

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** MARCH 27, 2017  
**TO:** MEMBERS OF THE TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD  
**FROM:** T&ES STAFF  
**SUBJECT:** DOCKET ITEM 8

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**ISSUE:** Consideration of proposed Code changes for the 72-hour on-street parking rule.

**APPLICANT:** City of Alexandria

**LOCATION:** Citywide

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board recommend approval to the City Council of an amendment to City Code Section 10-4-8 that allows vehicle registrants to apply for a temporary exemption to the 72-hour on-street parking rule.

**DISCUSSION:** City Code Section 10-4-8 currently prohibits vehicles from parking in the same place on City streets for more than 72-hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. This rule applies to all vehicles—including vehicles parked with stickers in Residential Parking Permit (RPP) districts. There are varying opinions about the original intent of this decades old rule. In practice today, the rule is used to encourage the turnover of on-street parking spaces. A different section of the Code addresses abandoned vehicles. Enforcement is generally generated through resident complaints and is treated contextually. Officers who field complaints typically place a check notice on a vehicle and return within 72 hours (excluding Saturday, Sunday, and holiday hours). If a car has not been moved, an officer may cite the vehicle. Fine amounts are \$25. Vehicles cited multiple times or vehicles that appear to be abandoned are impounded at the discretion of the responding officer.

**Background:** The Board previously reviewed the 72-hour rule in 2004, but at that time no changes were recommended. In June 2015, City Council directed City staff to review this rule noting three different options for consideration including: 1) an exemption or permit system; 2) extending the time beyond 72-hours; or 3) repealing the rule in full. Staff from the City Attorney's Office, the Department of Transportation and Environment Services (T&ES), and the Alexandria Police Department (APD) met for a preliminary review of the rule. The outcome of these proceedings included a review of practices in neighboring jurisdictions and analysis of the historical data related to citations issued for violating the 72-hour rule.

**Public Outreach & Review Process:** T&ES staff initiated the full review of this rule in December 2016. To date, the process has included an AlexEngage questionnaire, two meetings of a subcommittee of the Traffic and Parking Board, and a Citywide Open House. The AlexEngage questionnaire was widely advertised on the City’s website and social media platforms. Staff also performed outreach to the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations. Various media outlets advertised the questionnaire on their websites. The questionnaire received 783 responses over a two-week period in January. Staff coordinated with the City’s contractor, Peak Democracy, to ensure that that none of the responses indicated fraudulent or repetitive activity.

The results of the questionnaire (Attachment 1 – Questionnaire Results) suggest that there are varying preferences and opinions throughout the City. Based on overall feedback, the questionnaire suggests that individuals generally prefer the implementation of an exemption to the rule or a full repeal of the rule. Supplemental data analysis suggests that individuals who have reported vehicles to APD in the past generally prefer the maintenance of the rule as-is or the provision of an exemption system; however, those who have been cited or impounded prefer the full repeal of the rule or the provision of an exemption system.

T&ES and APD staff hosted a Citywide Open House on February 16. Feedback at this event was generally consistent with the results of the questionnaire. While individuals in attendance represented a broad spectrum of perspectives, individuals who supported a full repeal of the ordinance were generally more vocal. At this meeting, staff assessed feedback regarding the provision of an exemption and realized that additional clarification was necessary. Staff provided this clarification to the subcommittee of the Traffic and Parking Board and posted the clarification on the project website under the “Frequently Asked Questions” header: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=95263>

A subcommittee of the City’s Traffic and Parking Board met twice to assess policy directions. At its first meeting on January 23, T&ES and APD staff provided the board with the results of the AlexEngage Questionnaire (Attachment 1) and an analysis of enforcement data related to the rule between the years 2010 and 2015 (Attachment 2 – Enforcement Data Analysis). At this body’s second meeting on February 27, staff provided more fine-grained analysis of the questionnaire’s response and reported on feedback from the Citywide Open House. Residents provided additional comments at both subcommittee meetings.

**Policy Assessment:** Despite a fair amount of public support for a full repeal of the 72-hour rule, staff recognizes the subcommittee’s interest in maintaining the rule as a tool for the Police Department to use in response to citizen complaints. Additionally, some members of the public—particularly those in Old Town—feel strongly that the rule encourages parking turnover and availability. Based on the extensive feedback compiled from the general public and a subcommittee of the Traffic and Parking Board, T&ES staff offers the provision of an exemption for consideration by the full Board. Staff feels that this solution functions as a compromise between those who do and do not support the rule. Attachment 3 provides the language for proposed Code amendments to section 10-4-8.

