

**PROPOSED PILOT PARKING PROGRAM
FOR VILLAGE OF LA JOLLA
AND SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL STREETS
September 19, 2007**

Background and Objective

After 18 months of study, analysis, field trips, and discussion, the Board tentatively believes that both paid on-street parking in some high-demand locations and a residential parking program in neighborhoods adjacent to commercial areas should be part of a comprehensive plan to alleviate La Jolla's parking problems. The Board is sensitive, however, to the views of many residents and merchants that measures other than paid on-street parking would adequately address existing parking problems and that any system of paid on-street parking will adversely affect our community, injure retail businesses, and create a new source of revenue that the City will exploit to La Jolla's detriment.

Although La Jolla can reasonably draw on the experience of other California coastal communities that have successfully implemented paid parking and residential permit systems, many believe that La Jolla's distinctive character and its status as a community within the City of San Diego, rather than as an independent municipality, deprives those other models of their predictive value. In recognition of that view, and in response to suggestions made by several community members, the Board has determined that it should undertake a targeted, real-world test of its tentative conclusions that would permit the entire community to assess the pros and cons of paid on-street parking and residential parking permits.

Accordingly, the Board proposes to implement a limited one-year Pilot Program to test the feasibility and effect of (1) paid on-street parking in select portions of the Village and (2) a residential parking program in neighborhoods surrounding the Village commercial core.

This version of the draft includes indented annotations intended to explain more fully the basis for the draft's proposals and to address some of the questions that readers may have.

Elements of Pilot Program

1. Paid on-street parking in portions of the Village.

- a. We propose to install an unobtrusive, state-of-the art system of paid on-street parking on both sides of the streets listed in Appendix A.

An example of the kind of pay station we might use can be seen at <http://tinyurl.com/2u36xl>. The pay station will accept coins, credit or debit cards, or “smart cards” (discussed below) and will issue a display ticket showing the amount paid, the date, and the expiration time. The ticket will be displayed on the dashboard or on the inside of the car’s windshield. We anticipate that there will be 2 or more pay stations on each side of a block so that visitors need not walk far to obtain a display ticket.

The original draft proposed an expansive footprint for the paid-parking test program in the Village. The second draft proposed a significantly reduced scope for the test program. There are competing forces at work here. On the one hand, a wider scope will make for a more realistic test of the program; on the other hand, it will be more expensive to implement, more cumbersome to monitor, and possibly more difficult to undo. A narrower scope may make for a more manageable test program, but it will predictably have the squeezing-the-balloon effect of increasing congestion on the adjacent uncovered streets and may therefore yield less accurate results. This draft proposes a middle course — less ambitious than the original proposal but slightly more extensive than the last one. The aim is to cover the streets that most residents and merchants recognize as the ones where parking is in greatest demand, while ensuring that the program will be readily reversible if it is deemed a failure. We are confident that the pay stations can be removed and redeployed elsewhere in San Diego if we determine, at the conclusion of the test period, that paid on-street parking should be terminated.

- b. To the maximum feasible extent, the system will be designed to permit real-time monitoring of parking spaces and adjustments of the applicable parking rate to reflect actual usage. The parking rate will be set at the lowest possible level consistent with maintaining approximately 10-15% availability of parking spaces on each affected block. Where a charge is not necessary to achieve the target level of availability, the rate will be reduced to zero.

A core goal of this program is to achieve a modest but reliable percentage of parking availability in the commercial area so that visitors can drive to La Jolla with confidence that they will be able to find convenient street parking without having to cruise the streets to do so. Parking professionals say that what discourages visitors is not the cost but the unavailability of convenient parking and the frustration of having to circle the streets in search of a spot. Free but *unavailable* parking deters rather than attracts shoppers. Our aim is to test the proposition that shoppers will be willing to pay a modest amount to park if they can count on finding a parking spot on Village streets.

