

USE OF DRONES IN CITY OF RANCHO PALOS VERDES

The use of drones is permitted on private property in the City of RPV, as long as the owner of the property consents to such use. However, Section 12.16.040 of the Rancho Palos Verdes Municipal Code (RPVMC) prohibits the operation of “motorized or radio-controlled models” in City parks. This prohibition includes the use of drones, both at City parks and on other City-owned property. A link to RPVMC Section 12.16.040 is provided below.

https://www2.municode.com/library/ca/rancho_palos_verdes/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT12STSIPUPL_CH12.16STPAREFA_12.16.040MORANTMO

RPVMC Section 12.16.040 does include provisions to allow the use of “motorized or radio-controlled models” in City parks in “designated areas for such use or, or upon written authorization from the City Manager...” The City has designated two (2) locations in City parks for such use: the operation of non-motorized radio-controlled model gliders at Del Cerro Park (2 Park Place) and the operation of motorized radio-controlled model helicopters at Point Vicente Park/Civic Center (30940 Hawthorne Boulevard). At both locations, it is necessary for the operator to have a permit from the City’s Recreation & Parks Department that is issued through a local pilots’ club: Peninsula Silent Flyers: (www.peninsulasilentflyers.com) at Del Cerro Park and the Southern California Organization of Radio-Controlled Helicopters (SCORCH) (contact Darrell Thorp at dfthorp@mac.com) at Point Vicente Park/Civic Center. However, since the City only permits non-motorized gliders at Del Cerro Park, the only City park location suitable for the operation of a motorized drone would be at Point Vicente Park/Civic Center.

Potential operators at the Point Vicente Park/Civic Center must satisfy the following requirements:

- Obtain a SCORCH permit,
- Pay the \$10 annual SCORCH fee
- Be current members of the AMA (Aeronautical Modelers Association),
- Provide their AMA membership number to SCORCH,
- Register all models with the FAA,
- Display the FAA registration number on the outside of all models,
- Follow all FAA guidelines,
- Must not exceed the maximum 400’ flight ceiling,
- Fly within the designated area at all times.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) also regulates the recreational and commercial use of drones. Please note that the entirety of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes is located within five nautical miles (5 nm) of Torrance Airport (TOA). FAA regulations for the use of drones may be found at the link below.

<https://www.faa.gov/uas/>

For further questions about obtaining permission to operate a drone at Point Vicente Park/Civic Center, please contact the City’s Recreation & Parks Department at (310) 544-5260 or parks@rpvca.gov