An exemption would provide residents relief from section 10-4-8 by allowing a vehicle to park on-street for a maximum of two weeks within 1/8 mile of their residences. Exemptions would be provided on a per-plate basis and residents would need to apply two weeks prior to the time the exemption would begin. Residents would be allowed to apply for an exemption for a vehicle a maximum of four times per year. No more than two contiguous exemptions shall be provided per vehicle. All on-street restrictions would still be applicable; therefore, exempted vehicles would still be subject to restrictions in RPP districts should they not have the necessary RPP decal. Staff suggests the consideration the 1/8 mile distance threshold to support residents who may not have dependably available parking spaces immediately adjacent to or across from their homes. Often this is due to existing “no parking” restrictions, the linear length of frontage, or proximity to non-residential land uses.

In total, the proposed exemptions allow a maximum of fifty-six days of relief per vehicle per year. As staff recommends that no more than two contiguous exemptions be granted, a vehicle could potentially be parked on-street in the same location for a period of 28 days. This should allow residents sufficient time to park on-street for vacation and business travel, assuming they are not subject to other signed restrictions.

Staff considered a number of logistical elements for the implementation and management of an exemption registration system. As posting exemptions on car windshields may invite break-ins, staff proposes a system that is managed electronically. Using an online form, plates will be registered and approved through an online system managed by T&ES and APD.

The exemption provision is slated to sunset on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, at which time T&ES and APD will review existing procedures and process. Any necessary changes will be addressed in future Code changes. Should demand for the program not warrant a continuation of the exemption program, staff will propose the removal of the exemption provision.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Questionnaire Results

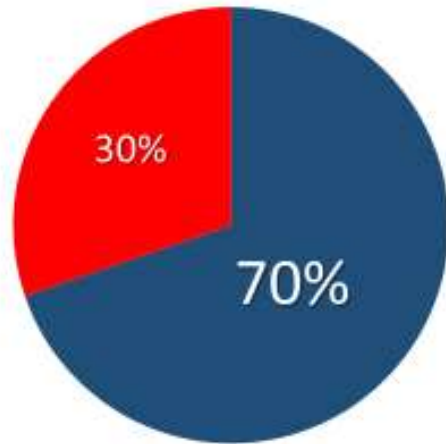
Attachment 2 – Enforcement Data Analysis

Attachment 3 – Proposed Code Amendments

Attachment 1 – Questionnaire Results

**QUESTION ONE**

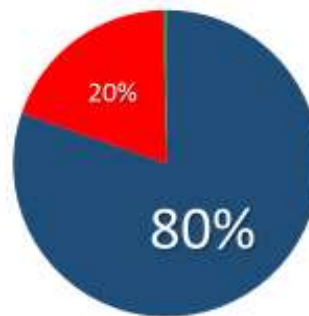
Prior to this questionnaire, were you aware that Alexandria has a rule preventing vehicles from parking on-street for over 72 hours?



■ Yes ■ No

**QUESTION TWO**

Do you ever need to park on-street for longer than 72 hours?



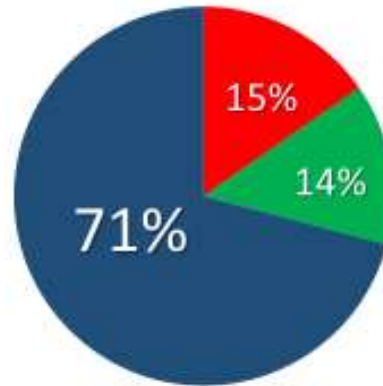
■ Yes

■ While I own a vehicle, I do not anticipate the need to park it on a public street for more than 72 hours.

■ I do not own a vehicle.

### QUESTION THREE

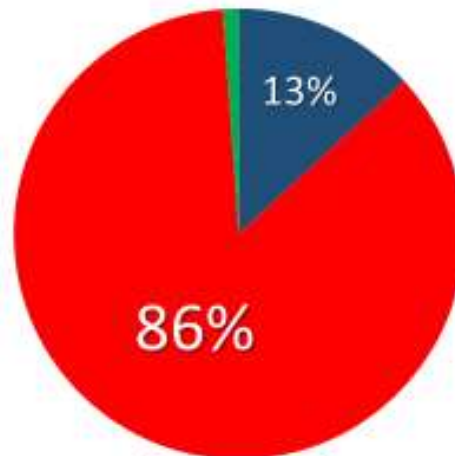
Have you ever contacted the Alexandria Police Department to report an infraction of the 72-hour rule?



