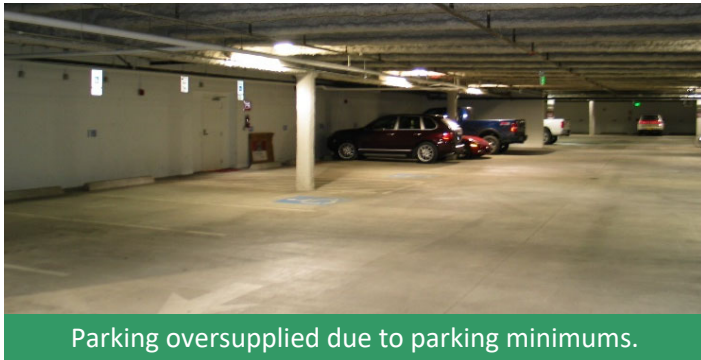




Title 21 Parking and Site Access Amendments

*An Update to Anchorage's Planning and Zoning Rules for
Minimum Parking and Site Access Requirements*



Parking oversupplied due to parking minimums.



One car space can fit ten bike spaces.

Community Discussion Draft



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Parking and Site Access Text Amendment

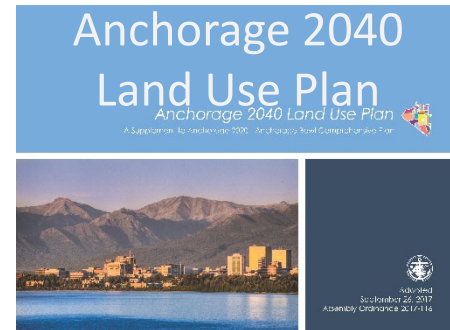
A Title 21 zoning code change to streamline and offer more options for minimum parking requirements, reflect the character and goals for urban and transit-supportive neighborhoods, and increase safety and quality of multi-modal site access

Why is this important?

The Anchorage Bowl population is forecast to grow by up to 21,000 households and more than 40,000 jobs by 2040. Infill and redevelopment – i.e., reinvestment in older, existing buildings, neighborhoods, and commercial districts – anchors the city’s plan for growing in the future. A barrier to urban development are parking costs that often are unnecessary. Parking lots can take up most of a property and raise housing costs in addition to having unintended health, environmental, and aesthetic impacts. As a result, many communities are reducing parking requirements. A walkable or bikeable experience is also a key attribute of successful urban neighborhood contexts. Improving site access along with lowering minimum parking requirements will allow for more efficient land use and more flexibility to meet market demand in urban neighborhood contexts. This project addresses these goals and carries out implementation actions in the *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan*.

Action 4-3: Allow more parking reductions by-right in key areas.

Action 4-6: Reform internal site circulation (driveway) standards.



Project Schedule: How to Be Involved at Each Step

The project is in Step 2. Your feedback on the Community Discussion Draft will help the Municipality to prepare a Public Hearing Draft to go before the Planning and Zoning Commission in the first quarter of 2022.



Step	Public Involvement
1. Spring/Summer 2021 Pre-consultations	Pre-Consultations with public, agencies, and subject experts. Discussion of different options for code amendments.
2. Winter 2021 Community Discussion Draft	<i>Community Discussion Draft Review</i> code changes available for public review in October 2021. Comments are due December 17, 2021.
3. Winter/Spring 2022 PZC-Recommended Draft Anchorage Assembly Final	<i>Public Hearing Draft</i> and public hearing before the Planning & Zoning Commission for a recommendation. <i>Final Draft</i> to Anchorage Assembly for a public hearing on adoption of the amendments.

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LEARN MORE: www.muni.org/Planning/2040actions.aspx



Parking and Site Access Text Amendment

Project Overview

Use Land Efficiently, Reduce Costs, Respond to Housing Demand

The proposed code change will replace five existing area-specific administrative parking reductions with an area-specific lower minimum parking requirement for traditional urban neighborhoods near Downtown and for transit-supportive development corridors extending from Midtown. The project reduces the minimum number of parking spaces only; developers may still choose to provide more parking. Developers will also have more choice with added options for obtaining parking reductions.

Most kinds of parking reductions are proposed to become “non-discretionary”. This means that a proposed development which meets the requirements in the code are eligible to get the full percentage reduction established in the code by-right without the Municipal Traffic Engineer and Planning Director reviewing or determining the percentage amount. This will provide more certainty to developers in site planning since approval up to a certain percent does not hinge on a review step.

The proposed code change also reduces some circulation aisle requirements for multi-family housing and tailors driveway standards by urban neighborhood context. It also improves site access for pedestrians, bicyclists, ride-share, and transit riders.



Good site access for pedestrians.



Driveway and parking takes most of the space on a site.

