

**Joint Neighborhood Parking Task Force
Recommendations Report – EXISTING SUBDIVISIONS
(SUMMARY)**

The Issue

The City Council’s Strategic Plan, updated in 2012, identifies neighborhood parking issues as a problem affecting the City’s Neighborhood Integrity. It is important to protect the unique character of neighborhoods because they contribute greatly to a unique sense of place and community identity. Neighborhood parking has an impact on the quality and stability of neighborhoods. One way to maintain neighborhood integrity is through solutions aimed at decreasing on-street parking problems.

College Station’s older neighborhoods – neighborhoods located primarily within Eastgate, Southside, and South Knoll areas – were developed when automobiles were less prevalent and limited off-street parking was provided. However, many of the streets these neighborhoods have converted to high percentages of renter-occupancy. Houses originally intended for single-family occupancy are being utilized as investment property or being demolished and replaced by larger houses with more bedrooms that are rented. An increase in the number of people per residence has resulted in a higher density of on-street parking. A number of neighborhoods have experienced overcrowding and emergency access concerns due to an increase in on-street parking. In some instances, fire trucks cannot pass through the street to reach citizens in need of assistance.

Current Approach

The City currently uses a limited number of options to alleviate on-street parking problems. These options include land use planning, development regulations, neighborhood plans, code enforcement, and parking removal.

Land Use Planning

College Station is dominated by suburban style land uses that encourage the use of vehicles and require intensive amounts of parking. When different land uses are separated far from one another they require greater distances of travel. This creates an environment where homes, jobs, and shopping are segregated and often require vehicles to travel from one use to the next. Land Use Planning allows the City to prepare for a compatible mix of uses, within one development or as separate developments, where shared parking and other forms of transportation may be incorporated.

Development Regulations

Currently, College Station limits single-family residences to four unrelated people and requires a minimum of two off-street parking spaces for each single-family dwelling unit. *The Task Force recommends an increased requirement to one parking space for each bedroom in a single-family dwelling (maximum of 4 required).*

Neighborhood Planning and Special Studies

The Neighborhood planning process assists neighborhoods in developing area-specific approaches to implementing parking goals. At this level, plans can focus on identifying parking issues specific to small defined areas. These plans are a helpful tool in identifying known parking and emergency access problems. Staff and citizens propose solutions for these problems to be implemented as a recommendation in their neighborhood plans.

Enforcement

Parking enforcement is a reactive tool used by the City to prevent vehicles from parking illegally. Both the Planning and Development Services Department and the Police Department are responsible for

**Joint Neighborhood Parking Task Force
Recommendations Report – EXISTING SUBDIVISIONS
(SUMMARY)**

ensuring compliance with City codes and ordinances. Citations may be issued by both departments when a parking violation occurs.

Parking Removal Program

Currently, parking is permitted on all City streets unless prohibited by City ordinance or State law. *The Task Force recommends the City consider removing parking on one or both sides of a street per a recommendation from the City’s Traffic Management Team ONLY if there is a safety concern verified by the City.* The City would continue to receive parking removal requests from individuals and neighborhoods and evaluate the impact on-street parking has on public safety in the area. The following is the City’s process that must be followed in order to remove parking from public streets:

1. Concern Initiation –A citizen informs the City of a potential problem resulting from on-street parking (Citizen Initiated) or the City observes the need to remove on-street parking from a street (City Initiated).
2. Concern Evaluation – The City’s Traffic Management Team (TMT) will evaluate the request and analyze the impact existing on-street parking has on public safety. If the existing on-street parking is determined to impact public safety, the TMT will forward a recommendation to the City Council and a public hearing will be held.
3. Public Notice – Per the recommendation from the TMT to remove on-street parking on a specific street, notices will be mailed to property owners and residents on both sides of the street where parking is proposed to be removed. These notices will provide the date of the City Council meeting when the public hearing for the proposed ordinance will occur.
4. Public Hearing – The proposal to remove on-street parking from a specific street will be presented to Council, followed by a public hearing where citizens can voice their opinions. The City Council can discuss and vote on the proposed parking removal ordinance after the public hearing.

