



CITY OF SAINT PAUL  
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1/31/2020

**Subject: Overnight Parking Restrictions on Summit Avenue**

This memo outlines the cost, maintenance, and safety implications of implementing an overnight parking restriction one night per week on Summit Avenue from Mississippi River Boulevard to Selby Avenue. An overnight parking restriction would provide more opportunities to perform maintenance activities along Summit Avenue to improve the safety and usability of the bicycle lanes.

Saint Paul is committed to providing safe and comfortable bicycle facilities year-round. Bicycle lanes that are covered in sand, debris, snow, or ice can present safety hazards to people on bicycles. The City has received complaints from the community regarding the maintenance of the bicycle lanes on Summit Avenue and an overnight parking restriction may help city staff address those concerns.

**Background Information**

Summit Avenue is one of most heavily used bicycle routes in Saint Paul. The bicycle lanes on Summit Avenue were installed in the early 1990's, making them some of the oldest bike lanes in the city. Summit Avenue is a collector and Municipal State Aid roadway with motorized vehicle traffic volumes ranging from 5,000 to 11,000 vehicles per day along the length of the corridor. In 2015, automated bicycle counters were installed in the bike lanes just east of Fairview Avenue. Bicycle counts on Summit Avenue near Fairview range from approximately 900 bicycles per day during the summer months to about 80 bicycles per day during the winter months.

**Maintenance Challenges**

Bicycle lanes that are located between the parking lane and the driving lanes are often challenging to fully maintain. Vehicles entering and exiting the parking lane tend to cause ice buildup in the bike lanes that is difficult to remove. Additionally, as snow buildup increases throughout the winter in the parking lanes, parked vehicles tend to encroach into the bike lanes limiting both the usefulness and safety of the bike lanes as well as the ability of city staff to perform maintenance on the bike lanes.

Routine plowing and sweeping operations can be challenging on Summit Avenue when parked vehicles are present. Public Works currently sweeps Summit Avenue about 6-10 times per year. Prior to each sweeping, Public Works posts temporary no parking signs 24 hours in advance of the work being performed to ensure cars are not parked in the street. While this results in most of the parked cars being moved, a few cars typically remain parked in the street. City staff can not effectively sweep the bike lanes or parking lanes if parked cars are present.



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Public Works typically declares approximately 4 snow emergencies each year, however there are often a dozen or more additional snow events where snow emergencies are not declared, resulting in challenges clearing the bicycle and parking lanes due to parked vehicles. On heavier snowfalls when a snow emergency is in effect, the city is able to plow the roadway to the curb, including the bicycle lanes. However, without a snow emergency, city staff are often not able to plow all the way to the curb due to parked cars, and much of the snow cleared from the motorized travel lanes remains pushed into the bike lanes and parking lanes.

The ability of City staff to adequately maintain the bicycle lanes is related to the design of the roadway. The design of the Summit Avenue bike lanes varies throughout the length of the street.

- Mississippi River Boulevard to Lexington Parkway – This segment has a wide landscaped median except near Snelling Avenue. Both the north and south sides of the street are 28' wide, which is currently striped with a 15' travel lane, 5' bike lane, and 8' parking lane.
- Lexington Parkway to Selby Avenue – This segment does not have a median. The roadway is 48' wide and is currently striped with 11' travel lanes, 5' bike lanes, and 8' parking lanes.

The existing bicycle lanes are narrow. At 5' wide, they meet minimum width requirements, but additional width is desired. Wider bike lanes and buffered bike lanes are desirable from a maintenance standpoint since they allow the bicycle lanes to remain usable in the event that snow buildup encroaches in a portion of the bike lane. In Summer of 2020, Public Works plans to restripe Summit Avenue between Mississippi River Boulevard and Lexington Parkway, widening the bike lanes to 6', and adding a 3' buffer in most areas.

### **Overnight Parking Restrictions**

Saint Paul has implemented overnight parking restrictions on various collector or arterial streets throughout the city as a way of aiding in routine maintenance of the roadway. Maintenance activities such as sweeping and snow plowing are more effective and efficient when performed when parked vehicles are not present. Often referred to as "sanitation bans", such parking restrictions are already present on various streets throughout the city.