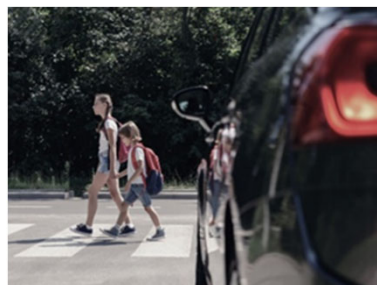
Outcomes

Reflects Character and Goals of Urban Neighborhood Contexts:

- Allows more efficient land use.
- Traditional urban and transit-corridor neighborhoods get new developments that fit their character and goals.
- Minimum parking requirements reduced in parts of the Anchorage Bowl where parking demand is lower and multi-modal access is a key priority; developer still has choice to add more parking than is required if market demands it.
- Amends parking circulations standards for multi-family housing to prevent wide swaths of asphalt out of character with neighborhoods.

Meets Housing Needs:

- Will not have to pay for expensive parking spaces if they are not needed.
- Greater flexibility in parking will facilitate develop of a variety of housing types; developers better able to respond to market demands.



Increased Safety and Improved Quality of Multi-Modal Access:

- Improves site access for pedestrians, bicyclists, ride-share, and public transit.

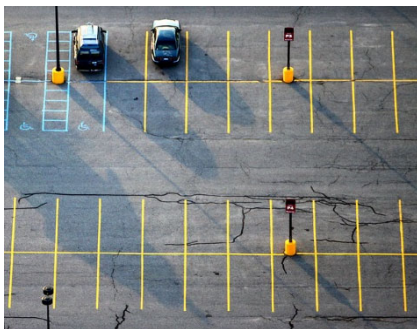
Streamlines Code and Offers More Options to Developers:

- More choice for parking management strategies.
- Offers options for smaller parking lot space dimensions for land uses with lower-parking turnovers.
- Allows non-discretionary approval for some parking reductions.
- Consolidates parking, driveway, and pedestrian access regulations into fewer sections of Title 21.
- Simplifies and streamlines residential pedestrian frontage requirements.



Summary of Major Proposals

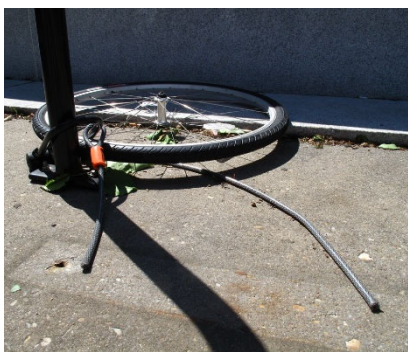
Issues



High minimum parking standards lead to over supply in urban context areas and land use inefficiencies.



Driveway and parking takes most of the space on a site.



Lack of secure and convenient bicycle parking.

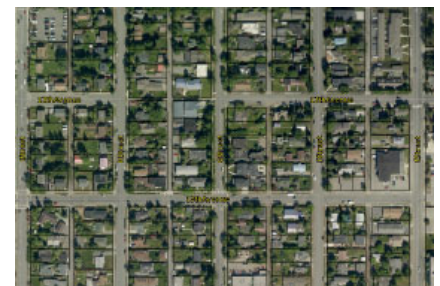
Main Proposals

1. Streamline approvals for administrative parking reductions from the minimum number of required parking spaces.
2. Provide a more complete menu of available parking reduction strategies.
3. Replace five area-specific administrative parking reductions with a lower minimum by-right parking requirement in urban neighborhood contexts near Downtown and along transit-supportive development corridors.
4. Improve site access for pedestrians, bicyclists, ride-share, and public transit ridership.
5. Amend residential access and circulation driveway requirements in urban contexts to be truer to neighborhood character.
6. Allow smaller dimensions of parking spaces and aisles for certain uses and urban contexts.

Benefits



Good site access for pedestrians.



Tailors regulations for areas with an urban street grid.



Secure bike storage for residents and commuters.

Pages 4 – 13 that follow outline these six main proposals in more detail.

Attachment 2 pages ii. and iii. cross-reference these six-main proposals to the specific code amendment language.



