

# GOBERKELEY SMARTSPACE: VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETING #2 FOR THE ELMWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD

Notes from the 12-15-2021 Community Meeting 6:30 – 8:00 PM

Project Team: Dana Rubin, Tom Brown, Ezra Pincus-Roth, Alejo Alvarado, Ayaka Habu, Gordon Hansen, Matthew Cotterill, Dianne Yee

Number of Attendees: 66

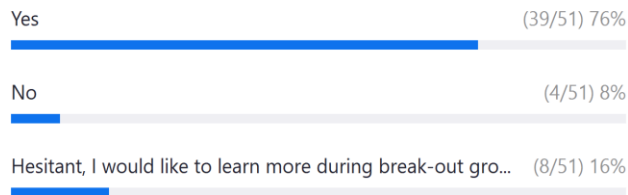
## Poll Question Results:

### Commuter Benefits

Poll ended | 1 question | 51 of 63 (80%) participated

1. Do you support working with merchants to provide commute benefits to help employees travel to and from the Elmwood neighborhood? (Single Choice) \*

51/51 (100%) answered

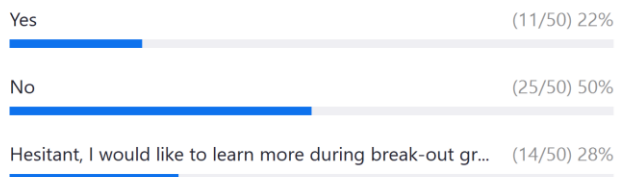


### Extending RPP Limits

Poll ended | 1 question | 50 of 63 (79%) participated

1. Do you support extending unpaid time limits in RPP zones to allow guests, workers, and/or other visitors to park for longer to avoid the 2-hour shuffle? (For example, 4-hour time limits instead of 2-hour time limits) (Single Choice) \*

50/50 (100%) answered



## Parking Passes

Poll ended | 1 question | 48 of 63 (76%) participated

1. Do you support providing employee parking passes to local merchant employees? (Single Choice) \*

48/48 (100%) answered



## Break-out Group (Room 4)

- **Resident:** We don't know how many businesses and employees and number of passes are being passed out.
- **Resident:** I agree, it will be different if the program is 100 versus 1,000 permits. The impact of the numbers makes a difference. In theory, it's a great idea.
- **Resident:** Who came up with this problem? Has this been a problem? Employees and visitors are all aware of 2-hour shuttle. Is this a real problem, or is it because city got a grant and wants to make a problem?
  - **Dana:** This underlining 2-hour shuffle problem is not coming from nowhere. Anecdotally, Dana has spoken to shop keepers who have addressed this concern, but certainly more research and investigation that is needed.
- **Resident:** Employees have 8-hour shifts. People with medical issues who go to dialysis clinics in the area have no opportunities to park. Two-hours is totally inadequate time-limit.
- **Resident:** Elmwood area has a theater next to the BART Station. People who go to the show cannot fulfill at two-hour time-limit.
- **Resident:** People who rent also need parking space. Driveways are not a solution. Especially for senior citizens, they will need different needs. These people cannot find alternate transportation as easily.
- **Resident:** I have some thoughts. In 1987, when RPP settled, there was a mediator between businesses employees and four city departments. I think you also need to address the issue that some of us live closer to commercial areas will be heavily impacted, and there are people do currently have employee permits
- **Resident:** I don't see Alta Bates representatives here. I also don't see AC Transit representatives here as well.
- **Resident:** There are hang-tags that belong to residents, and it can be given to relatives, residents, caretakers. And we pay for our permit parking as well.

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- **Resident:** There has been good insightful information. Ultimately, what we are facing is what everyone is facing in every city and every employee. I used to pay for BART costs or a parking lot when I went to San Francisco. I want us to help alleviate employees. But I don't want employees to get free parking. You could put parking lot behind the elmwood.
- **Resident:** **Recommendation by resident:** Give free passes AC Transit glore! It would have to be pretty much free for people to use it over a car. People are choosing to do 2-hour shuttle over transit today. People are willing to break the rules today rather than taking transit.
- **Resident:** Not a car owner. Space on these streets is a limited precious resource. Parking is not a high use, in my opinion. **Recommendation by resident** Employers in all situations should be paying for parking for all employees. That includes people who hire plumbers, nannies, etc. I do like the idea of parking being paid. Vast convenience of use also comes with cost – it comes with anxiety and presence is a burden to others. Let's look at this problem in a spectrum of possibilities. It was mentioned that employees would gain parking permit. Who would pay for that?
  - **Dana:** Yes, paid pricing generally helps set priorities for curb use between vehicles and other modes of transportation.
- **Resident:**

