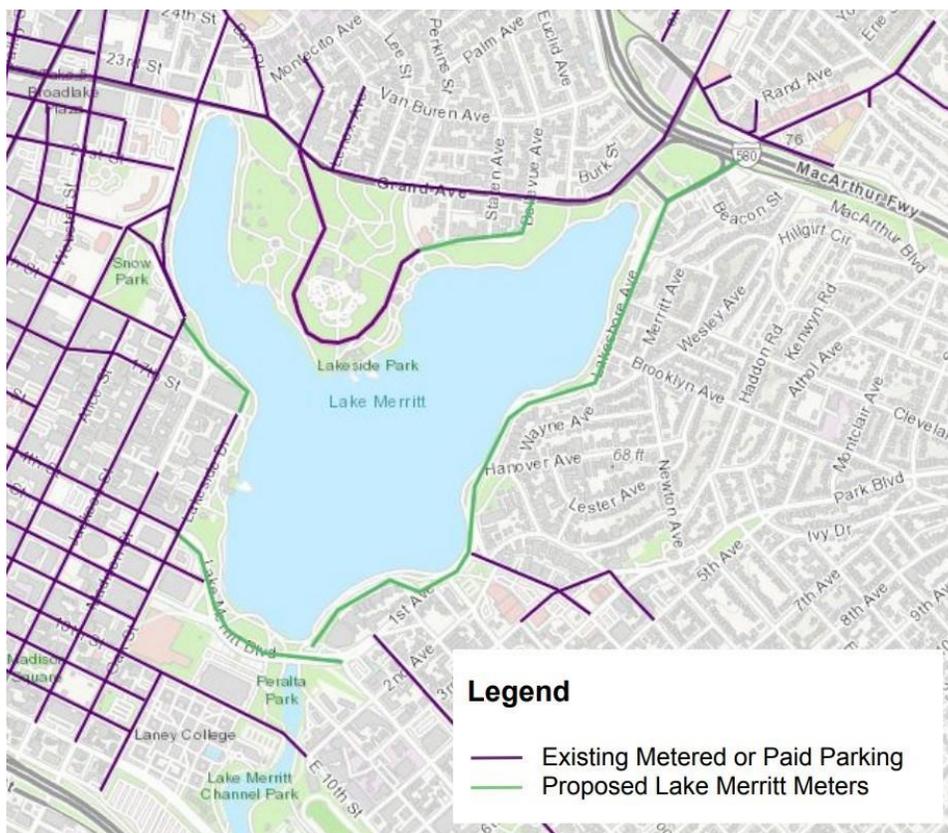




Improving Access to Lake Merritt Through Better Curbside Management, Spring 2022

The Challenge: Over the last few years, thousands of people visit Oakland’s Lake Merritt every weekend when the weather is welcoming. **There are often more people seeking to access this public park than there are parking spaces to accommodate vehicles for all of them resulting in unsafe double parking that impacts pedestrian, bike and vehicular safety**, and the City is working to maintain equitable community access to these spaces and improve roadway safety. In the past, City efforts have included significant police presence and closure of major streets and lanes – which have been expensive efforts and actually decreased access to the park. We want to find a better way.

The Proposal: Parking management, and in particular parking *meters*, have a proven track record of providing improved access to parking spaces in high-demand areas. For example, in busy commercial districts, time limits and metering provide parking turnover – people arriving, staying for a time, and then leaving – so that *arriving* visitors are more likely to be able to find a spot. Currently, in unmetered areas along Lake Merritt, many vehicles are parked in the morning and left there all day long (or over multiple days), which denies access to people trying to access those spots later in the day. The below map shows the areas around the Lake which are already subject to metering or other parking restrictions, as well as streets where *new* meters are proposed to be installed around the perimeter of the Lake.