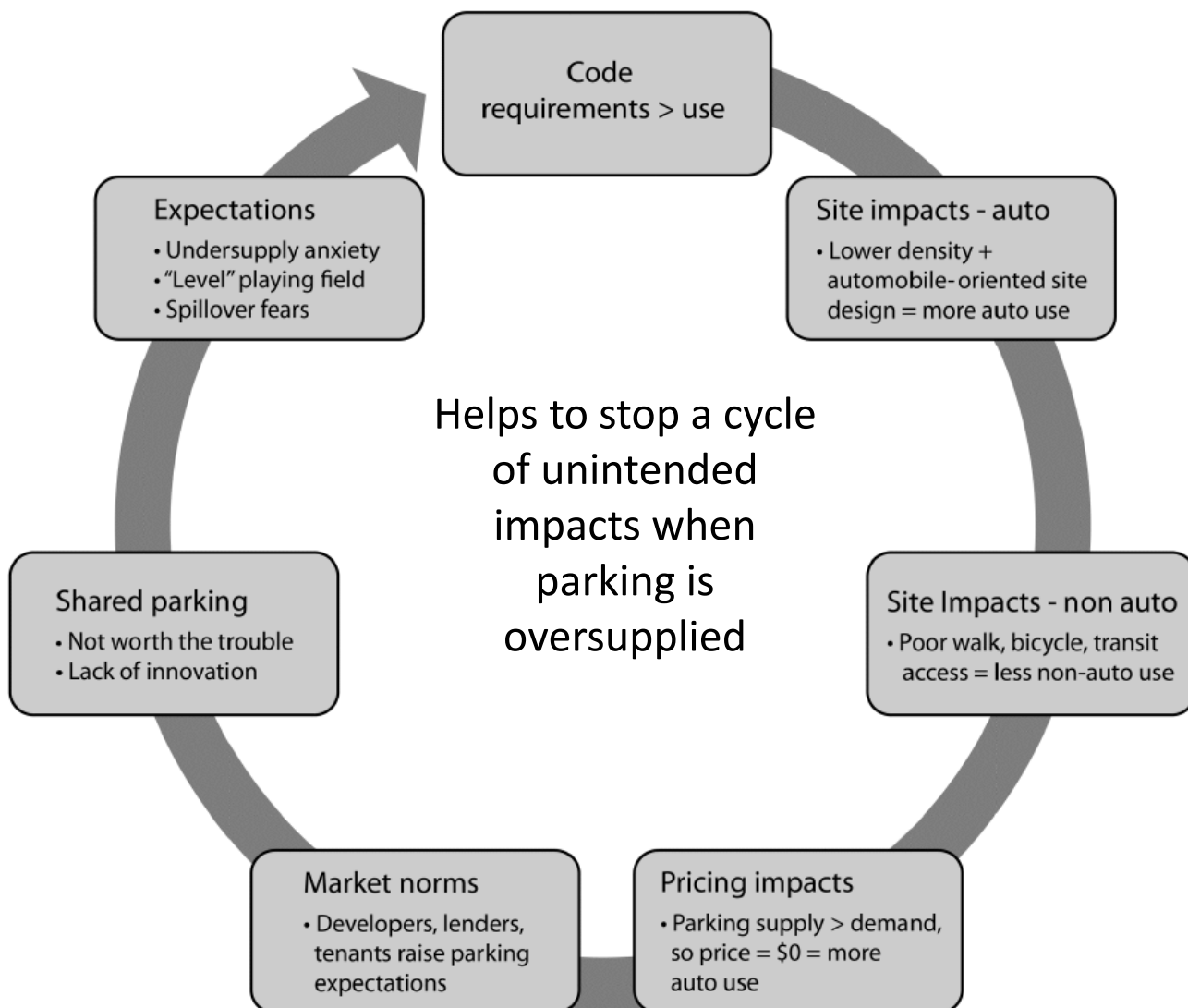
1. Streamlined Approvals for Administrative Parking Reductions

Current

- Discretionary approval (signature of Traffic Director/Engineer and Planning Director) for all parking reductions.
- Parking studies required for many parking reductions.
- Extensive pre-requisite approval criteria.

Proposed

- Allow non-discretionary approvals of most parking reductions up to a maximum percent (%) reduction (see next page for proposed percents).
- Set a maximum % combined reduction from multiple non-discretionary reductions.
- Clarify approval criteria for parking reductions that still require discretionary review.
- Streamline and clarify the development standards for shared parking, off-site parking, and other reductions.
- Calculate site-specific parking reductions more easily and consistently.



Credit/Illustration: Richard Willson, *Parking Reform Made Easy*



2. More Complete Menu of Available Parking Reduction Strategies

Current

- No minimum parking reductions for car-share programs, enhanced walkways, complete sidewalks, pedestrian amenities, unbundled parking, adaptive reuse, or historic preservation.
- Outdated menu choices for parking reductions that are often not utilized.

Proposed

- Add car-sharing to the shared vehicle programs eligible for parking reductions.
- Add reductions for enhanced walkways, transit shelters, and other pedestrian amenities.
- Move accessory dwelling unit (ADU) parking exception into parking reductions and simplify rules.
- Add parking reductions for adaptive reuse of older buildings and landmark preservation (often occurs on smaller urban lots with less lot space for parking).
- Delete unused and problematic parking reductions.

Parking Reduction Strategies		Non-discretionary Reductions
Shared Vehicle Programs	Carpool Program Rideshare (Vanpool) Car-Share Program Transit Pass Benefits	up to 2% up to 5% NEW up to 10% up to 10%
Enhanced Pedestrian Access	Extra Bicycle Parking Enhanced Walkway Complete Sidewalk Transit Stop or Shelter Pedestrian Amenities	up to 10% NEW up to 2% NEW up to 2% up to 2% NEW +1%
Parking Pricing	Parking Cash-out Unbundled Parking	up to 10% NEW up to 10%
Housing	Affordable Housing ADUs Senior Housing	up to 25% area-specific exemption up to 25%
Efficient Parking Facilities	Shared Parking Off-site Parking District Parking Land Banking	yes, for up to 3 uses yes, for abutting lots discretionary only up to 25%
Infill Goals	Adaptive Reuse NEW Historic Preservation NEW	exempts small increases up to 25% if listed



3 . Area-Specific, Lower Parking Requirements (cont'd): Current and Proposed

Current

Five area-specific administrative parking reductions (map below left):

