



Honorable Mayor Dyer and Members of City Council:

We appreciate the opportunity to share our perspective on an issue that has long been a concern for our community—public parking at the Oceanfront. I, along with the board of the Atlantic Avenue Association and its members, urge you to support free Oceanfront public parking for Virginia Beach residents as a strategic investment that will strengthen our local economy, enhance city branding, improve resident life-styles, and build stronger community ties in all corners of our great city. To follow is a brief on the subject:

1. While we understand the concern regarding lost parking revenue, please consider broader economic benefits:

- Free parking ensures tax-paying Virginia Beach residents are not paying twice to access their own community beach.
- Increased local engagement will drive higher business revenue and boost tax collections from meals, sales, and real estate.
- People will park a long time, which creates a new revenue stream via 3 hour free parking, followed by standard hourly rates (Note: Less than 3 hours free is not enough time for most people to walk to their destination(s), enjoy themselves and return to their vehicle. Could be perceived negatively.).
- Economic vitality offsets parking loss: If local foot traffic decreases due to high parking costs, businesses suffer, vacancies increase, and property values decline, leading to long-term losses for the city.

2. Economic Benefits: A thriving Oceanfront is not just a summer tourism destination but rather a year-round economic engine:

- Stronger local engagement attracts quality retail and investment. Cities like Charleston and Myrtle Beach, SC, have successfully leveraged resident-friendly policies to create more vibrant business districts and community pride.
- Increased resident traffic would drive higher off-season revenue, reduce dependence on summer tourism, and be a step closer to creating a year-round destination. Tourists want to go where locals go. Conversely, if the Oceanfront is seen as only for visitors, it loses appeal.
- Atlantic Park: Launching a free resident parking program in conjunction with the opening of this project would enhance the development's local appeal and increase visitation.

3. Enhancing City Branding & Community Engagement: If Virginia Beach prides itself on inclusiveness and hospitality, how can we claim to be a welcoming city if our own residents feel excluded from the Oceanfront?

- Implementing a free parking program aligns with best practices in community-focused governance.
- Positive PR and goodwill generated from this initiative will be invaluable, reinforcing Virginia Beach's reputation as a welcoming city that prioritizes its people in all districts.



4. Feasibility & Implementation: Several cities have successfully implemented similar programs, and Virginia Beach can do the same by using:

- License plate scanning or digital permits to ensure resident eligibility.

This is not about giving away free parking; it's about making a long-term investment in Virginia Beach's economic growth, community connection, and brand identity. A city that welcomes its own residents will thrive as a destination for everyone. As community advocates, we urge you to consider this attractive policy not as a revenue loss but as an economic growth strategy that will yield far greater returns and touch all corners and districts of our city in a positive way.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to further discussions on how we can make Virginia Beach an even better place to live, work, and play.

Sincerely,

D. Nachnani

President,