

Agenda Item 10: Updated Resolution for Downtown RPP

March 6, 2017

Dear Councilmembers:

As I did not see our previous letter (for the February meeting) in your packet for this agenda item, I am resending it.

Thank you for your efforts to address the parking problems for the many Palo Alto neighborhoods now overrun with commuter cars, including Downtown North, University South, Crescent Park, Evergreen Park, Southgate and Ventura. In regard to the specific proposal to help Downtown neighborhoods, we hope you will give full attention to these remaining issues:

1. The limit of 2,000 annual commuter permits is greater than the actual number of such permits sold during Phase 1. This conflicts with the fundamental goal of RPP to limit and then reduce commuter parking.
2. The plan allows the city to sell an unlimited number of one- and five-day passes, effectively putting no limit on how many commuter cars could end up in the neighborhoods.
3. The plan does not yet appear to comply with the state law requiring that:

“preferential parking permits for members of organizations, professions, or other designated groups, including, but not limited to, school personnel, to park on specified streets [are allowed only] if the local authority determines that the use of the permits will not adversely affect parking conditions for residents and merchants in the area.”

The city should determine how many cars belonging to non-residents/merchants will cause an adverse impact in the neighborhoods and then assure that the number of such cars is below that level.
4. Phase 1 demonstrated that commuters seeking to avoid purchasing permits will simply park farther away, impacting neighborhoods that have never before been affected. The Council should allow these residents to opt in to a College Terrace-style plan and/or only allow commuters to park on residential streets where permitted.
5. The proposed reduction of 200 permits a year represents a mere 2% a year of Downtown area parking spaces. This hardly seems adequate to reduce traffic and parking problems, which are top concerns for residents, and to meet our overall environmental responsibilities.

We hope the Council will exercise its leadership role to overcome the parking and traffic problems that beset our town, none of which were caused or sought by residents. Adjusting the proposed RPP plan to remedy the specific problems above will better protect everyone.

Thank you,

Sheri Furman (PAN Chair) and the PAN Steering Committee