

Traffic and Parking FAQs

(Updated July 31, 2009)

On May 21, 2009, the Somerville Traffic Commission passed several regulatory changes affecting parking in the City of Somerville. These included changes to the Residential Permit Parking Program, parking meter rates and hours of operation, and the creation of parking meter zones. These changes, as well as additional changes currently before the Traffic Commission, are designed to improve parking design in the City of Somerville by increasing parking space turnover through better pricing policies, to encourage better compliance with state registration and excise rules, and to expand the number of spaces available to residents. The Traffic Commission believes that these changes are in the best interest of both the business community and residents of the City of Somerville.

Question: *How can I provide testimony about parking changes?*

Answer: The Traffic Commission holds monthly public meetings with advance notice given on the City's website and in the local newspapers. When the Traffic Commission takes up new business, the Chair of the Commission may choose to take comments from interested parties, but the Commission's meetings are not public hearings. If an action of the Traffic Commission is challenged by public petition under the terms of Article VII of the City Charter Appendix (1978), the Traffic Board schedules a hearing prior to voting on whether to rescind or ratify the Commission's actions.

Question: *Where can I find information about Traffic and Parking regulations and permits?*

Answer: Call 311 for information. The City of Somerville's website is continually updated with new information. Please visit us at www.somervillema.gov.

Question: *Can plumbers, electricians, and other tradesmen working in my residence park on my block?*

Answer: Yes. If they are there to do short-term jobs (one or two days) they can use your Visitor Permit. If they will be working on longer term projects, they can go to Traffic and Parking to get their own temporary permit for the duration of the job.

Question: *How will residents be made aware of changes to residential permit parking?*

Answer: These changes have been well publicized by the Traffic Commission as well as several press releases issued by the City. Additionally, Traffic & Parking will be flyering the City to announce the changes over the next weeks and months.

Question: *Will the vote to adopt citywide permit parking be fully implemented and enforced on August 1st?*

Answer: No, implementation will *begin* on August 1st with the installation of new signage on affected streets. Once the signs are in place, the residents and businesses in the areas will be notified by hand-delivered flyer and by the City's Connect CTY mass notification system. Then, and only then, will enforcement begin. Actual implementation dates will vary by location.

Question: *Will private ways be affected by these changes in parking regulations?*

Answer: No. Private ways are not subject to city parking regulations, and it is up to abutters to develop and enforce their own parking policies. (Please note, however, that - as abutters to permitted public ways - residents of homes on private ways are eligible for visitors permits.

Question: *If I live on a street that will come under permit parking regulations as a result of these changes, how soon can I get a resident parking permit(s) for my vehicle(s) and visitor permits for friends, family or tradespeople visiting my home?*

Answer: You can get your permits right away. (And having a City of Somerville resident permit sticker on your vehicle allows you to park not only on your home street but on any permit parking street in the City.)

Question: *What about if I'm having a large gathering - a graduation party, a wedding, a big cookout, a family reunion etc.?*

Answer: Traffic and Parking will be happy to issue special event permits as needed. Each permit cost a dollar and is valid for one vehicle for one event.

Question: *Besides metered spaces, will there be any curbside spaces in the City were unpermitted vehicles can park without getting a ticket?*

Answer: Yes. To support daily visitors and customers, the City has called for eight main thoroughfares (Broadway, Medford, Highland, Holland, Elm, Somerville Ave, Beacon, and Washington) to change to Resident Permit Parking between 2:30 am and 10 am only with all other parking policies on those streets to remain as they are today.