

Office of the City Manager

City of Richland Hills, Texas

## Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council  
From: Eric Strong  
Date: November 5, 2013  
Subject: Traffic Control Issues on Faith Creek and Norton

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### **Council Action Requested:**

No action requested. Discussion items only.

### **Background Information:**

We are experiencing problems on two streets, Faith Creek and Norton, where parking along the respective streets has raised concerns about traffic control and public safety. The problem on Faith Creek is of very recent origin, created by parking related to events at the new Faith Creek Church on Baker Boulevard. The problem on Norton has a longer history.

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, the Police Department was notified of a traffic issue on Faith Creek that was caused by attendance at a funeral at the new church on the North West Corner of Faith Creek and Baker Blvd. The traffic problem occurred again a few days later at the church's Fall Festival.

The church currently has approximately 100 parking spaces, which is sufficient per the code. Practically, it is also a sufficient number for most of their routine church services. However, during the two events listed above (the funeral and Fall Festival), there were clearly far more cars than could be accommodated by the parking lot. I have included a picture (next page) which illustrates the problem. In the picture, (which is on Faith Creek, looking South toward Baker), you can see that when cars were parked along both sides of Faith Creek, it was barely wide enough to get one car down the road. In

addition to regular vehicular traffic, this could have presented a problem for emergency service vehicles in the event that they would have needed to access the road.

Section 82-215 of our City Code indicates that:

“The chief of police is hereby authorized to determine and designate by proper signs, places in which the stopping, standing, or parking of vehicles would create an especially hazardous condition or would cause unusual delay in traffic.”

We currently have temporary “No Parking” signs along Faith Creek, which will be replaced by permanent signs once they arrive (they have been ordered).



**Photo of parking problem on Faith Creek at Baker Blvd.**

The problem on Norton has been created by the overabundance of vehicles parked on Norton between Bridges and Hovenkamp during school hours. The parking problem on Norton has created a situation where safe travel through the block has become at times very challenging. Safe travel is especially arduous for emergency vehicles. As a primary

through street, it is imperative that emergency vehicles have clear access through this area. In an effort to come up with a solution to alleviate the congestion, a traffic engineer was engaged to analyze the problems and to develop a viable solution.

After observing the area, the engineer verified that the excessive number of vehicles that are parking in this block creates too narrow of a passageway. The majority of the parked vehicles belong to teachers from Richland Middle School. Officials from the Birdville Independent School District (BISD) were asked if sufficient off-street parking could be provided for their employees. It was also recommended that the teachers park on Bridges instead of Norton. According to BISD, sufficient funds are not available at this time to build additional parking spaces and the teachers prefer not to park on Bridges. Therefore, the most workable alternative to the congestion at this time is to limit the available parking along the west curb of the street during school hours on school days only.

Limiting parking along the west curb on Norton will alleviate the congestion, but while it will allow most teachers to park closer to the school, it will present an inconvenience to the residents during schools hours. However, the residents and their guests will also be allowed to park on the west side during these times. After school hours, on weekends, and on school holidays there will be no limitations.

This alternative seems better than limiting parking along the east curb (school side), which would result in basically dumping a bunch of cars in front of the resident's homes and driveways during school hours. In addition, our observation is that most of the residents do not park in the street during the day.

Chief Childress has sent a letter to each residence about this *proposed* solution to the problem. The letters were to be hand delivered by the officers assigned to that area. The officers would explain what is in the letter, and it will most probably give us a feel about their thoughts on the proposal. If the letter generates enough questions we will hold a neighborhood meeting to discuss the issue further prior to any implementation. An aerial view of the street depicting where the signs will be placed is attached.

Chief Childress will discuss both parking issues with Council and is prepared to discuss enforcement options.

**Board/Citizen Input:**

Residents along Norton have been delivered a letter outlining a proposed solution on their street.

**Financial Impact:**

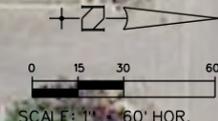
There will be a cost for additional signs.

