



CITY OF SOUTH ST. PAUL MEETING AGENDA

WORK SESSION

Training Room
125 3rd Avenue North
South St. Paul, MN 55075

Monday, April 13, 2026
7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Charter Commission Discussion
- B. Employee Service Recognition Program Policy
- C. Northview Aquatic Center Project Check-In
- D. Residential Permit Parking Program Phase-Out Follow-Up Discussion
- E. 2026 Conference Opportunities

3. COUNCIL COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

4. ADJOURNMENT



WORK SESSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: April 13, 2026
DEPARTMENT: Administration
PREPARED BY: Ryan Garcia, Kori Land, Deanna Werner
AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 2.A.

MEETING TYPE

Regular Meeting

AGENDA ITEM

Charter Commission Discussion

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED OR DESIRED OUTCOME

- Receive a high-level overview of the City's Charter Commission, including its purpose, structure, and authority under:
 - The South St. Paul City Charter
 - Applicable City ordinances
 - Minnesota Statutes (including Minn. Stat. §§ [410.05](#))
- Provide an opportunity for Council discussion and questions.
- No formal action is requested.

OVERVIEW

Background

The City Charter serves as the foundational governing document for the City of South St. Paul and establishes the structure, powers, and processes of municipal government. Under Minnesota law, home rule charter cities operate pursuant to Minn. Stat. [Chapter 410](#). The Charter Commission is a statutory body established under Minn. Stat. § [410.05](#) and reflected in [the City Charter](#). The South St. Paul City Charter provides that the Charter Commission consists of nine residents appointed for four-year terms in accordance with state law. South St. Paul's Charter Commission has been "dormant" for about ten years, although a membership roster of 7 residents has been confirmed from prior appointments. It is anticipated that these 7 members will be in attendance at the Worksession.

At the March 2, 2026 City Council Meeting, Council requested additional information on the Charter Commission, confirmation from currently appointed members of their continued interest in serving on the Charter Commission, and an opportunity to further deliberate the makeup of the Charter Commission prior to making appointments to this commission for 2026. Nonetheless, during the boards and commissions application process earlier this year, the City received applications from several individuals that expressed some level of interest in serving on the Charter Commission. These applications are included for reference, should the Council wish to advance any to a business meeting for nomination to the district court for appointment.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Charter Commission

The Charter Commission's primary role is to review the City Charter and recommend amendments to ensure it remains current, effective, and consistent with state law and community needs. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § [410.12](#), the Commission has authority to propose Charter amendments.

Key functions include:

- Reviewing the Charter periodically;
- Proposing amendments or revisions;
- Facilitating public input on proposed changes; and
- Submitting recommended amendments to the City Council and/or voters as required by law.

Authority and Responsibilities

The authority of the Charter Commission is derived from Minnesota Statutes and implemented through the City Charter. Under Minn. Stat. § 410.12, proposed amendments may be submitted to voters following review and procedural requirements (it should be noted that the City Council also retains the authority to propose Charter Amendments). The Commission functions as an independent advisory body on matters relating to the City's governing framework. The City Council retains legislative authority over ordinances and policy decisions, and all powers of the City are generally vested in the City Council except where otherwise provided by Charter or state law.

Purpose of this Worksession Discussion

The purpose of this worksession is to provide a foundational understanding of the Charter Commission's role and authority to support informed policy discussions and future considerations involving Charter amendments or governance structure. If Council feels prepared to have the discussion on potential appointments, a future business meeting Agenda Item will be prepared to consider such appointments. Staff will be available to answer questions from the City Council.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

ATTACHMENTS

None



WORK SESSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: April 13, 2026
DEPARTMENT: Administration
PREPARED BY: Ryan Garcia, Shelly Anderson
AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 2.B.

MEETING TYPE

Regular Meeting

AGENDA ITEM

Employee Service Recognition Program Policy

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED OR DESIRED OUTCOME

The attached policy was presented for approval on April 6, however Council sought further discussion on the topic at a worksession. Staff is seeking guidance on what, if any, changes to the existing policy are expected and acceptable to Council, so that the policy can be presented for approval at a future Council meeting.

OVERVIEW

In 2017, City Council approved an Employee Recognition Program Policy. The purpose of the policy is to recognize those employees who reach service milestones with the City for their years of service. [State Law allows a City](#) to (1) establish and operate a program of preventive health and employee recognition services for its employees; (2) to provide necessary staff, equipment and facilities; and (3) to expend funds, as necessary, to achieve the objectives of the program. [The program must be documented in writing and state clear wellness and recognition objectives, and the City Council must approve the program, with the council determining the amount necessary to achieve the objectives of the program.](#)

As adopted in 2017, the policy provided recognition in the form of "value points" which could be redeemed for products within an approved South St. Paul catalog of merchandise. In September 2022, the Policy was amended and the manner of recognition was adjusted to provide recipients with either a gift certificate to a local South St. Paul establishment or a Visa/Mastercard Gift Card. Council approved the award amounts for various milestones in September 2022. When the attached policy was presented for consideration at the April 6, 2026 Council Meeting, Council motioned to place the policy on the next worksession to discuss increasing the award amount(s), currently set as follows:

- 5 years of service - \$50.00
- 10 years of service - \$75.00
- 15 years of service - \$100.00
- 20 years of service - \$125.00
- 25 years of service - \$150.00
- 30 years of service - \$175.00

- 35 years of service - \$200.00
- 40+ years of service - \$225.00

In light of [definitive guidance recently published by the Office of the State Auditor](#) as it relates to public expenditures and specifically spending public funds on gift cards, we are recommending changing the Employee Recognition Program Policy to instead provide a service recognition awards as a (taxable) monetary benefit through the City's payroll process. Service awards are based on continuous years of service and granted in five-year length of service blocks. Along with service awards, the City will continue to provide an annual employee appreciation luncheon which is open to all employees. During the employee appreciation luncheon, the City will recognize those employees who have reached service milestones.

Ultimately, Staff recommends approval of the revised Employee Service Recognition Program Policy effective immediately, with the understanding the City Council has the authority to approve, deny, or amend annual budgetary dollars for this program. An increase in the award amount(s) at any level of service is a policy decision within the purview of the Council.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Human Resources Budget.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Service Recognition Program Policy (April 2026 DRAFT Update)

EMPLOYEE SERVICE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

SCOPE

Execute an Employee Service Recognition Program to recognize employee service and assist in employee retention strategies.

PURPOSE

The City of South St. Paul will recognize the service of its employees through the Employee Service Recognition Program which provides an annual employee appreciation luncheon and individual employee service awards based on years of service. This policy is intended to maintain a consistent practice for the type and amount of each service award and employee appreciation program.

DEFINITIONS

Employee Appreciation Program: Annual all-employee appreciation program to recognize employees who have reached service milestones.

Service Awards: Certificate of service and a service award for specified amount based on length of service.

Length of Service: Length of service is defined as the total amount of continuous years of service that an employee has been employed with the City of South St. Paul in a regular part-time (20 hours or more) or a full-time position. Length of service does not include service time worked in a part-time (less than 20 hours per week), seasonal, temporary, or variable hour position.

POLICY

Eligibility for Service Awards. Service awards are given for length of service at regular intervals defined by this policy. Employees will receive the first service award after five years of service and will continue to receive awards every five years thereafter. Length of service is defined as the total amount of continuous years of service that an employee has with the City of South St. Paul in a regular part-time (20 hours or more) or full-time position.

Employee Appreciation Program. If budgetarily approved, the City will host an annual employee appreciation luncheon which shall be open to all employees. At the luncheon the City Council, City Administrator, and/or other staff representatives will recognize those employees who have reached service milestones.

General Guidelines:

Service Award Certificates shall be presented to employees at the annual Employee Appreciation Program, provided the employee is a current and active employee of the City. Employees are eligible for service awards based on length of service, in five-year increments. Eligible employees will receive a Service Award in the amount listed below. Service Awards are taxable and will be processed on the payroll period following the Employee Appreciation Program.

Service Awards, based on length of continuous service are as follows:

• 5 years of service:	\$50.00	• 25 years of service:	\$150.00
• 10 years of service:	\$75.00	• 30 years of service:	\$175.00
• 15 years of service:	\$100.00	• 35 years of service:	\$200.00
• 20 years of service:	\$125.00	• 40+ years of service:	\$225.00

PROCESS

The Human Resources budget will include funds for the Employee Service Recognition Program. The City Council will review and have the option to approve, deny, or amend the budgetary dollars for this program.

Human Resource personnel, along with the assistance of the Wellness Committee shall be responsible for the planning and coordination of the Employee Service Recognition Program.



WORK SESSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: April 13, 2026
DEPARTMENT: Parks & Recreation
PREPARED BY: Shannon Young, Michael Healy
AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 2.C.

MEETING TYPE

Regular Meeting

AGENDA ITEM

Northview Aquatic Center Project Check-In

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED OR DESIRED OUTCOME

As our pool design consultants advance to the latter stages of design development for the Northview Aquatic Center project ([authorized by Council in November 2025](#)) and the project has come more clearly into view, Staff is seeking an opportunity to provide Council with important updates and afford the opportunity for Council questions and feedback. Staff and JLG will be prepared to discuss the following key topics:

- City Staff and JLG Architects are recommending that the City Council approve a Construction Manager At-Risk (CMaR) contract with Krauss Anderson on the consent agenda at the April 20th City Council meeting. If the contract is approved, Krauss Anderson will manage the aquatics center construction project on behalf of the City as Construction Manager with construction work performed under their purview by sub-contractors. They will provide the City with a binding "not to exceed" cost for the construction project (known as a guaranteed maximum price or GMP). The CMaR process is a commonly used construction management approach authorized by the Minnesota State Legislature for municipal projects in Minnesota since 2023. City Staff and JLG Architects will be prepared to answer any questions that the City Council might have about the CMaR process.
- As Council is aware, the City has a bonding request currently under consideration at the State legislature for \$6,500,000 in funding support for the project. Bonding dollars can not be granted for project costs that are incurred prior to legislative authority and a signed agreement with the State of Minnesota. As such, if the City wants to retain the opportunity to leverage state funding then the earliest that a construction project could be authorized through a public bidding process is most likely sometime after Memorial Day 2026 (assuming the legislative session ends as scheduled on May 18 and no special session is convened). Given this timeline constraint and current material lead times for core construction materials (namely precast) for the project, it is infeasible to complete the pool replacement in time to salvage any portion of the 2027 swim season at Northview. To put it bluntly, there will be no public swimming available at Northview in either 2026 or 2027.
- JLG Architects will provide an update on the status of the final construction documents for the new Northview Aquatic Center.

- The process for developing the final construction documents involved soil sampling, a comprehensive site analysis by a civil engineering team, updated cost estimates based on current pricing for pool projects throughout Minnesota, and the creation of a stormwater management plan for the aquatics center site which complies with MPCA requirements. The final design process unearthed some surmountable challenges that JLG Architects would like to talk about with the City Council. There are bad soils at the site which need to be corrected and the project's stormwater management needs are more significant than previously anticipated.
- JLG Architects has identified potential opportunities to bring the aquatic center's initial construction costs down, but this would involve using cheaper building materials that will require a higher level of long-term maintenance. JLG Architects and City Staff want to better understand whether (and if so, where) the City Council would like to realize cost savings, as it is anticipated at this point that the predesign budget expectation will be exceeded (potentially by more than 40%) for the project. Does the City Council want to save some money on the front-end by using less expensive building materials or save a larger amount of money on the back-end by using the recommended building materials, which will be more expensive but will require less maintenance?

OVERVIEW

Background

After a yearlong community engagement process, South St. Paul adopted a new Parks Master Plan in 2024. One of the big challenges facing South St. Paul today is the status of its aquatics program, which needs significant reinvestment in order to continue for another generation of park users. Northview Pool, which was built in 1956, has outlived most of the other outdoor municipal swimming pools that were constructed throughout Minnesota during the 1930's through the 1960's, but it is now at the end of its useful life and is not opening for the 2026 pool season. The almost 70-year-old mechanical equipment could fail at any time and the pool would then become completely inoperable. During public engagement for the Parks Master Plan, residents made it very clear that they want the City to continue to offer an aquatics program.

Following the adoption of the new Parks Master Plan, the City partnered with JLG Architects and completed a pool feasibility study. The purpose of the feasibility study was to help the community decide what type of aquatics facility it wants to have, understand the costs of building that facility, and identify funding sources to pay for the construction and ongoing operation of that facility. JLG Architects advised that both the Northview Pool and the Lorraine Park Splash Pool are at or near the end of their useful lives and the most cost-effective way for the City to handle aquatics is to demolish both existing facilities and build one new consolidated aquatics center that will include both a full-sized swimming pool and a spray feature for young children so that entire families can enjoy the pool together. Currently, families with young children generally go to Lorraine Splash Pool and families with older children generally go to Northview Pool. Neither existing pool has the ability to comprehensively entertain a family with

children of all ages and this has a very negative impact on total attendance numbers.

Following a robust public engagement process, the City Council approved a conceptual design for a new aquatics center at Northview Park at their October 6, 2025 meeting. The City Council then hired JLG Architects to complete the next phase of the project, preparing final construction documents that could be used to bid the construction project. The Northview Aquatic Center would be built in the footprint of the existing Northview Pool and is envisioned as having the following features:

- A 6,026 square foot pool. *This is slightly larger than the existing Northview Pool, which is 5,000 square feet in size.*
- New pool building with changing rooms, staff spaces, concessions, and space for mechanical equipment.
- A new full-sized swimming pool with beach entry, lap lanes, and a diving area.
- A play structure in the shallow end.
- A diving board.
- A climbing wall.
- Six (6) shade structures.
- A repaved and resurfaced parking lot that would use the footprint of the existing lot. The striping plan would provide 35 standard parking stalls and 2 ADA stalls (both ADA stalls are required).
- Two water slides. *This can potentially be bid as an alternative and removed from the*

project if pricing is not favorable.

