

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Introduce an Ordinance Repealing Ordinance No. 2898-09 and Designating Certain Streets in the Area of the Caltrain Station as Preferential Parking Zones

BACKGROUND

Ordinance No. 2898-09 (Attachment 1) adopted on June 9, 2009, designated certain streets near the Caltrain Station as a preferential parking zone. The Ordinance allows residents within the zone the option to purchase a residential parking permit that allows permit holders to park on preferential parking zone streets for periods longer than the posted 7-hour time limit, but still subject to California Vehicle Code restrictions on parking vehicles for longer than 72 hours. The Caltrain Station Preferential Parking Zone includes streets north and south of the Caltrain Station. The streets included in the preferential parking zone include the following:

North of the Caltrain Station

- Angel Avenue between Beemer Avenue and N. Taaffe Street
- Beemer Avenue between Angel Avenue and N. Murphy Avenue
- N. Frances Street between W. Hendy Avenue and California Avenue
- W. Hendy Avenue between N. Taaffe Street and N. Murphy Avenue
- N. Murphy Avenue between W. Hendy Avenue and California Avenue
- N. Taaffe Street between W. Hendy Avenue and Beemer Avenue

South of the Caltrain Station

- Charles Street between W. Evelyn Avenue and W. McKinley Avenue
- Florence Street between W. Evelyn Avenue and W. McKinley Avenue
- Washington Avenue between Charles Street and Waverly Street
- Waverly Street between W. Evelyn Avenue and W. McKinley Avenue

Subsequent to the establishment of the preferential parking zone, the following changes were made to the on-street parking restrictions based on the preference of residents on each street:

- N. Frances Street between W. Hendy Avenue and Beemer Avenue - Changed 7-hour parking time limit to 2-hour parking time limit
- Waverly Street between W. Evelyn Avenue and Washington Avenue - Removed 7-hour parking limit to eliminate on-street parking time limits
- Florence Street between Washington Avenue and W. McKinley Avenue - Removed 7-hour parking limit to eliminate on-street parking time limits

A map of the existing preferential parking zone and current parking restrictions is included in

Attachment 2.

EXISTING POLICY

Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 10.26 Preferential Parking on Residential Street allows the City Council to designate by ordinance (Attachment 3) certain residential streets as a preferential parking zone.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The adoption of this Ordinance is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061 (b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines since it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the adoption and implementation of this Ordinance may have a significant effect on the environment.

DISCUSSION

On June 9, 2009, City Council adopted an ordinance that designated certain streets in the area of the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station as a preferential parking zone. Prior to this date, many of the residential streets near the Sunnyvale Caltrain Station had a 7-hour parking time limit for all vehicles that was enforced Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. with no permit parking program. The permit parking program established for this area as part of the 2009 Ordinance allows residents with parking permits to park longer than the posted time limits.

The posted parking time limit restrictions had been effective for several years in discouraging commuters from parking in the neighborhood and maintained adequate parking availability for neighborhood residents to park on the preferential parking zone streets. However, the on-street parking demand has increased recently which has hindered residents with preferential parking zone permits from finding on-street parking space near their homes. Based on staff observations and reports from residents, the increase in parking demand in this area can be attributed to several factors:

- As work schedules have become more flexible, daily Caltrain commuters have been observed parking in the neighborhood after 11 a.m. and would not violate the posted restrictions as the 7-hour time limit ends at 6 p.m.
- Nearby office buildings in Peery Park appear to have more workers per square feet above standard office rates, causing overflow to park in neighboring preferential parking zone streets. The workers have been observed re-parking their vehicles once per day or start work at 11 a.m. to avoid violating the 7-hour time limit, which ends at 6 p.m.
- The parking demand for Downtown has increased and will continue to increase as redevelopment occurs.

Because of these factors, several residents in the area have requested to reduce the on-street parking time limits to discourage commuters from continuing to park in the neighborhood.

On Nov. 25, 2019, the City received a petition from close to 90% of the residents on N. Taaffe Street and Angel Avenue requesting the City change the parking time limits from 7 hours to 2 hours. The petition submitted by residents was enough evidence to show support for the change on these streets. However, making the change to the parking time limit to two hours for only those two streets in the neighborhood could lead to shifting of parking problems to the other adjacent streets. In order

to avoid having streets with different time limits in the same neighborhood and parking concentrated in the streets with 7-hour parking, staff wanted to determine if there was support to change the on-street parking time limits to 2 hours on the other streets within the preferential parking zone. Although the Caltrain Station Preferential Parking Zone includes streets north and south of the Caltrain Railroad, the streets south of the railroad do not have the same level of parking demand and therefore were not included in the effort to change the on-street parking time limits.

On Feb. 26, 2020, staff from the Department of Public Works and the Department of Public Safety held a neighborhood meeting to inform residents within the northern Caltrain Preferential Parking Zone that the City received a petition to modify the on-street parking time limits, answer some of the questions about parking impacts in the neighborhood, and to let the residents know their options. Staff informed the meeting attendees that a survey would be mailed to each resident and property owner to determine the support for changing the on-street parking time limits from 7 hours to 2 hours. The City received survey responses from property owners or occupants representing 100 out of 214 households in the neighborhood. Out of the 100 responses, 85 or 85% were in favor of changing the on-street parking time limit from 7 hours to 2 hours.

