

Recreational Vehicle Parking & Storing

The city often receives questions from citizens on where they can park or store their private RV, watercraft, and/or trailer. This info-bulletin provides an overview of the allowances and limitations for storing recreational equipment on private property and public streets.



BACKGROUND

The [Carlsbad Community Vision](#) was developed through a city-sponsored Envision Carlsbad Program that resulted in a series of core values and vision statements that help guide city leaders as they carry out their services. There are two vision statements that generally pertain to recreational equipment:

- Promote active lifestyles and recreational opportunities; and
- Maintain quality neighborhoods, small town feel, and beach community character and collectedness.

There are many residents that live in the city who own a trailer, recreational vehicle or boat that would like to store them at their property in some capacity for ease of maintenance and use. However, storing recreational vehicles in the one's driveway can adversely impact neighborhood character and storing such equipment on the street takes away needed public parking, particularly near the beach.

To address these conflicting issues and ultimately balance the two aforementioned vision statements, the city developed parking regulations for the storage of recreational equipment in residential areas.

Documents Referenced

Off-Street Parking Regulations; [§21.44.060](#)
On-Street Parking Regulations; [§10.40.180](#)
Recreational Vehicle (RV) Minor Variance, [P-12](#)
Oversize/Recreational Vehicle; [Permit Application](#)

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

The term "recreational vehicle" is a general term used to describe any vehicle, either self-propelled or drawn by another vehicle, that is used for recreational purposes ([§21.04.298](#)). Examples of recreational vehicles include, but not limited to campers, motor homes, trailers, boats, jet skis, and other vehicles designed for recreational purposes.

OFF-STREET PARKING

The parking or storage allowances for recreational vehicles on private residential property are summarized below, and detailed in [§21.44.060](#).



Off-Street Parking Allowances

- Recreational vehicles can be parked in the rear yard, or on either side of the home or garage, so long as it does not encroach within the required front yard setback.
- In cases where there is insufficient area within the side yard to park a recreational vehicle, the city may authorize parking in the front yard through the approval of a "Recreational Vehicle Minor Variance," described more below.

- City regulations are not intended to supersede more restrictive privately adopted conditions, covenants, and restrictions (CC&Rs). While the city does not enforce CC&Rs, it is encouraged that you comply with the more restrictive CC&Rs. Please note, however, that if the provisions of the CC&Rs are less restrictive than city regulations, then the city code shall apply.

Deviation from Off-Street Parking Standards

A Recreational Vehicle Minor Variance, which is administratively approved by the City Planner, allows a recreational vehicle to be parked in the required front yard setback of a single-family residence. The following findings must be made in order for a variance to be approved.

- Parking in/access to the side or rear yard would require structural alteration to the existing residence or would require the removal of significant landscaping. A fence does not prevent access to the side or rear yard;
- Parking in, or access to, the side or rear yard would require extensive grading;
- Parking of the recreational vehicle in the front yard would not interfere with visibility to or from any street; and
- Parking of the recreational vehicle in the front yard would not interfere with traffic on the street or sidewalk, nor would encroach into the street and utility right-of-way.

To apply for a variance, a complete application ([Form P-12](#)) must be filed with the Planning Division. Once filed, property owners within 600' of the property will be notified of the request. Public comments are considered in the City Planner's final determination, which can be appealed to the Planning Commission within 10 days following decision. See [Form P-12](#) for more information on the application processing.



ON-STREET PARKING

The parking allowances on public streets for recreational vehicles and oversized vehicles, which includes vehicles measuring more than 22 feet in length, or seven feet in height and seven feet in width, are summarized below and detailed in [§10.40.180](#).

On-Street Parking Allowances

The city allows recreational and oversized vehicles to be parked on public streets, except during the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m.

Deviation from On-Street Parking Standards

A temporary parking permit, which is administratively approved by the Carlsbad Police Department, allows recreational and oversized vehicles to park on public streets throughout the night under the following conditions.

- Yearly Residential Permit: Carlsbad residents who own an RV can apply for a free yearly permit to park their vehicle on a public street within 400 feet of their residence for up to 72 hours, four times within each month.
- 72 Hour Guest Permit: Carlsbad residents can apply for a temporary permit for their guest. This free permit would allow residents to have guests with an RV park at their residence for up to 72 hours, six times per year.
- Commercial Property Permit: Hotels/motels can allow guests to park RVs on public streets if the RVs cannot be accommodated in the parking lot. The city may issue each hotel/motel reusable permits that they can give guests.

The permits can be obtained by filling out the application [Oversized/Recreational Vehicle Permit Application](#) and submitting it to the City of Carlsbad Police Department Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Police Department is located at 2560 Orion Way, 442-339-2119.