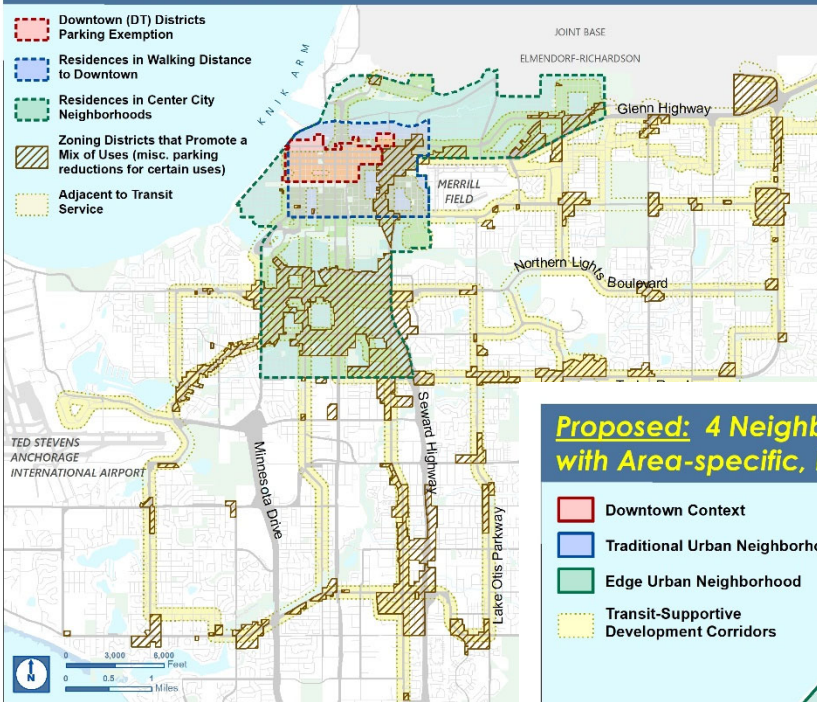
- Downtown no minimum parking requirement.
- One specific fits-all minimum parking requirement elsewhere.
- Some are based on public transit routes that periodically change year-to-year.

Proposed

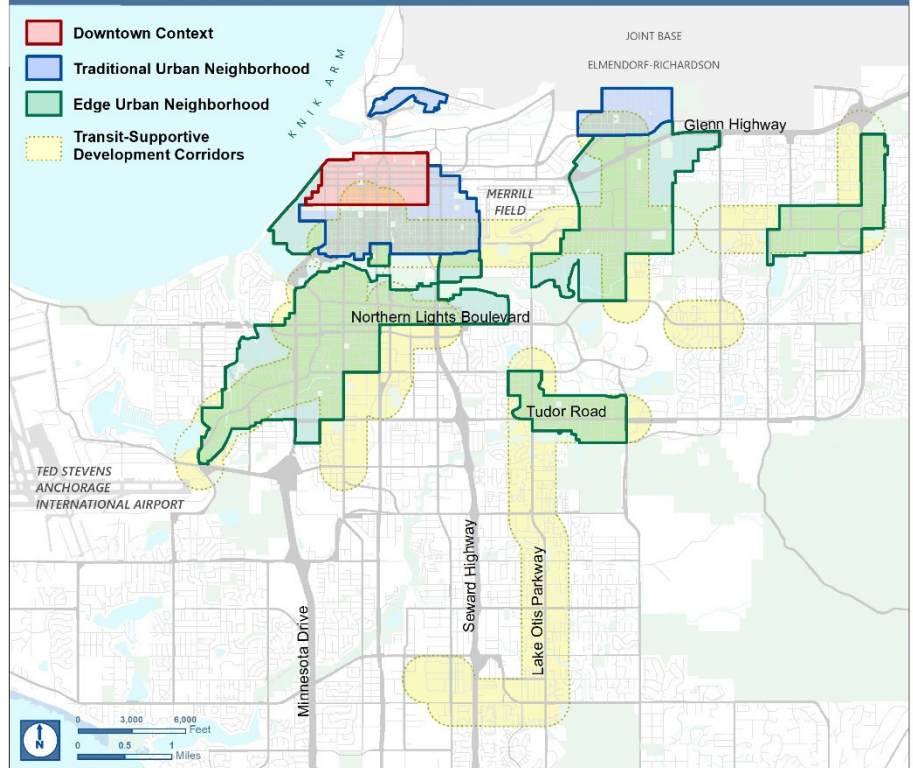
- Recognize, define, and map Anchorage's urban neighborhood development contexts.
- Include neighborhood context maps in Title 21.
- Replace the five area-specific parking reductions with lower minimum by-right parking requirements in the defined/mapped urban neighborhood development contexts (map below right).

- Downtown: All zones exempted from parking requirements (same as current, but area slightly expanded)
- Traditional Urban Neighborhoods like South Addition and Fairview
- Edge Urban Neighborhoods like Spenard and Airport Heights
- Transit-Supportive Development Corridors where the Municipality invests in high-frequency service.