**Staff Contacts:**

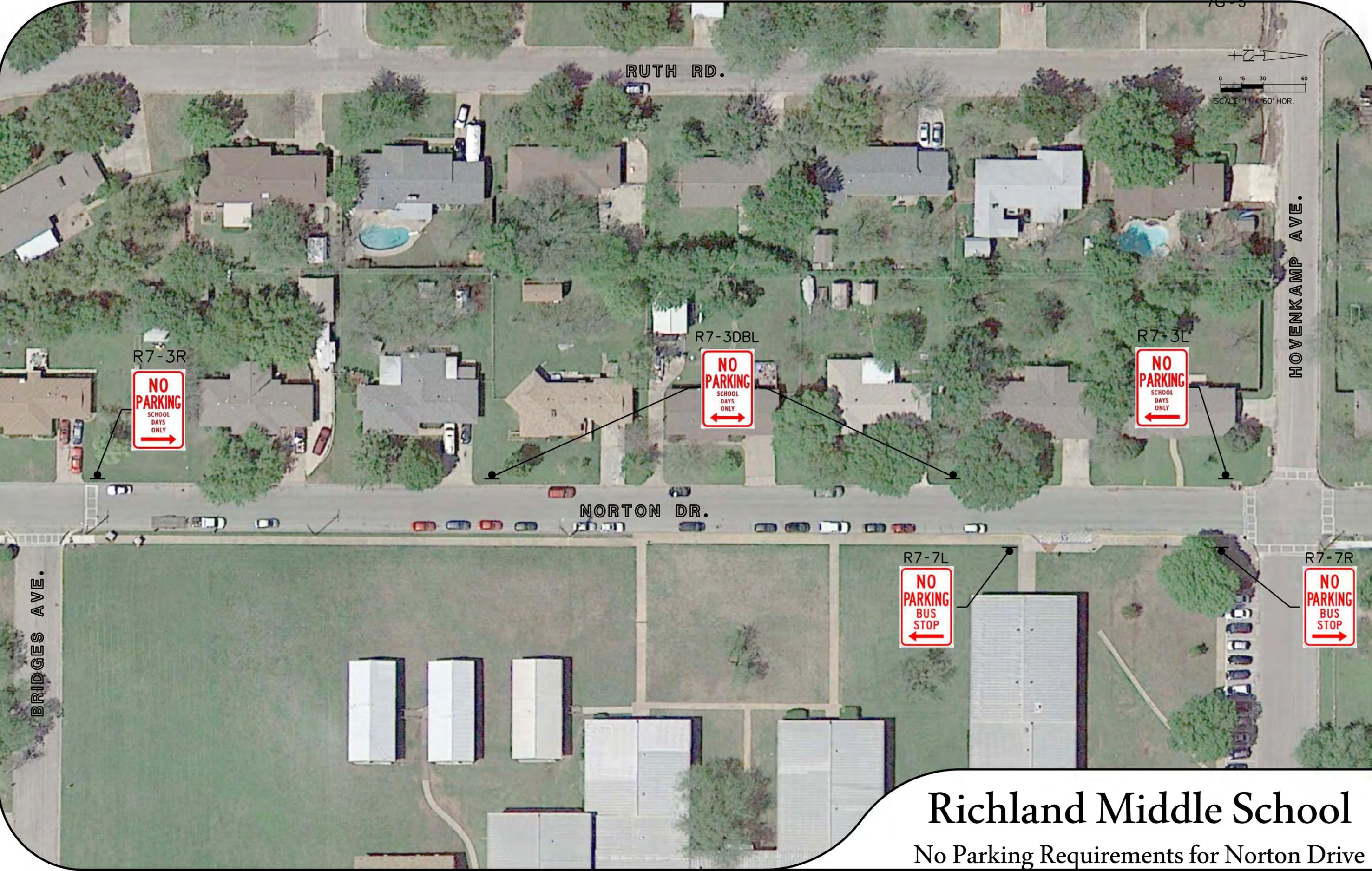
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**Attachments:** Aerial view of parking on Norton and proposed signage



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**Richland Middle School**  
No Parking Requirements for Norton Drive