

**MTC Smart Growth Technical Assistance:  
Parking Reform Campaign**

# Parking Code Guidance: Case Studies and Model Provisions

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**June 2012**

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## Executive Summary

This paper identifies key issues and provides guidance for local jurisdictions as they consider refining their parking codes to reflect “best practices” for parking standards and parking management. It builds on MTC’s *Toolbox/Handbook: Parking Best Practices and Strategies for Supporting Transit Oriented Development in the San Francisco Bay Area* and includes the following components:

- An overview of issues related to parking minimums, shared parking and pricing;
- A 10-point program for parking reform for discussion purposes;
- An overview of key parking policies and model code provisions that can be adapted for local use and implemented hand in hand with reducing parking requirements; and
- In the appendices, a review of regulatory provisions that have reduced or eliminated parking requirements, including issues addressed and sample code language and web links to exemplary codes.

The best practices reflect and support transit-oriented and pedestrian friendly areas; they also will help make infill development viable and create more walkable, livable communities. They are based on the principle that parking should be managed as a resource that has critical impacts on visitor and commuter access, retail health, traffic safety, economic development, and streetscape quality, and that parking should be managed to achieve both transportation objectives and other community goals. These ideas also respond to trends showing growing interest in living in transit-served areas, with less dependence on the automobile.

### The Ten Point Program

#### **1. Reduce or eliminate unnecessary parking requirements.**

Requirements for additional parking for new non-residential development in Downtowns and town centers should be eliminated, wherever feasible, based on local conditions and community plans.

#### **2. Share parking.**

Ideally, all new non-residential parking in Downtowns and town centers, and around rail transit stations, should be shared parking—spaces that are available for public use, rather than reserved for the tenants and visitors associated with any particular property or set of properties.

### **3. Promote alternative modes.**

Incorporate requirements or incentives for free/discounted transit passes in exchange for parking spaces, carshare incentives, and bicycle parking requirements to promote the use of alternative modes and reduce the need for car ownership.

### **4. Establish parking maximums in transit-served areas and expand the existing supply of parking only as warranted.**

Maximums can prevent over-building; parking codes also can cap the allowable amount of parking, and require additional permits if a developer believes more are required.

### **5. Adopt additional strategies for parking management.**

Some best-practice management strategies are:

- Require developers to unbundle parking costs in residential projects
- Implement parking cashout programs
- Provide transit passes
- Provide parking credits for on-site carsharing service
- Require more bike parking

### **6. Price on-street and off-street parking.**

Charging for parking is the most direct way to both reduce parking demand and ensure that end-users carry more of the cost of providing off-street accommodations. Pricing can be used to ensure availability and turnover of on-street and off-street spaces.

### **7. Adopt an on-street parking availability target.**

The targets can maintain the availability of on-street parking in Downtowns, town centers and transit corridors and prevent spillover parking impacts in surrounding areas. Parking occupancy can be monitored and paired with investment of funds into the local area (see point 10 below).

### **8. Manage parking to achieve the availability target using pricing or time limits.**

Expanding on point #7, cities can manage on-street parking demand to achieve the desired availability target either by implementing pricing or time limits, adjusting rates and/or regulations as necessary to ensure that 1-2 spaces per block are usually available.

### **9. Prevent spillover parking impacts in surrounding neighborhoods with residential permit parking zones.**

Cities can establish residential permit parking zones to prioritize curb space for local residents and/or businesses, in areas where the availability of parking in surrounding areas is seriously impacted by workers, transit riders, shoppers, business vehicles, and/or visitors.



### **10. Establish parking benefit districts.**

Net revenues collected from on-street parking pricing and permit revenues can be dedicated to funding public improvements within designated Parking Benefit Districts, ensuring that revenue is used to benefit the blocks where the money is collected.

## **Model Provisions and Zoning Strategies**

Reduced parking requirements, combined with flexible design standards, parking pricing of public spaces and other parking management policies, can ensure an appropriate supply of parking. Such regulations also can further broader community planning objectives, including infill development, support for transit and other modes, and creation of walkable communities. This paper reviews specific strategies to manage parking through regulations in local zoning ordinances that support the 10-point program.

Within each strategy, a General Plan policy foundation is proposed, and then a zoning strategy and regulatory provisions and standards are described. Having clear policy direction in the General Plan establishes the legislative authority for zoning changes because zoning must be consistent with the General Plan in general law cities.

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## Introduction

The objective of this paper is to identify key issues and provide guidance for local jurisdictions as they consider reforming their parking codes to reflect “best practices” for parking and access standards and management. This paper provides guidance on how to regulate and manage parking in a way that supports development in urban infill areas, such as Priority Development Areas, encourages balanced multimodal access, and reduces vehicle traffic. This guidance is based on best practices for access and parking regulations in the Bay Area and elsewhere. This paper builds on MTC’s *Toolbox/Handbook: Parking Best Practices and Strategies for Supporting Transit Oriented Development in the San Francisco Bay Area*.

This paper includes the following components:

- An overview of issues related to parking minimums, shared parking and pricing;
- A proposed program for parking reform for discussion purposes;
- An overview of a variety of key parking policies and model code provisions that can be adapted for local use and implemented hand in hand with reducing parking requirements; and
- In the appendices, a review of regulatory provisions of local jurisdictions that have reduced or eliminated parking requirements, including issues they have addressed and sample code language.



*Unused parking area creates blight. This land can be put to better use.*

The best practices for access and parking regulations reflect and support transit-oriented and pedestrian friendly areas; they will help make infill development viable in Priority Development Areas and other places identified by local jurisdictions and create more walkable, livable communities. They are based on the principle that parking should be managed as a resource that has critical impacts on visitor and commuter access, retail health, traffic safety, economic development, and streetscape quality, and that parking should be managed to achieve both transportation objectives and other community goals. These goals should include consideration of the special needs of handicapped persons. These ideas also respond to trends showing growing interest in living in transit-served areas, with less dependence on the automobile.

## Parking Minimum Overview

### The Problem with Parking Minimums

Most cities in the Bay Area include parking minimums in their zoning codes. Parking minimums can be unnecessarily burdensome and a barrier to new development, particularly for infill development. To the extent that these minimum requirements are causing more parking to be built than the buyers and renters in the housing market would be willing to pay for, these policies are causing excessive development costs in the form of parking amenities. And looking ahead, younger Americans are showing a lower propensity to drive, with fewer getting drivers' licenses than in previous generations and lower overall auto ownership. Where excess parking is not used, empty lots are a blight—a dead space within a shopping area or a neighborhood. This land could be put to better use, contributing to revitalization of older areas.

Changes in these minimums, which allow more market-driven provision of parking for urban and infill developments, are a key component of parking reform. Eliminating or reducing parking requirements allows developers more flexibility in the amount of parking they provide and how they provide it, removing a barrier to new investments in downtowns and transit centers, and potentially making the final product more affordable. It is important to note that parking minimum requirements are just that—minimum requirements. Reducing or eliminating the minimum requirement does not eliminate parking—a developer will build parking where demand exists for it, even without minimums, in order to make their products attractive to buyers and renters, and obtain financing.

### Addressing Local Concerns

A range of local concerns may arise in relation to reducing or eliminating parking requirements, and details will need to be worked out with local decision-makers. A few of the key issues are listed below; the examples of Zoning Code provisions for parking included in the Appendix further illustrate how other jurisdictions have addressed these issues, as applicable.

- Understanding the role of parking minimums, when and where they can be reduced and how this can best be done;
- Equity—who is eligible and why would distinctions be made;
- Concerns related to spill-over parking into adjacent neighborhoods;
- Impacts to the developer and financing implications;
- Impacts on businesses and employers ability to attract customers/employees; and
- Consideration of the needs of handicapped residents, commuters and shoppers.

## The Big Ideas – A Ten Point Program for Parking Reform

A comprehensive approach to parking reform includes not only reducing or eliminating off-street parking requirements, but also enacting initiatives to manage both on-street and off-street parking effectively, and implementing other supportive access policies. In sum, the big ideas are as follows; they are based on programs designed by Nelson/Nygaard for many California Cities:

### 1. Reduce or Eliminate Unnecessary Parking Requirements

Requirements for additional parking for new non-residential development in Downtowns and town centers should be eliminated, wherever feasible, based on local conditions and community plans. The elimination or reduction in city parking minimums will allow developments to proceed with lower levels of parking in the specific situations where developers think these are viable, and will not prevent the construction of new parking where warranted by the market.



*Having safe, secure and conveniently located bike parking can promote more bicycling for commuting and recreation.*

Experience has demonstrated that such flexibility results in more creativity in addressing access through transit passes, car share, bike parking and shared parking, among other approaches. For example, for residential development in free-standing buildings, some on-site parking may be warranted, but in mixed use buildings, opportunities for shared spaces can reduce the total amount of parking built. In transit corridors with frequent service and around rail transit stations, reductions on the order of 25 percent or more are justified based on “best practices”. The Appendix has details on these in the Bay Area and elsewhere, and model code provisions that follow show how this could be done.

### 2. Share Parking

Ideally, all new non-residential parking in Downtowns and town centers, and around rail transit stations, should be shared parking—spaces that are available for public use, rather than reserved for the tenants and visitors associated with any particular property or set of properties. Shared

spaces make economic sense, as the experience in Bay Area cities and elsewhere demonstrate. This can reduce the total parking demand by up to 25 percent or more.

### **3. Promote Alternative Modes**

Incorporate requirements or incentives for free/discounted transit passes in exchange for parking spaces, carshare incentives, and bicycle parking requirements to promote the use of alternative modes and reduce the need for car ownership. Cities can establish commuter benefit ordinances that require employers above a stated size to provide multi-modal options to employees, as enacted in San Francisco<sup>1</sup>, Richmond and Berkeley – these policies can save both the employers and employees money. Specific code provisions to accomplish this are presented in this paper.

### **4. Establish Parking Maximums in Very Transit-Rich and Walkable Areas**

A combination of on-street parking and off-street parking is typically used at approximately 1 to 2 spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area for non-residential uses and 1 space per unit for market-rate residential land uses in downtowns, town centers, transit corridors, and mixed-use districts in small cities. Parking usage may be even lower close to excellent transit and in walkable, bikeable communities. Parking maximums can be established in these particular locations, and can help to reduce automobile congestion. Parking occupancy surveys should be performed to establish utilization. Parking utilization responds to pricing, so pricing policies should be assessed when conducting utilization studies. Maximums can prevent over-building of parking, but use of this strategy should be informed by careful local market analysis to avoid overly dampening the development market, and should be developed in consultation with stakeholders and decision-makers. Parking codes can cap the allowable amount of parking, and require additional permits if a developer or the review authority believes more are required.

### **5. Adopt Additional Strategies for Parking Management**

Some best-practice management strategies that could be included in Parking Code updates are:

- Require developers to unbundle parking costs in residential projects
- Implement/support parking cashout programs
- Provide/facilitate discounted transit pass programs
- Provide parking credits for on-site carsharing service
- Require/facilitate more bike parking

Examples of how this can be done are presented in this paper.

### **6. Price on-street and off-street parking**

Charging for parking is the most direct way to both reduce parking demand and ensure that end-users carry more of the cost of providing off-street accommodations. Pricing can be used to

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<sup>1</sup>See <http://sfenvironment.org/article/businessesemployees/san-francisco-commuter-benefits-ordinance-overview>

ensure availability and turnover of on-street and off-street spaces. One popular approach is as follows:

- Permit free or reduced-price short-term parking;
- After first two hours, price all shared non-residential parking by the hour;
- Allow residents and others, as appropriate, to obtain frequent parker permits with an annual fee based on expected usage;
- Develop programs targeted toward employees to encourage use of alternative modes (e.g., commuter benefit ordinances, discounted transit passes, secure bike parking at work, etc.) and to encourage employee parking farther from the prime street spaces in front of retail businesses; and
- Price parking to reflect parking desirability, i.e. spaces closest to activity hubs and on-street are priced higher than spaces at the downtown fringe and parking garages.

A very creative use of variable parking pricing with new technology allowing “real-time” information on parking availability to be provided in SFpark, which was established by the San Francisco Department of Transportation’s Urban Partnership Program with federal funding. The program uses new technologies and pricing policies to improve parking in San Francisco. The basic premise is that reducing traffic by helping drivers find parking benefits everyone. More parking availability makes streets less congested and safer. Meters that accept credit and debit cards reduce frustration and parking citations. With SFpark, drivers in the areas where it is offered can all circle less and live more. To help achieve the right level of parking availability, SFpark periodically adjusts meter and garage pricing up and down to match demand. Demand-responsive pricing encourages drivers to park in underused areas and garages, reducing demand in overused areas, or to use other modes. SFpark is testing its new parking management system at 7,000 of San Francisco’s 28,800 metered spaces and 12,250 spaces in 15 of 20 City-owned parking garages. The pilot phase of SFpark will run until summer 2012.

## **7. Adopt an on-street parking availability target**

To maintain the availability of on-street parking in Downtowns, town centers and transit corridors and to prevent spillover parking impacts in surrounding areas, adopt a policy goal that 15 percent of on-street parking spaces on each block face (1-2 spaces per block) in designated parking management areas remain available at all times. Parking occupancy can be monitored annually by the local Police Department or other department as authorized, and may be supported by local business associations, especially if paired with investment of funds into the local area (see point 10 below).

