



## PERMIT PARKING POLICY

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT / ENGINEERING DIVISION  
8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, CA 91942

REVISION DATE: September 25, 2018

SUBJECT: Policy for the Evaluation and Implementation of Permit Parking Zones for public areas.

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Provide guidelines for the evaluation and implementation of Permit Parking Zones within the public right of way or other public property.
- Maximize the availability of public parking in areas of parking deficiencies.
- Promote equitable access to public parking for the adjacent properties and other users.
- Comply with the applicable portions of the California Vehicle Code and La Mesa Municipal Code.
- Prioritize the use of limited resources to address these needs in a fair and equitable manner with public input.

### BACKGROUND:

Strong competition between residents, businesses, and public uses for on-street and other public parking spaces has created the need for a process to evaluate and implement exclusive permit parking areas to efficiently and equitably utilize the available public parking facilities. Density increases and conversions of private garages to living space have increased the demand. Although regulations for permit parking have been included in the City of La Mesa Municipal Code (Section 12.42)<sup>1</sup> since 1989, a policy for the establishment of these zones had not been developed. Although only one Permit Parking Zone (Wellesley Street) has previously been established in La Mesa, new requests for these areas are becoming more frequent.

### Scope:

This policy shall apply to Permit Parking Zone needs within the City of La Mesa to the maximum extent practicable. This policy does not include parking restrictions on private property, those designated by the City Council for special needs (No-Parking (Red Zones), Handicapped/Disabled Parking (Blue Zones, etc.) (Section 12.48.020)<sup>2</sup>, or revenue-based Parking Districts (such the Downtown Parking District), which is used to finance the cost of parking projects, including real estate, construction, and administrative costs.

### Definitions:

- "Permit Parking Zone" shall be an area with designated boundaries established by City Traffic Commission within which special parking restrictions are imposed, unless vehicles possess a valid permit.
- "Resident" shall be a person owning, leasing or residing in a dwelling unit in the zone.
- "Guest" shall be a person visiting a resident of a zone.

### PRACTICES:

#### Evaluation Process for the Creation of New Zones

When the Public Works Department receives a completed residential Permit Parking Zone establishment request, City staff will process the request based on the initial request date and the magnitude of the parking deficiency as determined by the City Traffic Commission. If insufficient resources are available to evaluate all of the requests that are received, then staff shall prioritize evaluations based on a yearly work plan approved by the Traffic Commission. Listed below are the steps involved in evaluating a request.

1. **Initial Request:** An initial request to consider establishing a residential permit parking area shall be made in writing to the City. No request shall be reviewed for a zone size smaller than the minimum size

of approximately 30 spaces or for parking subzones. The request shall be in the form of a petition signed by residents representing at least 66% of the homes in the preliminary area, with the names, addresses, and signatures. The person(s) making the initial request shall be responsible for carrying the petition forms, which will be provided by the City. Failure to achieve the threshold support of 66% shall result in no further consideration of a Permit Parking Zone. The City Engineer shall report the request and the level of support to the Traffic Commission.

