

MEMORANDUM

To: Mike Nilsson
From: Bonnie Nelson and Phil Olmstead
Date: August 4, 2010
Subject: Mixed-Use District Parking Requirements – Best Practices

Overview

On May 5, 2010 Nelson\Nygaard completed a peer review of minimum parking requirements, which provided a summary of the City of Glendale's current parking code and a peer review of parking requirements for similar uses in other cities, including both geographic peers and best practice locations. This memorandum is intended to provide supplemental information, specifically aimed at identifying best practices for parking requirements in mixed-use districts. For each city profiled, key provisions of their parking policies for mixed-use and/or "transit-oriented" districts are summarized. The cities profiled include:

- Denver, CO
- Downtown Ventura, CA
- Pasadena, CA
- Mesa, AZ
- Downtown Boulder, CO
- Portland, OR
- Arlington, VA

Other relevant examples for mixed-use districts (San Diego and Phoenix) were previously outlined in the May 5th memo. It is recommended that Staff review these case studies as well.

Case Studies

Denver, CO

The City of Denver's parking requirements recognize that different developments in different contexts perform differently, and that parking requirements cannot be applied in a one-size-fits-all manner. Instead, local planners have taken a progressive approach to parking and have outlined parking requirements that reflect not only a specific type of land use, but the interaction of land uses. This has been codified through the designation of off-street parking requirements for mixed-use districts.

Key Provisions of Parking Program:

In addition to setting parking standards that are more appropriate for particular types of land uses, the City of Denver has also recognized the value of districts that have close proximity to public transportation and demonstrate other factors that may reduce the need for parking spaces. These standards may be able to reduce the total number of parking spaces by up to 50 percent in select districts. The factors that contribute to these additional reductions include:

- Access to transit: Mixed use-zones within ¼ mile of the outer boundary of a rail station are subject to a parking space reduction of up to 25 percent.
- Shared Parking Analysis/Trip Reduction Strategy: Upon the submission of a formal transportation/trip reduction plan among other requirements, parking spaces are subject to reductions of 26-50 percent.
- Affordable Housing: Parking requirements associated with affordable housing may be reduced up to 20 percent.

These reductions are subject to analysis of project location, shared parking opportunities, trip reduction plans among other submissions to the zoning administrator.

In addition, the City of Denver also has a unique approach to parking requirements for change in uses and historic reuses among the case studies provided. More specifically, Denver does not require additional parking for a change in use provided that the new use's parking requirement does not exceed the previous use's parking requirement by more than 25 percent. Furthermore, the City does not have a parking requirement for historic reuses, namely "...structures designated for preservation or for contributing structures in districts designated for preservation...beyond the number of parking spaces required for the land use and located on site as of August 1, 2007."

References:

City of Denver Municipal Code

<http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=10257&stateId=6&stateName=Colorado>

Downtown Ventura, CA

In 2007, Ventura adopted the Downtown Specific Plan, which included a Downtown Parking Management Program (DPMP). The DPMP was developed on the premise that parking is not an end in itself, but a means to achieve broader community goals by leveraging existing assets. The DPMP identifies the goal, rationale and benefit behind each requirement created to manage parking resources in the Downtown Specific Plan Area.

Key Provisions of Parking Program:

- **Reduced and simplified minimum parking requirements.** As part of the DPMP, parking requirements were greatly simplified and reduced. For nonresidential uses, 2 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet are required. The establishment of a single, “blended” ratio for all nonresidential land uses serves two purposes: (1) it reflects the typical average demand for observed for Downtown Ventura uses in comparable downtowns; and (2) it makes it possible for land uses to change freely over time within a building, as property owner’s needs and economic demands change. For residential uses, 1 parking space per 1,500 square feet is required, while no parking spaces required for single-room occupancy (SRO) units.
- **Tandem / stacked permitted by right.** Except for designated disabled parking spaces, no parking spaces for any use in the Downtown Specific Plan area are required to be individually accessible. In other words, tandem, stacking, and valet parking are permitted by right to satisfy the minimum parking requirements.
- **Shared parking.** Shared on-site parking between land uses with different periods of peak parking demand is allowed for all uses. Shared on-site parking is allowed to satisfy 100 percent of the minimum parking requirement for each use.
- **Off-site parking.** Off-site parking is allowed, within 1,250 feet, to satisfy 100 percent of the minimum parking requirement for each use at the approval of the Community Development Director. Off-site parking located further than 1,250 feet may be allowed at the approval of the Community Development Director.
- **Expanded in-lieu fee program.** The option to pay a fee in-lieu of providing onsite parking was expanded to apply to all development types within the Downtown Specific Plan area. Payment of the in-lieu parking fee for each required space would be allowed to satisfy 100 percent of the minimum parking requirement. The in-lieu revenue generated by the program is used to fund parking and transportation management strategies.
- **Required “unbundling.”** All new residential development in the Downtown Specific Plan is required to “unbundle” the costs of parking from the cost of the housing itself to create a separate charge for use of the parking spaces.
- **Reuse:** For rehabilitation or restoration of non-residential uses, in which no new floor area is added or a use is intensified, no additional parking spaces are required.

