

THE EASTPORT PARKING AND MOBILITY WORKING GROUP

INTERIM REPORT May 18, 2022

1. INTRODUCTION AND MISSION STATEMENT

The Eastport Parking and Mobility Working Group was formed to research, identify, and recommend potential solutions for managed parking and increased equitable transportation to serve citizens, businesses, and visitors in Eastport. The idea of forming this group was the joint effort of the Eastport Civic Association and the Eastport Business Association. Eleven members were chosen as representatives of the different communities of Eastport and from a variety of businesses. All the members have lived or worked in Eastport for a significant period.

The specific objectives of the Work Group included:

- Ensuring that meaningful citizen and business input was solicited from the diverse neighborhoods and businesses throughout Eastport.
- Reviewing all relevant data and engaging with consulting services from the City of Annapolis
- Providing a written summary of recommendations to be published to the citizens and business community and elected city officials and staff.

The Working Group has consulted regularly with the Annapolis City Manager to obtain previous data and information collected by the city related to the parking and mobility issues in Eastport. In addition, the City Manager acted as a liaison to the company SP+, the parking enforcement contractors for the city. These contractors provided information to the Working Group related to several options for the enforcement of parking and provision of mobility services. Representatives of the Working Group participated in a virtual meeting with the mayor who recognized and offered support for the Group's effort.

The Working Group has conducted a total of seven (7) virtual meetings and has formed three sub task groups for 1) data collection, 2) review of previous parking/mobility studies for Eastport and 3) development of questionnaires for citizens/businesses related to issues and potential solutions for parking/mobility problems in Eastport.

The Working group reviewed an extensive amount of data provided by the City regarding parking enforcement and conditions in Eastport. All previous studies regarding parking problems and past recommendations were reviewed. A questionnaire was developed regarding the public's perception and concerns regarding parking and mobility in Eastport. Over 220 respondents participated in the questionnaire. and the full results of this questionnaire can be reviewed through a link on the Eastport Civic Association website.

II. HISTORY OF PARKING/MOBILITY ISSUES IN EASTPORT.

The traffic and parking issues and related problems have been studied and analyzed by the City and dedicated working groups since the 1990s, but most recently in 2016, 2017 and 2018. The Eastport Traffic Study of 2016 detailed specific short-term and long-term recommendations relating to parking, event management, cycling improvements, crosswalk improvements and recommendations for traffic calming. In 2018 the Eastport Parking Report reviewed all previous data and recommendations and recited 14 specific recommendations to improve parking conditions in Eastport. It is noteworthy that the descriptions of the problems are consistent over these years but very few of these recommendations have ever been implemented.

A recent report from the Department of Planning and Zoning to the Annapolis Planning Commission dated March 23, 2022 regarding the proposed ordinance O-9-22 for eliminating off-street parking requirements for restaurants, bars and social clubs states in part: “One potential place of conflict is in the area around the commercially zoned properties of Eastport where we should expect conflicts to arise should the legislation be adopted, and with no other shared parking solutions implemented”. This report also highlights potential problems created by this ordinance regarding large restaurant development in the Waterfront Maritime Zones in Eastport.

Until recently, there has been no consistent or effective enforcement of existing parking regulations in Eastport.

III. RESULTS OF THE EASTPORT PARKING/MOBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

The Working Group developed and distributed an online questionnaire in English and Spanish for citizens and businesses in Eastport regarding the perception of current problems and issues related to parking and mobility. Over 220 individuals responded to the questionnaire. - 86% were residents of Eastport and 15% were business owners or employees in Eastport. The results included:

- 72.46% agreed there are parking issues on the streets of Eastport.
- 52.68 % said they or their family were personally affected by the parking problems in Eastport.
- 60% reported available off-street parking while 40% relied on street parking.
- Parking problems experienced by residents included: blocked driveways 24.56%, not enough street parking for my family’s vehicles 28.07%, not enough parking for Eastport businesses 75.44%, large trucks and busses parking on narrow streets 41.23%.
- When people experienced the most parking problems in Eastport: Special events 87.22%, weekends or holidays 54.44%, Generally throughout the year 25.56%.
- How important are Eastport parking issues to you? Very important 43.41%, Fairly important 41.46%
- 70.62% of respondents agreed there is currently a mobility problem in Eastport.

IV. GENERAL PRINCIPLES APPLIED BY THE EASTPORT PARKING/MOBILITY WORKING GROUP AND IMMEDIATE RECCOMENDATIONS

The Eastport Parking/Mobility Working Group has applied the following findings and principles:

- There are long-standing problems with mobility and parking in Eastport that are recognized by residents and businesses.
- The recommendations put forth in the 2016 Eastport Traffic Study and the 2018 Parking Study are currently valid and very few have been implemented.
- The short and long-term effects of currently proposed ordinances O-9-22 and O-13-22 potentially exacerbate the parking and mobility problems in the commercial districts of Eastport around fourth Street and could be injurious to the balance of maritime businesses in the maritime districts.
- The effect of permanent outdoor dining legislation in Eastport is currently the subject of a study commissioned by the Annapolis City Council. The impact on mobility and parking because of this expansion will not be known until the completion of this study in September 2022.
- Whatever remedies are applied to improve the mobility and parking problems in Eastport must take into consideration the needs of citizens, businesses and employees that live and work throughout Eastport including the communities of Nautilus Point, Harbour House, and Eastport Terrace. Mobility options must be equitable and not just focused on tourism.
- Enhanced and strict enforcement of current parking regulations, improved event traffic management and provisions for increased mobility options should be initiated and tested before any consideration of designated paid parking zones in Eastport.
- Don't apply paid parking zones or other dramatic changes until we have worked in an incremental, data driven way toward solutions.

V. IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS

- The company, SP+ will continue daily and enhanced patrolling and strict enforcement of all current parking regulations in Eastport. SP+ will respond quickly to all citizen complaints regarding specific and verifiable parking violations and take appropriate action to include the towing of vehicles. Within 45 days SP+ will acquire and use license plate identification software to facilitate enforcement of parking time limitations within Eastport. The City will improve and enhance signage and curb restrictions regarding parking.
- The Annapolis-Go app. will be available for individuals to obtain transportation throughout the Eastport Peninsula and into and out of downtown Annapolis. The use of this system should be encouraged and advertised.

- Initiate and pass necessary legislation to permit private property owners, businesses, churches and schools to provide paid parking alternatives.
- A specific traffic management plan will be implemented in Eastport for all major events. (Blue Angels, boat show weekends etc.) During peak traffic hours for these events traffic management will include requiring inbound and outbound traffic in Eastport to be restricted from entering downtown Annapolis over the Spa Bridge. Traffic officials will be on site to guide and enforce traffic flow.
- The City of Annapolis, the Eastport Business Association and the Eastport Civic Association will work together to publicize the changes noted above and the enhanced enforcement efforts.
- Data will be collected regarding the effect of the efforts noted above and assessed in conjunction with the study being conducted by the Department of Planning and Zoning with a report due by September 2022. Any future consideration of a paid parking zone system or other alternatives will necessarily require examination of this report and the effect of enhanced enforcement efforts.