

L5 - Public Comment

From: [Jeff Carr](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment-- March 5 2024 City Council Mtg, Item J5 (1)
Date: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 8:17:13 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Public Comment-- March 5 2024 City Council Mtg, Item J5

(1) Second Reading and Adoption of the Updated and Revised Ordinance 1135 Amending Paso Robles Municipal Code Chapter 12.42, Parking Management, to clarify the process for setting parking rates, reestablishing the Downtown Parking Zone and other clean up measures;

I urge the city council to vote down and disapprove Ordinance 1135 Amending the Paso Robles Municipal Code.

It's understood that the downtown parking fund has made significant investments in equipment and personnel, and is in substantial debt that is getting worse due to these recently uncovered process mistakes. However, as I've seen no evidence that these conditions will get better anytime soon, and that any cure proposed by the city could most certainly be more painful than the disease---I feel an appropriate action now would be to end this program and cut our losses here.

As alternative direction to staff--I suggest the council direct staff to:

(a) extend this current parking enforcement 'pause' with the goal of bringing it to a final 'halt'.

(b) investigate the surplus potential of the existing parking equipment in the city's possession and report back to council within 1 month.

(c) investigate and report back to council within 1 month on all aspects involved in ending the current parking program including a complete and thorough accounting of all parking fund finances.

(d) support the reassembly of a downtown Parking Advisory Committee to meet, discuss, and study the city's parking situation; and establish plans and goals for improvement IF AND WHERE NEEDED. Extend the parking discussion to city wide--though first steps will be to focus on downtown and town center areas. Include not just parking on the street, but all aspects of parking in the city including the city's zoning and development requirements for parking and in-lieu parking fees. ---- The committee will include representation from business, commercial property owners, city business employees, members of the public, and city staff. A committee chair will be appointed by the committee--and if the committee so desires, council liaisons will be requested and/or other committee structure will be defined. Information and support from city staff may also be requested during the life of the committee. The Parking Advisory Committee will meet independently and set their own agendas with city support, but without city or council member interference. They will be provided

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with regular agenda time at council meetings to present the downtown's plan and recommendations.

This parking program, including its execution and management, has been a failure. It has failed the community. It has been a financial failure. It has never been a proper fit for the people of Paso Robles and the surrounding communities or the businesses of the city's downtown.

The parking enforcement 'pause' we have been experiencing these past weeks has been wonderful. From my perspective as a local resident, it has pumped excitement into the downtown that I haven't seen or felt in years. We've spent 5 years living with this distraction and argument and it's time for it to end.

An ordinance that claims the council's vote to raise parking rates on November 21, 2023 is a valid vote---is in my view, therefore an invalid action and ordinance.

The vote to raise parking rates, charging \$1 per hour starting at minute 1 within the Downtown Parking Zone executed on November 21, 2023 is considered an invalid vote by me and many others in the city because: (1) it violated the Brown Act and (2) it raised parking rates in violation of California code.

Instead of bringing the discussion on raising rates back to the council and the public for appropriate discussion, the city and council majority on this vote have chosen to spin this ordinance discussion into some fix for their poor process and invalid vote on November 21st.

Instead of doing the right thing, instead of maintaining a needed level of integrity for the council and the city--the city and council majority have chosen a path of questionable process and legal maneuvering to accomplish their goals. And all the time ignoring the overwhelming comments from downtown businesses and the public pleading with them to end the parking program.

I believe this has unnecessarily exposed the council and city to criticism in the local press and media, exposed the city to potential litigation, and brought public embarrassment to the council, city, and its residents.

End the current downtown parking program and 'paid parking'. Please do not approve this ordinance.

Jeff Carr -- Paso Robles, CA