



GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Abstract

Local Self Government Department - JNNURM - Automobile Parking Policy for the towns and Cities in the State of Kerala - orders issued.

LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT (DC) DEPARTMENT

G.O.(MS.)No.62 /2011/LSGD.

Dated, Thiruvananthapuram, 26-2-2011.

ORDER

Government are pleased to approve the Automobile Parking Policy for the towns and cities in the State of Kerala appended herewith as envisaged in the Reforms under JNNURM.

By order of the Governor,

M.Unnikrishnan,  
Addl. Secretary to Government.

To

All Mayors, Corporation of Thiruvananthapuram/Kollam/Kochi/  
Thrissur/Kozhikode.

The Director of Urban affairs, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Project Director, Kerala Sustainable Urban development Project.

All Secretaries, Corporation of Thiruvananthapuram/Kollam/Kochi/  
Thrissur/Kozhikode.

All Chairmen of Municipalities (Through Director of Urban Affairs)

All Secretaries of Municipalities (Through Director of Urban Affairs).

The Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India (with C/L)  
PWD/Transport/Finance Department.

The Chief Engineer, Local self Government Department.

The Chief Town Planner, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Principal Accountant General (Audit) Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Accountant General (A&E) Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Director, Information and Public Relations Department.

Stock File/Office Copy.

Copy to:- PS to Minister (LSGD).

PA to Addl. Chief Secretary, LSGD.

PA to Secretary, LSGD.

Forwarded/By order,

Section Officer.

# **VEHICLE PARKING POLICY FOR THE TOWNS AND CITIES IN THE STATE OF KERALA**

## **Introduction**

The State of Kerala has been experiencing astounding annual growth in the number of vehicles during the last two decades. Such increase in the number of vehicles (passenger and goods vehicles) increase the traffic volume much beyond the capacity of the roads in the State. Though all the motorable roads, irrespective of urban or rural, are affected by this increasing traffic volume, the urban roads suffer most due to the convergence of traffic. The State has been spending substantial funds on widening and improvement of the roads for increasing the carrying capacity of the roads; though the expected benefits do not result. Urban Planning practices prove that widening of the roads in proportion to the increasing traffic volume is not the only option in traffic planning. However, it is seen that even when roads are widened, the expected reduction of traffic congestion does not happen. Traffic Studies in some of our towns show that one of the major factors contributing to traffic congestion is on-street parking of vehicles. Precious carriage way is used for parking vehicles, which reduces the width of the motorable way. 4 lane roads behave as two lane roads since outer lanes on either side are used for parking. Traffic movement on 2 lane roads are blocked /slowed down when vehicles are parked on the side of the carriage way. This private enjoyment of the public road is discouraged in traffic planning.

Urban Traffic has become a very important aspect in urban planning and development. The State hitherto did not have any policy on parking. Study by experts point out serious issues with regard to parking of vehicles in the towns and cities of the State. A number of agencies/stakeholders are responsible for construction and maintenance of roads and for traffic management. The State Public Works Department (Roads & Bridges and National Highways), the Urban Local Bodies and the State Police have direct roles and responsibilities as far as roads in the urban areas are concerned. It is necessary to coordinate these agencies and their actions. Considering these the State finds it necessary to bring out a Parking Policy for towns and cities in the State of Kerala.

## **Parking Issues**

1. Roads are meant to be used for movement of people and goods. Roads are the main intra-city connecting links between various activity areas. Such connectivity upholds the economy of the urban area and facilitates better quality of life in that urban area. No action from any public agency or any private interest shall be allowed to obstruct movement of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on the roads.