References:

Ventura Downtown Specific Plan
<http://www.cityofventura.net/cd/neighbor/downtown>

Pasadena, CA

The City of Pasadena has adopted a set of parking standards that are expressly designed for its Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) districts. The standards for this land use provide for a mixture of commercial, high-density residential, mixed-use, public, and semi-public uses in close proximity to light rail stations, encouraging transit usage in conjunction with a safe and pleasant pedestrian-oriented environment.

Key Provisions to Parking Program:

These standards apply to new development projects located within 1,320 feet (1/4 mile) of a light-rail station platform.

- **Non-residential projects:**

- Reduction of 25 percent for offices uses, and this reduction shall be the maximum allowed number of parking spaces.
 - Reduction of 10 percent for all other nonresidential uses, and this reduction shall be the maximum allowed number of parking spaces.
 - The parking requirements may be further reduced through a parking demand study and approval of a Minor Conditional Use Permit.
 - Project site may exceed the maximum allowable parking requirements if there is shared and/or joint use parking.
- **Residential projects.** The following requirements apply to multi-family residential and mixed-use development projects proposing at least 48 dwelling units per acre.
 - Residential parking shall be a minimum of:
 - 1 space for each unit for units less than 650 square feet to a maximum of 1.25 spaces per unit; and
 - 1.5 spaces for each unit for units 650 square feet or more to a maximum of 1.75 spaces per unit.
 - The parking requirements may be further reduced through a parking demand study.
 - The cap includes the minimum parking requirement as well as the requirement for guest parking.
 - Permits for overnight parking shall not be allowed.

References:

City of Pasadena Municipal Code
<http://ww2.cityofpasadena.net/zoning/P-5.html#17.50.340>

Mesa, AZ

The City of Mesa has adopted a set of parking standards that are expressly designed for its TMX-1 and TMX-2 mixed-use districts. A TMX-1 District is generally applied to areas within 660 feet of high-capacity transit station areas and associated intermodal transportation facilities. These primary station areas are expected to have a high-density mixed-use character. A TMX-2 District is generally applied to areas between 660 feet and 1,320 feet of high-capacity transit station areas and associated intermodal facilities. These secondary station areas are expected to have a medium-density residential character along with a mix of commercial and office use.

Key Provisions to Parking Program:

- **Reductions to Parking Requirements as of Right.** For any land use, except Single Residence Dwelling, the number of parking spaces is automatically reduced by 25 percent of the normally required number of spaces for any site located in the TMX-1 or TMX-2 Districts. Additional reductions to up to 35 percent of the number of required parking spaces may be approved if:
 - The site is proximate to transit.
 - A TDM plan has been implemented at the site to reduce parking demand.

- Parking demand generated by the project will not exceed the capacity of or have a detrimental impact on the supply of on-street parking in the surrounding area.
- **Exemption for Small Commercial Uses.** Small commercial uses, (less than 1,500 square feet) do not need to provide parking.
- **Substitution of On-Street Spaces.** On-street parking spaces adjacent to the frontage of properties in the TMX districts may be counted toward required off-street parking for non-residential uses. One on-street parking space may be substituted for each required off-street space.
- **Location of Parking.** Off-street parking shall be located underground, within a parking structure, or in surface lots at the side or rear of buildings, or between 2 or more buildings on a lot. No parking space shall be located between a building and an adjacent street.

