

Town of Superior - Transportation & Safety Committee Meeting

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Proposal for Revision to Town Parking Regulations

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SUMMARY

By instituting alternate side parking on town streets, congestion would be reduced, increasing visibility and improving effectiveness of street sweepers and snowplows.

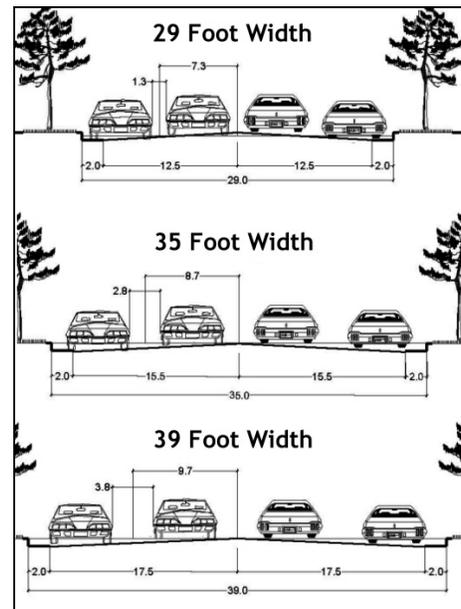
ISSUES ADDRESSED

Our goal is to solve two problems that have caused challenges for Superior residents:

1. Snowplows are unable to effectively clear snow from streets due to vehicles parked in their way during storm cleanup. In addition to inconveniencing residents, this can cause problems in emergency response, when there is nowhere reasonable for emergency vehicles to park (as evidenced by incident at 3128 Castle Peak on February 2, 2016).



2. Driving down narrow two-way thoroughfares (e.g., Castle Peak Avenue, Yarrow Circle, Torrey's Peak) is challenging, due to the need to weave back and forth to avoid parked vehicles on both sides of the road and the decreased visibility from these vehicles. The current street width is 28 feet (excluding two feet of asphalt on either side), which is near the minimum recommended for a two way street. Castle Peak was measured at 32 feet across, including the easement on either side. However, when vehicles do not park all the way against the curb, or vehicles are larger than the 6' average width used in this diagram (which many vehicles in Superior are), the width for driving and parking is further narrowed - creating a stressful situation for residents who are unable to safely drive through the community.



PROPOSED SOLUTION DETAILS

The Town would erect signs on both sides of the street indicating which days of the week it is acceptable to park on that side. When parking, vehicle owners would look at the signs to determine which side of the road should be used for street parking. If a vehicle is to be left for multiple days, it would need to be parked in a garage/driveway, or otherwise off the street.

This solution is successfully used by many other towns throughout the country. There are multiple ways to enact this.

- a) One side could allow parking Monday/Wednesday/Friday, and the other side to allow parking Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday/Sunday (as done in Albany, NY). Days are considered to run from 2:00am-1:59am, as per town regulations. Grouping the weekend days together helps avoid impacting homeowners who go away for a weekend, as it allows the vehicle to remain in place over the weekend.
- b) Another option could be to use odd/even calendar days along with odd/even sides of the street (as done in Iowa City, IA and Port Washington, WI - see signs at right). This solution could allow fewer signs to be erected.



PROPOSED SOLUTION IMPACT

Benefits

Limiting vehicles to one side of the street would **allow snow plows and street sweepers to more effectively clear the streets**. On streets where plows go in both directions, the plows are still unable to clear a sufficiently wide path due to the parked vehicles on both sides of the road. This solution would help residents to avoid having to shovel the street themselves to get out of their driveways.

With clear signage, it would be obvious when a vehicle is parked illegally - hopefully **limiting resources for enforcement**, as people would not want to be in flagrant violation of posted signs.

Residents have complained that it is difficult to see around intersections because of the many parked vehicles blocking the view; this solution would **improve traffic visibility** in at least one direction. It would also improve visibility into pedestrians and vehicles pulling out of driveways.

This solution will have the added benefit of **discouraging abandonment of vehicles** on the street, whether true abandonment or long-term parking of vehicles with up-to-date tags. While moving a vehicle from one side of the street to the other is a quick task, the small inconvenience may help to deter residents from having more vehicles than they actively use.

Adverse Impact

Residents would need to get used to **parking across the street** from their homes on alternate days, rather than always being able to park directly in front of their home. This could represent a minor inconvenience in having to walk across the street. However, we anticipate that this would also increase the number of residents parking in their garages/driveways rather than on streets, which would further help to mitigate the issue.

If many people do not follow the rules, this could result in **increased time from code enforcement** to ticket offending vehicles. However, this would be offset by the revenue increase for the town, which could also help with budget to turn code enforcement into a full time position.

There will be **initial cost to purchase the signs**, but this could be mitigated by tickets from non-enforcement. There would be no other ongoing costs associated with this proposal.

There may be issues with **homeowners not wanting signs in their yard**. One solution would be to make alternate side parking a town-wide rule and eliminate signs altogether (as done in Manhattan, NY) or only have signs at the entrances to the community. However, we believe this would cause confusion and also make enforcement more of a challenge.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED

1. **Ban all street parking within 24 hours of a storm**, requiring all residents to move vehicles to driveways or other locations. While this would be effective in solving the issue with snowplows, it would not help to mitigate other issues with visibility. This option could also place undue burden on families with more than four vehicles (or six vehicles in the case of three-car garages), and be seen as an extreme solution. Although we would still like to see this enacted to further improve snowplow operations, we view it as a potential next step if alternate side parking does not suffice.
2. Require homeowners to **park at least two vehicles in their driveway/garage**. This could be accomplished by issuing tags to homeowners, but would be very difficult to enforce, and would likely also receive a large negative reaction from residents.
3. **Ban parking directly across the street from another vehicle**. This would be difficult to enforce, as it would be unclear who parked first/second and who is in the wrong.
4. **Ban street parking overnight**. This would likely be viewed very unfavorably by homeowners, and has generally only been effective when put in place prior to community formation (e.g., as part of the initial bylaws).