



TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COMPLETE STREETS AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REPORT

MEETING DATE: 08/13/2026

ITEM NO: 4.

DATE: August 13, 2026
TO: Complete Streets and Transportation Commission
FROM: Nicolle Burnham, Parks and Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Receive and Review Draft Administrative Guidelines and Policies for the Town's Residential Preferential Parking (RPP) and Employee Preferential Parking (EPP) Programs and Provide Feedback to Staff.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and review draft Administrative Guidelines and Policies for the Town's Residential Preferential Parking (RPP) and Employee Preferential Parking (EPP) Programs, and provide feedback for staff to consider.

BACKGROUND:

On December 17, 2001, Town Council adopted Resolution No. 2001-145 (Attachment 1), approving the Downtown Parking Management Plan (Plan). The Plan directed the development of a zone-based enforcement approach for on- and off-street public parking in downtown and near Los Gatos High School, including recommended time limits, exemptions, enforcement days and hours, and resident and employee permit programs and fees.

The current Neighborhood Parking Plan Process (Attachment 2) has been in place since February 2010, governing the establishment of neighborhood residential preferential parking restrictions. It outlines five stages: 1) resident petition, 2) data collection, 3) informational neighborhood meeting, 4) additional meetings or modification, and 5) implementation. This policy had been used to evaluate requests for new or expanded RPP zones in Los Gatos, including in 2016, when it was used to establish six-month RPP pilot locations in the Alpine Avenue and Whitney Avenue neighborhoods.

On March 7, 2017, the Town Council approved staff recommendations to: A) discontinue the Neighborhood Parking Plan Process; B) maintain all existing parking permit areas; C) expand and rename the eastside parking permit area to the High School Zone; and D) absorb the Alpine and Whitney Avenue preferential parking pilots into the High School Zone with 90-minute

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Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Finance Director

BACKGROUND (continued):

parking restrictions enforced only during the school year. These recommendations recognized student parking as a major contributor to congestion near the high school and cited staffing limitations affecting enforcement and administration of expanded RPP programs.

On April 4, 2017, the Town Council repealed its March 7, 2017, action on residential preferential parking, instead approving the Alpine and Whitney Avenue RPP pilot programs as permanent and freezing the Neighborhood Parking Permit Process pending further discussion of costs and prioritization. Staff continue to receive requests for new RPP areas throughout Town, but has declined to evaluate these due to the 2017 Town Council actions.

On March 20, 2018, the Council approved staff's recommendation to solicit consultant services for a comprehensive analysis of downtown parking, including recommendations on residential and employee preferential parking programs and related policies.

On March 19, 2019, the Town Council approved an agreement with Dixon Resources Unlimited (DIXON) for a Comprehensive Downtown Parking Study, leading to the Parking Roadmap (<https://www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/23807/Los-Gatos-Parking-Roadmap>) (Roadmap), adopted on December 17, 2019. The Roadmap has been under implementation since then, and addressing Downtown parking remains a Town Council priority.

On recommendation of the Roadmap was to implement dedicated Downtown Employee Permit Parking Program. This recommendation was implemented as a pilot and continues to be available today. Through this program certain spaces in the Downtown lots are signed as employee spaces and employees can secure a free permit. Employee parking is enforced by Parking Control Officers.

On December 6, 2022, the Town Council received an update on the parking program, covering progress on Council priorities: wayfinding and signage, implementation of the Downtown employee parking program, parking program staffing, and efforts to introduce paid parking Downtown.

On August 15, 2023, the Town Council received a report on Parking Program Implementation and took action on several items: revising residential permit parking program charges, eliminating employee parking permit fees for the Olive Zone, and allocating up to \$200,000 to fund a limited-term (one-year) Parking Coordinator position to continue implementing the Downtown Parking Program.

On March 5, 2024, the Town Council authorized the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with Dixon Resources Limited (Dixon) for Parking Program management. Under this agreement, Dixon has provided support to the Town for a flat monthly fee, serving as staff augmentation.

BACKGROUND (continued):

A steering committee for the Town's Parking Program management, consisting of staff from Parks and Public Works, Economic Vitality, and Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department, has been collaborating regularly with Dixon since April 2024 to address Roadmap recommendations, including those prioritized by Town Council.

On February 13, 2025, the Complete Streets and Transportation Commission (CSTC) received a report on the proposed 2025 Parking Program Work Plan (Attachment 3), which included multiple Roadmap recommendations identified as Town Council priorities, along with proposed updates to the Town's Residential Parking Permit (RPP) and employee parking programs and policies.

On September 11, 2025, the CSTC received a status update on the 2025 Parking Program Work Plan. Staff highlighted completion of several Roadmap priorities and noted the ongoing review of residential and employee preferential permit policies and ordinance language. That review was completed in late 2025, resulting in draft Administrative Guidelines and Policy documents (Guidelines) to support ongoing implementation of the residential and preferential permit parking programs.

DISCUSSION:

Since September 11, 2025 CSTC meeting, the parking steering committee has continued developing Guidelines for the Town's RPP and EPP. These revised Guidelines are intended to modernize and replace the existing Neighborhood Parking Plan Process, providing administrative and operational policies that support improved permit program management and service delivery to Los Gatos residents, businesses and their employees.