## **8. Manage parking to achieve the availability target using pricing or time limits**

Cities can take Point #7 a step further, and actively manage on-street parking demand to achieve the desired availability target either by implementing pricing or time limits, adjusting rates and/or regulations as necessary to ensure that 1-2 spaces per block are usually available. Donald Shoup provides wealth of information on this in his book on *The High Cost of Free Parking*, available from the American Planning Association.

## **9. Prevent spillover parking impacts in surrounding neighborhoods with residential permit parking zones**

Cities can establish residential permit parking zones to prioritize curb space for local residents and/or businesses, in areas where the availability of parking in surrounding areas is seriously impacted by workers, transit riders, shoppers, business vehicles, and/or visitors.

The City of Hoboken in New Jersey took this idea of step further: they offer up to \$500 in rewards to those who turn in their residential parking permits, either giving up cars altogether (e.g., using the City's carshare, transit and biking programs) or otherwise keeping their cars off the street (e.g., by keeping their cars in garages or driveways)<sup>2</sup>. The rewards include transit passes, discounts on car rentals, discounts towards annual costs of being in the carshare program, a bike helmet and a bike commuter training class. This pilot program has been very successful in this first test.

## **10. Establish Parking Benefit Districts**

Net revenues collected from on-street parking pricing and permit revenues can be dedicated to funding public improvements within designated Parking Benefit Districts, ensuring that revenue is used to benefit the blocks where the money is collected. Berkeley is one city doing this, Pasadena another.

State laws that provide for public parking facility construction, operation and maintenance include the Vehicle Parking District of 1943, Parking District Law of 1951, and Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1989. All of these are in the California Streets and Highways Code. Substantive requirements for assessment districts were changed significantly with passage of Proposition 218 in 1996, so the City Attorney should be consulted to determine the best statutory authority to use for creation of parking benefit assessment districts and statutory restrictions on the potential use of such funds.

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.hobokennj.org/departments/transportation-parking/surrenderyourpermit/>.



## Model Provisions and Zoning Strategies

Reduced parking requirements, combined with flexible design standards, pricing of public parking spaces and other parking management policies, can ensure an appropriate supply of parking in Downtowns, town centers and transit corridors. Parking regulations are best developed to support community planning objectives, including infill development, support for transit and other modes, and creation of walkable communities, where parking lots are not dominant. This section explores in some detail specific strategies to manage parking through regulations in local zoning ordinances:

1. Reducing or Eliminating Unnecessary Parking Space Requirements
2. “Unbundling” Parking
3. Parking Cash-Out
4. Shared Parking
5. Payment In-Lieu of Providing Parking and Related Parking Pricing Programs
6. Bicycle Parking
7. Carshare Programs
8. Free/Discounted Transit Passes
9. Transportation Demand Management



*Reducing parking minimums will support broader community objectives, such as infill development.*

Within each strategy, a General Plan policy foundation is proposed, and then a zoning strategy and regulatory provisions and standards are described. Having clear policy direction in the General Plan establishes the legislative authority for zoning changes because zoning must be consistent with the General Plan in general law cities. In charter cities, zoning consistency also makes sense from a policy perspective even though there is no State mandate. Model zoning code provisions are provided as examples for how these standards may be applied. These can be modified and tailored to a local jurisdiction’s needs. The appendix also includes code examples from the Bay Area and elsewhere.

## Reduce or Eliminate Unnecessary Parking Space Requirements

### Model Plan Policies

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Policy 1 | Promote quality of life and business viability by maintaining an adequate supply of parking to serve growing needs, while avoiding excessive supplies that discourage transit ridership and disrupt the urban fabric.         |
| Policy 2 | Adopt flexible parking standards that reflect calculated parking demand for proposed land uses and that allow for appropriate offsets to reduce parking demand and encourage walking, bicycling, carpooling, and transit use. |
| Policy 3 | Eliminate unnecessary parking requirements to complement a commitment to “put transit first” and support alternative modes.   |
| Policy 4 | Adopt a “market-based” approach to setting parking standards, consistent with urban densities and character.  |

### Zoning Strategy

Typical parking standards establish fixed ratios based on land use types (e.g. residential single family, vs. multi-family, retail or office) without regard to urban density and the character of a place, alternate modes, pricing or the parking demand generated by individual uses. They establish requirements for private development that may not serve the public realm and other civic priorities, given the growing interest in creating vibrant urban areas, supporting affordable housing and infill in our town and city centers, and reducing greenhouse gases. The model policies shown above suggest a range of approaches. Some flexibility should be provided in local zoning ordinances, and public parking strategies and pricing for on-street spaces can support an overall access and parking management program meeting broader community objectives. For example, exemptions could be granted for any new development within a Downtown or town center and for small retail shops, and businesses with parking demand below an established threshold. Reductions should be offered for senior housing and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) without any discretionary review because auto ownership is lower in this population (although special consideration should be given for disabled users). It also might be appropriate to reduce excessive space requirements for certain uses, reflecting transit availability and the evolving urban character of development, and for populations with lower parking utilization, such as smaller households, younger households, lower income households, seniors and those who consciously choose not to own a car. This may have economic development benefits if parking spaces can be used more efficiently, a subject addressed in the section on “Shared Parking”.

Cities should establish specific policies for where and when parking minimums may be reduced or eliminated based on their General Plans and transit availability. For example: eliminating parking requirements for new development within Downtowns and town centers should be an



*Parking space requirements can be designed with flexibility to ensure that an appropriate amount of parking is provided given the land use type, location, and projected parking demand.*

obvious priority, particularly if public parking for shoppers is available and good quality transit is available. Obvious candidates would be sites within transit service areas; sites with a higher residential or employment density; mixed-use development area; and for rental units (parking demand from renters is typically lower). On specified streets, cities also could allow on-street parking spaces to count toward the minimum. Eliminating parking for small space users, shops and walk-in offices, supports small businesses; these waived requirements could be tiered, so more buildings might benefit from this exemption in intensely developed areas.

Model language from Portland, a leader in regulatory reform, shows how a simple exemption for transit served areas could be codified.

### **Portland Zoning Ordinance**

#### **Minimum Required Parking Spaces – Specific Exemption for Transit-Served Areas**

- B. *Minimum number of parking spaces required.*
  - 3. *Exceptions 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. Applicants requesting this exception must provide a map identifying the site and TriMet schedules for all transit routes within 500 feet of the site.*

Some cities have gone further than just eliminating parking requirements; they have set limits on the maximum amount of parking that can be provided, either in terms of a base standard applicable citywide or in terms of a “cap” that is applied to a specific geographic area. The basic idea is that limiting the number of spaces allowed promotes efficient use of land, enhances urban form, and supports use of alternate modes of transportation. It helps make Downtowns and

town centers more livable spaces, because parking facilities do not dominate the streetscape. While maximums can be used to prevent over-building of parking in highly urban areas, and may reduce excess local automobile traffic, use of this strategy should be informed by careful analysis of parking utilization rates and local market conditions to avoid overly constraining the local market for development. Where parking structures are provided, they can be subject to design requirements to reduce negative impacts on the quality of the area, e.g., requirements for “wrapping” with habitable space – offices or residences, and requirements that parking garage entries cannot be on major pedestrian streets. Air quality benefits also accrue with this policy, as it would lower auto use and also reduce “cruising” for spaces.

By way of example, Portland strikes a balance in its approach to reducing minimums and setting maximums. Their zoning ordinance seeks to accommodate auto trips to a site based on typical parking demands for the Downtown or transit corridor, and set much lower maximums where frequent transit service is provided. In areas where development is less intense, higher maximums are appropriate, such as beyond a ¼ mile walk to a bus stop or a half mile walk to a rail transit station. By contrast, Pasadena has codified a regulation stating that the reduced parking for transit-oriented development (TOD), which is 25 percent below the normal, citywide standard, is also the maximum, meaning no new TOD project can provide more than 75 percent of the base parking standard.

Another option is to adopt a “Parking Exempt Overlay Zone” that identifies a specific geographic area within the community where no parking is required. The intent would be to support a pedestrian-oriented environment where it exists or is planned and implement a market-based approach to setting parking requirements. Using an overlay allows the boundaries to fit with urban form and character, and not face problems that may arise if base zoning had to be changed to implement a specific parking exemption. The Appendix includes examples of Code provisions in cities that have reduced or eliminated parking, such as Berkeley, San Francisco, Seattle and Tacoma.

**Model Code Provisions for Parking Exempt Overlay Zone**

**17.44.010 Purposes**

*The specific purposes of the parking exempt overlay district are to:*

- A. Provide a pedestrian-friendly environment through a market-based approach to meeting parking needs generated by the area’s commercial and service uses. This allows buildings and uses to be concentrated and oriented to pedestrians, with the market providing parking where and when needed, supported, where feasible and appropriate, by public parking facilities.*
- B. Relieve certain properties located in the overlay district from on-site parking requirements.*
- C. Control on-site parking on properties within this district to ensure that such facilities do not conflict with planned concentrations of commercial buildings and pedestrian orientation.*

**17.44.020 Designation**

*The PE overlay district may be combined with any principal zoning district consistent with the purpose and provisions of this district. Regulations established by the PE overlay district shall be in addition to the regulations of the underlying principal zoning district, and in the event of a conflict between the two, the provisions of the PE district shall prevail.*

**17.44.030 On-site parking and loading regulations**

- A. No Onsite Parking and Loading Except for Residential. No on-site parking and loading facilities shall be required for any property zoned: PE, except for a residential use or development.*
- B. Residential Standards. Parking for residential development in the PE overlay district shall be provided in accord with the requirements of Chapter 17.54 with the following variations:*
  - 1. Guest parking shall not be required.*
  - 2. Offsite parking or use of on-street parking for a limited number of units (typically three or fewer) may be authorized by the Planning Commission with approval of a use permit. In order to approve such a permit the Planning Commission shall find that the offsite parking facility is reasonably accessible and secure to the tenants and is available long term; or that adequate curb parking is available adjacent to the property; or that onsite parking for the residential units are not needed.*
- C. Use Permit Required to Establish On-site Parking for Commercial Uses. On-site parking for commercial uses may only be established on properties zoned PE through approval of a use permit. In granting such a permit, the decision-making body shall find that the parking has been located and designed so that it does not conflict with the City’s land use and urban form policies, including planned building concentrations and pedestrian orientation.*

Other model code provisions to reduce or eliminate parking requirements follow.

## Model Code Examples

### Off-street Parking Reductions and Exemptions

#### No Minimums in Specified Districts (e.g. Downtowns and Town Centers)

- A. *No Off-street Parking Spaces are required in the following Commercial Zoning Districts: [list names]. In addition, no off-street loading spaces are required.*
- B. *Existing parking spaces may be reduced if approved through a Use Permit with findings that the parking reduction is consistent with the purposes of the District and meets the findings for approval of a Use Permit.*
- C. *No new off-street parking shall be permitted on any lot abutting [specify pedestrian or transit-oriented streets] exclusively, and shall only be permitted on lots abutting other streets where access to the parking is gained from curb cuts existing [specify adoption date], and subject to obtaining a Use Permit*
- D. *Optional: All Use Permits under this Section shall be subject to a condition of approval requiring payment of a Transportation Services Fee (TSF) and Downtown Parking Fee (DPF) if and when adopted.*

#### Reduced Minimums for Transit-Oriented Development outside Downtowns

- A. *The minimum standard parking requirement for commercial floor area in the following Commercial Zoning Districts intended for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): [list names] is two spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area [or alternatively, 25 percent lower than the citywide standard that otherwise would apply].*
- B. *The first 1,000 square feet of new gross floor area in TOD districts is exempt from providing Off-street Parking Spaces.*
- C. *The number of Off-street Parking Spaces required for the commercial portion of Mixed Use projects may be modified or waived by the Director, subject to securing a Minor Use Permit, when the proposed Mixed Use project will combine Retail Products Stores and/or Personal Household Services, and Multi-family Residential Uses, to be contained within the same building, or which are to be located on the same lot.*

#### Discretionary Program for Reductions and Exemptions for TOD

**Waiver or Reduction of Required Parking for Residential Development.** *For a waiver or reduction in required parking for halfplex, duplex, or multi-family residential development (three or more units) with a TOD project, the Director may approve a special permit to waive or reduce the amount of required parking. The Director may waive or reduce a minimum of one parking space to a maximum of [ten (10) or up to twenty-five (25), depending on local studies] percent of the total required parking. For adaptive reuse of a structure (i.e., a warehouse) to be converted for use for residential purposes, the Director may waive or reduce four spaces or up to a maximum of fifty (50) percent of the total required parking, whichever is greater. If the amount of parking proposed to be waived or reduced is greater than that which the Director may waive or reduce, a special permit approved by the Planning Commission is required.*

### Off-street Parking Reductions and Exemptions (continued)

**Waiver or Reduction of Required Parking for Nonresidential Development.** *For nonresidential buildings not exceeding ten thousand (10,000) square feet in gross floor area, the Director may approve a special permit to waive or reduce the amount of required parking. For nonresidential buildings larger than ten thousand (10,000) square feet in gross floor area, the Planning Commission may approve a special permit pursuant to Section 17.212.030 of this title to waive or reduce the amount of required parking.*

### Reductions for Transit-Served Locations – Discretionary Option

*At the discretion of the Director, minimum off-street parking ratios may be reduced by: (1) up to 50 percent from the otherwise applicable requirements for rehabilitation or reuse of existing structures located in a primary area within one quarter mile of Transit Corridors and Transit Hubs designated in the General Plan [or within Priority Development Areas – PDAs, designated in the General Plan], and (2) up to 25 percent for structures located in a secondary area (between 1/4 and 1/2 mile from the Transit Stations, Transit Hubs, or Transit Corridors with frequent service, that are within PDAs).*

*For new construction in such locations, the Director is authorized to approve off-street parking ratio reductions of up to 25 percent if he determines, based on information provided by the applicant, that transit use and alternatives to private automobile use will be actively promoted and/or that other factors are likely to result in automobile ownership rates that are lower than indicated by applicable off-street parking ratios.*

### Minimal Parking – Option for Any Commercial Zone

*When the minimum off-street parking requirements of this chapter for non-residential uses result in a requirement to provide 10 or fewer parking spaces, off-street parking need not be provided. This provision does not apply to residential uses. (Alternatively, a tiered system could be created, as in Chicago, with parking waived for up to 50 spaces in high density areas with transit service. Details are in the Appendix.)*

### Reductions for Specific Land Use Types

For jurisdictions that want to look comprehensively at their parking standards for individual uses, not just as requirements in transit-served areas and how they might be adjusted, as part of a broader effort to reduce dependence on the automobile for all travel, Table 1 summarizes typical parking requirements and some recommendations for adjustments. These include elimination of the requirement for covered spaces on single-family lots and other ways to reduce requirements based on successful examples noted in Bay Area cities and other jurisdictions. Non-residential uses also would be allowed to have reductions for Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Strategies.