- Yes, I have contacted APD to report a 72-hour rule infraction.
- I have not but would if I believed a vehicle had parked for over 72 hours.
- I have not and would not even if I believed a vehicle had parked for over 72 hours.

### QUESTION FOUR

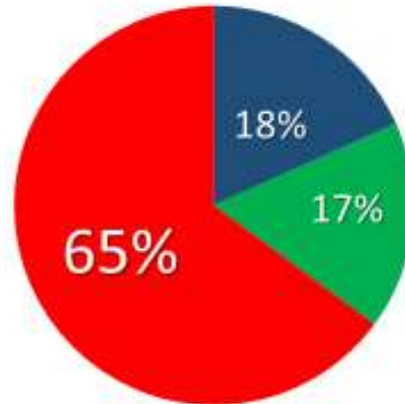
Have you ever received a citation or notice for a violation of the 72-hour rule or 48-hour abandoned vehicles rule?



- Yes
- No
- Unsure

### QUESTION FIVE

Have you ever noticed an abandoned vehicle on a public street in Alexandria? Choose the statement that best describes you.

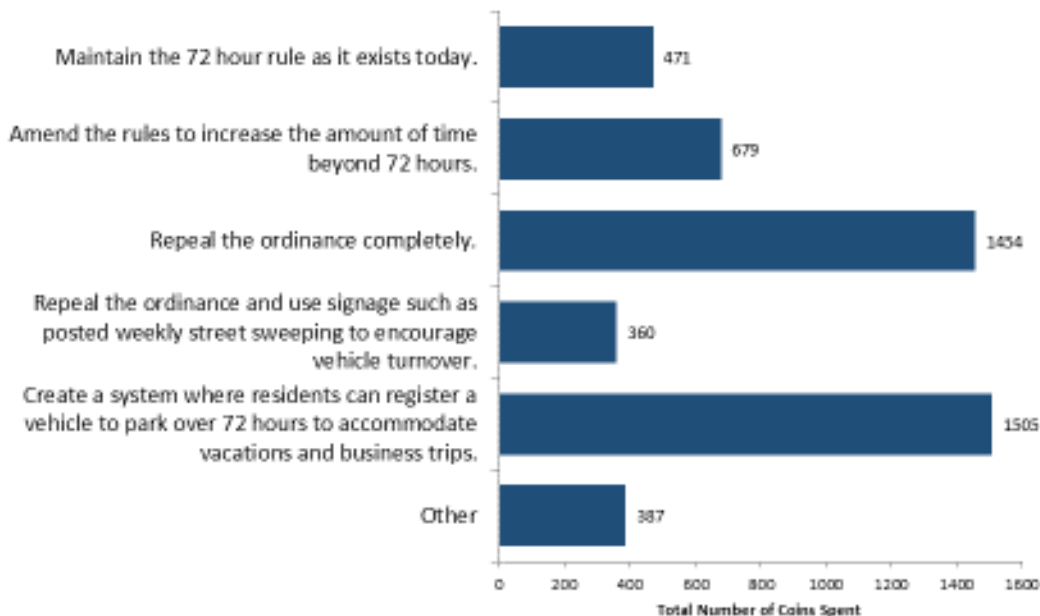


- I have noticed an abandoned vehicle on a public street in Alexandria and I have reported the vehicle to the police.
- I have noticed an abandoned vehicle on a public street in Alexandria but did not report it.
- I have neither noticed nor reported an abandoned vehicle on a public street in Alexandria.

QUESTION SIX: Which of the following statements do you believe are true? Select all that apply.



**QUESTION SEVEN:** The City is reviewing options for the 72-hour rule. Which outcomes are the most desirable for you? Spend your seven coins to show support for the outcomes you feel are best.



**QUESTION EIGHT:** Do you have any additional thoughts or comments about the 72-hour rule?

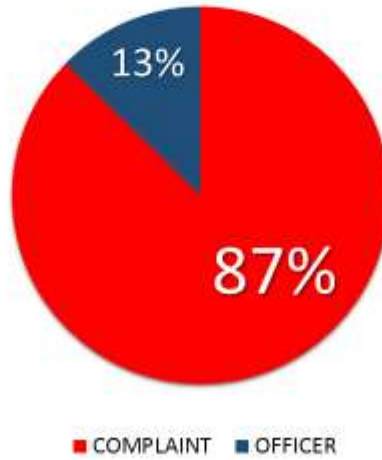
**Common Themes not Addressed in Questionnaire:**

