

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
COLLABORATIVE

PARKING POLICY GUIDANCE

OCTOBER 2025



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METROPOLITAN
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ASSOCIATION
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GOVERNMENTS

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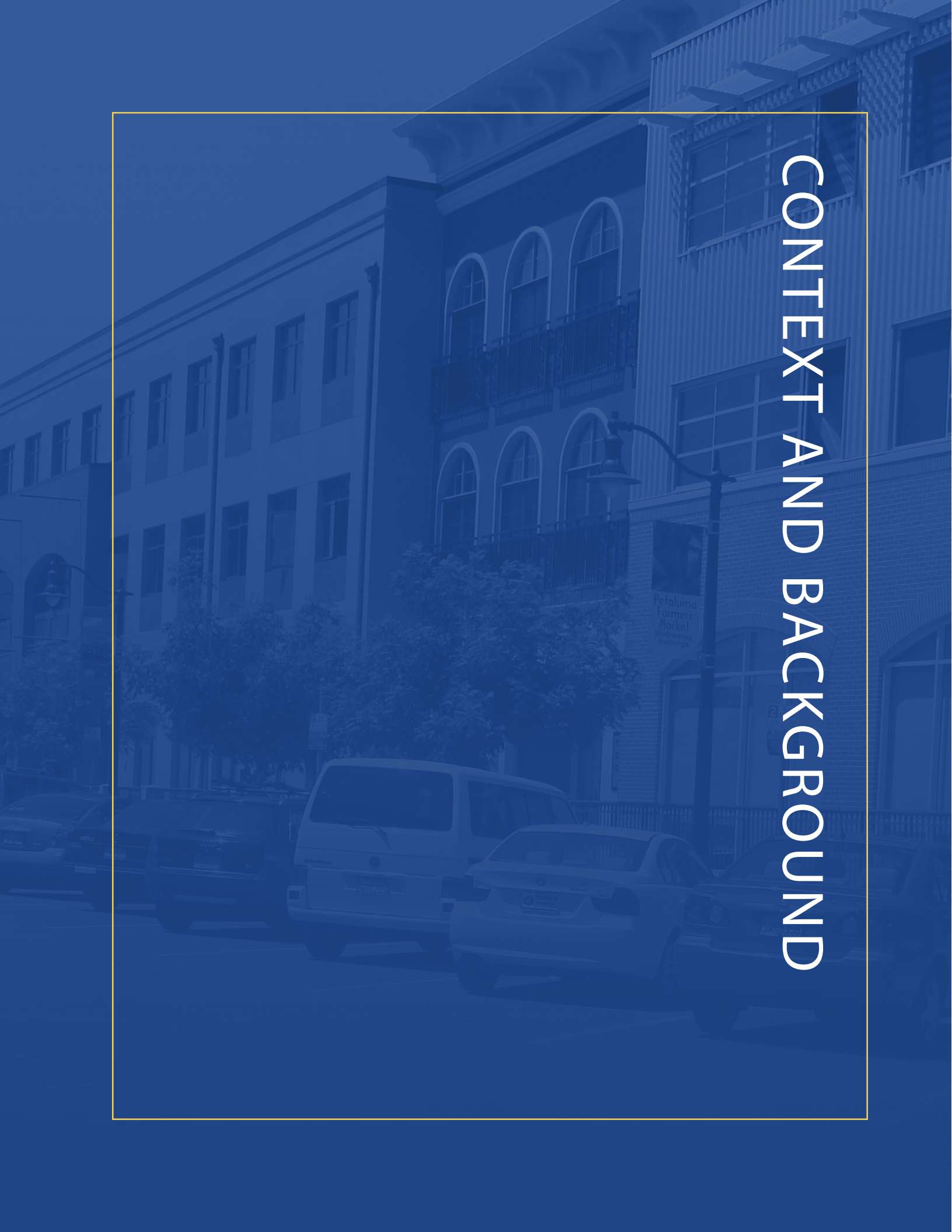
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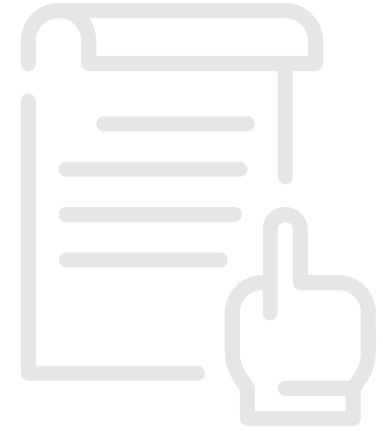
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CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND



01



CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

WHAT ARE PARKING REQUIREMENTS?

Parking requirements are regulations set by cities, towns, or counties. These requirements can include both minimum and maximum requirements and are typically contained in the zoning code. They provide information on how many parking spaces must be built with developments or whether a parking cap applies.

Parking requirements are determined on the basis of the intended use of a building, usually set according to the number of bedrooms in a residential development or square footage for non-residential developments. These requirements apply to vehicles and bicycles.

Here are some examples of vehicle parking requirements:

- A minimum of 1 space/1 multi-family residential unit. This would mean a 100-unit apartment development must supply 100 vehicle parking spaces on site.
- A maximum of 1 space/2,500 commercial square feet. This means a 20,000 square foot

retail development cannot supply more than eight vehicle parking spaces on site.

Bicycle parking requirements are like vehicle parking requirements, but often have separate requirements for short-term spaces and long-term spaces.

- Short-term bicycle spaces: Bicycle racks for quick trips, like a bicyclist stopping in a grocery store or restaurant.
- Long-term bicycle spaces: Bicycle lockers or rooms at workplaces or apartments. Best for employees or residents leaving their bicycles for extended periods or overnight.

WHY DO WE HAVE PARKING REQUIREMENTS?

Parking requirements tend to be one of the primary factors that determine the footprint and cost of development. Over the years, state laws and regional policies have limited how much parking local jurisdictions can require for certain projects. At the same time, many local jurisdictions have been rethinking parking requirements, especially parking minimums.



Street Parking at Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek.

Source: MIG



Street Parking at Downtown Pleasant Hill.

Source: MIG

If there is not enough vehicle parking at a destination, drivers may compete with nearby residents and customers of adjacent businesses for parking. This is referred to as parking spillover into street parking or lots. Drivers searching elsewhere for available parking can contribute to traffic congestion.

Cities have tried to limit spillover parking and traffic congestion by requiring enough vehicle parking for times of peak demand (i.e., minimum vehicle parking requirements). In reality, requiring a large number of off-street parking spaces may not resolve the spillover issue in many jurisdictions if on-street parking is largely free and unregulated. Mandating a greater number of parking spaces potentially creates more vehicle traffic.

Vehicle parking maximums are a more recent tool used to offset the negative effects of building too many parking spaces. Cities have made efforts to reduce their parking requirements and introduced measures like shared parking as alternatives to reduce car dependence.

