



## Takoma Park City Council Meeting – May 15, 2019

### Agenda Item 6

#### **Work Session**

Next Steps on Parking Management Plan Project

#### **Recommended Council Action**

Review and consider authorizing an ad hoc Parking Management Committee

#### **Context with Key Issues**

The Parking Management Plan is a City-wide effort, with a particular focus on commercial areas and the Residential Parking Permit (RPP) zones. City-owned streets are a community asset of public land and are to be managed for the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors to achieve the City's goals of equity, economic development, environmental protection, fiscal responsibility and community livability. Though the City of Takoma Park's parking regulations have not been comprehensively reviewed for decades, staff has analyzed the conditions and researched best practices regarding parking, with the aim to modernize and streamline existing programs while preparing for changes that affect the way people travel in Takoma Park.

A City-wide Parking Management Plan includes the evaluation of meters, accessible (handicapped) parking, commercial vehicle parking, Residential Parking Permit (RPP) zones along with their associated enforcement, City Code and regulations, and parking "hot spots." The City's parking programs involve staff from the Police, Housing and Community Development, Finance, and Public Works departments, and include contracts with vendors for technology and services, generate revenues, and incur regular costs.

The project to evaluate parking in the City began in 2015 and included recommendations from a MWCOG-funded project in FY16 that focused on the Old Takoma commercial area and surrounding neighborhoods, surveys of residents and business owners, and additional research and public outreach. The completed plan will develop goals for fair, equitable, and consolidated parking management and may include recommendations for changes to City Code, Administrative Regulations, practices, procedures and enforcement to more equitably and efficiently manage the parking supply in Takoma Park.

In this work session, staff will present the conceptual framework for parking policy and potential recommendations and discuss the appointment of a parking committee. In order to accomplish the stated goals and recognizing the sensitivity of the topic, staff suggests the creation of a Council-appointed ad hoc committee of residents representing all 6 wards, as well as representatives from multi-family buildings and businesses, to review the plans comprehensively and make recommendations to Council. The appointed committee will help to ensure that the diverse needs of City residents are accurately represented and reflected in the resulting Parking Management Plan.

#### **Council Priority**

A Livable Community for All; Fiscally Sustainable Government; Environmentally Sustainable Community; Engaged, Responsive & Service-oriented Government; Community Development for an

Improved and Equitable Quality of Life.

### **Environmental Considerations**

The City's sustainability goals include encouraging and promoting the use of transit and active transportation that reduces dependency on automobiles for traveling to and through Takoma Park. The City devotes 4.5 acres to parking spaces in the Residential Parking Permit zones. However, parking takes public space that could be allotted to other uses that would advance the City's sustainability goals, such as bike lanes, expanded pedestrian space, bio-retention facilities and better public amenities.

### **Fiscal Considerations**

The City's existing on-street parking programs entail various costs associated with administration, maintenance, and enforcement, including staff time, vehicles, and various contracts. Meanwhile, residential parking permit fees, meter fees, and tickets for violations generate revenue for the City.

### **Racial Equity Considerations**

The City's current parking policies, particularly the residential parking permit zones, expose existing inequities in terms of access to on-street parking. Such issues will be reviewed as policy changes are considered.

### **Attachments and Links**

- Parking Management Plan Project Page  
<https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory/parking-study/>
- Parking Management Plan – Recommendation
- Staff Suggestions for Committee Consideration
- Video: [The High Cost of Free Parking](#) (6:43 minutes)

## **Parking Management Plan – Recommendation**

### **Introduction**

The Parking Management Plan is an ongoing initiative to address parking issues in Takoma Park, including meters, accessible (handicapped) parking, commercial vehicle parking, residential parking permit (RPP) zones as well as their associated enforcement, City Code and regulations, and parking “hot spots.” It is an interdepartmental effort to modernize and streamline existing programs while preparing for ongoing developments and technological changes in the City and region.

