

PARKING CRUNCH: A car blocks traffic and patrons block the sidewalk in front of Toast restaurant on West 3rd Street. City planners acknowledge the problem of "fictitious parking" but have no database to track which businesses are leasing which spaces.

Plenty of cars, not enough spots

[Parking, from Page B1]

Third, waiting for indoor or outdoor seating — which is in high demand even though diners in hale bus fumes as they eat.

Loading zones behind businesses fill up with cars, forcing semitrucks delivering supplies to restaurants onto side streets, where they block alleys and permit-only street parking, which is scattered throughout the area.

Drivers speed down residential streets looking for spots. Valets make U-turns or zoom customers' vehicles in reverse down busy blocks to secure open metered spots.

"Whenever there is an available metered space that should be open to patrons of all businesses, it's grabbed by a valet vigilante with a walkie-talkie," Elliott said.

"As soon as one car pulls out, they pull in another."

The 3rd Street parking controversy has been simmering for years but came to a boil with the proposed tripling, to 3,000 square feet, of Joani's on Third, a busy gourmet marketplace and cafe.

"We are the first to admit there's a parking problem on 3rd Street, but it's not Joani's on Third's problem. It's a city planning problem," said Susie Hastings, manager of Joani's and a co-owner with her mother, Joani McNamara, and her sister, Carol McNamara.

"We're talking about one-of-a-kind shops that are growing to survive," Hastings said. "We have more customers than we have room for."

Linn Wyatt, a zoning administrator in the city's planning department, approved the expansion, with conditions. The restaurant had to lease 30 parking spaces exclusively for patrons and offer valet service starting at 5 p.m.

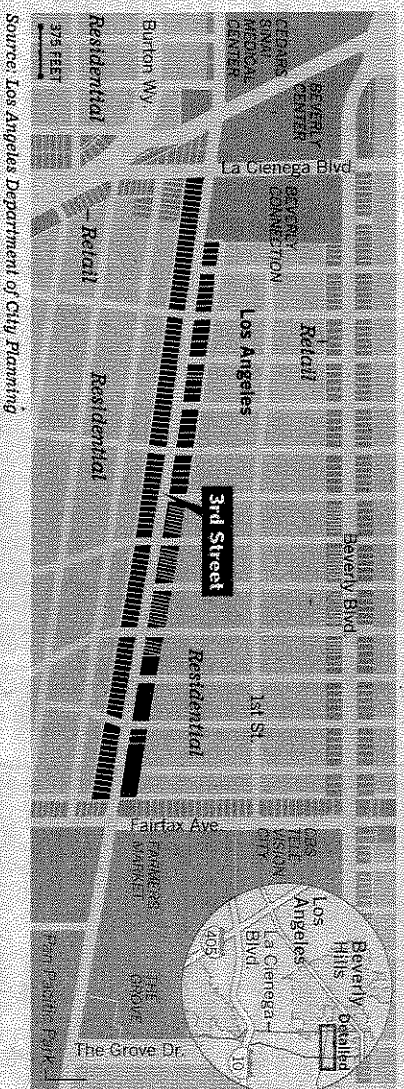
When neighbors contended that some of those parking leases were bogus, the restaurant hired Rose & Kindel, a Sacramento-based consulting firm.

Steve Catalano, the firm's deputy managing director in Los Angeles, acknowledged in an interview that he had serious

A parking shell game on the Westside

A scarcity of parking along a densely packed commercial stretch of West 3rd Street has led some of the many restaurants there to invent fictitious parking spaces to meet city requirements.

Restaurants and other businesses on 3rd St.



Source: Los Angeles Department of City Planning

questions about leases that Joani had previously secured, and "we changed those."

Wyatt signed off on the project, and the City Council approved it with the strong backing of Councilman Jack Weiss. Catalano said the parking he helped arrange for the expanded Joani's was in compliance, "to the best of my knowledge."