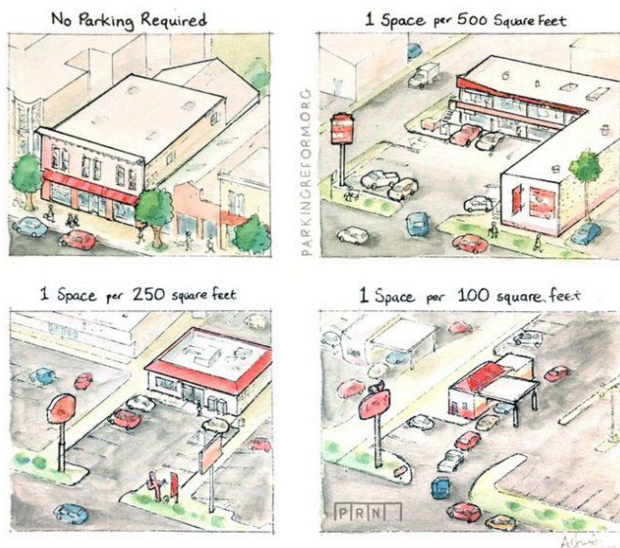
WHAT EFFECTS DO PARKING REQUIREMENTS HAVE ON CITIES AND TRANSPORTATION ?

Parking requirements tend to influence travel choices and development patterns in the growth of cities. With a shift in favor of compact and walkable development patterns, cities have also been re-evaluating their parking minimums.

Minimum vehicle parking requirements have led to negative effects on cities and transportation, including the following examples.

- Minimum vehicle parking requirements create enough parking for peak demand, which means that parking spaces are often left empty, creating an inefficient use of valuable land.
- Requirements are based on imperfect sources, so sometimes more vehicle spaces are built than will ever be needed.

- Minimum vehicle parking requirements drive costs up since the land and construction costs of building parking are passed onto renters and consumers.
- Vehicle parking spaces spread out destinations and make walking, bicycling, and transit less time-effective and less enjoyable.
- Minimum vehicle parking requirements can discourage development projects on small lots, where making the space for parking would be difficult and costly.



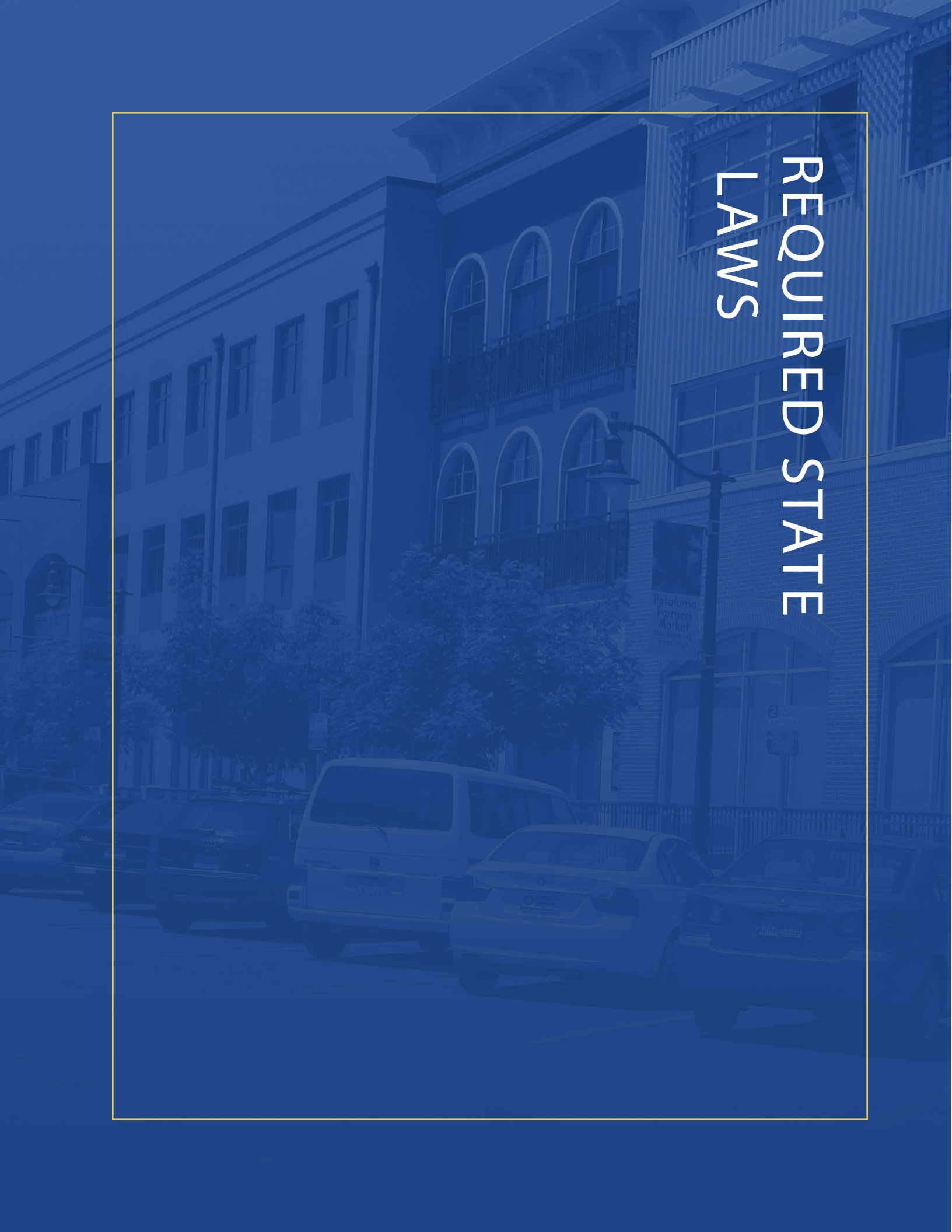
PRIN PARKING REFORM NETWORK

How minimum parking requirements affect cities.

Source: [Parking Reform Network](#)

Parking maximums can help reduce car dependencies, traffic congestion, and pollution, while ensuring adequate parking for cars. This shift, from requiring a minimum amount of parking to allowing a maximum amount of parking, has direct and indirect impacts on costs of housing, development densities, creating space for affordable housing and a sustainable future.

REQUIRED STATE LAWS



02



REQUIRED STATE LAWS

A. NEAR MAJOR TRANSIT STOPS

I. MAJOR TRANSIT STOPS:

A major transit stop in [Public Resources Code Section 21064.3](#) includes the intersection of two or more bus routes with a frequency of 20 minutes or less during commute periods. Laws such as Government Code Section [65863.2](#) and density bonus law have a wider impact with the new definition of a major transit stop.

PARKING MINIMUMS NEAR MAJOR TRANSIT STOPS

- State law prohibits minimum vehicle parking requirements for most developments near major transit stops.
- These requirements apply to developments within one-half mile of a “major transit stop” and to planned or funded transit stops. See Public Resources Code [Section 21155](#) and [Section 21064.3](#).

