

Cupertino Library Commission
10185 N Stelling Rd
Cupertino, CA 95014

January 10, 2020

Cupertino City Council
Cupertino City Manager
10350 Torre Ave
Cupertino, CA 95014

Honorable Mayor Scharf, Vice Mayor Paul, Council Members Chao, Sinks, and Willey, City Manager Feng, and Assistant City Manager Thompson:

As you are aware, we have high demand for parking spaces in the shared lot for City Hall, Community Hall, and the Library (civic center parking lot). And, on some occasions, visitors to the area misuse time-limited and charging station parking spaces.

The Cupertino Library served more than 900,000 patrons in 2019—the most patrons served of all libraries within the SCCLD. Misuse of time-limited parking stalls exacerbates traffic congestion, which affects the safety of everyone trying to get in and out of the lot. Vehicles stop as passengers are being picked up or dropped off. Vehicles stop while books are being dropped off. Vehicles stop when anyone pulls in or out of a time-limited (or any) parking stall.

Library Commissioners have made anecdotal observations of parking behavior in the 4-minute stalls located near the book drop and note visitors using the spaces for activities not related to returning books and often lasting longer than the four minutes permitted. For example, visitors park in the 4-minute stalls to wait for passengers who are inside the library or to exit their vehicles and enter a building in civic center plaza, presumably for a task that they expect to complete quickly. However, these non-book return activities sometimes take much longer than visitors anticipate. As a result, we observe some vehicles parked in 4-minute stalls for 30 minutes or more.

In the past year, Library Commissioners have met with and traded communication with representatives from Code Enforcement and Public Works to address community concerns regarding the parking situation in the civic center parking lot, including misuse of the 4-minute stalls. We appreciate the time invested and the thoughtful responses we have received from all staff members who have helped commissioners address parking and congestion concerns in the civic center parking lot.

With prompt assistance from City staff, we have added two A-frame signs near the book drop to encourage visitors to respect the time-limit assigned to parking spaces closest to the book drop (Attachment A). We believe the signs will be more effective if Code Enforcement could intermittently monitor use of the 4-minute stalls, especially during evening and weekend hours when the library is busiest. Perhaps it would be possible that when visiting the civic center parking lot, Code Enforcement could monitor usage of the charging station stalls (are parked vehicles charging or just parked?) and the bike racks (are bicycles locked securely? is there suspicious activity happening near the parked bicycles?).

However, with assistance from previous Library Commission liaison Kim Calame and guidance from Code Enforcement representative Gulu Sakhrani, we understand that the Code Enforcement team is not staffed to patrol the civic center parking lot on evenings and weekends (Attachment B), which reduces the ability of the City to hold accountable those who misuse the 4-minute and charging station stalls.

Suggestions to Address Misuse of Time-limited Parking Stalls in the Civic Center Parking Lot

Option 1

Consider increasing headcount for Code Enforcement to support intermittent weekend and evening monitoring of time-limited parking stalls, including but not limited to misuse of the 4-minute stalls and charging station stalls. Use the additional headcount to support weekend and evening monitoring of Civic Center Plaza generally, including detection of suspicious activity near the bike racks.

Option 2

Replace two (2) of the 4-minute book return stalls with 10-minute loading and unloading stalls. (In total, offer two [2] 4-minute book return stalls and two [2] 10-minute loading and unloading stalls for short-stay use.) Today, Civic Center Plaza has no designated passenger or equipment loading and unloading zones. Instead, drivers often queue up behind the 4-minute book return stalls to load or unload passengers or equipment. Or, drivers use the 4-minute book return stalls for passenger or equipment loading and unloading.

Note1: Library commissioners discussed Option 2 extensively and have accepted guidance from Cupertino Community Librarian Clare Varesio, who suggested that patrons generally do not respond favorably to changes that could be perceived as a loss of amenities or services. For example, we considered an option to remove the 4-minute stalls entirely because the time limit is unenforceable during library peak use times under current Code Enforcement funding allocations. We also considered removing the 4-minute stalls because of traffic bottlenecks and safety hazards caused by frequent in-and-out activity in an already busy parking lot. However, we recognize removing the option for short-stay parking does not resolve the underlying needs patrons have to return books or drop-off or collect passengers or equipment quickly. Instead, we suggest acknowledging the community's needs for short-stay parking in the Civic Center Parking lot through signage and code enforcement, when possible.

