



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

ASSEMBLY MEMORANDUM

No. AM 681-2022

Meeting Date: November 22, 2022

1 **FROM: ASSEMBLY MEMBERS VOLLAND, CROSS, AND DUNBAR**
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 3 **SUBJECT: AO 2022-80(S): AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL**
 4 **ASSEMBLY AMENDING ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 21**
 5 **CHAPTERS 21.04, ZONING DISTRICTS; 21.07, DEVELOPMENT AND**
 6 **DESIGN STANDARDS; 21.11, DOWNTOWN; 21.15, RULES OF**
 7 **CONSTRUCTION AND DEFINITIONS, AND AMENDING ANCHORAGE**
 8 **MUNICIPAL CODE OF REGULATIONS SECTION 21.20.007,**
 9 **SCHEDULE OF FEES, IN ORDER TO AMEND THE OFF-STREET**
 10 **PARKING AND SITE ACCESS DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND**
 11 **ACHIEVE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS FOR INFILL AND**
 12 **REDEVELOPMENT, HOUSING, AND ACCESSIBLE LAND USE.**
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15 This AM outlines the changes in AO 2022-80(S)version from the original ordinance
 16 introduced on September 13, 2022. It also summarizes the S-version’s development
 17 process and explains the rationale for the S-version’s changes.
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19 The S-version arises from community feedback about various challenges facing
 20 Anchorage, the most notable of which is the need for more housing. The S-version also
 21 attempts to simplify the original version and to decouple parking issues from site access
 22 and other design standards. It eliminates several maps, tables, and an incentive system
 23 that were previously proposed. The overarching policy goals of this new, streamlined S-
 24 version are to:
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- 26 - Make it more affordable to build housing and commercial development in Anchorage
- 27 - Give designers and developers increased flexibility
- 28 - Simplify proposed changes to Title 21
- 29 - Encourage Adaptive Re-use of Vacant Properties
- 30 - Prioritize the creation of connected public spaces over empty swaths of pavement
- 31 - Help accommodate non-motorized, multimodal travel

32 **DESCRIPTION OF S-VERSION CHANGES FROM THE ORIGINAL ORDINANCE**

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 35 The S-version of the *Title 21 Parking and Site Access Amendments* ordinance revises the
 36 code amendment language of the original ordinance.¹ Following is an overview of its
 37 changes to the two main parts of the ordinance: *parking* and *site access*.
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¹ The S-version follows standard legislative formatting rules for showing all revisions to code amendment text from the original AO 2022-80:

- New words proposed by the S-version are bolded and underlined.
- [DELETED WORDS FROM CURRENT ADOPTED CODE LANGUAGE ARE BOLDED, BRACKETED, AND CAPITALIZED.]
- [~~Deleted words that were new language proposed in the original AO are struck out, bolded, underlined, and bracketed.~~]

Parking. The S-version removes off-street minimum parking requirements, in all areas of the Municipality. This change replaces the ordinance’s proposed lower, area-specific parking requirements for urban neighborhoods and proposed streamlined approvals of site-specific reductions in required parking. As a result, Title 21 will no longer require developments in the Municipality to provide a minimum number of off-street parking spaces. Developers will decide how many parking spaces to include on each site.

In consideration of the removal of parking minimums, the S-version also revises the amendments to other Title 21 regulations for off-street parking facilities. For example, it shortens parking regulation intent statements, parking space usage regulations, and rules for calculating parking requirements such as for the maximum allowed number of parking spaces. It adjusts the accessible (ADA) parking space requirements, simplifies the amendments to bicycle parking requirements, and adds a few requirements to mitigate potential effects from eliminating parking minimums. The following table provides a more detailed comparison of the S-version’s changes from the original AO 2022-80 amendments to the Title 21 *parking* regulations:

Parking Regulation	A.O. 2022-80 Code Amendment (as introduced on 9-13-2022)	S-version Amendment
Minimum Off-Street Parking Requirements (21.07.090A. - E.)	Set area-specific minimum parking requirements that are 10% to 35% lower for urban neighborhoods and public transit corridors. Remove parking requirements in the future within yet-to-be-created parking management districts.	Completely remove off-street parking requirements in all parts of the Municipality. No longer regulate the usage or availability of parking spaces. Allow shared and off-site parking, by-right.
Applicability of Parking Design Standards (21.07.090E.1.)	No change to current requirement that all parking facilities must comply with the Title 21 development standards for constructing parking facilities.	Require all areas <u>used</u> for off-street parking to meet the Title 21 development standards for parking facilities.
Maximum Allowed Parking (21.07.090E.2.)	No change to current maximum allowed number of parking spaces, which is 125% of the minimum parking requirement for most commercial uses.	Base the maximum allowed number of parking spaces on the size of the building.
Parking Reductions (21.07.090F.)	Streamline approvals of % reductions in the required number of parking spaces, to become by-right approvals for developments that incorporate parking management strategies or that use less parking (e.g., affordable housing). Add to the menu of parking reduction strategies, through which developments may earn percentage reductions in the parking requirement.	Allow developments to provide little or no parking, by-right, without having to earn percentage reductions. Beginning in 2024 after a transition period, require large developments to select one parking demand reduction strategy from a simplified list of parking reduction strategies. Exempt smaller projects, affordable housing, etc.
Accessible (ADA) Parking Spaces (21.07.090J.)	No change to current required number of accessible (ADA) parking spaces, which is set as a ratio of the total amount of (required) parking provided, except in the urban neighborhoods with a lower overall parking requirement.	Fewer ADA spaces (or none) will be required in developments that choose to build fewer or no parking spaces. Therefore, increase the number of required ADA spaces as a ratio of the total amount of parking provided.