However, Elliott and other activists maintain that some of the spaces have already been subleased to other businesses, including another restaurant.

The so-called double-dipping problem reflects the economic boom on 3rd Street, which has benefited in part from the spillover success of The Grove and the expanded Farmers Market. The values of nearby residential and commercial properties have soared. A number of factors contribute to the problem of fictitious parking, planners and residents say.

Restaurants in the city of Los Angeles are not required to supply parking spaces for outdoor diners, based on the often faulty assumption that they arrive on foot.

What's more, many commercial buildings were built decades ago, before parking requirements were imposed, and have little or no parking.

Dan Green, an associate zoning administrator in the planning department, said planners have found in some cases that parking leases presented by restaurants were "for the same location at the same time." He once denied an establishment a permit because he had heard "horror stories" about its inadequate parking.

Merchants on 3rd Street are contemplating a universal valet system like that in Old Pasadena, according to Mandy Lake, a consultant with the fledgling West Third Street Business Assn. The Pasadena program allows a patron to drop off a car at one location and retrieve it at another.

Spurred by residents' complaints, Weiss submitted a council motion in September acknowledging that the residential community around 3rd Street had been "negatively impacted" by illegal parking and congestion. Merchants, he noted, were hurt by the overuse and abuse of loading zones and metered spaces.

He wants the city's Department of Transportation to analyze traffic in the area and consider building a city-owned parking lot, among other steps. The motion has not yet reached the City Council.

Sewage closes two beaches

From Times Staff and Wire Reports

A 1-mile stretch of Will Rogers State Beach was closed Friday after 10,000 gallons of raw sewage spilled into the ocean through Santa Monica Mountain Creek, authorities said.

The spill was centered near Pacific Coast Highway and Chautauque Boulevard, said Eric Edwards, acting chief environmental health specialist for the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services.

The sewage was believed to have originated from the nearby Riviera Country Club, Edwards said. The beach was expected to remain closed until at least Sunday, he said.

A county club official could not be reached for comment.

Meanwhile, in Long Beach, 10,000 to 15,000 gallons of raw sewage spilled into the Los Cerritos Channel from a county sanitation line.

That spill forced the indefinite closure of Mother's Beach and Marine Stadium to recreational use, said Kathy Parsons, a spokeswoman for the city.

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RICHARDO DEARAYANNA, Los Angeles Times

may an our quest require money, having put in considerable campaign work on their own time. Now that the campaign is over, no Schwarzenegger aide will be paid anything beyond a straight government salary, Soderlund said.

"Adam, Susan, Clay and Daniel — in addition to working full time in their state jobs — dedicated a tremendous amount of time to the campaign, in terms of coming in in the mornings before work, in the evenings after work, and on the weekends. And this is compensation for that time," she said.

Schwarzenegger's practice of boosting the salaries of his most valued aides appears to be rare. A survey of the 10 largest states after California showed that nine don't allow it. Of this group, only Texas, Republican Gov. Rick Perry uses campaign money to compensate state aides for political work on their own time.

A spokeswoman for Democratic Gov. Edward G. Rendell of Pennsylvania said that her boss insists on a strict separation between state and campaign work.

"You can't have staffers bowing to two gods," said Kate Phillips, Rendell's spokeswoman. Rendell "never wants someone to be in a situation where they might feel compromised or their role is unclear."

"Rendell staffers," she added, "don't enjoy that perk."

Because of the level of campaign pay she has received, Kennedy's compensation now comes primarily from the special interesters that pay into Schwarzenegger's campaign fund. Her state salary is \$131,000; the campaign money amounts to \$192,500.

Watchdog groups said the practice is troubling. A government aide's allegiance should be to the California taxpayers, they contend. If the bulk of one's pay comes from private interests, loyalties can be misplaced, they say.

"Public officials who are making public decisions should not be receiving money from campaign contributors who are private entities with their own spe-

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