2. The State/any responsible agency of Government or any ULB has not yet prepared Parking Plan for the city/town, which designates road margin or areas where vehicle parking can be allowed, road stretches which can be allowed for orderly on-street parking of vehicles, designation of bus bays off the carriageway, provision for off street parking facilities etc. Whatever action in this regard taken in any city/town is only based on ad-hoc arrangements.
3. Since on-street parking arrangements are made in a planned manner, vehicles are parked perpendicular to the road (at right angles to the carriageway), diagonally (angular parking at 45 or 60 degrees), parallel parking (parallel to the carriageway) or haphazardly. In all such cases (except in the case of parallel parking) the vehicles are reversed into the carriage way to drive into the moving stream. Such parking not only eats into the precious road space, but such parking also affects the traffic movement - often blocking the traffic when reversing the vehicles (often causing accidents).
4. It is seen that in some road stretches especially in busy commercial streets/market roads vehicles are 'double parked' (two vehicles are parked side by side parallel to the road) when more than two third of the road width is occupied by parking vehicles. (Ex: Chalai Bazaar in Thiruvananthapuram). Hardly one lane width of road space is left free for vehicular movements and pedestrian movements. It is seen that at the cost of road usage such practices escape enforcement.
5. Mass transport and intermediate public transport modes (buses, mini passenger & goods carriages-vans, trucks, and three wheelers) make intermediate halts for alighting or boarding of passengers or for loading /unloading of goods by stopping the vehicles right in the middle of the carriageway without caring for the movement of other vehicles. Bus bays and lay-bys are not provided by any conscious efforts, though any available road margin may at times be used for the purpose (mostly hindering pedestrian movement).
6. Many drivers of vehicles consider it a right for parking on the carriageway – unmindful of the traffic problems they cause.
7. Even when 'No-Parking' signs are put up (though based on ad-hoc decisions) at specified locations/stretches of roads, in the absence of enforcement people (sometimes even the enforcement officers) ignore such mandatory signs.
8. No city/town has taken any conscious effort to designate places / locations for stationing hired vehicles (taxis/auto-rickshaws-three wheelers /vans /small goods

vehicles/omnibuses etc.). As a result of this drivers of these vehicles themselves designate locations – many often at road junctions – causing road /traffic blocks, hindering vision lines (visibility) at junctions etc.

9. Movement of incoming and outgoing goods is essential for the economic life of any town/city. Many of the towns and cities in the State have active market/bazaar areas and industrial areas. But towns/cities have most often failed to provide designated areas for truck parking with ancillary facilities. As a result of this, trucks are parked right on the roads hindering traffic movements (*the resultant sanitation problems etc. are not discussed here*). Even National Highways near the industrial cities /towns are choked by parking of trucks. This situation is caused by the inaction of the local governments in these areas to provide parking facilities for trucks.
10. Many of the towns and cities have omni buses operating to major cities within the State and in other states. Without designated bus parking and boarding facilities, these buses are parked on the roads causing traffic blocks. Master Plans of these cities and towns have to address these issues to designate locations where such operations can be accommodated.
11. Regular bus terminals of the KSRTC and private buses in many towns and cities are also located on the roads without terminals located off the road spaces. Traffic congestion in locations like East Fort area in Thiruvananthapuram is mainly attributed to bus terminals on the road.
12. Though stipulations exist in the Kerala Municipal Building Rules for providing parking spaces for vehicles for buildings requiring parking spaces, unauthorized conversion of such plot level parking spaces in full or in part and/or inaccessible & inadequate parking spaces provided in the plans and/or non-provision of parking spaces for the number of vehicles reaching the building, result in parking on the roads. Though the KMBR stipulates only the minimum required parking facility it is for the owners/designers of such buildings to estimate the anticipated parking requirements and to provide for that requirement, this is often not adhered to. They get away with meager provisions resulting in road side parking unmindful of the traffic problems they cause.
13. Major cities in other States have adopted the policy of 'pay and park' even for on-street parking. The revenue earned is used for creating parking facilities for vehicles. This system of pay to park is yet to take off in Kerala, though it is high time that we think on those lines in view of the fact that