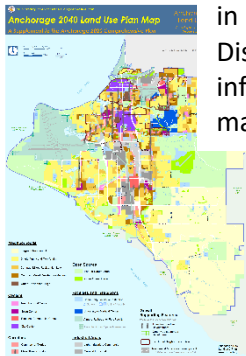
Current: 5 Area-specific Administrative Parking Reductions



Proposed: 4 Neighborhood Contexts with Area-specific, Lower Parking Requirements



The urban neighborhood contexts are recognized in the 2040 Land Use Plan and in Neighborhood and Districts Plans, which informed the proposed map at the right.



3. Area-Specific, Lower Parking Requirements: Policy Options for Where to Map Area-Specific Contexts

Alternative Options:

A. "No Area-specific"



All Bowl the Same
(No Area-specific Parking Requirements)

B. "Urban Contexts Only"



Traditional Urban



Edge Urban

C. "Extend & Tailor"



Traditional Urban



Edge Urban



Transit-supportive

D. "Extend & Simplify"

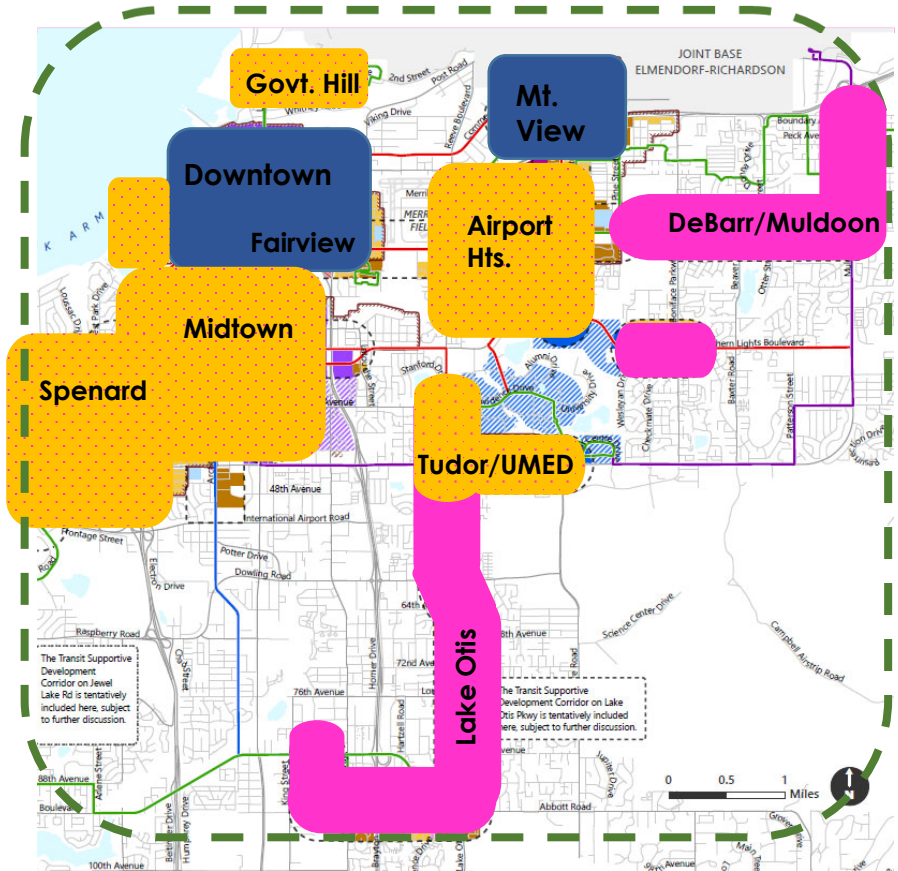


Traditional Urban



Edge Urban/
Transit-supportive

The Community Discussion Draft reflects **Option C: Extend and Tailor (shown below)**. Option C allows tailoring of parking and other development standards by neighborhood context.

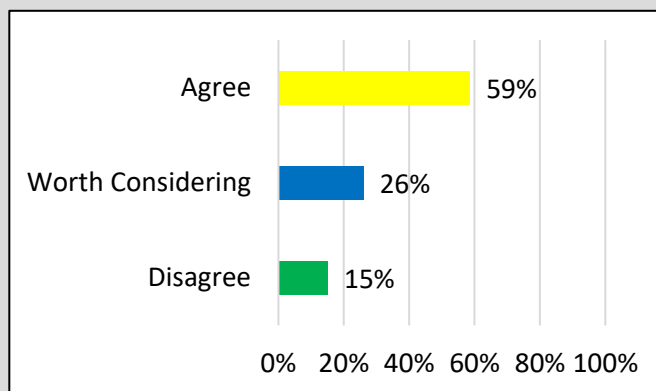


Public Feedback: What We Heard in Step 1 Pre-Consultations

Option C, "Extend & Tailor" received the most votes at design workshops, followed by Option B, "Extend & Simplify." Responses to the project questionnaire showed most people supported area-specific minimum parking requirements tailored to the urban context.