Sorry I have no mic or video. Frankly, until there is some true enforcement of existing restrictions beyond street sweeping, there wont be any improvement. I Manage the Elmwood Theater, we have the passenger loading zone right in front. We deploy 5 cones/signs to denote its no parking when were open. We have called Parking Enforcement twice for people who park there anyhow. The most recently, the driver returned 51 minutes after I called and guess what he found on his windshield? Nothing. Parking enforcement couldn't get over here in almost an hour. Look at Durant with the restaurants every night. Double, triple parked. NO ENFORCEMENT whatsoever. No one respects posted parking restrictions (other than disabled) because there is no enforcement with any regularity beyond street sweeps. Lastly, some people LIKE the two hour shuffle. It gets them an extra breather from the work day along the way.
- **Resident:** I am concerned about hospital workers. We do pay for RPP. I don't have a car myself. I take transit to work because it's faster to travel by BART and it's quicker.
- **Resident:** I like that Berkeley is known for hard-to-park. I don't want to free parking for merchants. I like that it's a hard parking.

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- Dana: we want to make it easier for all people. At the end of the day, streets are shared.
- **Resident:** Recommendation by resident I'd like all parking eliminated -- get protected bike-lanes for a safer experience. Biking is not just for the young and fit. This is a great tool to manage shifting priorities. I don't even think its parking, it's storage. Why should we be providing free parking at all? We don't expect it in San Francisco. If we close Russel Street and put out tables and chairs, and coffee – it might bring more public, give more reason to go to Elmwood. That's good. I would like to get all parking eliminated and driving reduced.
- **Resident:** This is a neighborhood that are lucky and rich enough. We can walk and we don't drive. It's serviced by people who are not lucky enough to walk to work. I'd like us to think about the perspectives of employees who must make breakfast for their children drop children off school, and commute from Richmond, and Hayward. They don't have time to spend on transportation for two hours even if it's free. This is a class issue. Who is going to be priced out if we have dynamic parking?
- **Resident:** I'm concerned about how rezoning has affected small business retentions. More on the southside. The edges of Telegraph Avenue have been zoned to allow tall student apartment buildings. So, I think this process needs to be merged into how zoning is taking away parking. It's also taking away senior housing because zoning is allowing dorms. I'm concerned about the university and city planning that is breaking away the character of our neighborhood. And it's breaking down the "livable Berkeley" concept.
- **Resident:** The class analysis really bothers me. There are so many of us have kids or have one car and get our kids ready for school. I used to take BART/AC Transit. To say that I'm not sensitive to taking public transit. 51 runs all the time. We have multiple bus lines that come through our neighborhood. It's not like we can't park just above Claremont where there is no time-limit. Just walk half a mile or take a bike to get to work. I just don't buy it. That said, I'm very supportive of the merchants. They have a pass, and they pay for it. I get it. I think we should expand it. Recommendation by resident Let's get more passes. I don't think it should be unlimited. You can do a formula to figure out a number. And they can share it like Supercuts. Let's not demonize our neighborhood. I'm sorry that this came out like a hurricane last month. And I really appreciate that we came back and moved on. It's rare that a government is hearing us, and you heard us, and I just want to thank you personally, and thank you.
- **Resident:** When are you going to council with a proposal?
- **Gordon:** Late spring early summer 2022.
- **Resident:** I also want to echo gratitude for echo and everybody's willingness to pivot. However, we got here, we can't always count on people listening but you did. I want to express my gratitude and that quality. I don't take this for granted.
- **Resident:** I want to echo that the city staff is responsive. Back in 1987, council came to the idea of merchants having permits along with residents, there was a

concern in the chat today – isn't that going to stack people up next to commercial district.

- **Resident:** Time is of the essence here. All the problems are urgent. We have an insolvent parking metered fund: estimated 10 million. Diminished public parking, car-free zones, and struggling merchants. It would be nice to find streamlined ways to get through this. **Recommendation by resident** Just give them the permits outside of the pilot - and can we just see if it works? Seems like we can do this outside of this grant process that's rather cumbersome.

- **Gordon:** one of the benefits about doing this under a pilot mechanism is we can study the effects of new implementations.

- **Resident:**

What about more enforcement?  
There's always street sweeping enforcement but these door dashers and people double triple parking everywhere.

- **Gordon:** 21 enforcement officers and 2 supervisors of far. Adding more enforcement is a question for City Council essentially. They are unsplit shift over the course of six days. They are expected to do time-limit areas across 14 RPP areas, parking meter enforcement in 4,000 metered parking, and time-limited zones (Claremont library for examples), school zone, loading zones, traffic collisions traffic controls, street sweeping duties.

- **Resident:** This pilot program should be evaluated against goals. We are going to try it for a year, and it won't go away.

- **Gordon:** yes, we should have a sunset point. With the recent pivot, we are still currently in development. Whatever report we bring to council will have suite of strategies, and we will recommend continuing the new ideas or going back to the original status.