- i. The State has great difficulty in acquiring land for widening of the roads, so that the existing road space has to be optimally utilised for movement of vehicles and pedestrians,
  - ii. The ULBs are not financially sound to acquire and develop land for creating off street parking facilities,
  - iii. Paid parking facilities may result in designation of parking spaces, designation of no-parking areas and result in road discipline
  - iv. Revenue generated from the paid parking facilities can be ploughed back to maintain (and sometimes) develop parking areas.
14. Roads within the town /cities are constructed and maintained by the State PWD (MDRs and ODRs) or the National Highway Department (Highways) or the ULB (ODRs and Local Roads). Traffic signs are provided by the respective agency, but traffic management is enforced through the police. Therefore not much attention is given for coordinated road network planning, except in cases where Master Plans are prepared, which partially address this issue. Because many agencies are responsible for different roads, no single agency has attempted to prepare city/town level parking plans, designate parking areas and impose 'pay and park' facilities. A single agency responsibility for this task is required.

## Legal Provisions

The First Schedule of the Kerala Municipality Act which lists the Functions of the Municipality includes "Providing parking spaces for vehicles" as one of the Mandatory Functions of the Municipality. Section 472 of the Kerala Municipality Act, 1994 provides for establishment of public cart stands etc. It says that a Municipality may subject to such guidelines as the Government may issue in this behalf, construct or provide public landing places, halting places and cart stands and may levy fee for the use of the same. A Cart Stand include a Bus Stand, Taxi Stand, Auto-rickshaw Stand, Lorry Stand and Stand for other vehicles.

It is noticed that in many States in India, provision of parking spaces is provided as a Municipal function. Bihar Municipality Act, 2007 not only makes 'provision of parking spaces' as a responsibility of the Municipalities, but also provides in Sn. 128 of the Act that " The Municipality may levy user charges for ..... parking of different types of vehicles in different areas and for different periods..."

It is the duty of every Urban Local Body to establish parking areas at appropriate locations within the town /city. Establishment and/or maintenance expenses of such public vehicle

parking arrangements may be met by levying differential charges under the practice of 'Pay and Park'. Alternatively, the ULB may also rope in a private partner for establishing and maintaining public vehicle parking facilities under suitable Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements.

## **Recommended Policies**

1. The State of Kerala decides that cities and towns should address the issue of 'Traffic in Towns' as a major subject in urban planning and management. Though every city or town should go for adoption of Master Plan, whether a Master Plan is in place or not, traffic management shall be discussed at the town level with the participation of all the stakeholders and traffic management policies shall be arrived at for implementation. The ULB shall coordinate such activities.
2. Vehicle parking facilities in the town/city shall be a priority in urban traffic management. Even before the urban traffic management policies are finalized, it is imperative to adopt strategies to mitigate vehicle parking problems.
3. Though different agencies are responsible for construction and maintenance of different categories of urban roads, the State considers it necessary to entrust the responsibility for implementation of vehicle parking policies at the town/city level to a single agency. This responsibility is assigned to the Municipality/Municipal Corporation, as the case may be. The Municipality/Municipal Corporation shall plan for it and implement the proposals by coordinating with the other stakeholders.
4. The Standing Committee dealing with Town Planning in the Municipality/Municipal Corporation shall also be responsible for developing vehicle parking proposals in the town/city in consultation with the Department of Town and Country Planning, NATPAC or experts in the field and for initiating actions for participatory implementation.
5. For the purpose of Property Tax assessment the towns/cities are identifying and declaring 'primary and secondary zones'. Based on the same, every town/city shall in the first phase subject
  - (i) The declared 'primary zone (zones)'
  - (ii) Major market areas and/or
  - (iii) Major institution areas for parking studies, to plan for vehicle parking facilities and to adopt parking are development strategies and for parking area regulations.Awaiting detailed studies and finalization of proposals with regard to vehicle

parking, the Municipality/Municipal Corporation shall review the parking issues along with the officers of the Department of Town and Country Planning, State PWD and the NH Department having jurisdiction in the town/city, prepare an interim plan and adopt the Plan for implementation.

