

## 4 KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SEATTLE ALLEY OCCUPANCY STUDY

Cities that want to strategically manage their load/unload space network can use the toolkit to replicate the UFL alley occupancy study and generate much-needed data and findings to inform policy and practice.

The Seattle alley survey and occupancy study produce several key findings that give policymakers and transportation officials new understanding of the Seattle Center City area alley system and how the system can best be managed to avoid massive gridlock. Among those findings are that:

1. The occupancy study confirms the operational constraints discovered in the alley infrastructure survey: parking per alley is largely limited to one-to-two commercial vehicles at a time given that 90% of Center City area alleys are constricted to one lane.
2. 68% of all vehicles parked in alleys were there for 15 minutes or less.
3. Alleys are vacant about half of the time during the business day. But as alleys typically hold only one-to-two parked trucks at a time, they are not a viable alternative to replace the use of commercial vehicle loading zones (CVLZS) along city curbs.

As one parked vehicle operationally blocks the entire alley, the Urban Freight Lab team concludes that the goal of new alley policies and strategies should be to reduce the amount of time alleys are blocked to additional users. Adding to street congestion and pollution by pushing commercial vehicles onto surface streets to circle until an alley is free is an undesirable outcome.

The two occupancy case studies illustrate how differently alleys can be used and by what vehicles, as well as how each alley has its unique ecosystem in terms of connection to the street network, who and what is served on the block and nearby blocks, and features (or lack thereof) inside the alley.