If a one night per week overnight parking restriction is implemented on Summit Avenue, the timing would be coordinated with other overnight parking restrictions throughout the neighborhood to balance the parking impacts throughout the week. Most overnight parking restrictions are in effect from 2:00 AM to 7:00 AM and range anywhere from one night a week to every night of the week. Nearby overnight parking restrictions include:

- Grand Avenue (north side) – Monday
- Grand Avenue (south side) – Tuesday
- Snelling Avenue (west side) – Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday
- Snelling Avenue (east side) – Monday, Wednesday, Friday
- Cleveland Avenue (east side, Grand Ave to Selby Ave) – Friday
- Dale Street (west side) – Thursday
- Dale Street (east side) – Monday

If an overnight parking restriction is implemented on Summit Avenue, it is recommended that the restrictions on the north and south sides of the street occur on different days of the week, once a week. The optimal timing for an overnight parking restriction on Summit Avenue is:

- North side of Summit Avenue – parking restricted Thursdays 2:00-7:00 AM
- South side of Summit Avenue – parking restricted Fridays 2:00-7:00 AM

### **Parking Data Collection**

Parking occupancy data was collected to better understand existing parking utilization on Thursdays and Fridays along Summit Avenue. Parking data was collected on six occasions from July-September 2019, three counts on Thursdays and three counts on Fridays. Two of the count dates were selected to ensure overlap with school being in session at Macalester College and St. Thomas University, as well as other schools in the area. The parking data was collected between the hours of 12:00 AM and 6:00 AM. Parking utilization data was collected on intersecting side streets on the eastern end of the corridor where parking utilization was observed to be the highest. The data collected is presented graphically as an attachment to this memo.

The parking data shows the following:

- Parking utilization rates well below 50% were observed along most of Summit Avenue on all six count dates.
- Parking utilization rates above 75% were consistently observed for a two block segment near Dale Street as well as on intersecting side streets near Dale Street.
- Parking utilization rates above 50% were observed near the University of St. Thomas in September when school was in session.

In general, parking utilization below 50% on both sides of the street suggests an overnight parking restriction on one side of the street will have a limited impact on parking availability. Individuals who would have parked on the side of the street with the parking restriction should be able to find parking available across the street. On Summit Avenue, the majority of blocks had parking utilization below 50%, with the exception of the two-block segment between St. Albans and Kent Street (one block either side of Dale Street). In this segment, parking utilization is high enough that individuals impacted by the parking restriction may need to walk further than one block to find an available parking space.

### **Cost Analysis**

Signs displaying the overnight parking restriction would need to be posted on both sides of Summit Avenue. Assuming an average sign spacing of 200 feet, and a length of 4.5 miles between Mississippi River Boulevard and Selby Avenue, this would require approximately 240 new signs at an estimated cost of \$85,000, including design and engineering. Permanent signs would create new costs relating to ongoing maintenance, including responding to occasional knock-downs as well as routine replacement every 10-20 years. The ongoing costs to maintain the signs will vary based on annual labor, equipment, and material rates, with an expected attrition rate of 5-10%.

These one-time and ongoing costs to post permanent overnight parking restriction signs would eliminate the need to post temporary overnight parking restriction signs. On average, public works posts temporary parking restriction signs on Summit Avenue approximately 4-6 times per year at a total annual cost of \$4000.