6. The State feels that use of public land (roads, road margins or public vacant land) for private facility of parking of vehicles shall be on 'pay and park' principle. The methods, the parking charges, the methods for developing parking facilities and the operation & maintenance parts may be worked out as part of the Parking Plan adopted by the Municipality/Municipal Corporation.
7. Differential parking charges at the rates adopted by the Council differently for short duration parking and long duration parking shall be prescribed and notified. The parking fee collected by the ULB shall be separately accounted for and shall be ploughed back together additional ULB level funding for developing parking facilities at more locations in the town/city.
8. Management including maintenance and fee collection can be arranged through private operators under the general supervision of a Municipal level Committee.
9. The Municipality shall also identify and designate parking areas for taxis and auto rickshaws. Such locations shall be notified and boards to that effect shall be erected at such locations. Such parking stands for taxi cars/vans, commercial light goods carriage vehicles, auto rickshaws etc. shall not be located at road junctions and shall be off the carriageway at a minimum distance of 75 metres.
10. Towns and Cities shall assess requirement of truck parking facilities in their respective areas and shall provide for truck parking facilities on pay & park basis (together with facilities for truck drivers and helpers) preferably in the peripheral areas of the towns/ cities.
11. Locations of the existing taxi stands, auto rickshaw stands, lorry /van stands, stands for omnibuses etc. shall be reviewed and re-designated and notified with the consent of the Regional Transport Authority, if required. Such locations shall be in conformity with accepted norms and standards. The number of vehicles allowed to be parked in each of the designated stands shall also be stipulated. Overspill into the roads shall be regulated.
12. Automobile workshops which function utilizing the adjacent roads for parking and repairing of vehicles shall be prohibited from doing so, with due notices to shift such

parking on roads and to provide parking within the premises or to shift to new locations. Such notices shall specify time allowed to carry out implementation of the directions given in the orders/notice.

13. Vehicle parking facilities may be provided through the following methods based on the gravity of problem, width of carriageway and right of way of roads, land availability, project feasibility etc.

- (i) **On street parking facilities for small vehicles:** On-street parking facility shall be resorted to only when there are no other options. On street parking can be provided only on selected road stretches provided the on street parking facility shall not obstruct traffic movement along the road. On street parking areas may be identified and provided for separately for two wheelers and four wheelers (small vehicles).

Specific site studies shall be carried out before deciding to use any road side margin for parking of vehicles to ensure that the proposed parking provision would not obstruct pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Large off street parking lots shall preferably be installed with surveillance cameras.

On-street vehicle parking arrangement may be designed subject to the width of land available at the specific location as:

- Diagonal parking facility;





- Parallel parking facility;

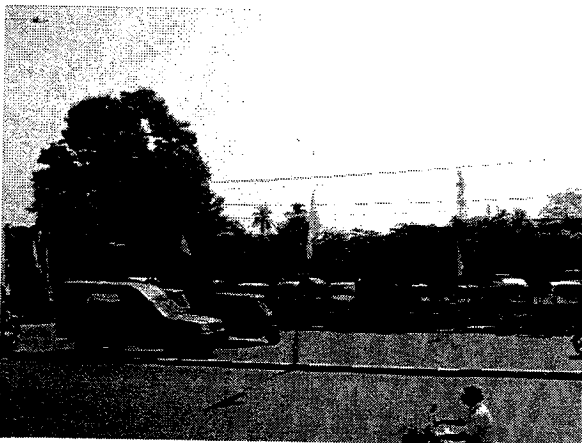


- Perpendicular (right angle) parking facility

Parking bays (separately for 2 wheelers and 4 wheelers) shall be marked with road marking lines and parking shall be regulated (restricted) only within the designated areas.

