



# City of Palo Alto

## City Council Staff Report

(ID # 10464)

---

**Report Type: Informational Report**

**Meeting Date: 6/24/2019**

**Council Priority: Transportation and Traffic**

**Summary Title: Informational Report: Parking Work Plan**

**Title: Informational Report on the Parking Work Plan That Prioritizes Implementation of the 35 Recommendations From the Municipal Resource Group (MRG) Parking Study**

**From: City Manager**

**Lead Department: Transportation**

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the City Council receive this informational report containing the tentative Parking Work Plan that prioritizes implementation of the 35 recommendations from the MRG Parking Study.

### **Background**

On May 13, 2019, the City Manager brought forth a report from the consultant, Municipal Resource Group (MRG), with 35 recommendations related to the Residential Preferential Parking (RPP) Program. The report identified aspects of the program in need of improvement as well as other parking-related items that will be coming forward to the City Council before the end of June 2019. The staff report and the MRG report are available online at: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?t=64449.69&BlobID=71100>.

At that meeting, the City Council adopted the following motion:

- A. Accept the City of Palo Alto Residential Preferential Parking (RPP) Program Review Report by the City's consultant, Municipal Resource Group (MRG), and direct Staff to return to City Council with a workplan to address the items in the report, including consideration of allocation mechanisms for business permits.
- B. Use the Planning and Transportation Commission [PTC] as the preferred forum for resident and business community engagement in evaluating the recommendations of the MRG report;
- C. Direct Staff to continue the proposed RPP district outreach and stakeholder process for Old Palo Alto and Green Acres, in accordance with the Planning and Transportation Commission's recommended prioritization; and

- D. Confirm that modifications to existing RPP districts (e.g., number of permits, etc.) will be put on hold until potential overall program changes are decided.

This work plan report addresses Items A and B of the May 13<sup>th</sup> Council-adopted motion. Staff continues to work on the implementation of the Old Palo Alto RPP in accordance with the Planning and Transportation Commission’s recommended prioritization.

**Discussion**

The tentative work plan below organizes the 35 recommendations from the MRG report into a preliminary schedule for staff to work on the recommendations and accounts for the staffing capacity to thoroughly implement the recommendations. Staff will update the schedule and add more specificity to it as staff capacity allows. Some of the recommendations are relatively small and staff has been working on those already. Others require more administrative work, discussion, and policy direction. Those other recommendations are organized in the workplan below in a way that accounts for staff capacity and other priorities over the coming year. The dates in the work plan may change slightly when the new Chief Transportation Official joins the team and prioritizes all assignments for the Office of Transportation staff.

The MRG report will be discussed with the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) and staff will develop a timeline with the PTC at one of their first meetings after the break in the late summer 2019.

It should be noted that the MRG recommendations were organized in buckets in the original report. In this workplan, staff organized the recommendations by Month of Anticipated implementation. Those with no date set yet are at the end. The original MRG report recommendation numbers are referenced for ease of referring back to the MRG report.

**Parking Work Plan based on the MRG Recommendations:**

Month	MRG Recommendation	Status / Notes	Who?
-------	--------------------	----------------	------

<b>Month</b>	<b>MRG Recommendation</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>	<b>Who?</b>
May 2019	<i>3. Engage the Community in Modifications to the Residential Preferential Parking Program –The engagement of the community in making modifications to the Program is imperative and could occur through the Planning and Transportation Commission or, as the City did five years ago, through a working group. To be effective, the City Council should be clear on the effort’s purpose, scope of work, parameters, and schedule. There are nine recommendations in this report that are identified to be referred to the Commission/Group. If a working group is selected, the membership should not exceed 12 individuals.</i>	Done: The City Council decided at the May 13, 2019 meeting to refer the 9 work plan items for deeper community engagement discussion to go to the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC). This parking work plan accounts for those PTC discussions.	City Council and PTC
June 2019	<i>1. Improve Parking Permit Management System – A contract should be approved to develop, implement, support and maintain a new comprehensive parking permit and citation management system. This contract is expected to be presented to the City Council in FY 2018-19.</i>	This report is being brought to City Council for adoption on June 24, 2019. It is a contract with Duncan Solutions for a new parking permit management system. Staff will implement the system over the fall of 2019 with help from the Administrative Services Department. The preliminary goal is for the system to be up and running for a phased parking program release starting in 2020.	City Council then staff implementation