Removing minimum parking requirements incentivizes community members to increasingly rely on transit for daily needs, thereby helping with the following:

- Development can be cheaper and easier to build and, in turn, makes housing more affordable.
- Environmental benefits to air and water quality may result from reduced reliance on single occupant passenger vehicles.
- Transit-oriented development utilizes land more efficiently and fosters vibrant and walkable communities.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- Developers can be flexible and build less or no parking, depending on the context.
- Established residents may see spillover parking if less parking is supplied and inadequate on-street management is provided.
- New residents without private vehicles can find affordably-priced housing, close to transit.
- Visitors may find new commercial uses without vehicle parking easier to access by walking, biking, or transit.



Mixed-use development with density bonus near a transit station and bus routes in Pittsburg. Source: MIG

II. SUPPORTIVE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS:

As defined in California Health and Safety Code [Section 50675.2\(b\)](#), “Supportive Housing means housing with no limit on length of stay, that is occupied by the target population, and that is linked to onsite or offsite services that assist the supportive housing resident in retaining the housing, improving their health status, and maximizing their

ability to live and, when possible, work in the community.”

Pursuant to California Government Code [Section 65650\(b\)](#), transitional housing for youth and young adults also qualifies as supportive housing.

Supportive housing developments must be affordable to lower-income households and subject to certain limitations, may include nonresidential uses and administrative office space.

PARKING MINIMUMS FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS NEAR MAJOR TRANSIT STOPS

- Under California Government Code [Section 65654](#), a local government shall impose no minimum vehicle parking requirements for units with supportive housing residents (i.e., previously unhoused individuals or families) on sites within one-half mile of a public transit stop.
- The requirements apply to supportive housing developments within one-half mile of any transit stop.

No minimum parking requirements help free up resources that can be used to lower rents or build more units that are also accessible.

- Supportive housing often serves individuals who may not own cars due to financial constraints or other factors. Requiring fewer parking spaces aligns with the actual needs of the residents and avoids the unnecessary expense of building and maintaining unused parking.
- Building supportive housing developments is more cost effective and easier to build with no parking minimums.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- Developers building supportive housing can be more flexible when deciding how much parking to provide, if any.
- Residents of supportive housing may not have on-site parking available but would have access to public transit.

B. UNBUNDLED PARKING

I. UNBUNDLED PARKING IN SELECT CALIFORNIA COUNTIES

Unbundling means separating the cost of vehicle parking from the rental or purchase price of housing.

In some counties, parking costs must be “unbundled” for new residential developments. Certain other uses are excluded from this requirement. These include:

- Small developments
- 100% affordable developments
- Units with an individual garage

Under California Civic Code [Section 1947.1](#), unbundled parking regulations apply to 10 California counties, not including Contra Costa County.

While Contra Costa County jurisdictions are not required to comply with this provision of the California Civil Code, residents in Contra Costa County could benefit from the opportunities presented with unbundled parking. Unbundling reflects a broader trend in housing and transportation planning to encourage more equitable and environmentally sustainable living patterns. When parking is included in rent, all tenants pay for it—whether they use it or not. This artificially inflates housing costs and encourages car ownership, even in transit-accessible areas⁴. Unbundled parking makes housing more affordable for households with no or fewer vehicles.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

Renters and buyers can find more affordably priced housing and are incentivized to own fewer vehicles to save money on parking.

II. UNBUNDLED PARKING FOR TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECTS:

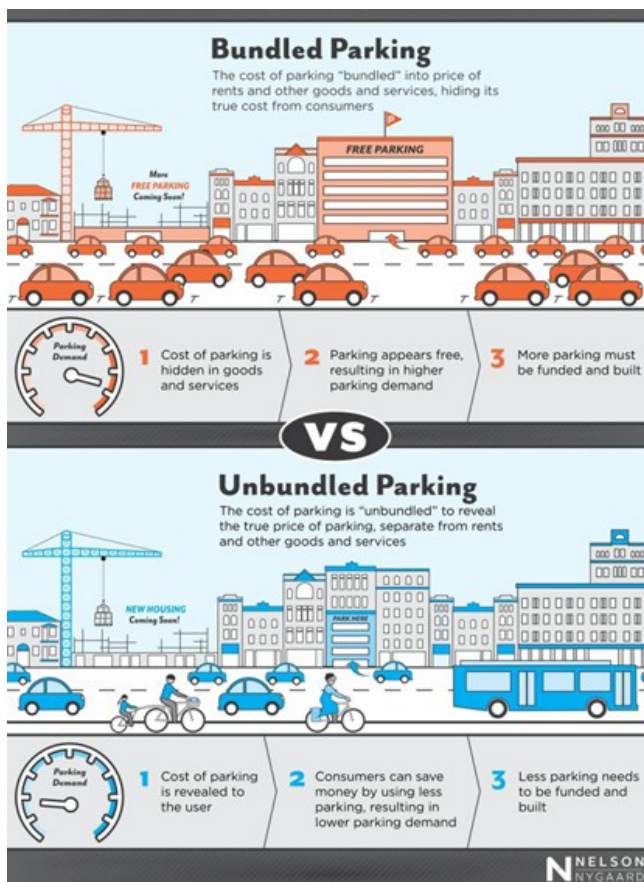
California Government Code [Section 65470](#) authorizes local agencies to participate in the Transit Priority Project Program, a program intended to

support land use patterns that facilitate dense development near transit and reduced vehicle miles traveled. The local agency must adopt an ordinance indicating its intent to participate in the program, and it must form an infrastructure financing district.

- Transit Priority Project Program developments must have unbundled parking or pay a fee for each parking space provided.
- Transit priority projects must be within one half-mile of a major transit stop or high-quality transit corridor pursuant to [Section 21155](#) of the Public Resources Code.

HOW IS UNBUNDLED PARKING HELPFUL TO TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECTS?

Unbundled parking encourages households to have fewer or no vehicles, which reduces vehicle miles traveled and increases transit ridership.



Bundled vs Unbundled Parking.

Source: [Nelson\Nygaard](#)

C. MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION

I. DAYLIGHTING:

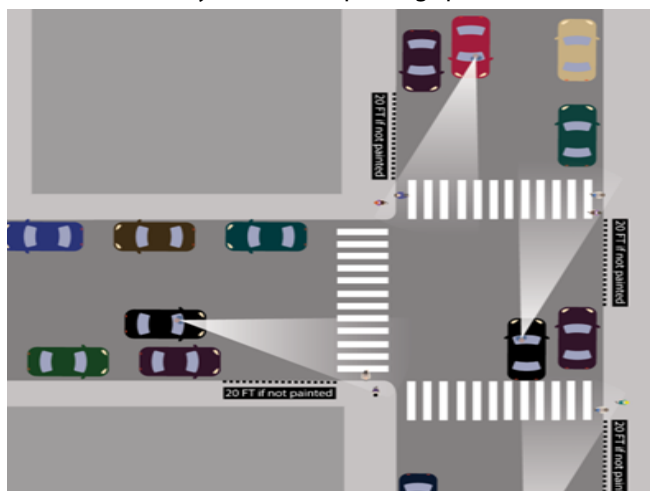
“Daylighting” improves safety at intersections by creating a better line of sight between people driving and people in crosswalks. By keeping the area next to crosswalks clear of parked vehicle obstructions, people can see each other better². California Vehicle Code [Section 22500](#) facilitates “daylighting” by establishing the following standards:

- Vehicle parking is not allowed within 20 feet of a crosswalk on the vehicle approach side.
- The distance is reduced to 15 feet where there is a curb extension.
- Crosswalks subject to this statute may be marked or unmarked crosswalks on public streets.

