



CITY OF MEDINA

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Date: November 12, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: Stephen R. Burns, City Manager

Subject: Viewpoint Park Parking Stalls

History

Viewpoint Park is located at Overlake Drive West & 84th Ave NE in the south part of Medina. The north section of the park is elevated and overlooks Lake Washington while the southern portion is located on the lake with a public dock. There are five parking stalls available which are located in the lower lot with access to the lake and two stalls which are located directly off of Overlake Drive. The park is open from 6am to 10pm.



Aerial photo of parking stalls



Current configuration



Eastbound approach



Westbound approach

In 2016, the expanded SR 520 bridge opened, featuring a new pedestrian/bicycle path across Lake Washington. This development facilitated bicycle access between Seattle and the Eastside, leading to a noticeable increase in bicycle traffic in Medina. Consequently, police staff observed an increase in bicycle traffic on Evergreen Point Road and Overlake Drive. With increased bicycle traffic, the two stalls at Viewpoint became a concern due to the conflict between drivers backing out and oncoming traffic. Additionally, vehicles heading east on Overlake Drive encounter a slight grade which may further diminish visibility of these parking spots.

By 2020, the Medina Police Department began receiving increased after-hour complaints regarding criminal activity at this location. These complaints included noise, drug use, and trash emanating from vehicles which were parking in the two stalls located off Overlake Drive.

Residents have expressed concerns about the safety of the two angled parking spots at Viewpoint Park. The configuration of these spots raises issues, as vehicles backing out often enter the opposite lane of traffic, creating a conflict between the various road users.

In response to the complaints and concerns, city staff evaluated several options for addressing the issue and determined that removing the two angled parking stalls was the most effective solution, particularly given the availability of alternative parking spaces located closer to the water.

On November 21, 2022, city staff presented the proposal to close the two angled parking spaces to the Medina Parks and Recreation Board. After thorough discussion over three meetings, the Board endorsed the removal of the parking stalls.

Following the Board's recommendation, the proposal was brought before the City Council on three occasions during Director's Reports for feedback. At the May 8, 2023, City Council meeting, no objections were raised regarding the closure of the two angled parking stalls. Consequently, City Manager Steve Burns authorized the closure, and Public Works staff installed two yellow bollards to block the stalls in June 2023.

Details

At the City Council meeting held on June 10, 2024, city staff was instructed to include the discussion regarding the closure of the two Viewpoint Park parking stalls on a future Council agenda. The City has performed due diligence on this matter, including consulting with experts. As a result of that work, the City Manager recommends keeping the stalls closed, or undertaking additional work to provide parking in a different configuration that will create fewer potential conflicts with other road users.

Discussion

City staff is seeking guidance on the next steps. Here are some options to consider:

1. **Keep the stalls closed.**
2. **Request an analysis from the Transportation Group** to explore potential improvements for re-opening the stalls, and then present the findings to the Council.
3. **Study converting the parking to parallel spots** and have Public Works clear vegetation around the stalls to enhance visibility.
4. **Consider other options or suggestions.**