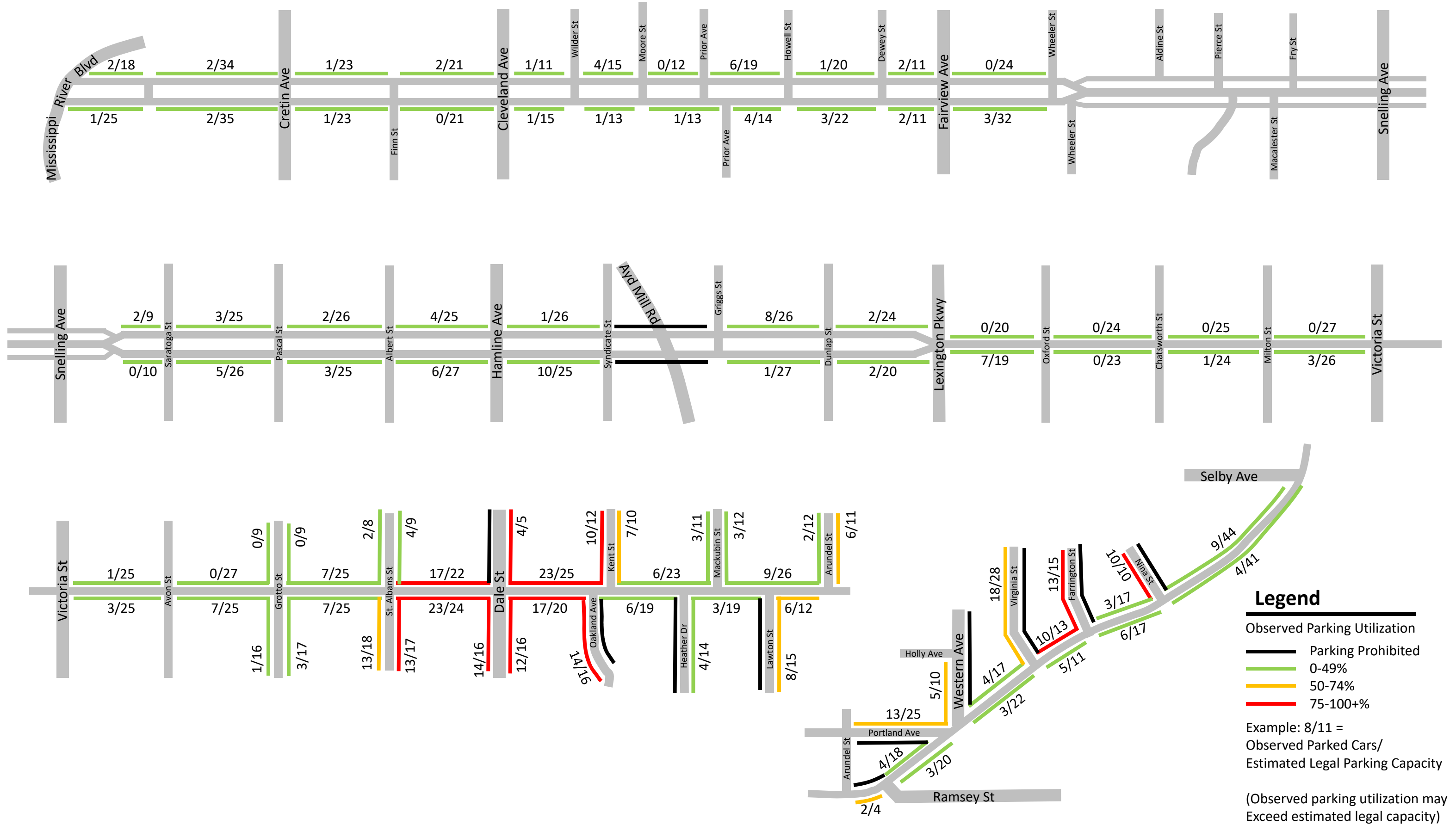
**Timeline**

An overnight parking restriction would take effect at the time new permanent signs are installed. From the time funding is identified to implement an overnight parking restriction, approximately 6 months would be needed to implement the restriction. Due to the large number of signs needed and the number of new posts that would need to be installed in the ground, new signage could not be installed during the winter months when the ground is frozen.