Discussion

JLG Architects will provide a presentation at the Worksession meeting. After the presentation, JLG Architects and City Staff will be prepared to discuss the following:

- Based on positive experiences with other projects, JLG Architects is advising the City to hire a Construction Manager at Risk (CMaR) for the Northview Aquatics Center construction project. This approach, which is common in other states but has only been allowed in Minnesota for municipal projects since 2023, involves hiring a construction company before a project is put out to bid, to manage the bidding process and oversee the construction project on behalf of the City. The CMaR's role roughly equates to that of a general contractor, essentially "owning" the project from start to finish by identifying, prequalifying, and interviewing subcontractors, managing the public bidding process and procurement processes, overseeing and coordinating day-to-day construction activities throughout the project, and maintaining alignment on project schedule and budget. Like virtually all cities our size, South St. Paul lacks the expertise and capacity internally to fulfill this role for this critical but complex project. Utilizing the CMaR, Cities typically find that bidding is more competitive, value driven, and transparent. The CMaR, by design and by law, will provide the City with a guaranteed maximum price (GMP) for the project which will allow the City to finance the project without needing to worry about potential cost overruns. If the CMaR is able to find ways to save money on the project, much of those savings are passed on to the City. JLG Architects and City Staff conducted an RFQ/RFP process during the first quarter of 2026 and interviewed four construction firms in mid-March. JLG Architects and City Staff are recommending that the City Council approve a CMaR contract with Kraus Anderson at the April 20th meeting, the same group that is already assisting the City with the new Public Works Central Maintenance Facility project.
- The project's overall construction costs are likely to be meaningfully higher than the preliminary estimates that were prepared in 2025. Some of the cost increase is related to construction industry pricing that is being seen with other similar projects. Some of the cost increase is site-specific and is related to the need for soil corrections and new stormwater management features at Northview Park which are required to meet Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) stormwater standards. Some of the cost increase is attributable to fees for the retention of a Construction Manager At-Risk for the project, which was not factored in to earlier project estimates.
- The City is requesting \$6.5 million from the State Legislature to complete the aquatics center project with its proposed scope. If the Legislature approves a bonding bill in 2026 which includes this funding, it will allow the City to bring the project to fruition with a greatly reduced impact on local taxpayers.

Timeline for Next Steps

1. **April 20, 2026-** Consider awarding contract to Kraus Anderson as Construction Manager at Risk (CMaR) for the Northview Aquatic Center.
2. **May 18, 2026-** The Minnesota State Legislature adjourns its session. The City will know by this date whether there is a bonding bill and whether \$6.5 million (or a lesser amount) has been granted to help fund the construction of the Northview Aquatic Center.
3. **Early June-** After the City learns how much the State Legislature is willing to contribute financially, the City Council will need to commit to covering the City's share of the project. The City Council consensus at the March 24, 2026 Worksession was that they wanted to cover the City's portion of the cost by pursuing the issuance of general obligation Tax Abatement bonds. This process involves a public hearing and a formal vote on a resolution. At least 4 of the 7 City Councilmembers must vote "Yes" on the resolution to issue the bonds to pay for the City's share of the project. *Every \$1 million dollars that the City borrows to build a new aquatics facility is anticipated (at current interest rates) to add roughly \$8.50 to the annual property taxes of the median value home for the next 20 years. For example, an \$8.75 million bond would mean that the owner of a \$285,200 house would pay roughly \$73 more in property taxes each year for a term of 20 years (the typical term for general obligation debt used historically by the City; thirty years is also an option which would reduce this amount by a little over \$10/month).*
4. **Summer 2026-** Only Lorraine Park Splash Pool will open during the summer of 2026 (and 2027). Northview Pool will not open so that it can be demolished and additional site preparation work can be scheduled and programmed prior to starting the construction of the new aquatics center.
5. **Late Summer / Early Fall 2026 –** Considering the need to wait until we have clarity on a bonding bill, the City is unable to bid the project until after the financing structure is settled upon. With session ending (optimistically, assuming there's no special session) on May 18, this realistically means that a bid posting doesn't happen at earliest until after Memorial Day. Because material lead times for core elements of the project are on the order of 6 months or more, a June bidding process award makes it infeasible to start Construction on the facility until spring 2027 in even the most optimistic scenario. As such, the team feels it would be in the project's best interest to advertise for bids on the project in the Fall 2026 timeframe (sometime from early/mid-October until Thanksgiving). All of this considered, it is anticipated that construction of the new aquatics center will not begin until the spring of 2027.
6. **Spring/Summer 2027 –** Unfortunately, Staff and our consulting team feel that it is a near certainty that the project cannot be completed in time for even a partial 2027 swim season. In other words, the City will be without a Northview Pool for two seasons.

LINKS

[Northview Aquatic Center Project Website](#)

SOURCE OF FUNDS

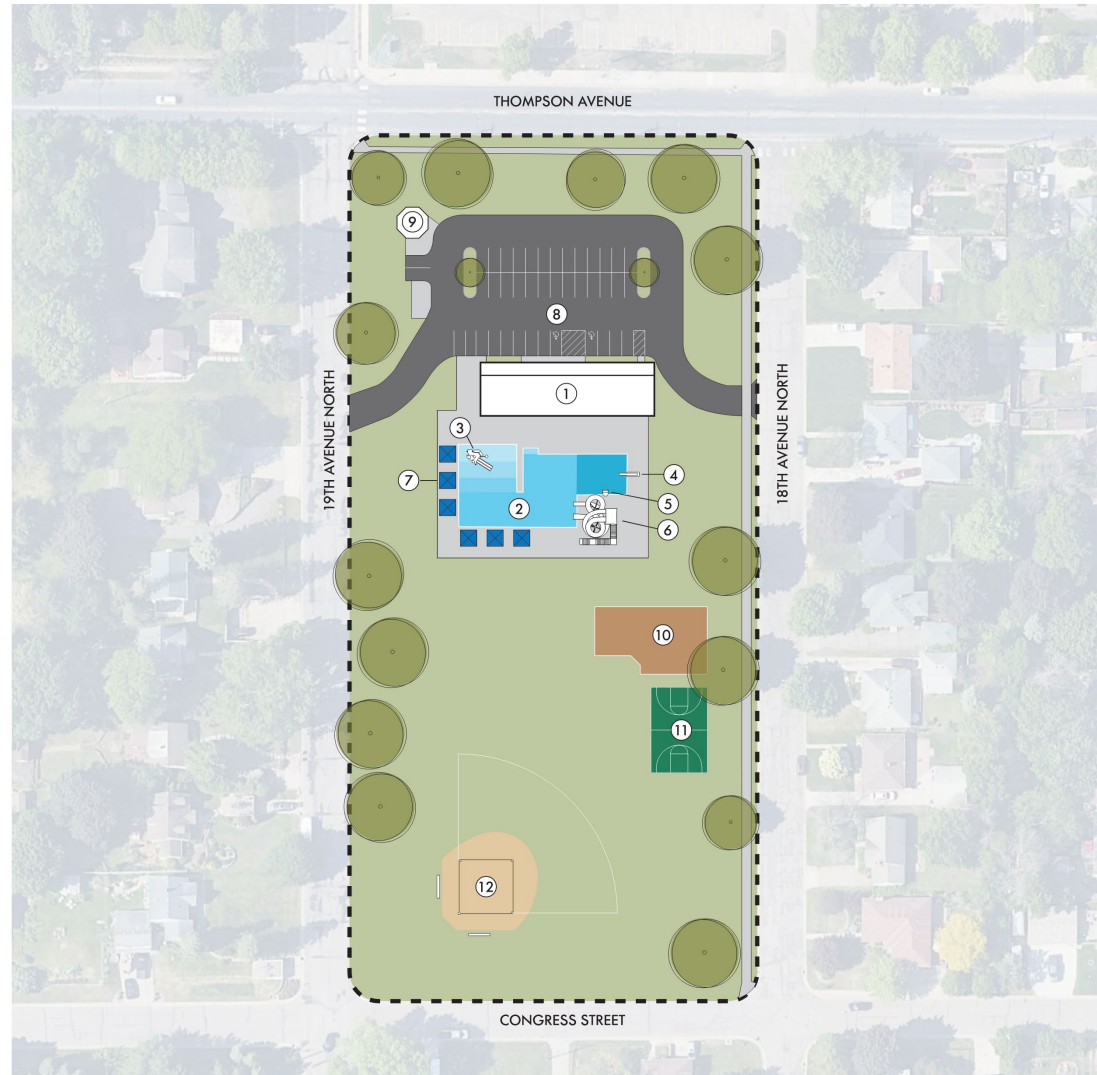
JLG Architects' design project is being funded through the City's Capital Programs Fund. The City has a pending application in to the State for financing of construction through the 2026 Capital Investment (Bonding) Bill, and has considered financing through the City's Tax Abatement Bonding Authority in 2026 as needed to support the project.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Northview Aquatic Center Architectural Drawings

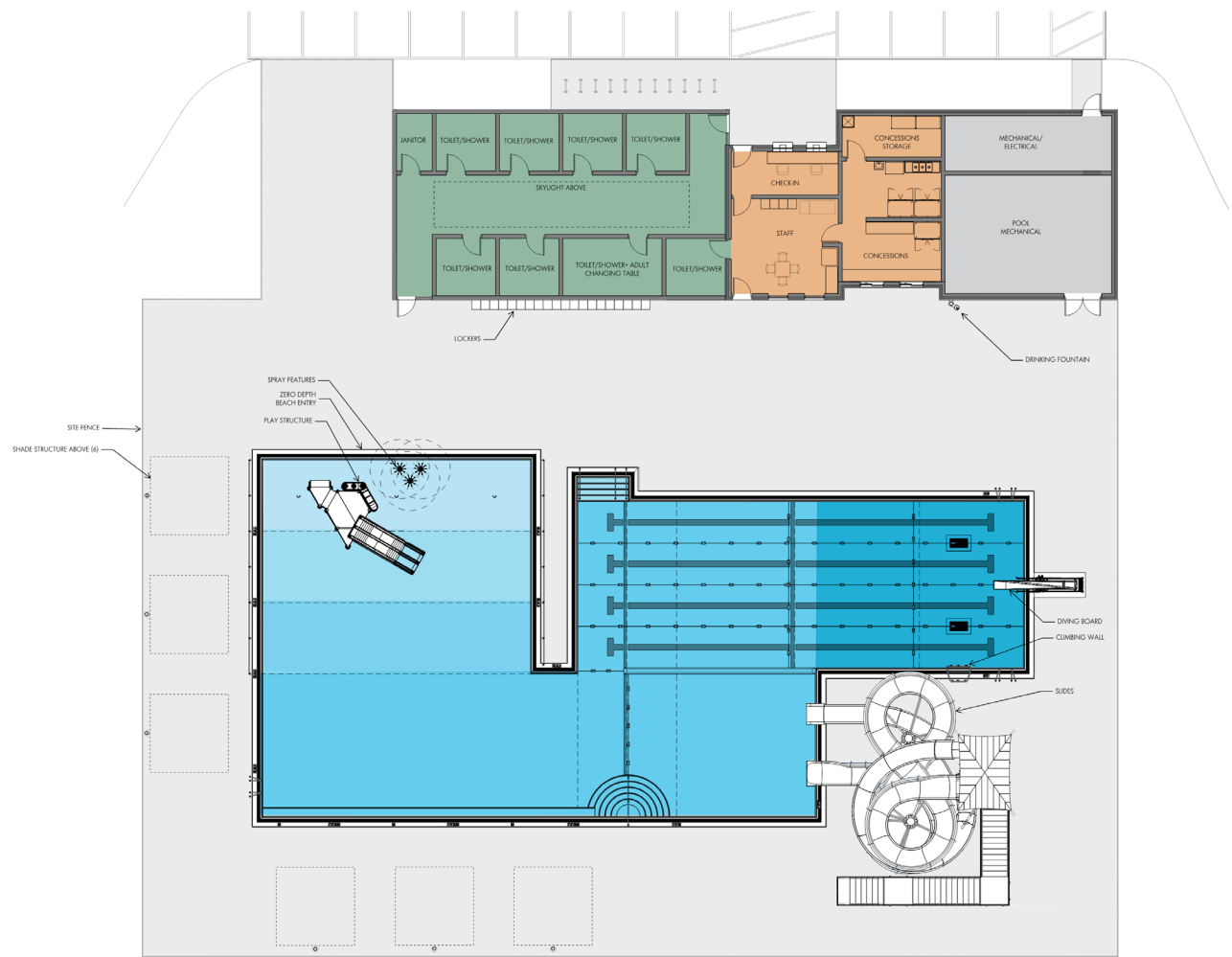
SITE PLAN

ATTACHMENT 1 NORTHVIEW AQUATIC CENTER ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS



- ① New pool building with changing rooms, staff spaces, concessions, and mechanical space
- ② New pool with beach entry, lap lanes, and diving well
- ③ Play structure
- ④ Diving board
- ⑤ Climbing wall
- ⑥ Slides
- ⑦ Shade structures (6)
- ⑧ Repaved and re-stripped parking lot (41 stalls)
- ⑨ Existing pump house
- ⑩ Existing playground
- ⑪ Existing basketball court
- ⑫ Existing softball diamond

FLOOR PLAN









WORK SESSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: April 13, 2026
DEPARTMENT: Council and Board
PREPARED BY: Michael Healy, Kelsey Gelhar, Brian Wicke, Deanna Werner
AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 2.D.

