

## INFORMATION ITEM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: City Staff

SUBJECT: Creation of a Limited and Targeted On-street Permit Parking Program for Employees of Businesses Adjacent to Preferential Parking Zones along Montana Avenue, Pico Boulevard and Ocean Park Boulevard Commercial Corridors

### Introduction

This report proposes characteristics of a program to provide a limited number of on-street parking permits to employees of businesses adjacent to certain preferential parking zones and identifies areas where the City Council might consider a trial implementation. To encourage public consideration and comment, it is being provided in advance of the June 14 Council meeting at which the Council will have the opportunity to consider the issue and may wish to direct staff to prepare an implementation ordinance. Written comments from the public are welcome, and two open-house meeting times have been scheduled to provide additional opportunities for interested people to ask questions and provide feedback in advance of the Council meeting.

### Background

When new preferential parking zones are approved, businesses adjacent to the zones that lack sufficient on-site parking for employees have frequently asked the Council to find a way to accommodate parking for their employees. The Santa Monica Municipal

Code currently allows the sale of on-street preferential parking permits only to residents. Although many permit zones continue to be heavily parked when restricted to residents only, some do have available space once the restrictions are in place. Staff and the Council have received complaints of preferential parking areas that, during the day when many residents are at work, could accommodate some employee parking.

In June 2003, the City Council approved the expanded and amended Preferential Parking Zone G that encompasses the first blocks both north and south of Montana Avenue along the business corridor as well as Idaho Avenue. Many businesses in this corridor are located in older structures and planning policies discourage redevelopment that would provide additional off-street parking. To accommodate employee needs, staff had proposed leaving one side of the street unregulated, but the Council decided to regulate both sides of the residential streets, and consider creating an on-street employee permit parking program within preferential parking districts.

### Purpose

Goals of an employee permit parking program would be to:

- allow for the continuing vitality of neighborhood commercial districts
- reduce the tendency toward parking “spillover” within neighborhoods by making on-street space available to employees
- do so without unduly inconveniencing residents
- address deficiencies that arise from increasing auto use and activity

- not encourage new uses or intensification of existing uses that would require additional parking pursuant to today's Municipal Code standards
- be simple both to administer and enforce.

Such a program would work in the following ways:

- 1) A specific number of permits would be made available for any particular qualifying block, based on observed occupancy of that block
- 2) Permits would be issued for residential blocks in an area that, taken as a whole, was found to have low parking occupancies (approximately 50% of spaces occupied with other regulations in place)
- 3) Number of permits issued would be related to a percentage of the number of spaces on a block
- 4) Only businesses with legal, non-conforming parking situations would be eligible
- 5) A limited number of permits would be available to a business
- 6) A lottery system would be used to distribute permits to businesses
- 7) Permits would be issued quarterly, and directly to businesses, not individual employees, and
- 8) Fees would be commensurate with the cost to administer the program (estimated at \$120/year).

A program of this nature could also be implemented on a trial basis around the Ocean Park Boulevard/Sunset Park business corridor, and might be suitable for other areas of

the City with low residential demand for on-street spaces and few off-street options for employee parking.

### Montana Avenue Strategy

Since the issues of neighborhood spillover and employee parking demand were critical in the Montana corridor, staff collected and evaluated data to determine the implications of instituting employee parking on adjacent streets. Based on responses to a 2002 survey of businesses, it is estimated that approximately 400 employees rely on street parking in the Montana corridor each weekday during daytime hours. To accommodate most of the employees in the area, 25 percent of the spaces on each preferential parking block would have to be available for employee permits. This would result in high parking occupancies and would negate the benefits of preferential parking for residents.

Businesses located on Montana would enter a lottery for permits specific to a preferential parking block either north or south of the business. The number of permits issued for a block would be based on the number of parking spaces on that block. Permits equal to 10 percent of spaces on each preferential parking block would be made available in the lottery. This would provide parking in the preferential zones for about one-quarter of the Montana employees, providing some relief to businesses and ensuring that the majority of spaces would continue to be available for residents, their guests and time-limited visitor parking.

As noted in the following table, up to 106 employee on-street parking permits could be issued if the entire zone adjacent to the Montana business corridor became preferential parking.

<u>Block Range</u>	<u># Of Blocks</u>	<u>Avg. # Spaces</u>	<u># Permits/ Block</u>	<u>Total Permits</u>
600/700 Lincoln-9th	2	33	3	6
600/700 10th-15th	6	61	6	36
600/700 16th-17th	2	30	3	6
800 Lincoln-17th	10	41	4	40
800-1600 Idaho	<u>9</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>18</u>
	29	37	4	106

There are a few businesses located immediately west of the preferential parking zone (west of Lincoln Boulevard). Employees of those businesses would presumably continue to park on streets west of Lincoln that currently do not have preferential parking restrictions. Employees elsewhere in the corridor would presumably continue to park where many are parking today, on Alta Avenue and the streets to the north.