(ii) **Off street parking areas for small vehicles:**

Off-street parking facility means parking area not within the 'right of way' (land area within the confines of the side boundaries) of roads. Off street vehicle parking facility is an ideal solution since traffic on the roads would not be disturbed due to parking of vehicles. Such off street parking facilities shall have to be developed at such selected locations where due to congregation of people in large numbers for shopping, to avail services from various institutions and/or to participate in various events, vehicles get regularly parked on the roads causing hindrances to regular /routine traffic movement. The Municipality shall identify such locations and decide on off street vehicle parking facility based on the severity of issue.



Off- street vehicle parking facility can be developed in public land and also in private land, based on some benefit sharing arrangement and agreement with the private land owner.

**Off- street vehicle parking facility** can be developed in one of the two methods:

- (a) At grade – at the ground level only; or
- (b) At more than one level – (multi-grade) parking arrangement in more than one floor level: though the multi level parking plaza can accommodate more number of vehicles in a unit area of land, the cost is high in developing such an arrangement. This higher cost of parking area development may reflect in the parking fee that would be proposed. However, in city locations where land cost is high and the parking demand is high, it is recommended that multi-level parking arrangement may be developed since the economics of the scheme may make the scheme viable. Multilevel parking arrangement is also suitable when the terrain of the land justifies such an arrangement. When the available land is at a lower level than the road, one level of parking can be brought to the access level from the road and the lower level at the level of the ground can be accessed through a drive down ramp.
- (c) At locations where parking demand is very high and where the land value is at a premium, a three level ramp up solution may be a good option. However, such options may be adopted only after a model study. Such a techno-economic feasibility study would reveal: (i) whether it is technically feasible to construct a multi level parking arrangement with driving ramp within the available piece of land (after leaving necessary/mandatory open spaces around and providing parking bays and maneuvering spaces as per KMBR) ; (ii) whether the cost of investment would justify such a development; (iii) whether the expected returns from the parking fee (either run directly by the Municipality or contracted out to agencies) would be sufficient to meet operation and maintenance (O&M) expenses and/or would recover capital expenditure at least partly.
- (d) At major city locations where parking demand is very high (Especially short duration parking) as in central city commercial areas where it is difficult to procure land for providing 'at grade' parking spaces, it is also possible to provide multi level parking arrangement in small parcels of land with vertical lift with parking attendants or through computer controlled systems. However, such facility has three major defects (i) capital cost of such

development is high, which would be justified only by a higher rate of parking fee and high parking demand; (ii) O&M Cost is very high (also to be supported by standby power generator to work when electrical supply fails); and (iii) due to the employment of sophisticated electrically operated equipments, skilled manpower is required to operate the system.

## **Public Private Partnership (PPP) Programmes for Developing and Operating Parking Arrangements**

It is not always easy for Municipal Councils to develop on-street and off-street parking facilities due to various reasons. A few of the reasons are noted below:

- When on-street parking spaces are designated, wherever adequate road margins are available, the action has to be necessarily followed up with 'no parking' regulation on the road (carriage way) stretch. But enforcement of this can be effected only with the help of police force.
- When on-street parking is provided with parking lane markings, sign boards etc., this has to be continuously maintained and disciplined parking within the designated bay has to be ensured. Once the facility is created, Municipal Councils fail to follow up with further actions, with the result that the facility is rendered useless and/or the land is encroached upon by unauthorized bunks.
- In case public land is available beyond the carriageway to provide for off-street parking spaces, Municipal Councils are not able to decide to use the land for off-street parking facility considering the commercial potential of the high value property.
- The Municipal Councils are not able to pool in technical expertise to develop a feasible parking facility proposal or structure the proposal to exploit commercial returns.
- In view of high land value in the towns and cities, Municipal Councils are not able to acquire land to be utilized for vehicle parking facilities

In view of the above, it is necessary for the Municipal Councils to adopt solutions to the parking problems appropriate to each of the locations. One of the solutions is to rope in partnership with the private sector. Many options for partnership with private sector can be worked out to suit specific needs. A few of them are indicated below.

