

Palo Alto Residential Preferential Parking (RPP) Program Meeting Notes

Date: September 16, 2015, 3:00 – 4:30 pm

Location: City Hall, Community Meeting Room, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto

Attendees:

Name	Representation
RPP Stakeholder Group	
Rob George	District manager, Philz Coffee
Will Griffin	Employee, Palantir
Elaine Uang	Resident, 321 Kipling (Downtown North)
Ben Cintz	Cintz Commercial Properties
Gabrielle Layton	Resident, 365 Lincoln (Downtown South)
Sue Nightingale	Business owner, Watercourse Way
Michael Hodos	Resident, 944 Bryant (Professorville)
Richard Brand	Resident, 281 Addison (Professorville)
Neilson Buchanan	Resident, 155 Bryant (Downtown North)
Chop Keenan	Land Owner, Keenan Land
City Staff and Members of the Public	
Hillary Gitelman	Planning Department Director, City of Palo Alto
Jessica Sullivan	Transportation Planning Manager, City of Palo Alto
Sue-Ellen Atkinson	Parking Operations Lead, City of Palo Alto
Kelsey Kawaguchi	Transportation Intern, City of Palo Alto
Elaine Meyer	University South Neighborhood Association
Jeff Spicker	Parking Concepts, Inc.
Marianne Mueller	Kingsley Park Homeowners Association
Ruth Hodos	Resident
Joe Baldwin	Resident, Channing House
Craig Allen	Channing House
Ellen Uhrbrock	Resident
Carol Kipersky	Resident
Mila Zelkha	Palantir
Gennady Sheyner	Palo Alto Weekly
Fred Kohler	Resident
Ian Irwin	Resident

Meeting Goals:

1. Update on RPP implementation for Phase 1
2. Discuss Data Collection Strategy for Phase 1

Review of Agenda and Meeting Guidelines

1. Staff provided an overview of the agenda, which focused on the status of program implementation and the data the collection strategy during Phase 1.

RPP Implementation

1. Parking Patterns

- Staff observed an increase in cars parking south of the RPP district border and a decrease of parked cars in many parts of Downtown North in the short period of time since the program's implementation on Tuesday, September 15, 2015.
- Stakeholders have also noticed changes produced by the implementation of the program, indicating that parking tends to fill up closer to 10am rather than 7am. The stakeholders plan to continue observing the changes as the program continues.
- Stakeholder indicated that two customers have experienced difficulty finding short-term parking, which was not a complaint previously received from their customers.
- Stakeholder brought up concern about a problem for the areas that opted out of the program, which will need to be addressed in the future.
- Stakeholder noted that the 1000 block of Alma did not have signs installed, but is part of the RPP district.
 - Staff noted that the issue has been identified and plans have been arranged to install signage.
- Stakeholder addressed a concern that some employees may not want to purchase a permit and may end up moving their car every two hours.
- Stakeholder requested a program update notice for the public.
 - Staff plans to provide an update once the full enforcement date is determined.

2. Implementation Update

a. Online Permit Sales website / Issues to be addressed

- Staff shared that a total of 3,743 permits have been distributed to residents and employees as of September 15. Staff believes that there are many residences that may still need to get their permits. Permit breakdown as follows:
 - BUS (Business standard): 578
 - BVR (Business reduced price): 318
 - RES (Resident): 2,847
- Stakeholder requested further breakdown of the resident permits that have been purchased.
 - Staff responded they could provide additional permit details.
- Stakeholder inquired about the number of permits allotted for residents free of charge.
 - Staff indicated that during Phase 1 residents are eligible for 4 free permits. Beginning in Phase 2, residents can receive 1 permit free of charge and up to 3 additional permits for \$50 each.
- Staff updated the stakeholders on the expected schedule for the first few weeks of the program. Informational notices, rather than warning citations, are being issued during the first two weeks, with distribution of warning citations to follow.

