



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

**TO:** Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Eric Huseby, Assistant Division Manager, Public Works  
Ramiro A. Chavez, P.E. PgMP, Director/City Engineer, Public Works  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Ordinance – Proposed Amendments to Chapter 11.05 of the Municipal Code - July 30, 2024  
**DATE:** July 10, 2024

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### SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

An ordinance amending Chapter 11.05 of the Municipal Code, relating to Model Traffic Ordinance, by amending various sections to better align with current business practices; and adding two new sections to add parking management tools to enhance the safety and utilization of the right-of-way.

### BACKGROUND:

**This Department's Recommendation is Based On:** Parking Services has been working to identify areas of the Municipal Code that need updating to align those provisions with current business practices, modernize the application of the parking system laws, and address areas of developing and emerging need in the parking services context. In this vein, staff recommends amending two provisions of the Municipal Code to adapt to changing parking payment systems, recommends adding two new parking enforcement tools that will help address parking stressors and impacts and finally recommends amending outdated Revised Code of Washington (RCW) references as it relates to automated enforcement.

The proposed ordinance will update Chapter 11.05 of the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) as follows:

- Amend TMC Sections 11.05.707 and 11.05.708 to modernize the language therein to account for the developing ability of end-users of the City's Parking System to pay for parking through authorized online or digital applications and to permit enforcement options where users do not appropriately comply with such payment requirements.
- Amend TMC Section 11.05.250 to allow for the creation and administration of permit parking only zones, to provide administrative authority and flexibility to specified City personnel, and to provide for corollary enforcement options when end users do not appropriately comply with such zone use restrictions.
- Amend TMC to add a new section, Section 11.05.255, entitled "Permit Parking Only Zones – violation," which identifies the prohibited and allowable parking behaviors in permit parking only zones and provides the penalty for violations.
- Amend TMC to add a new section, Section 11.05.246, entitled "Obstruct bike lane or path," to prohibit the obstruction of designated bike lanes and to provide an enforcement option for violations thereof. This provision seeks to address an emergent and continuing need for enforcement and seeks to redress impacts to bicycle accessibility in designated pathways.
- Amend TMC Section 11.05.605 to reflect the new additions of 11.05.246 and 11.05.255.

Parking Services provides a vital service to the ongoing functionality of the City's roadways and corridors. -As part of an ongoing comprehensive review of available tools, staff has identified areas in TMC that need updating to help



match current business practices. -To this end, staff recommends updating the Code to specify how parkers can electronically pay to park, and the ramifications for failing to appropriately do so where the end user does not otherwise utilize the pay and display physical payment option.

Additionally, providing authority for the development and administration of permit parking only zones throughout the City will help mitigate impacts of parking stressors, contribute to the vitality of the City's business corridors, and ensure those attempting to patronize and visit businesses and places of interest within the City have access to parking to do so.

The first of the proposed additions would allow administrative flexibility in creating permit parking only zones and in catering to those zones' needs. -The current policy of the City for its parking system is to maximize the use of the right-of-way while encouraging utilization of parking to all users, manage the parking supply by using the 85 percent rule with the intent of accommodating existing and new economic growth, and mitigate any impacts on the adjacent neighborhoods. -Since the COVID-19 pandemic, parking behaviors have shifted dramatically in certain areas. -While the priority users in downtown and business districts remain the customer, client, and visitor, there are pockets of lower performing block faces that can benefit from an extended stay permit. -This new tool would allow the City to proactively allocate appropriate roadway space to account for business patronage, visitors, and corresponding parking turnover. -It would further allow staff to create permit parking only zones to better align with the strategy of maximizing use of the right-of-way in areas that may have an underlying need for parking resources and where the City has historically implemented no parking treatments.

The second proposed tool would provide parking enforcement with the ability to redress the vehicular obstruction of bicycle lanes or paths as the Municipal Code currently lacks a specific and appropriate tool for this purpose.

As such, staff recommends that the City Council adopt the amendments and additions as set forth in Exhibit "A".

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

The proposed amendments are responsive to community feedback about current parking practices and will provide necessary tools to allow the City to be more responsive to the needs of the users of the right-of-way. Implementation of the new tools will include focused outreach: where new permit parking is applied, feedback will be solicited from properties/users in the area; where bike lane enforcement is conducted, warnings will be issued in advance of citations to educate violators on the expectations.

### **2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

#### **Equity and Accessibility:**

Proper and safe use of the right-of-way enhances the accessibility and equitable use of the right-of-way for all types of users. The proposed amendments enhance the City's ability to enforce needed safety provisions while looking to maximize use of the right-of-way for all users.

#### **Livability: *Equity Index Score: Low Opportunity***

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

Improve access and proximity by residents to diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.



**Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).**

Increasing the tools in the parking management toolbox allows for the safe and efficient use of the right-of-way. The additional parking management tools proposed in this legislation will improve safety, accessibility, and the overall quality of the user experience in the right-of-way.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Do not update TMC as proposed.	None.	Would maintain antiquated code provisions in the face of developing technology; would prevent enforcement options in areas of need.

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

Increased compliance, maximization of the right-of-way, and lower ad hoc community enforcement requests are the desired outcomes of this legislation. Enforcement data is tracked regularly along with 311 service requests as part of Parking Services’ regular business practices. The City Council can be updated as appropriate.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends adopting the full package of amendments presented. If approved, staff will work on developing program elements for the additional “permit parking only” product. For the first 30 days after the effective date of the ordinance, staff will address violations by issuing warnings and distributing educational inserts instead of citations

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Minimal fiscal impact is anticipated from the proposed changes. The proposed tools may be implemented administratively within adopted budget levels.

Fund Number & Name	COST (CC/WBS/ORDER)	OBJECT	Cost Element	Total Amount
4140 Parking Enterprise Fund	530500		4350010	<\$5,000
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>&lt;\$5,000</b>

**What Funding is being used to support the expense?**

Additional costs associated with these changes are expected to be minimal and would likely be offset by revenues produced by enforcing the new provisions added to TMC.

**Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium’s current budget?**

**NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW**

Expenses are anticipated to be minimal and can be absorbed within the established 2023/24 Parking Services’ budget. Revenues associated with enforcement and citations are unknown but would be acknowledged within the 4140 Parking Fund and will offset any expenses.

**Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?**

YES

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**

YES



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**Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?**

No

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Exhibit A—proposed Tacoma Municipal Code amendments