Approximately 47% of the households in the project area responded to the survey, with a large majority (85%) favoring the on-street parking time limit change to 2 hours. Although the number of respondents was less than half of the total number of households surveyed, City staff feels that the results of the survey reflect the overall preference of the neighborhood. There may be several reasons why a more robust survey response did not occur. First, the survey was conducted via mail in spring and summer of 2020 during the early stages of the Covid-19 global pandemic and Santa Clara County's shelter-in-place order. During this time, the neighborhood on-street parking demand was significantly reduced as some businesses suspended on-site operations, employees worked from home, and Caltrain ridership declined. Since the neighborhood parking demand was low, residents may have felt less compelled at that time to respond to the survey.

In conducting the survey, City staff made several efforts to ensure that the survey results reflect the preference of the residents, which included the following:

- A pre-addressed survey card with pre-paid postage was mailed to each resident and property owner in March 2020 clearly indicating the two choices (2-hour or 7-hour) for the on-street parking time limits and included a deadline date to return the survey by April 2020. In addition, the survey card noted that a failure to return the survey indicated that the resident had no preference and the preferred on-street parking time limit will be determined by residents that returned the survey.
- The survey deadline was extended several weeks as a number of residents indicated that their mail delivery service was slow during March and April.
- A second survey was conducted in August/September targeting households that did not respond to the first survey to provide one last opportunity to respond to the survey.
- After the survey results were tabulated, City staff in November 2020 contacted the residents that submitted the initial petition to determine if they wished to continue with their efforts to change the on-street parking time limits since the parking demand in the neighborhood had changed. After the residents spoke to several of their neighbors, they responded that they

wanted to continue with the process as they felt that the neighborhood parking demand will eventually increase as the effects of Covid-19 diminish.

Per Sunnyvale Municipal Code Chapter 10.26 Preferential Parking on Residential Streets, not less than 50% of the properties in the proposed Preferential Parking area need to support the parking zone. Staff has interpreted the survey results of 85% support amongst the 47% response rate as being adequate to continue the public hearing process on this issue.

In addition, the City collected on-street parking data for the neighborhood in February 2020 during a typical weekday on Thursday during two consecutive weeks. Parking data was collected at 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 8 p.m. The data showed that the peak of the on-street parking demand was at 11 a.m. with 70% of the on-street parking spaces occupied. Of the number of vehicles parked in the neighborhood at 11 a.m., 77% of the vehicles belonged to non-residents and 23% belonged to residents. Additionally, the data showed that the streets closer to the businesses in Peery Park and the Caltrain Station had higher on-street parking occupancy rates with Angel Avenue, Beemer Avenue, and N. Taaffe Street over 80% occupied during the 11 a.m. hour. The parking survey data is summarized in a table shown in Attachment 4.

In summary, 85% of the neighborhood residents and property owners who responded to the survey support changing the parking time limits from 7 hours to 2 hours in the neighborhood. In addition, the parking data shows that during the midday peak parking period over 75% of parked vehicles are from non-residents. By changing the on-street parking time limits to 2 hours, the non-resident parking in the neighborhood will be reduced and would most likely allow residents to find parking closer to their homes.

In addition to changing the on-street parking time limits for streets north of the Caltrain Station from 7 hours to 2 hours in the new Ordinance, the following changes are being made to reflect the current conditions where the streets below had the time limited residential parking permit signs taken removed per residents requests:

- Waverly Street between W. Evelyn Avenue and Washington Avenue will be removed from the preferential permit parking program
- Florence Street between Washington Avenue and W. McKinley Avenue will be removed from the preferential permit parking program

A draft Ordinance is shown in Attachment 5.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff estimates that the cost to change the existing 7-hour parking signs to 2-hour parking signs for the streets in question will be \$12,726.07. This includes cost for manufacturing 78 signs, 7 sign posts, materials, and staff time. Staff will work to see if this cost can be reduced by modifying the existing signs instead of fabricating all new signs. Funding is available in Capital Improvement Project 834370 - Traffic Sign Installation and Maintenance.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, Sunnyvale Public Library and Department of Public Safety. In addition, the agenda

and report are available at the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

In addition, residents who requested updates from staff on this issue were notified by email about the City Council meeting.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Introduce an Ordinance Repealing Ordinance No. 2898-09 and designating certain streets in the area of the Caltrain Station as Preferential Parking Zones.
2. Introduce an Ordinance Repealing Ordinance No. 2898-09 and designating certain streets in the area of the Caltrain Station as Preferential Parking Zones, with modifications.
3. Do not repeal Ordinance No. 2898-09 establishing the Caltrain Station Preferential Parking Zone.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Introduce an Ordinance repealing Ordinance No. 2898-09 and designating certain streets in the area of the Caltrain Station as Preferential Parking Zones.

Prepared by: Ralph Garcia, Senior Transportation Engineer

Reviewed by: Dennis Ng, Transportation and Traffic Manager, Public Works

Reviewed by: Chip Taylor, Director, Public Works

Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager

Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Ordinance No. 2898-09 An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Sunnyvale Designating Certain Streets in the Area of the Caltrain Station as Preferential Parking Zones for the Benefit of Residents Adjacent Thereto
2. Caltrain Station Preferential Parking Zone Map with Current On-street Parking Restrictions
3. Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 10.26 Preferential Parking on Residential Street allows the City Council to designate by ordinance certain residential streets as a preferential parking zone
4. Caltrain Station Area Parking Count
5. Draft of New Preferential Parking Ordinance for the Caltrain Station Area