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OLA #01149

## LEGISLATIVE ANALYST REPORT

TO: HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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DATE: February 11, 2002

SUBJECT: **24-HOUR RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMITS**

### SUMMARY OF REQUESTED ACTION

A request introduced by Supervisor Leno requests the Office of the Legislative Analyst (OLA) to research how the City of Los Angeles and other municipalities have managed and funded 24-hour residential parking permits in high density urban areas. Further clarification with the Supervisor's aides indicated that the Supervisor wished to explore the feasibility of implementing a similar program here in San Francisco.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

San Francisco has 25 residential parking zones that exempt qualified, permitted residential vehicles from 2-hour restrictions on parking. Currently, in the Castro (Area S) parking is generally restricted for non-permitted vehicles from 8:00am to 9:00pm Monday to Friday. Increasing numbers of vehicles in these zones have highlighted the need to address the demand for residential parking. One possible mechanism for reducing demand is to increase enforcement by extending enforcement hours around the clock.

This paper summarizes the current practice of Residential Parking Permit (RPP) enforcement in San Francisco and looks at a number of other cities on which to model a new 24-hour RPP program. After reviewing programs in eight other municipalities, this paper finds that only one -- the City of West Hollywood -- provides 24-hour enforcement of its residential parking zones. While it has been a qualified success in West Hollywood, four essential factors must be considered prior to implementation here in San Francisco, namely cost, convenience, impacts on business, and security. After review of these four factors, the Office of the Legislative Analyst finds that widespread implementation of 24-hour residential parking enforcement may not be the best solution for San Francisco.

## **Recommendation**

At a minimum, DPT should enforce its residential permit zones for the full posted hours. In addition, the Board may consider expanding the current hours of enforcement in residential zones to cover the heavily-trafficked evening hours. Over the long-term, however, more difficult decisions may have to be made to better align the currently high demand for residential parking with the low available supply.

## **RESIDENTIAL PARKING IN SAN FRANCISCO**

### **Current Practice**

Initially authorized in 1976, San Francisco currently has 25 Residential Parking Permit (RPP) zones covering approximately 13 percent of the total acreage of the city. Each zone has multiple sub-zones that range from block-level metered parking on commercial streets to 3-hour parking around public areas such as schools and churches. Residents of RPP zones may register as many vehicles to their home address as they like for the low annual cost of \$27 per vehicle.

Forty seven parking control officers (PCOs) patrol these 25 zones in two eight-hour shifts (see Attached map). The morning shift covers the hours from 8:00am to 4:00pm with 36 officers providing on-street enforcement between the hours of 9:00am and 3:30pm. The afternoon shift begins at 1:00pm and continues until 9:00pm, with nine officers providing on-street enforcement between the hours of 2:00pm and 8:30pm, the latter hours primarily in Areas A (North Beach), G (Russian Hill), and S (Castro).

In fiscal year 2000-2001, the Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT) issued 89,754 residential, temporary, and visitor parking permits in San Francisco and collected approximately \$2.4 million in enrollment revenues. During this same time period, DPT issued 246,578 parking violations (an average of approximately 20 tickets per PCO per weekday) and collected \$6,102,805 in RPP ticket revenues<sup>1</sup>.

Unfortunately, DPT does not have current figures on the cost of administering the RPP program. According to DPT, a large portion of the cost is contained in the Engineering Department including processing, surveying and evaluating all requests for new and extensions to RPP areas as well as posting and maintaining RPP area signage. In addition, many of the resources used by the RPP program, including staff and vehicles, are not solely dedicated to RPP but are also employed in ticket enforcement elsewhere in the city. According to Diana Hammons, DPT is currently in the process of identifying the total cost of the program. However, this information will not be available for several months.

### **Defining the Problem**

Given an estimated parking supply of 87,457 on-street<sup>2</sup> parking spaces in the 25 RPP zones (approximately 13 percent of San Francisco's 47 square miles), vehicles with valid residential parking

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<sup>1</sup> PCOs wrote an additional 150,000 non-RPP tickets last year in their total 52,041 field hours.

<sup>2</sup> The number of on-street spaces is estimated by DPT by multiplying 946 miles of non-highway road \* 2 sides per road \* 5280 feet per mile / 25 feet per space \* 0.8 (to factor for driveways and intersections). OLA then subtracting DPT counts for red, yellow, green, blue and taxi zones and metered parking spaces and multiplied by 0.3 to estimate the number of

permits exceed the number of estimated spaces available (See Appendix A: Permits Issued by Area). However, not all permitted vehicles operate on the same schedules and compete for parking at the same time nor do they all regularly park on the street. On any given day and at any given time of day, an unknown number of permitted vehicles are outside of the permit area. Similarly, an unknown number of vehicles have both designated off-street parking spaces and residential parking permits.