# Summit Avenue Parking Utilization

Thursday 7/25/2019

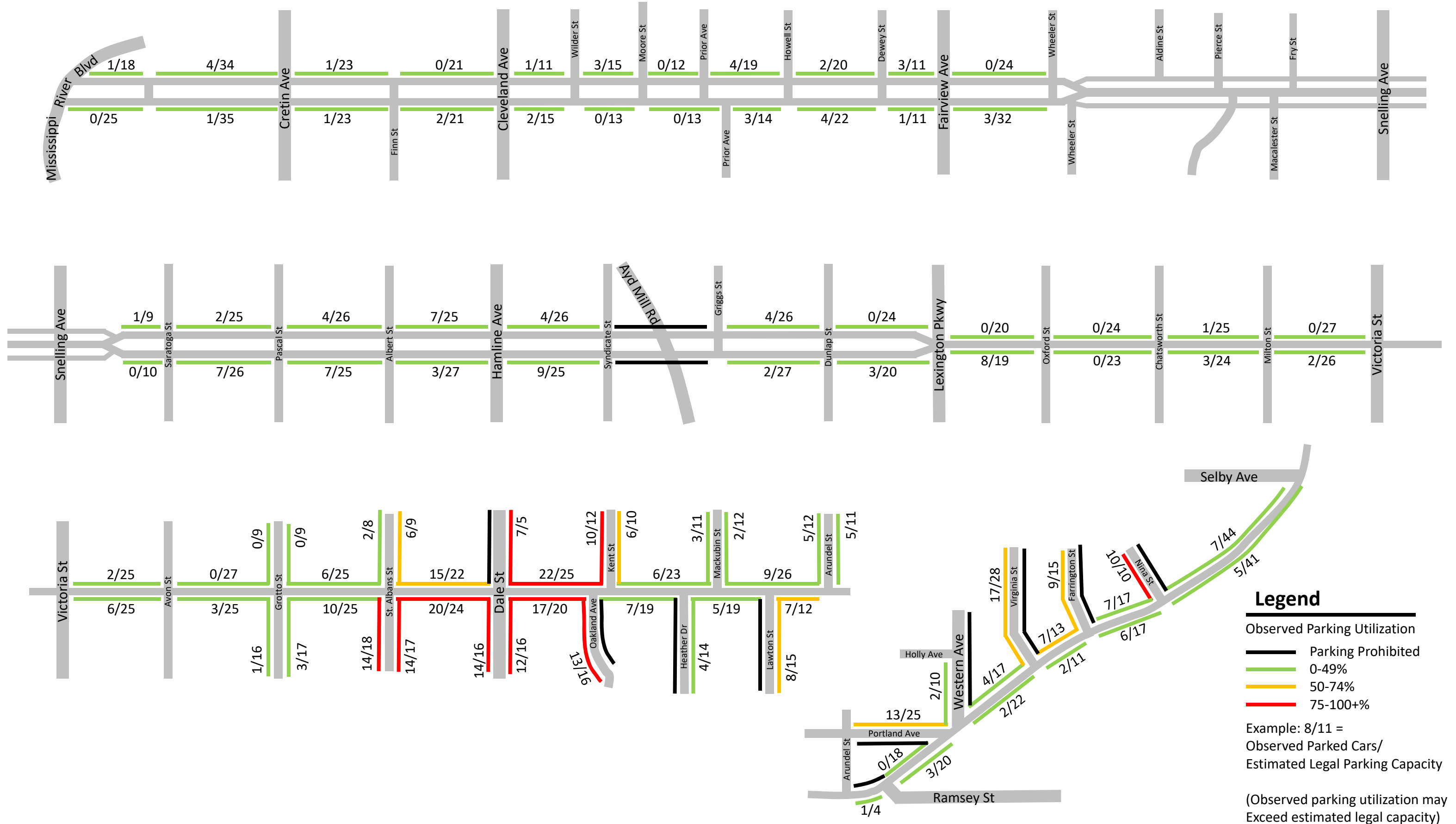
12:00 AM-2:00 AM



# Summit Avenue Parking Utilization

Thursday 8/1/2019

