



CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA - City Manager

DATE OF MEETING: September 8, 2025

ITEM TITLE: Second Reading of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 69 "Parking Regulations" Regarding Off-Street Parking in Residential Areas

BACKGROUND:

Originally started in October of 2024, Staff brought this item back to the May 5, 2025, City Council Work Session for additional discussion and feedback by Council Members. This originated due to concerns about limiting RV Parking in residential areas, as well as parking on grass in residential areas throughout the City.

Staff have received complaints from residents regarding vehicles being parked in the front yards of residential properties. This practice can lead to unsafe conditions, create nuisance issues, and negatively affect neighborhood aesthetics and property values. The current City Code does not adequately address the issue of off-street and yard parking in residential zones. This proposed ordinance aims to establish clear and enforceable regulations to protect residential communities.

The City Council approved the first reading of this ordinance at its August 25, 2025, meeting.

DISCUSSION:

This ordinance amends Chapter 69 of the City Code by adding a new section (69.32) specifically governing the off-street parking and storage of vehicles in residential areas. The key provisions of the ordinance are as follows:

- **Requires an "All-Weather Surface":** Vehicles parked in a front yard or a side yard on a corner lot must be on an approved all-weather surface, such as concrete, asphalt, gravel, or pavers.
- **Limits Surface Area:** The total area of the driveway and parking surface is limited to a maximum of 40% of the front yard or side yard on a corner lot. Existing driveways that exceed this limit are grandfathered in but cannot be expanded.
- **Provides Exceptions:** An exception is made during snow emergencies, allowing residents to temporarily park in their yards. Vehicles must be moved back to a compliant surface within 24 hours after the snow ordinance is lifted.
- **Prohibits Habitation:** The ordinance prohibits using a recreational vehicle for habitation (living or sleeping) on a residential property for more than 72 consecutive hours.
- **Prohibits Trail Parking:** Parking on any City-maintained recreational trail is prohibited.
- **Declares Violations a Nuisance:** Violations are declared a public nuisance, which allows the City to pursue abatement through established procedures for municipal infractions.

RESULTS:

The City has established priorities during strategic planning sessions. This item supports the Vision from that session of **supporting high-quality City services** and **promoting and encouraging community involvement and engagement**. This item helps achieve that vision by providing clear regulations that allow for consistent code enforcement and by responding directly to concerns raised by residents, thereby improving the overall quality of life in our neighborhoods.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

There is no significant financial impact associated with this ordinance. Enforcement will be handled by current City staff as part of their regular duties.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends a motion to approve the second reading of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 69 "Parking Regulations" Regarding Off-Street Parking in Residential Areas.

Staff recommends a motion to suspend the statutory rule requiring an ordinance to be considered and voted on for passage at two council meetings prior to the meeting at which it is to be finally passed.

Staff recommends a motion to have this ordinance, Amending Chapter 69 "Parking Regulations" Regarding Off-Street Parking in Residential Areas, placed on its final passage for adoption pursuant to Iowa Code Section 380.3 and to authorize the Mayor to sign the Ordinance. The changes will be effective upon the ordinance summary being published in the newspaper.