- Consider different rule applications for different neighborhoods based on availability of garages/driveways
- Rule is not consistent with City's multimodal vision
- Consider applying rule only to individuals without City sticker
- Individuals with more than one or two vehicles but no off-street parking present issues
- Common response of moving a vehicle to another spot on the same block doesn't help solve anything

Attachment 2 – Enforcement Data Analysis

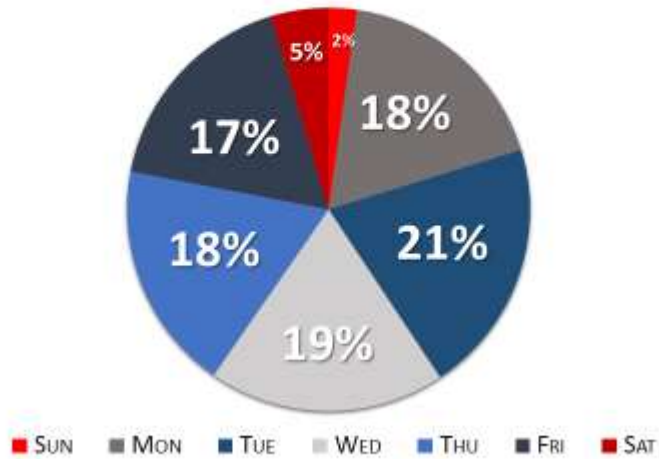
### CITIZEN INITIATED REPORTS VS. OFFICER INITIATED REPORTS

(n = 7,520)



### CITIZEN-INITIATED COMPLAINTS BY DAY

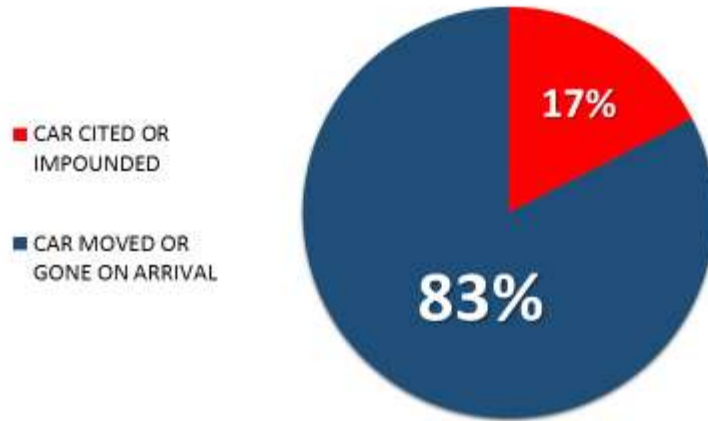
(n = 6,454)





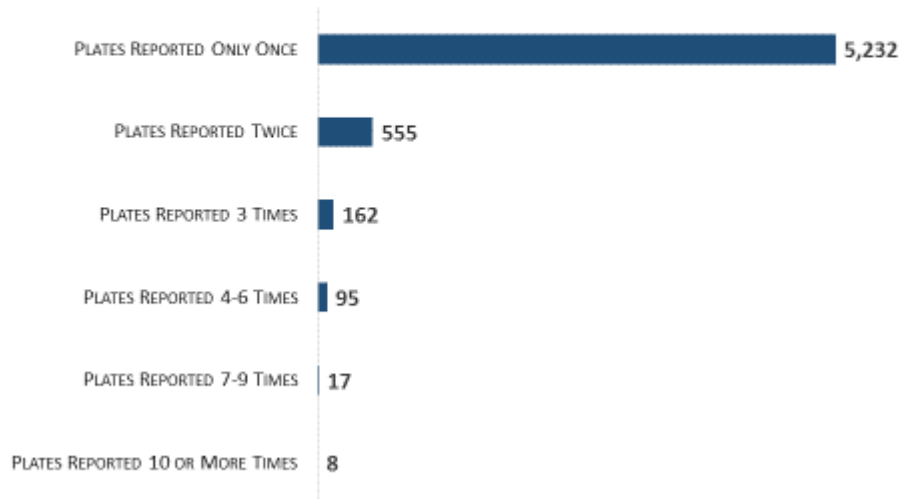
## REPORT RESPONSES

(n = 7,520)