Option 3

Consider a reconfiguration of the civic center parking lot to accommodate:

- (a) easier and more efficient entry and exit to and from most parking stalls (replace perpendicular parking with angled parking);
- (b) the addition of a multi-use lane for short-stay parking, including access to the automated book returns and for community shuttle and private vehicle passenger or equipment loading and unloading;
- (c) the addition of a dedicated lane for driver-side access to a standalone book drop box.

(See Attachment C for a rough parking lot redesign suggestion.)

Note2: Under Option 3, the 4-minute book return stalls are removed and replaced with short-stay lane parking that can accommodate efficient book return access and passenger or equipment loading and unloading, eliminating the need for vehicles to back out of parking stalls and reducing the likelihood of traffic bottlenecks and collisions. From guidance offered by Assistant City Manager Dianne Thompson, Library Commissioners understand that replacing perpendicular “head-in” parking with angled parking can result in a net loss of about 10% of the total number of parking stalls. However, we believe the overall safety and ease-of-use improvements that result from the implementation of an angled parking design and the addition of single-direction pull-out lanes for short-stay uses are well worth the net loss of total parking spaces. We also note that numerous high-traffic, public parking lots in the area include angled parking.

Option 4

Maintain the status quo. Keep the 4-minute stalls and rely on the A-frame signs to encourage awareness of time-limited parking constraints as well as compliance without additional patrols of the civic center parking lot by Code Enforcement.

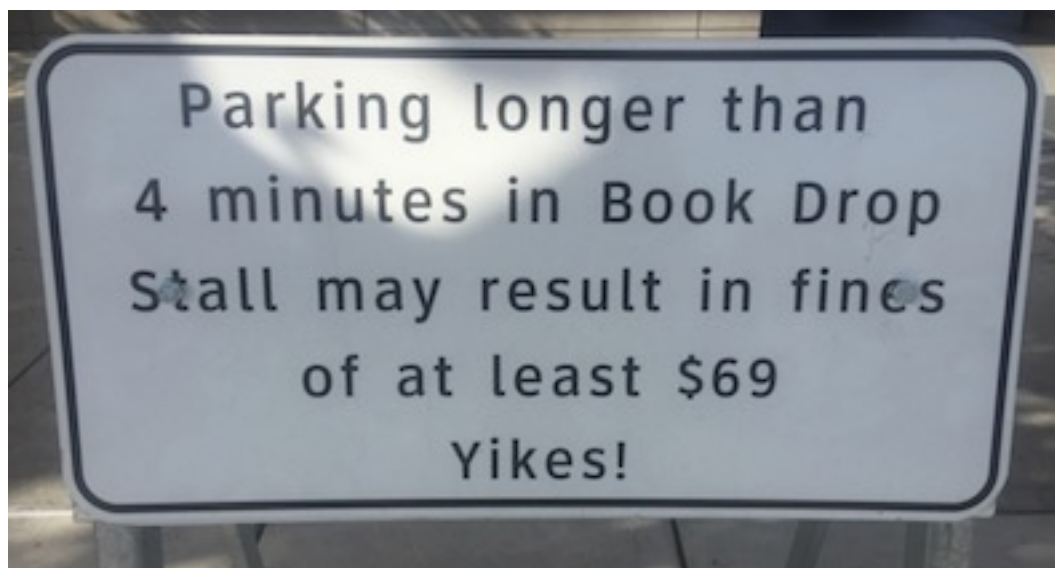
The library expansion project will affect the community’s use of the civic center parking lot. In our letter today, we hope to have offered short-term and longer-term suggestions for mitigating trouble spots affecting library patron and resident use of the civic center parking lot. Please also refer the Library Commission’s letter to Council and the City Manager dated 12/5/2019 for suggestions about how to encourage and promote walking, biking, community shuttle use, public transit use, and neighborhood or off-site parking as preferred travel methods or support ideas for visitors to Civic Center Plaza destinations.

Thank you for your consideration of opportunities to improve the public’s ease of access to facilities located in Civic Center Plaza.

