



## Memorandum Department of Planning & Public Works

**To:** Planning and Public Works Committee  
**From:** Justin Wyse, Project Planner  
**Date:** November 1, 2010  
**RE:** Off Street Parking of Recreational Vehicles in Residential Districts  
**CC:** Aimee Nassif, Planning and Development Services Director

### Summary

At the September 2, 2010 Planning and Public Works Committee Meeting Staff was asked to research the issue of parking large vehicles, including commercial and recreational vehicles, in residential areas and provide draft language regarding the regulation thereof. The main purpose behind regulating parking of large vehicles is to preserve the character of an area as residential and thus protect residential property values.

### Existing Vehicle Regulations in the City of Chesterfield

The City of Chesterfield currently has seven ordinances which restrict both the parking of various types of vehicles and the locations where various vehicle types may be parked. Table 1 provides a summary each of these ordinances.

Table 1: Chesterfield Ordinance Summary

Ordinance	Regulates	Summary
159	Parking location	Parking not permitted in grassy areas
163	Residential districts	No parking in required front yard
164	Roadway	No vehicle on roadway for more than 24 hours
165	Roadway	No parking on roadway to display vehicles for sale or for working on vehicles
166	Residential districts	No commercial vehicle over 12,000 pounds parked on a roadway in a residential district between midnight and 6 A.M.
169	Restrictions on parking in various places	No parking for various areas (on sidewalk, in crosswalk, etc.)
2345	Residential districts	No tractor or tractor trailer or tractor trailer truck in any driveway in any residential district

As can be seen on the previous page, the City of Chesterfield ordinances deal with parking of vehicles on public roads, requiring parking of all vehicles to be on a paved surface, prohibiting parking to preserve safety of the public, and restricting tractor trailers in residential areas. Additionally, most of the restrictions in place regarding parking aim at controlling parking on public facilities. Two ordinances (163 and 2345) restrict parking on private property in residentially zoned areas.

Concern has recently arisen regarding the parking of certain types of vehicles on private property in residential areas. The concern stems from the idea that allowing these vehicles, as currently allowed by the City, to park on most areas of residential properties detracts from the residential character of neighborhoods and may reduce property values.

### **Parking of Recreational Vehicles in Residential Areas**

#### Definition of Recreational Vehicles

Staff is recommending the following definition for the purpose of this discussion:

*Recreational Vehicle:* A term encompassing any type of vehicle used primarily for recreational pleasure. Examples include but not limited to travel trailers, motor homes, boats, jet skis, etc. This term shall also include the trailers used for transporting recreational vehicles. Recreational vehicles shall include any mobile structure designed for temporary occupancy, but shall exclude manufactured homes.

#### Comparison of Regulations

In order to evaluate the City's current regulations, Staff prepared Table 2 comparing the City of Chesterfield's regulations for parking large vehicles on private property. This table provides a summary of the regulations for several cities in the St. Louis area and also includes several examples from other cities across the country. As can be seen, cities have taken different approaches to the regulation of parking and storage of large vehicles. Most municipalities prohibit the parking of large vehicles in the required front yard and allow parking in the rear and side yards.

City	State	Parking Allowed In			Paved Surface Required	Time Limit	Setbacks	Screening Required	# Allowed
		Front Yard	Side Yard	Rear Yard					
Ballwin	MO	No	Yes	Yes	No	None	None	No	1
Creve Coeur	MO	No	No	Yes	No	None	None	No	N/A
Ellisville	MO	No	No	No	Yes	None	15 ft from curb and 3 from sidewalk or structure	No	N/A
St. Charles	MO	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	24 consecutive hours (owner present) for loading/unloading	None	No	N/A
St. Peters	MO	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2 hours in any 24 hour period, 0 days / year for prep	None	No	1
<b>Chesterfield</b>	<b>MO</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Aurora	IL	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	48 hours for loading / unloading, 5 days / cal. year for prep	None	Yes	N/A
Naperville	IL	No	Yes	Yes	No	3x per month for no more than 48 hours for loading / unloading	5 ft. from any property line	Yes	N/A
Cedar Rapids	IA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	None	None	No	1 (side), 2 (rear)
Arlington	VA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	None	None	No	N/A
Champlin	MN	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	None	None	No	N/A

## Analysis

### Possible Restrictions for Parking Recreational Vehicles in Residential Areas

As mentioned above, cities across the nation have taken different approaches to mitigating the impact of parking recreational vehicles in residential areas. In order to better illustrate these alternative regulations, the following figures have been prepared. Each of these figures illustrates the spatial impact of parking recreational vehicles on residential properties associated with a specific regulation or set of regulations.

Red areas denote portions of the property where parking of recreational vehicles is, or would be prohibited. Green areas denote areas of the property where parking is, or would be permitted. It is important to note that all of these restrictions are associated with unenclosed parking and storage of recreational vehicles. Fully enclosed vehicle storage areas would be reviewed against the City's current regulations.