**Table 1: Options for “Rightsizing” Parking for Specific Land Use Type**

<i>Use Types</i>	<i>Typical Parking Requirements</i>	<i>A “Rightsize” Parking Requirement</i>
<i>Residential Use Types</i>		
Single-Family Detached	2 covered parking spaces/unit	Eliminate “covered”, reduce standard to one for small lots.
Two-family or Multi-family dwellings:		Allow 25 percent reduction for senior housing; allow reductions or eliminate transit-served corridors; allow reductions for “car-share” spaces; allow reductions or eliminate small-lot development and for small units; do not require additional parking for housing in mixed-use development if shared parking is provided; eliminate parking requirements in car-free zones and allow for guest parking credits with new on-street spaces.
Studio Units	1/unit	
One (1) bedroom	1/unit	
Two (2) or more bedroom units	1.5/unit	
Five (5) or more dwelling units	0.25 guest parking spaces/unit plus parking spaces stated above 60 percent may be of compact car size, individually marked.	
<i>Civic Use Types</i>		
Community Education		
Elementary and Junior High Schools	1/classroom and 1/35 sq. ft. of non-fixed seating area in the auditorium.	
High Schools	5/classroom and 1/25 sq. ft. non-fixed seating in the auditorium, plus the standard public assembly areas and dormitories.	Reduce to 1/classroom plus 1/10 students; allow City to tailor requirements through CUP process for projects with transit access
Trade schools, business colleges, and commercial schools	1/ 35 sq. ft. in instruction area, plus 1/ 250 sq. ft. in office area.	Reduce to 1/25 sq. ft. or less with transit access
Community Assembly	1/3 fixed seats, or per 50 sq. ft. where there are no fixed seats	Reduce to 1/100 sq. ft. and 1/6 seats with transit access.
<i>Commercial Use Types</i>		
Offices	1/ 333 sq. ft.	Reduce to 2/1000 sq. ft. or even eliminate in areas with good transit access and 1/1000 or less in Downtowns
Financial Services	1/250 sq. ft.	
Retail Sales	1/333 sq. ft. of local-serving retail serving primarily local customers. 1/250 sq. ft. for regional retail uses.	Exempt small shops, less than 5,000 sq. ft., with larger cutoffs in downtowns and along transit corridors
Multi-tenant Commercial	1/250 sq. ft. of gross leasable	Eliminate if need less than 20



**Table 1: Options for “Rightsizing” Parking for Specific Land Use Type**

<i>Use Types</i>	<i>Typical Parking Requirements</i>	<i>A “Rightsize” Parking Requirement</i>
	area.	spaces and transit service is available or tier, based on location and project size and transit service available
Hotels and Motels	1/guest unit plus 2 for a manager's unit and 0.5/employee	Reduce employee parking and reduce hotel to 0.75/unit plus spaces for conference/meeting rooms, or to .50/unit if parking is priced and managed.
<b>Eating/Drinking Establishments:</b>		
Full service	1/125 sq. ft.	Reduce to 1/250 or less, or allow Director approval based on case-by-case review and specifically allow for very low or no minimums where circumstances warrant
Convenience. Drive-in and drive-through in restaurants	1/125 sq. ft.	Reduce to 1/250 or less; exempt small uses, less than 2,000 sq. ft.; prohibit drive-in and drive-through in pedestrian-oriented areas

**Discussion Issues for Local Jurisdictions Considering Reducing or Eliminating Parking Requirements**

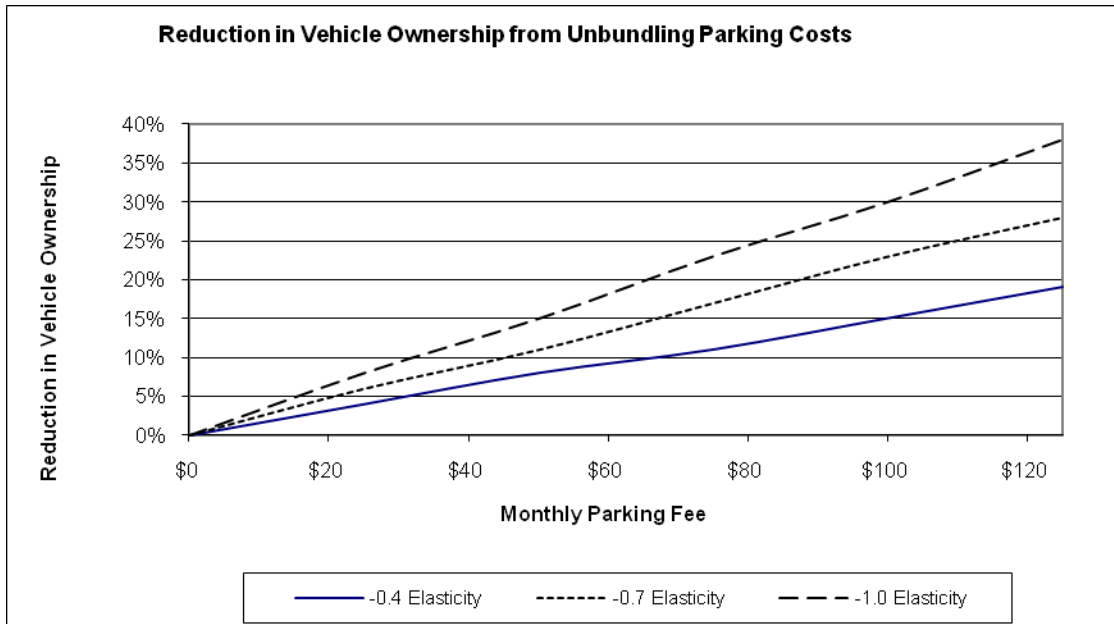
- Whether to eliminate or provide reductions in certain areas, such as transit corridors or Downtown, or for specified uses, such as restaurants, or where parking is priced and actively managed;
- Whether to maintain minimums for residential uses in residential neighborhoods;
- Whether to maintain minimums for auto-oriented uses, particularly where on-street parking alternatives are limited;
- Whether to provide credits for on-street spaces as well as provide reductions;
- Whether to link minimums where in lieu fees may be required to fund multi-modal access improvements or public parking facilities;
- Whether to establish a maximum amount of parking that can be provided in a transit-served area or in Downtown or a town center, subject to careful analysis;
- How to take the needs of disabled people into account; and
- Whether to make reductions discretionary or as of right.

## “Unbundling” Parking

Parking costs are generally subsumed into the sale or rental price of housing and commercial space. Although the cost of parking is often hidden in this way, parking is never free; instead the cost to construct and maintain the “free” parking is included in the cost of the goods and services. For all commercial and residential development in a community, or only for projects in a Priority Development Area, local parking regulations could require the cost to lease or purchase parking to be unbundled from the cost to lease or purchase space. Such a policy would provide a financial incentive to residents and employers to lease only the amount of parking they need. For residential development, unbundled parking may prompt some residents to dispense with one of their cars and to make more of their trips by other modes. Among households with below-average vehicle ownership rates (e.g., low-income people, singles and single parents, seniors on fixed incomes, and college students), unbundled parking can also provide a substantial financial benefit that increases housing affordability. Unbundled parking can allow employers to provide employees with an equitable transportation benefit that can reduce vehicle commuting. This also is known as a “parking cash-out” and may be part of a broader program for Transportation Demand Management (TDM), as discussed more fully in a subsequent section.

By requiring unbundled parking local jurisdictions could see significant reductions in residential vehicle ownership and an associated decrease in vehicle trips from residents of new residential development. Figure 1 indicates the reduction in vehicle ownership that can be expected from unbundling. It is important to note that if on-street parking adjacent to the development is not priced and no time limits are in place, some residents may choose to park in these spaces. On-street parking regulation is discussed in the next section.

**Figure 1: Unbundled Parking and Vehicle Ownership**



Source: Litman, Todd. "Parking Requirement Impacts on Housing Affordability." Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 2004.

### Model Plan Policy

**Policy 5**      Require new multi-family residential development to “unbundle” payments for parking spaces from rent payments and condominium purchases, and require that renters and buyers can choose whether to pay for parking spaces.

### Zoning Strategy

The cost of a residential unit’s parking space is often passed indirectly on to a unit buyer by “bundling” the two together in one price. Unbundling establishes a cost to provide parking by requiring that developers uncouple the cost of the parking space from the cost of the residential unit’s purchase or rental price. By selling or renting the parking space separately, the costs are borne by the people who want to use them and are willing to pay. The cost involved means that some buyers or renters will choose not to maintain a car, thereby increasing the affordability of housing for people who are willing to use alternative modes, while reducing vehicle traffic.

For example, a developer of a residential tower might ordinarily price a unit in the tower with an attached parking space at \$500,000 or more. Under this policy, the developer would price the unit at \$475,000 and each parking space at \$25,000. The unit buyer might not purchase two spaces, if he or she is willing to use alternative modes and expects to own only one vehicle, thus saving substantial expense. This approach also allows residents to change their parking expenses to fit their life situation. For example, they may choose to pay for another parking space when a household member would use one, and then to relinquish the space back to the condo association for them to rent out when the resident no longer desires the parking space. In MTC’s

experience, developers are generally comfortable with unbundling the spaces beyond one per unit for purchased housing units, and most spaces for rental units in transit rich and urban areas.

A local zoning ordinance then would:

- Require developers to sell or rent the parking space separately from the residential unit to tenants/residents in the project; and
- Not require a prospective residential unit owner to purchase or rent a parking space along with the purchase or rent of a unit.

#### ***Specific Code Requirements for Unbundling Parking***

- Set a floor on the price of the parking space in order to prevent the sale of a parking space essentially for free. For example, the floor could be set at a certain minimum value (for example, \$5,000 or less) and higher where TOD is being encouraged (e.g. around Major Transit Hubs).
- Require the homeowners' association or building management to sell spaces only to building residents until all units are bought/leased, at which time spaces may be offered to other users on a monthly rental, but not for sale, to preserve the option of a new owner/tenant being able to buy a space.

## Model Code Example

### City of San Francisco City Planning Code, Section 167

#### Sec. 167 Parking costs separated from housing costs in new residential buildings.

- A. *All off-street parking spaces accessory to residential uses in new structures of 10 dwelling units or more, or in new conversions of non-residential buildings to residential use of 10 dwelling units or more, shall be leased or sold separately from the rental or purchase fees for dwelling units for the life of the dwelling units, such that potential renters or buyers have the option of renting or buying a residential unit at a price lower than would be the case if there were a single price for both the residential unit and the parking space. In cases where there are fewer parking spaces than dwelling units, the parking spaces shall be offered first to the potential owners or renters of three-bedroom or more units, second to the owners or renters of two bedroom units, and then to the owners or renters of other units. Renters or buyers of on-site inclusionary affordable units provided pursuant to Section 315 shall have an equal opportunity to rent or buy a parking space on the same terms and conditions as offered to renters or buyers of other dwelling units, and at a price determined by the Mayor's Office of Housing, subject to procedures adopted by the Planning Commission notwithstanding any other provision of Section 315 et seq.*
- B. *Exception. The Planning Commission may grant an exception from this requirement for projects which include financing for affordable housing that requires that costs for parking and housing be bundled together.*

#### Discussion Issues for Local Jurisdictions Considering Unbundling Provisions

- Whether to require unbundling of all residential parking spaces, or to set a minimum requirement of one space per unit and only require “unbundling” for the additional spaces;
- Whether to differentiate between rental and purchased housing;
- Whether to apply the unbundling requirement only to projects within a half mile of a rail transit station or projects within a downtown area;
- Whether to apply the policy to all newly built properties or only those above a certain size; and
- Whether to test unbundling and related enforcement issues (e.g. on-street parking problems and renting/selling spaces) through a pilot project, only codifying the requirement if the project is successful. This option may not fully consistent with the jurisdiction’s General Plan policy on “unbundling”, but would allow for additional information to be gleaned, which might facilitate implementation. However, it may suffice to evaluate the success of such programs in other jurisdictions.

## Parking Cash-Out

### Model Plan Policy

Policy 6            Encourage major employers to offer “parking cash out”, whereby employees who choose not to drive are offered the cash value of any employee parking subsidy, to be used towards commuting to work by other means.