<b>Month</b>	<b>MRG Recommendation</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>	<b>Who?</b>
June 2019	<i>4. Increase Staff Resources – The City should add a Parking Manager to the Office of Transportation to meet the existing workload and to manage the improvements needed to move parking services forward. This proposal is expected to be presented to the City Council as part of the Proposed Operating Budget for FY 2019-20.</i>	This is proposed in the FY 2020 budget with the request of a new Parking Manager position that can assist with the daily parking operations tasks and also help guide the strategic improvements of the parking program. The Finance Committee advanced this recommendation. The full Council will consider it in the budget adoption on June 17.	City Council
August 2019	<i>2. Conduct Downtown Parking Operational Study – A contract (amendment) should be approved that provides the information and specific steps needed to move the City forward from a parking program built around a rigid system of pre-paid permits to a program built around the dynamic monitoring of usage and the application of pricing. It would also provide a roadmap to build community support for this effort. This contract is expected to be presented to the City Council in FY 2018-19.</i>	This report is being brought to the City Council for adoption in August 2019. It is a contract amendment with Dixon.	City Council then staff implementation
Fall 2019	<i>5. Amend the National Citizen Survey – To measure the long-term effectiveness of the RPP Program, consider adding a question to the annual National Citizen Survey (Palo Alto Community Survey Supplement) to obtain the opinion of the City’s households (28% of all households) about the Residential Preferential Parking Program.</i>	Staff will incorporate this into development of the next National Citizen Survey for Palo Alto.	Staff and later City Council

<b>Month</b>	<b>MRG Recommendation</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>	<b>Who?</b>
Fall 2019	<i>21. Process Applications for New Residential Permit Parking Districts – Processing the proposals by the Old Palo Alto Neighborhood and the Green Acre Neighborhood should move forward pursuant to the schedule identified in Chapter 10.50 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, subject to the availability of adequate resources.</i>	Staff is currently doing research and preparing outreach materials for the Old Palo Alto RPP in accordance to the Planning and Transportation Commission’s recommended prioritization. No date set yet on the Green Acres RPP.	Staff and later City Council
Fall 2019	<i>24. Evaluate Consolidation of Parking Compliance Functions – The consolidation of the parking compliance functions in the Police Department and the Office of Transportation should be evaluated.</i>	Transportation staff is preparing an RFP for RPP enforcement services as the existing contract expires in Fall 2019. Initial discussions can occur at that time.	Staff and later City Council
Begin Fall 2019	<i>6. Update Codes and Guidelines – The following regulations should be updated to reflect the changes in staff authority and responsibility with the establishment of the Office of Transportation (a) Chapter 10.50 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, and (b) the Residential Permit Parking Administrative Guidelines.</i>	This will follow outreach on program revisions.	Staff and later City Council
Begin Fall 2019	<i>7. Clarify the Downtown Residential Permit Parking District Boundary – Remove the ambiguity in the Resolution that adopted the boundary of the Downtown Residential Permit Parking District that does not appear to include the Downtown commercial area.</i>	This will follow outreach on program revisions.	Staff and later City Council
Begin Fall 2019	<i>16. Improve Process to Purchase Daily Permits – In the near-term, until a paid hourly system is implemented, the purchase of daily permits should be improved in terms of communications with the public, access to pay-on-foot, and multi-day permits.</i>	Staff will assess this as a possibility in the implementation of the new parking permit system.	Staff

<b>Month</b>	<b>MRG Recommendation</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>	<b>Who?</b>
Begin in Fall 2019	<i>17. Consider Paid Hourly Parking – A plan should be developed to initiate a paid parking program in the City’s garages and lots. A paid parking program could retain the initial three hours’ parking in garages to be free and set a reasonable fee above that time, versus the current jump to \$25 after three hours. This recommendation could be incorporated with recommendation #2, above.</i>	This is being incorporated into the Dixon contract amendment for Dixon to study and provide an implementation plan to the City related to this.	Staff and consultants and then later City Council
Begin initial discussions in Fall 2019	<i>27. Establish “Parking Availability Standards” – Parking availability standards should be established for the Downtown, Evergreen Park-Mayfield, and Southgate Residential Permit Parking Districts considering the residents’ perceptions of the impact of parking availability on their quality of life. Changes in the number of employee permits and boundaries of existing RPP districts should be deferred until parking availability standards are approved by the City Council.</i>	Staff will develop a timeline with the PTC in late Summer 2019	Staff and PTC then later City Council
Begin initial discussions in Fall 2019	<i>28. Establish Approach to Reduce Employee Parking Permits – Develop a “quid-pro-quo” approach to reduce RPP employee permits where the addition of “employee spaces” in garages and lots triggers the reduction of RPP employee parking permits.</i>	Staff will develop a timeline with the PTC in late Summer 2019	Staff and PTC then later City Council
Begin initial discussions in Fall 2019	<i>29. Provide Automatic Renewal for Employee Parking Permits – To avoid the mad dash to obtain a permit at the twice-a-year sale event, the City should consider providing for the automatic renewal of employee parking permits and the ability of applicants to be on a wait list.</i>	Staff will develop a timeline with the PTC in late Summer 2019	Staff and PTC