Figure 1: Existing Restrictions in Chesterfield



Figure 2: No Parking in Building Setbacks



Figure 3: No Parking in Front of Main Building Façade or Side Yard

*Benefits and Shortcomings of Restricting Parking to Areas Located Behind Main Façade*

One of the primary concerns with parking of recreational vehicles in residential areas is that it detracts from the residential character of a neighborhood. Requiring parking and storage of these types of vehicles to be located behind the main façade of the structure helps to minimize the visual impact of the activity. Similar to prohibiting parking in the required front yard, this regulation helps to ensure that vehicles parked in a driveway do not overhang onto the sidewalk or the roadway.



Figure 4: RV Overhanging Sidewalk

While this regulation may partially mitigate the aesthetic view from the roadway, neighbors to the side and rear of the lot may still feel that the recreational vehicle impacts their property negatively. In fact, requiring recreational vehicles to be parked behind the main façade of the building often results in vehicles parking in the side yard, closer to the neighboring structure. It should be noted that City of Chesterfield Ordinance 169 prohibits parking over a sidewalk.

*Benefits and Shortcomings of Restricting Parking within Building Setbacks*

The primary benefit of this regulation is that it would help to offset the disadvantage discussed above regarding the impact to the parcels immediately next to and behind a property with a recreational vehicle parked on the lot. Requiring a setback from the property line increases the distance between the neighbor and the vehicle; partially reducing the impact.

While requiring recreational vehicle parking and storage to adhere to side yard setbacks may increase the distance between neighbors and the vehicle, this regulation does not fully address the visual impact. Additionally, requiring parking of recreational vehicles to adhere to building setbacks may make it highly difficult for some properties to park on their lot, even for short periods of time for loading / unloading, preparation, and temporary visitor parking. Another shortcoming of this regulation is that many people may not be aware of what their setbacks are and where the property line is located. This may make it difficult for people trying to comply with the requirement to actually be in compliance.



Figure 5: RV Behind Privacy Fence

*Benefits and Shortcomings of Requiring Vehicle Screening*

Requiring screening may be one of the best ways to minimize the visual impact of parking. Some municipalities have elected to require fencing and / or vegetative planting to screen the parking area for large vehicles. Providing screening for the vehicles reduces or eliminates the visual impact.

While screening techniques may reduce the visual impact of recreational vehicle parking, it is unlikely that fencing and plantings will completely remove the vehicles from view. When you consider the impact of the screening along with the cost required to install a fence and / or landscaping, the results may fall short of the desired outcome.



*Benefits and Shortcomings of Including Time Restriction on Parking*

Many communities have also elected to allow short term parking of recreational vehicles in designated areas for brief periods to accommodate various needs (e.g. load/unloading, short term visits). The primary benefit of this route is that accommodations can be made to allow for loading/unloading, short term visitors, short term storage, and other needs.

The primary issue with this type of regulation is that some people may currently store their recreational vehicle on their property. Passing this regulation would require these people to construct an additional garage or find a storage facility off-site for the storage of their recreational vehicle.

**Potential Revisions**

Staff is recommending the following language:

*Sec. 18-111. Parking of Recreational Vehicles on Residential Lots.*

- A. Not more than one recreational vehicle may be located outside of a fully enclosed building or structure on any lot or parcel of land, whose primary use is residential, subject to the following restrictions:
  1. A recreational vehicle may be temporarily placed, kept or maintained upon any lot or parcel primarily used for residential purpose for a period not to exceed two times per month and for not more than 72 hours per occurrence.
  2. Parking of recreational vehicles must comply with all other regulations of the City of Chesterfield City Code.

- B. Recreational vehicle shall be defined as, "A term encompassing any type of vehicle used primarily for recreational pleasure. Examples include, but are not limited to, travel trailers, motor homes, boats, jet skis, etc. This term shall also include the trailers used for transporting recreational vehicles. Recreational vehicles shall include any mobile structure designed for temporary occupancy, but shall exclude manufactured homes."

OR

*Sec. 18-111. Parking of Recreational Vehicles on Residential Lots.*

- A. Not more than one recreational vehicle may be located outside of a fully enclosed building or structure on any lot or parcel of land, whose primary use is residential, subject to the following restrictions:
1. Residential properties less than one (1) acre may temporarily park a recreational vehicle for a period not to exceed two times per month and for not more than 72 hours per occurrence.
  2. Residential properties containing one (1) acre or more may park or store a recreational vehicle on the site. The parking and / or storage area must not be located within the required front, side, or rear yard.
  3. Parking of recreational vehicles must comply with all other regulations regarding the parking of vehicles with the City of Chesterfield City Code.
- B. Recreational vehicle shall be defined as, "A term encompassing any type of vehicle used primarily for recreational pleasure. Examples include, but are not limited to, travel trailers, motor homes, boats, jet skis, etc. This term shall also include the trailers used for transporting recreational vehicles. Recreational vehicles shall include any mobile structure designed for temporary occupancy, but shall exclude manufactured homes."

Respectfully submitted,

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