

Will The New Parking Rules Leave Your Vehicle Out?

You've seen them around town. 20+ year old RVs and Vans parked in and around the center of town that are the homes for many in Santa Barbara without permanent housing. In some areas, they are generally tolerated, but in others, they impact surrounding homes in a number of ways.

To address this, and ensure the constitutionality of the response, the City of Santa Barbara passed an oversize vehicle ordinance last October. The ordinance bans parking of any vehicle or combination of connected vehicles that exceed 25-feet long, or 6-feet 8 inches (80-inches) wide, or 6-feet 10-inches tall (82-inches). [The ordinance can be found here.](#)

Along with the ordinance, the City provided a few exceptions, including commercial vehicles providing a service, the City's own vehicles and other Government vehicles, and inoperable vehicles making emergency repairs. So if you are a plumber and you drive your commercial vehicle to someone's home to perform work, you're fine.

But if at the end of that job you drive your large commercial vehicle home and park it on the street, you are in violation of the new ordinance.

Now I hear what some of you are saying. "Ken, these big RVs are hazards on the twisting, narrow streets of Santa Barbara, and we shouldn't let them park here!" And for many of these massive RVs, I don't disagree. But do we really need to outlaw Sprinter Vans?

You see, if you drive a Sprinter van as your commercial vehicle, this ordinance affects you. Sprinter vans are good (most of the time) on length and width, but the height is another matter. As they exceed this new height limitation, they won't be able to park on City streets.

And for some businesses, this is a real problem. If you are a sole proprietor, you need to take your vehicle home at night. If your business is in Goleta, you might want to limit the miles your staff is driving and sending them home in the commercial vehicle saves everyone time and cuts emissions. There are any number of reasons it might be a good idea for you or your employees to take business vehicles home at night.

But if they are taller than 6' 10", the City is telling you no, you can't do that any longer.

If you are affected by this ordinance, take a moment to let me know. We're putting together a group of businesses who would like to find a way to address oversized vehicles that doesn't limit the ability for commercial entities to allow their employees to take their vehicles home at night. Drop me an email at ken@sbchamber.org, or call me at 965-3023, and let's discuss how we can help the City adjust this ordinance to the benefit of the business community.