Parked vehicles make it difficult to see pedestrians waiting to cross the street or entering the crosswalk. Removing vehicles from these areas helps drivers spot pedestrians sooner, reducing the risk of vehicle collisions with pedestrians.³

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- Pedestrians have a safer and more comfortable experience crossing the street.
- Drivers may have fewer parking spaces



Daylighting Law.
Source: [SFMTA](#)

II. CALGREEN BIKE PARKING REQUIREMENTS:

CALGreen (California Green Building Standards Code) is a set of mandatory and voluntary standards for sustainable building practices in California⁴. [Section 5.106.4](#) of this code dictates the secure short-term and long-term bicycle parking for the following:

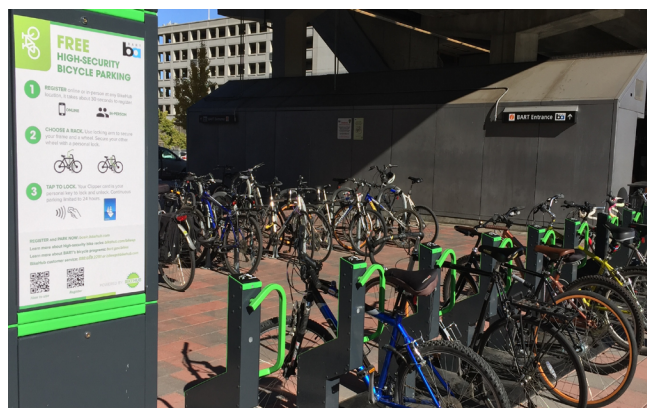
- New or expanded non-residential buildings
- New public school or community college buildings

The purpose of this code is to improve public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings⁴. It promotes building standards with a positive environmental impact.

Providing secure bicycle parking encourages sustainable forms of travel.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- Students and school staff would be able to bike and safely store their bicycles.
- Visitors and employees to commercial uses would see more opportunities to securely park their bikes.
- Non-residential developers will have to pay for and make space for long-term bicycle parking.



Secure Bike Parking at Pleasant Hill Bart Station. Source: [BART Parking Guide](#)

D. SHARED PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)

I. SHARED PARKING:

Shared parking is a parking strategy that optimizes available parking capacity by having complementary building uses share parking spaces at different times during the day, based on the peak and off-peak schedules of each land use. California Government Code [Section 65863.1](#) directs local agencies to allow shared parking under certain circumstances prescribed in the statute. More specifically, the statute requires that:

- Sharing underutilized parking with the public or other uses must be allowed.
- To meet parking requirements using shared vehicle spaces, the following must be true.
 - » Parking analysis supports the shared parking agreement OR the local agency approves the agreement.
 - » The sites are neighboring, within 2,000 feet of each other, or there is a plan to connect the sites such as by shuttle.

These requirements apply to sites with over 20% parking vacancy during shared hours.

Shared parking helps:

- Reduce the need for new parking.
- Reduce the costs for construction of residential and commercial development as less new parking has environmental benefits and uses land more efficiently.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- Developers can be flexible when meeting parking requirements.
- Drivers will be able to find an available parking space more easily but may have to park farther from their destination.

- Pedestrians may experience a denser and more walkable district when fewer new parking spaces are built.

II. PARKING CASH OUT:

Parking cash-out program is a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measure where employers pay employees a cash allowance if they do not park a vehicle at work. California Government Code [Section 65089.3](#) authorizes regional transportation planning agencies to adopt parking cash-out programs as part of their congestion management program

- A commercial development with a parking cash-out program is granted a reduction in parking requirements.
- These requirements apply to new or existing commercial developments.
- Parking cash-out typically reduces the demand for vehicle parking. With cash-out, the parking supply can also be lowered.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- With parking cash-out, employees are motivated to use more sustainable ways to travel to work other than driving alone.
- Property owners can use more of their site for revenue generating development with reduced parking requirements due to cash-out.



Shared Parking.
Source: [Nelson\Nygaard](#)

E. PRO-HOUSING

I. DENSITY BONUS AND PARKING:

Density Bonus Law in California Government Code [Section 65915](#) incentivizes a housing developer to encourage the construction of affordable housing units. Through this bonus, developers are allowed to build more units

than those permitted (based on maximum allowable residential density for the zoning district in which the site is located), if their proposal includes a certain percentage of affordable housing units.

In addition, parking requirements are reduced for projects that qualify for a density bonus as shown in the following table:

TYPE OF PROJECT	LOCATION	BEDROOMS	NO MINIMUM VEHICLE PARKING REQUIREMENTS OVER THE FOLLOWING
Qualifies for Density Bonus	Any	0-1 Bedrooms	1 space/unit
		2-3 Bedrooms	1.5 spaces/unit
		4+ Bedrooms	2.5 spaces/unit
		Bedspace in Student Housing	0 spaces/bed
At least 20% low income	Near transit		0.5 space/unit
At least 11% very low income			
At least 40% moderate income	Near Transit	-	0.5 space/bedroom
100% affordable but no more than 20% moderate income	Near transit and senior, special needs, or supportive housing	-	No minimums allowed

Table 1: Parking requirements based on Density Bonus

- These regulations apply to areas near transit, which refers to projects within one-half mile of a major transit stop pursuant to [Section 21155](#) and [Section 21064.3](#) of the Public Resources Code.
- When near transit, there must be unobstructed access to the transit stop.

Density Bonus is a tool to increase housing production, particularly in California. It helps facilitate housing development because:

- Developers can exceed the maximum allowable residential density permitted by the zoning of the site.
- Developers can construct housing with **waivers or reductions of regulations or standards**, such as height or setbacks, that would otherwise make development infeasible at the allowed density.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- Developers may provide affordable units in exchange for flexibility.
- Lower- or moderate-income households may see more affordable housing available.
- Residents of affordable developments may not have on-site parking available but would likely have access to public transit and/or paratransit.



Density Bonus.
Source: [AB 1287](#)

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- Agencies are encouraged to adopt pro-housing policies in exchange for funding.
- Developers may be given flexibility when deciding how much parking to provide.



Housing in Walnut Creek (a designated Prohousing Jurisdiction).
Source: MIG

II. PRO-HOUSING JURISDICTIONS:

The Prohousing Designation Program (PDP) authorized in California Government Code [Section 65589.9](#) seeks to acknowledge and support jurisdictions that go above and beyond state housing law to help accelerate housing production.⁵

- Cities, towns, or counties with “prohousing” policies can apply to be designated as a pro-housing jurisdiction.
- Reduced parking requirements for residential zones is a pro-housing policy.
- Pro-housing jurisdictions are given extra points or preference for state grant programs.
- These regulations apply statewide.
- Funding is prioritized for jurisdictions that make it easier to build housing.

F. ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS AND TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENT (SB 9)

ADUs are attached or detached residential units on the same lot as a “primary” residence, often a single-family house. California Government Code in [Sections 66310](#) through 66432 establish the construction requirements for ADUs and junior ADUs.

I. ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADUs):

ADUs must have permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation. The following parking requirements apply:

- Minimum vehicle parking requirements cannot be higher than one space per unit for ADUs.
- With the conditions described below, parking cannot be required for ADUs:
 - » Within one-half mile walk of any public transit.
 - » In an architecturally and historically significant district.
 - » Where the ADU is part of the primary residence or an accessory structure.
 - » Where permits are needed to park on street, but the resident(s) of ADU do not receive one.
 - » When a car share vehicle is within one block.

With a lack of housing in California, the state legislature has enacted laws to encourage ADUs to as a strategy to increase the housing supply. This would address development barriers such as affordability and environmental quality. Additionally, requiring less or no parking for this housing type can reduce the homeowner’s costs of ADU construction and make it easier to create an ADU, especially on a small lot.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- Property owners may be enabled to create ADUs without parking.
- New residents can find more opportunities for smaller housing units that are affordable by design, including in single-family areas.

- Established residents may see spillover parking when residents of ADUs do not have sufficient parking.

II. JUNIOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (JADUs):

A JADU is a secondary residential unit that is contained entirely within a single-family residence.

- JADUs may not exceed 500 square feet and may share a bathroom with the existing structure.
- No additional parking can be required for a JADU.
- These requirements apply Statewide.
- See the Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) section for importance of JADUs and their parking requirements.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

See the Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) section.

III. TWO-UNIT DEVELOPMENTS AND URBAN LOT SPLITS:

To create more opportunities for infill housing units that are affordable by design, the State legislature enacted California Government Code [Section 65852.21](#) allowing for up to two residential units to be constructed on lots within a single-family residential zone. California Government Code [Section 66411.7](#) additionally allows subdivision of an existing lot to create up to two new lots in a single-family residential zone. Local agencies must approve these two-unit developments and urban lot splits through a streamlined permitting process.

- Only one vehicle parking space per unit can be required.
- No vehicle spaces can be required if the location is near transit or car share.

- No spaces are required within one-half mile walking distance of a high-quality transit corridor ([Section 21155](#) of Public Resources Code) or a major transit stop ([Section 21064.3](#)) or if there is a carshare vehicle within one block.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Excessive minimum vehicle parking requirements are difficult to meet with small lot sizes.
- Urban lot splits and two-unit developments can add housing supply and increase affordability, especially in single-family zoned areas.

WHO COULD IT IMPACT?

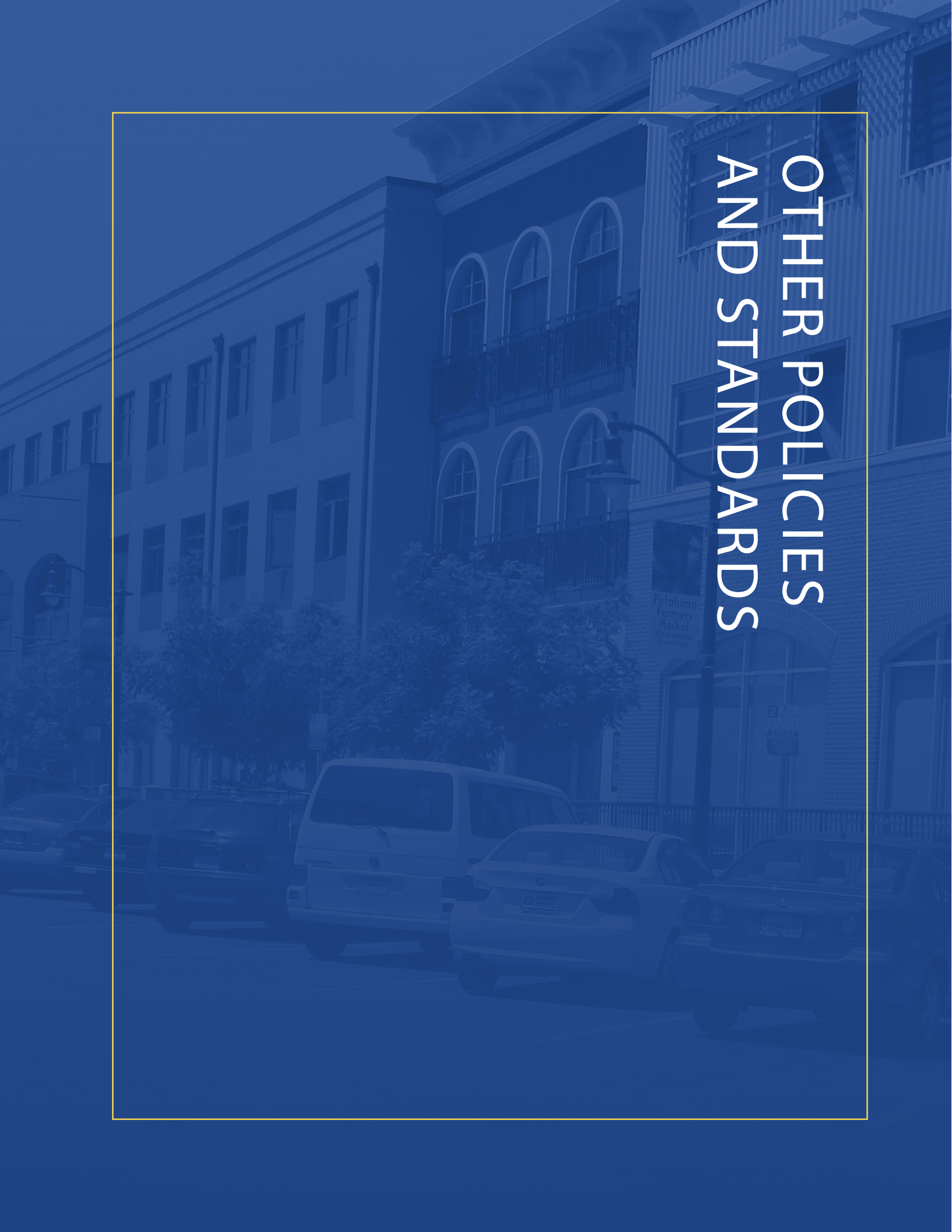
- Property owners may be enabled to split their lots or add additional units.
- New residents can find more opportunities for smaller housing units affordable by design, including in single-family areas.
- Established residents may see spillover parking when new units do not have on-site parking.



ADUs.

Source: <https://www.keeptruckeegreen.org/uncategorized/accessory-dwelling-units/>

OTHER POLICIES AND STANDARDS



03



OTHER POLICIES AND STANDARDS

A. TRANSIT-ORIENTED COMMUNITIES (TOC) POLICY

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) adopted the [Transit-Oriented Communities \(TOC\) Policy](#) to support the region's transit investments and advance the goals of Plan Bay Area 2050 (PBA 2050), the region's Long Range Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. Compliance with the TOC Policy is voluntary for jurisdictions that want to be competitive for select MTC discretionary funds.