Sincerely,

Liana Crabtree, Chair
Amanda Wo, Vice Chair
Christie Wang
Qin Pan
Rahul Vasanth

Attachment A



Attachment A, reminder to visitors to comply with time-limited parking restrictions assigned to the book drop stalls

Attachment B

Re: Cupertino Library - 4-Minute Parking Signs

Liana Crabtree

Mon 11/25/2019 8:33 AM

To: Clare Varesio <CVaresio@sccl.org>

Cc: Kim Calame <kimc@cupertino.org>

Hi Clare,

I realized as I considered Gulu's replies that there were suggestions we might want to make to Council regarding time-limited parking and ideas to alleviate traffic congestion in the parking lot that we had not discussed during commission meetings. As a result, I have asked to bring the 2 parking items back to the commission in December, when we can review and edit specific letter drafts.

I do think it would be helpful to include the email thread with Gulu as an attachment to the meeting agenda unless anyone sees a reason not to do that.

Thank you for bringing this item to the commission's attention.

Liana

On Nov 24, 2019, at 6:12 PM, Clare Varesio <CVaresio@sccl.org> wrote:

Hi Kim and Liana –

I met with Qin earlier this evening, and had planned to forward her the email string below as she had questions about the 4-minute parking at Cupertino Library. However, I see that Christie was included in that string, and do not want to run afoul of the Brown Act in including too many Commissioners in this conversation.

I know that the 4-minute parking will be discussed at the December Library Commission meeting. Would the information below be available to the Commissioners either at that meeting, or beforehand? I found the responses helpful in considering the issue.

Thank you –
Clare.

Attachment B, information exchange with commissioners and City and Library staff to consider possible improvements the parking situation in the civic center parking lot

Regarding adding metered parking to the Civic Center lot, I don't recall recent discussions with the Library Commission on this topic. Very likely the commission has discussed metered parking and either I wasn't present or I don't remember. My sense, though, is that metered parking in the Civic Center lot would be very unpopular with residents for all the reasons that people don't like metered parking elsewhere. Metered parking could be viewed as a kind of an added fee (double tax?) to access public facilities that are already funded by tax payers.

The Library Commission recognizes that dissatisfaction associated with misuse of the 4-minute parking stalls is a small part of a larger issue related to heavy demand for access to public facilities (Library, Community Hall, Library Field) during peak evening and weekend hours coupled with an insufficient number of parking stalls. The Library Commission recognizes that solutions to the current parking shortages will need to involve encouraging the public (a) to use alternative forms of transportation when traveling to the Library and Civic Center area; and (b) to park in the neighborhood when walking/biking/Via Cupertino shuttle/public buses are not practical/possible travel options. On the City side, efficient use of the parking lot could be improved if the site could be improved to include a safe, clearly designated loading zone for private vehicles and Via Cupertino shuttles.

Library Commissioners would like to be supportive of whatever efforts may be in the works to add evening and or weekend resources to the Code Enforcement team, such that in the future it may be possible to monitor occasionally the parking behavior near the Library and Civic Center on evenings and weekends. Library Commissioners understand evening and weekend monitoring of the Library and Civic Center lot is not possible today due to staffing constraints.

Sincerely,

Liana Crabtree
Library Commissioner

Attachment B, information exchange with commissioners and City and Library staff to consider possible improvements the parking situation in the civic center parking lot

From: Kim Calame <kimc@cupertino.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2019 9:37 AM
To: Liana Crabtree <lcrabtree@cupertino.org>
Subject: FW: Cupertino Library - 4-Minute Parking Signs

Here you go!

 **Kim Calame**
Recreation Supervisor
Parks and Recreation
KimC@cupertino.org
(408) 777-3139
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From: Gulu Sakhrani <GuluS@cupertino.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 5, 2019 8:29 AM
To: Kim Calame <kimc@cupertino.org>
Cc: Albert Salvador, P.E., C.B.O <AlbertS@cupertino.org>; Jason.Brown@shf.sccgov.org; Code <Code@cupertino.org>; David Stillman <DavidS@cupertino.org>
Subject: Re: Cupertino Library - 4-Minute Parking Signs

Good morning Kim,

Here is my perspective.

