



## Legislation Text

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### **TITLE:**

CITYWIDE PARKING STUDY OF THE RESIDENTIAL PERMIT PARKING PROGRAM

**DEPARTMENT:** PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT/ TRANSPORTATION  
SERVICES DIVISION

**PRESENTED BY:** RAJA SETHURAMAN, PUBLIC SERVICES DIRECTOR

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the City Council provide input on the proposed recommendations for the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) program based on the results of the Citywide parking study.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The most recent guidelines for the City of Costa Mesa's residential permit parking program were adopted in January 2016 (Attachment 1). The purpose of the Residential Permit Parking program is to help relieve parking congestion on public streets adjacent to impacted residential areas by vehicles unrelated to the neighborhood.

Key components of the permit program include:

- Considered on a street by street basis;
- Eligible household is defined as a single family (or multi-family residence prior to 2016) along the designated permit parking street, as well as single family residence located in a mixed-use neighborhood within 250 feet of a permit parking street;
- Parking survey that identifies neighborhood parking demand of 70 percent or more of all available parking;
- Petition signed by a majority of households for installation or removal of the program;
- Up to three (3) permits per household; and,
- One hundred (100) guest parking permits per household issued per year.

In recent years, the parking demands from single-family residential, multi-family residential, and commercial businesses have caused significant parking impacts on other adjacent residential neighborhoods where residents are unable to park on streets adjacent to their homes. The City has received significant feedback from both residents and business owners related to scarce parking on public streets.

Several factors have contributed to an increase in parking impacts including a growing number of vehicles per household, older neighborhoods originally designed for a lower parking demand,

insufficient parking within multi-family communities, and the use of one-or two-car garages for storage.

In addition, when a single-family street becomes a residential permit parking street, residents utilizing this street for parking are displaced and moved to other nearby streets. Often, streets designated with residential permit parking become far less utilized since residents living on other nearby streets and/or residents of multi-family housing units actually living on that street, but currently ineligible for the program, are displaced. These residents are then required to find parking elsewhere resulting in a new set of parking challenges in yet another neighborhood. This sequence of events creates unintended cascading impacts on surrounding streets.

A Citywide Parking Study of the Residential Permit Parking program was conducted by Dixon Resources Unlimited to identify viable solutions including both short-term and long-term options to address parking impacted neighborhoods. The objectives were as follows:

- Actively engage all stakeholders in the community;
- Holistically address parking challenges for all residents (both single family and multi-family);
- Fully evaluate the effectiveness of the current Residential Permit Parking program in alleviating parking congestion; and
- Develop recommendations that will have an immediate impact on the City's parking operation.

The scope of work included extensive stakeholder input, a parking analysis of existing and future parking conditions, alternative parking management strategies and an implementation plan. In April 2020, the project was put on hold and temporarily defunded due to the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the City's approved Capital Improvement Project fund for fiscal year (FY) 20-21, funding for the project was restored. The Citywide Parking Study was reinitiated with Dixon Resources Unlimited in October 2020 when students returned to campus for in-person learning and traffic patterns returned to more typical levels.

### **ANALYSIS:**

The Citywide Parking Study includes a review of existing conditions, current parking policies, extensive data collection and analysis, and community outreach. The on-street parking data collection was conducted in the residential areas of City Council Districts 4 and 5 and approximately 650 blocks were observed consisting of a total inventory of 10,531 spaces. Data collection occurred over two days in October 2020 including weekday and weekend data to compare occupancy and turnover rates.

An online Citywide Residential Parking Survey was also conducted from March 13, 2021 to April 18, 2021. The purpose of the survey was to gather initial feedback about residential on-street parking including existing policies and programs. The survey was available online with English and Spanish language options. The City received 356 total responses and four percent took the survey in Spanish.

In addition, the City hosted four virtual community outreach meetings to provide information about the project and to solicit feedback from residents. The presentation slides were offered in both English and Spanish, and a Spanish translator was present during the meetings.

The community outreach meetings were held on the following dates:

- March 15, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.
- March 31, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.
- June 30, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.
- September 28, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Over 100 residents participated in the community outreach meetings.

Several recommendations were developed taking into consideration the data collection results, community outreach feedback, residential parking survey, industry best practices, and the 2016 California State Attorney General opinion. These recommendations are meant to address the current and long-term residential parking and mobility challenges in Costa Mesa. Initial steps recommended for the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) program will provide immediate parking management benefits and establish the basis for future improvements.