The TOC Policy requirements are intended to support transit ridership and foster livable, accessible communities around transit. This helps by:

- Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and increasing transit ridership
- Allowing land in transit-oriented areas to be prioritized for shared or active transportation modes rather than vehicle parking
- Allowing unbundled and shared parking to encourage more efficient use of the parking supply
- Having parking policies that complement parking maximums – for example, paid on-street parking addresses parking spillover

The TOC Policy requirements are applicable within one-half mile of existing and planned transit stops served by rail, bus rapid transit, or ferries. Some requirements depend on transit service tier. The tiers are as follows:

- Tier 1 – Rail stations serving regional centers (i.e., Downtown San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose)
- Tier 2 – Stop served by two or more BART lines or BART and Caltrain
- Tier 3 – Stop served by one BART line, Caltrain, light rail transit, or bus rapid transit
- Tier 4 – Commuter rail (SMART, ACE, Capitol Corridor, Valley Link) stations, Caltrain stations south of Tamien, or ferry terminals

The TOC Policy includes the following requirements related to parking:

- Minimum vehicle parking requirements are prohibited. While this requirement of the TOC Policy does not apply to Tier 4 TOC areas, jurisdictions must still comply with applicable State laws that prohibit imposition of parking minimums, such as Government Code Section 65863.2

- Vehicle parking maximums are required and vary by tier of transit service. A parking maximum may be exceeded if a developer applies a concession as part of State Density Bonus Law
- Secure bicycle parking spaces must be required at a minimum of one bicycle space per residential unit and per 5,000 occupied square feet of commercial office development
- Unbundled parking (i.e., separating the cost of a parking space from the sale or rental price of residential units/commercial space) and shared parking must be allowed
- One or more of the following policies or programs from the MTC/Association of Bay Area Government (ABAG) Parking Policy Playbook must be implemented:
 - » Require Transportation Demand Management (TDM) for new developments
 - » Prioritize curb access based on need
 - » Invest parking revenues into a Parking Benefit District (PBD)
 - » Implement demand-responsive parking pricing
 - » Add priced parking where it used to be free



Mixed-Use Development near Pleasant Hill BART.
Source: MIG



Residential Developments in a Tier 3 transit tier.
(within one-half mile of Pleasant Hill BART)
Source: MIG

TRANSIT SERVICE TIER	NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Tier 1	0.375 space/unit	0.25 space/1,000 sq ft
Tier 2	0.5 space/unit	1.6 spaces/1,000 sq ft
Tier 3	1.0 space/unit	2.5 spaces/1,000 sq ft
Tier 4	1.5 space/unit	4.0 spaces/1,000 sq ft

Table 2: Parking Requirements as per Transit Tier

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- Developers that are subject to maximum parking standards may be required to provide fewer parking stalls than they would otherwise choose to provide.
- Developers are given flexibility to unbundle and share parking.
- Pedestrians may experience a denser and more walkable district when fewer new parking spaces are built.

- Bicyclists would have better access to bicycle parking at their destinations.
- Established residents and visitors may see spillover parking when new developments provide less parking, or they may have to pay for on-street parking where paid parking has been implemented as a parking management tool.

B. FEDERAL STANDARDS: REQUIRED ON-STREET ACCESSIBLE PARKING

- The Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) were adopted by the US Department of Transportation in late 2024 and are currently in effect.
- [Section R211](#) contains requirements for on-street accessible parking spaces.
- The required number of accessible on-street parking spaces from Table R211 (see below) must be provided on a block perimeter or street, if the street is not part of a block perimeter.
- On-street spaces should meet the requirements from [Section R310](#).

# OF METERED OR DESIGNATED PARKING SPACES	MINIMUM RREQUIRED ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES
1 to 25	1
26 to 50	2
51 to 75	3
76 to 100	4
101 to 150	5
151 to 200	6
200 and over	4% of total

Table 3: R211: Minimum Required Accessible Parking Spaces

The on-street accessible parking requirements are applicable to the following:

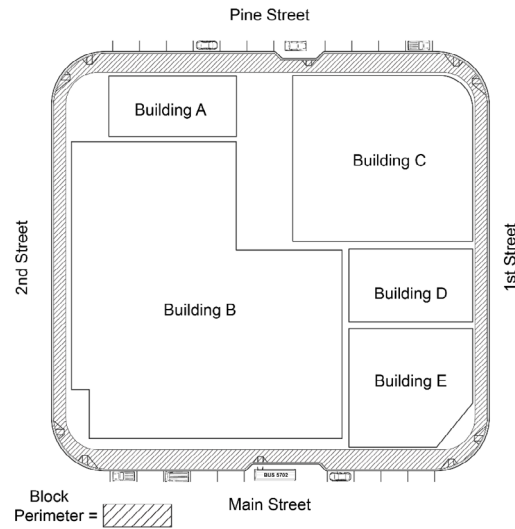
- New roadway facilities with on-street vehicle parking.
- Existing roadway segments with any modification of on-street parking.

These parking requirements are important to:

- Increase the availability of accessible on-street parking for people with disabilities.
- Where new buildings do not provide off-street parking, there would be accessible on-street parking nearby.

WHO COULD BE AFFECTED?

- People with disabilities would have easier access to destinations, especially where there is little off-street parking.
- Drivers without disabilities would have fewer available parking spaces on street.



Parking on Block Perimeter.
Source: [PROWAG](#)



Accessible Parking Spaces.
Source: [SFMTA](#)



CODE FLEXIBILITY AND REFORM PROCESS

04



CODE FLEXIBILITY AND REFORM PROCESS

WAYS TO ADD CODE FLEXIBILITY

Adding flexibility to parking requirements can help change development patterns, boost housing production and transit use, and support sustainable practices. The following are a few ways to tackle code requirements to cater to reduction in parking requirements.

I. COUNTING ON-STREET SPACES TOWARDS OFF-STREET REQUIREMENTS:

On-street parking spaces can be counted to meet minimum vehicle parking requirements. Cities traditionally require parking in lots or garages, but spaces on the street are often used to accommodate parking demand. The code may note:

- The spaces must be along the uses' street frontage
- How many feet qualifies as a parking space (for example, 22 linear feet of street frontage per parallel parking stall)
- Spaces for non-residential uses should not have residential permit restrictions

This gives developers added flexibility to meet parking minimums, especially if many of the visitors to the use would likely use on-street parking rather than off-street parking.

II. DIFFERENT TYPE OF SPACES:

A code may allow different types of spaces to meet minimum vehicle parking requirements, including:

Tandem parking – drivers park in a line rather than aligned side-by-side. Often, tandem parking spaces must be assigned to the same residential unit or non-residential use, since the users of the two spaces have to coordinate to allow the inner vehicle to exit.

