Legislation Text

File #: 2025-0913, **Version:** 1

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): County Counsel and Sonoma County Public Infrastructure
Staff Name and Phone Number: Deputy County Counsel Matt Lilligren, (707) 565-2421; Janice Thompson, Deputy Director, Sonoma Public Infrastructure, (707) 565-2550
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:
Update to County Parking Regulations

Recommended Action:

A) Adopt a Resolution introducing, reading the title of, and waiving further reading of an ordinance amending Chapter 18 of the Sonoma County Code as follows:
   i. Amending Article III and Section 18-3 to revise, restate, and codify the provisions of County Ordinance 2300 related to parking restrictions along County roads and rights-of-ways;
   ii. Adding a new section to Article III, Section 18-3 establishing limitations on parking of trailers and oversized vehicles on County roads and rights-of-ways; and
   iii. Determining the actions to be exempt from CEQA;

B) Adopt a Resolution restating the portions of County roads and rights-of-ways where parking is currently restricted under County Ordinance 2300 and establishing new parking zones on additional County roads in unincorporated areas of the County.

C) Adopt by Resolution a Schedule of Parking Penalties for County Roads establishing the civil penalties for parking violations on County roads and rights-of-ways and the related late payment penalties.

Executive Summary:
The County's parking regulations are currently split between two separate ordinances-Ordinance 2300 (uncodified, covering county roads) and Section 18-1 of the Sonoma County Code (covering County-owned or controlled properties). This dual framework has created confusion, as the only list of parking restrictions publicly available online is Section 18-1, which does not apply to county roads. To improve clarity, transparency, and enforceability, staff recommends consolidating and restructuring these regulations by codifying the restrictions from Ordinance 2300 into Chapter 18, establishing a clear mechanism for adopting new zones, and requiring Public Infrastructure to maintain an online list of all designated zones.

In addition, staff recommends updating and expanding existing restrictions by adopting new "No Parking," "No Overnight Parking," and oversized vehicle restrictions to address current community concerns, safety hazards, and congestion issues. This effort also includes updating the County's penalty schedule, which has not been revised in over 20 years, and incorporating new requirements under California's "Daylighting Laws" effective January 1, 2025. Together, these actions will modernize the County's parking regulations, enhance public safety, improve accessibility, and provide transparency for residents and stakeholders.

Discussion:

Existing Parking Restrictions

The County parking regulations are currently contained within two separate and distinct ordinances: Ordinance 2300 and Chapter 18 of the Sonoma County Code. Ordinance 2300 is an uncodified ordinance not currently contained within the Sonoma County Code and applies to public roads within unincorporated Sonoma County that are managed under the Roads Division of Sonoma Public Infrastructure (i.e., county "highways" and generally referred to as "county roads"). The types of parking restrictions (i.e., no parking anytime, no overnight parking, etc.) and the list of specific zones where parking is prohibited under Ordinance 2300 is currently maintained in hard copy form within the offices of Sonoma Public Infrastructure. There is no publicly accessible version of the ordinance available online and the parking restrictions are not set forth in the Sonoma County Code. When a new parking zone is added by resolution, the new zone is added to the list of current parking restrictions maintained by Sonoma Public Infrastructure.

Section 18-1 in contrast is a codified ordinance and applies to property owned or controlled by the County, like the County Administration Center, County Parks, and the Airport, including the roads within those County properties. Because Section 18-1 is the only publicly accessible list of parking restrictions available online, it can be confusing to determine where and how these regulations apply on county roads throughout unincorporated Sonoma County. This statutory scheme over time has expanded and changed such that a revision would be beneficial to provide clarity and promote public transparency.

Recommendations Regarding Restructuring of County Parking Regulations

Staff proposes adopting a new ordinance as part of Chapter 18 of the Sonoma County Code that incorporates all of the existing parking restrictions and designated parking zones from Ordinance 2300 and codifies them as new individual Code Sections, provides a mechanism for adopting additional parking zones from time to time by Resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors, and establishes new requirements for Public Infrastructure to post the list of parking zones online in addition to maintaining a hardcopy in its offices.