### **Issues**

- How should on-street space, with potential for multiple purposes, be managed and how should these various uses be prioritized?
- How effectively do the parking meters manage demand?
- How effectively and equitably do the Residential Parking Permit zones manage parking needs?
- What is the current and future demand for parking for the commercial areas and is it adequate?
- What is the need for accessible parking and is it adequate?
- How is parking enforcement managed?
- What are the equity issues in the current parking program?
- What are the sustainability issues that are impacted by parking?

### **Goals**

Goals should be set to improve the use of the public right-of-way considering the following factors:

- safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
- use of public transit
- racial equity considerations
- social equity and accessibility
- sustainability considerations

### **Recommendation: Formation of Parking Management Committee**

The Council-appointed committee could consist of one representative from each ward, and including representatives from multi-family units; businesses; and relevant City committees such as the Committee on the Environment and the Committee on Safe Roadways/Safe Mobility. Staff would provide background materials and support in the committee’s work. A number of suggestions and options have been compiled by staff so that committee work can be targeted. The committee may make recommendations for general and specific public outreach efforts, for Council’s consideration.

## **Parking Management Plan – Staff Suggestions for Committee Consideration**

**The following recommendations and options are intended for discussion by the Parking Management Committee and will be altered and edited based on the resulting feedback.**

### A City-Wide Parking Permit

Anyone who lives in Takoma Park could be eligible for a City-wide permit that would allow the permit holder to park in Takoma Park. The permit fees could be adjusted to accurately reflect the cost of administering the permit program (currently \$12.50 per year or \$20 for two years). The permit fee could be scaled to increase with each additional car registered at an address. Residents of registered multi-family properties and group houses would be eligible as individual units.

Business owners are also investors in the City of Takoma Park and could be eligible for the City-wide parking permit. Commercial parking needs include both parking for customers and employees.

Home based businesses with County permits to operate in a residence, or residents with commercial vehicles such as pick-up trucks, could also get a permit to park their vehicles. The City could restrict the type and number of such vehicles, and consider a different permit fee for them.

### “Hot-Spot” Neighborhoods

In neighborhoods with identified parking pressures, the City could have time-restricted parking through ParkMobile with time limits (2-hour or 4-hour parking). City-wide permit holders would be exempt from metered parking and time limits. An option for residents without a driveway in a hot spot neighborhood could be to petition the City for a reserved space for one car, for a fee.

### Guest Passes or Occasional Passes

Examples in other jurisdictions include a set number of day passes available with the permits and extra passes could be available for purchase. Day passes could be used for occasional events, such as large gatherings, or for various service people who are working at the house. Passes could be accessed online.

### Enforcement/Administration

Enforcement is done by the Police Department, primarily the Neighborhood Services team. They have one current vacancy in parking enforcement. Enforcement of some parking violations in neighborhoods, such as blocked driveways, are complaint driven due to staff limitations. Note that the City has moved away from painting yellow curbs to signal no parking, but the Public Works Department will paint a parking line near driveways to indicate the end of the parking area.

### Meter Rates

In DC, the parking meter rates are \$2.30 per hour; in Takoma Park, the rates are \$0.75 per hour. The impact of this price gap pushes more drivers to park in Takoma Park, thus increasing the parking pressures there. What would be the desirable rate?

### Accessible Parking Requirements

The City is required to designate accessible parking spaces in locations where specific spaces are delineated or metered. In the residential neighborhoods, where parking spaces are not individually marked, there is not an ADA requirement for designated accessible parking spaces. What are the

options for residents to request a designated accessible parking space in front of their residence? How would that work in a multi-family unit, or where parking is prohibited directly in front of the residence?

#### Commercial Delivery Areas

Many commercial properties in Takoma Park do not have loading docks or delivery zones. Deliveries generally happen in the morning hours, when parking demand is lower. One option for the City would be to create a delivery area by restricting parking in spaces near the businesses during designated delivery hours.

#### Electric Charging Stations in Residential Areas

Some residents, due to the specific design of their property or the parking restrictions on their street, have inquired about installing electric charging stations in the City's right-of-way. What policies make sense to address this issue?