Currently, only 12 of 29 blocks in the zone have preferential parking restrictions. The following table shows how many business employee permits would be issued today.

<u>Block</u>	<u>Avg. # Spaces</u>	<u>Total Permits</u>
600/700 10th	61	6
600/700 11th	61	6
600/700 12th	61	6
600/700 Euclid	61	6
600/700 14th	61	6
600/700 15th	61	6
600/700 16th	30	3
600/700 17th	30	3
800 16th	41	4
900 Idaho	22	2
1200 Idaho	22	<u>2</u>
1300 Idaho	22	<u>2</u>
		52

### Alternative to Business Permits

An employee permit program is more costly than a program to allow employee parking on one side of each regulated block since it will require staff sale of permits and the monitoring of their use. A one-side-of-the-street option would not require staff to issue permits to businesses. However, with a one-side-of-the-street approach, approximately 50% of spaces would be available for employees, but they would compete with visitors to use them. In blocks where there is high employee demand, fewer spaces would be available for visitors of residents.

### “College” Parking District

One of the oldest and most restrictive parking districts in the City was formed around Santa Monica College. College students have pursued opportunities to use free unregulated parking in the vicinity of the campus with such eagerness and persistence that they have driven residents on many neighboring blocks to petition for parking relief. A small but significant minority of students travel further to find “free” spaces than is typical of employees of most neighborhood commercial districts. Since the college students may only be in the area for a few hours to attend a particular class, time-limit restrictions do not discourage them from using the spaces. Residential density is not especially high in the area, so many regulated streets in this area have a considerable number of spaces available during the day.

The regulations implemented to prevent college students from using all the parking also preclude long-term street parking opportunities for employees of commercial districts

along Ocean Park and Pico Boulevards. Generally, spaces directly adjacent to the commercial establishments have time-limited parking to encourage use by customers.

*Ocean Park Boulevard:* There are approximately 345 on-street parking spaces currently regulated by preferential parking surrounding the Ocean Park Boulevard shopping area on the following blocks:

- Oak Street between 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets,
- Hill Street between 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets,
- 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets between Ocean Park Boulevard and Hill Streets,
- 18<sup>th</sup> Street between Maple Street and Hill Streets, and
- Maple Street between 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets.

The vast majority of these spaces are in the R1 district where street parking demands are not generally intense. If 10 percent of these spaces were eligible for business employee parking, 35 employees could be accommodated on these streets.

*Pico Boulevard:* Parking for employees of Pico Boulevard businesses is limited. Small businesses just east of the college in the vicinity of 19<sup>th</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup> Streets have very limited parking opportunities. There are approximately 250 on-street parking spaces currently regulated by preferential parking on 20<sup>th</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup> Streets between Pico Boulevard and Pearl Street. Three-quarters of these spaces are in the R1 district where street parking demands are not generally intense. If 10 percent of these spaces were eligible for business employee parking, 25 employees could be accommodated on these streets. Another opportunity exists on the 1800/1900 block of 10<sup>th</sup> Street between Pico Boulevard and Michigan Avenue. Though this is a multi-family area, the spaces on the east side of the street are perpendicular, and there are a total of 93 spaces on this

block. A spot check on this block on a non-street sweeping day noted the block was 55 percent full. If 10 percent of these spaces were eligible for business employee parking, nine employees could be accommodated on this street, and the occupancy would be approximately 65 percent.

#### Pico Boulevard near East City Limits

Unlike the College area, there is more short-term parking for customers of the businesses on Pico Boulevard in this area. Parking for employees of Pico Boulevard businesses, however, is limited. There are approximately 340 on-street parking spaces currently regulated by preferential parking on 29<sup>th</sup> through 33<sup>rd</sup> Streets between Pico Boulevard and Pearl Street. The majority of these spaces are in the R1 district where street parking demands are not generally intense. If 10 percent of these spaces were eligible for business employee parking, 34 employees could be accommodated on these streets.

#### Areas not under current consideration

Most of the areas currently regulated by preferential parking in the City are significantly occupied during the day and would not be candidates for this program, including:

- Mid-City locations surrounding Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevards,
- Ocean Park area west of 4th Street near the beach, and
- Streets north of the 3rd Street Promenade.

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Opportunities to discuss the issues and provide comments

**Open House Meetings**

Wednesday, May 25 9:30-11:30 a.m.  
Ken Edwards Center  
1527 4th Street

Thursday, June 9 6:00-7:30 p.m.  
Montana Branch Library  
1704 Montana Avenue

**City Council Meeting**

Tuesday, June 14  
City Hall Council Chambers  
1685 Main Street

You will have a limited opportunity to speak directly to the Council on this issue as part of the regularly scheduled meeting.

**Written Comments**

Written comments (mail, fax or e-mail) received by June 3 will be provided to the City Council with the Staff Report in advance for the June 14 City Council Meeting. Comments received between June 3 and June 14 will be given to the Council the night of the meeting. You may submit written comments to:

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**Questions**

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