

Mercado District Parking Permit Voter Pamphlet

I. Introduction

The City of Tucson (ParkTucson) provides a Neighborhood Parking Permit Program for neighborhoods experiencing significant overflow parking from outside the neighborhood. Generally, to implement the program at least 75% of the property owners on each block-face (one side of the street between cross-streets) must vote for permits. Given the plaza-based nature of the Mercado District most residences do not front a specific street. So ParkTucson proposes to consider our neighborhood as a whole, rather than by specific block-faces. That means all the property owners within the Mercado District must vote (with a 75% requirement) for permit parking within the entire Mercado District.

Additionally, to determine how many permits will be available for each property owner, ParkTucson usually measures each property's street frontage to determine how many parking spots, and therefore how many permits, will be available for that particular property. Again, given that many properties in the Mercado District do not front a specific street, ParkTucson preliminarily proposes that each residence will be able to purchase one paid residential permit and then get one free visitor's pass permit per residence. Please be aware, that this proposal of one paid permit and one free visitor's pass per residence, is not final until ParkTucson determines how many parking spaces are available within the entire neighborhood.

After a petition is submitted with the required number of owners voting for permits, ParkTucson will conduct an inventory of parking activity to determine the extent to which parking by motor vehicles registered to non-residents of the area places an unreasonable burden on area residents.

Adoption of the parking permit program is a decision made by individual property owners - not by HOAs or Neighborhood Associations. The Mercado District Maintenance Association is providing this voter pamphlet to property owners for informational purposes and in anticipation of a possible neighborhood interest in the future.

The City of Tucson describes ParkTucson as “a financially self-sustaining division of the City of Tucson Department of Transportation & Mobility.”

Here is the link to the Tucson parking code. [Tucson City Codes - Parking](#). A fine schedule was requested from ParkTucson and no response was received.

ParkTucson has 3 permit restriction options:

- Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm restrictions - annual permit costs \$48
- Monday to Friday, 6:00pm to 6:00am and Saturday and Sunday 24 hours restrictions - annual permit costs \$48
- 24/7 restrictions - annual permit costs \$72

Parking meters on Convento require payment Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Parking time and fees on surface lots within the Mercado District vary. There is no parking garage.

II. ParkTucson Neighborhood Parking Program

To view details about the permit program and the voting process, click on these links. The changes from the general ParkTucson permit program and process, resulting from our plaza-based neighborhood, are set forth above.

[ParkTucson Information/Policies](#)

[ParkTucson Petition](#)

III. Arguments For and Against Parking Permit Program

A.

“Yes” to Parking Permit Program

1) Dagmar & Janine Strand, 895 W. Calle de los Higos

Mercado streets are full and several realities are sending visitors, employees, streetcar riders, and Monier residents into the residential neighborhood seeking free street parking.

- *Existing free parking is being eliminated. The dirt lots along Convento now often have parking fees and one is closed with tow-away signs. Meters along Congress, Convento, and Cushing will also send cars into the neighborhood for free parking.*
- *Monier offers only paid parking, one space in the underground garage for each of the 122 units. If 1/3 of the apartments house two adults with their own vehicles, that's 41 cars parked on the streets. Plus, many residents prefer free street parking over paying \$125/month for the garage. By the same principal, Bautista, with 256 units, will add another 85 cars without space in the garage. Plus those who prefer to not pay for parking.*
- *Many homeowners park their cars on the street rather than use their homes' garages.*

People will skip paid-parking in favor of available free parking nearby. Tally the number of restaurants, cafes, bars, and shops between Plaza, Annex, Monier, Bautista; then multiply that by the number of patrons and employees, there is not enough free parking to go around. And how about the regular weekly and special events? Our three or four little streets will be overrun - chaotic and noisy - by hundreds of cars day and night. It's not incumbent on homeowners to provide free public parking. Developers must create parking as they create new residences and businesses. For those invested in Mercado homes, 24/7 permit parking ensures parking for ourselves and guests when needed and preserves the value of our homes.

Thank you, Janine and Dagmar

B.
“No” to Parking Permit Program

1) Rick & Jennifer Jones, 898 W. Calle de los Higos

Rick & Jennifer Jones - Residents Since 2008

Philosophical Opposition

THE FOUNDING CONCEPT BEHIND THE MERCADO DISTRICT

Since WWII, urban design in the U.S. has been car-centric. The negatives of that focus are painfully obvious in nearly every urban area: strip malls, massive parking lots, sprawl, car-dependency, the loss of neighborhood small businesses, and much more. New Urbanism is an urban design concept that specifically rejects the car-centric model. New Urbanism emphasizes walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and sustainable communities, aiming to reduce dependence on cars and improve the quality of life. It's about building places for people, with a focus on livable streets, diverse housing options, and access to amenities by walking, biking, or transit. Our Mercado District is a child of New Urbanism. Our neighborhood is about shared public spaces. Notably, the developers specifically rejected private streets in favor of public streets. The idea was to be welcoming to the surrounding neighborhoods. It worked. We were welcoming, and as a result, we were welcomed. We are part of a greater community.