Nonetheless, the data suggests that the often-cited parking problem in residential areas is not solely a problem of enforcement but rather that there exists a high ratio (1.03) of permits issued per estimated space which may indicate an inefficient allocation of supply and demand for permits. In other words, the current low price of \$27 per permit vastly underrepresents the demand for parking. While enforcement of non-permitted vehicles will no doubt help to alleviate the parking pressure, especially during peak hours of visitation, it should be recognized that non-permitted vehicles form only a portion of the demand for parking. Therefore, only a solution that aligns permit supply with demand -- whether by reducing the number of both non-permitted AND permitted vehicles or by increasing the price of parking -- will have long term impacts on addressing the region's increasing parking shortage.

To this effect, the law on residential parking remains clear. Namely, residents can inexpensively register as many vehicles to their valid address as they like but, given the number of other permits issued, they may not always be able to find a place to park them. So long as this remains city policy, residents may continue to enjoy the right to park in their neighborhoods but will be denied the guarantee that they will find parking that is convenient to their homes.

### **OTHER RESIDENTIAL PARKING PROGRAMS**

The Board asked the OLA to review other municipalities that have implemented 24-hour enforcement of their residential permit zones. In response, the OLA reviewed eight municipalities with residential parking permit zones representing a diversity of geographic and urban characteristics including the cities of New York, Los Angeles, Berkeley, San Jose, Seattle, Madison, WI, Portland, OR and West Hollywood, CA. The survey found that while each of these cities limit parking to residents and short term (usually two hour) visitors in designated areas, only one -- the City of West Hollywood -- has 24-hour enforcement of their residential parking zones.

#### **Privately Contracted 24-hr Parking Enforcement: The West Hollywood Example**

The densely populated 1.9 square mile City of West Hollywood has nine residential parking permit areas covering over 60 percent of the city. On July 1, 1999, the city entered into a contract with Serco Management Services, Inc. (one of the largest private outsourcing companies in the world with operations in Los Angeles and San Francisco as well as 35 countries) to privately administer all parking enforcement services within the city, including the residential parking permit areas.

For fiscal year 2001-2002, the City of West Hollywood budgeted \$1,156,146 from its general fund to pay for the contract and expects the nine staff and 19 parking control officers employed to collect approximately \$6.6 million in parking ticket revenues for an annual net gain to the city of \$5.45 million. The City Parking Manager, Vit Vittatote, manages the contract and meets with Serco

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spaces in a residential parking zone. It should be specifically stated that by "on-street" parking this figure intentionally excludes off-street parking such as residential garages and commercial lots.

representatives weekly, per the contract. In an early January phone interview, Mr. Vittatoe indicated that the program was "very much a success" with city management of the program "limited to contract management."

### **FEASIBILITY OF 24-HOUR ENFORCEMENT IN SAN FRANCISCO**

West Hollywood offers a unique solution to managing residential parking 24-hours in a densely populated, mixed use urban area. However, several factors should be considered prior to establishing 24-hour residential parking enforcement here in San Francisco.

#### **1. Cost**

While the majority of permit areas do not have the commercial activity to justify 24-hour enforcement, some areas such as North Beach and the Castro may. As an example, DPT estimates that the total annual cost of adding one additional PCO, including all labor and materials costs, ranges between a high of \$112,000 and a low of \$104,000. In order for additional PCOs to pay for themselves through parking ticket revenues, the DPT further estimates that each PCO must write approximately 17 tickets per 8-hour shift (a feat that, on average, PCOs are currently exceeding).

Extending enforcement in Area S alone (the Castro) from the current 8:00am to 9:00pm Monday to Friday to round-the-clock coverage would require adding a third shift of enforcement, reassigning the hours of those shifts, and hiring an additional six PCOs for a total additional cost of between \$626,000 and \$675,000. With parking turnover decreasing through the night, the OLA finds it unlikely that these six PCOs could issue the average 95 additional tickets per day required to recoup the costs of this alternative<sup>3</sup>. Three other alternatives, however, may be more plausible:

1. Enforcing the area 24-hours but reducing after hours enforcement from complete coverage to random sweeps. This would only require two additional PCOs and cost the city between \$209,000 and \$225,000, or approximately 32 additional tickets per day.
2. Limiting 24-hour enforcement to a few congested areas within the permit zone. The cost of this alternative would depend entirely on the size of the area under consideration and would have to be coordinated with the Engineering Department at DPT to effectively manage parking supply.
3. Extending the evening hours of enforcement an additional three hours until 12:00am midnight. This would require three additional PCOs and cost the city between \$313,000 and \$337,000, or approximately 48 additional tickets per day.

#### **2. Convenience**

Enforcing parking 24-hours prevents visitors and guests from bringing their cars into the city overnight during weekdays unless they have prearranged places to park. With BART service ending at midnight and temporary permits not readily available, this type of arrangement would likely serve to further anger both residents and visitors already frustrated by San Francisco's parking shortage.

Extending hours, however, could have the desired benefit of freeing up spaces for residents during peak times of turnover in the early evening. In Area S, for example, enforcement currently ends at 8:00pm. A non-permitted vehicle, therefore, can legally park through the night beginning just under two hours before enforcement ends or, in this case, 6:00pm. As this coincides with the time residents

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<sup>3</sup> Computed by dividing the average additional cost of \$650,500 by (260 weekdays/year \* \$35/ticket \* 75% collection rate), or 95.31 tickets/day.

likely return from work, extending effective enforcement hours past 10:00pm (alternative #3 above) could allow more residents to find parking after returning from work.