Frequently Asked Questions:

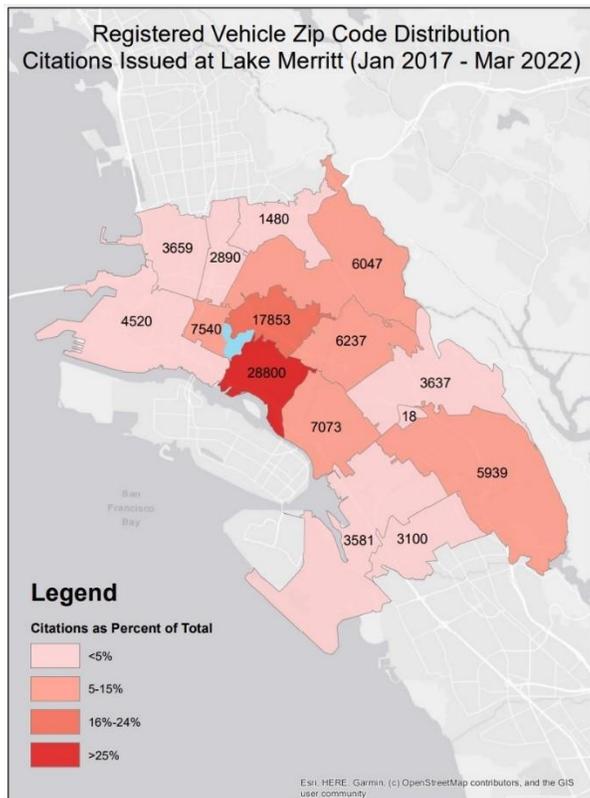
Q: What exactly would change under this proposal?

A: If this proposal is approved, the City would proceed with installing new parking meters at parking spaces on the streets indicated in green in the map above – only on the side of those streets that directly border Lake Merritt. Civilian parking management staff, not police, will enforce these meters.

Attachment A Lake Merritt Parking Management Plan May 17, 2022

Q: How can we measure whether this proposal is successful – if it's providing improved visitor access to Lake Merritt?

A: Successfully managed metered parking should support significant usage of the available parking while leaving one or two open spaces per block – typically about 85-90% utilization of parking spaces is ideal. That's what we will be looking for here, especially during times of peak demand for access.



Q: Who is getting parking tickets around Lake Merritt *now*?

A: Data from the last five years shows that most citations being issued to vehicles at Lake Merritt are being issued to residents of the ZIP codes closest to the lake itself – in other words, residents who live there, rather than visitors from other parts of Oakland. More information is on the map on the left.

Q: What is the City doing to manage demand at Lake Merritt now? How is this different?

A: Currently, the City's Police, Parking Enforcement and Municipal Code Enforcement officers are at the Lake nearly every weekend, which is not sustainable or equitable, and is not ideal for park users, residents or City departments.

Q: How will this proposal affect historically excluded communities and address racial equity regarding access and belonging at Lake Merritt?

A: Among the most important guiding principles driving the City's efforts at Lake Merritt is that everyone deserves access to the Lake – that it is a shared place for all Oaklanders of every background, identity, and neighborhood. The status quo allows vehicle owners to park in unmetered spots bordering the Lake and leave their vehicle there for long periods of time – including from Saturday afternoon

through Monday morning, at times when visitors' demand for these spaces is at its highest. This disproportionately benefits nearby residents who can claim these spaces while making access harder for residents of other neighborhoods who are driving to visit the lake. Among the priority goals for this proposal is to improve access for these visitors, and the City will be evaluating the success of this effort and honing it over time as needed.

Additionally, the City will continue to report out, as we have in the above map, which Oakland zip codes are receiving citations, using public information about where vehicles' registered owners live. Currently, that data indicates that residents near the Lake are receiving the most tickets, with relatively few being issued to residents of West Oakland, Fruitvale, East Oakland, and elsewhere. As the City continues evaluating this effort, it will include updates to that citation data and watch for any changes that disproportionately affect historically excluded and underserved communities and neighborhoods.

Q: Is the City doing this to collect more money from vehicle owners? What will happen with the revenues?

A: The City's primary aim with this proposal is to facilitate better access to Lake Merritt, not raise money. Implementing these meters would produce revenue, however, and as with all metering revenues Citywide, the City Council would have discretion over how to spend them. Staff have heard significant community support for using revenues on increased parks programming and maintenance and will be sharing that with the City Council, suggesting also that they be used to support fee-free debit cards for Oakland's unbanked and underbanked residents to use the meters without additional charges, as well as supporting other efforts to provide mobility access.

Q: How can I share my thoughts, ideas, concerns, and priorities with City leaders considering this proposal?

A: Please contact your local Councilmember's Office or attend an upcoming meeting of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission or the City Council and ask to speak either during open forum or when this item is on the agenda. Visit www.oaklandca.gov for more information.