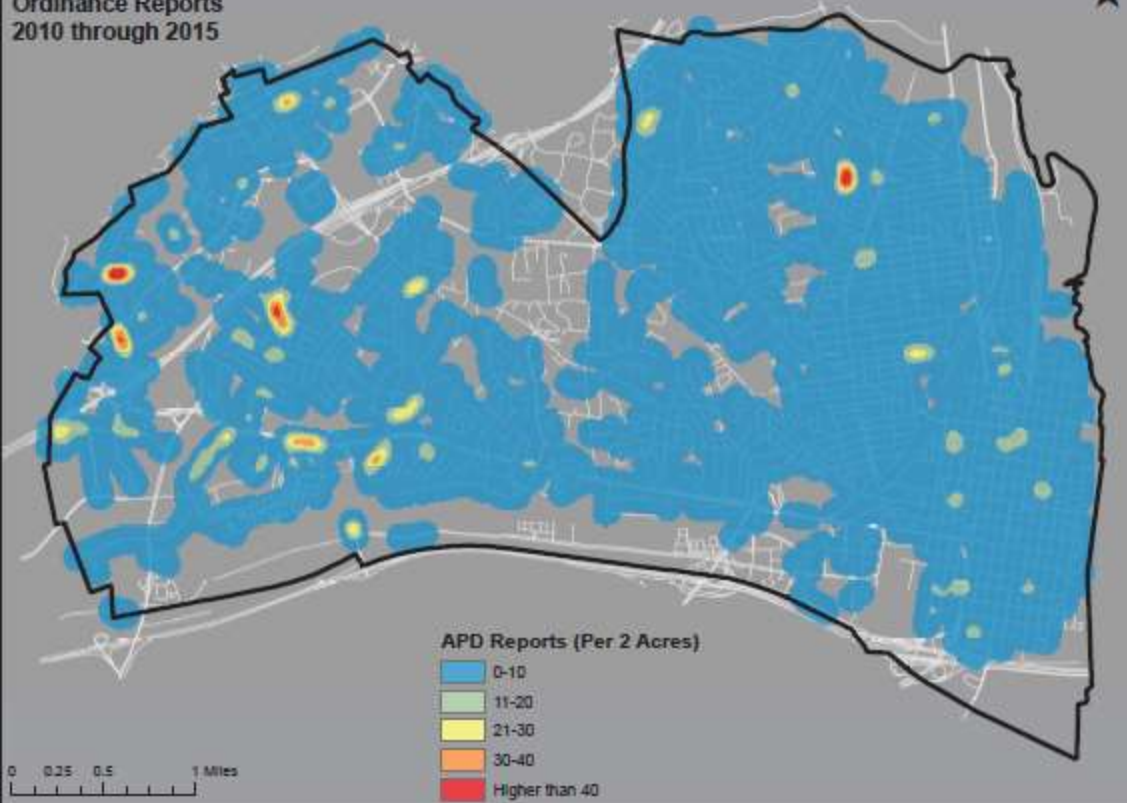


## REPEAT OFFENDERS

AVERAGE = 1.24 REPORTS PER PLATE  
MAXIMUM = 23 REPORTS FOR A SINGLE PLATE



Density of 72 Hour  
Ordinance Reports  
2010 through 2015



## Attachment 3 – Proposed Code Amendments

### Sec. 10-4-8 - Parking for more than 72 continuous hours.

Unless otherwise controlled by an official sign, the parking of any vehicle in the same place on the streets of the City for more than 72 hours is prohibited; provided that this prohibition shall not apply to the parking of a vehicle in the same place on the streets of the City on Saturday, Sunday and holidays-, **or any vehicle provided a 72-hour parking rule exemption through the provision of 10-4-8(a).**

**(a) Exemption. A 72-hour parking rule exemption may be provided to residents by the Alexandria Police Department in coordination with the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services pursuant to the regulations detailed in 10-4-8b. If granted, a 72-hour parking rule exemption will not supersede any posted signage. All hourly restrictions otherwise applicable to a parked vehicle remain subject to enforcement. The provisions of subsection 10-4-8a and 10-4-8b shall expire on June 1, 2018.**

#### **(b) Exemption regulations.**

1. **Exemptions shall only be granted to vehicles registered with the City of Alexandria.**
2. **Exemptions may not be transferred between vehicles.**
3. **Each exemption may be granted for a maximum of two weeks.**
4. **Vehicles may be granted a maximum of four exemptions per year.**
5. **Vehicles may be granted no more than two contiguous exemptions.**
6. **Vehicles will only be permitted to park within one-eighth mile of their place of residence. Vehicles granted exemptions found parking beyond this maximum radius will be subject to enforcement.**
7. **Exemption applications must be filed two-weeks prior to the date of the needed exemption.**
8. **The Department of Transportation and Environmental Services and the Alexandria Police Department retain the right to move and store vehicles when necessary due to street maintenance, in cases of emergency, or as otherwise provided by law.**