CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
333 West Ocean Boulevard 9th Floor • Long Beach, CA 90802 • (562) 570-6383 • Fax (562) 570-6012

ORD-38

October 6, 2015

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation to declare ordinance amending the Long Beach Municipal Code by adding Section 10.22.184 regarding the establishment of a pilot program to permit left-curb parking in designated areas read the first time and laid over to the next regular meeting of the City Council for final reading. (District 3)

DISCUSSION

The Peninsula neighborhood is a parking impacted neighborhood with limited land available for development. Residential streets in this neighborhood can be characterized as short, narrow roadways, perpendicular to Ocean Boulevard, that dead-end at the water's edge, without sufficient turn-around areas for vehicular traffic. This thereby reduces the space available for safely maneuvering vehicles, to which is attributed the 30 accidents within the subject area during a five-year period; eight of these accidents involved vehicles moving in reverse.

Given the parking challenges that exist in the Peninsula, drivers often park the left side of their vehicles parallel to the left-hand curb out of convenience and safety. This practice is illegal, pursuant to the California Vehicle Code, which has created enforcement issues in the area. The State's Vehicle Code requires that all vehicles parked along two-way streets have the vehicle's right-hand wheels within 18 inches of the right-hand curb, unless expressly exempted.

City of Long Beach (City) staff worked with former Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal to find a State legislative solution to this problem. In 2010, AB 2067 was enacted and provides the City with State legislative authority to implement a pilot program that will give Peninsula area drivers the option to park the left side of their vehicles on the left-hand side of the roadway, parallel to and within 18 inches of the left-hand curb on two-way residential streets perpendicular to Ocean Boulevard, beginning at Balboa Place and ending at 72nd Place, with the exclusion of 62nd Place.

As a condition of this authority, the State required the City to make a finding, supported by a professional engineering study, that the pilot program is necessary to facilitate safe and orderly movement of vehicles on the affected roadways. City traffic engineers

have completed the study to meet this criterion and concluded that the current parking circumstances could be improved and safety potentially enhanced. The professional engineering study finds that implementation of left-hand parking will likely reduce the chance of unsafe vehicle movements, such as a vehicle needing to drive in reverse to exit a residential street. (Exhibits A and B).

The City is required to enact a local ordinance to establish the Peninsula Pilot Parking Program, per AB 2067. Two years after the ordinance is adopted, the City must submit a report that outlines the safety performance and parking efficiency of the pilot program to the Legislature. The City's authority to continue the pilot program expires three years after the date the ordinance is adopted, pending further legislative action to make this pilot program permanent. If findings from this pilot program demonstrate that traffic safety is improved upon by allowing vehicles to park on the left-hand side of the roadway, parallel to and within 18 inches of the left-hand curb in the Peninsula area of the City, City Staff will recommend that these regulations become permanent, specific to two-way residential streets perpendicular to Ocean Boulevard, beginning at Balboa Place and ending at 72nd Place, with the exclusion of 62nd Place.

The pilot program is slated to begin no later than December 2015. Signs will be posted on the affected streets to inform motorists that parking on the left-hand side is legal. Additionally, Peninsula residents will be notified by mail on the details of the pilot program.

Interim City Traffic Engineer, Ignacio Ochoa, has reviewed the program and determined that it will maintain safety and reduce the potential for accidents.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Amy Webber on September 15, 2015 and by Budget Management Officer Victoria Bell on August 28, 2015.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on October 6, 2015, in order to begin the implementation of the traffic improvement and safety measures for the impacted areas.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation cost of the pilot program is estimated at $2,500. The cost includes notifying residents by mail of the pilot program and the installation of signage to inform motorists that parking on the left side of the road is legal. Sufficient funds are budgeted in FY 16 in the General Fund (GF) in the Public Works Department (PW). Potential revenue loss from decreased parking citations is expected to be minimal.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

ARA MALOYAN, PE
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

AM:sf
P\CL\Left hand Parking CL Rev3.doc

Attachments:
Exhibit A – Professional Engineering Study
Exhibit B – Street Photos
Ordinance

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER

Exhibit A

City of Long Beach

Review of Safety and Parking Efficiency Impacts of Vehicles Parking on the Left-hand Side of the Roadway in the "Peninsula" Area

Prepared by:

City of Long Beach, Department of Public Works
Traffic Engineering Division

BACKGROUND

The "peninsula" area of the city of Long Beach contains a significant number of narrow north/south two-way dead-end streets, which are perpendicular to Ocean Boulevard. These streets have substandard roadway widths of 24 – 27 feet with no cul-de-sacs or sufficient turn around area for vehicular traffic. In addition, these streets are within the City's parking impacted area and the high number of parked vehicles further reduces the space available for maneuvering vehicles. As a result, ingress and egress prove to be difficult at all times.