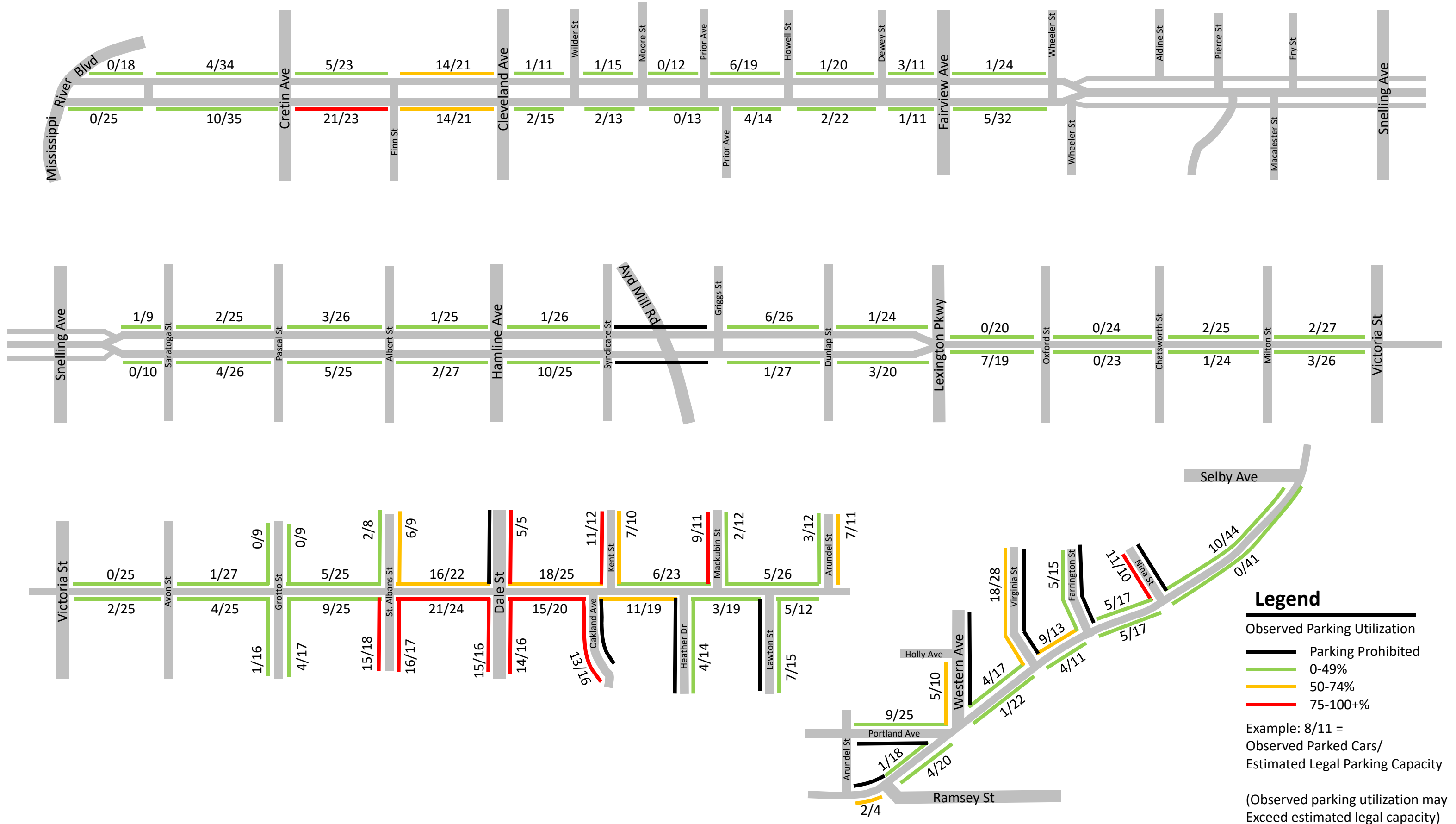
12:00 AM-2:00 AM



# Summit Avenue Parking Utilization

Thursday 9/19/2019