### Zoning Strategy

A zoning ordinance implementing this policy would specifically allow major employees to receive a cash payment instead of a free or reduced-price parking space. This can be a cost-effective way to manage parking supply, as in most cases it is cheaper to provide the cash payment than build a structured space. State legal requirements would have to be met in drafting this provision. Importantly, a 2009 amendment to these provisions provides for cities to enforce these requirements, including penalties to be imposed on employers who do not provide the “parking cash-out” allowance to employees. The local ordinance establishing this program has to provide notice to the employer and allow for appeals, which is good practice. Current State provisions governing this program follow in the text box.

The basic concept is to make the cash-out value equal to the value the employee would have received in parking space subsidy. If the space is leased, this is the value of the lease minus the amount the employee was expected to contribute. If the space is owned, this could be comparable parking space lease rates in the building.

**Model Code Example**

**California State Health and Safety Code Section 43845, Parking Cash-Out Program**

- A. *In any air basin designated as a nonattainment area pursuant to Section 39608, each employer of 50 persons or more who provides a parking subsidy to employees, shall offer a parking cash-out program. “Parking cash-out program” means an employer-funded program under which an employer offers to provide a cash allowance to an employee equivalent to the parking subsidy that the employer would otherwise pay to provide the employee with a parking space.*
- B. *A parking cash-out program may include a requirement that employee participants certify that they will comply with guidelines established by the employer designed to avoid neighborhood parking problems, with a provision that employees not complying with the guidelines will no longer be eligible for the parking cash-out program.*
- C. *As used in this section, the following terms have the following meanings:*
  - 1. *“Employee” means an employee of an employer subject to this section.*
  - 2. *“Parking subsidy” means the difference between the out-of-pocket amount paid by an employer on a regular basis in order to secure the availability of an employee parking space not owned by the employer and the price, if any, charged to an employee for use of that space.*
- D. *Subdivision (a) does not apply to any employer who, on or before January 1, 1993, has leased employee parking, until the expiration of that lease or unless the lease permits the employer to reduce, without penalty, the number of parking spaces subject to the lease.*
- E. *It is the intent of the Legislature, in enacting this section, that the cash-out requirements apply only to employers who can reduce, without penalty, the number of paid parking spaces they maintain for the use of their employees and instead provide their employees the cash-out option described in this section.*
- F. *(2)(A) A city, county, or air district may also adopt, by ordinance or resolution, a penalty or other mechanism to ensure that an employer within the jurisdiction of that city, count or air district is in compliance with this section.*

*(2)(B) If a city, county or air district establishes a penalty, the governing body shall also establish procedures for providing notice to employers that are in violation of this section and for appeal by the employer of any penalty imposed.*

**Discussion Issues for Jurisdictions Considering Parking Cash-outs**

- Whether major employers are supportive of the program as a local initiative;
- Whether a penalty program should be created as an enforcement mechanism; and
- Whether a pilot effort should be initiated on a voluntary basis before establishing a citywide mandatory program.

## Shared Parking and Parking for Persons with Disabilities

### Model Plan Policy

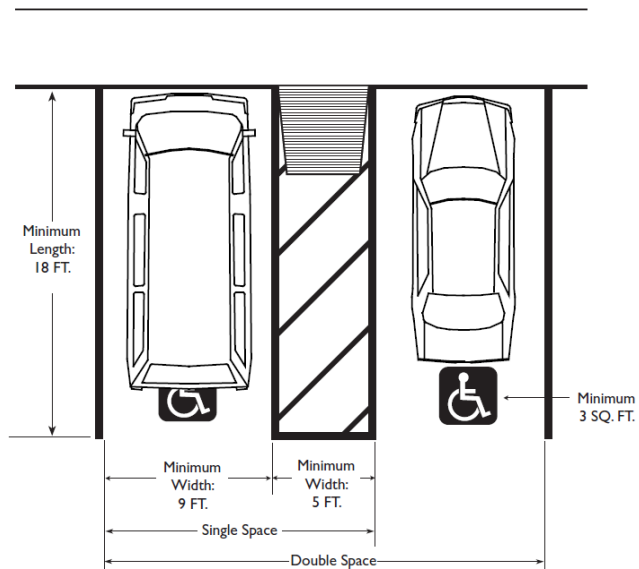
- Policy 7 Support shared parking between multiple uses to the extent possible, and allow private property owners to share their underutilized off-street parking resources with the general public.
- Policy 8 Ensure that accessible parking for persons with disabilities is provided at safe and convenient locations.

### Zoning Strategy

Local parking regulations should avoid over-supply of parking by allowing multiple uses to share the same parking facilities when the uses experience peak demand at different times of day or day of week. This optimizes the use of parking facilities, improves the financial return on public investments in parking facilities, and enables the intensification of urban uses and provision of additional public/open space.

For example, assume a residential building with ground-floor neighborhood-serving uses and an office building use the same parking lot. Each use saves on the cost of constructing parking, and the supply is sufficient to meet the parking requirements of each of the two uses individually (i.e. whichever requirement is higher for a given time period). Neighborhood walkability is enhanced by reducing the number of parking spaces that have to be built, and having more active frontages.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and related State and Federal Law establish strong guidance for accommodating the parking needs for persons with disabilities. Rather than be an afterthought in zoning, the need to provide accessible parking should be a priority. One way to do this visually is to include, on all illustrations of parking dimensional standards, a handicapped space logo.



A General Plan policy on shared parking could be implemented by drafting code requirements based on the following principle:



- Parking required for two or more buildings or uses with differing peak times of day and/or day of week may be provided in combined parking facilities and the amount required may be reduced to reflect the efficiencies of shared parking.



*Bay Area cities can optimize the use of parking facilities by allowing multiple uses to share the same facilities when the uses experience peak demand at different times of day or day of week.*

### **Specific Code Requirements for Shared Parking Provisions**

- Determine required parking by use through the use of a shared parking computer model for all existing and proposed uses that would utilize the shared facility or by allowing the applicant to submit a report from a qualified parking consultant, including survey data or references to published surveys of parking demand for the uses proposed. The “model option” could use a variation on a model developed by MTC for local cities’ use or a model developed by the Urban Land Institute that is available for purchase, or the ordinance, as suggested above, could allow applicants to submit their own survey data for city review.
- Require that shared parking for the multiple uses be provided for the life of the buildings or uses. An agreement for shared use of parking space must be acceptable to the City Attorney and publicly recorded.
- Require that subsequent changes to any of the uses benefitting from a shared parking arrangement be reviewed to determine the adequacy of the parking supply. If a change of use to a less parking-intensive use is proposed, no technical evaluation is necessary. If a change of use to a more parking-intensive use is anticipated, a utilization study of the shared facility should be required and the conclusions compared to the results of the original shared parking determination. If sufficient reserve capacity exists, the use change is permitted. If the change requires parking above the available capacity, the applicant would be required to pay a fee-in-lieu, to be used to build public parking spaces, or to build the required parking. Street parking can be included in this analysis of parking availability, as appropriate (e.g., use of street parking at night in areas with low night demand).

Parking facilities would have to be on-site or located within walking distance of each use (1,500 feet), measured from the entrance of the building to the entrance of the parking facility. Or, cities

## MTC Smart Growth Technical Assistance: Parking Reform

might allow for local use of the Walnut Creek program, enabling businesses with mini lots to have meters, allowing use by anyone who will pay (and the decision to validate left to businesses).

**Model Code Example**

**Shared Parking Facilities**

*A conditional use permit may be approved by the Planning Commission for shared parking facilities serving more than one use on a site. A use permit for shared off-street parking may reduce the total number of spaces required by this section if the following findings are made:*

- A. The spaces to be provided will be available as long as the uses requiring the spaces are in operation;*
- B. The peak hours of parking demand from all uses do not coincide so that peak demand is greater than the parking provided;*
- C. The adequacy of the quantity and efficiency of parking provided will equal or exceed the level that can be expected if collective parking is not provided; and*
- D. A written agreement between the property owner(s) and the City, in a form satisfactory to the City Attorney, that includes:*
  - 1. A guarantee that there will be no substantial alteration in the uses that will create a greater demand for parking;*
  - 2. A guarantee among the property owner(s) for access to and use of the shared parking facilities;*
  - 3. A provision that the City may require parking facilities in addition to those originally approved upon finding by the Planning Commission that adequate parking to serve the use(s) has not been provided; and*
  - 4. A provision stating that the City, acting through the Planning Commission, may for due cause and upon notice and hearing, unilaterally modify, amend, or terminate the agreement at any time.*

*The maximum allowable reduction in the number of spaces to be provided shall not exceed 20 or 25 percent of the sum of the number required for each use served and not reduce the total number of spaces to less than one space for every 450 square feet of gross floor area in a commercial mixed use development.<sup>3</sup>*

*An applicant for a use permit for shared parking may be required to submit survey data substantiating a request for reduced parking requirements. A use permit for shared parking shall describe the limits of any area subject to reduced parking requirements and the reduction applicable to each use.*

**Discussion Issues for Jurisdictions Considering Shared Parking**

- Whether to allow this by-right or subject to discretionary review;
- Whether to require guarantees that the shared facility will remain in place for a specified term or replacement parking provided, if needed; and
- Whether a maximum limit should be placed on how much of the parking demand can or should be met with shared parking.

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<sup>3</sup> For Bay Area Cities, MTC’s smart growth consultant recommends allowing the reduction to be what the shared parking model requires, without setting a maximum or require a minimum number of privately owned spaces to be reserved for a use.

## Payment In-Lieu of Providing Parking and Related Parking Pricing

### Model Plan Policy

- Policy 9            Establish public parking strategies, such as variable pricing for on-street and off-street public parking and public use of private garages, to maintain a parking space utilization goal of 85 percent.
- Policy 10          Provide off-street public parking or public garages strategically, in locations convenient and proximate to eventual destinations. Allow developers to pay in-lieu parking fees when parking districts are created for public parking.

### Regulatory Strategy

As described in the Ten Point Plan overview, pricing is a powerful tool to regulate parking availability and the San Francisco Planning Code is an excellent model of how this can be done. Another example is to have a parking tax. For example, San Francisco's Parking Tax (Article 9 of San Francisco Business and Tax Regulations Code Sections 601 and following) applies to the rental of all non-residential parking spaces in the City. This is true even when a parking space is furnished with rented office space and rent for the parking space is not separately stated in the rental agreement. In such a circumstance the Parking Tax is due on the amount that would have been charged for the parking space if rent for the parking space had been separately stated based on the market rate for rent of parking spaces in the part of the City where the parking space is located. The Parking Tax applies because a building owner or owner's agent who receives rent from a building tenant for the occupancy of a parking space is an operator who must collect and remit the tax from the parking space occupant to the City. Revenues from the Parking Tax are split between the General Fund (20 percent) and the Municipal Transportation Fund (80 percent), the latter financing the City's transit system - Muni.



*Pricing can help manage parking availability.*

Several California cities, including Glendale, have written into their codes that collected parking in-lieu fees can be used to fund transit/TDM on-going costs, not just parking facilities. However, several other cities, often due to conservative City attorneys, are banning all forms of spending parking in lieu fees on operations or community benefit programs, as this has not been legally tested and affirmed by California courts. So, while in theory, there should not be any legal obstacles to a transportation or parking "access fee" that could be applied to an array of local improvement projects and programs, some caution may be in order because of limitations imposed on special assessments and exactions, and the rules of Proposition 218.

In the City of Santa Monica, downtown in-lieu fee update is underway, and right now it looks like the City will use its in-lieu fee revenue to fund a combination of the following: **new parking facilities** (most expensive, smallest return on investment); **more efficient use of existing parking facilities**, such as valet parking, real-time wayfinding, etc. (quite affective, and much high return on investment than new parking structures); and **monetary contribution to the future downtown Transportation Management Association** for strategically located bike parking, employee eco passes, etc. (most effective, but still expensive). The Santa Monica City attorney has approved this proposal in concept, for now, but is still awaiting feedback from other City staff. A specific Code proposal has yet to be prepared for presentation and adoption by the City Council, so model provisions for this type of program are not available.

California law does authorize local jurisdictions to enact parking meter ordinances with fair market rates that “may...justify a fee system intended and calculated to hasten the departure of parked vehicles in congested areas, as well as to defray the cost of installation and supervision” [DeAryan v. City of San Diego, 75 CA2d (1946) pp292, 296]. California case law also recognizes that parking meter ordinances are for the purpose of regulating and mitigating traffic and parking congestion on public streets, and not a tax for general revenue purposes [DeAryan v. City of San Diego, 75 CA2d, p293]

Many California cities offer residents an annual permit for parking at meters. Some cities, only allow only the residents of certain neighborhoods and/or people who work within certain neighborhoods to purchase annual parking permits that allow unlimited parking in certain parking meter zones without having to pay any additional meter fees. San Francisco has program that allows contractors, but not the general public, to purchase an annual permit that allows unlimited parking at meters.

The process is straightforward:

- Establish a parking meter zone for a specified area, pursuant to Section 22508 of the California Vehicle Code;
- Set an hourly parking fee;
- Establish a method or methods by which motorists may pay the fee. The Vehicle Code does not require that any particular technology must be used, so cities can use single-space meters, multi-space meters (of both the pay-and-display and pay-by-space variety), and pay-by-cell-phone technologies; and
- Offer identified groups (e.g., residents of the city or a specific neighborhood or transit corridor, or workers in the neighborhood) or the general public, the option of purchasing an annual parking permit that would be less expensive for frequent parkers than simply paying the hourly rate.

