

Permit Parking Suggestion

To be submitted for discussion at the May 10 Parking Workshop

Existing Situation: Downtown residents compete for street parking with commuters, business patrons, day trippers, tourists, contractors, concert patrons. Neighborhoods are congested with cruisers seeking a free parking place not restricted to residential use. Parking lots are under-utilized because free parking is in close proximity. The number of hotel rooms/visitors (and their cars) continues to increase. Everyone is frustrated.

Goals: Enable neighborhood residents to park within reasonable proximity of their homes without spending excessive time looking for street parking. Enable drivers from outside the downtown neighborhoods to have parking reasonably convenient to downtown destinations without cruising. Encourage use of alternative transportation, taxis/ride-share services and the Duval Loop. Promote use of existing public parking areas. Increase available parking without constructing a parking garage.

Proposal: Create a residential parking zone ("RPZ") to ensure neighborhood parking for Bahama Village and Old Town residents. Establish days and hours to balance commercial and residential needs.

Initial Area: RPZ bounded by Truman Avenue (to the waterfront) on the south and White Street (to the Gulf) on the east. 100% of the parking in the RPZ will be either permit or pay-and-display.

Times: unmetered street parking reserved for RPZ residents after 6:00 pm and all day Sat/Sun. This enables non-resident commuters/contractors/visitors/etc. to park anywhere in the RPZ during traditional business hours. Residents returning from work can find parking. Evening visitors can use parking lots (Key West residents get 4 hours free with city sticker). Duval Loop serves those who prefer not to walk to attractions from parking lots.

Implementation. Requires nothing but signage in the RPZ and an annual sticker for an RPZ resident vehicle. Limit two per address (apts. A/B/C are separate addresses). Note: average cars per RPZ household is 1.2. Priority for stickers:

- 1) Residents lacking off-street parking – 1st car. If you have a driveway then you already occupy a street space with your curb cut. Park in your driveway
- 2) Residents with off-street parking – 1st car.
- 3) Second cars
- 4) Handicapped parking to be painted for residents with documentation

After Hours Visitors and Business Patrons.

- 1) Residents can inexpensively purchase visitor passes for houseguests and evening invitees (e.g. \$5 for 25 = only \$0.25 each). Printed on “sticky notes” and good for 24 hours. Filled in with a date and time they allow parking in the RPZ.
- 2) Businesses can purchase visitor passes for their patrons at similar prices. Printed on a different color sticky note and good for 4 hours. Ample time for a restaurant visit.

Benefits:

- 1) More parking in the RPZ because spaces do not need to be individually striped and marked “residential” with insufficient space for a car restricted to scooters. Parking experts suggest parking increased 10-15% possibly eliminating the need for incongruous, multi-million dollar parking garages. Some scooter parking preserved.
- 2) Savings from reduced maintenance.
- 3) Anyone can park anywhere during the day thus reducing traffic and distracted drivers. Contractors can find parking near projects without being residents. Patrons of neighborhood grocers and other businesses can find parking.
- 4) RPZ residents can find parking when they return from work and weekend errands.
- 5) After-hours visitors to the RPZ know where they can find metered parking and parking lots.
- 6) Island residents living outside the RPZ have four hour free parking at public lots.
- 7) Encourages alternative transportation to the downtown “party zone” = less drunk driving and improved public safety.

Flexibility: For the price of signage the program can be refined. RPZ permits might be 12 months per year to start then possibly changed to “season” if shown to be unnecessary year-round. Or a City Sticker alone could be valid in the RPZ if experience shows neighborhood residents have ample accommodation. Meter parking could be increased either side of Duval if demand is present. Very inexpensive to try and easy to modify.