The limited space for mobility has led to "peninsula" area residents and visitors parking their vehicles with the left-hand side of the vehicle parallel with the left-hand side of the roadway for safety and convenience. Residents argue that parking on the left side of the street reduces their risk of causing property damage that may result from attempts to turn their vehicle around. However, California Vehicle Code (Section 22502a) requires vehicles stopped or parked on two-way streets to have their right-hand wheels within 18 inches of the right-hand curb; vehicles violating this law are subject to citation.

In response, City Staff worked with Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal to petition the State Legislature to allow parking on the left-hand side in outstanding situations. Assembly Bill 2067 (Lowenthal) was signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger on August 13, 2010 and authorizes the City of Long Beach to implement a pilot program that would permit vehicles to park on the left-hand side of the roadway parallel to and within 18 inches of the left-hand curb on two-way local residential streets that dead-end with no cul-de-sac or other designated area in which to turn around. This program applies to dead-end streets perpendicular to Ocean Boulevard in the "peninsula" area of the City of Long Beach, specifically streets between Balboa Avenue and 72nd Place, with the exclusion of 62nd Place. As a condition of AB 2067, the City of Long Beach is required to make a finding, supported by a professional engineering study, that the ordinance is justified by the need to facilitate the safe and orderly movement of vehicles. This study is a response to that requirement and was completed by City of Long Beach traffic engineers.

ANALYSIS

City traffic engineers reviewed roadway designs, performed field visits, tested vehicle maneuverability, examined alternatives and analyzed accident data in preparation of this report.

The subject area is defined as the "peninsula" area of the City of Long Beach, which is located along Ocean Boulevard, east of Balboa Avenue. Ocean Boulevard is a four-lane roadway with two-lanes in each direction and a partial center median. The streets in question (also termed "residential streets") are all perpendicular to Ocean Boulevard.

Within the subject area, there have been 30 accidents in the past five years. With 37 streets in the subject area, this comes out to an accident rate of 0.16 accidents have occurred per street per year. Eight of these accidents involved vehicles moving in reverse

As a result of the analysis, the following findings were determined:

Finding #1: Permitting vehicles to park on the left-hand side of identified streets will enhance safety and parking efficiency.

Permitting vehicles to park on the left-hand side of identified streets will enhance safety and parking efficiency. The widths of roadways in the "peninsula" area range from 24 – 27 feet. Thus, when parking spaces on both sides of the roadway are occupied, only one direction of travel is permitted. This becomes problematic when a motorist enters one of the dead-end streets and encounters an exiting motorist. The entering motorist will have to back out of the street onto Ocean Boulevard in order to allow the exiting motorist to exit (Figure 1). Any maneuver by the exiting motorist will not provide enough room for the entering motorist because the streets do not contain cul-de-sacs or enough passing room.

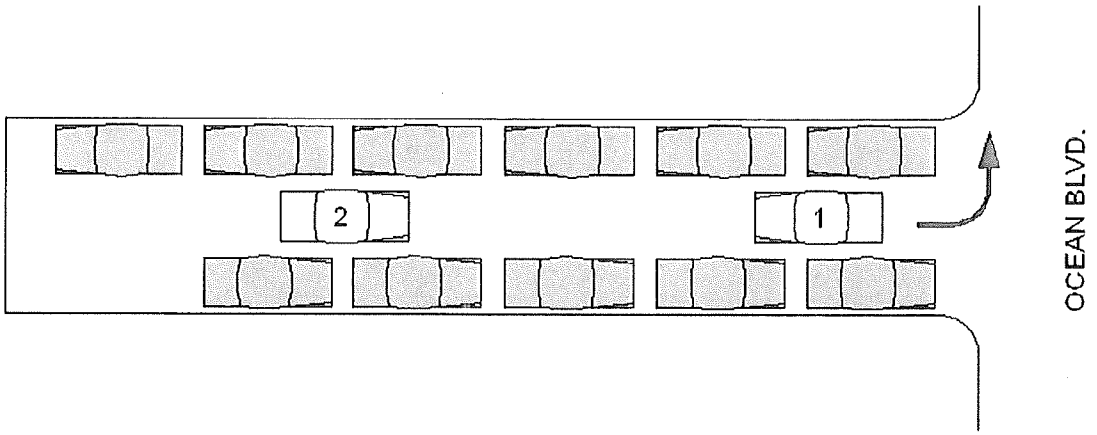


Figure 1 – Vehicle 1 must back out into Ocean Blvd in order for Vehicle 2 to exit the street.

With left-hand parking permitted, the entering vehicle has an option to park on both sides of the street without driving to the end to turn around (Figure 2). This reduces the chances of conflict between entering and exiting vehicles.