MEETING TYPE

Regular Meeting

AGENDA ITEM

Residential Permit Parking Program Phase-Out Follow-Up Discussion

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED OR DESIRED OUTCOME

- The City Council should discuss problems with the residential permit parking program which have been identified by the Police Department and City Hall Staff. The program was established in the 1980s and expanded in the 1990s when several neighborhoods were facing specific parking pressures that they no longer face today.
 - The permit parking program is a zombie program that is not actively overseen by any department. The program consists solely of a 3-ring binder and a roll of old permit stickers that were placed in a filing cabinet near the front desk at some point in the past thirty years. City Staff gives permit stickers away to any resident who provides proof that they live in one of the three permit parking zones and makes a handwritten entry in the 3-ring binder documenting that the stickers were given away. The City does not charge for permits and there is not any annual tracking of permits or follow-up of any kind.
 - Most residents living in the permit parking zones do not actually come to City Hall to get parking permit stickers and many park their own cars in the street without a permit. Instead of getting permits, they rely on the Police Department to issue parking tickets in response to complaints by looking up vehicle information and knocking on doors to talk to homeowners and ask who owns which car. The permit parking program is essentially a sham permit program that allows a small group of residents to chase visitors away if they try to park in front of their houses and to call 911 if the visitors do not comply. This is a waste of police resources, and administering a sham permit program makes the City look unprofessional.

- McMorrow Field and Lorraine Park have both had their parking lots significantly expanded in the years since their permit parking zones were created. On occasions where some amount of on-street parking is necessary for a large event at McMorrow Field or Lorraine Park, visitors must park a block away from the public park to avoid the permit parking zone. This means they are parking their cars in front of a different group of houses and impacting a different group of neighbors.
- The City Council should review the public engagement that was conducted in 2025 and discuss the City Staff recommendation to eliminate the permit parking program and put up new signs by the high school to discourage students from parking in front of residents' houses.
- City Council should provide direction on the future of the residential permit parking program.

OVERVIEW

Existing Permit Parking Zones

Currently, there are three residential areas in South St. Paul where a parking permit sticker is required to be displayed on the windshield to park a car on the public street:

1. A 1 ½-block stretch of the east side of 6th Avenue North across the street from the high school. *Per the posted signs, a permit is required to park a car in this zone at any time.*
2. A 2-block stretch of 8th Street South, a 1-block stretch of 3rd Avenue South, and a 1-block stretch of 2nd Avenue South near McGuire Field at Lorraine Park. *Per the posted signs, a permit is required to park a car in this zone only “during ballgames.”*
3. A 2-block stretch of South Street East, a 1-block stretch of 1st Avenue South, and a 1-block stretch of Syndicate Avenue near McMorrow Field. *Per the posted signs, a permit is required to park a car in this zone at any time.*

Section 58-103 of the City Code (ATTACHMENT 6) authorizes the City Council to establish permit parking zones at their discretion. The City Code does not contain objective criteria for establishing a new permit parking zone. No traffic study or parking study is required.

Status of 2024 Permit Parking Phase-Out Project

In July 2024, the City Council discussed the residential permit parking program at a Worksession meeting. There was consensus that the program does not work well, is a relic of a bygone era, and probably should be phased out. However, the City Council wanted City Staff to conduct community engagement in the three neighborhoods that currently have permit parking and come back with a plan for “next steps.” City Staff gathered information, set up a public engagement webpage, and prepared a detailed FAQ (see Attachment 1). Former City Engineer Nick Guilliams and Planning Manager Michael Healy then sent invitation letters and held an open house at City Hall on April 24, 2025. Just a few residents attended the open house, but numerous residents engaged in email exchanges with City Staff (see Attachment 5). Most of the residents who participated in public engagement were initially very opposed to the phase-out, but many came to understand that it is not consistent with the principles of good government to operate a sham permit program that benefits some residents at the expense of other residents with a drain on City resources.

Nick Guilliams resigned from the City Engineer position at the beginning of June 2025 and the phase-out project was placed on the back burner due to his resignation. As previously stated, the permit parking program is a zombie program that is not actively overseen by any department, so there is no obvious department to take the lead in retiring the program. City Staff is hoping to re-engage the City Council on this topic because the permit parking signs have been causing headaches for the City and for residents:

- The permit parking phase-out public engagement webpage from 2025 is still active and is what pops up first if a resident Google searches the permit parking program. This has caused confusion and many residents have asked City Staff to clarify whether the permit parking program has been phased out or not.
- A resident playing the “Pokémon Go” video game in her car near McMorrow Field on the evening of February 24th was verbally assaulted by a homeowner for idling her vehicle next to a badly faded “permit parking” sign. The car was not parked, and the resident was playing the video game inside her car (this particular video game uses smartphone technology and requires the player to move around the community to visit parks, businesses, and other public places). The homeowner threatened to call the police and acted aggressively until the resident agreed to move her car across the street to an area without permit parking signs. The resident who was targeted by the verbal assault was shaken by the experience and emailed Mayor Francis asking if the City Council is still planning to revisit this topic and remove the permit parking signs.
- In mid-March, a resident living near the high school had a neighbor call the police on him alleging that his car was parked on the street without a permit. The police issued a

parking ticket, and the resident came to City Hall to get more information and to contest his ticket because he did have a parking permit (he is a tenant and his landlord gave him an old parking permit stuck to a piece of paper which he claims he had laying on his dashboard). *Very few residents bother to even get permits and those who do get permits often stick the permit on a piece of paper and lay it on their dashboard where it is easy for it to flip over or be covered up. It is unclear why residents are doing this when Section 58-103 of the City Code explicitly states that the permit sticker must be affixed to the rear window to be valid. Staff views this as further evidence that the permit parking program is a defunct zombie program that is not being taken seriously.*

City Staff is prepared to strongly make the following recommendation to the City Council:

1. Eliminate the permit parking zone by McMorrow Field entirely.
2. Eliminate the permit parking zone by Lorraine Park entirely.
3. Eliminate the permit parking zone that is on the east side of 6th Avenue North by the high school but put up new signs on those streets which will discourage high school students from parking on the street. Most Twin Cities suburbs take this approach near high schools.

ALTERNATIVE 1: Put up signs that say "2 Hour Parking, 8 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday."

These are the signs that are already up in other neighborhoods around South St. Paul Secondary, where student parking is discouraged. These signs are already in place on the west side of 6th Avenue North.

ALTERNATIVE 2: Put up signs that say "2-Hour parking, 8 AM to 8 PM, Monday through Friday, Block Residents Exempt."

This would be a new type of signage which SSP does not have today and is based on the approach that North Saint Paul and West St. Paul take near high schools. During public engagement, some residents who live on the east side of 6th Avenue North indicated that they were potentially willing to support this as a compromise solution for eliminating the parking permit program. Several houses in this area (i.e. 300 6th Avenue N) have very limited off-street parking, which is why this area was originally set up as a permit parking zone instead of a 2-hour parking zone in the 1990s. Block residents expressed during public engagement that they would like the signs enforced in response to complaints until 8 PM each night because they do not want school visitors parking in front of their houses

during after-school events. Block residents were also interested in seeing Saturday and Sunday enforcement to keep visitors from parking in front of their houses during special weekend events such as Kaposia Days, but City Staff does not support requiring the Police Department to enforce this signage on weekends. ALTERNATIVE 2 will continue to require "above and beyond" police resources as the PD will need to look up vehicle information to determine if a car is owned by a block resident if they get a parking complaint.

DIRECTION NEEDED

City Staff would ask that the City Council review this memo and the attached FAQ, which provides full justification for the phase-out of the permit parking program.

The City Council essentially has three options:

1. Keep the "status quo." *City Staff will keep handing out permit parking stickers and handwriting names in the 3-ring binder. Residents will continue fighting with each other over the permit parking signs and the Police Department will continue to issue parking tickets in response to 911 calls regarding the three permit parking zones. City Staff has strong concerns about the "status quo" because enforcing such a poorly constructed program makes the City look unprofessional and arguably does a disservice to residents.*
2. Implement the Staff recommendation with either ALTERNATIVE 1, ALTERNATIVE 2, or some hybrid of the two alternatives. *City Staff will bring forward a resolution repealing the three permit parking zones and/or an ordinance eliminating the permit parking program entirely. After the final vote, the Public Works Department will take down the permit parking signs and will put up new restricted parking signs near the high school.*
3. Direct City Staff to develop a robust Minneapolis-style permit parking program that charges residents an annual fee for parking permits to defray staff costs. *The City Council discussed this in 2024 and the consensus was that permit parking does not provide enough value in SSP to justify the costs of creating a legitimate permit parking program. In addition to police department enforcement costs, this type of program would have significant administrative costs and would involve annual permit renewals, mailed reminders, and tracking. It would be expensive to operate and may require additional staff capacity or new software. Cities like Minneapolis typically only establish a permit parking zone in areas with a chronic parking shortage. South St. Paul's three permit parking zones do not have chronic parking shortages, residents just do not want visitors parking in front of their homes.*

LINKS

[Permit Parking Phase-Out Project Public Engagement Webpage](#)

[Staff Memo from July 22, 2024 City Council Worksession Discussion](#)

SOURCE OF FUNDS

NA

ATTACHMENTS

1. South St. Paul Permit Parking Phase-Out FAQ
2. Mcmorrow Field Permit Parking Zone Map
3. Lorraine Park Permit Parking Zone Map
4. South St. Paul High School Parking Restriction Map
5. Public Engagement Email Exchanges with City Staff
6. South St. Paul Permit Parking Ordinance

ATTACHMENT 1

South St. Paul Permit Parking Phase-Out FAQ

4/11/2025

Q: When were South St. Paul's residential permit parking zones established?

A: Section 58-103 of the City Code states that the City Council can establish a permit parking zone if they adopt a finding that the occupants of dwellings in a residential area do not have adequate on-street parking. The City Code does not set any objective criteria for making this determination and leaves the decision completely up to the City Council on a case-by-case basis. The City currently has three permit parking zones:

1. The permit parking zone by McMorro Field was established sometime in 1984 or 1985 but the records are unclear about the exact date of implementation.
2. The permit parking zone on 6th Avenue North was established in July of 1993 by City Council vote. The zone was expanded in November of 1993 which set its current boundaries.
3. The permit parking zone by McGuire Field at Lorraine Park was established on March 20, 1995 by City Council vote. The zone was expanded on June 5, 1995, which set its current boundaries. *This permit zone has unique signage stating that a permit is only required during ballgames.*

Q: How do residential on-street parking permits work today?

A: The City's permit parking program operates in a very informal manner. There is a roll of parking permit stickers at the front counter at City Hall. Anyone who can prove that they live in one of the 3 permit parking zones is given up to 4 parking permit stickers for free to do whatever they want with. They can stick the permits in their own car's window or give them to a friend to stick in their car's window as guest parking. Parking permit stickers do not expire, so any car with an SSP parking permit in its window can park in all 3 zones for life, even if the resident no longer lives in a permit parking zone.

All records related to parking permits are handwritten and kept in a 3-ring binder that appears to be several decades old. Because parking permits are issued for life and do not require annual renewal, it is impossible for City Staff to know which properties have active parking permits and which properties do not since residents move and/or replace cars without informing the City.

Q: Do residents currently follow the permit parking rules?

A: City Staff visited the permit parking zone near the high school and the permit parking zone near McMorro field on different days in 2024, both on school days and on non-school days. None of the cars parked in the permit zone near McMorro Field were displaying a permit. Less than half of cars parked in the permit zone by the high school were displaying a permit on the days that Staff visited. The permit requirement near McGuire Field is only in effect during ballgames. The permit parking signs near McGuire Field result in ballgame attendees parking in front of houses just outside of the permit parking zone instead of parking within the zone. This is causing frustration for some residents who live just outside of the permit parking zone, and they have complained about this being unfair.

Q: Do other communities in the Twin Cities metro have residential permit parking programs for on-street parking?

A: Very few communities in the Twin Cities metro operate on-street permit parking programs in residential areas. Residential permit parking programs are generally a “big city” solution for managing parking conflicts. Most cities with large permit parking programs charge an annual fee to cover the administrative costs of issuing and tracking parking permits. Minneapolis and Saint Paul each have a large number of permit parking zones and both cities charge \$25 per year for each car that needs a parking permit. Residents living in permit parking zones in Minneapolis and Saint Paul must also purchase additional parking permits each year if they want their guests to be able to park on the street.

Q: How do most suburbs handle parking conflicts near high schools if they do not operate a permit parking program?

A: Most suburbs in the Twin Cities use restricted parking signage to regulate parking in the residential areas near their high schools instead of operating a permit parking program. Some examples of signs that communities put up along residential streets near their high schools include:

West Saint Paul: “No Parking 8 AM-2 PM. Local Residents Exempt”

North Saint Paul: “Resident Parking Only This Block on School Days 7 AM to 3 PM

Cottage Grove: “Resident Parking Only- 7 AM to 2:30 PM, Mon thru Fri, During School”

Q: Why is South St. Paul’s permit parking program proposed to be retired?

A: South St. Paul’s permit parking program is proposed to be retired this year for three main reasons:

1. Most of the permit parking signs in SSP are decades old, badly faded, and in need of replacement. This is a good time to reevaluate the permit parking program before the City incurs the expense of fabricating and installing new signs.
2. Two of SSP’s three permit parking zones were established in the 1980’s and 1990’s in response to very specific conditions in neighborhoods that were next to busy city parks. Both parks have different usage conditions today and both parks have had their parking lots expanded in the years since the permit parking zones were created. In the case of McGuire Field, the permit parking signs are causing unintended problems. The signs are pushing ballgame attendees to park just outside the permit parking zone and walk to McGuire Field which is causing neighbors to complain about unfairness since some blocks have permit parking signs and others do not.
3. Regarding the high school area, most of the same benefits of permit parking can be achieved by putting signs up along 6th Avenue North that restrict parking to block residents during school hours. This type of signage can be enforced by the Police Department in response to complaints, so nothing will really change from the status quo. Most high schoolers do not want to get a parking ticket and will respond to restricted parking signs in the same manner as they would respond to permit parking signs.

Q: Who currently enforces the residential permit parking rules in South St. Paul?