References:

City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance

<http://www.mesaaz.gov/planning/ZoningOrdinanceRewrite/publicreview/09.pdf>

Downtown Boulder, CO

In the 1970s, the City established a downtown special district – the Central Area General Improvement District (CAGID) – to fund and manage improvement to the downtown area. The Board of CAGID, which makes the final decisions on issues such as new parking construction, is comprised of the City Council. However, considerable power over decisions such as parking charges is held by the Downtown Management Commission (DMC), which is made up of local businesses and property owners, although its actions are subject to City Council review.

Key Provisions of Parking Program:

- **No parking requirements.** The City has no minimum parking requirements for nonresidential uses within the CAGID area. Developers are allowed to build as much or as little parking as they choose, subject to design standards in the zoning code, and to manage it as they see fit. If they choose to build little or no parking on-site, they can purchase permits for public lots and garages from the DMC for resale to their employees. This is usually a much cheaper strategy than building parking onsite. Residential minimum parking requirements are set at one space per unit, although these have had little impact since developers have tended to provide two spaces per unit given perceived market demands.
- **Reduced parking requirements in mixed-use districts.** Outside of the CAGID area, the City has also experimented with lower, more flexible parking requirements in mixed-use districts.
 - Mixed-use developments may reduce parking by 10 or 25 percent, depending on the mixed-use district, if the following requirements are met:
 - The project is a mixed use development that includes, as part of an integrated development plan, both residential and nonresidential uses. Residential uses shall comprise at least thirty-three percent of the floor area of the development; and;
 - The property is within a quarter of a mile walking distance to a high frequency transit route that provides service intervals of fifteen minutes or less during

peak periods. This measurement shall be made along standard pedestrian routes from the property.

- Parking reductions, of up to 25 percent, elsewhere in the City can be made if the City Manager finds that:
 - The parking needs of the use will be adequately served through on-street parking or off-street parking;
 - A mix of residential uses with either office or retail uses is proposed, and the parking needs of all uses will be accommodated through shared parking;
 - If joint use of common parking areas is proposed, varying time periods of use will accommodate proposed parking needs; or
 - The applicant provides an acceptable proposal for alternate modes of transportation, including a description of existing and proposed facilities, proximity to existing transit lines, and assurances that the use of alternate modes of transportation will continue to reduce the need for on-site parking on an ongoing basis.
- **Funding of public parking.** Shared public parking facilities are constructed and operated by CAGID, and funded through CAGID's general obligation bonds. This debt is supported primarily by revenue from parking charges (including meters), and secondarily by property and other taxes paid by property owners. Thus, compared to many downtowns, where parking is heavily subsidized by public contributions of both dollars and land, much of the cost of the parking system is paid for by those who park, resulting in lower drive alone rates. In Boulder, while the parking permit prices for public structures and lots would not be able to fund the full cost of constructing and operating a parking space, the rates nonetheless cover a substantial portion of the cost.
- **Demand management.** On-street meter revenue is used to provide all employees with benefits such as a free universal transit pass (called an Eco-Pass); Guaranteed Ride Home; ride-matching services; bicycle parking; and a number of other benefits. This focus was prompted by the reality of limited street capacity to handle more traffic, and simple economics.
- **Curb parking.** All downtown parking meter revenue is transferred to CAGID from the City's General Fund. This responsibility, together with the fact that local businesses and property owners comprise the DMC, gives it a strong incentive to create new curb parking. One of its first moves was to create more curbside, metered parking through converting parallel spaces to diagonal.
- **Residential Parking Benefit Districts.** Permit programs have been established to prevent overspill parking from commuters trying to avoid parking restrictions and charges downtown. Commuters are eligible, however, to buy on-street parking permits for \$60 per quarter – another example of the integration of on-street and off-street management. Commuter permits are limited to four per block face, on blocks where average occupancy is lower than 75%. This RPP program is designed to be revenue neutral, and so commuter fees cross-subsidize low annual resident fees of \$12 per year. Sophisticated enforcement is used, with license plates entered into a handheld commuter, meaning that motorists cannot evade the restrictions by simply moving their cars every few hours.
- **Discounted validated parking.** Downtown businesses can bulk-purchase meter tokens or validated stamps, in order to offer free parking to their customers. A common practice in many

downtowns with parking charges, it avoids the risk of customers turning to other retail destinations in order to avoid parking charges.

