

Work Session

Agenda Item #	3
Meeting Date	June 1, 2015
Prepared By	Suzanne Ludlow City Manager

Discussion Item	Follow Up on the Discussion of Parking Adjacent to Commercial Areas
Background	<p>On May 11, Council had a work session discussion regarding parking adjacent to commercial areas. At that work session, a recommendation was made by staff to undertake a comprehensive look at the City's parking management regulations and needs, examine best practices, and draft recommendations for Council consideration. Council agreed that such a comprehensive look was warranted and made a number of suggestions about elements to consider.</p> <p>For this discussion, staff will present draft language of the purpose of the effort and a draft project work plan. Research on parking best practices, surveys of residents within current permit parking areas, and examination of parking issues in areas of the City that have not been studied to date will be done over the summer, with a report back to the Council in the fall.</p>
Fiscal Impact	None
Attachments	Draft Purpose Statement; Working Document for Parking Study
Recommendation	Approve proposal to move forward on a comprehensive study of parking
Special Consideration	

DRAFT

Comprehensive Parking Study

Purpose: Public parking is a community asset but should be well-managed to meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. City of Takoma Park parking regulations have not been comprehensively studied for decades and needs and technology have changed significantly over this time. A comprehensive parking study will include:

- Identification of parking-related best practices and innovative policies, designs and technology
- Assessment of resident and business needs and desires related to public parking and parking regulation citywide
- Preparation of recommendations on parking regulations, public parking supply, and related designs and technologies to advance the City's goals for economic development, environmental protection, fiscal responsibility and community livability.



City of Takoma Park, Maryland
Housing and Community Development Department
PROPOSAL - Parking Study

Background: The City currently has six parking zones. With increased activity in the Old Takoma commercial area, residents are experiencing more street parking pressures. Staff is evaluating the need for changing the current system. Staff has looked at current parking usage within one block of the commercial district and will survey usage again in the spring, after the opening of Busboys and Poets. OTBA has been in contact with commercial property owners and identified 520 possible parking spots that could become metered parking if the need was demonstrated.

Anticipated Outcomes:

Staff will evaluate parking demand and best practices for managing it. Staff will consider the immediate issue of the impact of demand for commercial parking on residential neighborhoods as well as the overall effectiveness of the existing permit regulations and possible changes throughout the community.

Tentative Schedule:

February: Police will do a second survey of evening/night parking for one week in residential and commercial areas around Old Town. Planning staff will review administrative regulations regarding residential parking permit.

April/May: Police will do additional surveys of evening/night parking for one week in residential and commercial areas around Old Town.

June/July: Police and Planning staff will examine data of surveys, parking tickets issued in permit zones, location and impact of home-based businesses and accessory apartments, numbers of households with more than one permit, consider change in restricted hours.

August/Sept: Staff will develop recommendations regarding residential parking permits and other commercial parking options. Staff will work with OTBA to make additional parking available.

Sept/Oct: Staff will present information and recommendations to Council.

Immediate Steps:

Increase enforcement:

- Increase enforcement of existing permit-only hours, as well as other violations like blocked driveways.

Improve signage/education:

- Signage for existing publicly accessible parking areas.
- Signage on meters clarifying the times the meters are in effect
- Encourage OTBA and businesses, such as Willow Street Yoga and Republic, to direct their customers to parking lots rather than residential parking.

Review Administrative Regulations and City Code (Chapter 13.12) on Parking

- Review and update Administrative Regulations regarding hourly rates, Saturday exemption for SDA Church, commercial parking provisions on residential property, etc.
- Review City Code to simplify and clarify in relation to the Administrative Regulations.

Short-Term Action:

Adjust Residential Parking Permit Zones near the commercial district:

- Standardize hours.
Zones 1, 1A, 2, 2A, 3 and 4 are currently permitted 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Zone 5 is 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. and Zone 6 is 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. Parking meters in the City are in effect 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Saturday, except federal holidays. The Junction lot pay station is in effect 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., Monday through Saturday, except federal holidays.

Review number of residential parking permits for businesses:

Currently businesses may obtain up to 3 permits for staff parking in residential areas, a policy intended to reserve convenient, visible parking for customer use. Permits have been issued to 10 businesses for a total of 28 permits, which will expire June 30, 2015.

- Evaluate the number of permits for businesses – who is using them, how many, where?
- Evaluate which streets/zones the permit allows them to use.
- Require businesses to create a transit plan for encouraging greater use of alternative transportation modes.

Restrict residential parking permits for non-profits:

- Limit the number of permits allowed for individual non-profits.
Currently there is no limit to the number of permits non-profits may receive. Two non-profits in the 6930 Carroll Avenue professional building have a total of five permits. The Takoma Park Presbyterian Church at 310 Tulip has 3 permit stickers for car windows for specific staff members and 43 placards for visitors.

Review parking permits for Victory Tower:

Reconsider which streets/zones the permits allow them to use. Ten permits have been issued to Victory Tower residents and one special permit (visitor passes but not car). Residents on Tulip have indicated that many Victory Tower residents park on Tulip.

Collect more data:

- Survey parking in residential zones during currently permitted time, especially during 5-7 pm.

- Survey more areas:
 - Extend survey area around Old Town, including DC side.
 - Extend survey to the Junction.
 - Extend survey to Wards 5 and 6, around the commercial areas.

Long-Term Action:

Conduct a comprehensive parking and traffic flow study with recommendations.

Access private commercial parking options for evening/weekend hours:

- Encourage agreements between private property owners and parking management companies to make more private commercial parking available for evening use, such as the underground garage at 6930 Carroll Avenue for public use after 5:00 (approx. 200 parking spaces). *As of summer 2014, parking management companies who considered the area did not see enough parking demand to recover the investment to launch this effort. How could the City encourage or incentivize this process?*

Consider expanding metered parking:

- Increase meters/stations for high impact areas like the 7100 blocks of Maple and Willow. Residents with permits would not be subject to time limits or fees.
- Parking apps that allow for convenient payment at meters/stations.

Adjust Residential Parking Permit Zones near the commercial district:

Options:

- Create a new “high impact” permit zone for blocks closest to the commercial district with extended hours.
- Limit number of permits per household or establish variable pricing (ie. \$25/yr for the first permit, \$200/yr for additional permits). *No limit to the number of permits per household currently exists.*
- Examine the impact of home-based businesses on parking.
- Examine the impact of accessory apartments on parking.
- Restrict visitor passes -- limit the number; make them date specific; require separate purchase. (Many residents register one car and use the visitor pass on a second vehicle. If the cost for parking a second vehicle increases, so will the use of a visitor pass on a second vehicle.) *Currently residents receive 2 visitor passes for each parking permit, valid for the duration of the permit. Residents also have the option of contacting the police to request a reprieve on enforcement for a special event.*