### **3. Impact on Business**

San Francisco merchants rely on their ability to draw customers from outside their surrounding neighborhoods. Making it more difficult for customers to park in the area will invite opposition from chambers of commerce, merchant associations and individual shopkeepers.

### **4. Security**

One issue cited by DPT concerns the security of PCOs during after hours enforcement. Multiple cases have been documented of PCOs enduring verbal and physical abuse with the majority occurring in the evening hours. In San Francisco, after hours enforcement currently exists in North Beach, the Castro, and Russian Hill until as late as 10:00pm and is enforced by teams of two PCOs working in tandem. In West Hollywood, five PCOs patrol the night shift (11:00pm - 6:30am) individually with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's office providing occasional on-call security backup as well as support issuing tickets in unusual cases. According to Mr. Vittatoe, this procedure has worked effectively in West Hollywood without compromising PCO security.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The RPP program in San Francisco does not currently function as effectively as it could. At a minimum, enforcement should continue through the end of the posted hours of enforcement, rather than the current practice of beginning enforcement one hour late and ending one hour early in all 25 RPP zones. In areas such as the Castro, this simple measure would free up on-street spaces for residents at a critical time: when they return home from work between 6:00pm and 7:00pm.

Three other alternatives for increasing enforcement are available to the Board: enforcing 24-hours with random sweeps, enforcing 24-hours but in limited subzones, or extending enforcement hours beyond currently posted hours. None of these measures come without cost as indicated in the section on feasibility above.

Finally, the Board should consider pursuing a longer-range strategy aimed at aligning the mismatch between parking supply and demand while preserving the right of residents of all incomes to park their vehicles near their homes.

**Appendix A: Permits Issued by Area****Department of Parking and Traffic**

## Permit Parking Program Summary

As of June 30, 2001

<b>Permit Area</b>	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Temporary</b>	<b>Visitor</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>A</b> North Beach	10,921	654	346	11,921
<b>B</b> Alemany	229	9		238
<b>C</b> Chinatown	6,634	417	153	7,204
<b>D</b> Glen Park	1,304	22	10	1,336
<b>E</b> Park Merced	1,881	51	20	1,952
<b>F</b> Presidio Hgts	2,868	95	38	3,001
<b>G</b> Pacific Hgts	10,108	532	269	10,909
<b>H</b> Lakeside	565	6	2	573
<b>I</b> Mission	2,001	63	28	2,092
<b>J</b> Sunset	5,301	198	106	5,605
<b>K</b> Cow Hollow	5,822	312	141	6,275
<b>L</b> Lone Mountain	2,608	96	33	2,737
<b>M</b> Marina	4,770	248	96	5,114
<b>N</b> Inner Richmond	3,816	134	46	3,996
<b>O</b> West Portal	2,037	24	9	2,070
<b>P</b> Beidman	1,472	79	30	1,581
<b>Q</b> Bayview	28	1		29
<b>R</b> Cleary Court	835	49	12	896
<b>S</b> Duboce/Castro	11,754	689	329	12,772
<b>T</b> Forest Hill	357	5		362
<b>U</b> SOMA	1,281	58	19	1,358
<b>V</b> Balboa Pk	1,382	29	2	1,413
<b>W</b> Potrero/SFGH	1,866	63	31	1,960
<b>X</b> Potrero Hill				-
<b>Y</b> South Beach	286	24	6	316
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>80,126</b>	<b>3,858</b>	<b>1,726</b>	<b>85,710</b>
Teachers				876
Car Pool CPMC				39
Car Pool SFGH				144
Farmers				10
Van Pool				154
Contractors				2821
				4044
<b>Total</b>				<b>89,754</b>

**Appendix B: PCO Cost**

<b>Department of Parking and Traffic</b>				
<b>Cost of 8214 Parking Control Officer</b>				
	<b>Low</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>High</b>
	<b>Bi Weekly</b>		<b>Yearly</b>	
Salary	1,329	1,596	34,687	41,656
Fringe Benefits				
FICA		6.20%	2,151	2,583
Medicare		1.45%	503	604
Retirement		7.50%	2,602	3,124
Health		2567.16	2567	2567
Dental		1,113.00	1113	1113
Subtotal			8,935	9,991
<b>Total Labor</b>			<b>43,622</b>	<b>51,647</b>
Supplies				
Uniforms, initial			1,418	1,418
Safety equipment			1,000	1,000
Supplies			160	160
Radio			2,839	2,839
Ticket writer, printer, rack			9,456	9,456
Vehicle			25,114	25,114
Facilities			20,833	20,833
<b>Total Materials</b>			<b>60,820</b>	<b>60,820</b>
<b>Total Labor and Materials</b>			<b>104,442</b>	<b>112,467</b>

Note: DPT does not have sufficient space in their current facility to house additional officers

# RESIDENTIAL PERMIT PARKING AREAS

San Francisco, CA 2002