1. Code Enforcement has provided constructive suggestions to the Planning Commission over time. Most of which have been passed over.
2. Our officers enforce the violations when possible. I personally have enforced the 4-minute-parking space for the past 13 plus years numerous times.
3. Same issues... new violators and many have their own reasons **for**

Attachment B, information exchange with commissioners and City and Library staff to consider possible improvements the parking situation in the civic center parking lot

ignoring the signs for the time allotted to drop off borrowed items into the slot.

4. Code Enforcement has recommended paid parking meters, relocating the 4-minute-book drop spaces to Pacifica Drive and having a drive-up drop box or even replacing these 4-minute-spaces with disabled parking. **Disabled parking violations can be immediately cited upon being on viewed by the officer/deputy.**
5. The Planning Commission decided instead to update verbiage for new a-frames for enforcement.
6. I would not recommend putting our phone number to call Code for each violation. We do not have any administrative staff in the office to answer phones/complaints when they are called in.
7. Residents can call the Santa Clara County Communications non-emergency number at 408-299-2311 to report each violation – but in reality, by the time code officers or deputies arrive to monitor that “4-minute-violation”, the driver will have moved.
8. During the week, Jeff and I work our code duties and conduct investigations in the field. Daniel works part time and conducts numerous Parks and Rec duties all weekend so we only have him for cite writing and other code parking issues Mondays and Tuesdays. Phillip does not cite for parking violations.

Hopefully, you understand this and you can pass this along on my behalf.

Thanks,

Gulu

Attachment B, information exchange with commissioners and City and Library staff to consider possible improvements the parking situation in the civic center parking lot

From: Jeffrey Trybus <JeffreyT@cupertino.org>
Sent: Monday, November 4, 2019 11:21 AM
To: Code <Code@cupertino.org>
Cc: Albert Salvador, P.E., C.B.O <AlbertS@cupertino.org>; Jason.Brown@shf.sccgov.org
<Jason.Brown@shf.sccgov.org>
Subject: Fw: Cupertino Library - 4-Minute Parking Signs

Hello All,

Looks like we have another round of 4-Minute parking concerns from the Library Commission.

Does anyone want to attend the next meeting to listen to their concerns? I've already gone to two (2) meetings so far. Let's try and work as a team on this one.....

Thanks,
Jeff

From: Kim Calame <kimc@cupertino.org>
Sent: Monday, November 4, 2019 10:24 AM
To: Qin Pan <QPan@cupertino.org>
Cc: Liana Crabtree <lcrabtree@cupertino.org>
Subject: RE: Cupertino Library - 4-Minute Parking Signs

Hi Qin, we can invite Code Enforcement...I'm not sure they can come again.... I have to say that this is not going to be high on the list of priorities as they have to patrol the whole city. Their hours are M-F until 4:30...and there is someone on Saturday and Sunday morning. They will do regular patrols of the parking lot...and the rest of the city. I'm just not sure of what else we can expect from them. We can ask. Kim

 **Kim Calame**
Recreation Supervisor
Parks and Recreation
KimC@cupertino.org
(408) 777-3139
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Attachment B, information exchange with commissioners and City and Library staff to consider possible improvements the parking situation in the civic center parking lot

From: Qin Pan <QPan@cupertino.org>
Sent: Monday, November 4, 2019 7:44 AM
To: Kim Calame <kimc@cupertino.org>
Subject: Re: Cupertino Library - 4-Minute Parking Signs

Kim,

I talked to Clare over the weekend about the 4 minutes parking issues, and she suggest that if we can invite Code Enforcement to our meeting, and discuss how we can help enforce the 4 minutes parking issues.

I had picture of the same car parking at the 4 minutes parking spot for more than 30 minutes.

Let me know,
Thank you!
Qin

Attachment B, information exchange with commissioners and City and Library staff to consider possible improvements the parking situation in the civic center parking lot

Attachment C



Attachment C, not to scale, reconfigured parking lot idea to accommodate [1] driver-side standalone book drop; [2] short stay parking for passenger loading and unloading and use of the automated book return; [3] preserved use of the four existing charging station stalls (4 stalls, location noted in yellow). "Lavender arrow zones" indicate location and flow direction for pull-in, pull-out, short-stay parking.

Note3: The source for the background graphic for the reconfigured parking lot was borrowed from the December 2019 Cupertino Civic Center transportation survey.