A: The permit parking rules are enforced by the South St. Paul Police Department, but these rules are only enforced in response to complaints. Police Departments are not staffed to proactively monitor permit parking zones and most residential permit parking zones in the Twin Cities operate largely on the honor system with enforcement only done in response to complaints. Even Minneapolis and Saint Paul's residential permit parking programs do not bring in nearly enough money with their \$25 annual fees to cover the cost of proactive enforcement.

Q. How are the usage conditions and parking conditions at McGuire Field and McMorrow Field different today than when the permit parking zones were established in the 1980's and 1990's?

A: McMorrow Field was redone following the 2014 parks referendum and now has much more off-street parking and no longer has softball facilities. The McGuire Field parking lot at Lorraine Park was expanded to add an additional 30 stalls in 1995 and now features 62 stalls total. This expansion took place three months after the permit parking zone was initially established.

Q: How will the three permit parking zones be de-established if the phase-out moves forward?

A: The City Council will vote on whether to de-establish the three permit parking zones at an upcoming meeting this spring or summer. If the three zones are officially de-established, Public Works will remove all the existing signs and install new restricted parking signs near the high school.

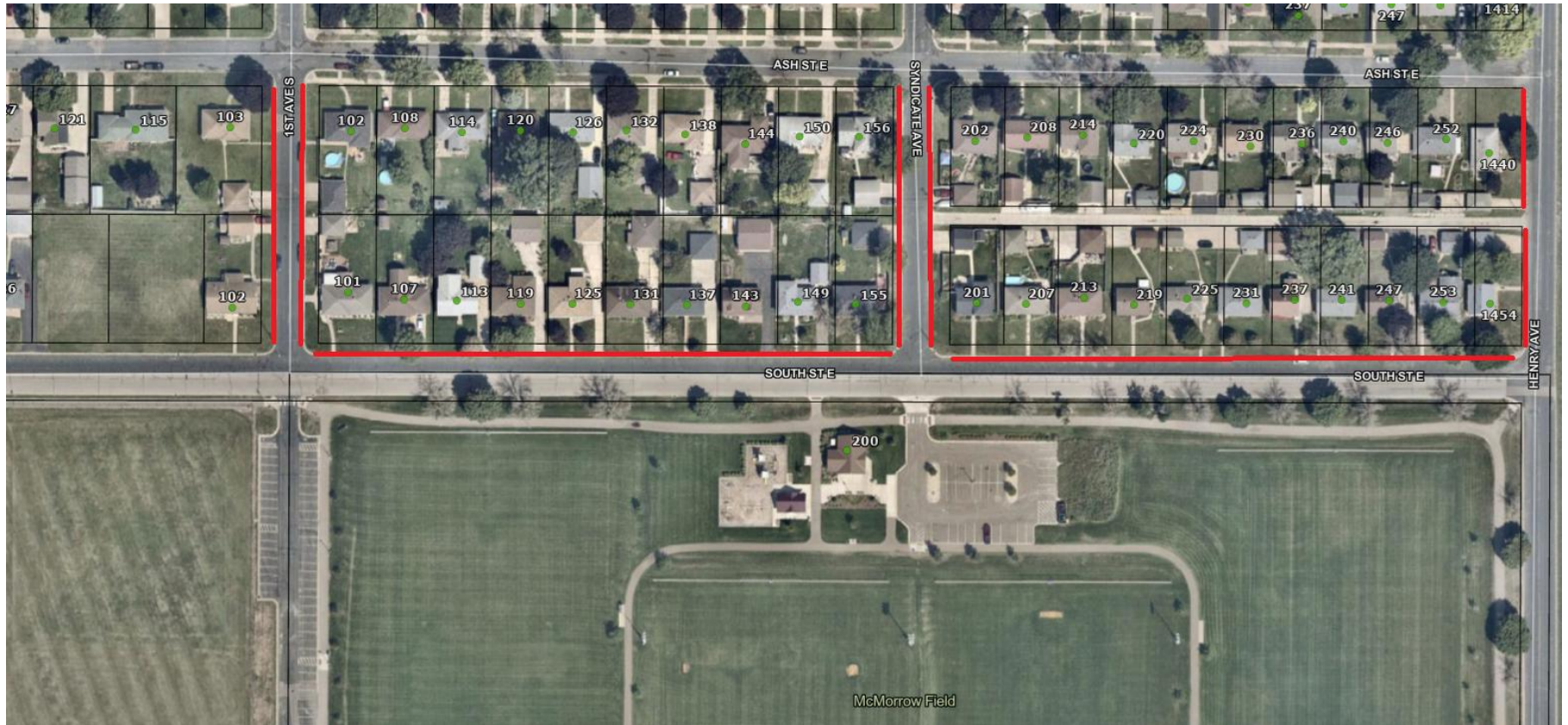
Q: Are there other options besides phasing out the permit parking program?

A: Permit parking programs can be appropriate in residential areas with a severe parking shortage but there is no such parking shortage in any of SSP's three permit parking zones. Even in areas where permit parking does make sense, this type of program benefits specific households at the expense of other households, and it requires City resources to manage. At a minimum, a permit parking program really does need to cover its own administrative costs (street sign replacement, permit printing and issuance, tracking of permits, etc.). If residents feel strongly that the permit parking program needs to be continued, City Staff can explore what it would take to overhaul the program and make it cover its own costs. Most likely, that would mean at least a \$25 annual fee for each car that needs a permit and additional charges for guest parking permits. This could be a financial burden for some households and could be hard to justify when there is not a documented parking shortage in any of SSP's three permit parking zones and high school parking issues can easily be addressed with signage.

Q: Where can I get more information?

A: The City has set up a webpage to provide more information including a staff memo from the July 22, 2024 City Council Worksession which contains an in-depth analysis of the permit parking program and maps of all three permit parking zones. The webpage can be found at <https://www.southstpaul.org/1017/Permit-Parking-Phase-Out>

ATTACHMENT 2
MCMORROW FIELD PERMIT PARKING ZONE MAP



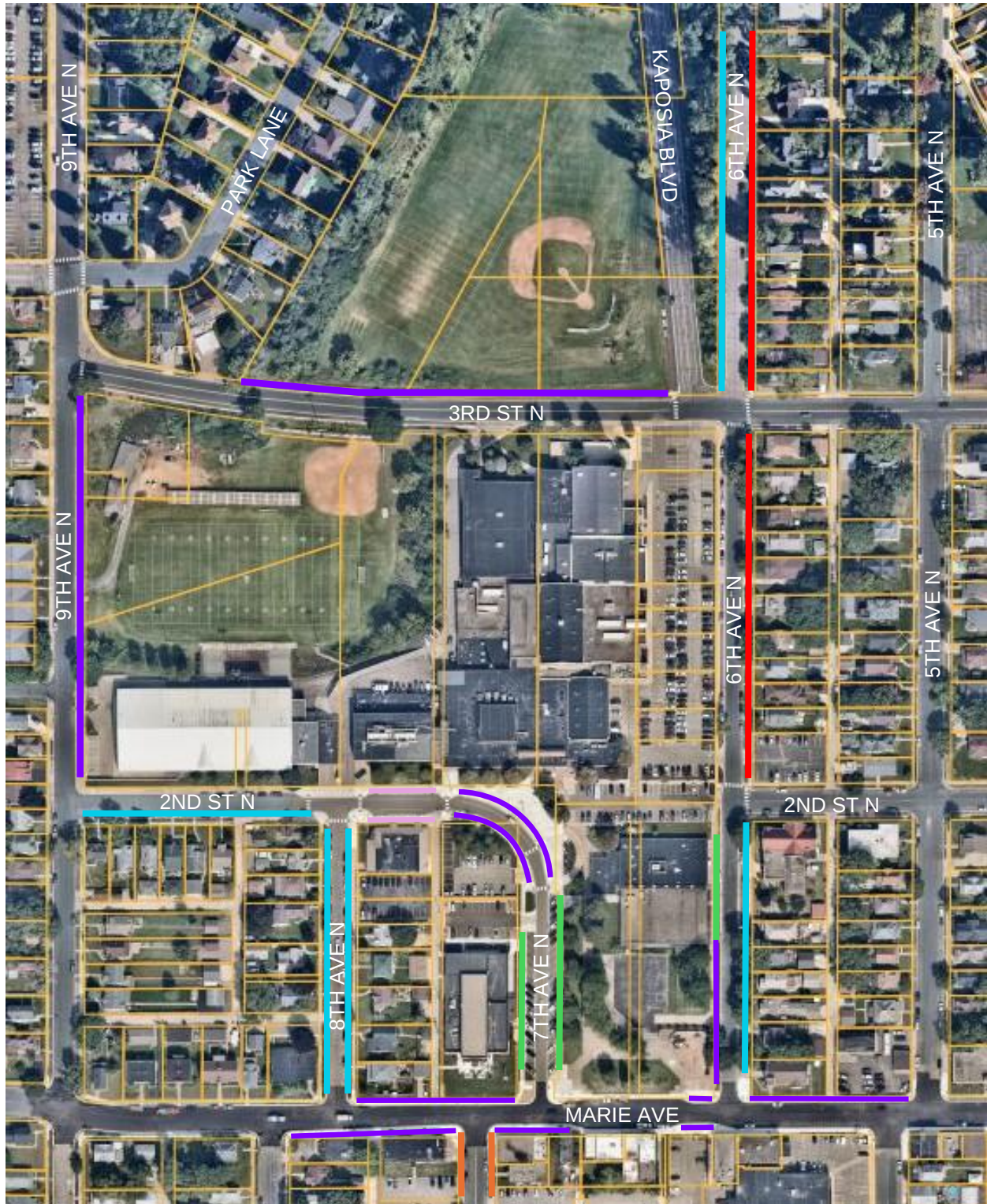
— = Signs Say “Parking by Permit Only”

**ATTACHMENT 3
LORRAINE PARK PERMIT PARKING ZONE MAP**



— = Signs Say “Parking by Permit Only During Ballgame”

ATTACHMENT 4 SOUTH ST. PAUL HIGH SCHOOL PARKING RESTRICTION MAP



- = Signs Say “Parking by Permit Only – Enforced at All Times”
- = Signs Say “2 Hour Parking – 8 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday”
- = Signs Say “2 Hour Parking – 8 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Saturday”
- = Signs Say “3 Hour Parking – 7 AM to 3 PM or 8 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday”
- = Signs Say “1 Hour Parking – 7 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday”
- = Signs Say “No Parking Any Time”

ATTACHMENT 5
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EMAIL EXCHANGES WITH CITY STAFF
(RESIDENT CONTACT INFORMATION REMOVED)

From: [Michael Healy](#)
To:
Cc: [Nick Guilliams](#)
Subject: RE: South St Paul Permit Parking Program
Date: Monday, April 28, 2025 9:53:00 AM
Attachments:

Kym,

Thank you for the comments, they will be made a part of the record and included whenever this matter is brought to the City Council for additional discussion. I've cc'ed City Engineer Nick Guilliams so that he can address your concerns about stop sign visibility.

I do understand that nobody in town wants other people to park in front of their house. That is 100% a universal sentiment and not something that is limited to the area by McMorrow Field. Candidly, I don't like it when my neighbors park in front of my house either. It is not logistically possible to guarantee every resident dedicated on-street parking stalls in front of their own house, so we need to make compromises to treat everyone fairly. I'm not aware of any other communities in Dakota County that use permit parking to restrict parking because of occasional sporting events at a public park. The benefit of living by a park is that you have easy access to the park and all of its amenities. The downside to living by a park is that sometimes there will be cars parked on the street related to the park. As I explained in the FAQ that was mailed out, permit parking is primarily a big city solution (i.e. Minneapolis and Saint Paul) and it is very unusual for a town like South St. Paul to operate a permit parking program.

Permit parking programs are logistically demanding to operate, and it would take a lot of Staff time to modernize SSP's permit parking program if the City Council wanted to preserve it instead of phasing it out. The existing program is a "fake" permit program that has largely been forgotten by the City and has very little actual compliance. Most residents in the three permit parking zones do not get permit stickers or put any stickers on their cars or their guests' cars. Instead, residents living in the permit parking areas depend on the permit parking signs to scare away non-residents. It isn't very transparent for the City to operate a fake permit program and it puts our Police Department in an awkward spot when they are called to the scene to investigate violations of a fake permitting program. One of your neighbors who also wants to keep the permit parking signs has stated bluntly that he does not have any parking permit stickers and most of his neighbors don't have stickers either and he expects the Police Department to knock on doors and look up license plates to figure out which cars belong to outsiders and which ones belong to residents. This is not a good use of Police Department resources.

We can't keep operating a fake permit parking program and it isn't fair to our Police Department to leave the signs up if the program goes away since they do get called out periodically to enforce the signs. If the City Council wanted to create a "real" permit parking program, there would be a lot of administrative time involved setting up the program and a lot of administrative time involved with running it:

1. You have to develop rules for how many permits each house gets and how many (if any) guest permits they can get. These rules need to be administered by a City employee.
2. If you don't want to use a 3-ring binder for managing the program like we do today, you need to set up a software program for issuing and tracking permits. There is an upfront cost to buy the software and continuing costs to use it. We may or may not have existing software at City Hall that could be adapted to run this type of program so it is possible that we might need to buy new software and pay a yearly licensing fee.
3. You need to physically print permits. You either have to print stickers that have a trackable serial number tied to an account, or you need to print new stickers every year if you want each house to get new permits every year.
4. The City Clerk's office needs to send out one or more annual mailings reminding people that their permit is going to expire, and they need to renew it. If you don't do this, you are going to have angry residents who are upset that they got a parking ticket after their permit expired and they didn't notice.
5. Every time a resident in the permit zone buys a new vehicle that they want to park on the street, they will need to register the new vehicle and its license plate with the permit program and this data will need to be entered into the system by a City employee.
6. You need to develop a fee structure for how you will handle annual permits and guest permits for large events. Somebody at City Hall has to be responsible for selling guest permits.