Parking Regulation	A.O. 2022-80 Code Amendment <i>(as introduced on 9-13-2022)</i>	S-version Amendment
Bicycle Parking Requirements <i>(21.07.090K.)</i>	Require most smaller developments to provide at least one U-rack. Increase the bike parking requirement in urban neighborhoods and transit corridors. Require a percentage of bike parking to be in secure and sheltered areas for employee and resident bike parking.	Wait until 2024 to apply the amended bike parking requirements, after a transition period. Increase the bike parking requirement by the same amount in all areas, rather than in just the urban neighborhoods. Allow co-location of bike parking among uses.

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The net effect of these changes is to simplify the parking regulations in Title 21, cutting the code sections devoted to off-street parking requirements (21.07.090A. through F.) from 20 pages down to 7 pages. These changes can be expected to reduce the time that developers and municipal zoning plan reviewers must devote to ensuring conformance with Title 21. For many kinds of developments, parking minimums also comprise the largest site development costs and site area requirements mandated by Title 21.

Site Access. With respect to *site access* regulations (e.g., driveways and walkways), the overall approach is to separate out the *parking* amendments from the *site access* amendments in AO 2022-80 and move forward first with only the *parking* amendments in the S-version. The intent of the Planning Department is to take the *site access* amendments from AO 2022-80 and reconstitute them in a separate ordinance. The Planning Department will take the *site access* amendments back to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a public hearing and then submit them to the Assembly in 2023.

Therefore, the S-version language for AO 2022-80 reverses all the parts of the ordinance that proposed to amend the Title 21 *site access* regulations. This includes deleting (i.e., reversing) all the amendments to current adopted Title 21 driveway standards, pedestrian access facilities, and residential and mixed-use design standards. The S-version restores the current adopted code language for these *site access* sections and moves forward with amendments to only the *parking*-related sections of the original ordinance.

SOURCE AND RATIONALE FOR THE (S) VERSION'S CHANGES

Development of S-version. Assembly Members Volland, Dunbar, and Cross initiated an S-version working group process with community volunteers and the Planning Department to discuss and propose changes in the draft ordinance that was recommended by the Planning Department and Planning and Zoning Commission. The Assembly Members initiated the working group to address several issues heard through community input regarding the draft *Parking and Site Access Amendments* ordinance. Issues included the overall length of the ordinance, the complexity and volume of changes to certain sections of Title 21, and that minimum parking requirements for residential or commercial uses were not eliminated with the draft ordinance.

The Assembly Members provided an initial draft S-version to the Planning Department in September, for discussion. Over the course of four working group meetings, proposed edits to the S-version were discussed and accepted by the working group. The S-version introduced to the Assembly is the product of the working group effort and includes such items as the elimination of minimum parking requirements, which are foreseen as a viable way to reduce development costs to bring new housing to Anchorage.

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2 *Rationale for S-version Changes.* Parking sprawl hinders the creation of connected
3 spaces and multimodal travel by pushing housing and commercial uses ever further apart.
4 Large surface area parking increases the distances that must be traveled to get from place
5 to place without a car. It can be argued that this has the effect of discouraging travel by
6 foot, bicycle, or wheelchair. This, in turn, hinders accessibility and equity, as lower income
7 residents are less likely to own a car or multiple cars. Additionally, excess parking is
8 harmful for the environment and adds long term costs to our stormwater system, while
9 impacting Anchorage's property tax base by taking up much of our buildable land.

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11 Recently, the Assembly approved the funding of a Long Range Transportation Plan, to
12 include the study of snow removal from streets and sidewalks, pedestrian safety, right-of-
13 way management, and on-street parking management. This plan can recommend
14 mitigation strategies for on-street parking and right-of-way, should future need arise.

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16 **ATTACHMENT A: SIMPLIFIED (S) VERSION – FOR REFERENCE ONLY**

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18 Because the S-version ordinance must be formatted to show all its changes to the code
19 amendment language in AO 2022-80, the S-version is lengthy and includes complicated
20 formatting in some sections. *Attachment A: Simplified S-version – For Reference Only* is
21 provided as an informational exhibit to clarify how the S-version would change the current
22 adopted Title 21 code language.

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24 The *Simplified S-version – For Reference Only* just shows how the S-version changes the
25 currently adopted Title 21 code text. It removes all the text from the S-version that shows
26 how the S-version differs from the original AO 2022-80. This *Simplified S-version* is
27 informational only and does not replace or substitute for the S-version main document.

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29 The S-version main document, AO 2022-80(S), is the document recommended for official
30 adoption. We request that proposed floor amendments (if any) from Assembly Members
31 should refer to the S-version main document.

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33 **RECOMMENDATION:**

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35 **We request your support for the S-version, AO 2022-80(S).**

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37 Prepared by: Assembly Counsel's Office
38 Respectfully submitted: Daniel Volland, Assembly Member
39 District 1, North Anchorage

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41 Kevin Cross, Assembly Member
42 District 2, Eagle River, Chugiak & JBER

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44 Forrest Dunbar, Assembly Member
45 District 5, East Anchorage

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47 Attachments: Attachment A—Simplified S-version – For Reference Only
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49 (Planning and Zoning Commission Case No. 2022-0026)
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