



*Municipality of Princeton*

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September 13, 2018

Ms. Jamie Oplinger, Executive Manager  
Bureau of Traffic Engineering  
New Jersey Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 600  
Trenton, NJ 08625

**RE: TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER MODIFICATION REQUESTED FOR NEW JERSEY 27 (NASSAU STREET) RELATED TO ON-STREET METERED PARKING AND LOADING ZONES BETWEEN MILE POST 0.04 AND 1.21**

Dear Ms. Oplinger:

Since 2016 with the funding assistance of a Transportation & Community Development Initiative (TCDI) grant, the Municipality of Princeton has been analyzing parking demands and identifying innovative parking solutions for downtown Princeton. As the last parking study was completed in 2001 and the business community has changed quite distinctly to include many more restaurants, the demands for parking have changed.

Additionally, alternate modes of transportation have changed over the last 17 years: NJ Transit lost a route in Princeton, Princeton and Princeton University established free fixed-route shuttles, and new ridesharing companies have entered the marketplace. Additionally, Princeton is actively encouraging bicycling and walking through Complete Streets and bicycle mobility initiatives.

Based on the recommendations of the enclosed TCDI Parking Strategy Report prepared by Nelson Nygaard, Princeton has undertaken a \$1 million capital improvement project to replace all of its existing parking meters and implement operational changes to support economic growth and vitality of Princeton's business community. We anticipate launching the new parking system in November 2018. With much public support gathered during the TCDI study, as well as with outreach for the new parking meters, Princeton is seeking to simplify the 48 various metered zones that have been established using time limits and hourly rates into a system with 3 parking zones with one rate each, one consistent set of operating hours, and clear regulations on commercial and passenger loading zones. The goal is to create a pleasant parking experience for visitors to downtown Princeton, while minimizing congestion related to the hunt for an available parking space; the system is intended to create one available parking space in every block any day or time of the week.

The following key components of the proposed parking system affect the traffic regulation order (TRO) on NJ 27 (Nassau Street):

- **Hours of operation / enforcement** – As the character of retail business has changed with the popularity of online shopping, many of Princeton’s storefronts have changed from retail to restaurant / food establishments. This has resulted in activity and parking demands much later into the evenings and on weekends, including Sunday. The existing TRO for parking meter hours effectively allows night shift restaurant staff to park until 2 am while only paying for 2 or 3 hours of parking; on Sundays, restaurant staff could park all day for free. This means that those prime parking spaces near the businesses are now not available for restaurant patrons and downtown visitors. Additionally, the current TRO has varying end times of metered parking; this does not complement the goal of creating a simple set of rules governing parking in Princeton.

In order to achieve Princeton’s goal to have an available parking space in each block, parking meter payments and enforcement activities are required to ensure compliance. Therefore, Princeton is seeking approval to change all of the parking meter hours of operation to the following times:

- 9 am to 8 pm M-TH
  - 9 am to 9 pm F-SA
  - 1 pm to 8 pm SU
- **Parking time limits** – Princeton currently establishes zones of parking using both time limits and rates, which effectively creates about 48 parking zones. In order to streamline the rules and make parking in Princeton more inviting, we are seeking to establish three parking area zones with Nassau Street as the center of the system. The map on page 3 shows the three proposed areas. The existing TRO permits only 2 hour and 30 minute parking limits on NJ 27. We are seeking approval to increase time limits to 3 hour and all day in some locations further away from the downtown core. These time limits are complementary to the business development intensity in each location and also provide walkable options for those seeking less costly parking rates and a longer stay option.
  - **Loading zone usage** – The existing TRO is silent regarding the hours of operation for loading zones. Princeton is seeking approval to establish commercial loading zone hours of 7 am to 5 pm Monday through Saturday. Outside of these hours, we are seeking to use these loading zones for passenger loading and unloading with a time restriction of 3-5 minutes. The goal is to provide opportunities to those that may have mobility challenges to be unloaded from vehicles near their destination, rather than at their parking space. This change will also allow the current rideshare activities to have a safe location, out of travel lanes, to load and unload patrons.

The following enclosed documents provide additional justification and support for these requested modifications:

- Certified Resolution 18-299 requesting NJDOT to formulate a new traffic regulation order for New Jersey 27 (Nassau Street).
- Parking study titled “Princeton Parking Strategy”  
(<https://www.princetonnj.gov/reports/princeton-parking-study>)

- Parking Meter Replacement Project presentation, updated August 14, 2018 ([https://drive.google.com/file/d/17\\_8QYR8Z8vUflg0Lefsgg4z98KYkPMiq/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17_8QYR8Z8vUflg0Lefsgg4z98KYkPMiq/view))
- Parking Meter Replacement Project presentation, updated August 28, 2018 ([https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ESabRHmUeedzMIYA\\_jZyuvf9yeRRdn\\_/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ESabRHmUeedzMIYA_jZyuvf9yeRRdn_/view))

Please contact me at [dstockton@princetonnj.gov](mailto:dstockton@princetonnj.gov) or at 609-921-7077 x 1138 to schedule a meeting or discuss further. I look forward to working with you to accomplish our current parking goals.

Best regards,



Deanna Stockton, P.E., C.M.E.  
Municipal Engineer

w/Enclosures

Cc: Liz Lempert, Mayor  
Marc Dashield, Administrator  
Kathleen Brzezynski, Clerk  
Tejal Patel, Assistant Engineer  
Kevin Israel, Director, NJDOT Office of Community and Constituent Services