The Task Force recommends the City pursue neighborhood initiated parking removal ONLY when it is related to public safety. In all other cases, the individual neighborhood would need to address parking issues through a private process, such as deed restrictions and covenants.

Recommendation for a City-wide Approach

The Task Force restrained itself to the development of a set of tools to address emergency access issues. The Task Force recommends a set of solutions to aid in the reduction of neighborhood parking problems City-wide. These recommendations should be required for redevelopment and new development.

Increased Off-Street Parking Requirements

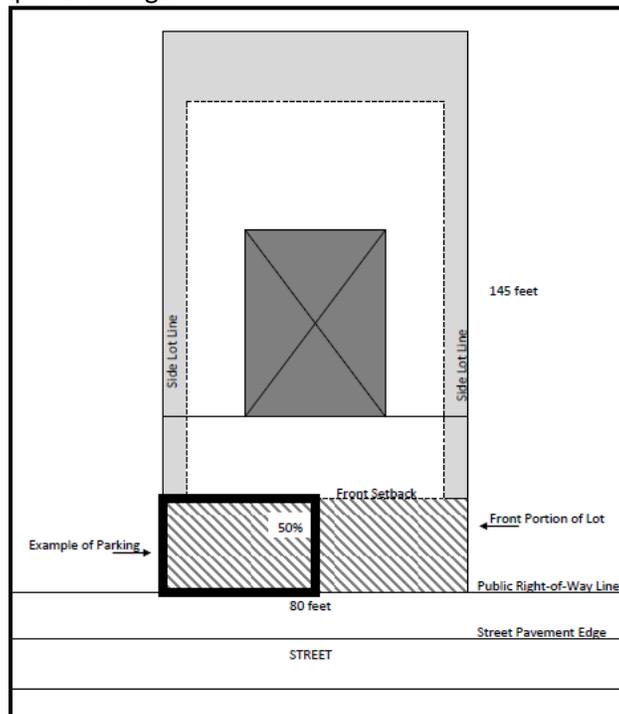
Currently, College Station requires a minimum of two off-street parking spaces for each single-family dwelling unit. **The Task Force recommends an increase of the current minimum requirements for off-street parking, increasing the standard to one parking space required for each bedroom in a single-family dwelling, up to four required parking spaces.**

**Joint Neighborhood Parking Task Force
Recommendations Report – EXISTING SUBDIVISIONS
(SUMMARY)**

Maximum Front Yard Coverage

The Task Force recommends that no more than 50% of the front portion of the property be used for parking or be impervious. This recommendation is currently being implemented in “Area 5” of the Southside Area Neighborhood Plan. It requires all parking be located within the areas described below:

1. Anywhere on the lot behind the structure with no limit on the size of the area;
2. Anywhere in the side yards of the lot with no limit on the size of the area; and,
3. An area located in front of the structure not to exceed a size equivalent to 50% of the front portion of the property. The front portion of the property is the area of the lot within the side lot lines, the front setback, and the public right-of-way line (see graphic). The square footage of parking allowed by this calculation may be located within or outside the boundary of the area used for calculations (see graphic). The portion of the driveway located between the front property line and structure shall be included in the maximum parking area square footage.



Approach Summary

In summary, The Task Force recommends three solutions to aid in the reduction of neighborhood parking problems City-wide. These recommendations include:

- Refine the current parking removal process to allow parking removal on one or both sides of a street per a recommendation from the City’s Traffic Management Team ONLY if there is a verified safety concern,
- Increase the off-street parking requirements based on the number of bedrooms provided, and
- Require no more than 50% of the front portion of the property be used for parking or be impervious.

**Joint Neighborhood Parking Task Force
Recommendations Report – EXISTING SUBDIVISIONS
(SUMMARY)**

Underlying Issues

The Task Force scope only addresses the emergency assess portion of on-street parking concerns. The recommendations provided by the Task Force do not solve other neighborhood problems stemming from increased densities in single-family neighborhoods. At some point, it may be necessary to discuss solutions aimed at decreasing the population density in these areas. This may include options to reduce rental conversions through revised subdivision regulations and City ordinances aimed at reducing the number of unrelated persons in single-family residences.