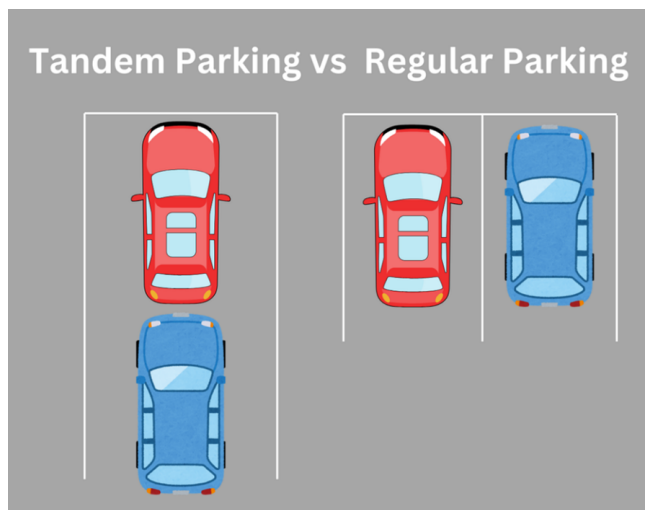
Stacked parking – vehicles are vertically stacked on mechanical lifts. An attendant should be present to move vehicles, unless there is an automatic system present.

Valet parking – an attendant moves the vehicles to another lot or “tandem” parks the vehicles.

With these types of spaces, developers are able to have more space-efficient parking. Additionally, valet parking lets farther away, underutilized spaces be used without making visitors walk from a distant lot.

III. SPACES IN AN OFF-SITE LOCATION:

Spaces in an off-site location on another property can be used to meet minimum vehicle parking requirements. Typically, there is a maximum distance that the spaces can be from the site (for example, 2,000 feet). The distance may be measured along a pedestrian route or “as the crow flies.” There should be a shared parking agreement in place to avoid overlapping demand for the spaces. For example, spaces for a restaurant and office can be shared more easily – since restaurants have higher demand in the evening when offices are closed – than spaces for two offices.



Accessible Parking Spaces.

Source: [Apartmentguide](#)



Automated Stacked Parking.

Source: [ParkPlus](#)

IV. IN-LIEU FEES:

In-lieu fees can be used for vehicle minimums and possibly for maximums.

- Minimums: Developers pay a fee for each required space they do not provide.
- Maximums: Developers pay a fee for each space they provide that exceeds the maximum.

Parking in-lieu fees give developers the option to pay a fee in exchange for flexibility with parking requirements. There must be a connection between the reason for charging the fee and use of the funds received from developers.

- In-lieu fees, for example, for parking minimums can be used for increasing the supply of parking – building more public parking or sharing existing parking – or for improvements that decrease parking demand by making it easier to walk, bike, or take transit.
- In-lieu fees for parking maximums should be used to offset the negative effects of building more parking, such as through TDM or multimodal improvements.

Parking in-lieu fee amounts should be updated regularly according to inflation, typically in a “master fee schedule.” The initial amount may be based on (a) the amount charged by peer cities, or (b) the perceived value of a parking space.

V. SHARED PARKING REDUCTION:

Flexibility with vehicle parking minimums and maximums may be granted if a development makes their parking publicly accessible. The code should include specific language for:

At least how much parking must be made publicly accessible?

Provide a percentage (for example, 25% or 100%)

What are the minimum hours that the parking must be shared?

- Specify the exact hours or “non-business hours” or “business hours”
- Minimum hours can be different for non-residential and residential uses

How much of a reduction or increase in the requirements is granted?

Provide a percentage (for example, 25%)

Developers would enter into shared parking agreements with the jurisdiction. Shared parking can reduce the need to supply new parking and ensure existing parking is used more efficiently

VI. TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT:

Developers can be given flexibility with vehicle parking minimums and maximums if they provide additional TDM measures above what is already required. The code should have specific language of “how much” extra TDM there must be. For example, the developer may have to provide an extra percentage trip reduction or number of extra TDM measures.



Parking for offices and businesses that typically operate during daytime hours can be shared with nearby restaurant and retail uses.

Source: MIG



Midday shuttles connecting office buildings with nearby shopping centers are a TDM strategy that allows employees to make lunchtime trips for food or to run errands without a personal car.

Source: MIG

PROCESS TO REFORM CODE

Reforming parking regulations in local zoning codes is a multi-step process that begins with research and data collection as the foundation for updated standards.

I. REASONS TO REFORM THE PARKING CODE:

A city, town, or county may choose to revise their code for a variety of parking-related reasons.

- To align with local goals. Local planning efforts may identify changes to parking requirements or parking management that would help meet transportation, housing, economic or climate goals. For example:
 - » Eliminating parking minimums and/or adding parking maximums could reduce VMT and support more dense housing along transit corridors.
 - » Policies that encourage less vehicle parking can positively impact lower-income households that tend to own fewer vehicles.
 - » Minimum parking requirements that exceed actual demand result in underutilized parking areas and potentially, missed opportunities for developing land with community-serving and tax revenue-generating uses.
 - » Requiring fewer off-street parking stalls to serve a use reduces the amount of land that must be paved for vehicle parking, potentially benefiting stormwater quality and reducing the urban heat island effect from asphalt-paved surfaces.
- To align with and respond to State law.
 - » California [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 2097](#) eliminates most minimum parking requirements within one-half mile of a major transit stop. The code should reflect that there are no parking minimums near transit.
 - » Better parking management of on-street parking may be needed to respond to spillover parking. Spillover parking may be

caused by less on-site parking in accordance with AB 2097.

- To align with regional policy. For jurisdictions with Tier 2, Tier 3 or Tier 4 transit stations, adherence to MTC's TOC Policy improves the jurisdiction's positioning for select regional funding for which TOC Policy compliance is a scoring metric. The TOC Policy requires parking maximums and bicycle parking requirements near major transit stops.

II. DATA NEEDS:

The following data may be collected when revising the parking code and setting new parking minimums or maximums. Using data makes the code changes more defensible when explaining them to decision-makers.

- Parking data for approved and/or entitled recent developments in the jurisdiction. At a minimum, include:
 - » The size of each development in square footage or units
 - » The vehicle parking ratio provided with each project (for example, 1.5 spaces per residential unit)
 - » Data from the last 5-10 years
- On-street parking occupancy data during peak hours of demand for at least one day. Collect data for each segment in areas considered for Residential Permit Parking (RPP) or pricing.
- Census data on vehicle ownership for the specific jurisdiction. It may be broken into smaller census tracts, as shown in the example figure.
- Data from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation. Based on nationwide data collection efforts, this resource provides parking demand for different types of land uses.

- Interviews with developers and lenders that have projects in the local jurisdiction.
- Best practices from similarly sized or nearby jurisdictions, or cities that have innovative ways to manage their parking.
- Community engagement through surveys, in-person or virtual public meetings, booths at major events, etc.