The Police Department and the South Metro Fire Department are both aware of the proposal to get rid of the permit parking signs as it has been discussed at several management staff meetings. The Police Department actively supports this proposal, and the Fire Department is neutral on this proposal. There have not been any concerns expressed by our first responders about emergency vehicle access. The Staff recommendation is likely going to continue to be that the permit parking program be phased out. Permit parking is a big city solution and South St. Paul does not face the same type of chronic parking shortages near its mid-sized public parks as Minneapolis and Saint Paul do in the neighborhoods near their colleges and hospitals. At the end of the day, however, this is a policy decision. I won't take it personally if the City Council wants to go a different direction than what the City Engineer and I are recommending.

Thank you again for your comments.

Michael

Michael Healy | Planning Manager

Phone : 651-554-3217 | Fax: 651-554-3211

City of South St. Paul | 125 3rd Avenue North | South St. Paul, MN 55075



From: Kym Thew

Sent: Sunday, April 27, 2025 8:06 AM

To: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>

Cc: Kym Thew <

> **Subject:** South St Paul Permit Parking Program

Hi Michael,

My husband and I have lived at 107 South St E since Jan 1995 (30 years) and I have always been in favor of the permit parking and always will be ! Since we live right at the intersection of 1st & South Street, we often had cars parked in front of our home when there was soccer game happening across the street EVEN WHEN there was parking available across the street in the parking lot (just lazy people not wanting to walk any distance to watch the games). The funny thing is when a police car comes rolling down the street you would see these people RUN to get to their car to move them as fast as they could, so they know they were not supposed to be parking there ! Personally, I would of had NO issues with them parking there had they asked me first !

Since the Park had been redone in 2014, there has been less activity across the street but when there is a soccer practice or tournament most will park on the side of the street where the fields are or in the parking lot itself but on occasion you will get someone parking in from of our home. If I catch them in time, I will personally point out the Permit Parking Only Sign - most of the people I caught told me they were not from here and were not aware of this.

I would happily pay \$25 a year per car to continue this program but understand that not everyone has the financial means to do so. **I do ask that if you decide to discontinue the program that you please leave the Permit Parking Signs up and NOT REMOVE THEM** because as I said, most that violate are not from this area so they would not be aware if this program no longer existed. Also, if cars were parked on both sides of the street, that

would NOT leave much room for an emergency vehicle to squeeze through either. I've seen it where people parked in the street were trying to pull out of their spot and someone is waiting for that spot and then the cars are backed up through the stop sign at 1st and South St E waiting for them to switch places - what if an ambulance or firetruck needed to get through ??

While I am on the topic of the stop sign at 1st & South St E - anyway you can make that Stop Sign more noticeable ? Like put red flashing lights around the sign ??? If I got a dollar for every car that blew that stop sign in the 30 years I have lived here, I could retire early !! LOL

Again, If you decide to eliminate the Permit Parking Program, please leave the Permit Parking Signs up on South Street E.

Many Thanks !

Best Regards,

Kym Thew

President - St Paul/Minneapolis Bulldog Club

Bulldog Club of America Division VI Member



Caution: External Email - This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

From: [Michael Healy](#)
To:
Cc: [Nick Guilliams](#); [Jimmy Francis](#)
Bcc: [Ryan Garcia](#)
Subject: RE: Proposed Phase-Out of South St. Paul's Residential Permit Parking Program
Date: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 4:05:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Emma,

The issue isn't that the current program isn't enforceable, our PD does go out and issue parking tickets when they get a complaint. The issue is:

1. The City Code does not have any criteria for which streets get permit parking and which streets do not. This is a problem from a fairness perspective unless you want to lean really hard into the idea that certain streets are "grandfathered" and nobody else should get permit parking.
2. The City Code has a set of rules for how permit parking is supposed to work (get a sticker and put it on your car, guests aren't allowed to park on the street unless they have a sticker). Residents living in the permit parking zones don't follow these rules and very few residents bother to put a sticker on their own vehicle, let alone their guest vehicles. The City's system for issuing parking permits was developed in the 1980's (roll of stickers and a 3-ring binder) and has never been modernized. The City has never developed a program for tracking parking permits or expiring them, we only have a system for issuing them in the first place.

Most residents do not realize how much more administrative time goes into a permit parking program than what goes into a restricted signage program. With a restricted signage program, there is no admin time whatsoever. The signs get installed and PD responds to complaints. As you stated, these programs tend to police themselves and it isn't very common for the PD to actually need to get involved. A fake permit parking program like we have today has almost no admin time but there are other shortcomings like the lack of transparency. With a "real" permit parking program:

- You have to develop rules for how many permits each house gets and how many (if any) guests permits they can get. These rules need to be administered by a City employee.
- If you don't want to use a 3-ring binder, you need to set up a software program for issuing and tracking permits.
- You need to physically print permits. You either have to print stickers that have a trackable

serial number tied to an account, or you need to print new stickers every year if you want each house to get new permits every year.

- The City Clerk's office needs to send out one or more annual mailings reminding people that their permit is going to expire, and they need to renew it. If you don't do this, you are going to have angry residents who are upset that they got a parking ticket after their permit expired and they didn't notice.
- Every time a resident in the permit zone buys a new vehicle that they want to park on the street, they will need to register the new vehicle and its license plate with the permit program and this data will need to be entered into the system by a City employee.
- You need to develop a fee structure for how you will handle annual permits and guest permits for large events. Somebody at City Hall has to be responsible for selling guest permits.

All of the admin time is arguably worthwhile if you are in an area with a severe constant parking shortage and a real need for this type of program. In most areas, restricted parking signs get the job done without all of this admin time. As I explained in the FAQ, permit parking is primarily a big city solution (i.e. Minneapolis and Saint Paul) and it is very unusual for a town like South St. Paul to operate a permit parking program.

The cost of a permit is going to depend on how much the City Council wants to subsidize the program. The program probably will not cover its own admin costs at \$25 per permit but that is what Minneapolis and Saint Paul both currently charge per vehicle per year. Minneapolis and Saint Paul also charge per-car daily fees for guest parking for special events (birthday parties, grad parties, etc.). Just to be clear, not even Minneapolis and Saint Paul do regular proactive enforcement of permit parking zones and a \$25 annual permit will not come close to covering the cost of providing any kind of routine monitoring by the Police Department. We are likely still talking about complaint-based code enforcement at that price, the permit fee would just be partially covering admin time.

Michael

Michael Healy | Planning Manager

Phone : 651-554-3217 | Fax: 651-554-3211

City of South St. Paul | 125 3rd Avenue North | South St. Paul, MN 55075



From: Emma Adams

Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 12:48 PM

To: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>

Cc: Nick Guilliams <nguilliams@southstpaul.org>; Jimmy Francis <jfrancis@southstpaul.org>

Subject: RE: Proposed Phase-Out of South St. Paul's Residential Permit Parking Program

Dear Michael and Jimmy,

Unfortunately, we cannot attend the open house tomorrow evening. I wanted to ensure our points are heard via email. Apologies for reiterating.

Our neighbors and I are open to exploring other avenues and costs to retain the permit program. We believed the program was enforceable, as the signs indicated compliance with the law.

We hope to reach a mutually beneficial agreement where the city isn't burdened with additional policing and residents aren't incurring extra expenses. Could we consider re-upping our permits, self-documenting, and continuing with status quo reporting if needed? The signs are generally effective, and we occasionally 'self-police' by informing violators of the permit zone. I have never actually called the PD to report this.

Additionally, \$25 per car annually seems high for a program that residents believed was enforceable. If transitioning to a real, enforceable program is the path forward, I hope the actual cost is significantly lower. If residents can continue to self-report, can we please entertain that option?

You previously mentioned that the program isn't enforceable or monitored due to resource constraints. Transitioning to '2-hour parking' doesn't change that fact, so I'm wondering how this change doesn't incur an expense, but leaving the program 'as is' does. It just sounds like we are replacing one 'fake' policy with another.

Best regards,



Emma M. Adams (MEYER)

Network Product Data Consultant Prin. | Network

Operations

Prime Therapeutics

office: 612-777-2942

cell: 612-309-5261

web: primetherapeutics.com

Emma.Adams@PrimeTherapeutics.com

Upcoming PTO:

April 25, 28

From: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>

Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 10:50 AM

To: Emma Adams

Cc: Nick Guilliams <nguilliams@southstpaul.org>; Jimmy Francis <jfrancis@southstpaul.org>

Subject: RE: Proposed Phase-Out of South St. Paul's Residential Permit Parking Program

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Emily and Chris,

The purpose of the letter and the upcoming open house is to gain community perspective and that work will take place before any final decisions are made. As I stated at the end of the FAQ, the alternative to phasing out the fake permit parking program is to make it a real program with annual permit renewals and tracking of permits. There will be a real cost to that, and most cities expect the residents who benefit from the program to cover that cost by paying an annual permit renewal fee. It also isn't fair to expect our Police Department to spend the extra time to look up license plates and knock on doors like most of the people on your block currently expect. If there is going to be a permit parking program, people need to actually come to City Hall and pick up a permit and they need to stick it on their vehicle's windshield or they need to be prepared to get a parking ticket. Almost nobody sticks a permit sticker on their windshield today, they expect the Police Department to do all of the work for them and they expect the Police Department to only issue tickets if an outsider is parked in the permit zone. The only other person who has emailed me in response to my letter besides yourself has been very blunt about this. He told me he doesn't have any parking permits, most of his neighbors don't have any parking permits, and he told me he expects the Police Department to figure out vehicle ownership in order to enforce the program. He doesn't see a problem with the status quo.

I think you hit the nail on the head with the high school permit area being different than the two public park permit areas. City Staff 100% agrees with you on that which is why we were proposing to model a new parking control program after what the other Dakota County suburbs are doing and create a 2-hour parking zone that block residents are exempt from. We were only proposing to do that in the high school area which currently is a permit zone, and it was largely in deference to your "grandfather" status. I understand that it won't work exactly like a permit parking zone, but it will be very similar to how the permit parking zone works today. Regarding special events, there's nothing to prevent your block from getting barricades from the Public Works Department to shut the street down during Kaposia Days and other special block party events that your neighborhood wants to hold. I would respectfully disagree that conditions near the high school have not changed in the past 30 years. The high school has been struggling with declining enrollment for years and my understanding is that the student body is significantly smaller today and has less parking demand today than it did in the 1990's. Demographic trends do not suggest that this will change anytime soon, if ever.

At the end of the day, this is a policy decision. I won't take it personally if the City Council doesn't like the solution that the City Engineer and I have come up with and would prefer a solution that preserves the permit parking program and turns it into a "real" program. I do have some concerns

that your neighbors won't like it if they have to pay for a parking permit each year or if they or their guests start getting parking tickets because they don't have a sticker on their windshield, but we can certainly explore what a "real" permit parking program might look like if that is what the neighborhood and the City Council want to see happen. I think anything less than this being turned into a "real" program is a problem when it comes to transparency. Personally, I think the person making the complaints has made a good case that the existing program is arbitrary and unfair since there are no objective criteria to dictate which blocks get permit parking and which blocks do not and it is a "free" program that only benefits some residents with policing costs that are borne by the taxpayers.

I'm cc'ing Mayor Francis and the City Engineer to keep them in the loop on this.

Michael

Michael Healy | Planning Manager

Phone : 651-554-3217 | Fax: 651-554-3211

City of South St. Paul | 125 3rd Avenue North | South St. Paul, MN 55075



From: Emma Adams

Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 9:02 AM

To: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>

Cc: Nick Guilliams <nguilliams@southstpaul.org>

Subject: RE: Proposed Phase-Out of South St. Paul's Residential Permit Parking Program

Dear Michael and Nick,

I appreciate you taking the time to read through my email and address our questions and concerns. I also appreciate your efforts in bringing these issues to the City Council.

While I now understand the program is not officially enforced, I never previously considered that to be the case. I assumed the signs were law-abiding and enforced, which highlights a lack of transparency. If we only have one repeat complainer, what is the harm in retaining the program as-is?

- I took the time to read the staff report last evening. While it was helpful to gain further insight from city staff, it lacked community perspective.
- I understand that everyone wants to park in front of their house, and I recognize this cannot always be the case 100% of the time. However, the fact remains that not every house in the community poses the same challenges, which isn't fair. The same challenge remains for the city. Changing the signage doesn't change the unofficial nature of the program or the city's inability or unwillingness to enforce it.

- Our goal (and that of my neighbors) isn't to introduce new sanctions or penalties to families just trying to get by. We simply want to retain the permit parking due to the unique area we are in and the challenges this area poses. We aren't asking for special treatment; we are asking to be grandfathered in due to the proximity of the high school and all the functions it brings.
- I spoke with Mayor Francis yesterday and shared my concerns and those of my neighbors. He stated he would support us and the push to retain the program. I believe his previous commentary was premature as it likely lacked insight from impacted individuals. Jimmy, who is at the far end of the block, has a large driveway and is unimpacted by the parking situation.
- I understand you have one individual making this difficult. The letter itself lacked transparency as it indicates 'some residents' have complained. Why are we catering to one person and not trying to understand the foresight of implementing the permit policy in the first place? It sounds like the situation around McMorrow and McGuire field has changed since being implemented, and parking has expanded. Why is the scope of this not limited to the areas that have had relevant changes?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Emily and Chris Adams

310 6th Ave North



Emma M. Adams (MEYER)

Network Product Data Consultant Prin. | Network
Operations
Prime Therapeutics

Upcoming PTO:

April 25, 28

From: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>

Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 4:16 PM

To: Emma Adams

Cc: Nick Guilliams <nguilliams@southstpaul.org>

Subject: RE: Proposed Phase-Out of South St. Paul's Residential Permit Parking Program

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Good afternoon Emily and Chris,

I will share your comments with the City Council. A lot of your questions are hard to answer because you are asking City Staff to take a “deep dive” into a program that hasn’t been actively enforced in decades (if ever). The current administrative costs of the permit parking program are low because the City does not take the program seriously. The permit program is essentially a “fake” permit program as most residents living in the permit areas do not bother to get permits and just use the permit parking signs to file police reports if they don’t like somebody that parks in front of their house. If the City were to take the permit parking program seriously, the administrative costs would be exponentially higher. The more seriously the City took the program, the higher the costs would be. The City is committed to transparency and good governance and it is not transparent to operate a fake permit parking program.