2. **Field Data Gathering:** If a petition showing support by at least 66% of the residences in the initial area is received, the City Engineer or his designee shall conduct a field study to verify that a parking deficiency exists and estimate the magnitude through objective measurements. This shall include, at a minimum, the approximate average number of available spaces within the prospective area during times of peak demand. If possible, gather information on the source of the parked vehicles and the time of day when the peak parking demand occurs. If a significant parking deficiency cannot be identified, then the City Engineer shall report the findings and a recommendation to the City Traffic Commission for denial. If denied by the Commission, this zone will not be pursued further, although these denials can be appealed to the City Council.
3. **Boundary Determination and Study:** Upon determination that a significant parking deficiency exists and that Permit Parking Zone may be warranted, the City Engineer or his designee shall use the field data to determine the proposed boundaries, hours of operation, number of permits (described below), and other pertinent conditions of the Permit Parking Zone. The proposed area should not encompass more than one different type of zone or land use (residential, commercial, office, public use, etc.) nor less than 30 parking spaces (approximately). Parking for non-residential land uses will require special investigation.
4. **Zone Support:** After establishing the proposed zone's conditions, each residence in the final zone boundary shall be formally petitioned by the City to determine the level of support for establishing the Permit Parking Zone. The petition shall include a description of the possible parking restrictions (hours, etc.), the cost to residents, and other conditions. Before recommending the creation of a Permit Parking Zone, a positive response shall be received from at least 75% of the homes located in the final zone area. Failure to achieve at least 75% support will result in the parking zone shall not being further considered.
5. **Report and Approval:** If greater than 75% support is received, the City Engineer shall prepare a report to the Traffic Commission indicating the level of resident local support and his/her final recommendations for the zone conditions. Notices of Traffic Commission hearings for parking zones shall be provided to all properties within 500 feet of a proposed zone boundary (unless modified by other regulations) so that the needs of adjacent properties can be considered. The proposed report shall be brought to the Traffic Commission for recommendation and then to the City Council for approval or denial.
6. **Implementation:** Once approved by the Traffic Commission and the City Council, the City Engineer/Public Works Director shall have the appropriate signage installed within 60 days after sending notice to the affected properties and notify the Police Department to begin enforcement.

#### **Number of Permits:**

The City Engineer shall recommend the number of permits to be issued for each property based on the parking needs for the land use type, availability of parking on private property, and other pertinent factors. Typically, a maximum of three (3) permits per residence may be purchased (fixed permit for a specific vehicle) and one (1) guest permit may be purchased per detached single family dwelling. Multi-family Residential units may purchase one (1) permit per bedroom with up to one (1) of these being a guest permit. The Traffic Commission can adjust these counts based on the amount of available parking in the zone, as documented in the staff parking analysis.

#### **Fees:**

Fees are collected prior to issuing parking permits. Permits must be renewed and the fee paid annually or when needed to replace a lost permit. Fee amounts shall be determined on a regular basis using on actual costs incurred and will be collected in the amounts shown on the City's Council approved fee schedule or resolution.

**Distribution of Permits:** Permits will be issued by the City. In order to obtain a residential parking permit, a resident or homeowner must provide vehicle registration and proof of residency or ownership. To obtain a guest permit, a homeowner or resident need not provide vehicle registration. Owners or residents can provide purchased guest permits to caregivers, delivery services, or similar uses for their property. However, resale of guest placards is prohibited, which can result in denial of future permits.

**Protection of Permits:** If fees are collected, methods of protection shall be used for both residential and guest permits to the extent practical. These include standard counterfeit protections in permit manufacturing and distribution, such as non-removal stickers or premade placards for guest permits.

**Exemptions:** All motor vehicles shall be subject to area and time limitations established in a given parking district, except for those exempted by other laws such as emergency vehicles, vehicles with handicapped placards or license plates, or public utility/government agency vehicles.

**Dissolution:** After at least two years from the date of establishment of the area by the Traffic Commission and the Council, a request may be made by a resident to dissolve or modify a Permit Parking Zone, if accompanied by a petition supported by at least 66% of the affected property owners. Such a request shall follow the same evaluation and approval process as initiating a permit parking area. If the Traffic Commission feels that the conditions have changed substantially, then a staff investigation and petition process should be conducted to verify that the need still exists and that the Zone's residents are still in favor. If the Traffic Commission determines that the existing permit parking district serves no purpose under current conditions, then we recommend to dissolve the the Zone will be made to the City Council. If approved, the Zone shall be dissolved at no cost to the individual making the removal request.

**Duration of Districts:** Traffic Commission shall verify every two years that each permit parking zone is still serving the purpose and conditions that it was initially established for. Permit Parking Zones that are adjacent to areas affected by significant new development can be subject to reassessment of the study conditions, if approved by the Traffic Commission.



APPROVAL: \_\_\_\_\_

Richard B. Leja  
Director of Public Works/City Engineer

REFERENCES:

1. Chapter 12.42 of the City of La Mesa Municipal Code
2. Sections 12.48.020 of the City of La Mesa Municipal Code