We are also mindful that the existing pattern of cruising for parking spots in the commercial area wastes fuel and contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. A study conducted in the 15-block business district of Westwood Village, an area similar in size to the La Jolla commercial zone, found that drivers searching for curbside parking racked up a total of 950,000 excess vehicle miles a year — the equivalent of 38 trips around the earth — thereby wasting 47,000 gallons of fuel and producing 730 tons of carbon dioxide emissions. If this Pilot Program succeeds in minimizing the search for free curbside parking in La Jolla, we can take a small but meaningful step toward conserving our natural resources, improving our air quality, and reducing our contribution to global warming.

It is important to emphasize that the fundamental purpose of paid on-street parking is regulatory, not fiscal. The goal is to make parking more accessible to everyone, both residents and outsiders, thereby reducing traffic congestion and block circling. Although the revenues generated from a system of paid on-street parking can be used to enhance the Village experience (by funding landscaping improvements, additional benches, upgraded lighting, cleaner alleys, sidewalk repairs, increased enforcement, and so on) and perhaps, if the program were continued after the test period, to help expand the supply of parking spaces, those are entirely derivative benefits that would not, standing alone, justify a recommendation to implement such a system.

- c. To encourage turnover, the rate on the affected streets will be set initially at \$1.50 an hour in the commercial zone, \$1.50 an hour in the beach zone on weekdays, and \$1.00 an hour in the beach zone on weekends and holidays. To accommodate regular visitors and short-term parkers, the initial 30 minutes of parking will be free of charge.

Under this plan, a visitor will pay nothing for up to 30 minutes, \$.75 for a total of one hour, \$1.50 for 90 minutes, and \$2.25 for 2 hours. In the beach zone on weekdays, a visitor would pay a total of \$5.25 for 4 hours. A visitor who wishes to park for 30 minutes or less will be able to obtain from the pay station without charge a display ticket showing an expiration time of 30 minutes from the time it is issued.

Free parking for the first 30 minutes is intended to accommodate the many local residents who drive into the Village for relatively quick shopping errands. It also offers some protection for those merchants that depend heavily on quick-errand shoppers. The Board will closely monitor this aspect of the program to ensure that allowing 30 minutes of free parking does not undermine the goal of achieving 10-15% parking availability and does not lend itself to abuse.

The per-hour parking rates proposed in this draft are only a starting point for the Pilot Program and will be subject to change in either direction depending on experience. If necessary to achieve the target percentage of parking availability, we may need to increase the rate on some streets. By the same token, if experience shows that we have exceeded our target percentage on some streets, we may need to lower the rate, perhaps even to zero if warranted.

- d. Paid parking on the affected streets will be in force daily from 10:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m.

A prior draft had proposed free parking before 11:00 a.m. and enforcement between 11:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. With the introduction of free 30-minute parking at any time of day, however, the original purpose of free parking before 11:00 a.m. — to set aside a time during which those who want to run short errands without having to pay for parking — is now served in a different and more effective way that applies throughout the day. Because the Village gets its heaviest flow of traffic during the lunch hours, it seems sensible to start the enforcement time at 10:00 a.m. (the first half hour of which would be free for those who park at that hour). That should help ensure that a modest supply of parking spaces will be available on the affected streets during the period of highest demand. If we keep the total number of enforcement hours at 9, enforcement would end at 7:00 p.m., thereby accommodating those who come to the Village for an early, leisurely dinner that may take longer than 2 hours.

- e. Parking on the affected streets will be subject to a time limit of 2 hours in the commercial zone, 4 hours in the beach zone on weekdays, and 9 hours in the beach zone on weekends and holidays. The time limit will not be extendable by replenishing the pay station. Those who need to park for longer than the posted time limit will have to use commercial parking facilities.

In its original iteration, the draft had proposed a 2-hour time limit throughout the Village commercial area. In response to public comment at a prior meeting, the second draft proposed a 3-hour limit so that those who come to the Village for lunch and shopping will not feel rushed. That proposal generated some persuasive negative reaction at our most recent meeting, and this draft now reverts to a 2-hour limit.

