

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 15, 2022

TO: MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CC: CITY MANAGER JIM PARAJON

FROM: MAYOR JUSTIN M. WILSON

SUBJECT: OLD TOWN PARKING

A decade ago, the approved Waterfront Small Area Plan¹ included a series of observations and recommendations on the scarcity of on-street parking in the vicinity of the waterfront. These recommendations focused on providing new incentives for the utilization of existing, underutilized off-street parking, while also suggesting new ways to protect the availability of on-street spaces for residents and short-term visitors alike.

The 2015 Old Town Area Parking Study (OTAPS)² observed similar conditions and made similar recommendations to address the scarcity of on-street parking and the impact on residents. Most of these recommendations have now been implemented, including changes to meter fees, limits to parking duration and the implementation of the Residential Pay-By-Phone program.

Yet, the scarcity of on-street parking availability remains a concern for residents of Old Town's neighborhoods. Last summer presented a confluence of positive events, including a rapid recovery from the pandemic for Old Town's restaurants, the opening of large new restaurants at Robinson Landing and the significant success of the expanded Waterfront Park and the pedestrianized King Street. While the economic growth has buttressed City revenues during a difficult time, the success has exacerbated pre-existing parking scarcity in our neighborhoods.

¹ <https://media.alexandriava.gov/docs-archives/planning/info/masterplan/city=master=plan=map/waterfrontplancurrent.pdf>

² <https://media.alexandriava.gov/docs-archives/2015-11-13-otaps-staff-report-w-attachments.pdf>

While most parking policy changes require significant trade-off analysis and community input, I believe there are several proposals that can be quickly implemented to ameliorate some of the impacts that these successes have had on Old Town residents. As such, I would propose the following for direction by City Council:

Expansion of Residential Pay-By-Phone Area: Three years ago, City Council voted to make the popular Residential Pay-By-Phone program permanent³. In doing so, City Council chose to maintain a geographic limitation that restricted the program to blocks bounded by Princess Street, Washington Street, Wolfe Street and the Potomac River⁴. Council should remove this limitation and allow the program to organically grow into eligible areas with demonstrated resident support.

Residential Pay-By-Phone Fees: Council should provide our staff with the authority to adjust residential pay-by-phone rates and the duration of parking allowed in the areas with the most significant parking scarcity. This market-based solution can serve to preserve on-street availability.

Incentivize City Garages: Using parking utilization data, reduce parking rates at City parking garages with lower utilization to provide an incentive to improve utilization.

Split District 1: As recommended by OTAPS, staff should return to the Traffic & Parking Board with a recommendation to split the current Residential Parking District Zone 1 to allow for a distinct district for those blocks most proximate to the waterfront.

Cc: Yon Lambert, Director of Transportation & Environmental Services

³ <https://alexandria.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3882209&GUID=720C38CE-254E-4874-962B-ECC889BE0746>

44

https://library.municode.com/va/alexandria/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIITHCOGEOR_TIT5TR ENSE_CH8PATRRE_ARTFPEPADI_S5-8-84PAPHPAFEWIREPEPADI