<b>Month</b>	<b>MRG Recommendation</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>	<b>Who?</b>
Begin initial discussions in Fall 2019	<i>30. Change Payment Schedule for Employee Parking Permits – The six-month pay in advance permit system should be replaced with a monthly payment system that would be more amendable to the parker and provide greater equity for employees whose duration of employment is less than six months.</i>	Staff will assess this as a possibility in the implementation of the new parking permit system.	Staff
Begin initial discussions in Fall 2019	<i>31. Increase Cost of Employee Parking Permits – Consideration should be given to increase the cost of an RPP employee parking permit so that it is greater than the cost of a reserved space in a garage or lot, in order to incentivize parkers to choose off-street parking over on-street parking.</i>	At the FY 2020 Budget Hearings in the Finance Committee, the Committee expressed an interest in further discussion of this. Staff will develop a timeline with the PTC in late Summer 2019 and plan to bring the discussion subsequently to City Council.	Staff and PTC then later City Council
Begin initial discussions in Fall 2019	<i>32. Standardize Cost of Employee Parking Permits – The cost of employee parking permits between the RPP districts should be the same, unless there are extenuating circumstances. The cost of a six-month employee parking permit is \$74.50 in the Southgate District; \$187.50 in the Evergreen Park-Mayfield District; and \$375.00 in the Downtown District.</i>	Staff will develop a timeline with the PTC in late Summer 2019	Staff and PTC then later City Council
Begin initial discussions in Fall 2019	<i>33. Change Payment Schedule and Increase Cost of Reduced-Price Parking Permits – The reduced-price parking permit is designed to support low-income employees (e.g. \$50,000 or less annual income). When a monthly payment system is available, the cost of the permit should be at least \$15.00 per month, which is less than \$1 per day for a full-time employee. This amount is less than an outlay of \$50 for the current six-month permit, and for some employees may be preferable.</i>	Staff will develop a timeline with the PTC in late Summer 2019	Staff and PTC and then later City Council

<b>Month</b>	<b>MRG Recommendation</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>	<b>Who?</b>
Begin initial discussions in Fall 2019	<i>34. Remove Inconsistencies Between Districts – Inconsistencies between Residential Preferential Permit Parking districts should be eliminated, unless there are extenuating circumstances. The inconsistencies include, but are not necessarily limited to, the number of resident permits, the cost of resident permits, and the number of single-day permits.</i>	Staff will develop a timeline with the PTC in late Summer 2019	Staff and PTC and then later City Council
Begin initial discussions in Fall 2019	<i>35. Review Renewal Dates – The renewal dates for residential and employee permits should be reviewed to determine the most efficient schedule for the City to administer that is still convenient for users.</i>	Staff will assess this as a possibility in the implementation of the new parking permit system.	Staff and PTC
In permit renewal cycles	<i>8. Communicate Availability of Employee Parking Spaces – The availability of employee parking permits in underutilized RPP zones should be communicated to employees who have been denied spaces in their preferred zone.</i>		Staff
In permit renewal cycles	<i>9. Communicate Available Downtown Reserved Parking Spaces – The availability of reserved spaces in the Downtown garages and lots should be communicated to employees who have been denied spaces in their preferred garages or lots.</i>		Staff
Annual in Spring	<i>25. Review Parking Citation Fees – The fee schedule for parking infractions should be reviewed on a regular basis as part of the Master Fee schedule.</i>	Staff will make recommendations for City Council Finance Committee review with the annual budget process.	City Council