III. HOW TO USE DATA TO REFORM THE PARKING CODE:

The data collected may be helpful for revising the parking code in the following ways:

- Recent development data, interviews with developers

Make sure vehicle parking maximums are not too low that they discourage development or too high that they would not have an effect.
- On-street occupancy data

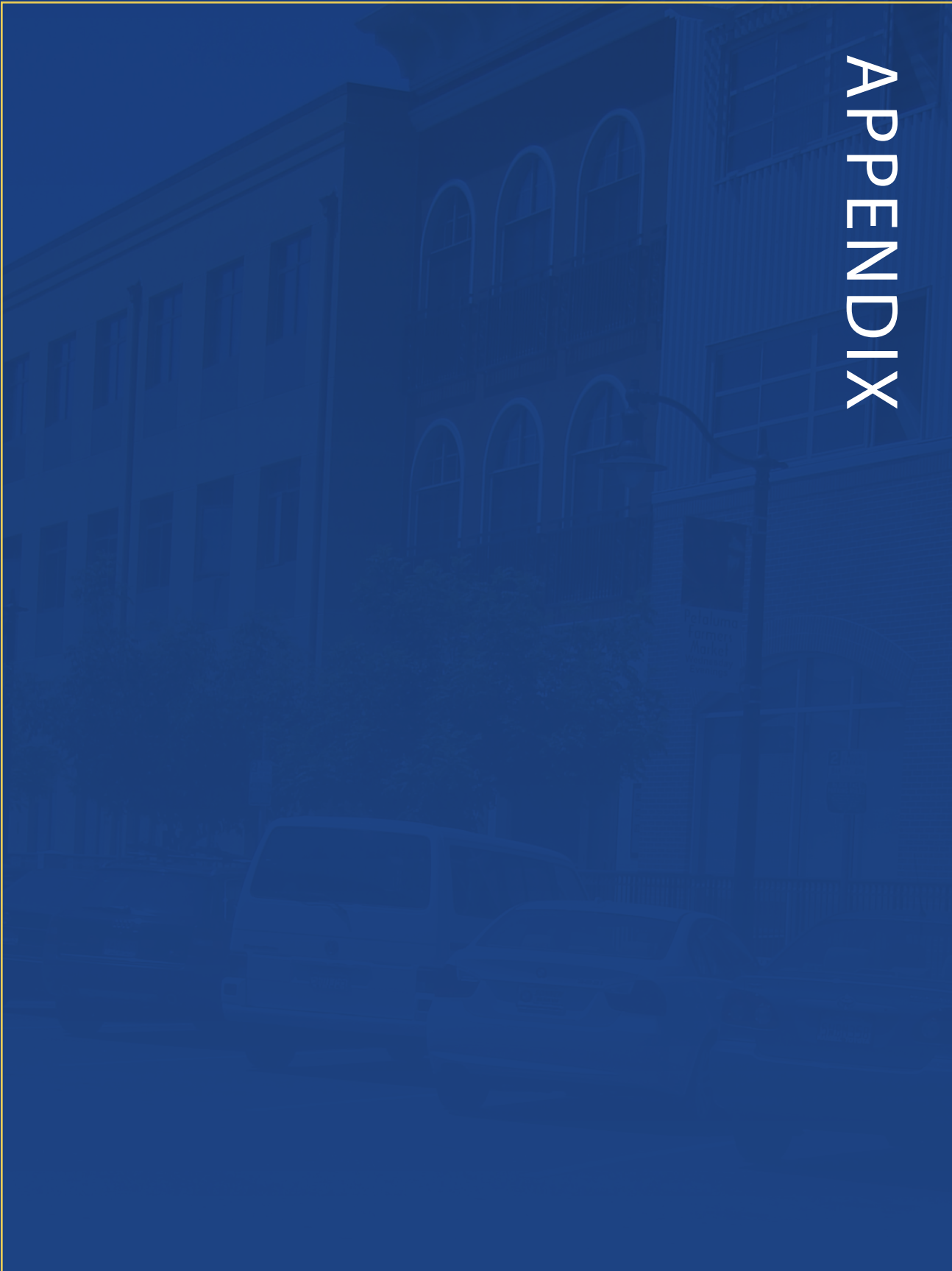
If parking occupancy is above a given threshold (typically 70-85%) for a street segment, then it may benefit from parking pricing or RPP. Pricing is used for segments with non-residential uses while RPP is used on segments with primarily residential uses.
- Census data on vehicle ownership
 - » Show the geography of which areas can have lower minimums or maximums, since vehicle ownership in the census tract is lower.
 - » Set the maximum number of residential permits per household.
- Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation data
 - » Align parking minimums with actual demand.
 - » Compare maximums to parking demand and adjust up or down as needed.
- Best practices from peer cities
 - » See what reasonable and successful parking policies in other jurisdictions may be.

- » May offer innovative practices and lessons to learn from, such as when developing new bicycle parking requirements.
- Community engagement
 - » Identify current issues experienced by community members.
 - » Gauge the public's interest in parking reforms, like RPP, bike parking requirements, or parking pricing.

IV. PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Collect data and interview developers and lenders
- Analyze data, review plans and policies
- Draft the code changes – Example changes:
 - » Set a “transit” parking district to cover areas where California [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 2097](#) and/or the Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Policy applies. In those areas, set parking maximums that comply with the TOC Policy, and/or remove minimum vehicle parking requirements.
 - » Outside of the “transit” district, adjust or remove parking minimums.
 - » Identify a potential RPP and/or on-street parking pricing program.
 - » Revise bicycle parking requirements.
- Workshop code changes with the public and stakeholders
- Finalize and adopt the code changes

APPENDIX



BUILDING CODES AND FOOTNOTES

#	LAW/POLICY/STANDARD	CODES AND SECTIONS
	Major Transit Stop	AB 2553 (2024)
	Parking minimums near major transit stops	Gov Code 65863.2 , AB 2097 (2022)
	Parking minimums for supportive housing developments near major transit stops	Gov Code 65654
	Unbundled parking in select California counties	Civil Code 1947.1 , AB 1317 (2023) & AB 2898 (2024)
	Unbundled parking for transit priority projects	Gov Code 65470
	Daylighting Law	Vehicle Code 22500 , AB 413 (2023)
	CALGreen bike parking requirements	Health & Safety Code 18944.19 , AB 2864 (2022)
	Shared Parking	Gov Code 65863.1 , AB 894 (2023)
	Parking Cash-Out	Gov Code 65089
	Density Bonus and Parking	Gov Code 65915 AB 2345 (2020)
	Pro-Housing Jurisdictions	Gov Code 65589.9
	Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	Gov Code 66314 , Gov Code 66322
	Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs)	Gov Code 66334
	Two-Unit Developments and Urban Lot Splits	Gov Code 65852.21 , Gov Code 66411.7
	Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Policy	Guidance from MTC and MTC's TOC website
	Required On-Street Accessible Parking, Federal Standards	Section R211 , Section R310 .
FOOTNOTES		
1	https://www.reliantparking.com/californias-new-parking-laws-are-changing-the-game-for-multifamily-housing/	
2	https://www.sfmta.com/getting-around/walk/pedestrian-improvements-toolkit/daylighting	
3	https://menlopark.gov/News-articles/City-news/20241223How-Californias-new-%E2%80%98daylighting%E2%80%99-law-affects-you	
4	https://www.hcd.ca.gov/building-standards/calgreen	
5	https://www.hcd.ca.gov/planning-and-community-development/prohousing-designation-program	