



Council Agenda Report

From: Damian Nord, Chief of Police

Subject: Potential Modifications to the Downtown Employee Monthly Permit Parking and Short-Term Spaces

CEQA Determination: The City finds that this action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State Guidelines Section State CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15060, subd. (c)(2)-(3), 15378.

Date: August 20, 2024

Facts

1. On [October 16, 2018, the City Council](#) approved the Downtown Employee Permit Pilot Program.
2. The Employee Parking Permit Program provides business owners and employees a low-cost option for parking in the downtown core, at \$5 per month.
3. Permit parking is available in four designated parking lots that comprise a total of 98 parking spaces. The lots are located at Spring Street and 12th Street; 12th Street, near Marv's Pizza; Alley between Pine Street and Railroad Street, 13th Street and 12th Street; and 12th Street and Railroad Street.
4. The Employee permit parking lots were established prior to paid parking implementation. These spaces were established to encourage employees to park in designated permit areas, thus leaving on-street parking available for other users.
5. On March 15 2022, the City Council approved the introduction of 30-minute parking spaces located at the ends of block faces. The intent of the 30-minute parking was to allow customers to avoid the paid parking system for quick transactions, since, at the time, it was intended that the paid parking program was to be charged from minute-one.
6. There are currently 35 thirty-minute parking spaces in the downtown area marked with green curbs and appropriate signage.
7. On May 21, 2024, City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1139, which amended portions of the Paso Robles Municipal Code related to Parking Management. As a result of that action, the paid, on-street Parking Program operations were ended.
8. On July 16, 2024, City Council requested the employee parking permit program and the 30-minute spots be brought back for discussion.

Options

1. Take no action;
2. Provide direction to staff.

Analysis and Conclusions

In May 2024, the City Council directed staff to wind down the downtown on-street paid parking program operations. The Employee Parking Permit Program as well as the short-term, on-street parking spaces are still valid and remain in effect. However, given that the rest of the downtown core is no longer charging for parking, City Council requested staff bring back this item for discussion.

Currently, the downtown employee parking lots provide employees with dedicated parking spots. Downtown employee parking permits are valid daily from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Downtown business owners and employees have four options available to purchase a Downtown Employee Parking Permit. Permits can be purchased in bulk or individually and are available for purchase monthly or annually. Monthly permits are valid until the last day of the month. Annual permits are prorated and valid until December 31st each year. The permit cost is \$5 per month. In Fiscal Year 2023, the number of permits issued for the employee lots were 4,286. In Fiscal Year 2024, that figure was 3,845. These figures represent the total of monthly and annual permits issued.

Should the permit-only restrictions on these lots be lifted, the spaces will convert to first come, first served public parking without any time restrictions. Should the spaces convert to public parking, it may be more challenging for employees to find parking close to their place of work, and it is not as guaranteed that an employee will find a spot in a timely manner. Furthermore, the loss of dedicated employee parking lots may increase the number of employees that will utilize on-street spaces in front of businesses, reducing the number of, and turnover of spaces for patrons.

City staff are working on a project to enhance the permit parking lots next to Marv's Pizza and at 12th and Railroad. This initiative responds to requests from downtown business owners and employees for better safety and functionality of these lots. Planned improvements include upgraded lighting, redesigned layouts, EV charging stations, and other enhancements. The design phase is nearly finished, and the project will soon be put out to bid. It is fully budgeted and is proceeding as planned.

The 30-minute parking spots were originally implemented to offer short-term, free on-street parking. The 30-minute spots are intended solely for the purpose of running a quick errand that will take 30 minutes or less. Examples of uses for these spots include food delivery drivers picking up food from a downtown restaurant, a vendor dropping merchandise off at a downtown business, or a patron purchasing a good from a local merchant. These spots are meant to encourage very frequent turnover so that more people can have a chance to park in convenient locations. Reduction or elimination of these spots may impact these short-term types of transactions taking place in downtown businesses if other parking spots are not available.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact from receiving direction from City Council. However, depending on the action, fiscal impacts are anticipated to be minimal. The cost of removing signage from the monthly permit lots is minimal in terms of staff time. As far as employee permits, in 2024, the City sold 3,845 permits, generating approximately \$12,000 (net to the City after associated fees) per year.

CEQA

The City finds that this action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State Guidelines Section State CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15060, subd. (c)(2)-(3), 15378.

Recommendation

Provide staff with directions regarding the monthly permit parking lots and the 30-minute paid parking spaces.

Attachments

None.