

Old Marco Interim Parking Accommodation Options
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Parking to serve the commercial uses within Old Marco during peak season has been a challenge for over two decades. Many of the existing commercial uses do not have adequate parking to accommodate their patrons during peak season. Some Old Marco businesses have added unauthorized dining seats thereby exceeding their zoning certificate allotment. Other businesses, not just restaurants, even fail to apply for a zoning certificate. The city has requested various times over the years that these businesses comply with their zoning certificate requirements by removing the unauthorized seats or by applying for a zoning certificate amendment and adding parking to accommodate the increased intensity. The increase in intensity has resulted in patrons having to park in the roadside swales which are not designed to accommodate parking. The sod in the swales has become dirt, and parking spaces are not delineated resulting in unsafe situations whereby vehicles end up partially parked on the road or do not have sufficient space to maneuver in and out of parking spaces. Even with the swale parking there is a deficit of parking spaces available to meet the demand.

Further redevelopment within Old Marco is expected. Accordingly, City Council has authorized staff to seek a consultant to prepare a redevelopment master plan for Old Marco. Until such time that the master plan is adopted, the following interim accommodations are proposed by staff for Council consideration:

Resident Parking Permits

Parking within the public rights of way of Old Marco can be limited to residents of Old Marco by issuing parking permit stickers. The stickers can be issued at city hall upon address verification. Any patron would still be able to park at the limited private parking provided at the businesses being visited. The result of this option by itself would limit the number of patrons to the businesses in Old Marco. This option could be combined with the parking shuttle option that follows.

Parking Shuttle

Business owners in Old Marco can contract with a private shuttle service to provide transportation from other parking areas on the island to Old Marco. The parking shuttle can charge a fee for transportation or can be funded by the Old Marco businesses.

Parking Agreement

Old Marco businesses can seek a parking agreement with properties with appropriate zoning that have large parking areas with available parking. This option could also be combined with the parking shuttle option.

Vacant Lot

There is a vacant commercial lot at 1163 Bald Eagle Drive immediately adjacent to the Old Marco commercial area. Businesses in Old Marco can request that the property owner submit a site development plan to construct a parking lot or parking garage. Fees for parking can be charged or the businesses can compensate the property owner for the costs.

Also, City Council could consider an ordinance change to Sec. 30-483 of the Land Development Code to allow grass parking on vacant commercial lots within Old Marco so that a paved parking lot or parking garage does not have to be constructed.

Swale Parking Ban

Parking in the roadside swales in Old Marco can be prohibited to prevent unsafe parking and damage to the swales like the prohibited swale parking on Swallow Ave., Seagrape Dr., and Sandhill St.