

July 31, 2024

MEMORANDUM

To: Governance, Accountability, and Economic Development Committee
From: Calvin Chow, Analyst
Subject: Council Bill 120827 - Music Venue Zone Proposal

On August 8, 2024, the Governance, Accountability, and Economic Development Committee will discuss and possibly vote on [Council Bill \(CB\) 120827](#) that would authorize the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to establish a Music Venue Zone Permit program. The program would establish parking/loading zones for touring musicians and crews near live music venues, managed through permits held by the music venues. SDOT has identified 33 music venues that would qualify for the program.

Background

In 2014, as part of Seattle's City of Music initiative ([Resolution 31173](#)) to support Seattle's music community and economy, SDOT initiated a pilot program to provide musician loading zones near five participating music venues. This pilot program relied on added signage at established loading zones to signal priority for musicians loading and unloading. However, this approach was voluntary/advisory and did not provide an enforcement mechanism to prioritize musician loading or to allow for musician parking.

In recent years, music venues have sought temporary no parking (TNP) permits to reserve parking spaces for musician loading and parking. SDOT's [TNP program](#) is intended to address construction contractors use of the right-of-way, and it relies on advanced deployment of no-parking easels (providing 72-hours' notice) that are typically rented by the permit holder through a third-party vendor.

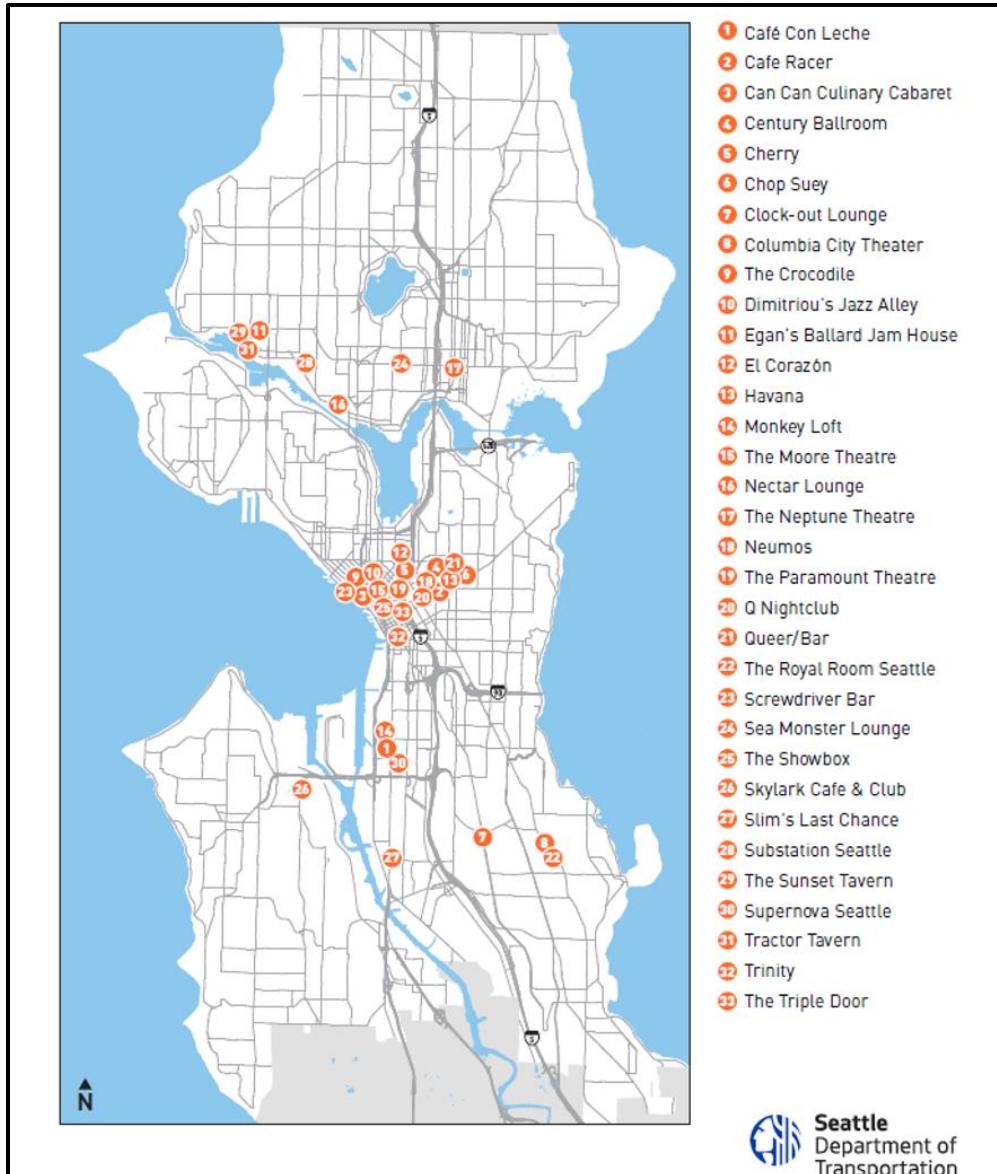
Based on staff and outreach feedback, SDOT reports that the TNP program is considered unwieldy as a means to address the regular on-going need for musician parking and loading near music venues. In 2023, SDOT issued 595 TNP permits to 17 individual music venues, suggesting that almost half of the 33 identified local music venues have used other means to address their musician loading and parking needs.

In response to this feedback, SDOT has worked with the Seattle Music Commission on a proposal to establish a Music Venue Zone Permit program to address the needs of local music venues.

Music Venue Zone Proposal

The proposed legislation would authorize SDOT to designate curb space as a Music Venue Zone and to issue permits to music venues, defined as premises that host live music and charge a fee for admission on at least two days per week. The use of Music Venue Zones would be exclusive for displayed permit holders. The 33 music venues currently identified as eligible for participation in the permit program are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Music Venues potentially eligible for Music Venue Zone permits, as of June 2024



The cost of a Music Venue Zone permit would be established at \$250 annually. The fine for a parking violation in the zone would be established at \$47.

Considerations

SDOT estimates a one-time cost to establish the Music Venue Zones of approximately \$30,000. This implementation cost would be recouped through the program's permit fees over four years. Based on the locations of the identified eligible music venues, SDOT estimates that the Music Venue Zones would replace up to 60 paid parking spaces.¹ Based on average 2023 parking revenue per space, this reduction would represent approximately \$178,000 in foregone parking revenue to the General Fund. The actual financial impact will depend on parking utilization and availability near specific locations. For context, there are currently approximately 11,000 paid on-street parking spaces in Seattle and the 2024 Adopted Budget anticipates approximately \$41.7 million of parking meter revenue to the General Fund.

The decision to reserve curb space for specific uses is a policy decision. The Council has provided SDOT with the authority to establish curb use zones ([SMC 11.23.440](#)) for:

- Taxicabs
- Official career consul vehicles
- Moving or loading
- Disabled persons
- Curb space parking including no parking zones
- Service parking
- Carpool parking
- Car share parking
- Food vehicles
- Vending units
- Restricted parking zone (RPZ) program

Next Steps

If the Committee votes to recommend passage of CB 120827 on August 8, the City Council could take final action on the legislation as soon as August 13.

cc: Ben Noble, Director
Yolanda Ho, Deputy Director

¹ Of the 33 identified music venues, 20 are located in business districts with paid parking. If each of these 20 locations required a maximum of 3 paid parking spaces to establish a Music Venue Zone, this would result in a reduction of 60 paid parking spaces.