

## **Request for Creation of a Residential Parking Permit Program within the ECCO Neighborhood**

The ECCO neighborhood is formally petitioning the City of Lincoln for the creation of a Parking Permit District within the ECCO neighborhood.

### **Reasons for Petition**

The primary reasons for the petition, are to reduce the following consequences to the ECCO residential district adjacent to UNL's East Campus caused by commuters, who use the district for free parking.

- Protect the residents of the residential district from unreasonable burdens in gaining access to their residences.
- Reduce hazardous traffic conditions in the residential district, particularly:
  - ✓ Number of pedestrians crossing Holdrege Street to gain access to UNL East Campus after parking in the residential district.
  - ✓ Number of vehicles seeking free parking on residential streets throughout the district.
  - ✓ Difficulty for emergency vehicles to serve residences, as access is impeded.
  - ✓ Difficulty for snow removal and street cleaning vehicles to serve residential streets, as access is impeded.
- Protect the residential neighborhood from increased pollution, noise, and trash caused by commuters.
- Reduce and simplify parking enforcement and expense to the City caused by current, varied parking restrictions within the district.
- Preserve the character of the district as a residential district and preserve the property values of the ECCO neighborhood.

### **Background – description of the Parking Conditions**

Residential parking in ECCO has evolved for many reasons over time, and has become increasingly challenging, primarily Monday – Friday during working hours, and to some extent during the evening, as a result of more night classes held on this campus. The ECCO neighborhood is adjacent to UNL's East Campus, resulting in a daily influx of students and faculty seeking the free and relatively unrestricted parking the neighborhood has afforded them up until now. Families in the past owned one vehicle; today, the average single-family home now has at least two vehicles, and often more. Rental houses often have at least three vehicles associated with the property – and more. Some rental house owners have converted lawns, even in the Historic District, to concrete, to circumvent the parking challenges, changing the character of the neighborhood and reducing home values. Most driveways are narrow, and on-street parking is not available to residents closest to campus, during the school day. It is difficult for residents to provide adequate parking for contractors and visitors during the day. Landscaping firms with trucks/trailers are unable to park to service yards during the week.

Attempts to mitigate parking issues have led to a “crazy quilt” of restrictions and signage. There are currently multiple iterations – sometimes on the same block; these have sprung up over time, as 2/3 of residents w/in multiple 300 foot street segments tried their best to find resolution. For example:

- Unrestricted parking on both sides
- Unrestricted parking on one side + no parking on the other side
- No parking on one side + restricted parking during specific hours (i.e. 8AM to 10AM)
- No parking on one side + restricted parking (M-F from 8AM to 4PM) on the other side

- ✓ Unrestricted on both sides all other times
- No doubt, there are more

As a result, there is a high percentage of contested tickets for the City to deal with; and continuing “education” as students turn over each semester. There is only one parking enforcement officer for the entire NE Lincoln area – including ECCO.

There have also been some issues with overflow fraternity parking as well (AGR, AGS, and FarmHouse are all located within ECCO boundaries). However, with the rebuilding of AGR and FarmHouse over the past 6-7 years, parking for those organizations was brought up to code (required to provide parking for 75% of stated “beds”/residents), and became less of a nuisance. However, none of the fraternities has enough off-street parking for all residents – there is still some overflow, requiring on-street parking to accommodate these residents.

Over the past several years, ECCO has met with representatives from UNL, Lincoln Police Department, the Mayor’s Office, and City Council members and fraternities, to find a mutually acceptable solution. All parties recognized that all of these pressures taken together can also make it more difficult to attract and retain single family homeowners in the ECCO neighborhood – something that is important to all parties concerned.

Studies have been undertaken by UNL with ECCO’s input. Some results from those studies:

- A significant number of cars of both UNL faculty and students come daily into the neighborhood to park off-campus Monday – Friday during working and/or school hours.
- Fully 95% of UNL students have at least one car – some have two.
- UNL continues to increase the number of students, and add classes on East Campus. Parking pressure will only increase.
- 800+ parking places go empty each day at East Campus, due to the close proximity of available, free parking in the neighborhood.
- UNL has increased bus transportation between campuses through StarTran to help reduce the need for students to commute via car. It is estimated that either a City bus or dedicated campus bus between campuses can be accessed every 10 minutes or less.

The outgrowth of our continuing efforts to find a solution, was the idea that a pilot Parking District should be established, monitored for “unintended consequences”, and “tweaked” as appropriate until the best final outcome can be established for our particular district moving forward.

### **Recommended Boundaries**

The ECCO Board is recommending boundaries as indicated below. There is no parking on Holdrege Street, 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, or the MoPac Trail; however, these are logical boundaries for areas perpendicular to them. All streets within the boundaries are public, and zoned residential on at least one side. On-street parking is not otherwise restricted due to safety mobility, or security issues; again, there would be no change to current restricted parking areas.