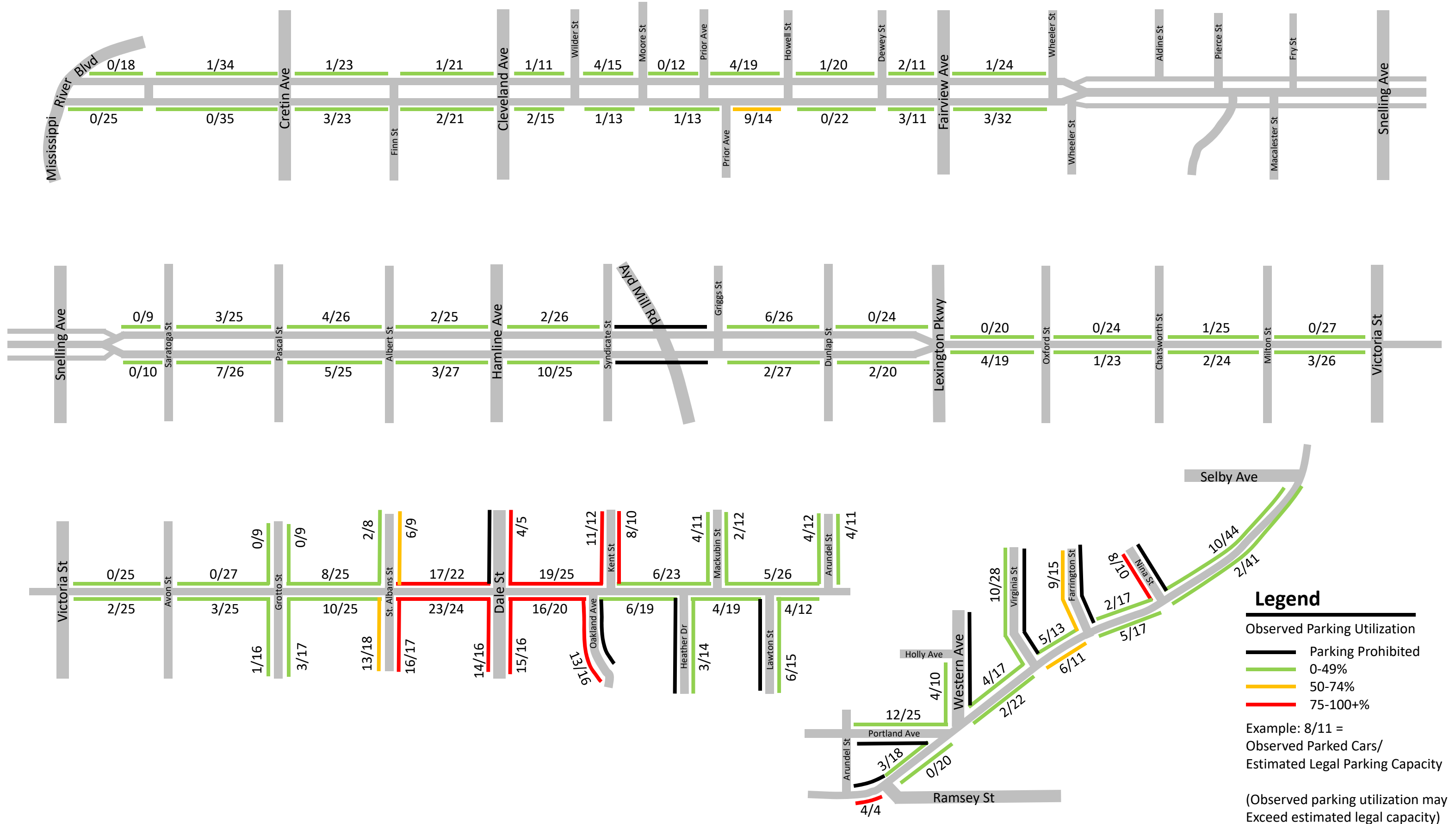
4:00 AM-6:00 AM



# Summit Avenue Parking Utilization

Friday 8/16/2019

12:00 AM-2:00 AM

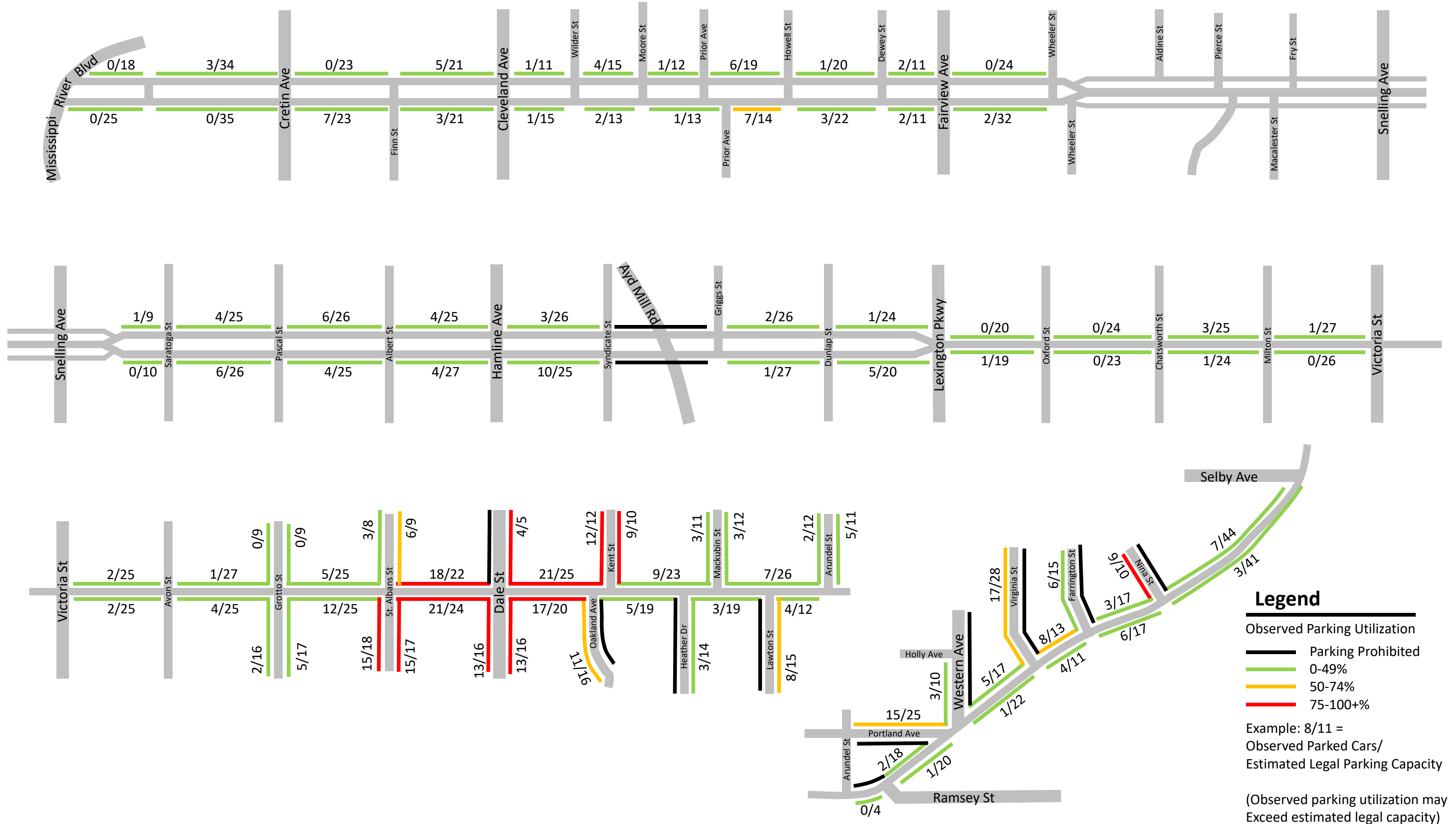




# Summit Avenue Parking Utilization

Friday 8/23/2019

4:00 AM-6:00 AM



# Summit Avenue Parking Utilization

Friday 9/20/2019

4:00 AM-6:00 AM