I will try to answer your questions as best as I can with the information that I have available. Some of your questions would require a very large amount of staff time to answer as they would require substantial additional data gathering and “above and beyond” analysis.

- If you haven’t read the July 22, 2024 staff report that analyzes the permit parking program and its shortcomings, I would ask that you do so (see attached). I think it will answer a lot of your questions. It includes maps that show all of the affected properties.
- I do understand that nobody in town wants other people to park in front of their house. That is 100% a universal sentiment and not something that is limited to the area by the high school. Candidly, I don’t like it when my neighbors park in front of my house either. It is not logistically possible to guarantee every resident dedicated on-street parking stalls in front of their own house, so we need to make compromises to treat everyone fairly. Most communities in Dakota County have concluded that it is fair to spend City resources to give residents living near a high school special treatment during the school day. With that in mind, most communities in Dakota County have signs up that keep students from parking in front of houses during school hours. It is very unusual to take the next step and give people living in houses near a high school special treatment 24 hours a day.
- Our City Council is cognizant of the fact that a large parking ticket can be a financial hardship for many families and the goal is to discourage bad behavior, not generate revenue. As a result, our Police Department currently only charges \$20 for parking tickets (see Page 9 of the attached fee schedule). This does not come anywhere close to covering the cost of their time to respond to a parking complaint. Parking tickets are not a revenue generator, they are time suck that requires additional police staffing which ultimately means higher taxes to pay for that staffing. This is one reason why the permit parking program would cost a lot more to administer if the City took it seriously.

- Mayor Francis lives in the permit parking zone on your street just a couple of houses down from you. He shared at the July 22nd Worksession meeting that most residents on the street know that the permit parking program is a fake program, and most residents will be okay with it being replaced by a real parking management program (i.e., restricted parking signs). A real parking management program would be much more transparent and justifiable.
- I'm going to be frank with you, most of the complaints about permit parking have been coming from one resident who lives near McGuire Field just outside of the permit parking zone. She has been very persistent in filing complaints and demanding that the permit parking zone be expanded to include her house. Her complaints have exposed the permit parking program as a "fake" program which has made it difficult for the City to continue to defend the program in its current form. That was the initial catalyst for reevaluating the program. If the program is going to continue to exist, it can't be a fake program. Currently, we have no criteria for the program and we don't have a good reason to tell some people "yes" and other people "no" when they ask about getting permit parking on their block.

Michael

Michael Healy | Planning Manager

Phone : 651-554-3217 | Fax: 651-554-3211

City of South St. Paul | 125 3rd Avenue North | South St. Paul, MN 55075



From: Emma Adams <>

Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 3:05 PM

To: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>

Subject: Proposed Phase-Out of South St. Paul's Residential Permit Parking Program

Importance: High

Dear Michael Healy and City Council Members,

Our community strongly urges the retention of the current permit policy, which was established in 1993, the same year the high school was built. The proximity to the high school and community center presents numerous challenges both during and outside of school

hours. While changing the signage to two-hour parking may alleviate some parking constraints during school days, it fails to address significant issues that arise outside of these hours.

It appears that the initiative to change the permit policy has only considered the physical school day. We ask that you consider the various events and functions that draw students, families, and friends to the area outside of school hours, such as sporting events, practices, tournaments, dances (homecoming and prom), plays, Kaposia Days, car shows, markets, and more. The high school is not just a place for education; it is a hub for community activities and gatherings.

Thirty years ago, the foresight of implementing the permit policy likely included considerations for these additional uses. The high school, being tax-subsidized, serves multiple purposes beyond its curriculum. Recently, the signs near the high school on 6th Ave North were replaced due to fading, and the narrative about incurring costs to replace signs is moot. It would be more costly to replace them with entirely new signage.

If this is a documentation issue, the residents of 6th Ave North are willing to come together to bridge this need and renew our permits. We are ready to facilitate this effort.

I urge you to fully consider the impacts this change would have on our community. As a parent of two small children with another on the way, the only place I can safely park my car is in front of my house. Maintaining this access is crucial for the safety of my family. Our road is already busy, being a dead end with two large apartment buildings at the end. The apartment is not accessible from the alley, and parking down the block is not a safe option due to the volume of careless traffic.

Additionally, I have several questions regarding the FAQ section:

- How many homeowners are affected by this phase-out?
- How much is the city spending on this program each year?
- How much money will the city save by this change?
- What is the cost associated with the change?
- How do you plan to differentiate homeowners from non-homeowners for the exemption? (This seems like the same issue, except more complicated than just resident parking.)
- What is accomplished by inconveniencing these homeowners? What is the goal? If the goal is “equality,” maybe events should be moved around and housed in different neighborhoods where their streets can be blocked off and have mass foot traffic.
- Is the monitoring of these zones by the police really an added expense, or a mechanism for the city to generate revenue?
- Were the new signs recently installed on 6th Ave North factored into the cost analysis?
- How many complaints have been received regarding the fairness of this policy? I believe

there would be far more complaints from residents losing their only parking space. If this is an effort of fairness, what other parking policies are changing? Why would two-hour parking be fair if other roads in South St. Paul do not have parking limits?

- Why do the FAQs reference other cities' codes and policies? Are we planning to adopt other cities' referendums?
- If police do not monitor parking today, how will changing policy/signage change that going forward? In the future state, will residents have to wait two hours to call the police to come out? You cannot enforce the rules timely in the same way you could today.
- The west side of 6th Ave N is already two-hour parking from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Friday. What is the purpose of implementing this on the full street?
- Regarding the issue of former residents being able to come back and park in permit parking, has there ever been a documented case of this happening? If someone moves, the chances of them using permit parking at their former residence or any of the defined permit parking areas seem incredibly improbable.

Please consider retaining this program. We desperately need it in our area.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Emily and Chris Adams
310 6th Ave North



Emma M. Adams (MEYER)

Network Product Data Consultant Prin. | Network
Operations
Prime Therapeutics

Upcoming PTO:
April 25, 28

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From:
To: [Michael Healy](#)
Cc: [Lori Hansen](#); [Pam Bakken](#); [Todd Podgorski](#); [Matthew Thompson](#); [Tom Seaberg](#); [Joe Kaliszewski](#); [Nick Guilliams](#)
Subject: Re: Proposed Phase-Out of South St. Paul Residential Permit Parking Program
Date: Friday, April 25, 2025 7:13:27 PM

Thank you Michael for taking the time to respond back to me so quickly. The information you provided was very clear.

After reading your email, I do understand the position of the city. I agree, it would be costly implementing and maintaining a street parking permit program. It is unfair for some streets to get the signs while others do not. An occasional parking inconvenience is part of living close to a park.

I cc'd the City Council Members because I thought that they were the decision makers on this issue. Lol. I now understand that that this is an administrative issue.

I have only lived in this city for six years and I love it here. You all do an awesome job!!

Keep up the great work, Tracie Zerwas.

On Apr 24, 2025, at 4:29 PM, Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org> wrote:

Tracie,

Thank you for the comments, they will be made a part of the record and included whenever this matter is brought to the City Council for additional discussion. Tonight's gathering is just an open house facilitated by City Staff to gather citizen feedback.

I do understand that nobody in town wants other people to park in front of their house. That is 100% a universal sentiment and not something that is limited to the area by McGuire Field. Candidly, I don't like it when my neighbors park in front of my house either. It is not logistically possible to guarantee every resident dedicated on-street parking stalls in front of their own house, so we need to make compromises to treat everyone fairly. I'm not aware of any other communities in Dakota County that use permit parking to restrict parking because of occasional events at a public park. The benefit of living by a park is that you have easy access to the park and all of its amenities. The downside to living by a park is that sometimes there will be cars parked on the street related to the park. As I explained in the FAQ, permit parking is primarily a big city solution (i.e. Minneapolis and Saint Paul) and it is very unusual for a town like South St. Paul to operate a permit parking program.

The City did already expand the parking lot at the baseball field/Lorraine Park due to community concerns that the parking lot was not large enough. This was done the year

after permit parking was established so the parking lot is already significantly larger than it was when the permit parking signs went in (30 new stalls were added in 1995). It is expensive to expand a parking lot and every time we do it, Lorraine Park's green space and amenity area shrinks further. Most cities right-size their parking facilities at community parks to align with typical daily usage and it is expected that occasional overflow parking for large events will utilize nearby streets. Right now, a couple of streets near McGuire Field get special treatment with permit parking signs and other streets near McGuire Field do not. There is nothing in the City Code to justify why some streets are "winners" and others are "losers" when it comes to the permit parking program. This is causing hurt feelings and complaints and was the initial catalyst for reevaluating the permit parking program.

Permit parking programs are logistically demanding to operate, and it would take a lot of Staff time to modernize SSP's permit parking program if the City Council wanted to preserve it instead of phasing it out. The existing program is a "fake" permit program that has largely been forgotten by the City and has very little actual compliance although the neighborhood near McGuire Field may take the program slightly more seriously than the other two neighborhoods. Most residents in the three permit parking zones do not get permit stickers or put any stickers on their cars or their guests' cars. Instead, residents living in the permit parking areas depend on the permit parking signs to scare away non-residents. If the City Council wanted to create a "real" permit parking program, there would be a lot of administrative time involved setting up the program and a lot of administrative time involved with running it:

- You have to develop rules for how many permits each house gets and how many (if any) guest permits they can get. These rules need to be administered by a City employee.
- If you don't want to use a 3-ring binder for managing the program like we do today, you need to set up a software program for issuing and tracking permits. There is an upfront cost to buy the software and continuing costs to use it. We may or may not have existing software at City Hall that could be adapted to run this type of program so it is possible that we might need to buy new software and pay a yearly licensing fee.
- You need to physically print permits. You either have to print stickers that have a trackable serial number tied to an account, or you need to print new stickers every year if you want each house to get new permits every year.
- The City Clerk's office needs to send out one or more annual mailings reminding

people that their permit is going to expire, and they need to renew it. If you don't do this, you are going to have angry residents who are upset that they got a parking ticket after their permit expired and they didn't notice.

- Every time a resident in the permit zone buys a new vehicle that they want to park on the street, they will need to register the new vehicle and its license plate with the permit program and this data will need to be entered into the system by a City employee.
- You need to develop a fee structure for how you will handle annual permits and guest permits for large events. Somebody at City Hall has to be responsible for selling guest permits.

If the City did go this direction, how much would you and your neighbors be willing to pay for parking permits and guest permits? Minneapolis and Saint Paul both currently charge \$25 per vehicle per year which probably still doesn't fully cover their programs' administrative costs. Minneapolis and Saint Paul also charge \$2 and \$3 per-car daily fees for guest parking for special events (birthday parties, grad parties, etc.). Just to be clear, not even Minneapolis and Saint Paul do regular proactive enforcement of permit parking zones and a \$25 annual permit will not come close to covering the cost of providing any kind of routine monitoring by the Police Department.

The Staff recommendation is likely going to continue to be that the permit parking program be phased out. Permit parking is a big city solution and South St. Paul does not face the same type of chronic parking shortages near its mid-sized public parks as Minneapolis and Saint Paul do in the neighborhoods near their colleges and hospitals. At the end of the day, this is a policy decision. I won't take it personally if the City Council wants to go a different direction than what the City Engineer and I are recommending.

Thank you again for your comments.

Michael

Michael Healy | Planning Manager

Phone : 651-554-3217 | Fax: 651-554-3211

City of South St. Paul | 125 3rd Avenue North | South St. Paul, MN 55075

[<image001.png>](#) [<image003.png>](#)

[<image002.png>](#)

From:**Sent:** Thursday, April 24, 2025 12:38 PM**To:** Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>**Cc:** Lori Hansen <lhansen@southstpaul.org>; Pam Bakken <pbakken@southstpaul.org>; Todd Podgorski <tpodgorski@southstpaul.org>; Matthew Thompson <mthompson@southstpaul.org>; Tom Seaberg <tseaberg@southstpaul.org>; Joe Kaliszewski <jkaliszewski@southstpaul.org>**Subject:** Proposed Phase-Out of South St. Paul Residential Permit Parking Program

Greeting Michael,

I am sending you my concerns and suggestions regarding the proposed phase-out of South St. Paul residential permit parking program as I am unable to attend tonight's meeting because I am recovering from surgery. Please address my concerns at tonight's meeting.

My name is Tracie Zerwas, I live at 824 2nd Ave. S., South St. Paul. My house is located down the block from Lorraine Park in an existing permit parking zone.

A parking problem does exist during baseball games and when there are large parties/events held at the pavilion. I will only address my concerns regarding parking during baseball games at this time. Removing the existing signs only shifts the problem, it does not fix it. If the no parking during baseball game sign is removed, the overflow cars attending the baseball games will then only park on the streets where the signs now exist and were removed. The city will still receive complaints regarding the lack of street parking in front of our own homes during baseball games, except, the complaints will then come from the homeowners where the signs have been removed. Again, there is a problem with lack of parking during baseball games or homes outside of the no parking zones would not be calling and complaining.

I would like to recommend the following:

1. Expand the parking lot at the baseball field/Lorriane Park. This permanently solves the problem: or
2. Keep the existing signs and charge a permit fee; or
3. keep the existing signs and charge a permit fee until the parking can be expanded; or
4. Work with the church on the corner to come to an agreement that would allow for overflow parking during baseball games the ability to park in their lot. This lot is closer to the baseball fields than my house is.

Again, removing the existing "no parking during a baseball game" signs does not fix the problem; it only shifts the problem to different South St. Paul households. Let's work together to solve the problem for all affected

South St. Paul households, not shift the problem.

Thank you for your time and please feel free to reach out to me with any additional questions or information regarding this issue.