Questionnaire:

Should Anchorage have area-specific minimum parking requirements tailored to urban neighborhoods and transit-supportive development corridors?
(results at right)



3. Area-Specific, Lower Parking Requirements (cont'd): Options for How Low to Set Area-Specific Requirements

Options for Lower Parking Requirements within Urban Contexts:

A. "Match Peak Usage"	B. "Match Average Usage"	C. "Shift toward Goals"	D. "Open Option Parking"
Set Parking Requirement to Match Highest Peak Utilization Levels.	Set Parking Requirement to Match Average Peak Utilization Levels.	Set Parking Requirement to Less-than-Average Peak Utilization Levels.	Set to Zero.
<i>No Change from Current Title 21.</i>	<i>Reduces Title 21 Parking Requirement Somewhat But Maintains Existing Utilization levels.</i>	<i>Further Reduces Title 21 Parking Requirement to Encourage Utilization Levels to Fall.</i>	<i>Eliminates Parking Requirement.</i>

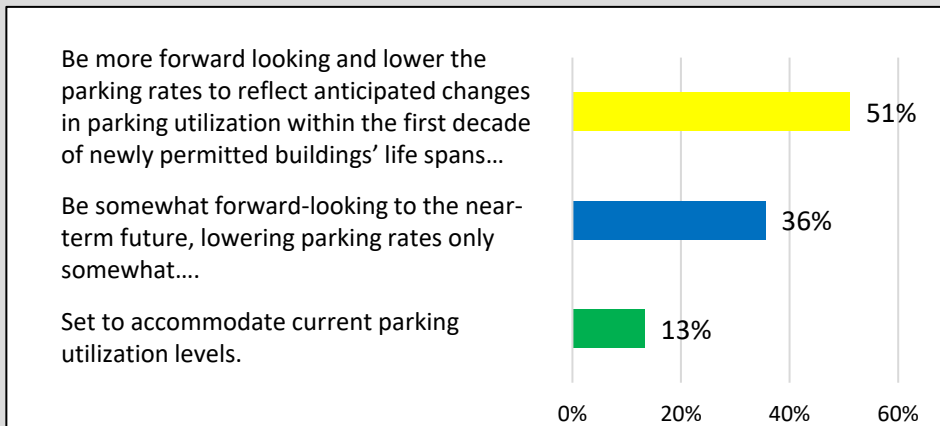
The Community Discussion Draft area-specific parking requirements for urban neighborhood contexts reflect a blend of Options B and C.

Public Feedback: What We Heard in Step 1 Pre-Consultations

A majority of design workshop participants preferred Option C "Shift Toward Goals" as the preferred policy alternative. Option C would set the minimum area-specific parking requirement to less than today's average peak period parking utilization levels. A sizeable minority preferred Option B, "Match Average Usage". Questionnaire respondents responded similarly to a question asking how forward-looking the parking requirements should be.

Questionnaire:

How much forward-looking should urban neighborhood parking requirements be?
Should they be set to accommodate current parking utilization levels, or to future lower parking utilization levels forecast to occur based on the socioeconomic/technological trends?
(results at right)



3. Area-Specific, Lower Parking Requirements (Continued): Open Option Parking Areas

Some members of the public supported eliminated parking requirements entirely in all or parts of the Bowl (policy option D “open option parking” on page 6 of this handout). This would necessitate a change in Anchorage’s current approach to addressing on-street parking congestion, and managing street design, maintenance, on-street parking enforcement, and snow clearing.

The proposed amendments enable the establishment of "Open Option Parking" areas that remove minimum parking requirements within specified boundaries and replaces them with a street management strategy proposed by the applicant. Under this option, developers, property owners, and businesses decide how much on-site parking to provide on their properties based on their particular operations and activities, and the public right-of-way gets managed separately if on-street parking becomes too congested. Any area within the Traditional Urban Neighborhood or Edge Urban Neighborhood Contexts discussed on the previous pages could be eligible as an Open Option Parking area.

Two ways to approach on-street parking congestion:

A) Off street parking minimums

Off-street parking minimums require a certain amount of space be dedicated to storing vehicles in all situations. This places the cost of on-street parking congestion on property owners.



Off-street parking minimums focus regulations on private property

- Easy to implement in the permitting process
- Generally, no follow-up required
- Difficult to guarantee mandated parking space will be used as intended
- Apply to all private property regardless of need
- Require large amounts of land & increase the costs of development
- Costs spread across everyone, regardless of use
- Do not directly address on-street congestion

B) Street management

Street management treats streets as a public asset that is managed in line with community priorities. This places the cost of on-street parking congestion on users. Property owners are still able to provide as much parking on private property as they wish.



Street management focuses regulations on public property

- Effectively solves on-street congestion
- Costs borne by users
- Does not prohibit property owners from using their own land for vehicle storage
- Capacity may be limited by driveways serving vehicle storage on private property
- Requires active management and goal setting for community property
- Some people may be uncomfortable losing subsidized storage



4. Improved Site Access for Pedestrians, Bicyclists, Ride-Share, and Public Transit

Current

- Pedestrian-supportive street frontage standards are in different sub-sections of Title 21.
- Complicated standards for pedestrian-frontage requirements.



