

# Memo

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Bryan Myrkle, Community Development Director  
**Date:** September 27, 2017  
**Re:** Recreational Vehicle Storage

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As you no doubt remember, the Planning Commission held a discussion this summer about driveway storage of recreational vehicles. While widely practiced throughout the city, parking a recreational vehicle in a residential driveway is prohibited by City Code.

It has become an enforcement issue due to the sheer number of potential violations that would need to be cited in order to fairly administer this issue. Presently, only the largest RV's that draw attention, and those which elicit complaints from neighbors become the subject of enforcement. This is not fair, nor equitable, when literally hundreds of other identical violations go unchallenged.

As I said at the earlier meeting, it would be possible to begin a more large-scale enforcement effort that would involve a public relations campaign to better inform residents about the rules. However, I asked the Planning Commission to review these rules and consider whether they truly reflect our community standards. I think it's possible that local attitudes about recreational vehicle ownership and storage may have changed over the years, and the community might not support strict and evenly-applied enforcement of these rules.

I asked the Planning Commission to consider the following questions:

- Should driveway parking be allowed for RV's?
- Should regulation be the same regardless of size or type? Length? Height?
- Should allowance be made for seasonal use and parking?
- Should camper visits be allowed for more than 24-hours at a time?
- Should there be a limitation on number or type?
- If no driveway storage is to be allowed, should the height restriction on accessory structures be increased to accommodate RV's?
- Should these rules be extended to include parking of commercial vehicles?

As a reminder the City Code defines a recreational vehicle as: *Trailer coaches, travel trailers, utility trailers, pick-up campers or coaches, motorized dwellings, tent trailers, boats, and boat trailers, snowmobiles, horse trailers, dune buggies, race cars, demolition derby cars and other similar equipment and conveyances.*

The rules regarding storage are as follows: *Recreational equipment owned by residents of the city may be stored on their individual lots and shall be stored only within the confines of the rear yard and shall further respect the requirements of this section applicable to accessory buildings and structures, insofar as distances from principal structures, lot lines and easements are concerned. All recreational equipment parked or stored shall not be connected to sanitary facilities and shall not be occupied. In those instances where a rear yard is not accessible, the Building Official may allow recreational equipment to be parked or stored in a side yard, provided such parking or storage shall be behind the front of the principal building.*

Following its discussion, the Planning Commission asked for suggestions on gathering public input regarding these issues. I suggested an online poll, supported by a newspaper article and social media push to potentially gauge public opinion. I constructed the poll using the discussion topics above, and we received nearly 150 responses. I have included the poll results here for your reference. I was pleased to see that the results are quite straightforward, indicating which of these issues may receive public support, and which might not.

On the fundamental issue of whether driveway parking of RV's should be allowed, more than 2/3's of respondents indicated it should be. There was also a strong signal sent that the rules should be the same for all RV's, regardless of size or type. The poll results were generally split on the remainder of the issues, with the exception of accessory building height. In that case, responses indicating support for increasing the height allowance to accommodate tall RV's if driveway parking is not allowed.

**I hope the poll has provided the guidance you desired. I would ask the Planning Commission to discuss, once again, whether these parking guidelines should be adjusted to accommodate some level of driveway parking for recreational vehicles.**