Parking meter revenues, net of operational costs, then can be used help pay for streetscape improvements, support transit/TDM or other alternative transportation, or help fund services that benefit shoppers or visitors to the community.

Where minimum parking space requirements exist and a parking assessment district or business and parking improvement district has been created under State law, the zoning ordinance would

implement the proposed policy above by specifically allowing developers to pay a fee in lieu of each required parking space not provided. In-lieu fees facilitate urban mixed use development where space constraints would make it otherwise impossible to develop because of insufficient room to build all the required number of parking spaces on-site. By making a payment to the City, new developments can waive some or all of their minimum parking requirements.

An in lieu fee program for new development within a parking assessment district could be established as follows:

- Fees should be structured to repay the City for building public parking facilities and be linked to the City’s actual construction costs for public parking spaces, not set arbitrarily;
- Projects would have to be within one-half mile of a public parking facility to be eligible to participate in the in-lieu fee program; and
- The City could establish a price per space and reevaluate this periodically. These fees need not be codified, but could be in separate fee resolutions.

If the district is created under the broader authority for a business and parking improvement district, fees may be used for transportation enhancements, such as multi-modal facilities and/or streetscape amenities. Details should be reviewed with the jurisdiction’s legal counsel to ensure compliance with all applicable statutes and case law.

### Model Code Example

#### Petaluma

#### ***11.035 - Exception to Off-Street Parking***

*Sites and structures located in a municipal parking assessment district are exempt from the requirement to provide off-street parking facilities.*

### Discussion Issues for Jurisdictions Considering In-Lieu Fees and Related Parking Prices

- Whether to create a parking meter fee program to fund a variety of transportation or streetscape related improvements or programs;
- Whether to have the meter pricing be variable, based on real-time information on parking demand;
- Whether to create a parking assessment district with “by right” in lieu fees for uses subject to required parking, that is any use within a defined public parking district can pay an in-lieu fee and no have an on-site parking obligation; or
- Whether under a discretionary program, the City only has to accept fees for up to, say, 20 spaces, and may negotiate with applicants whether a portion of the on-site parking still would have to be provided, such as for short-term use.

## Parking for Car-Sharing Vehicles

### Model Plan Policy

Policy 11 Support car-sharing as a means to reduce overall demand for parking by ensuring that car-sharing vehicles are available and accommodated in new development.

### Zoning Strategy

Car-sharing programs can have the effect of reducing demand for parking overall, by providing a convenient alternative to private car ownership. Operators of car-sharing programs can generally secure spaces for their vehicles in public and privately-operated commercial parking lots; however, the appeal of the program is diminished if residents do not have convenient access to the vehicles where they live, or close by. To facilitate car-sharing, local parking regulations can require provision of parking spaces dedicated to car-sharing vehicles, either in addition to standard parking spaces or to replace a percentage of standard parking spaces that would otherwise be required. Cities can also dedicate certain public parking spaces for carshare vehicles, and can choose whether to charge carshare companies for these spaces. Finally, cities can share the carshare vehicles between city staff and the public—the City of Berkeley is a good example of how this can be done successfully.

### Specific Code Requirements for Shared Parking Provisions

- Specify the use types and/or districts for which car-sharing spaces shall be provided (residential/mixed use, commercial, or other);
- Determine the number of car-sharing parking spaces required, possibly indexed to the number of standard spaces required;
- Clarify whether the car-sharing spaces are to be provided in addition to the number of standard parking spaces required, or if they may replace a certain percentage of otherwise required parking;
- Provide administrative procedures to ensure that the space is being used appropriately
- Specify whether the car-sharing spaces will be provided to the car-sharing program free of charge, at a reduced rate, or at a market rate; and
- Describe how the dedicated spaces may be used if there is no car-sharing program in place or requesting their use.

**Model Code Example**

**City of Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 23E.68, Downtown Mixed Use District  
23E.68.080 Parking – Number of Spaces, Sec. S**

*For residential structures constructed or converted from a non-residential use that require vehicle parking under Section 23E.68.080.B, required parking spaces shall be designated as vehicle sharing spaces in the amounts specified in the following table. If no parking spaces are provided pursuant to Sections 23E.68.080.D no vehicle sharing spaces shall be required.*

<i>Number of Parking Spaces Required</i>	<i>Minimum Number of Vehicle Sharing Spaces</i>
0-10	0
11-30	1
31-60	2
61 or more	3, plus one for every additional 60 spaces

- 1. The required vehicle sharing spaces shall be offered to vehicle sharing service providers at no cost.*
- 2. The vehicle sharing spaces required by this Section shall remain available to a vehicle sharing service provider as long as providers request the spaces. If no vehicle sharing service provider requests a space, the space may be leased for use by other vehicles. When a vehicle sharing service provider requests such space, the property owner shall make the space available within 90 days.*

**Discussion Issues for Local Jurisdictions Considering Parking Spaces for Car-Sharing Vehicles**

- Whether to require car-sharing spaces in addition to or in lieu of any amount of required parking;
- Whether the number of required car-sharing spaces should be indexed to building size, type, and/or number of standard parking spaces required, and whether the requirement shall apply to new and converted uses in all districts or in selected ones; and
- Whether to require guarantees that the car-sharing spaces will remain in place for a specified term, and whether additional administrative procedures are needed to monitor the use of the spaces post-occupancy.
- Whether to designate some public spaces for the exclusive use of vehicles in the same way that taxis often are given preferential rights at designated parking stands.



## Transit Passes

### Model Plan Policy

Policy 12 Offer incentives for major employees and residential complexes to provide free or reduced price transit passes to improve air quality by reducing total vehicle miles traveled daily and peak hour vehicle trips through more transit use.

### Zoning Strategy

Providing free or reduced-price transit passes to residents or employees is one strategy that may be used to reduce demand for parking on-site. Similar to car-sharing programs and other TDM strategies, free or discounted transit passes may discourage single occupancy vehicle trips. Local regulations can allow provision of free or discounted transit passes to substitute for some percentage of required parking spaces, or they can be one aspect of a broader TDM program in which employers or other project proponents participate (see discussion in the subsequent section of TDM programs).

For the program to be effective, transit must be convenient to the development in question. For example, cities should consider limiting this provision to areas within a quarter-mile of a bus stop or half-mile to rail station where service operates at headways of 20 minutes or less, or to developments where a complementary service is in place (e.g. a shuttle bus from the employment center to the nearest train station).

### Specific Code Requirements for Transit Pass Provision

- Specify the use types and/or districts for which free or reduced-price transit passes shall be provided (residential/mixed use, commercial, along transit corridors or station areas, or other)
- Determine the percent reduction in required parking spaces, which may be indexed to the cost reduction of the passes
- Specify the length of time that the passes must be provided
- Establish administrative procedures for post-occupancy enforcement

## Model Code Example

### City of Seattle Municipal Code Section 23.54.020, Parking Quantity Exceptions

#### *F. Reductions to Minimum Parking Requirements*

- 3. For new or expanding offices or manufacturing uses that require 40 or more parking spaces, the minimum parking requirement may be reduced by up to a maximum of 40 percent by the substitution of alternative transportation programs, according to the following provisions:*
  - c. If transit or transportation passes are provided with a 50 percent or greater cost reduction to all employees in a proposed structure for the duration of the business establishment(s) within it, or five years, whichever is less, and if transit service is located within 800 feet, the parking requirement shall be reduced by 10 percent. With a 25 percent to 49 percent cost reduction, and if transit service is located within 800 feet, the parking requirement shall be reduced by 5 percent.*

### Discussion Issues for Local Jurisdictions Considering Free or Discounted Transit Passes

- Whether the provision should apply only to places of employment or to residential developments or both;
- Whether a maximum limit should be placed on how much of the parking need can be substituted with free or reduced-price transit passes;
- How “transit proximity” and level of service should be defined;
- Whether the number of required car-sharing spaces should be indexed to building size, type, and/or number of standard parking spaces required; and
- Whether to require guarantees that the passes will be provided for a specified term, and whether additional administrative procedures are needed to monitor the continued provision of passes.

## Bicycle Parking

### Model Plan Policy

Policy 13        Require multi-family residential development and non-residential development to provide safe and secure facilities for bicycle parking that are conveniently located and easy to use to facilitate multi-modal commute choices and use of bicycles for recreational and shopping trips.

### Zoning Strategy

Providing for safe and secure bicycle parking, with racks and lockers integrated into overall site and building design, would implement this model policy and support bicycle use, not only for commuting but also for other purposes. Where there are comprehensive bicycle systems in place, with designated bike routes and, ideally, separate Class I bikeways, safety standards and signage criteria and a way-finding program, bicycle parking and motorcycle parking can substitute for vehicle parking up to a specified limit. In communities where an extensive network of routes is

not yet in place, bicycle ownership and use is less likely to reduce automobile ownership, so reductions in the total number of vehicle spaces may not be justified.

### **Specific Code Requirements for Bicycle and Motorcycle Parking**

Five requirements are recommended for bicycle parking provisions in a zoning ordinance:

- Set a standard for the number of spaces required for multi-family residential and non-residential uses;
- Establish minimal dimensional standards for bicycle parking spaces;
- Require “inverted-U” racks or lockers, but allow for alternative designs that may be in keeping with a streetscape or building design;
- Require bicycle spaces to be located in convenient, visible, well-lighted areas; and
- Set motorcycle parking standards for larger parking lots, with minimal dimensional standards and striping and signage criteria.



*Motorcycle parking spaces need dimensional standards.*



*Standards for bicycle parking should include provisions for lockers at work places.*

## Model Code Example

### Bicycle and Motorcycle Parking

#### A. Bicycle Parking

1. *Spaces Required. All multifamily residential buildings and all nonresidential development with 10 or more required vehicle parking spaces must provide at least 3 bicycle parking spaces or at least one bicycle space per 10 off-street vehicle parking spaces, whichever is greater.*
2. *Substitution for Vehicle Parking. Bicycle parking may substitute for up to 25 percent of required vehicle parking. For every five non-required bicycle parking spaces that meet the bicycle parking ownership, design and location standards below, the motor vehicle parking requirement is reduced by one space. Existing parking may be converted to take advantage of this provision.*

*Ownership, Design and Location.*

  - i. *General. Required bicycle parking spaces must:*
  - ii. *Be on private property;*
  - iii. *Consist of racks or lockers anchored so that they cannot be easily removed and must be of solid construction, resistant to rust, corrosion, hammers, and saws;*
  - iv. *Preferably use "Inverted-U" bike racks, although alternative designs may be approved by the Director;*
  - v. *Be designed so as not to cause damage to the bicycle;*
  - vi. *Facilitate easy locking without interference from or to adjacent bicycles; and*
  - vii. *Racks that support a bicycle primarily through the wheel are prohibited.*
  - a. *Size. Required bicycle parking spaces must have minimum dimensions of 2 feet in width by 6 feet in length, with a minimum overhead vertical clearance of seven feet.*
  - b. *Location*
    - i. *Required bicycle parking spaces must be located in convenient, visible, well-lighted areas without interfering with pedestrian movements. The bike racks shall not be more than 300 feet from the main entrance to the building or from internal elevator access to upper floors if located in a basement garage.*
    - ii. *Required bicycle parking may be located indoors or outdoors. If required bicycle parking facilities are not visible from the abutting street or the main entrance, signs must be posted indicating their location.*

#### B. Motorcycle Parking

1. *For any nonresidential use providing 50 or more off-street spaces, 2 required off-street parking spaces per 50 vehicle spaces must be set aside for motorcycle and scooter parking.*
2. *Each designated motorcycle parking space must be at least 4 feet wide and 8 feet in length, and identified with pavement striping and a sign.*

### **Discussion Issues for Local Jurisdictions Considering Bicycle Parking**

- Whether the City’s bicycle network provides a safe and secure system that will support additional bicycle use and justifies substitution of bicycle spaces for vehicle spaces, or are specific improvements needed; and
- Whether the City has a wayfinding and signage system in place to promote bicycle safety and foster additional bike ridership, again justifying substitution changes in the code.

## **Transportation Demand Management (TDM)**

### **Model Plan Policy**

Policy 14      Work with local, regional and state agencies, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Transportation Management Association, as well as employers and residents, to encourage and support programs that reduce vehicle miles traveled, such as preferential carpool parking, parking pricing, flexible work schedules, and ridesharing.

### **Zoning Strategy**

To implement the proposed plan policy, a zoning ordinance could allow developers to provide less than the required number of parking spaces in exchange for enhancing alternative mode travel at the development. This option would be integrated with an intensity/density bonus program or a community benefits program or just be a requirement of major new non-residential development. When compared to the cost of providing parking, enhancements to other modes of travel or incentives for drivers to share rides can be more cost-effective. As a general rule, programs that reduce the number of drive-alone trips will in turn reduce the demand for parking. TDM programs are made up of a number of different initiatives that are meant to increase the attractiveness of modes other than the car. These include but are not limited to:

- Carpool/vanpool preferential parking and gas cards
- Ride-share matching services
- Bicycle parking/lockers
- Shower facilities
- Free or deeply discounted employee transit passes, and/or Commuter Checks
- Dedicated spaces for car-sharing vehicles
- Flexible work schedules and telecommuting options
- “Guaranteed Ride Home” programs

A zoning ordinance then would:

- Allow reductions in the amount of parking provided, in exchange for participation in an approved TDM program under the bonus program;

- Optionally, require certain amenities, such as a minimum number of bicycle spaces or bicycle lockers and bicycle showers, or a certain number of spaces dedicated to car-sharing, carpooling or vanpooling, regardless of whether a bonus is requested; and
- Optionally, allow other adjustments to parking requirements in exchange for participation in a TDM program. For example, allow the developer to provide a certain number of carshare spaces instead of standard spaces in exchange for TDM program participation.