Proposed

- Consolidate existing Title 21 standards for pedestrian-supportive street frontages into one section from different parts of Title 21.
- Ride-hailing spaces and electric vehicle charging spaces count toward required parking.
- Clarify and consolidate design standards for sidewalks and on-site pedestrian walkways.
- Focus on stronger frontage standards for developments with less required parking.
- Simplify the frontage standards that applied to other developments.



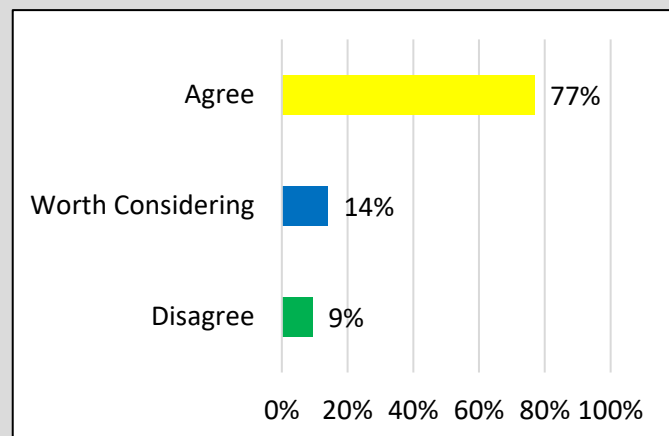
Commercial development with pedestrian-supportive street frontage.

Public Feedback: What We Heard in Step 1 Pre-Consultations

A majority of questionnaire respondents agreed there should be improved pedestrian standards where parking requirements are reduced.

Questionnaire:

In areas where parking requirements are reduced, should there should be standards for improved accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other parking demand management strategies?
(results at right)



4. Improved Site Access for Pedestrians, Bicyclists, Ride-Share, and Public Transit (cont'd): Bicycle Parking

Current

- Inadequate bicycle parking requirements.
- Lack of secure long-term storage location requirements for commuters and residents.
- Bicycle parking design requirements in a different sub-section of Title 21 than bicycle space number requirements.

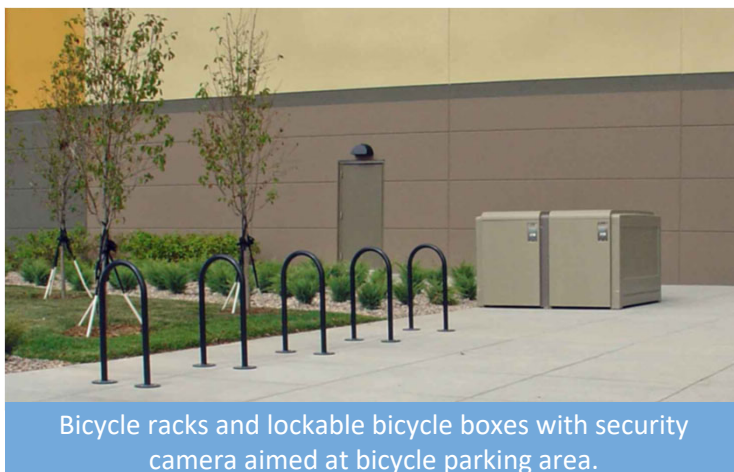


Proposed

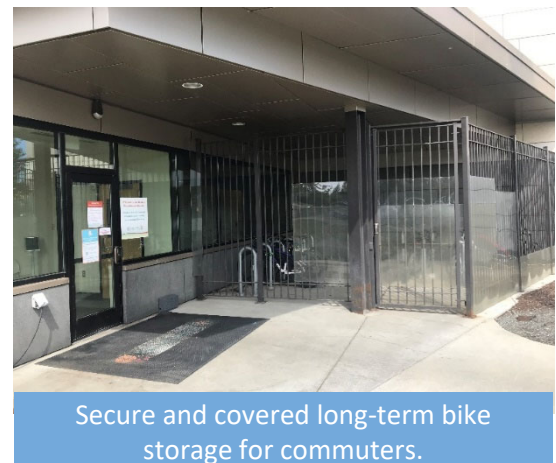
- Locate bicycle space design and space number requirements in the same sub-section of Title 21.
- Require some bicycle parking spaces to be in sheltered, secure spaces to meet long-term parking needs of commuters and residents.
- Increase the bicycle parking requirement primarily in the urban neighborhood contexts where the automobile parking requirements have been reduced.
- Require two bicycle parking spaces per use at a minimum (generally, a single U-rack).
- Updates unclear design requirement language that unintentionally limits different bicycle rack designs.



Secure long-term bike storage with vertical spaces.



Bicycle racks and lockable bicycle boxes with security camera aimed at bicycle parking area.



Secure and covered long-term bike storage for commuters.