<b>Month</b>	<b>MRG Recommendation</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>	<b>Who?</b>
Begin after new system in place	<i>18. Change Payment Schedule for Reserved Parking in Garages and Lots – The 3-, 6-, and 12- month pay in advance permit system should be replaced with a monthly payment system that would be more amendable to the parker, and eliminate the accounting associated with the reimbursement of early termination.</i>	Staff will assess this as a possibility in the implementation of the new parking permit system.	Staff
Assuming full staffing, begin late Spring 2020	<i>10. Improve Parking Website – The City of Palo Alto parking website should be updated to ensure it is complete, user-friendly and intuitive.</i>	Staff will keep the webpage up to date and will later assess the best options for a potential website redesign.	Staff
Assuming full staffing, begin late Spring 2020	<i>15. Determine Best Reparking Regulation – Re-evaluate the value of trying to explain to motorists the meaning of the term “Initial” as it relates to the reparking of a vehicle versus the confusion created by the attempt to explain the term, and consider alternatives, such as “No same day reparking.”</i>		Staff
No date set yet	<i>11. Evaluate “Neighborhood Serving Businesses” – Giving “neighborhood serving businesses” a preference in obtaining employee parking permits should be reviewed by the City Administration to determine its policy, administrative, and legal implications.</i>		Staff
No date set yet	<i>12. Examine Purchase of Reserved Parking Spaces by Businesses Located Outside of a Business District – The City Administration should determine the ability of employees of a business located outside of a business district that helped to fund a garage, to purchase reserved parking spaces in that garage.</i>		Staff

<b>Month</b>	<b>MRG Recommendation</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>	<b>Who?</b>
No date set yet	<i>13. Measure the Performance of Transportation Demand Management Initiatives – The efforts of the Transportation Management Association (TMA) and the City’s Shuttle Service should ultimately result in a reduction in the number of employees and business patrons who would otherwise need parking spaces. Outcome-based performance measures should be designed and utilized to determine the effectiveness of these efforts and to guide the direction of these services.</i>	Staff has begun working on the transportation demand management ordinance as referenced during the adoption of the Traffic Impact Fee Ordinance. Staff will also continue to monitor TMA activities.	Staff and PTC (for TDM Ordinance) and later City Council
No date set yet	<i>14. Evaluate Impact of Shared Rides – Evaluate the existing and potential use of services like Uber and Lyft to reduce the demand for parking as well as the impact on traffic.</i>		Staff
No date set yet	<i>19. Institute a Performance-Driven System – A performance metric should be established that measures the user’s perception of the quality of service to identify areas where corrective actions are needed, and which is used to take appropriate actions.</i>		Staff
No date set yet	<i>20. Maintain Integrity of Program – The City should routinely check the qualifications of permittees and the uses of permits.</i>		Staff
No date set yet	<i>26. Review the Level of Funding Subsidy of the Residential Permit Parking Program – A review of the expenditures and revenues for the Residential Permit Parking Fund should be performed to ensure the level of support from the General Fund is appropriate.</i>		City Council

<b>Month</b>	<b>MRG Recommendation</b>	<b>Status / Notes</b>	<b>Who?</b>
Hold	<i>22. Treat Requests for Annexations Like Other Requests for Service – The request to annex an area on the west side of El Camino between Stanford Avenue and Park Boulevard into the Evergreen Park-Mayfield RPP District should follow the provisions in the RPP Ordinance and the RPP Administrative Guidelines and should be placed into the backlog of work to be performed by parking services.</i>	The Council action on May 13 confirmed that modifications to existing RPP districts will be put on hold until potential overall program changes are decided.	N/A
Hold	<i>23. Minor Modifications to a Residential Permit Parking District – Because all changes in an RPP district may have unintended consequences and therefore warrant an appropriate level of evaluation, requests for modifications to an RPP district should be placed into the backlog of work to be performed by parking services. Two examples of this type of request include extending the days that parking time limits apply in the Evergreen Park-Mayfield RPP District to include those days games and other major events are held at Stanford University; and extending the duration of the parking time limits in the Downtown RPP zones near the commercial areas to curtail non-permitted employee parking.</i>	The Council action on May 13 confirmed that modifications to existing RPP districts will be put on hold until potential overall program changes are decided.	N/A

### **Resource Impact**

Implementing the staff recommendation would involve the use of current staff resources in FY 2019 for community engagement and development of a parking work plan. The FY 2020 Proposed Operating Budget includes the addition of a Parking Manager (Transportation Programs Manager) that will be funded by the appropriate parking funds and will be a critical resource for advancing this work plan.

Though it will take time to reorganize and scale all of the parking activities that will come in a parking work plan as a result of this report, the benefits to staff, customer service, public relations and the sustainability of the City’s parking programs will be very significant.

## **Environmental Review**

The proposed actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).