*Developers can initiate transportation demand management programs, such as providing carsharing pods or installing bicycle lockers, in exchange for reductions in parking space requirements.*

### **Specific Code Requirements for Transportation Demand Management (TDM)**

Participation in the TDM program must be assured for at least 5-10 years; a zoning ordinance should require that participation is maintained, or else the building owner must make up any parking deficiency and/or contribute to a transportation fund established by the City. Specific enforcement provisions and penalties for violations should be established.

- Require building owners to have property managers establish a point person who is in charge of administering the program for employees;
- Allow substitution of the employer's own set of TDM initiatives, especially where City-run programs are not available. In this case, the ordinance would establish minimum criteria for these programs, with bonding or other financial guarantees; and
- Establish standards for the provision of required amenities, such as bicycle parking. If the requirements state that bicycle lockers and showers, carsharing spaces or other amenities must be provided, these must be provided for the life of the building in order to qualify. (For example, bicycle showers must be fully functional, and priority spaces devoted for carpooling must be monitored to prevent abuse by non-carpool drivers.)



## Model Code Example

### Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Programs

- A. *Applicability.* The requirements of this section apply to all nonresidential development seeking a floor area ratio (FAR) or height bonus.
- B. *Required Measures.* All projects subject to the requirements of this section shall implement the following measures:
  1. ***Carpool and Vanpool Ride-matching Services.*** The designated employer contact shall be responsible for matching potential carpoolers and vanpoolers by administering a carpool/vanpool matching application. The application shall match employees who may be able to carpool or vanpool.
  2. ***Designated Employer Contact.*** Each applicant shall designate or require tenants to designate an employee as the official contact for the TDM program. The City shall be provided with a current name and phone number of the designated employer contact. The designated employer contact shall administer carpool and vanpool ride-matching services, the promotional programs, update information on the information boards/kiosks, and be the official contact for the administration of the annual survey and triennial report.
  3. ***Free Parking for Carpools, Vanpools, and Carshare.*** The preferential parking spaces shall be provided free of charge.
  4. ***Guaranteed Ride Home.*** Carpool, vanpool and transit riders shall be provided with guaranteed rides home in emergency situations. Rides shall be provided either by a transportation service provider (taxi or rental car) or an informal policy using company vehicles/ and or designated employees.
  5. ***Information Boards/Kiosks.*** The designated employer contact shall display in a permanent location the following information: transit routes and schedules; carpooling and vanpooling information; bicycle lanes, routes and paths and facility information; and alternative commute subsidy information.
  6. ***Passenger Loading Zones.*** Passenger loading zones for carpool and vanpool drop-off shall be located near the main building entrance.
  7. ***Preferential Carpool and Vanpool Parking.*** Ten percent of vehicle spaces shall be reserved for carpools or vanpools, with a minimum of one space required. Such spaces shall be provided in premium and convenient locations.
  8. ***Promotional Programs.*** The following promotional programs shall be promoted and organized by the designated employer contact: new tenant and employee orientation packets on transportation alternatives; flyers, posters, brochures, and emails on commute alternatives, Commuter Checks and transit/bus passes; transportation fairs; Spare the Air (June — October); Rideshare Week (October); trip planning assistance-routes and maps.
  9. ***Showers/Clothes Lockers.*** Shower and clothes locker facilities shall be provided free of charge.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Programs (continued)**

- C. *Additional measures. All projects subject to the requirements of this section may be required to implement any combination of the following measures to achieve the required minimum alternative mode use established for the bonus program. The Review Authority shall determine the appropriateness of each additional measure chosen by the applicant. Guidelines regarding the range of alternative mode use achievable from each of the following measures are available from the City.*
1. **Alternative Commute Subsidies/Parking Cash Out.** *Employees shall be provided with a subsidy, determined by the applicant and subject to review by the City if they use transit or commute by other alternative modes.*
  2. **Compressed Work Week.** *The applicant shall allow employees or require their tenants to allow employees to adjust their work schedule in order to complete the basic work requirement of five eight-hour workdays by adjusting their schedule to reduce vehicle trips to the worksite.*
  3. **Flextime.** *The applicant shall provide or require their tenants to provide employees with staggered work hours involving a shift in the set work hours of all employees at the workplace or flexible work hours involving individually determined work hours.*
  4. **Onsite Amenities.** *One or more of the following amenities shall be implemented: ATM, day care, cafeteria, limited food service establishment, dry cleaners, exercise facilities, convenience retail, and on-site transit pass sales.*
  5. **Paid Parking at Prevalent Market Rates.** *Parking shall be provided at a cost equal to the prevalent market rate, as determined by the City based on a survey of parking in a defined study area(s).*
  6. **Telecommuting.** *The applicant shall provide or require tenants to provide opportunities and the ability to work off-site.*
  7. **Other Measures.** *Additional measures not listed above, such as childcare facilities.*

**Discussion Issues for Local Jurisdictions Considering TDM Programs**

- Whether the TDM program is optional or mandatory for specified uses or projects above a certain size;
- Whether penalties should be imposed for non-compliance, as authorized, for example, for cash-out programs and whether periodic monitoring is required; and
- Whether applicants can re-program activities or have substitute measures as long as performance criteria are met.







# Appendix A: Links to Exemplary Parking Codes

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MTC Smart Growth Technical Assistance: Parking Reform

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**For More Information and Full Zoning Code Language, Please See:**

<i>City</i>	<i>Website</i>
Arlington County, Virginia	<a href="http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/cphd/planning/zoning/pdfs/Ordinance_Section33.pdf">http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/cphd/planning/zoning/pdfs/Ordinance_Section33.pdf</a>
Berkeley	<a href="http://codepublishing.com/ca/berkeley/">http://codepublishing.com/ca/berkeley/</a> <a href="http://codepublishing.com/ca/berkeley/html/pdfs/Berkeley23E.pdf">http://codepublishing.com/ca/berkeley/html/pdfs/Berkeley23E.pdf</a>
Boulder, Colorado	<a href="http://www.colocode.com/boulder2/title7.htm">http://www.colocode.com/boulder2/title7.htm</a>
California State Health and Safety	<a href="http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=hsc&amp;group=43001-44000&amp;file=4384">http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=hsc&amp;group=43001-44000&amp;file=4384</a>
Chicago, Illinois	<a href="http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Illinois/chicagozoning/title17chicagozoningordinance/chapter17-10parkingandloading?f=templates\$fn=default.htm\$3.0\$vid=amlegal:chicagozoning_il">http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Illinois/chicagozoning/title17chicagozoningordinance/chapter17-10parkingandloading?f=templates\$fn=default.htm\$3.0\$vid=amlegal:chicagozoning_il</a>
Hayward	<a href="http://www.hayward-ca.gov/municipal/HMCWEB/Off-StreetParking.pdf">http://www.hayward-ca.gov/municipal/HMCWEB/Off-StreetParking.pdf</a>
Redwood City	<a href="http://library.municode.com/HTML/16091/level1/ART30OREPALO.html#ART30OREPALO_30.4RENUASPIXEZODI#TOPTITLE">http://library.municode.com/HTML/16091/level1/ART30OREPALO.html#ART30OREPALO_30.4RENUASPIXEZODI#TOPTITLE</a> <a href="http://library.municode.com/HTML/16091/level1/ART30OREPALO.html#ART30OREPALO_30.3EUPAFE">http://library.municode.com/HTML/16091/level1/ART30OREPALO.html#ART30OREPALO_30.3EUPAFE</a>
Sacramento	<a href="http://www.qcode.us/codes/sacramento/view.php?topic=17-iii-17_64&amp;frames=on">http://www.qcode.us/codes/sacramento/view.php?topic=17-iii-17_64&amp;frames=on</a>
San Carlos	<a href="http://www.codepublishing.com/ca/SanCarlos/html/SanCarlos18/SanCarlos1820.html#18.20">http://www.codepublishing.com/ca/SanCarlos/html/SanCarlos18/SanCarlos1820.html#18.20</a>
San Francisco	<a href="http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/California/planning/article15off-streetparkingandloading?f=templates\$fn=default.htm\$3.0\$vid=amlegal:sanfrancisco_ca">http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/California/planning/article15off-streetparkingandloading?f=templates\$fn=default.htm\$3.0\$vid=amlegal:sanfrancisco_ca</a> <a href="http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/California/planning/article15off-streetparkingandloading?f=templates\$fn=default.htm\$3.0\$vid=amlegal:sanfrancisco_ca">http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/California/planning/article15off-streetparkingandloading?f=templates\$fn=default.htm\$3.0\$vid=amlegal:sanfrancisco_ca</a>
Seattle, Washington	<a href="http://clerk.seattle.gov/public/toc/23-54.htm">http://clerk.seattle.gov/public/toc/23-54.htm</a>
Tacoma, Washington	<a href="http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/cityclerk/Files/MunicipalCode/Title13-LandUseRegulatoryCode.PDF">http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/cityclerk/Files/MunicipalCode/Title13-LandUseRegulatoryCode.PDF</a>

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## Appendix B: Code Examples

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MTC Smart Growth Technical Assistance: Parking Reform

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## Examples of Parking Minimum Reductions

Minimum parking requirements established in zoning ordinances are intended to achieve specific goals (most commonly identified by cities as avoiding spillover parking problems and reducing congestion of on-street parking). However, these goals can also be achieved through other policies, such as pricing curb parking at market rates, residential parking permit programs, and other parking management techniques discussed later in this paper. Minimum parking requirements increase the price of development, while providing a subsidy for driving. By reducing requirements, cities can let the market dictate the amount of parking constructed, and determine what other uses may be most useful in development areas.

Eliminating parking requirements would not mean that no new parking would be constructed. Rather, it would mean that market forces would determine the appropriate level of supply, based on market demands. Minimum parking requirements could be waived entirely anywhere in a city where there are measures in place to combat parking spillover, but especially in mixed-use areas and in proximity to major transit corridors, especially around rail transit stations. One downside to eliminating parking minimums altogether is that if fees in-lieu of providing parking have been identified as a potential funding source for a public parking facility, then eliminating the requirement to provide parking also eliminates the basis for charging an in-lieu fee. Alternative funding sources, such as parking meter revenues or an additional sales tax for transportation projects and related improvements, would need to be identified.

As already noted, reduced requirements may be particularly appropriate in urban infill and Priority Development Areas immediately adjacent to the Caltrain, Muni and BART stations, where there are strong transit options and where the cities may wish to create incentives for urban infill development.

Many Bay Area cities already allow their Planning Commission to grant exemptions from minimum parking requirements for shared parking and for projects near transit. This is not always “by right”, but often approved only after a case-by-case review. Reduced minimum parking requirements may be particularly appropriate in the case of mixed-use developments with a shared supply of parking. Different types of uses have peak demand at different times of day (for example, offices, residences, and entertainment venues have different typical peak parking demand periods), and shared parking can reduce the overall parking required by a mix of uses.

The examples of specific approach to reducing parking requirements, presented in this section, show how this can be done effectively. Knowing what other cities have adopted often helps City Councils feel comfortable in enacting similar proposals.

## Berkeley

Berkeley has long supported policies that reduce vehicle use in order to reduce impacts on the community and the environment. The City's parking policies and regulations have been a critical component of this effort. Berkeley has excellent transit access, presenting more transit options than most other communities. As of 2009, about 15 percent of employed Berkeley residents commuted to work on foot. About 9 percent of employed Berkeley residents commute to work by bicycle, over five times the Alameda County average, and nearly nine times the average for the State of California. Programs like "Guaranteed Ride Home" and access to car-sharing vehicles can also play an important role in that they provide the flexibility of a car when occasionally needed. Downtown Berkeley is the second largest transit hub in the East Bay, and has extraordinary access by bus and BART. Thirteen AC Transit bus lines (2008) and several shuttles (for UC Berkeley, LBNL and Summit/Alta Bates) converge Downtown. Transit also reduces impacts traffic generated by the University of California and Downtown employment. UC Berkeley's 2020 Long Range Development Plan requires that all new University housing be accessible to the central campus within 20 minutes on foot and using transit. In addition, UC Berkeley's students and staff regularly bike through Downtown to get to the campus as 21 percent of University bike trips originate in Berkeley.

At the same time, the City's plans recognize that automobiles are likely to remain the dominant transportation mode in the foreseeable future (even if they are mostly electric or hybrid), and trucks will continue to deliver most goods. With the growth of the economy, both locally and regionally, and the increase in traffic volumes, parking continues to be an issue in Berkeley. In the Downtown area, some parking garages are filled to capacity at times during weekday hours, due to the large number of all-day monthly parkers and institutional users of Downtown parking. In 1999, the City raised all-day parking fees in the City's Downtown garages and lots to further discourage all-day parking. The effect of rising long-term parking fees was immediate. Private garages followed the City's lead and instituted comparable daily-rate increases. As a result, Downtown garages are no longer filled to capacity on a daily basis. Future efforts to increase the cost of monthly parking passes closer to the cost of daily parking would further decrease the use of public parking by long-term parkers and increase the supply for shoppers and visitors.

The City's policy and its zoning regulations have been drafted to discourage long term parking for commuters, manage the available parking supply so that it can be more readily available for short-term users, and have relatively low minimum parking requirements for residential development.

