



**Date:** February 2, 2010  
**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske, Fifth District (5)  
**Subject:** **Residential Parking Relief in Neighborhoods Adjacent to Public Parks**

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Discussion

Because of the lack of sports facilities in Long Beach and to accommodate the growing interest in soccer and other field sports, existing public parks are being utilized to capacity and beyond, resulting in increased vehicle traffic in neighborhoods. The City is allowing more and more teams to practice and play at these parks – whose neighborhoods have not normally experienced large amounts of non-residential parking. While the City has increased access to team sports at the parks, it has not increased the number of available parking spaces to accommodate the team participants and sports fans.

The increased use by sports teams at these parks has also increased the number of hours of play at these fields which is negatively impacting neighborhoods by generating more traffic, noise, lighting, litter and parking.

Residents who live adjacent to these parks are complaining that sport participants are double parking and blocking residents' driveways for extended periods of time. Some drivers have gone over driveways and lawns to turn around. Heavy and illegal parking is endangering the children who live in the area and those who come to play sports in the parks. The police are being called out on a routine basis to respond to the resident complaints.

The residents have asked the City for relief by requesting that the City:

1. Reduce potentially hazardous traffic conditions and congestion resulting from the increased number of vehicles parked adjacent to City parks.
2. Protect the area from polluted air, excessive noise and refuse caused by entry and exit of these vehicles.
3. Protect the residents of the area from unreasonable burdens in obtaining parking near their residences and in gaining access to their residences and/or property.
4. Preserve the safety of children, pedestrians and in general promote traffic safety, good order and alleviate hardships caused by parking congestion often resulting in strained relationships between residents and those using the parks.

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### **Preferential Parking**

The vehicle code allows the parking of vehicles on any public street without restriction unless a municipality enacts an ordinance allowing preferential parking with permit.

The City of Long Beach allows preferential parking but within the last two years has attached a fee of \$1200 for the parking study needed to determine if the neighborhood is parking impacted. If the study indicates the neighborhood is impacted, a petition is circulated to determine if 60% or more of the residents on a street agree to restrict parking to residents with permits. If the majority agree, signage and permits are required and must be paid by the residents.

The residents impacted by the increased use of the public parks adjacent to them do not believe that it is fair for the City of Long Beach to charge residents a \$1200 fee for a parking study or the costs for signage and permits to deal with a parking problem that has been caused by the City permitting more and more sports teams to use the parks, thereby bringing more vehicles into the neighborhood. It is not clear whether or not other cities charge their residents for a parking study and signage.

### **SUGGESTED ACTION:**

Request that the City Traffic Engineer be given authorization to determine if a neighborhood is impacted by traffic increased directly due to use of a public park by permitted team sports without charge for such study and if such study indicates a neighborhood is parking impacted because of park use, then after a petition is circulated and affirmed by 60% of the residents, preferential parking shall be implemented. The residents shall not be charged for the signage but will have to pay for annual permits.