The proposal of a 4-hour limit in the beach zone is designed to allow visitors to enjoy a full morning or afternoon at the beach. It is also compatible with the Coastal Commission's requirements. Because families often plan to spend an entire day at the beach on weekends and holidays, we propose to extend the time limit to 9 hours for those days.

- f. Those who regularly visit La Jolla will be able to purchase either “smart cards” or “in-car meters” at the discount rate of \$1.00 per hour of parking time. “Smart cards” will function like debit cards in the pay stations. “In-car meters” will serve as a substitute for a display ticket; they will be hung on the rear-view mirror or placed on the dashboard and will be set by the individual to operate only during the time the car is parked on an affected street.

Aspen, Colorado, which has had notable success with its parking program, offers individuals the option of using pre-paid “smart cards” or “in-car meters.” You can find information about Aspen's approach at <http://www.aspenpitkin.com/depts/61/deptmain.cfm>. Those who buy pre-paid time on an in-car meter will not have to go to a pay station when

they park. Instead, they will simply start the timer on the in-car meter when they leave the car and turn it off when they return. Although the prepaid time on an in-car meter will be running even during the first half hour (which would be free for those who use a smart card or who pay at the pay station), the in-car meter is an option that some may nevertheless prefer because of its added convenience. And because time on an in-car meter will be priced at a 33% discount (\$1.00 per hour instead of \$1.50 per hour), the effective charge for the first half hour would be \$.50 rather than \$.75.

2. Residential parking program for neighborhoods adjacent to the Village commercial core.

- a. We propose to implement a residential parking program to protect the residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Village commercial area from all-day parking by commuters and others.

Those who currently park for extended periods on the affected residential streets will have to find alternative arrangements. Some may take advantage of garage parking (perhaps subsidized by their employers); others may prefer to consider carpool, subsidized van-pool, or public transportation options. A portion of revenues derived from the Pilot Program may be used to expand the existing subsidized bus-pass program, to supplement the existing regional van-pool subsidy program, and to assist employers who are willing to contribute to their employees' parking fees in garages or street lots. The goal is to ensure that residential streets near the Village commercial zone are not used as free all-day parking lots, but the Board is likewise committed to helping those who are displaced from neighborhood streets to find affordable alternatives.

- b. The program will be implemented initially on the streets listed in Appendix B. If the residents of any of those streets prefer to be excluded from the program, or if the residents on any streets not listed in Appendix B wish to be included in the program, they may petition the Board for an adjustment.

The streets listed in Appendix B are widely recognized as the residential blocks that are most heavily used for all-day parking by commuters and that therefore are in greatest immediate need of protection. It is predictable that imposing time limits on these streets will drive some commuters further from the Village commercial district and will adversely affect other streets. The Board will monitor the situation and will, either on its own initiative or at the request of residents on those other streets, recommend expanding the program as necessary.

- c. On each designated street, parking will be subject to a 2-hour time limit between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Residents may purchase Residential Parking Permits for up to 2 registered vehicles per household. When properly displayed, a Residential Parking Permit will exempt a vehicle from the posted time limit. Residential Parking Permits will be available for a fee of \$14 each per year.

This proposal tracks the system used by many other communities around the country, including some within the City of San Diego, to protect residential streets against overflow commuter parking from adjacent commercial areas. The \$14 fee is what the City currently charges for permits in other communities with residential parking programs. It reflects the costs of administering the program and should help ensure that only those who need permits request them. The primary objective here (and with the Guest Passes and Contractor Parking Permits mentioned below) is not to exploit additional sources of revenue, but rather to protect the designated streets from all-day parking and to provide a mechanism by which residents, their guests, and the contractors who perform work for them can park in front of their homes.

