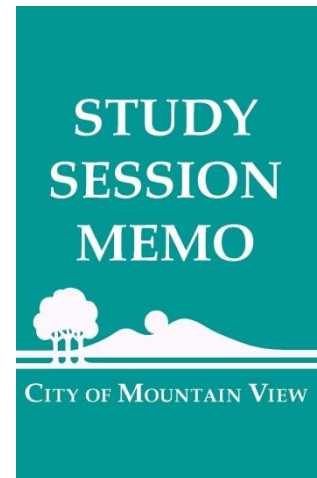


DATE: November 12, 2019
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Michael A. Fuller, Public Works Director
VIA: Daniel H. Rich, City Manager
TITLE: Residential Parking Permit Program



PURPOSE

The purpose of this Study Session is to provide an overview and update on the City's Residential Parking Permit (RPP) Program and to obtain City Council direction on possible changes to program criteria.

BACKGROUND

On November 8, 2011, the City Council adopted a downtown parking work plan, one element of which was to develop a Residential Parking Permit (RPP) Program. On October 4, 2016, after review by the Council Transportation Committee on December 9, 2015, and a Council Study Session on February 23, 2016, the City Council adopted an ordinance amending Chapter 19 of the City Code to create such a program. The purpose of the RPP Program is to provide relief for neighborhoods that are affected by overflow parking by nonresidents from adjacent commercial, transit, school, or other uses.

While initiated in response to a review of downtown parking challenges, staff had also heard concerns from residents about parking spillover near Mountain View High School and the San Antonio Caltrain Station, in the Cuesta/Miramonte area, and near the Sunset Estates and New Frontier Mobile Home Parks.

A brief summary of the City's RPP Program follows. The program is for areas that are primarily zoned residential and are not within the Downtown Parking District. The Downtown Parking District is subject to its own regulations as set forth in City Code Section 19.92.

Establishment Process

According to the City Code, the process to create an RPP Zone may be initiated through a neighborhood petition or by the City Council, with the petition process and thresholds for establishing RPP zones determined by the “Residential Parking Permit Program Guidelines” (Attachment 1).

The neighborhood petition process, which is online at <https://www.mountainview.gov/depts/pw/transport/traffic.asp>, is as follows:

Step 1: Resident Petition

The petition contains contact information for neighborhood representatives leading the effort; a description of the nonresident parking that intrudes into the neighborhood; a description of the proposed RPP Program Zone; and signatures by adult residents residing in at least 51 percent of the dwelling units within each block of the proposed RPP Zone.

The proposed RPP Zone should consist of at least five contiguous blocks. If the nonresident parking-impacted neighborhood does not have five contiguous blocks, a minimum of three blocks is sufficient.

Step 2: Parking Surveys

Before undertaking parking surveys, the City informs those residents within the proposed RPP Zone, plus those within two adjoining blocks of the proposed RPP Zone, about the potential implementation of the RPP Program and provides an opportunity for residents in those two adjoining blocks of the proposed RPP Zone to participate in the petition process for designation of an RPP Zone, subject to meeting the same requirements.

The City then undertakes the parking surveys to determine if a minimum of 75 percent of all the on-street parking spaces within each block of the proposed RPP Zone are occupied.

Step 3: Establishment of RPP Zone Boundary and Restrictions or Denial of Request to Establish RPP Zone

If the RPP Zone request meets the above requirements, the City proposes the RPP Zone boundary and time restrictions for the zone. Time restrictions are based on the days and hours the proposed zone is impacted by nonresident parking.

Step 4: Postcard Surveys

The City then conducts a postcard survey of the properties within the proposed RPP Zone. The postcard survey will include, as a minimum, a description of the RPP Zone boundary, descriptions of the parking restrictions, the hours that parking will be restricted, and the current cost of permits. A minimum of 51 percent of the surveys must be returned and 67 percent of the returned surveys must support the establishment of the RPP Zone in order for the process to continue.

Step 5: Council Transportation Committee (CTC) Discussion

If 67 percent of the returned surveys support the establishment of the RPP Zone, the request is presented to the CTC for public input, discussion, and recommendation to Council.

Step 6: City Council Action

The CTC's recommendation is then presented to Council for consideration.

Step 7: Posting of RPP Zone Signs

If approved by Council, signs are posted to designate the RPP Zone.

Step 8: Notice to Residents about RPP Zone Designation

Upon designation of an RPP Zone, a notice is sent to residents within the zone about relevant parking regulations, the date the RPP Zone enforcement will begin, and how to purchase parking permits.

The City Council may initiate consideration of an RPP zone without receipt of a petition and subject to meeting the above criteria. For example, Council may direct staff to process an RPP zone designation in any area and staff will study the area to see if it meets the above criteria and report back to Council.

Permit Fees

To establish permit fees, staff evaluated a hypothetical RPP Zone and estimated the capital and operating costs of creating and enforcing the zone. More detail on the methodology is provided in the [February 23, 2016 Study Session report](#).

The adopted fee structure, established by Council resolution, represented approximately 50 percent cost recovery, with an annual fee of \$60 per vehicle. Fees were also established for visitors, contractors, and other nonresidents.