### **Southside Car-Free Housing Overlay Zone in the Zoning Ordinance**

New residential development within a designated area in the R-S residential district south of the UC Berkeley campus are not required to provide any off-street parking, and existing parking may be reduced subject to approval of a Use Permit. Occupants of residential properties approved without off-street parking within a designated car-free overlay may not receive residential parking permits. The Zoning Officer or Board may approve parking waivers or modifications for other residential development in the R-S zone based on a determination that additional or new on-site parking would be detrimental and other findings.

### **West Berkeley Commercial Zoning District**

The West Berkeley Commercial Zoning District restricts the number of parking spaces that can be provided for new development and includes a variety of other provisions to encourage pedestrian-oriented development, provide locations for commercial uses that serve area residents and business and promote other development consistent with the district purposes.

- The number of parking spaces provided for new commercial floor area shall not exceed four spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area of the commercial use, except that up to five spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area of food service uses may be provided.
- Bicycle parking spaces shall be provided for new construction at the ratio of one space per 2,000 square feet of gross floor area of non-residential space, in accordance with Section 23E.28.070.
- Any automobile parking required by this section may be leased, provided that the requirements of the general regulations concerning leased parking, Section 23E.28.030, are met and provided that the leased parking spaces are within 500 feet of the property where the parking is required; provided that leased parking a greater distance from the property may be approved by Administrative Use Permit and that if the property is located within a designated node, the leased parking spaces are located within the same designated node as the property.
- For multiple dwellings where the occupancy will be exclusively for persons over the age of 62 years, the number of required off-street parking spaces may be reduced to 25 percent of what would otherwise be required for multiple family dwelling uses, subject to obtaining a Use Permit.
- Any mixed use building (residential and commercial) shall satisfy the off-street parking standards and requirements of this District, provided, however, that the Board or the Zoning Officer may issue a Permit to modify the off-street parking and usable open space requirements where it finds such modification promotes any of the general purposes set forth in Section 23E.64.020. The Permit required shall be an Administrative Use Permit unless a Use Permit from the Board is required to approve the use or structure, in which case a Use Permit shall be required by the Board.
- If a public parking facility available for use by all members of the public is within 1,000 feet of a proposed use, the Zoning Officer or Board may approve a Use Permit to allow that use to reduce or eliminate the otherwise required parking.
- Subject to the finding in Section 23E.64.090.F, an Administrative Use Permit may be issued to designate up to 10 percent of automobile parking required for a use for bicycle and/or motorcycle parking, unless a Use Permit from the Board is required to approve any part of the application, in which case the Use Permit shall be approved by the Board. Any bicycle parking created by this designation shall be in addition to otherwise required bicycle parking.

### **Modification and Reduction of Parking Requirements**

The Zoning Officer or the Zoning Adjustments Board may approve a reduction in required off-street parking spaces in Berkeley's commercial districts based on findings, including:

## MTC Smart Growth Technical Assistance: Parking Reform

- The use is located one-third of a mile or less from a BART station, intercity rail station or rapid bus transit stops; or
- The use is located one-quarter of a mile or less from a publicly accessible parking facility, the use of which is not limited to a specific business or activity during the use's peak parking demand; or
- A parking survey conducted under procedures set forth by the Planning Department finds that within 500 feet or less of the use, on non-residential streets, at least two times the number of spaces requested for reduction are available through on-street parking spaces for at least two of the four hours of the use's peak parking demand; or
- The use includes one of the following neighborhood-serving uses: Retail Products Store(s), Food Service Establishments, and/or Personal/Household Service(s). These uses include, but are not limited to: Dry Cleaning and Laundry Agents, Drug Stores, Food Products Stores, Household Items Repair Shops, and/or Laundromats; and
- The parking requirement modification will meet the purposes of the district related to improvement and support for alternative transportation, pedestrian improvements and activity, or similar policies; or
- There are other factors, such as alternative transportation demand management strategies or policies in place that will reduce the parking demand generated by the use.

Similar provisions apply to the City's manufacturing districts (M, MM, and MU) where parking requirements may be reduced based on a determination that:

- The use is located one-third of a mile or less from a rapid bus transit stop, an intercity rail station or a bus stop serving at least four lines; or
- The use is located one-quarter of a mile or less from a public or private parking area, lot, or structure that is accessible by the employees of the use and sufficient parking supply is available therein to mitigate the reduction in parking for the use; or
- A parking survey conducted under procedures set forth by the Planning Department finds that within [500] feet or less of the use, on non-Residential District streets, at least two times the number of spaces requested for reduction are available at on-street parking spaces during the peak hours of operation of the use; and
- The parking requirement modification will implement the Goals and Policies of the West Berkeley Plan related to improvement and support for alternative transportation, pedestrian improvements and activity, or similar policies; or
- There are other project-specific transportation demand management strategies or policies in place, such as but not limited to: employer sponsored transit subsidies, car sharing programs, bicycle storage, and flexible work schedules.

### ***Berkeley Downtown Area Plan and Zoning***

The recently adopted Downtown Area Plan (DAP) and related zoning seek to balance the community's strong desire to minimize the use of autos while accommodating them to the degree necessary and mitigating potential negative impacts on pedestrians and bicyclists. To achieve this balance, the DAP and its zoning have multiple strategies to promote alternative

modes, manage parking and traffic more effectively, and make street- and parking- related improvements that support the Plan's goals.

People who come Downtown to shop or conduct other short-term business are less likely to use alternative modes because they place a premium on convenience and transit can seem unreliable and time consuming (especially at off-peak times). At the same time, shoppers and other short-term visitors are vital to Downtown's economic health and attractiveness as a destination. To maintain a thriving shopping district, Downtown must rely on people from outside of the area, and retailers must compete with other shopping options in Berkeley and surrounding communities. For retail, the availability of short-term parking – especially convenient on-street parking – plays a critical role, as does a safe and attractive pedestrian environment. Convenient parking is also important to persons with disabilities and families with small children. Accordingly, one of the key strategies for this group is adequate management of the parking supply to ensure that short-term parking is available and convenient.

City policy has long discouraged commuters from parking in Downtown. A 2004 survey of Downtown workers reported that 37 percent said they drive alone or with others and park in Downtown. Of those who arrive by car, 70 percent said they parked in garages. The rest said they parked on-street and avoided citations by moving their cars and “feeding” meters. To promote Downtown's revitalization, development in the Downtown's Core Area (the blocks around the Downtown BART station) already has some of the lowest parking requirements in the Bay Area outside of San Francisco: one space for every three dwelling units if a Use Permit is obtained. Actual demand corresponds closely with this requirement, testifying to the reduced driving rates of Downtown residents.

Parking management is a critical component of the DAP access strategy. The DAP states that the Downtown's transportation system must serve the area's three principal roles: a vibrant city center, a livable neighborhood, and a regional destination for employment, education and culture. To support this objective, the plan proposes a series of transportation management strategies that address the following themes.

- Emphasize and enhance Downtown as a destination.
- Give priority to transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists, while reducing automobile use, especially by commuters.
- Improve connectivity between Downtown and Berkeley neighborhoods, and between Downtown and the Bay Area.

The DAP's parking policies and zoning discourage commuter parking while encouraging residents, visitors, and shoppers to leave their cars parked and “experience downtown as a pedestrian.” In fact, new zoning for the Downtown (BMC Chapter 23E.68) establishes specific requirements related to parking minimums, with case-by-case review to get less parking built, but defers to decision on Code-set parking maximums to later study.

## Hayward

The City of Hayward has been particularly diligent in amending its parking regulations in the zoning ordinance to reflect planning concepts for the Downtown Specific Plan and South Hayward BART/Mission Boulevard Parking Area and related documents.

The credit for proximity to transit results in a 15 percent reduction in the number of spaces required if bus transit is within 500 feet and rail transit within 1,000 feet for public or private institutional use, retail uses and multi-family residential. Interestingly, the retail uses must provide a bus stop and shelter adjacent to the site to receive the credit.

The specific Code provisions for these reductions are shown in the following text box. Hayward also permits tandem parking with approval of the Planning Commission for multi-family projects within 1,000 feet of a bus route or rail transit station. No more than 35 percent of the units can have tandem parking, but the City Council may increase this percentage to meet the goals of an “officially-adopted Design plan,” including density and architectural design, which is a unique requirement not used by any other Bay Area city.

### Hayward’s Regulations for Reducing Parking Requirements

#### Sec. 10-2.404 Credit for Proximity to Public Transportation Facilities

- D. *Except for uses established in the Central Parking District, parking space requirements for public or private institutional or government uses, e.g., hospitals, office buildings, may be reduced by the Director of Community and Economic Development/Planning Director up to 15 percent, provided public transportation is available within 500 feet of the site or if public rail transportation is available within 1000 feet of the site.*
- E. *Except for uses established in the Central Parking District, parking space requirements for retail establishments may be reduced by the Director of Community and Economic Development/Planning Director up to 15 percent, provided a public bus stop and shelter are immediately adjacent to the site and maintained by the retail establishment.*
- F. *Except for uses established in the Central Parking District, parking space requirements for multi-family residential may be reduced by the Director of Community and Economic Development/Planning Director up to 15 percent provided public rail transportation is available within 1,000 feet of the site.*

#### Sec. 10-2.412 Central Parking District Residential Parking Requirements

*Residential parking shall be provided on the site being developed. Use of combined facilities for residential parking requirements shall be permitted if parking facility is located on site of residential development.*

- *1.0 covered and 0.50 open spaces per dwelling unit.*
- *0.5 space per dwelling unit for multiple-family dwellings providing housing exclusively for the elderly. (Occupancy requirements must be guaranteed, e.g., condition of government financing or grant, or other guarantee acceptable to the City.*

### Hayward's Regulations for Reducing Parking Requirements (continued)

*An increase in the number of dwelling units within an existing building or the conversion of a non-residential use to residential within the Central Parking District shall not require providing parking spaces. If more than two floors are converted to residential use, the developer must meet the residential parking requirements for units on the additional floors.*

### Redwood City

The City of Redwood City has implemented two separate and complementary strategies for parking:

- Management of public parking through their Downtown Parking Management Plan, and
- Updating parking requirements for new development in the Downtown area to allow for residential requirement reductions, parking maximums, and shared parking.

Adopted in 2005, the Downtown Parking Management Plan has been successful not only for managing the parking supply, but also for generating revenue to pay for public improvements. (Details on this management plan and the lessons learned will be covered in a separate paper – a parking toolkit for local governments.)

Reduced residential parking requirements in the Downtown Parking Zone complement the Public Parking Management Plan. In addition, maximums are included for residential and non-residential uses in the Downtown. Parking standards are shown in the following table. Note that additional residential reductions are available.

**Table B-1: Redwood City Parking Standards**

<i>Use</i>	<i>Downtown Minimum per Unit</i>	<i>Downtown Maximum Allowed</i>	<i>Outside of Downtown Minimum</i>
<i>Residential Uses</i>			
Dwellings, containing two (2) bedrooms or more:	1.5 per unit	3 per unit	2 per unit, with additional requirements for 4 bedrooms or more and for visitor parking
Dwellings, containing one (1) bedroom	1 per unit	2 per unit	
Dwellings, studio apartments:	0.75 per unit	1.5 per Uunit	
<i>Non-Residential Uses</i>			
Motels or Hotels	One (1) parking space for each living or sleeping unit, plus additional parking spaces for other uses such as restaurants, lounges, if present, according to the	One (1) parking space for each living or sleeping unit, plus additional parking spaces for other uses such as restaurants, lounges, if present, according	One (1) space for each living or sleeping unit, plus additional spaces

**Table B-1: Redwood City Parking Standards**

<i>Use</i>	<i>Downtown Minimum per Unit</i>	<i>Downtown Maximum Allowed</i>	<i>Outside of Downtown Minimum</i>
<i>Residential Uses</i>			
	requirements herein for such other uses	to the requirements herein for such other uses.	
Commercial Uses (all other uses permitted within the applicable zone district).	6 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area. <i>Shared Parking Bonus:</i> All shared parking spaces shall count as 2 parking spaces toward the fulfillment of the minimum requirement.	6 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area.	Ranges from: 1 space for each two hundred 200 square feet of floor area to 1 space for each 500 square feet of floor area.

- I. The minimum requirements above may be reduced if it can be shown to the satisfaction of the Zoning Administrator that fewer parking spaces than those required above are necessary.

The City was successful in getting these new standards adopted in part because of an extensive outreach program and communication with stakeholders about what other communities are doing and the lessons learned.

### San Carlos

To implement its new General Plan, including new parking policies and policies on fostering transit-supportive development and walkable neighborhoods and shopping districts, San Carlos adopted reduced parking requirements for designated Mixed Use areas, as shown in the following table. These are “as of right” with no discretionary review. The development community supported these reductions in workshops and hearings on the new ordinance because of the economic benefits; residents also were comfortable with the proposals because they fit with General Plan policies that were widely supported.

**Table B-2: Required On-Site Parking Spaces in Mixed-Use Districts in San Carlos**

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Required Parking Spaces</i>	
<i>Residential</i>		
Studio and one-bedroom units	1 space per unit	One covered space shall be provided for each unit.
Two or more bedrooms	1.5 spaces per unit	One additional guest parking space shall be provided for every 4 units for projects greater than 10 units.
<i>Non-Residential</i>		
Office	1 space per 450 square feet	
Retail	1 space per 400 square feet	
Restaurant	1 space per 250 square feet	



San Carlos also allows for reductions in parking with transportation demand management programs, proximity to transit, provision of motorcycle parking and shared parking. Of note it the limitation on these reductions – they do not apply in mixed use areas, where transit service already has been taken into account in setting reduced parking standards.