Thank you,

Tracie Zerwas

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From:
To: [Michael Healy](#)
Subject: Re: Parking program
Date: Monday, April 14, 2025 12:15:37 PM

Michael,

I don't think anyone actually gets permits. I won't let anyone park in front of my home during soccer events. I expect them to get a ticket. That includes my own mother. Some people need to park in front of their homes as we have no driveways for parking. I think both blocks across from McMorrow need resident only parking. Without that, stop signs should be added at Syndicate on South Street E. A crosswalk should be added there too. If parking is going to be allowed on the north side of South Street then there should be a sidewalk added for those 2 blocks. Pedestrians cannot just be expected to walk on the street or in yards. Children and parents jaywalk. I don't want to shovel a pedestrian sidewalk. Another reason I purchased this house. So, the way I see it is if you remove the parking restrictions you need to make the appropriate upgrades. Add 2 stop signs, put in a crosswalk, and take more of my boulevard to put in a sidewalk for 2 blocks on the north side of South Street E. I really don't think you folks have thought this through.

Respectfully,

Jeremy

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 14, 2025, at 11:16 AM, Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org> wrote:

>

> Jeremy,

>

> Thank you for reaching out, I will make sure that your comments are part of the record as the City Council is weighing options. My understanding is that parking issues at McMorrow are not nearly as bad as they were 22 years ago when you bought your house because the City moved the softball program out of the park in 2014. It sounds like you are disputing this or believe that there are still parking issues that require some type of program or signage to regulate. We can look into this further.

>

> Can you clarify whether your goal is to have permit parking on your block or whether your goal is simply to have a rule that nobody can park in front of your house during a soccer game? Permit parking is not the only way to regulate parking on a street and it sounds like you are acknowledging that most people on your block do not actually come to City Hall to get parking permits and the Police Department needs to look up vehicle ownership to figure out if a car belongs to a house on the block. If that is the setup that you and your neighbors like, you might want to consider requesting signage that says "Block Resident Parking Only During Soccer Games" or something like that. I can't guarantee that the City will be willing to provide that signage, but it would probably be more supportable than keeping a permit program alive that nobody is actually participating in.

>

> Michael

>

>

> Michael Healy | Planning Manager

> Phone : 651-554-3217 | Fax: 651-554-3211

> City of South St. Paul | 125 3rd Avenue North | South St. Paul, MN 55075

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Jeremy Broderick
> Sent: Monday, April 14, 2025 10:47 AM
> To: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>
> Subject: Parking program
>

>
> Hello Michael,
>

> I have lived in my home across the street from McMorrow field for 22 years. One of the reasons I purchased this home is the permit parking. You should agree that it would be unfair to take that away. Homeowners that do not have permit parking purchased those homes under those conditions. The complaint system works. The police do not issue tickets to vehicles registered to the address where it is parked. I have personally argued with park attendees about the parking on my side. One even referred to the signs being so faded that he can barely read them so they don't count. One said he was only there for 15 minutes and to F off. People regularly park in front of my house during soccer events because the added lots are too far away for their lazy overweight bodies to walk. People parking on my side of the road create a real risk trying to cross this busy road with children. Children running across the street in front of traffic. I see it every summer. You all want to make it more dangerous. You all should feel a responsibility to protect children because their parents won't. They won't just because it is less distance for them to walk. I own and operate my own business so I won't be able to attend the meeting. How much would it cost for me to have 2 signs that say no parking between these two signs ever? Less than \$5,000? Less than \$10,000? This is my home. How much can you extort from me? South St Paul has already taken 3' of the boulevard and charged me \$10,000 for that and the road about 15 years ago. I paid cash for that. You must keep the permit parking in place, for my home at least, just give me a price. Otherwise, when a child gets hit by a car crossing to or from McMorrow know that you played a role, and just maybe the people who first put the signs up did it with reason.

>
> Jeremy Broderick
> Sent from my iPhone
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>

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From:
To: [Michael Healy](#)
Subject: Re: Parking near McMorrow Field
Date: Monday, April 28, 2025 11:05:23 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Hi Michael,

Thank you for getting back to me. I totally understand it doesn't seem feasible to keep the program going. I was just coming from a place of concern for safety not only with leaving our driveway but also crossing the street on foot. I walk my dog at McMorrow multiple times a day and since we don't have a sidewalk, there is not a safe way to cross. The only time I see it being a big issue is when there are sporting events and there are lots of cars. I completely support the idea of no parking at all on our side of the street, but I don't know how the rest of the neighborhood would feel about it. I'm happy to answer any questions and thank you for considering alternate resolutions.

Sincerely,
Ashley Macziewski
Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 28, 2025, at 10:10 AM, Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org> wrote:

Ashley,

Thank you for the comments, they will be made a part of the record and included whenever this matter is brought to the City Council for additional discussion.

I do understand that nobody in town wants other people to park in front of their house. That is 100% a universal sentiment and not something that is limited to the area by McMorrow Field. Candidly, I don't like it when my neighbors park in front of my house either. It is not logistically possible to guarantee every resident dedicated on-street parking stalls in front of their own house, so we need to make compromises to treat everyone fairly. I'm not aware of any other communities in Dakota County that use permit parking to restrict parking because of occasional sporting events at a public park. The benefit of living by a park is that you have easy access to the park and all of its amenities. The downside to living by a park is that sometimes there will be cars parked on the street related to the park. As I explained in the FAQ that was mailed out, permit parking is primarily a big city solution (i.e. Minneapolis and Saint Paul) and it is very unusual for a town like South St. Paul to operate a permit parking program.

Permit parking programs are logistically demanding to operate, and it would take a lot of Staff time to modernize SSP's permit parking program if the City Council wanted to

preserve it instead of phasing it out. The existing program is a “fake” permit program that has largely been forgotten by the City and has very little actual compliance. Most residents in the three permit parking zones do not get permit stickers or put any stickers on their cars or their guests’ cars. Instead, residents living in the permit parking areas depend on the permit parking signs to scare away non-residents. It isn’t very transparent for the City to operate a fake permit program and it puts our Police Department in an awkward spot when they are called to the scene to investigate violations of a fake permitting program. One of your neighbors who also wants to keep the permit parking signs has stated bluntly that he does not have any parking permit stickers and most of his neighbors don’t have stickers either and he expects the Police Department to essentially knock on doors and look up license plates to figure out which cars belong to outsiders and which ones belong to residents. This is not a good use of Police Department resources.

If the City Council wanted to create a “real” permit parking program, there would be a lot of administrative time involved setting up the program and a lot of administrative time involved with running it:

1. You have to develop rules for how many permits each house gets and how many (if any) guest permits they can get. These rules need to be administered by a City employee.
2. If you don’t want to use a 3-ring binder for managing the program like we do today, you need to set up a software program for issuing and tracking permits. There is an upfront cost to buy the software and continuing costs to use it. We may or may not have existing software at City Hall that could be adapted to run this type of program so it is possible that we might need to buy new software and pay a yearly licensing fee.
3. You need to physically print permits. You either have to print stickers that have a trackable serial number tied to an account, or you need to print new stickers every year if you want each house to get new permits every year.
4. The City Clerk’s office needs to send out one or more annual mailings reminding people that their permit is going to expire, and they need to renew it. If you don’t do this, you are going to have angry residents who are upset that they got a parking ticket after their permit expired and they didn’t notice.

5. Every time a resident in the permit zone buys a new vehicle that they want to park on the street, they will need to register the new vehicle and its license plate with the permit program and this data will need to be entered into the system by a City employee.
6. You need to develop a fee structure for how you will handle annual permits and guest permits for large events. Somebody at City Hall has to be responsible for selling guest permits.

If the City Council did want to go in the direction of creating a real permit parking program, how much would you and your neighbors be willing to pay for parking permits and guest permits? Minneapolis and Saint Paul both currently charge \$25 per vehicle per year which probably still doesn't fully cover their programs' administrative costs. Minneapolis and Saint Paul also charge \$2 and \$3 per-car daily fees for guest parking for special events (birthday parties, grad parties, etc.). Just to be clear, not even Minneapolis and Saint Paul do regular proactive enforcement of permit parking zones and a \$25 annual permit will not come close to covering the cost of providing any kind of routine monitoring by the Police Department.

The Police Department and the South Metro Fire Department are both aware of the proposal to get rid of the permit parking program as it has been discussed at several management staff meetings. The Police Department actively supports this proposal, and the Fire Department is neutral on this proposal. There have not been any concerns expressed by our first responders about emergency vehicle access or impacts to traffic safety. We can take a look at the driveway visibility issue, but I think the solution in that case would be to ban parking on all or part of your side of the street at all times, not keep a permit parking program in place. Would you be supportive of parking being prohibited on your side of the street?

The Staff recommendation is likely going to continue to be that the permit parking program be phased out. Permit parking is a big city solution and South St. Paul does not face the same type of chronic parking shortages near its mid-sized public parks as Minneapolis and Saint Paul do in the neighborhoods near their colleges and hospitals. At the end of the day, however, this is a policy decision. I won't take it personally if the City Council wants to go a different direction than what the City Engineer and I are recommending.

Thank you again for your comments.

Michael

Michael Healy | Planning Manager

Phone : 651-554-3217 | Fax: 651-554-3211

City of South St. Paul | 125 3rd Avenue North | South St. Paul, MN 55075

[<image001.png>](#) [<image003.png>](#)
[<image002.png>](#)

-----Original Message-----

From: Ashley Taylor

Sent: Friday, April 25, 2025 11:33 AM

To: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>

Subject: Parking near McMorrow Field

Dear Michael,

I unfortunately wasn't able to attend the open house yesterday to voice my concerns about the parking permit signage removal. I really hope the city reconsiders removing the signs. We live at 119 South Street and when there are soccer games, South Street gets extremely busy. I feel like it is a very huge safety concern if people are gonna be parking on both sides of the street. It will completely obstruct our view as we back out of the driveway and there are constantly people speeding on South Street. we really enjoy living by the park and people are usually pretty respectful with parking and I feel like the signage keeps things in check. I really hope you reconsider.

Sincerely,

Ashley and Taylor Macziewski

119 South Street East

South St. Paul, MN 55075

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [Michael Healy](#)
To:
Cc: [Jimmy Francis](#); [Nick Guilliams](#)
Bcc: [Ryan Garcia](#)
Subject: RE: Proposed South Saint Paul Residential Permit Parking Phase-Out
Date: Thursday, April 24, 2025 9:31:00 AM
Attachments: [3 On-Street Permit Parking Discussion.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Good morning Jenna,

Thank you for the email, I will make sure your comments are shared with the City Council. I think there is some awkwardness on both sides regarding the history this program. On your side, you are stating that you were unaware that a parking permit was required despite the presence of a "Parking by Permit Only- Enforced at All Times" sign directly in front of your house. On our side, there was a wave of retirements several years ago and current City Hall staff was not aware that the parking permit program existed until somebody came to City Hall last year asking how to get a parking permit. We had to reach out to a former employee who had been reassigned to a different department and have her explain to us where the 3-ring binder and sticker roll were hidden away. Since that time, we have issued a couple of parking permits, but the program is still largely forgotten.

I think its fair to say that the existing permit parking program is a "fake" program and that residents primarily use the existing signs to discourage non-residents from parking in front of their houses. The goal with the "2 Hour Parking, 8 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday, Block Residents Exempt" signs would be to replace the fake permit parking program with a legitimate parking restriction program, one that we have modeled after what most other communities in Dakota County are doing near their high schools. You are correct that an alternative would be to create a real parking permit program, but I think most residents are not familiar with how complicated these programs are to administer and how much administrative staff time goes into running this type of program in Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the two cities in our area that use permit parking as their main tool for regulating parking near high schools. With a "real" permit parking program:

- You have to develop rules for how many permits each house gets and how many (if any) guest permits they can get. These rules need to be administered by a City employee.
- If you don't want to use a 3-ring binder, you need to set up a software program for issuing and tracking permits. There is an upfront cost to buy the software and continuing costs to use it. We may or may not have existing software at City Hall that could be adapted to run this type of program so it is possible that we might need to buy new software and pay a yearly licensing fee.
- You need to physically print permits. You either have to print stickers that have a trackable serial number tied to an account, or you need to print new stickers every year if you want each house to get new permits every year.

- The City Clerk's office needs to send out one or more annual mailings reminding people that their permit is going to expire, and they need to renew it. If you don't do this, you are going to have angry residents who are upset that they got a parking ticket after their permit expired and they didn't notice.
- Every time a resident in the permit zone buys a new vehicle that they want to park on the street, they will need to register the new vehicle and its license plate with the permit program and this data will need to be entered into the system by a City employee.
- You need to develop a fee structure for how you will handle annual permits and guest permits for large events. Somebody at City Hall has to be responsible for selling guest permits.

All of the administrative time is arguably worthwhile if you are in an area with a severe constant parking shortage and a real need for this type of program. In most areas, restricted parking signs get the job done without all of this administrative time. As I explained in the FAQ, permit parking is primarily a big city solution (i.e. Minneapolis and Saint Paul) and it is very unusual for a town like South St. Paul to operate a permit parking program.

If the City Council wants to develop a real permit parking program, the cost of a permit is going to depend on how much the City Council wants to subsidize the program. The program probably will not cover its own administrative costs at \$25 per permit but that is what Minneapolis and Saint Paul both currently charge per vehicle per year because it is not politically feasible to charge more than that. Minneapolis and Saint Paul also charge per-car daily fees for guest parking for special events (birthday parties, grad parties, etc.). Just to be clear, not even Minneapolis and Saint Paul do proactive enforcement of permit parking zones and a \$25 annual permit will not come close to covering the cost of providing any kind of routine monitoring by the Police Department. We are likely still talking about complaint-based code enforcement at that price, the permit fee would just be partially covering administrative staff time.