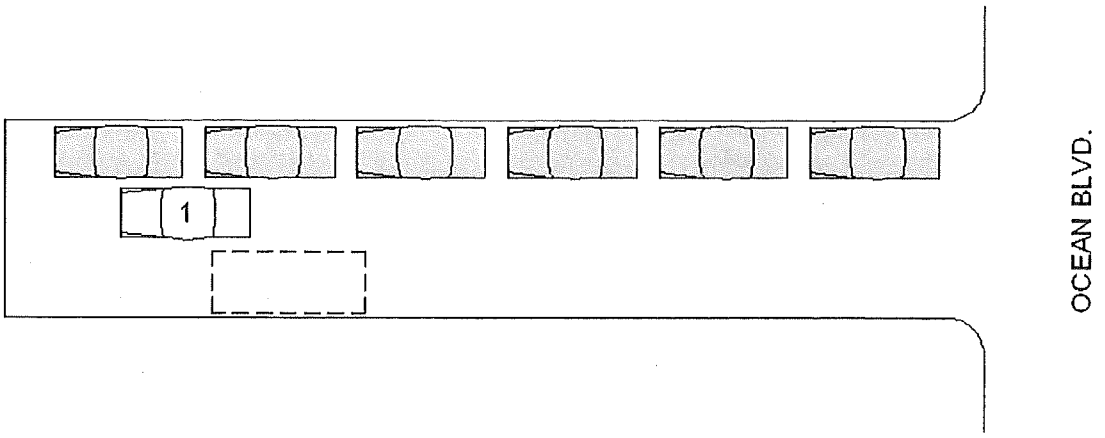


Figure 2 – Under current State law motorist must turn around to access parking on the other side of the street.

Current conditions require motorists to turn around to access parking on the other side of the street and, in doing so, it is most likely that the motorist will take the first parking spot available; therefore filling the parking spaces from the dead end side first. This reduces the space at the end for other vehicles to turn around causing more difficulty. With left-hand parking permitted, parking spaces will likely fill from spots closest to Ocean Boulevard rather than the dead end, providing more space for mobility should a motorist need to turn around (Figure 3).

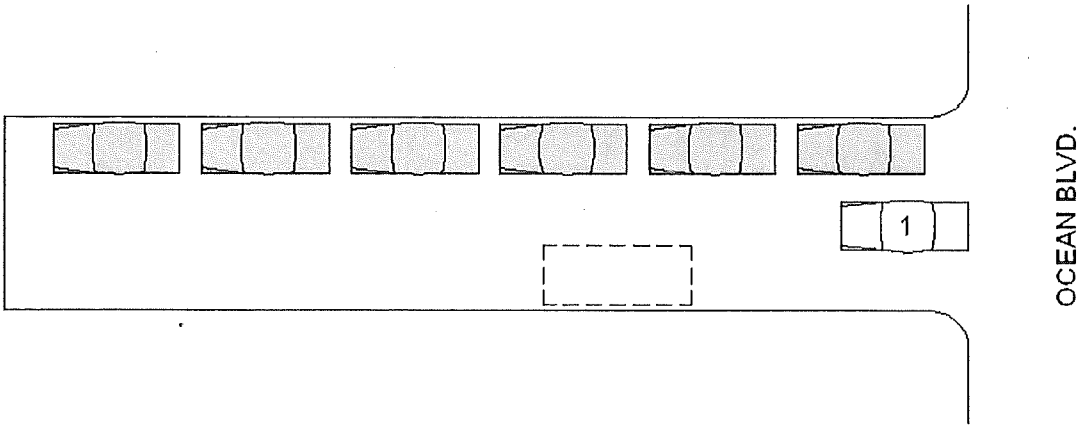


Figure 3 – Left-hand side parking will fill parking spaces from outlet to the dead end providing more space at the dead end should a vehicle need to turn around.

Finding #2: Vehicles exiting from parking spaces on the left-hand side of residential streets have greater sight distance visibility than other exiting vehicles.

A possible objection to allowing left-hand side parking is that such action would force all drivers who park on the left-hand side to back into Ocean Boulevard when exiting the residential streets, potentially crossing two lanes of traffic in order to orient the car in the desired direction on Ocean Boulevard (Ocean Boulevard is a four-lane roadway with two-lanes in each direction and a partial center median). In response to this possible objection, city traffic engineers note that this condition already exists with vehicles parked on the right-hand side. In addition, vehicles on the left would have greater sight distance visibility when reversing and, hence, would be executing a safer traffic movement.

Furthermore, city traffic engineers rarely observed vehicles to reverse across two lanes of Ocean Boulevard traffic. Currently, only the vehicles parked on the right hand side closest to Ocean Boulevard are likely to execute the maneuver, whereas vehicles parked further away typically have the option to turn around and enter Ocean Boulevard head on. As mentioned previously, left-hand parking is expected to increase the amount of space at the dead-end and encourage vehicles to drive to the end, turn around, and exit the residential streets appropriately.