The Board believes that a limit of 2 permits per household is a good starting place, but we recognize that some other communities allow more and we remain open to increasing the number if warranted by the needs of the affected residents. The Residential Parking Permits will be non-transferable. They will be attached to the car's windshield and labeled with the car's VIN.

Unlike the residential parking plans used by some other communities, this proposal would not prohibit parking by non-residents on the covered streets. On the contrary, anyone may park on the streets without charge for up to 2 hours. Consequently, a visitor who wishes to visit the Village commercial zone but prefers not to pay for on-street parking will retain the option of parking on the adjacent residential streets for no longer than the posted time limit. This proposal would simply eliminate the option of all-day free parking on those streets.

- d.** Residents of an affected street may also purchase Guest Passes for use by guests or household workers. If properly displayed, the Guest Pass will exempt a vehicle from the posted time limit. Residential Guest Passes will be available for a fee of \$3 per day or \$60 for 30 days (which need not be consecutive days).

Earlier drafts had proposed offering a single guest pass to each household at a cost of \$25 a year. We have tentatively determined, however, that a low-cost annual guest-pass is a recipe for abuse: there is no obvious way to prevent individuals from buying guest passes for \$25 and then selling them to commuters, who will use them to park on the covered residential streets. This draft proposes instead that a resident of a covered street may purchase any number of guest passes at the rate of \$3 a day or \$60 for a bundle of 30 days. This approach will largely negate the risk of misuse: because \$3 a day approximates a market rate for private parking several blocks away from the commercial core, there is not likely to be much profit in selling guest passes. Even so, the Board will monitor buying patterns and will take corrective steps if requests for guest passes exceed our expectations. The proposal should not impose a significant burden on residents because most residents can accommodate their guests by parking their own cars on the street (if they have a residential parking permit) and allowing their guests to park in their driveway.

- e. Licensed contractors who plan to work on homes in the affected area may purchase Contractor Parking Permits for themselves and their employees. A Contractor Parking Permit, if properly displayed, will exempt a vehicle from the posted time limit. Contractor Parking Permits will be available for a fee of \$3 per day or \$60 for 30 days (which need not be consecutive days).

Our goal here is to accommodate the legitimate needs of contractors who are working in homes on the affected streets. Because the charge for a Contractor Parking Permit will be same as for a residential Guest Pass, there will be no incentive to use Guest Passes for contractors. The permits will specify the street address at which the work will be done, and they will exempt a vehicle from the posted time limit only when it is parked at or near that address.

3. Disposition of revenues.

- a. The Board will request that, during the pendency of the Pilot Program, the City allocate to La Jolla 80% of the resulting parking revenues to pay for implementation of the Pilot Program and to fund projects and activities approved by the Board.

City Council Policy 100-18 provides that 45% of “the total parking meter revenues generated within each Community Parking District shall be allocated to that Community Parking District on an annual basis.” It further provides that, “[i]n addition to this 45% allocation, the City may allocate *all or a portion* of the parking management-related revenues to a Community Parking District on a case-by-case basis.” Because we propose to use the revenues for the very purposes spelled out in the Policy, we believe that we will have a strong basis for requesting an 80% or greater allocation of the parking revenues.

- b. Some of the projects and activities that may be candidates for funding are the following, which are illustrative rather than exclusive:
 - (i) acquiring the use of a GPS-enabled parking enforcement vehicle,
 - (ii) expanding enforcement hours and increasing enforcement staffing,
 - (iii) installing new and improved parking signage,
 - (iv) expanding the existing subsidized bus-pass program,
 - (v) supplementing SANDAG’s existing regional van-pool subsidy program,
 - (vi) funding improvements to Village streets, alleys, sidewalks, street lighting, and landscaping, and
 - (vii) expanding the existing parking inventory in the Village commercial area.

4. Evaluation and sunset.

- a. The Board will evaluate the Pilot Program on a monthly basis and will adjust or terminate any part of the program that proves to be ineffective or harmful to the community.

