

SMART LOADING ZONES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

OCTOBER 3, 2022



ABOUT THE PROJECT

1. WHAT IS A (CONVENTIONAL) LOADING ZONE?

A (conventional) Loading Zone is a dedicated space on the street within the parking lane that gives vehicles space to conduct loading and unloading activities. Parking is not permitted in a loading zone, and there is usually a fixed time limit for its use by a given vehicle. The City posts rules for using a loading zone on signages next to the loading space and expects the users to read the signages before using the space.

2. WHAT IS A SMART LOADING ZONE?

Like a (conventional) loading zone, a Smart Loading Zone is also a dedicated space on the street to conduct loading and unloading activities. But unlike a (conventional) loading zone, the availability and regulations for Smart Loading Zones are digitally codified and the zones are bookable through the Pebble Driver app. This digitization of physical space will allow delivery companies to reserve spaces and pay for only the time they use. The City will provide a suite of software applications for drivers and fleet managers to book these spaces through their smartphones and to manage multiple fleet vehicles through a single account.

	SMART LOADING ZONE	(CONVENTIONAL) LOADING ZONE
DIGITALLY CODED TO BE USED IN A SMARTPHONE APP	Yes	No
ALLOWS RESERVATIONS IN ADVANCE USING A SMARTPHONE APP OR WEBSITE	Yes	No
HAS TIME LIMIT	Yes (1 hour)	Yes
PROVIDES REAL-TIME AVAILABILITY INFORMATION	Yes - based on reservations, operational hours, and length of vehicle	No
REQUIRES FEE	Yes	No
MEASURES OCCUPANCY & DEMAND	Yes	No

WILL GET A TICKET OR CITATION	Yes, if used without reservation, including overstay beyond reservation or the time limit	Yes, if overstays beyond the time limit for that specific zone posted on the curbside
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3. HOW MANY AND WHERE ARE THESE ZONES BEING PLACED?

The City is piloting a smart zone project in Philadelphia's downtown area. The City will designate 21 existing loading zones as 'Smart Loading Zones.

These zones will be painted and marked using special signage. The pilot project will last six (6) months, starting October 17th, 2022.

4. WHY ARE WE TESTING SMART ZONES IN PHILADELPHIA?

There are three main reasons to test the digital management of loading spaces in Philadelphia today.

- **Demand:** With a rise in delivery and ride-share services, there is an increased demand for loading spaces. The unmet demand has increased illegal parking and traffic congestion, leading to several traffic safety issues. Smart Loading Zones may provide an efficient way to digitally manage curb space while reducing the amount of unsafe and illegal parking in Philadelphia.
- **Digital Standard:** the City will test a new standard called the *Curb Data Specification* (CDS) through this pilot project. A non-profit called *Open Mobility Foundation* (OMF) has developed this standard through a collaborative process involving several transportation policy experts from cities across the country and software development experts from several private companies in the mobility space. The City of Philadelphia was a founding member of OMF and has actively participated in developing Curb Data Specification (CDS).
- **Fines to Fees:** The Smart Loading Zone pilot will be a pilot to help local delivery companies avoid penalties they end up paying due to illegal parking, and move towards paying fees based on the pay-as-you-use price model. This transition may eventually help their bottom line because fees are tax deductible, but fines are not.

5. HOW DOES A SMART LOADING ZONE WORK?

A Smart Loading Zone is reservation-based and operates on a pay-per-use fee structure. The City has partnered with **Pebble by Sidewalk Labs** (part of Google) to provide software applications that support several stakeholders involved in managing a

Smart Loading Zone. To reserve a Smart Loading Zone, a delivery vehicle driver must download the **Pebble Driver App** on their iOS ([link](#)) or Android ([link](#)) smartphone, create an account, and add payment details. Fleet managers can use the **Pebble Fleet Manager Portal** ([link](#)) to manage multiple vehicles under one account. Parking Enforcement Officers will use the **Pebble Inspector App** to enforce the reservation-based use of Smart Loading Zones. Transportation officials at the Streets Department and Philadelphia Parking Authority will be able to track occupancy and several other metrics for these spaces through a **Smart Loading Zone Dashboard**. The City will also install low-cost vehicle detection technology at selected Smart Loading Zones to test variations between physical occupancy and reservations to improve the reliability of information drivers receive.