Proposed Areas to be Added to Existing List of Parking Restrictions

As part of the restructuring of the County's existing parking restrictions, staff recommends adding new "No Parking" zones, new "No Overnight Parking" zones, and additional signage for parking restrictions for narrow roads. The initial cost for the installation of the new signs for all three parking zones is approximately $50,000.00; future maintenance will be performed by SPI's Road Maintenance team. Based on requests that have been received by County stakeholders staff recommends additional parking restrictions be added to the following County roads:

No Parking Anytime

Third District

- Roberts Lake Road

Fifth District

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- Armstrong Woods Road
- Mill Street
- Moscow Road
- River Drive
- River Road

No Overnight Parking

First District
- Riverside Drive

Third District
- West Robles Avenue
- McMaude Place

Fifth District (Downtown Guerneville)
- 3rd Steet
- 5th Street
- Armstrong Woods Road
- Church Street
- First Street
- Mill Street

Schedule of Parking Penalties for County Roads

Under the California Vehicle Code penalty provisions (CVC §40203.5), the Board of Supervisors is required to adopt a schedule of parking penalties for county roads. Currently, Ordinance 2300, Section XIV, provides that violation of Ordinance 2300 is an infraction punishable by fines not to exceed the amounts set forth in Government Code Section 25132, which is up to $100 for the first infraction, up to $200 for the second infraction, and up to $500 for the third infraction. It has been more than 20 years since the current penalties in Ordinance 2300 have been reviewed and updated to capture all of the current parking restrictions that apply on County roads.

In addition, the County is now required to establish parking penalties for the new "Daylighting Laws" which took effect January 1, 2025 (California Vehicle Code section 22250(n)), requiring enhanced parking and stopping buffers at or near intersections. Given that the County's parking regulations will be moving from an uncodified ordinance into Chapter 18 of the County Code, and that we are now required to adopt parking penalties for the new parking and stopping restrictions that took effect at the beginning of the year, staff recommends that the Board adopt the Schedule of Parking Penalties by Resolution that accompanies this Board item.

Oversized Vehicle Ordinance

Over the past few years, County staff have received an increasing number of complaints related to the prolonged parking of oversized vehicles on County roads and road rights-of-way throughout the unincorporated areas of the County. The complaints generally relate to the parking of oversized commercial and recreational vehicles on County roads for prolonged periods of time thus limiting parking for those that

live at or visit residences and businesses in the area. There also has been an increased number of complaints in commercial and industrial areas where large vehicles tend to accumulate on County roads in concentrated areas causing far greater impacts to safety issues and parking availability than normal passenger vehicles. In addition, many County roads are narrow or have limited available parking, amplifying the impacts from prolonged parking of larger vehicles on the roads. When oversized vehicles are parked on County roads, multiple spots are taken which severely impacts the ability for regular sized vehicles to access parking near properties individuals live, visit, or patron. In addition, due to the size of the vehicles, they often create significant safety hazards when parked in areas that block sight lines, pedestrian walkways, and bike lanes.

Proposed Oversized Vehicle Parking Restrictions

This proposed ordinance adds the following provisions to the County code:

- Defines oversized vehicles and trailers by class of vehicle consistent with the California Vehicle Code or by size of vehicle
- Creates parking restrictions for oversized vehicles and trailers that is generally a maximum of six hours in one location, unless the vehicle is subject to one of the enumerated exceptions.
- Prohibits a vehicle from moving back to within ¼ mile of the same parking spot for a period of 72 hours

Creates exemptions for certain oversized vehicles, including:

- Parking an oversized vehicle immediately adjacent to the registered address for a period of 48 consecutive hours for the purpose of loading and unloading or moving
- Emergency and public safety vehicles
- Government vehicles for the purpose of government business
- Vehicles used for transporting persons with disabilities
- Oversized vehicles actively involved in agricultural operations
- Actively loading or unloading goods while parked immediately adjacent to a delivery
- address
- Food trucks open for business in front of non-residential properties
- Emergency repairs not to exceed eight hours

Community Caretaking Laws and Immediate Towing of Vehicles

The County will be subject to all Federal and State laws pertaining to the towing of vehicles, including compliance with California Vehicle Section 22650 that prohibits the unlawful seizure of vehicles unless the removal is necessary to meet a community caretaking need as determined under the authority of the applicable law enforcement agency.

Strategic Plan:
N/A

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?
No

Prior Board Actions:
None.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	**FY25-26 Adopted**	**FY26-27 Projected**	**FY27-28 Projected**
Budgeted Expenses	$50,000	$500	$500
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	**$50,000**	**$500**	**$500**
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	$50,000	$500	$500
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	**$50,000**	**$500**	**$500**

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:
Appropriations for new signage is included in the FY 2025-26 Road Maintenance (11051-34010102) budget. Appropriations for ongoing maintenance costs will be added in future Road Maintenance Recommended budgets (11051-34010102). These expenses will utilize traditional Road fund revenue sources including Highway User Tax Account (HUTA) and Road Repair and Accountability Act (SB1).

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	**Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)**	**Additions (Number)**	**Deletions (Number)**

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):
None.

Attachments:
Attachment A - Resolution - Ordinance
Attachment B - Ordinance
Attachment C - Resolution - Parking Restrictions
Attachment D - Resolution - Schedule of Parking Penalties

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:
None.