5. Residential Site Access Driveways

Current

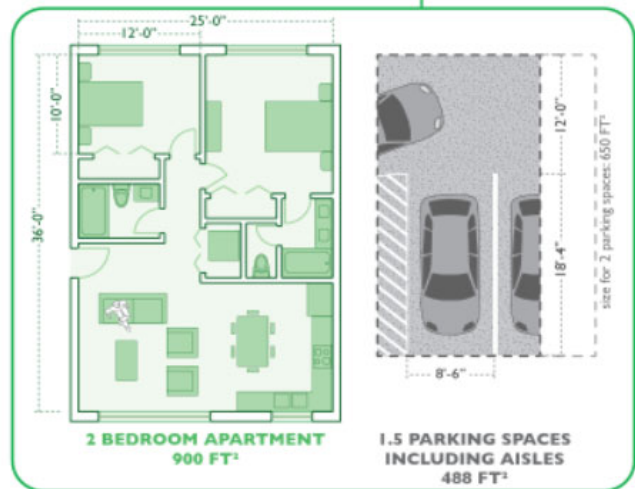
- Exemptions from on-site turnaround requirements and allowances for narrower driveway aisles for 3- and 4-plexes must be approved by Traffic Engineer.
- Driveway and access provisions unclear in Title 21.
- Residential driveway and alley access standards in a separate part of Title 21.



Large driveway area into multi-family housing inconsistent with surrounding single-family driveways.

Proposed

- Consolidate, organize, and clarify the vehicle access and circulation driveway standards.
- Exempt 3- and 4-plexes from on-site turnaround requirements in certain situations.
- Allow single-lane driveways into multi-unit residential developments of 3 to 6 units.
- Require driveway curb cuts in urban neighborhood contexts to restore level sidewalks.
- Focus residential alley access requirements on urban neighborhood contexts only.

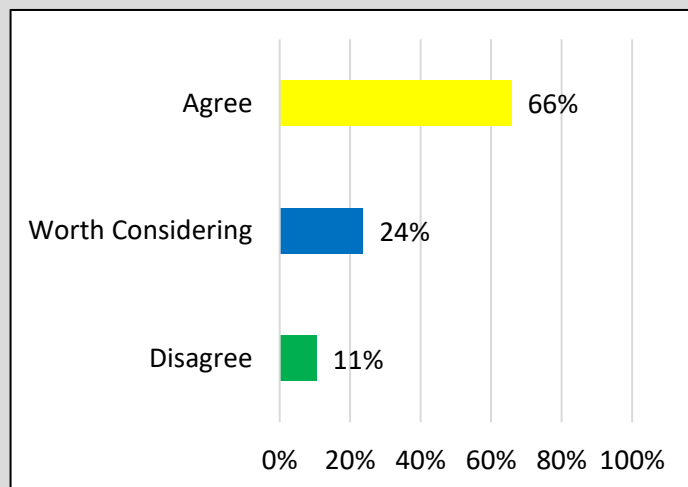


Public Feedback: What We Heard in Step 1 Pre-Consultations

A majority of questionnaire respondents supported tailoring driveway standards for infill housing projects to the urban neighborhood contexts.

Questionnaire:

Should driveway standards for infill housing projects be tailored for urban neighborhood contexts?
(results at right)



6. Dimensions of Parking Spaces and Circulation Aisles

Current

- Code standards and exceptions for minimum parking space width are distributed among several sections of Title 21, which makes it confusing to determine applicable parking space dimensions.
- The Downtown parking dimensions in chapter 21.11 date from the 1970s and need adjustment for compatibility with current code and modern vehicle dimensions..
- Lack of clarity on tandem parking and stacked parking exceptions.



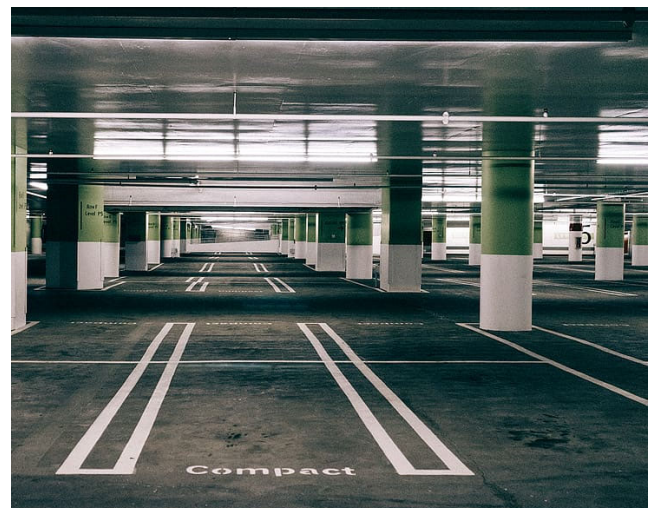
In urban contexts, not all parking spaces need to be able to accommodate a large pickup truck.



Downtown Central Business District parking space size requirements are unchanged from the 1970s.

Proposed

- Allow some parking spaces to be smaller parking spaces and “by-right” for residential, offices, and employment uses within urban contexts.
- Consolidate and update Downtown’s small/compact parking space dimensions.
- Consolidate and clarify allowances for tandem parking and stacked parking spaces.
- Allow narrower on-site driveway aisles between rows of facing garage doors.



Parking space marked for compact cars in a parking garage amongst spaces of other sizes.



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