- Staff emphasized that the date to begin full enforcement is still to be determined, contrary to mid-October date which has been floating around the public.
 - Stakeholders encouraged full enforcement to begin earlier in October rather than waiting until later in the month to avoid building up of bad habits.
- Stakeholder inquired about the number of people enforcing parking within the district.
 - Staff responded that there are four people enforcing on a randomized schedule.
- Staff noted that on the first day of the program approximately 150 notices were distributed to cars in violation. Additionally, an increased number of citations were issued downtown, most likely due to confusion regarding the valid area for RPP permits, which does not include the Downtown Commercial Core and the SOFA district.
- Staff has been working to address and resolve the issues with the RPP website.
- Stakeholder noted a problem on the website where the employer had to enter vehicle information in order to purchase permits.
 - Staff indicated that the website has been updated to allow employers to purchase the permits without entering vehicle information.
- Stakeholders suggested making one of the first screens users encounter informational, indicating all the necessary documents to complete the process.
- Stakeholders requested clarification on the website about the accepted documents for employees account verification.
 - Staff responded they are looking for documentation with the employees name and the local address for the place of employment. Staff also clarified that paystub is only required for employees seeking to qualify for the reduced price permits.
- Stakeholders voiced concern that accepting a business card as an acceptable document might be an easy way to get around the system.
- Stakeholder asked if all the permits had the city logo because he had noticed a vehicle displaying a hang tag permit without the City's logo.
 - Staff confirmed that all the permits include the city logo as part of the design.

b. Customer Service strategy

- Staff informed stakeholders that customer service is available to help individuals in person on the first floor at City Hall.
- Stakeholders indicated difficulties reaching customer service over the phone to get help acquiring parking permits.
 - Staff acknowledged the need for in-person help for future iterations of the program.
- Stakeholder inquired whether the City had utilized the library staff to assist in the rollout of the program.
 - Staff noted that they were included in the process, but indicated that a better customer solution would still be necessary for the future.

3. Phase 1 Data Collection

- Staff expects to begin data collection the first week of October. The collection frequency is still to be determined, but expected to occur at least once a month during Phase 1. The data collected will track occupancy numbers for both resident and employee permits for each block face.
 - Resident commented that data should also be collected for visitors who are parking under the 2 hour restriction.
- Stakeholder inquired whether the city intended to collect data by counts or by scanning permit barcodes. With the latter, stakeholder suggested geo-coding of the information to assist tracking of parking patterns
 - Staff expressed concern regarding privacy of permit holders' information by tracking individuals by scanning barcodes.
- Stakeholders voiced a concern that the data collected would not be sufficient to make informed decisions. The concern included whether the amount of permits sold exceeded the actual number of permits utilized by residents and employees.
 - Staff responded they felt the planned data collection is an adequate amount of data to analyze without intruding on the privacy of permit holders.
- Stakeholder offered to help with the data collection.
 - Staff showed interest in coordinating data collection times to possibly receive help with collecting periphery data.
- Staff announced that moving forward data compilation will be completed using a modified version of the Stakeholders' existing Excel spreadsheet.
- Stakeholder indicated the need to keep track of the situation in the garages, assessing the supply of parking spaces downtown to ensure workers and visitors to the area are accommodated.
- Stakeholder noted the program addresses the problem, but isn't a complete solution. Still need to work on finding new modes for people to get to Palo Alto without driving.
- Stakeholder advised getting expert opinions during the data collection period and emphasized the need to sample scientifically.

Members of the Public Comment

- Ian Irwin noted better usage of a parking garage and traffic calming in the area. Also noticed that some people have begun to turn the wrong direction on Homer Ave.
- Marianne Mueller brought attention to the fact that Kingsley Av—where the program is not currently active—is now facing parking problems.
- Craig Allen addressed an issue with the website where residents who did not print their permit the first time around were not able to regain access to print their permit
 - Staff confirmed that this bug has been fixed and users can return to their accounts and print their active permits.
- Fred Kohler emphasized that spaces should be watched to ensure that those blocks do not return to 100% occupancy as they were before the program was implemented.

- Mila Zelkha noted that in-person help is beneficial because some people do not have access to the technology required to get permits with an online program.
- Marianne Mueller commented that any data collected can be analyzed in many ways.
- Jeff Spicker recommended that in order to change behaviors enforcement should have an earlier start date for full enforcement. He also recommended that the City should do what is best for them since ultimately, the City will have to manage the program. Also added that most data collected goes to waste.