



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

Parking Permit Restrictions in Transit Areas FAQ

1. What is the purpose of this restriction?

The City's Comprehensive Plan, SomerVision, and the Zoning Ordinance are intended to spur the creation of more housing in Somerville. The purpose of this parking permit restriction is to limit the impacts from new housing developments to on-street permit parking capacity and traffic congestion.

This restriction was included in a Traffic Commission Regulation (Article XV, Section 15-2.1, paragraph 5) that was approved on December 12, 2019. A tenant/buyer notification and advertising requirement was included in the new Zoning Ordinance (Section 11.2.6) passed in 2019. Additional advertisement and notification requirements are outlined in the Code of Ordinances Chapter 7, Article I, Section 7-2, enacted on October 9, 2025.

2. Who does this regulation apply to?

The regulation only applies to the residents of new development that received a building permit on or after January 15th, 2020 and are located within ½ mile walking distance to a rapid transit station of the MBTA's Red, Orange, or Green Line services. The area of the city within that distance is referred to as a "Transit Area".

All properties zoned Neighborhood Residence (NR) are excluded from the proposed restriction and all properties outside of ½ mile walking distance to a rapid transit station are excluded. The Neighborhood Residence district includes almost all the single, 2-, and 3-family properties in Somerville, which will still be able to receive resident parking permits.

3. Does this restrict current residents who already have on-street residential parking permits?

Existing resident parking permits remain valid and residents of all existing dwelling units not subject to the restriction, whether they already have a resident parking permit or not, remain eligible for on-street parking permits in the future. If a current resident chooses to move to a new development subject to this restriction, they will not be able to renew their parking permit.

4. What qualifies as new development?

New development includes the construction of entirely new buildings and the redevelopment or modification of existing buildings that add new units in Transit Areas.

5. Who will certify which addresses the restriction applies to?

The Inspectional Services Department (ISD) will notify the Parking Department as Building Permits are applied for by new developments.

6. Can restricted units receive guest permits?

No, the regulation restricts access to all parking permits, including guest permits.

7. Are there any exceptions?

Yes, the regulation exempts residents that may be “choice limited”, including persons with disabilities, occupants of affordable dwelling units, and residents who claim to have extenuating circumstances. The exemption applies to resident parking permits only. You may find [the waiver application](#) and more information about the waiver process on the Parking Department website.

8. What about people that need their cars, such as families or elderly people?

The regulation does not apply to residents of existing housing in Somerville. Like all real estate decisions, households that do not yet live in a building subject to this restriction will have to make a choice about whether to purchase or rent a home or apartment that is subject to this restriction, based on their own personal needs. We are making sure people will be notified – see question 10 below for more details.

9. How is this restriction enforced?

The Parking Department maintains [a list of addresses subject to the restriction](#), available on our website.

10. How will new residents find out about this policy?

The Zoning Ordinance requires developers to market properties subject to this restriction as ineligible for residential parking permits and to inform potential new residents of the restriction through mandated zoning permit conditions. The Code of Ordinances Chapter 7, Article I, Section 7-2 requires property owners and their agent(s) to disclose this restriction when advertising dwelling units for rent or sale and provide written notification to prospective buyers or tenants using a standard form provided by the Parking Department.

11. What date did this regulation become effective?

The Traffic Commission approved this regulation on December 12th, 2019. The regulation became effective on January 15, 2020.