

Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free already advocated increasing on-street parking meter charges and metering of currently free parking spots. See "Value pricing for curbside parking" in our [Alternatives](#) report, pages 7 and 19. Note that the City acknowledges how this policy can address cruising. Keep NYC Congestion Tax Free remains concerned about the City's ability to deliver metering that allows automatic adjustment of metered parking rates based on time of day/ day of the week and volume of parking; the city needs to demonstrate that its access to the necessary technology, which might not quite exist.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/10/nyregion/10parking.html?ref=nyregion>

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City to Test Peak Rates for Parking Meters

By [WILLIAM NEUMAN](#)

Call it congestion parking.

In what amounts to [congestion pricing](#) for parking spaces, parking meter rates would double during heavy traffic periods in portions of Manhattan and Brooklyn as part of an experimental city program beginning this fall, officials said Wednesday.

The program's goal is to increase turnover in curbside parking spaces in the test areas — a section of Greenwich Village in Manhattan and a stretch of Kings Highway and adjacent streets in the Midwood neighborhood of Brooklyn — so that drivers will spend less time cruising in search of an open space, according to the transportation commissioner, Janette Sadik-Khan.

Cutting down on cruising will in turn decrease pollution and traffic congestion. It is also expected to decrease the number of drivers who double-park or park in bus stops.

"We've picked corridors that have a lot of congestion and a lot of cruising," Ms. Sadik-Khan said. "Dealing with the cruising and congestion problem we think will improve both mobility in the neighborhood and reduce pollution, and improve the quality of life also in those areas."

If successful, the program could be expanded, she said. The pilot programs are expected to begin in October and will last six months.

In the Village, the higher parking rates would be charged in an area that stretches from Houston Street to Charles Street and includes portions of Seventh Avenue South and Avenue of the Americas. Currently, the area has parking meters that charge 25 cents for 15 minutes, or \$1 an hour. Ms. Sadik-Khan said the meter rates would likely increase so that 25 cents would buy 6 to 7 1/2 minutes, which would be the equivalent of \$2 to \$2.50 an hour.

In Brooklyn, it was unclear how many blocks of Kings Highway would be included in the program, but business and community leaders said that parking and traffic problems are concentrated in the section between Coney Island and Ocean Avenues. Along that stretch of road, meters currently charge 25 cents for 20 minutes, or 75 cents an hour. In some locations, the rate is 25 cents for 30 minutes, or 50 cents an hour.

Ms. Sadik-Khan said those rates may be raised as high as 25 cents for 10 minutes, or \$1.50 an hour, during the peak parking period. But one community leader said transportation officials said in a meeting that the rate could be set as high as 25 cents for 6 minutes, or \$2.50 an hour.

The city is studying parking patterns in the two areas to determine the peak parking hours would be, Ms. Sadik-Khan said. She added that the higher rate would most likely be in effect around midday or in the afternoon, when competition for parking is at its highest.

Theresa Scavo, the chairwoman of Community Board 15 in Brooklyn, which covers the Kings Highway area, said that parking problems along the popular shopping strip had intensified in recent years with a boom in condominium construction in the neighborhood. She said that local business and community leaders recently met with city officials to discuss the proposal and that many details still needed to be worked out. But she added that the community was eager to find a solution to the daily parking tangle on Kings Highway.

“If you go there Thursday at 2 p.m., you are not parking anywhere,” Ms. Scavo said. “And if you go down Kings Highway you have double-parked, triple-parked cars, and every bus stop is taken with cars.”

Ms. Scavo said that she thought the rate increase would make a difference and that many shoppers would come earlier or later in the day to avoid the higher charge.

Brad Hoylman, the chairman of Community Board 2 in Manhattan, which includes Greenwich Village, said the board helped set the geographic boundaries for the increased rate meter zone. The board’s transportation committee voted on Tuesday to support the plan.

On Wednesday afternoon, Kings Highway was a slow-moving muddle of cars, delivery trucks and buses. Horns honked. Nerves frayed. Many cars and trucks were double-parked. Still shoppers and store employees were skeptical about the plan for higher parking meter rates.

“It’s not going to open up parking for us,” said Shlomo Benita, 24, the manager of the Sunflower Cafe at the corner of East 13th Street. “People are rich around here,” he said, adding that drivers would be able to pay the higher rate.

In contrast, Hazel Styles, 28, a manager at Image, a clothing store, feared that higher rates would drive customers away.

“With the price of gas, nobody wants to drive,” Ms. Styles said. “Bloomberg’s going to reduce traffic, but the majority of our customers come from out of the area.”

In Greenwich Village, Darrell Martin, 41, a musician, said, “I think New Yorkers will pay almost anything for convenience, and I’m one of them.” But he said that if rates are raised any higher, he’d be more likely to leave his car in a parking lot.

David Giambusso and Kathryn Carlson contributed reporting.