USING A SMART LOADING ZONE

1. HOW WILL I KNOW WHICH ZONES ARE SMART LOADING ZONES?

All the Smart Loading Zones are located in the Center City District (downtown) area of Philadelphia. They are identifiable via specific signage and have been numbered/marked for easy identification. Please refer to the map to see the location and designated numbers for each Smart Loading Zone.

2. HOW MUCH WILL USING A SMART ZONE COST ME?

Using a Smart Loading Zone will cost \$3 per hour but will be charged by the minute. Unlike regular metered parking spaces, you will be charged at the end of your stay at a Smart Loading Zone based on how much time you used. If you use the Smart Loading Zone for a very short period and the charge is less than \$0.50, you will not be charged in the same session, but that amount will be added to your bill the next time you use any Smart Loading Zone.

3. I AM A DELIVERY TRUCK DRIVER. HOW CAN I USE A SMART LOADING ZONE?

- First, install the **Pebble Driver App** on your iOS ([link](#)) or Android ([link](#)) device.
- Open the app and look up open zones on the map.
- Select the zone that you want to reserve.
- You can only reserve a zone when you are within a ½ (half) mile of it.
- Use the **Pebble Driver App** to navigate to the reserved zone. The zone will only be held for 15 mins, after which it will become available to others.

- Once you reach the reserved zone, press "*Start Session*" on the ***Pebble Driver App*** to start using the Smart Loading Zone.
- When you're done loading or unloading, Press "*End Session*" to stop using the zone, or just drive away. Your session will be terminated automatically once your device location is far enough from the zone.
- If someone else is occupying your reserved space when you arrive, you can tap "*Alert Enforcement*." You will be given the option to be rerouted to the nearest Smart Loading Zone or to use a conventional loading zone nearby. At the same time, enforcement officers will be notified that an unauthorized vehicle is occupying the zone.
- If you are part of a fleet, please ask your fleet manager to reach out at pebble-support@google.com or call (929) 257-1341 for information on how they can register multiple vehicles under one account through the Fleet Management Platform.

4. IS THERE A TIME LIMIT FOR USING A SMART LOADING ZONE?

Each Smart Loading Zone can be reserved and used for up to one hour. Smart Zone operational hours differ by zone and street; refer to the [Pebble Driver App](#) for the most up-to-date hours of operation for each zone.

DATA AND PRIVACY

1. WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO SHARE BEFORE I CAN USE A SMART LOADING ZONE?

To start using a Smart Zone, you need to provide your contact information, vehicle type, and license plate and enter a payment method into the system. The system will use this information to set up your account and ensure you can pay after you have finished using a Smart Loading Zone. Fleet Managers can manage payments for multiple vehicles by adding billing information on the Fleet Manager Portal along with all of their fleet's license plate numbers. The fleet will then be billed for all Smart Zone usage by their drivers on the first of every month. Once a fleet has registered their vehicles, the fleet's drivers can sign up for the Pebble Driver app and immediately begin booking loading zones with payments being covered by their fleet.

2. WHO WILL MANAGE THE PAYMENTS WITHIN THE SYSTEM?

Pebble's system uses **Stripe**, a third-party payment processor, to manage payments and payment-related information. You can read more about the data and privacy policies for **Stripe** [here](#).

3. HOW WILL MY INFORMATION BE PROTECTED?

- Personal data collected during the project (name, email address, phone number, license plate number, product registration number, and any other personal information you choose to provide will meet strict protections required by the City of Philadelphia and will not be used for marketing or solicitation purposes.
- Any personal data for accounts only using Smart Loading Zones in the City of Philadelphia will be deleted within six months following the end of the project
- Metrics tracked for Smart Loading Zones, such as total sessions, sessions by hour, holds by zone, will be aggregated or de-identified when shared with third parties.