References:

CAGID & DMC

http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1232&Itemid=429

Boulder, CO Development Standards

http://www.colocode.com/boulder2/chapter9-9.htm#section9_9_6

Portland, OR

Like most cities the City of Portland has required parking minimums for certain land uses. However, Portland has also developed a set of parking policies that allow numerous exceptions to the established minimums depending on both land use and development location.

Key Provisions of Parking Program:

- **No parking minimums.** For Portland's primary mixed use district (Mixed Commercial/Residential), there are no parking minimums. There are also no parking minimums for a number of other land use categories, such as Central Residential districts.
- **Parking maximums.** Portland has established parking maximums for most of its land uses, including in Mixed Commercial/Residential districts. For example, "general office" uses have an established minimum of 1 space per 500 square feet of floor area. The same use has a parking maximum of 1 space per 294 square feet of floor area.
- **Exceptions to parking minimums for sites well served by transit.** There is no minimum parking requirement for sites located less than 500 feet from a transit street with 20-minute peak hour service.
- **Minimum parking substitutions.** Portland allows for its minimum vehicles parking requirements to be substituted if certain facilities are provided in their place.
 - Bicycle parking may substitute for up to 25 percent of required parking. For every five non-required bicycle parking spaces that meet the short or long-term bicycle parking standards, the motor vehicle parking requirement is reduced by one space. Existing parking may be converted to take advantage of this provision.
 - Sites where at least 20 parking spaces are required, and where at least one street lot line abuts a transit street may substitute transit-supportive plazas for required parking, as follows. Existing parking areas may be converted to take advantage of these provisions.
 - Motorcycle parking may substitute for up to 5 spaces or 5 percent of required automobile parking, whichever is less. For every 4 motorcycle parking spaces provided, the automobile parking requirement is reduced by one space. Each motorcycle space must be at least 4 feet wide and 8 feet deep. Existing parking may be converted to take advantage of this provision.

References:

City of Portland, City Code, Title 33

<http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=28197&a=53320>

Arlington County, VA

The County's development policies over the past thirty years have turned Arlington into one of the best United States based case studies of intense development designed to maximize the benefits of a new rail line. The County has sought to preserve many of its older residential neighborhoods, and protect them from parking "spillover" and other impacts from new development around transit. These neighborhoods have benefited from substantial investment.

Key Provisions of Parking Program:

- **Reduced parking minimums:** In the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor, the County's Zoning Ordinance significantly reduces minimum parking requirements for certain uses.
 - No parking shall be required for certain uses (restaurants, retail and commercial services, grocery stores) where the major portion of the use is located within one thousand (1,000) feet of a Metrorail Station entrance.
 - The parking requirement for office and commercial uses may be reduced by 10 percent if a direct connection, which is not greater than five hundred (500) feet in length and which provides shelter from the elements, is provided to a Metro Transit Station.
- **Parking maximums.** The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) sets parking maximums for all federal government buildings in the region. In Arlington County, the maximum is one space per three employees. While these are advisory only, outside the District of Columbia, they are generally followed in suburban counties such as Arlington.
- **Parking & transportation demand management conditions.** The County requires developers to agree to a number of parking and transportation demand management conditions, through the site plan approval process. While these are negotiated on a case-by-case basis, those for recent developments have usually included:
 - Market-rate parking charges for single occupant vehicles
 - Unlimited discount-rate parking reserved for carpools and other rideshare vehicles
 - Monitoring of parking demand and traffic generation
 - Provision of short-term public parking (metered) at structure entrances
 - Shared parking
 - Car-sharing provision
- **Shared parking.** Most parking in Arlington is privately owned and managed. However, the County does run one structure, at Ballston Metro Center. It has also opened a structure serving a County office building for public use at evenings and weekends.

References:

Arlington County, Department of Environmental Services

<http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/EnvironmentalServices/dot/traffic/parking/EnvironmentalservicesParking.aspx>

Zoning Ordinance, Section 33

http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/CPHD/planning/zoning/pdfs/Ordinance_Section33.pdf