- North – Holdrege Street
- South – MoPac Trail
- East – 43<sup>rd</sup> Street
- West – 33<sup>rd</sup> Street

Areas within those boundaries where parking is currently completely restricted (“No Parking”) would remain the same. All current, applicable City ordinances would still apply (proximity to driveways, vehicles parking more than 24 hours in one spot, etc.). All other parking iterations within those boundaries would become permit parking areas only. All other areas within ECCO, but outside the Permit Parking District boundaries, would remain the same.

### **Proposed Hours of Restriction**

Restricted parking days/hours are proposed for Monday – Friday – 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM – permits would be required to park in the Parking District during these days/times.

Note: Night classes have become a bit of an issue for those areas closest to campus – most run from 6:00 to 9:00 PM. We seek to restrict commuter parking without creating unnecessary inconvenience for residents during the evening hours – for instance, holding a meeting or dinner party; we are hopeful that the 6:00 PM ending time should work, but it will need to be monitored during the pilot period, to determine any unintended consequences.

### **Permit Types and Eligibility**

The permit process will be digital, and managed by the City of Lincoln Parking Services Division. For those residents without computer access, they can visit the Parking Services Division office where staff will walk them through the process.

There is no need for a business permit category; the businesses within the proposed Parking District boundaries have adequate parking for their customers (Valentino’s Project – 2 buildings – at Holdrege & Idylwild; and convenience store @ 33<sup>rd</sup> & Holdrege).

#### *Resident (Home or Apartment)*

- Each resident who is a licensed driver would be eligible to register one vehicle for permit parking.

#### *Fraternity House Resident*

- Each Fraternity is considered one “residence”. Fraternity property owners must register/submit a list of fraternity residents’ vehicle license numbers to the City of Lincoln Parking Services Division for permits each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer).

#### *Visitor*

- Each household would be eligible for two Visitor permits.
- Visitor permits would be registered online for a specific time frame, not to exceed two weeks.
- Fraternity Houses and fraternity student residents are not eligible for Visitor permits.
- Fraternity house parent household is eligible for two Visitor permits.

#### *Contractor/Tradesman/Service Providers*

- Contractors/tradesmen/service providers with identifiable business vehicle signs would not be cited for parking in permit areas during restricted days/times.
- For larger projects with multiple contractors/employees parking in the neighborhood, and for those contractors/tradesmen/service providers without identifiable business vehicle signs, Contractor/Tradesman permits can be issued for a specific address for a specific time frame. Time frames may be extended as needed.

### **Penalties for Violation of Permit Restrictions**

- Any vehicle parked on the street in the Parking District without a permit would receive a City parking citation.
- Any vehicle even with a permit, if parking during restricted hours indicated by current signage, would receive a City parking citation.
- Residents violating Parking District rules could be subject to the loss of the right to receive a parking permit.

### **Cost to Residents**

It is understood that an online/digital approach for registering licensed driver residents, visitors, construction project participants, and/or vehicles and enforcement will be used, which would result in little additional cost overall, to the City. A Parking District database would be established and maintained by the City. There would be some initial and ongoing administrative fees for registering residents/vehicles; and initial fees for signage. Fees would be nominal to residents. Fees for additional permits will be set by the City; the Parking Services Division has suggested potential fees are \$20 for each additional Resident/Visitor permit.

UNL should be able to text/alert students and faculty very easily regarding the changes, once made; this should aid in initial and continuing education/enforcement about the Parking District. With a consistent program in place, there should be less confusion after initial implementation; it is possible that current administrative costs related to contested tickets may even be reduced. It is hoped that once established, enforcement costs would be flat or at least, not increase significantly.

### **Resolution of Parking Issues by Establishing a Residential Permit Parking District**

The ECCO Board believes that the establishment of a Residential Permit Parking District will significantly alleviate the challenges arising out of unrestricted parking by “outside” commuter vehicles in our neighborhood areas closest to UNL East Campus. This can be accomplished after initial implementation costs, at little or no additional administrative cost; and at nominal cost to residents.

- Residents will be able to use parking areas during the week in front of or near their homes, much as most City residents are able to do.
- Families with multiple vehicles will not have to “jockey” cars in narrow driveways – they can park on the street as needed.
- Service providers for residents will be able to park in front of or near homes they are servicing (plumber, electrician, piano tuner, landscaper, lawn service, etc.).
- Residents will have adequate parking for occasional visitors.
- Unnecessary neighborhood traffic will be reduced, providing a safer environment for residents.
- Illegal parking calls to the City will be reduced (vehicles parked across or too close to residents’ driveways, etc.)
- Emergency vehicle, street cleaning and snow removal will no longer be impeded – currently challenging, because streets are so often “parked in”.
- The neighborhood can more easily attract and retain families in the ECCO neighborhood, and maintain the ECCO neighborhood character and property values.