## San Carlos

### 18.20.050 Parking Reductions

*The number of on-site parking spaces required by Section 18.20.040, Required Parking Spaces, may be reduced as follows.*

- A. *Transportation Demand Management Programs. The number of required parking spaces for any project subject to Chapter 18.25, Transportation Demand Management, shall be reduced by 20 percent of the normally required number of spaces.*
- B. *Transit Accessibility. For any land use except residential single-unit and duplex development, if any portion of the lot is located within 1/4 mile of a transit stop with regular, scheduled service during the weekday hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., the number of required parking spaces may be reduced by 20 percent of the normally required number of spaces. This parking reduction does not apply in the Mixed-Use or the Industrial Arts Districts because parking requirements for these districts already reflect transit accessibility.*
- C. *Motorcycle Parking. Motorcycle parking may substitute for up to five percent of required automobile parking. Each motorcycle space must be at least four feet wide and seven feet deep.*
- D. *Shared Parking. Where a shared parking facility serving more than one use will be provided, the total number of required parking spaces may be reduced up to 40 percent with Planning Commission approval of a Conditional Use Permit approval, if the Commission finds that:*
  - 1. The peak hours of use will not overlap or coincide to the degree that peak demand for parking spaces from all uses will be greater than the total supply of spaces;
  - 2. The proposed shared parking provided will be adequate to serve each use;
  - 3. A parking demand study prepared by an independent traffic engineering professional approved by the City supports the proposed reduction; and
  - 4. In the case of a shared parking facility that serves more than one property, a parking agreement has been prepared consistent with the provisions of Off-Site Parking Facilities.

## San Francisco

Among Bay Area cities, San Francisco is the least restrictive in terms of minimum parking requirements, reflecting its historic urban character, walkability and extensive network of transit service. The Planning Code provides specific exemptions for small space users, occupying generally less than 5,000 square feet, as well as for affordable housing, senior housing and group housing outside residential neighborhoods. This is a good model for urban infill, where active frontages are desired with storefronts and spaces for walk-up offices and similar businesses,

which can rely on on-street parking and transit modes for employee and customer access. Table 3 presents these reduced standards for reference.

**Table B-3: Off-Street Parking Spaces Required in San Francisco for Selected Uses**

<i>Use or Activity</i>	<i>Number of Off-Street Parking Spaces Required</i>
Dwelling, specifically designed for and occupied by senior citizens,	None in districts other than RH-1 and RH-2,
Dwelling, in an affordable housing project	None in districts other than RH-1 and RH-2,
Group housing of any kind	None in districts other than RH-2,
Offices or studios of architects, engineers, interior designers and other design professionals and studios of graphic artists	One for each 1,000 square feet of occupied floor area, where the occupied floor area exceeds 5,000 square feet.
Other business office	One for each 500 square feet of occupied floor area, where the occupied floor area exceeds 5,000 square feet.
Other retail space	One for each 500 square feet of occupied floor area up to 20,000 where the occupied floor area exceeds 5,000 square feet, plus one for each 250 square feet of occupied floor area in excess of 20,000.
Live/work units	One for each 2,000 square feet of occupied floor area, where the occupied floor area exceeds 7,500 square feet, except in RH or RM Districts, within which the requirement shall be one space for each live/work unit.

### Outside the Bay Area

Outside the Bay Area are examples of jurisdictions that have reduced minimum parking requirements to help meet transportation policy objectives.

- **Sacramento.** The City of Sacramento made significant reductions in minimum parking standards and also established maximums for office uses, with the result being a fairly narrow band. **In the Central Business District (CBD):** Not more than 1 space per 500 gross sq. ft. **Within the Central City but outside the CBD:** Not less than 1 space per 450 gross sq. ft. (2.2 spaces per 1,000 gross sq. ft.) and not more than 1 space per 400 gross sq. ft. (2.5 spaces per 1,000 gross sq. ft.). **Outside the Central City:** Not less than 1 space per 400 gross sq. ft. (2.5 spaces per 1,000 gross sq. ft.) and not more than 1 space per 275 gross sq. ft. (3.6 spaces per 1,000 gross sq. ft.) These changes proved to be acceptable because of the good rail transit system which was designed to provide excellent access to the CBD and the Central City with radial routes.
- **Arlington County, Virginia.** Arlington has reduced parking minimums close to Metro rail stations. In the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor, the County’s Zoning Ordinance significantly reduces minimum parking requirements for certain uses. For commercial development within ¼ mile of a Metro station, they are halved from 1 per 530 square feet to 1 per 1000 square feet. For retail and service commercial uses within 1,500 feet of a Metro station, they are waived entirely for the first 5,000 square feet. Actual parking

ratios are often lower, following negotiations between the County and the developer – in some cases, no additional parking is required.

- **Boulder, Colorado.** In Boulder’s central area, the City has no minimum parking requirements for nonresidential uses. 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 for resale to their employees. This is usually a much cheaper strategy than building parking onsite. Public 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.
- **Chicago, Illinois.** In a comprehensive revision of the City’s zoning ordinance, Chicago established parking standards based on “parking groups” with reduced requirements— as-of-right—for transit-served locations, for small dwelling units in multi-family housing, and for retail stores. The retail space exemption, ranging from 4,000 square feet up to 10,000 square feet, is keyed to zoning district designators reflecting urban character and transit access. Downtown is treated separately, with no parking requirements in general. The City also capped leasing of excess space in residential buildings for office tenants in order to avoid over-building of parking structures. Finally, the City eliminated parking requirements for small spaces irrespective of use as a further way to reduce the costs of infill development. Code language to set the provisions in place is shown below and on the following page.

### **Chicago Off-Street Parking Reductions and Exemptions**

#### **17-10-0102-A Landmarks**

1. *No additional off-street parking or loading spaces are required for rehabilitation or reuse of an official Chicago Landmark building.*
2. *No additional off-street parking or loading spaces are required for rehabilitation or reuse of an existing “contributing building” within an official Chicago Landmark district.*

#### **17-10-0102-B Transit-Served Locations**

- E. *In B, C or D districts, minimum off-street parking ratios are reduced by 50 percent from the otherwise applicable standards for rehabilitation or reuse of existing structures located within 600 feet of a CTA or METRA rail station entrance.*
  - F. *For new construction in such locations, the Zoning Administrator is authorized to approve off-street parking ratio reductions of up to 25 percent if the Commissioner determines, based on information provided by the applicant, that transit use and alternatives to private automobile use will be actively promoted and/ or that other factors are likely to result in automobile ownership rates that are lower than indicated by applicable off-street parking ratios.*
3. *The 600-foot distance specified in this section must be measured along a straight line between the rail station entrance and the entrance of the building for which the parking reduction is requested.*

#### **17-10-0102-C Underground Parking**

*When buildings in “D” zoning districts provide all parking spaces underground, minimum off-street parking ratios are reduced by 50 percent from otherwise applicable standards.*

**Chicago Off-Street Parking Reductions and Exemptions (continued)**

**17-10-0102-D Small Dwelling Units**

*The Zoning Administrator is authorized to approve off-street parking ratio reductions of up to 25 percent for multi-unit residential developments in “D” districts if the Zoning Administrator determines, based on information provided by the applicant, that automobile ownership rates are likely to be lower than minimum off-street parking requirements. In order to qualify for consideration of lower parking ratios under this provision, the building must contain 100 or more dwelling units and the average size of a dwelling unit within the building must be less than 800 square feet.*

**17-10-0102-E Minimal Parking**

*When the minimum off-street parking requirements of this chapter result in a requirement to provide fewer than the following number of parking spaces, off-street parking need not be provided:*

<i>District</i>	<i>Parking Waived if Minimum Requirement is for Less than:</i>
D dash 5	5 spaces
D dash 7, 10	10 spaces
D dash 12, 16	50 Spaces

- **Seattle, Washington.** In Seattle, amendments to the City’s parking regulations were initiated in the 1990s after approval of a light rail system for the Puget Sound Region prompted a renewed commitment to neighborhood and downtown planning. As in Chicago and other central cities, the new zoning provides for specific reductions in transit served areas, but with a larger service area for walk-in patrons – one quarter mile, which is defined as the walking distance measured from the nearest transit stop to the lot line of the lot containing the use. A two-tier system is set up, for multi-family and commercial zones and then for industrial zones, as follows:
  - In multifamily and commercial zones, the minimum parking requirement for all uses is reduced by 20 percent if the use is located within 1,320 feet of a street with frequent transit service.
  - In industrial zones, the minimum parking requirement for a nonresidential use is reduced by 15 percent if the use is located within 1,320 feet of a street with peak transit service headways of 15 minutes or less.

Seattle also allows a reduction of up to 40 percent in the parking requirement for office and manufacturing uses with alternative transportation programs and provision of certified carpool spaces. These have to be backed up by a cash fee, performance bond or other acceptable guarantee, and the Director of the Department of Transportation has to provide certification to the Planning Director for these reductions to be approved. The City also allows for reductions for projects with parking for City-recognized car-sharing programs (1 one-for-one space reduction in the total number of spaces required for every parking space leased by a care-sharing program, and 3-for-1 for larger projects with 20 or more spaces). In order to gain this exception, an agreement between the property owner and car-sharing program must be approved by the Director and the

agreement, along with a notice that the agreement is the basis for this exception to the parking requirement, must be recorded with the title to the property before a Master Use Permit is issued. Finally, the City offers as-of-right parking waivers for pedestrian-designated zones, as shown below.

**Table B-4: Parking Waivers for Pedestrian-Designated Zones in Seattle**

<i>Use</i>	<i>Parking waivers</i>
A General sales and service uses; Medical service uses; Lodging uses; and Entertainment uses, except motion picture theaters and performing arts theaters	NCI zones – Parking waived for first 4,000 square feet of each business establishment NC2 and NC3 zones– Parking waived for first 5,000 square feet of each business establishment
B Motion picture theaters; and performing arts theaters	Parking waived for first 150 seats
C Eating and drinking establishments	NC1, NC2 and NC3 – Parking waived for first 2,500 square feet of each business establishment

- Tacoma, Washington.** In Tacoma, a hierarchy of mixed use centers was established in the City’s General Plan, and then zoning amendments were adopted, allowing 30 percent reductions in parking requirements for residential, commercial and office uses. In addition, the City allowed a blanket exemption for any use occupying 1,000 square feet or less as well as for any pre-existing building at the time the amendments were adopted, and for the first 3,000 square feet of ground-level retail and eating and drinking establishments. Pedestrian streets were designated, and buildings located along them need not provide parking. Parking reductions also are offered in transit-served areas, for uses with trip reduction plans for, car-sharing spaces, residential uses in mixed-use development and for projects creating on-street spaces. The Code provisions for these parking reductions are shown below.

**Table B-5: Parking Reductions in Tacoma**

<i>Parking in Mixed-Use Center Districts</i>	
Quantity	<p><b>Residential Uses.</b> Minimum 1.0 stall per unit  <b>Commercial or Office Uses.</b> Minimum 2.5 stalls per 1000 square feet of floor area.  <b>UCX-TD Commercial or Office Uses</b> (including retail, service and eating and drinking establishments). Minimum 0 stalls per 1000 square feet of floor area.  <b>Other Uses.</b> For uses not specifically listed above, the parking requirement in the Mixed-Use Center Districts shall be 70 percent of the parking requirement for that use identified. For purposes of calculating parking quantity requirements, “floor area,” when used, shall not include space devoted to parking.</p>
Exemptions	<p>No parking is required for any structure in existence upon the date the Mixed-Use Center was created within which it exists. New development shall provide parking as required. In NCX and CCX Districts, no parking is required for buildings located within 10 feet of the right-of-way of the designated core pedestrian streets. In NCX, CCX, and UCX Districts, no parking is required for the first 3,000 square feet of each ground-level retail or eating and drinking establishment.</p>
<i>Parking Quantity Reductions. The parking requirements for mixed-use, multi-family, commercial, institutional, and industrial developments within Mixed Use X-Districts may be reduced as follows:</i>	
Transit Access	<p>Parking requirement shall be reduced by 25 percent for sites located within 500 feet of a transit stop and 50 percent for sites located within 500 feet of a transit stop at which a minimum of 20-minute peak hour service is provided. Applicants requesting this reduction must provide a map identifying the site and transit service schedules for all transit routes within 500 feet of the site.</p>
Trip Reduction Plan	<p>Parking requirement shall be reduced by 25 percent for developments that create and implement a site-specific Trip Reduction plan and program that includes features such as employer-provided transit passes, telecommuting, ridesharing, carpooling, car sharing, bicycling, flexible work schedules, etc. The trip reduction plan shall be reviewed and approved by the City’s CTR Coordinator, and yearly reports shall be provided.</p>
Car-Sharing Stalls	<p>Parking requirements shall be reduced by one stall for each stall that is dedicated and designated for use by a locally-operating car sharing program, such as “Zipcar.”</p>
Mixed-Use/Shared Parking Credit	<p>No parking shall be required for the residential units in a mixed-use project where at least 50 percent of the floor area is designed for commercial or institutional use.</p>
On-Street Parking Credit	<p>Parking requirements shall be reduced ½ stall per each new public, on-street parking stall provided as part of the project (through the installation of angled or perpendicular spaces with bulb-outs and curbs or other methods).</p>



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