A complete description of the RPP Program and fees is provided in Attachment 1, "Residential Parking Permit Program Guidelines."

DISCUSSION

Experience with and feedback on the RPP Program is summarized below.

Experience to Date

To date, only two RPP Zone establishment processes have been initiated. The first was based on a petition received on July 18, 2017, for an RPP Zone on Church Street and Oak Street as shown in Figure 1 below. The area covered by the petition met the minimum three-block criterion to proceed with the next step of the process.



Figure 1

Staff evaluated the parking occupancy and determined that the area qualified based on a 75 percent occupancy rate in the peak periods. A postcard survey was sent to residents within the potential zone on December 14, 2017. Both sides of Oak Street did not meet the survey return requirement. The block of Church Street between Oak Street and Franklin Street met both requirements of 51 percent survey return and 67 percent support. However, the block of Church Street between Shoreline Boulevard and Oak Street (three houses only) did not meet 67 percent support and only met 50 percent support while meeting the postcard survey return rate. Since 67 percent is required, the effort failed.

A second effort was initiated by Council in the Willowgate neighborhood, which is impacted by overflow parking from the Downtown Transit Center. Postcard surveys were sent on May 30, 2019, to the residents in the area shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2

Only 20 percent of the surveys were returned, and only 37 percent favored establishment of an RPP Zone (with 63 percent opposed).

Although staff periodically fields calls from residents concerned about overflow parking, no other petitions have been received.

Feedback on the Program

Staff has received some feedback on the program from residents, including that the process is too onerous, and that there should be no cost to residents in RPP Zones for permits.

Possible Revisions to the Program

There is no “industry standard” for parking permit criteria, and programs vary from city to city. A comparison of Mountain View’s program compared with other cities is provided in Attachment 2. Based on the limited feedback and experience with the program, staff recommends the following for consideration if Council wishes to amend the program:

Petition Process and Minimum Zone Size

Staff recommends continuing to require the submittal of a petition for resident-initiated efforts. This requirement indicates some minimum consensus among residents that there is a problem and that a permit program is viewed as a possible solution. Initiating programs based on requests from only one or two residents would likely lead to a significant workload and many failed attempts.

However, Council may wish to consider reducing the 51 percent signature requirement for each block or make it 51 percent of the total area.

Question No. 1: Does Council support exploring changing the signature requirement to 51 percent of the total proposed RPP Area?

Staff recommends retaining the minimum zone size requirement (five blocks preferred, with a minimum of three blocks). Having block-by-block zones would likely only push the issue one street over and would make implementation and enforcement complex and challenging.

Parking Impact Assessment

The parking impact assessment performed after a petition is received is intended to verify that there is, in fact, a parking problem. The current requirement is 75 percent parking occupancy during peak periods. This is a typical requirement among the cities surveyed, and staff considers it to be an appropriate threshold.

Postcard Surveys

The requirements for successful voting are 51 percent of surveys returned on *each block* and 67 percent support on *each block*. These thresholds are relatively high as the parking program imposes cost and potential inconvenience to all residents in the zone, including those who may not support it.

Staff recommends there continue to be majority participation in the surveys and a super majority in support of implementing changes, but Council may wish to consider modifying either requirement and/or not tying them to block-by-block counts.

Question No. 2: Does Council wish to reduce the required percentage of surveys returned or percentage support on each block?

CTC Consideration

The City's program requires consideration by the CTC prior to review by the City Council. This was included to allow a public airing of the issue and consideration by policy-makers after the residents vote but prior to final Council consideration.

Question No. 3: Does Council wish to eliminate the requirement that the CTC consider the establishment of an RPP Zone if the support threshold is met?

Permit Fees

Staff has received feedback that the program should have no cost to residents within the permit zone. Some argue that overflow parking is not a problem created by the residents in the zone, so the residents should not bear the financial cost in addition to the inconvenience of the permit program.

Public streets are an asset available to all, and there is a cost associated with implementing an RPP, so staff does not recommend "no-cost" permits. However, Council may wish to consider a lower fee for the first permit, say \$25, and a higher amount for subsequent permits.

Question No. 4: Does Council support lowering the permit fee?

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council consider revisions to the program and direct staff to hold a community meeting to gather input and then draft revisions to the ordinance, Residential Parking Permit Guidelines, and/or fee resolution as appropriate to implement desired changes.

NEXT STEPS

If Council directs staff to implement any changes to the RPP Program, staff will return in the first half of 2020 with a recommended ordinance revision and/or fee resolution as needed.

PUBLIC NOTICING

Agenda posting. Notices were e-mailed to all neighborhood associations as well as to the Central Business Association and a notice was advertised in the *Mountain View Voice*. The meeting will also be promoted on social media. Residents of the Willowgate neighborhood were notified of the meeting in a letter communicating the results of the RPP survey taken in that neighborhood.

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Attachments: 1. [Residential Parking Permit Program Guidelines](#)
2. Comparison of Cities

cc: APWD – Cameron, CTE, STE – Lopez, STE – Aggarwal