- (1) When wide public land is available by the road side in possession of the Municipality depending on the demand for parking at that part of the town/city, this land can be developed as vehicle parking facility (for two wheeler or four wheeler, based on demand and availability of width). This 'pay & park' facility can be developed by the Municipality and entrusted through auction / public tender to a private agency for collecting parking fee and to maintain the facility in good condition for a specified number of years. (Occasional verification by the Standing Committee on Town Planning is necessary to see that the operator does not charge more than the specified amount and that the premises are maintained in good condition.
- (2) In the above case, the traders' association can be permitted to operate and maintain.
- (3) A few cities have also permitted the traders' associations to develop such parking facility in the road side public land close to the commercial centres and to operate and maintain the facility for a specified number of years, subject to conditions stated in the PPP agreement.
- (4) Municipality may also move the Department of Revenue to entrust development right on available revenue puramboke land at specific locations to the Municipality to develop parking centres
- (5) Similarly, the Municipality may give develop right of a Municipal land to a private agency/individual through duly approved processes to develop and operate vehicle parking facility through a clearly drawn up agreement, specifying all necessary conditions.
- (6) A private land owner can be allowed by the Municipality to develop public parking facility (only vehicle parking facility or public parking facility in combination with commercial spaces) and operate the same based on mutual agreement and subject to verification by the Municipality to ascertain that such facility is continually made available for public parking as per agreed terms. *(It may be noted that in such cases relaxed conditions are permissible in the KMBR 1999)*

It may be noted that many such options for PPP can be worked out depending on the situation. However, it is to be borne in mind that Private participation with the Municipality for providing public parking facility does not mean 'no role' for Municipalities, but that the private sector would take care of everything. The Municipalities have to lay down ground rules for the same, facilitate such partnership and development, draft the TOR (terms of reference) and Agreement, grant necessary approvals and monitor implementation.

## **Related Actions to be taken by the Municipal Councils**

- (1) Once parking development plan is prepared for any location, necessary consent from the stakeholder agencies should be obtained. If on-street parking arrangement is proposed on a road being maintained by the PWD, consent of the Executive Engineer having jurisdiction over the road should be obtained. The Revenue and Police authorities shall be informed of such a proposals and once the facility is established and comes into operation, the Police and PWD shall be informed and the road stretch shall be declared as 'no parking zone'. The police shall be requested to enforce the regulation.
- (2) Establishment of parking space and rates of parking fees shall be notified by the Urban Local Body as per the provisions contained in Section 524 of the Kerala Municipality Act, 1994. Wide publicity must be given regarding the provision for parking spaces and information boards shall be fixed.
- (3) After the identification of parking areas, Urban Local Bodies shall fix the fees to be charged. A variable pricing based on the location of the parking - parking in the centre of the city will be costlier than parking in the periphery. Variable pricing based on hourly basis during peak hours and lower prices during the off peak periods can be considered. Variable pricing can be fixed on size and type of vehicle also. Adequate Council Resolution shall be taken for the establishment of parking areas and fixing the parking fees. Urban Local Bodies can engage the collection of fees on contract basis.
- (4) Urban Local Bodies shall prohibit footpath parking and encroachments especially by Street Vendors.
- (5) Urban Local Bodies shall prohibit the parking of vehicles by workshops on roadsides and public land.
- (6) Conversion of parking areas to commercial and other uses, by the building owners should be prevented. Basement floor, which are meant for parking, are put to other use and the shopkeepers and customers are forced to park vehicles on roads. Strict monitoring and actions should be taken from the part of Urban Local Bodies for preventing the conversion of parking areas for other uses.
- (7) Urban Local Bodies can promote PPP initiatives for establishing public parking facility. Unused land can be converted for parking on interim parking location until the desired development. Urban Local Bodies can take these lands on lease for a specific period.