



Revised 8/10/2020

**Virtual Public Form  
Heavy Vehicle & Parking on Grass  
Frequently Asked Questions**

This FAQ is an organized collection of questions that citizens have asked during this virtual public forum on the development of the heavy vehicle and parking on grass ordinance. The intent is to update weekly until the end of the virtual public forum which is August 10, 2020.

If there are any additional comments please do not hesitate to contact Jerry Bark [jbark@harkerheights.gov](mailto:jbark@harkerheights.gov)

**1. Can I make suggestions to improve or amend the proposed ordinance?**

The primary purpose of this virtual public forum is to allow you to make comments and provide suggestions for the ordinance. While not all suggestions may be implemented, City Staff will investigate them and their impacts to the ordinance. Such investigations could include:

- Ensuring the suggestion falls within the authority of the City
- Determining the impact of the suggestion to the intent of the ordinance
- Making sure the suggestion can be fairly applied to as many situations as possible
- Examining neighboring cities' ordinances regarding the suggestion and how they address the issue

**2. Will this ordinance prevent residents from parking vehicles in their back yards?**

The proposed ordinance would not restrict residents from parking their vehicles in their back yards; it just requires that they be on an all-weather surface, such as concrete or asphalt. It also limits the amount of paving to 25% of the back yard.

**3. Does this ordinance prevent parking vehicle on the street?**

This ordinance is designed to address vehicle or trailer parking on unpaved areas in yards, and does not impact parking them in the streets. However, in our current Code of Ordinances, it is not permitted to park boats or trailers in street for more than 72 consecutive hours in any 7-day period or no more than twice, no matter the duration, in any 30-day period (Section 72.15).

**4. Will this ordinance effect if I can build a patio or pool in my yard?**

As currently written, this ordinance proposes to only limit paving for parking areas in your yard, and would therefore not impact patios or swimming pools. When you apply for a permit for a pool, patio, or parking area in the yard, the Building Official will make a determination as to whether or not you will need to show how you are impacting drainage in your yard, and may ask you to provide additional information.

**5. Where will truckers be able to park their trucks when they come home?**

Many corporate trucking companies and businesses provide facilities for parking their vehicles or have the ability to keep them on their properties, such as HEB, Walmart, Target, Rooms to Go, etc. For independent truckers, this ordinance would prevent them from parking their trucks at home and would require they seek other parking options, such as a self-storage facility or dedicated truck parking lot. For those truckers that currently have a valid Heavy Vehicle Parking Permit, we will allow

the permit to expire and will more than likely give 6 months to a year before enforcing this ordinance on them. This will give them an opportunity to find appropriate parking facilities

**6. Why aren't larger lots or screened parking areas exempt from this ordinance?**

City staff did consider exempting large-lot residences from the requirements for prohibiting vehicle parking on lawns. Aside from the aesthetic considerations for prohibiting parking on grass, the primary reason for promoting this ordinance is public safety. Particularly the prevention of chemical leakage into the water table and minimizing the potential to start grass fires. For more background, please see this local news story from 2018:

<https://www.kwtx.com/content/news/Heat-sparks-local-crackdown-on-grass-parking-laws-489201941.html>

In this context, the fire danger has no correlation to actual lot size and that was the decision to not have this exemption.

**7. Will these ordinances limit the number of cars that can be parked at a residence or on the street?**

Currently, there are no regulations within the Code of Ordinances that limit the number of cars parked in the street or at a residence, and such regulations are beyond the scope of these proposed ordinances.

**8. Will recreation vehicles be allowed to park in residential areas?**

The proposed changes to the Code of Ordinances would allow recreation vehicles to be parked in residential areas. They must be parked on an approved surface and may not be parked in the street.

**9. Are on-call vehicles, such as public utility vehicles, first responder vehicles, and tow trucks allowed to park at a residential property if they are considered heavy vehicles?**

City staff's recommendation is that those types of vehicles be exempt under the proposed ordinance and be allowed to be parked in residential areas because they are necessary for public safety.

**10. Is there a limit to the number of vehicles that can be parked at a residence?**

The proposed ordinances do not address this issue. Currently, there is no limit to the number of vehicles parked at or in front of a residence, but at the guidance of the City Council, this is an issue that can be investigated at a later date.

**11. How big is a parking spot?**

Per the existing Code of Ordinances Table 21-C, a parking spot is defined as an all-weather surface that typically measures 9 feet in width and 20 feet in length.