The following are goals and priorities identified for the parking program:

- Align the RPP program with the Attorney General's opinion and develop an equitable solution that serves the needs of all Costa Mesa residents. The 2016 California Attorney General's opinion (#14-304), states ***"In issuing long-term residential parking permits, local authorities may not distinguish among residents based on the type of dwelling in which they live."***
- Improve parking demand management. This includes addressing local neighborhood parking challenges and the parking demand generated by commercial areas.
- Improve mobility and promote alternative transportation options. Promoting alternatives to driving alone can lower parking demand, reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and is better for the environment.
- Address spillover impacts and optimize on-street parking supply utilization. There is often an imbalanced distribution of parking demand due to spillover parking impacts from permit parking restrictions.
- Streamline the RPP program. This includes permit applications and the approval process for new permit parking restrictions.
- Modernize the RPP program, and address the administrative costs associated with investing in technology that will automate and enhance the program.

The following guiding principles have been identified for the City of Costa Mesa and the RPP Program:

- Equitable access: Develop equitable programs that appropriately balance the parking needs of all residents, businesses, and visitors, while enabling the on-street parking supply to serve the community fairly, and enhance access for all.
- Sustainable solutions: Implement financially sustainable strategies that modernize and streamline parking program management.
- Efficient program management: Create an efficient and adaptable parking system that is optimized for the City's current needs, but can be incrementally updated and adjusted over time.

The recommended options and strategies for consideration include:

- Implementation of an updated RPP program
- Future RPP permit zones limited to external parking impacts: residents near commercial areas, OC Fair, and near City boundaries
- Refinements to permit eligibility and permit maximums
- Annual RPP permit fees and low-income options
- Implementation of an automated permit management system
- Implementation of mobile license plate recognition cameras, and transition to virtually managed permits
- Ongoing enforcement staffing adjustments based on data
- Branding and marketing
- Longer term shared parking agreements with schools and/or private lots
- Promote and enhance alternative transportation modes for walking and biking

Feedback from residents regarding proposed recommendations was obtained during the fourth community outreach meeting held on September 28, 2021. Over 40 community members attended this meeting via zoom. Several residents expressed support for implementing a permit fee and keeping a residential parking permit program. Residents on existing residential permit parking streets inquired about potential needs for re-applying and about any renewal priorities. Other topics discussed included virtual permits, parking enforcement, shared parking opportunities, greater utilization of garages and driveways, and increasing housing density.

Based on the public input received at the fourth community outreach meeting, it is recommended that the new program be phased-in to: 1) incorporate new households and new streets into the program; and 2) Re-evaluate existing residential parking permits for continuation in the program. The existing permitted streets with and without external parking impacts (i.e. near commercial businesses, entertainment and event facilities, and educational institutions) are shown in Attachment 2.

Recommended guidelines for the program may include the following:

- Allow all residents and housing types to apply for residential parking permits in compliance with the 2016 California Attorney General's opinion and remove the limitation of the program to only single family, R-1 zones.
- Align eligibility requirements with increased parking impacts resulting from external parking demand generators (i.e. commercial businesses, entertainment and event facilities, educational institutions, etc.). Create a minimum segment length of 2,000 feet for permit zones.
- Implement an annual permit fee structure with an escalating rate structure and low cost permit options for qualifying low income residents.
- Replace a maximum of three (3) permits per household limit, with one (1) permit per eligible driver with a maximum cap of (3) per household. An eligible driver is defined as a Costa Mesa resident with a valid license and vehicle registration in Costa Mesa.
- Continue petition process to be signed by at least 51% of residents in a new zone.

- Continue 70% occupancy threshold for new permit zones.
- Develop a phased renewal process for existing residential parking permit streets.

Based on City Council direction, staff will return for formal action on the new Residential Permit Parking program.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The City Council could consider other alternatives such as retaining the current program as is or eliminating the Residential Permit Parking program.

### **FISCAL REVIEW:**

The Citywide Parking Study is funded in the approved FY 20-21 Capital Improvement Project Fund. A new automated permit management system can be considered in the context of the upcoming year's budget for FY 21-22.

### **LEGAL REVIEW:**

The City Attorney's Office has reviewed this report and approves it as to form.

### **CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:**

This project supports City Council Goals:

- Achieve long-term fiscal sustainability.
- Strengthen the public's safety and improve the quality of life.
- Advance environmental sustainability and climate resiliency.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Staff requests the City Council provide input on the proposed recommendations for the Residential Permit Parking program.