Lastly, the risk of vehicles exiting in reverse and crossing two lanes of traffic is further reduced as only eight intersections do not have a median in place and would permit such maneuver. Of the 30 accidents that had occurred in the past five years in the entire subject area, none have been involved the maneuver of reversing across two lanes of Ocean Boulevard.

Finding #3: There are no alternatives that are both viable and would enhance safety and parking efficiency.

Several alternatives to left-hand parking were examined for this study, but none are both viable and would enhance safety and parking efficiency.

The first alternative investigated was to limit parking only to one side of the roadway, which would allow more space for mobility. This would be the safest option, as vehicles would always have the space to turn around or pass another vehicle. However, this would decrease the number of parking spaces and further impact parking availability in the area. Therefore, limiting parking to only one-side of the roadway is not a viable solution.

A second alternative examined was to convert the residential streets to one-way roadways. Parking on the left-hand side would effectively be permitted under existing California Vehicle Code. However, it would require all vehicles to either exit or enter the street in reverse, including those vehicles that are coming from or going to existing

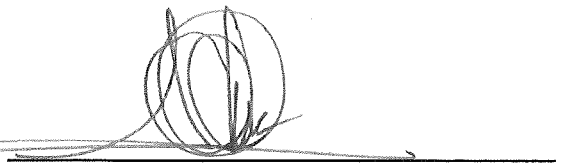
garages and driveways. Such conversion of the traffic operation would negatively impact safety.

Lastly, the possibility of constructing cul-de-sacs on each residential street was examined. The City of Long Beach Standard Plan identifies the minimum radius for cul-de-sacs and/or turnarounds as 38 feet, which is much greater than the width of the roadways in question. Thus, construction of cul-de-sacs would not be possible without encroaching on private property.

CONCLUSION

City traffic engineers have found that permitting left-hand parking on certain residential streets within the "peninsula" area of Long Beach facilitates safe and orderly movement of vehicles. This regulation would not expose drivers to any additional mobility conflict that does not already exist. Additionally, there are no other viable alternatives that would enhance safety and parking efficiency. It is therefore recommended that the pilot parking program be approved.

Submitted by: KT

Approved by: 

Ignacio Ochoa, Interim City Traffic Engineer

Exhibit B: Left Hand Parking Ordinance

66th Street off of Ocean Boulevard:

67th Street off of Ocean Boulevard:

ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH AMENDING THE LONG BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING SECTION 10.22.184 ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM PERMITTING LEFT CURB PARKING IN DESIGNATED AREAS

WHEREAS, the Peninsula area in the City of Long Beach poses unique challenges to on-street vehicle parking due to the number of dead-end streets with limited space to turn around; and

WHEREAS, California Vehicle Code Section 22502 (f) authorizes the establishment of a pilot program permitting vehicle parking on the left-hand side of the roadway parallel to and within 18 inches (18") of the left-hand curb on two-way local residential streets that dead-end with no cul-de-sac or turning area; and

WHEREAS, the City of Long Beach undertook a professional engineering study of the area, which found that left curb parking best facilitated the safe and orderly movement of vehicles on roadways in the Peninsula area; and

WHEREAS, the City Council now desires to implement such a pilot program in the designated area;

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach ordains as follows:

Section 1. Section 10.22.184 is added to the Long Beach Municipal Code to read as follows:

10.22.184 Pilot program establishing left curb parking in designated areas.

A. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Code, and

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY
CHARLES PARKIN, City Attorney
333 West Ocean Boulevard, 11th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802-4664

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pursuant to Section 22502 (f) of the California Vehicle Code, vehicles may park on the left-hand side of the roadway parallel to and within 18 inches (18") of the left-hand curb on two-way local residential streets that dead-end with no cul-de-sac or other designated area in which to turn around.

B. The area covered by this ordinance shall be limited to the streets perpendicular to Ocean Boulevard beginning with Balboa Place and ending at 72nd Place, but shall not include 62nd Place.

C. This ordinance shall not apply until signs or markings giving notice have been placed near the designated roadways.

D. This pilot program shall terminate three (3) years from the date of enactment of this ordinance unless otherwise authorized by the California Vehicle Code.

E. The City Traffic Engineer may, from time to time, promulgate rules and regulations, consistent with the purposes and provisions of this Section 10.22.184, to facilitate implementation of the Section.

Section 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance by the City Council and cause it to be posted in three (3) conspicuous places in the City of Long Beach, and it shall take effect on the thirty-first (31st) day after it is approved by the Mayor.

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OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY
CHARLES PARKIN, City Attorney
333 West Ocean Boulevard, 11th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802-4664

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was adopted by the City Council of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of _____, 2015, by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers: _____

_____

_____

_____

Noes: Councilmembers: _____

_____

Absent: Councilmembers: _____

_____

_____

City Clerk

Approved: _____ _____
(Date) Mayor

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