Have you had a chance to read the July 22, 2024 Staff memo on the project webpage yet (attached)? The final page is a map of the neighborhoods by the high school. As you will see, almost all of the blocks near the high school currently have their parking regulated by 2-hour parking signage and your block is one of just two blocks that have a permit parking requirement. I think there has always been a recognition that your two blocks have some extra parking challenges which is why City Staff is proposing to add the "block residents exempt" language so that you can still park in front of your homes during the day.

I look forward to meeting you tonight and discussing further! At the end of the day, this is a policy decision, and I won't take it personally if the City Council wants to go a different direction than what the City Engineer and I are recommending.

Michael

Michael Healy | Planning Manager

Phone : 651-554-3217 | Fax: 651-554-3211

City of South St. Paul | 125 3rd Avenue North | South St. Paul, MN 55075



From: Jenna Bookler <>

Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 11:16 PM

To: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>

Cc: Jimmy Francis <jfrancis@southstpaul.org>

Subject: Proposed South Saint Paul Residential Permit Parking Phase-Out

Good evening, Michael,

I am reaching out in response to the recent letter we received about the proposed phase-out of the residential permit parking program on 6th Ave North. My husband, Patrick, and I have lived at 300 6th Ave N since February 2021.

We have faced challenges with parking ever since we moved in. I will admit that we do not currently have vehicle permits from the city, but we also were never provided with any information on how to obtain them. I understand it is difficult for a city to manage residents moving in and out of a permit area, however, if a city offers permit parking zones and would like their permit areas enforced then it would be helpful to receive communication at least on an annual basis in the mail to ensure residents understand the expectations of the program. I would have been more than willing to post a sticker in my windshield denoting a permit had I known that was the expectation. Your mailed letter dated 4/11/25 was the first time I was informed that the City Hall had them accessible at the front counter. Is it possible to create an electronic form or filing system for residents to complete each year instead of using an outdated 3 ring binder? We as residents could certainly help the city with proper documentation records.

Our property is unique in the fact that we are very limited with parking due to multiple factors, but primarily city placed signage. The space we cannot park severely outweighs the space we can park. Please see my visual diagram attached. We are the first house on the block which means foot and car traffic are both significant throughout the day. On the south side of our house (3rd St. N), there is a sign that says "no parking here to corner" which is about 35 feet of street space. Directly in front of our house (6th Ave N - closest to grassy median), there is a stop sign and by law you cannot park within 30 feet of a stop sign. This leaves roughly 25 feet of parking space in front of our house that my husband and I can park our vehicles before we hit our neighbor, Merry Erickson's, property line. We have a very small detached garage (original to the home), but it does not fit either of our vehicles since I have a larger SUV and my husband has a truck. We do not have a driveway and we

own the only home that does not have alleyway access or a parking pad area since our garage faces south toward 3rd St. N instead of east toward the alley like the rest of the block.

My husband operates an interior remodeling business out of our home requiring frequent hauling of equipment back and forth to his truck. I am also pregnant with our first child and am thinking ahead about the safety and needs of having our vehicle accessible nearby. Our neighbors two doors down, Emma and Chris Adams, also have 2 (almost 3) small children. We as residents should not have to sacrifice our children's safety or face lack of parking near our homes simply because someone wants a convenient parking spot nearby the event or school they are attending.

I understand that we made a choice to live here and were well aware of the challenges in owning a 1920 home with "out-of-date" features such as a small garage, but due to this heavily trafficked area caused by high school/community events out of our control, I would strongly encourage that the permit parking continues. My husband and I are very willing to pay an annual permit fee per vehicle if that means we can park outside our home. We have called the police 3 or 4 times due to cars being parked on our street for extended periods of time for events at the high school (a few times late at night, too). We both have had our cars broken into on our street, 1 of which we filed a police report for. This, of course, is not an isolated event of crime and I know it happens across the city, but we purposely have a Ring alarm system and cameras on our property in order to protect our vehicles. If we are unable to park in front of our home, this layer of security is completely useless since our vehicles are not visible to the cameras.

Your proposed change to replace signs that read "2 Hour Parking, 8 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday, Block Residents Exempt" is a good thought, but from our experience the day time hours are not when we have issues. High school students and staff are very aware that they cannot park along 6th Ave N during school hours and we have rarely encountered someone parking on the street during the day besides neighbors. The true issue is after school hours from 3-10 pm on weekdays and when events are being held on the weekends. This is when residents on our street are home from work and need a spot to park.

For example, if there is an all-day wrestling tournament or dance competition on a Saturday, we've had cars parked on 6th Ave N the entire day making it so we cannot park on our street until the event is over. My husband has walked over to the high school a few times to ask event officials to announce for cars on 6th Ave N to politely move so we just had a spot to park on our street. Evening weekday sport practices and games also pose an issue unless I'm parked and home from work before 6 pm. There's plenty of special events throughout the year like homecoming, prom, Kaposia Days, graduation, etc. that brings congested traffic to our street constantly. Not to mention we have Central Square Community Center and 3 separate churches within a few blocks of us (Celestial Church of Christ and South St. Paul Hispanic SDA Church on 6th Ave N and St. Augustine's Catholic Church on 3rd St. N) that attracts weeknight and weekend traffic congestion as well. Unlike other areas of South St. Paul, the amount of overflow parking required for all these community functions affects residential parking. This is why the permit system should stay in place.

We plan to attend the open house tomorrow and hope the City Council understands our concerns as well as our neighbors. We thoroughly enjoy being residents of South Saint Paul and work hard as a

neighborhood to ensure the area near the school is safe and well cared for. My husband has lived in South Saint Paul almost his entire life and worked for 12 years in South Saint Paul Public Schools so we understand decisions like this take a fair amount of planning and opinions.

Feel free to reach out to me with any follow-up questions you may have.

Thanks,

Jenna and Patrick Bookler
300 6th Ave N.
South Saint Paul, MN 55075

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From: [Michael Healy](#)
To:
Cc: [Nick Williams](#)
Subject: RE: Permit parking
Date: Wednesday, May 14, 2025 12:48:00 PM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Ruth,

Thank you for the email, I will make sure it is shared with the City Council. We are still digesting the information that was received during the public comment period and evaluating possible “next steps.” Regardless of what happens with permit parking, it is unlawful to park within 5 feet of the entrance to a driveway and this is considered a towable offense under City Code Section 58-92. We sometimes put up signage about this if there is an area where it is proving to be a significant challenge and there are frequent violations.

I do understand that nobody in town wants other people to park in front of their house. That is 100% a universal sentiment and not something that is limited to the area by McMorrow Field. Candidly, I don’t like it when my neighbors park in front of my house either. It is not logistically possible to guarantee every resident dedicated on-street parking stalls in front of their own house, so we need to make compromises to treat everyone fairly. I’m not aware of any other communities in Dakota County that use permit parking to restrict parking because of occasional events at a public park. The benefit of living by a park is that you have easy access to the park and all of its amenities. The downside to living by a park is that sometimes there will be cars parked on the street related to the park. As I explained in the FAQ, permit parking is primarily a big city solution (i.e. Minneapolis and Saint Paul) and it is very unusual for a town like South St. Paul to operate a permit parking program.

Permit parking programs are logistically demanding to operate, and it would take a lot of Staff time to modernize SSP’s permit parking program if the City Council wanted to preserve it instead of phasing it out. The existing program is a “fake” permit program that has largely been forgotten by the City and has very little actual compliance. Most residents in the three permit parking zones do not get permit stickers or put any stickers on their cars or their guests’ cars. Instead, residents living in the permit parking areas depend on the permit parking signs to scare away non-residents. One of your neighbors who also wants to keep the permit parking signs has stated bluntly that he does not have any parking permit stickers and most of his neighbors don’t have stickers either and he expects the Police Department to essentially knock on doors and look up license plates to figure out which cars belong to outsiders and which ones belong to residents. This is not a good use of Police Department resources.

If the City Council wanted to create a “real” permit parking program, there would be a lot of administrative time involved setting up the program and a lot of administrative time involved with running it:

1. You have to develop rules for how many permits each house gets and how many (if any) guest permits they can get. These rules need to be administered by a City employee.

2. If you don't want to use a 3-ring binder for managing the program like we do today, you need to set up a software program for issuing and tracking permits. There is an upfront cost to buy the software and continuing costs to use it. We may or may not have existing software at City Hall that could be adapted to run this type of program so it is possible that we might need to buy new software and pay a yearly licensing fee.
3. You need to physically print permits. You either have to print stickers that have a trackable serial number tied to an account, or you need to print new stickers every year if you want each house to get new permits every year.
4. The City Clerk's office needs to send out one or more annual mailings reminding people that their permit is going to expire, and they need to renew it. If you don't do this, you are going to have angry residents who are upset that they got a parking ticket after their permit expired and they didn't notice.
5. Every time a resident in the permit zone buys a new vehicle that they want to park on the street, they will need to register the new vehicle and its license plate with the permit program and this data will need to be entered into the system by a City employee.
6. You need to develop a fee structure for how you will handle annual permits and guest permits for large events. Somebody at City Hall has to be responsible for selling guest permits.

If the City Council did want to go in the direction of creating a real permit parking program, how much would you and your neighbors be willing to pay for parking permits and guest permits? Minneapolis and Saint Paul both currently charge \$25 per vehicle per year which probably still doesn't fully cover their programs' administrative costs. Minneapolis and Saint Paul also charge \$2 and \$3 per-car daily fees for guest parking for special events (birthday parties, grad parties, etc.). Just to be clear, not even Minneapolis and Saint Paul do regular proactive enforcement of permit parking zones and a \$25 annual permit will not come close to covering the cost of providing any kind of routine monitoring by the Police Department.

The Police Department and the South Metro Fire Department are both aware of the proposal to get rid of the permit parking program as it has been discussed at several management staff meetings. The Police Department actively supports this proposal, and the Fire Department is neutral on this proposal. The Staff recommendation is likely going to continue to be that the permit parking program be phased out. Permit parking is a big city solution and South St. Paul does not face the same type of chronic parking shortages near its mid-sized public parks as Minneapolis and Saint Paul do in the neighborhoods near their colleges and hospitals. At the end of the day, this is a policy decision. I won't take it personally if the City Council wants to go a different direction than what the City Engineer and I are recommending.

Michael

Michael Healy | Planning Manager

Phone : 651-554-3217 | Fax: 651-554-3211

City of South St. Paul | 125 3rd Avenue North | South St. Paul, MN 55075



From: Ruth Spilhaus <>

Sent: Tuesday, May 13, 2025 6:07 PM

To: Michael Healy <mhealy@southstpaul.org>

Subject: Permit parking

Dear Michael Healy,

I just wanted to show you how bad the parking is on the opposite side of the street even when there isn't soccer going on I included a few pictures for you. I'm sorry to say this, but once soccer gets going it's going to be a terrible situation and I don't know if you want Police to be called because people can't get out of their driveways or stuff like that. I honestly believe that the permit parking is a good idea for one. It's a safety issue for two. it's just the right thing to do to keep it. Thank you for your time. I know you guys have probably already decided so it's kind of a moot point, but I thought I'd show you. Also, it seems like a waste of Police time to have us having to call the police to get out of our driveways and there are a lot of people that are disabled and you don't want there to be an issue and then have something come down on the city because of it. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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Ruth Spilhaus

ATTACHMENT 6

SOUTH ST. PAUL PERMIT PARKING ORDINANCE

Sec. 58-103. Residence parking permit.

- (a) *Policy.* The council finds that the occupants of dwellings in certain residential areas may not have suitable and adequate on-street parking available because vehicles of employees, patrons, visitors of commercial establishments, schools, public buildings and similar establishments have occupied the available on-street parking areas in such residential areas, that posted limited parking in such residential areas denies dwelling occupants reasonable on-street parking availability, and that it is in the public interest to afford dwelling occupants reasonable and suitable on-street parking in such residential areas.
- (b) *Parking zones.* The council may by resolution designate residential permit parking zones within residential areas upon a showing of necessity therefor to provide reasonable and suitable on-street parking availability to occupants of dwellings within the zone because of the circumstances set forth in subsection (a) of this section.
- (c) *Permits.* A resident within a designated residential permit parking zone may obtain residential parking permits in such number as may be determined by the council on a case-by-case basis for the parking of resident and guest motor vehicles. The permit authorizes the motor vehicle to be parked in the residential permit parking zone for a continuous period of time, not exceeding 20 consecutive hours, notwithstanding any posted limited parking, but does not authorize parking in a no parking zone nor parking in violation of snow removal provisions of this Code. The permit is issued by the clerk.
- (d) *Fee.* The permit fee shall be as established by chapter 26.
- (e) *Form of permit.* The residence parking permit is circular in shape, red in color, bears the letter "R" on its face, bears a code number representing the residence address of the owner of the vehicle on file in the office of the clerk, and must be capable of affixation to the inside of the rear window of the motor vehicle, or in such format as determined by the council.
- (f) *Placement.* The residence parking permit must be affixed to the inside of the rear window of the motor vehicle in the lower corner of the driver's side and located so as not to obstruct the vision of the driver; or, in the case of a nonsticker permit, it shall be located visibly in the rear window area on the driver's side or affixed temporarily to the rear window on the driver's side.

(Code 1992, § 1305.25)



WORK SESSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: April 13, 2026
DEPARTMENT: City Administrator
PREPARED BY: Ryan Garcia
AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 2.E.

MEETING TYPE

Regular Meeting

AGENDA ITEM

2026 Conference Opportunities

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED OR DESIRED OUTCOME

Council input on availability and interest for attendance at 2026 conferences.

OVERVIEW

The City Council has historically maintained an interest in having 2 - 3 members attend the annual National League of Cities City Summit and 1 - 2 members attend the annual League of Minnesota Cities Annual Conference. Staff would like to solidify interest for the 2026 conferences, which occur in June (LMC) and November (NLC):

- [LMC - June 24 - 26](#) (Rochester)
- [NLC City Summit - November 18 - November 21](#) (Nashville)

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Mayor & Council 2026 Budget (General Fund)

ATTACHMENTS

None