Permit parking undermines all that. If we vote for permits, we will be telling others that they are not welcome here. If we have permits, cars will once again take priority over people – a huge step backwards. Please make a difference. Don't let cars continue to control destiny.

Practical Opposition

ENFORCEMENT OF PERMIT RESTRICTIONS – AND ALL OTHER VIOLATIONS

Permit parking requires enforcement. That means ParkTucson will be in our neighborhood every day. Remember, ParkTucson is a “financially self-sustaining” entity within the City of Tucson. That means it needs revenue from fees and fines. It will not just enforce permit parking - it also enforce all parking violations. Park too far from a curb: ticket. Park too close to an alley entrance: ticket. Park facing the wrong way: ticket.

Notably, for those of us who park extra cars on the street, ParkTucson will also enforce TCC Sec. 20-261, which states that no car can be parked on the street for more than 24 hours at a time. However, if the car is parked directly in front of the owner's residence, it can be parked on the street for 7 days. Few people in this neighborhood can park in front of their own house. So, most residents are limited to 24 hours. All violations result in a fine. If there are three or more unpaid fines, the car can be booted or impounded. TCC Sec. 20-203. Taking a long trip and

leaving a car on the street? You could easily rack up 3 or more tickets and your car could be in impound when you get back.

Parking in our neighborhood can be, at times, inconvenient. *Permit parking is not the solution- it will create more problems than it solves.* The solution is to embrace our shared urban environment. Enjoy the benefits it brings us, and tolerate the occasional inconvenience.

2) Andrea Moses - 895 W.Paseo de los Zanjeros

Good Morning,

Thank you for collecting feedback regarding parking permits.

We have never had any difficulty finding parking in front of our home on Paseo de los Zanjeros. Because of this, we do not support joining the ParkTucson residential parking permit program.

I do not want to pay for a permit, affix a parking permit to my vehicle or keep track of visitor tags for guests. It would add unnecessary inconvenience for a problem that doesn't exist.

Thanks,

Andrea Moses, MD
Lead Hospitalist HERA

3) James Schaub - 201 S. Avenida del Palo Fierro

Dear Mercado Neighbors,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed Park Tucson Permit Parking Program (PPP) in the Mercado neighborhood. At a recent Menlo Park meeting, an Administrator representing Park Tucson gave a sales pitch on the benefits of a PPP. I don't buy it and here is why.....Park Tucson is a revenue generating arm of the City of Tucson government. They sell permits and enforce not just permits but parking codes and the associated fines/fees. Just because you hold a permit does not mean that you are exempt from ticketing. I find it telling that they do not list the fines associated with the parking violations they enforce on their website.

The Parking codes are listed on the City of Tucson website:
<https://www.tucsonaz.gov/Departments/Transportation-Mobility/Park-Tucson/Tucson-City-Codes-Parking>

Information about Neighborhood Parking Permit program:

https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/living-and-working/park-tucson/documents/information_policies_and_rules_neighborhood_parking_program_7-30-18.pdf

Key points for neighborhood parking permit holders:

- 1. All permits are vehicle specific.*
- 2. A permit cannot be transferred, sublet, or sold.*
- 3. Permits are valid only for the street block for which they are purchased.*
- 4. Permit holders are subject to all City of Tucson parking regulations, just as all citizens are.*

Enforcement officers are tenacious at exacting tickets. The primary responsibility of Park Tucson is to bring in revenue for the city. If a neighborhood has a PPP then it is a designated source of revenue and Park Tucson will be omnipresent. It seems to me this would be a source of constant worry and frustration.

I can speak from experience and have many stories to share if you wish to hear them. The most infuriating example was when I returned home from vacation to find that my car had been towed despite being registered and permitted to the address painted on the curb! The reason given for towing was that my car hadn't been moved in three days and was considered abandoned. I was told that they made a mistake, but I still had to pay for their mistake with time, a towing fee and impound fee.

As a downtown business owner, I appeared in court on a regular basis. I heard numerous horror stories of parking tickets turning into late fees, turning into vehicle immobilization, and then into a suspension of driving privileges and worse. All at very high costs in time, fines, and court costs. I wonder how a PPP will impact our surrounding neighbors and their families?

There is much to consider.

Ultimately, the quality of life in the Mercado District is wonderful. I don't believe a Parking Permit would make it better.

Sincerely,

James Schaub