RPP Administrative Guidelines and Policies

The draft RPP Administrative Guidelines and Policies (Attachment 4) formalize a structured process for establishing, maintaining, and dissolving RPP zones based on demonstrated need. Central to this policy update are the reinstatement of a resident-initiated petition process, a review and data collection cycle to support project prioritization, minimum zone size requirements to reduce spillover parking, and minimum participation rates to ensure ongoing utilization and cost recovery. Key elements of the revised RPP Guidelines include:

1. RPP zone designation criteria requiring evidence of recurring external, non-neighborhood resident parking impacts and a determination that alternative parking strategies are not feasible.

DISCUSSION (continued):

2. Three (3) initiation pathways: 1) Town Council direction, 2) Town Manager/staff-initiated review, or 3) resident-led petition—the latter requiring documented support from at least 51% of households within the proposed RPP zone.
3. A recommended minimum zone size of four contiguous blocks (approximately 2,000 linear feet of frontage) with existing RPP zones exempted from this sizing requirement.
4. A minimum 75% average parking occupancy rate during a parking utilization study is required before a proposed RPP zone may proceed for further consideration.
5. Formal Town Council action by resolution to designate a zone, defining its boundaries, restrictions, and permit eligibility criteria.
6. Public notification criteria to provide education to residents living within the boundaries of proposed or newly established RPP zones.
7. A request consideration and data collection cycle and one (1) year moratorium on re-evaluating invalid requests or newly established or dissolved zones.
8. Three (3) permit types: 1) Residential, 2) Guest, and 3) Temporary, with vehicle eligibility restrictions that exclude oversized vehicles, trailers, and RVs, and that bar vehicles with delinquent parking citations from receiving a permit.
9. An optional reduced-price permit component for income-qualified residents for future consideration by Town Council.
10. A minimum 51% household participation rate required both to activate a new RPP zone and to keep an existing RPP zone active at each renewal period.
11. Administrative authority for the Town Manager or designee to dissolve a zone that falls below participation thresholds or no longer demonstrates external parking impact, without requiring separate Council action.

EPP Administrative Guidelines and Policies

The draft EPP Administrative Guidelines and Policies (Attachment 5) follow a parallel structure to the RPP Guidelines above but are customized to support businesses and their employees in congested commercial areas of Los Gatos, such as Downtown and the Civic Center (Olive Zone) area.

The proposed EPP Guidelines incorporate current regulations for Downtown and Olive Zone employee parking and follow industry best practices for preferential permit parking rules for employees in commercial locations wherever possible. Key elements of the proposed EPP Guidelines include:

1. Designation criteria tied to employee parking impacts on customer and visitor availability, insufficient on-site parking supply, and a determination that alternatives such as shared parking or congestion demand management measures are not feasible.

DISCUSSION (continued):

2. Two (2) initiation pathways: 1) Town Council direction, or 2) Town Manager/staff-initiated review. EPP zones do not include a specific petition mechanism, reflecting the administrative nature of EPP parking restrictions on the public right-of-way and in public parking facilities.
3. A minimum 75% average parking occupancy rate during a parking utilization study is required for at least 51% of the available public parking supply within a proposed EPP zone before a proposed EPP zone may proceed for further consideration, highlighting that EPP parking restrictions may be used to shift parking demand and provide higher parking availability for customers.
4. Formal Town Council action by resolution to designate a zone, defining its boundaries, restrictions, and permit eligibility criteria.
5. Public notification criteria to provide education to residents and businesses within the boundaries of proposed or newly established EPP zones.
6. A request review and data collection cycle and one (1) year moratorium on re-evaluating invalid requests or newly established or dissolved zones to allow staff to prioritize workload.
7. Two (2) permit types: 1) Business Owner, and 2) Employee, with eligibility for company or leased vehicles.
8. An optional reduced-price permit component for income-qualified residents for future consideration by Town Council.
9. Administrative authority for the Town Manager or designee to dissolve an underutilized or no-longer-necessary EPP zone.

Working Drafts

The Guidelines presented here are working drafts and staff are seeking input on the proposed policies and requirements. They reflect the current status of the Town's RPP and EPP programs based on existing policy or operating procedures where appropriate. Where no policy currently exists, industry best practices are used, drawing from similar regional programs in the Bay Area, such as Palo Alto, San Bruno, and San Mateo.

Preferential Permit Parking Ordinance Update

As part of ongoing RPP and EPP program updates, staff have reviewed relevant State and local municipal ordinances related to preferential permit parking and prepared a draft ordinance to modernize the Town Code. The draft ordinance establishes Town Council-adopted Administrative Guidelines as the framework for ongoing permit program operations and management.

DISCUSSION (continued):

Permit Program Cost Recovery

Staff anticipate completing a cost recovery evaluation to understand the operational and administrative costs of implementing additional preferential parking zones, installing signs and markings, and performing related enforcement. One option under consideration is a one-time application fee or deposit, payable by the applicant. This is a cost recovery tool used by various California cities and may reflect staff time for reviewing and processing applications, mailing public notices, conducting data collection and analysis, manufacturing and installing signage and markings, and providing parking enforcement and related technology for permit zones.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

Attachments:

1. Resolution 2001-145 (Downtown Parking Management Plan)
2. Neighborhood Parking Plan Process
3. Review and Discuss Recommended Parking Program Work Plan Items for 2025 (CSTC Commission Item)
4. Draft RPP Administrative Guidelines and Policies
5. Draft EPP Administrative Guidelines and Policies