The Board intends to take its monitoring responsibility seriously. It may retain a professional consultant to assist in this effort.

- b. The Pilot Program will sunset automatically at the end of one year unless the Board votes affirmatively to renew all or any part of the Program based on its demonstrated success.

A hard sunset date will ensure that the program does not remain in effect by default. Before any aspect of the program can be continued beyond the one-year test period, the Board must vote to reauthorize it.

- c. The Pilot Program will include information systems designed to provide the Board with the objective data it needs to assess the Program's success or failure and to measure its effect on businesses, residents, visitors, and employees.

Examples of the measures that may be used to assess the program's success or failure are (a) the extent to which the program achieves its goal of maintaining 10-15% availability of parking in the commercial and beach zones, (b) the parking turnover rate on streets with paid parking, (c) the positive or negative effect on merchants' sales revenues per square foot, and (d) the extent to which residential streets are adequately protected, and (e) the informed reactions of property owners, merchants, residents, and visitors concerning the paid on-street parking program and the residential parking plan. Here, too, the Board may need the help of a professional consultant to identify the critical measures of success or failure, to design the systems needed to collect the relevant information, and to supervise the collection of that information for use by the Board and for review by the community.

- d. At each stage of evaluating the Pilot Program, the Board will solicit and fully consider the views of community groups and affected merchants and individuals.

5. Process.

- a. At its September 19, 2007, regular meeting, the Board will vote on whether to adopt this Pilot Program as its **proposed** recommendation to the City Council.
- b. If the Board votes to adopt the Pilot Program as its **proposed** recommendation to the City Council, it will then invite both written and oral public comment on the proposal during the ensuing 45-day period. The Board will confer with community groups during that period to solicit their suggestions and will devote most of its October regular meeting to hearing public comment on the proposed recommendation.
- c. At its regular meeting in November, the Board will consider possible amendments to the Pilot Program in light of the public comment it

has received. Also at that meeting, the Board will vote on whether to adopt the Pilot Program, as it may be amended during the meeting, as a **final** recommendation to the City Council. If it votes to adopt the Pilot Program in final form, the Board will promptly transmit its recommendation to the City Council for its consideration and approval.

The key point here is that any vote on September 19 will be simply to approve this plan for purposes of soliciting public comment. Only in November, and only after considering all comments and suggestions received in the interim, will the Board vote on whether to adopt this plan, with any amendments that may be approved, as its formal recommendation to the City Council. As this draft clearly reflects, the Board has tried to be responsive to the concerns it has heard expressed and the many constructive suggestions it has received so far. We recognize that many in the community have valuable contributions to make. If we tentatively approve this plan on September 19, we will remain open to considering changes to the plan — or to rethinking the plan entirely — based on the comments we receive during the ensuing 45-day comment period.

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Appendix A

Streets Designated for Pilot Paid Parking Program

Commercial zone:

1. Prospect Street from Cave Street to Fay Avenue
2. Fay Avenue from Prospect Street to Kline Street
3. Girard Avenue from Coast Boulevard South to Kline Street
4. Herschel Avenue from Prospect Street to Silverado Street
5. Ivanhoe Street from Prospect Street to Silverado Street
6. Silverado Street from Fay Avenue to Ivanhoe Avenue
7. Kline Street from Fay Avenue to Girard Avenue
8. Jenner Street from Prospect Street to Coast Boulevard South
9. All of Wall Street

Beach zone:

1. Coast Boulevard from Cave Street to #274 Coast Boulevard
2. All of Coast Boulevard South
3. Jenner Street between Coast Boulevard and Coast Boulevard South

Appendix B

Streets Designated for Pilot Residential Parking Program

1. Ivanhoe Avenue East from Virginia Way to Torrey Pines Road
2. Exchange Place from Prospect Street to Virginia Way
3. All of Park Row
4. High Avenue from Virginia Way to Torrey Pines Road
5. Virginia Way from Prospect Place to Torrey Pines Road