

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: February 26, 2025

TITLE: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE, AT ITS JANUARY 29, 2025 MEETING, FOR THE PARKING DEPARTMENT TO IMPLEMENT A NOTIFICATION SYSTEM THAT ALERTS RESIDENTS IF THEIR VEHICLE IS ILLEGALLY PARKED, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME TO COMPLY WITH THE CITY'S PARKING POLICIES BEFORE THE VEHICLE IS TOWED.

RECOMMENDATION

The City Administration ("Administration") recommends that the Mayor and City Commission ("City Commission") adopt the Resolution.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

At the November 20, 2024 City Commission meeting, at the request of Commissioner Alex Fernandez, the City Commission referred an agenda item (C4 D) to the Public Safety Neighborhoods Quality of Life Committee ("PSNQLC" or "Committee") to discuss implementing a system that notifies Miami Beach residents if their vehicle is illegally parked to provide a reasonable amount of time to comply with the City of Miami Beach ("City") parking policies before the vehicle is towed.

At the January 29, 2025 PSNQLC meeting, the Administration presented this item (Attachment B), and, during the discussion, the Parking Department staff requested input from the Committee on the various parameters of developing and implementing a text messaging system to notify illegally parked residents prior to towing their vehicle. The Committee passed a motion by acclamation recommending that the Parking Department implement a text messaging system that would alert Miami Beach residents prior to being towed, with the following parameters: **1) providing a one-time text notification to Miami Beach residents prior to initiating a tow; 2) allowing for a 15-minute grace period from the time the text alert is issued for residents to have the opportunity to comply with parking regulations; and 3) providing text notifications to residents only for non-life safety parking violations.** Any parking violation related to life safety would result in the immediate towing of the unauthorized vehicle.

ANALYSIS

The Parking Department enforces towing policies which require the towing of vehicles parked in residential zones during restricted hours without a valid permit; vehicles parked in no-parking zones, fire lanes, and Freight Loading Zones (FLZ); vehicles obstructing the public rights-of-way, including, but not limited to, travel lanes, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks; vehicles parked in disabled spaces without a valid permit; and abandoned vehicles.

Currently, when a parking enforcement officer identifies a vehicle illegally parked in a residential zone, the officer scans the vehicle's license plate for a permit. If no permit exists, the officer contacts dispatch to validate the vehicle's status. If the dispatcher confirms the vehicle does not have a valid permit, a tow truck is requested. During this process, the parking enforcement officer waits for the tow truck to arrive, which provides the vehicle owner an opportunity to move their vehicle before the vehicle is towed. The average time for a tow truck to arrive at the scene is approximately 15 to 20 minutes, depending on the time of day and location. In cases where the vehicle owner arrives while the vehicle is in the process of being towed, the vehicle is released without the owner incurring any fees.

The Parking Department acknowledges the potential benefit of implementing a system that would notify residents if they are illegally parked, by providing them with an opportunity to comply with the City's parking regulations before their vehicle is towed. While the Administration is receptive to notifying residents in advance, it is important to note that there are currently approximately only 20,000 active registered residents in the City's parking permit system. Of these, approximately 16,000 residents have provided contact phone numbers, leaving approximately 4,000 registered residents without any registered contact information. **For a notification system to be effective, all residents who wish to be notified would need to register in the City's parking system and provide a contact phone number. The goal would be to create an efficient and resident-friendly automated parking notification system that minimizes unnecessary towing while ensuring compliance with parking policies.**

Furthermore, to move forward with the implementation of an advance notification system, the Administration would need to ensure a streamlined registration process, conduct outreach to encourage all residents to register and provide their contact phone number. It is essential that residents understand how the notification system works, how to register, and how to respond to the alerts. A multi-channel approach, utilizing social media and community outreach, will be key to ensuring broad awareness of the program.

Under the proposed advance notification system, a fifteen (15) minute grace period will be granted to residents after a citation is issued and the resident is notified via text message, allowing residents time to comply with parking regulations before their vehicle is towed. Advance notifications will be sent for non-life safety violations only, including parking in residential areas during restricted hours without a valid permit, parking in no-parking zones, and for abandoned vehicles. However, no notifications will be issued for life safety violations, such as vehicles parked in fire lanes, blocking travel lanes, or occupying disabled parking spaces. In addition, the Parking Department will continue to tow unauthorized vehicles parked in FLZs without advance notification. To prevent misuse, residents will receive a one-time notification per citation.

In terms of implementation, the City's current automated parking enforcement system, provided through BLINKAY, has the capabilities to issue automated text alerts to registered residents - who have provided their contact phone numbers - when their vehicle is detected in violation of parking regulations by a parking enforcement officer. These text notifications would provide clear instructions to residents on how to resolve the parking violation and avoid further enforcement actions resulting in towing.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Adopting this Resolution is anticipated to have a fiscal impact of approximately \$20,000 for the development and deployment of an advance notification system for the first year with a recurring annual cost of \$7,500 beginning in the second year of deployment. Funds have been identified in the Parking Department's Fiscal Year 2024/25 Operating Budget.

Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate?
(FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

If applicable, the Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on:
See BIE at: <https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notice/>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Account: 480-0462-000343-27-421-526-00-00-00-

CONCLUSION

The Parking Department acknowledges the potential benefit of implementing a system that would notify residents if they are illegally parked, by providing them with an opportunity to comply with the City’s parking regulations before their vehicle is towed. The proposed text message advance notification system presents a valuable opportunity for residents to avoid being towed by providing residents a 15-minute grace period from the time the parking citation is issued and clear instructions for compliance. The use of automated text alerts from the City’s current enforcement vendor, BLINKAY, along with a comprehensive resident awareness campaign, will help ensure the system is well-received and effective. The Administration is committed to working collaboratively with BLINKAY and residents to implement this solution in a way that supports both compliance and convenience.

The Administration recommends that the City Commission adopt the subject Resolution.

Applicable Area

Citywide

Is this a “Residents Right to Know” item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?

Yes

Is this item related to a G.O. Bond Project?

No

Was this Agenda Item initially requested by a lobbyist which, as defined in Code Sec. 2-481, includes a principal engaged in lobbying? No

If so, specify the name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s):

Department

Parking

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner Alex Fernandez

Co-sponsor(s)

Commissioner Laura Dominguez
Commissioner Joseph Magazine

Condensed Title

Notify Residents Before Towing of Vehicle. (Fernandez/Dominguez/Magazine) PK

Previous Action (For City Clerk Use Only)