

READ-AHEAD MATERIALS FOR RESIDENTIAL PARKING WORKING GROUP MEETING SIX

At Residential Parking Working Group Meeting Five, the Working Group gave staff guidance on crafting first drafts of policy frameworks. Specifically, their guidance was for staff to work with some of the strategies as laid out in the “Current Parking Practices” section of the [read-ahead materials for Meeting Five](#); other strategies were not in this section of that read-ahead.

The strategies that the Working Group asked to consider were:

- Transit overlay zones
- Parking maximums
- Affordable housing parking ratio reductions
- Parking ratio reductions for the “bikeability” / “walkability” of the development site (not in the Meeting Five read-ahead)
- On-site and off-site shared parking
- Parking ratio reductions/relief for small development sites (not in the Meeting Five read-ahead)
- TDM requirements for both sites with ratios that are low and sites with ratios that are high

At Meeting Six, staff will walk the Working Group through the draft frameworks with the remainder of the meeting given over to Working Group discussion and questions for staff. In preparation for Residential Parking Working Group Meeting Six, staff have assembled some read-ahead materials.

[Descriptions of the strategies listed above.](#) This includes short descriptions of various parking policy strategies.

Current Parking Practices

Localities are using a variety of measures that go beyond the traditional minimum parking requirements. The following is a list of potential policy measures that the Working Group asked staff to consider in preparing policy frameworks for Meeting Six.

Transit Overlay Zones

Parking requirements differ based on access to transit. These zones are usually defined by distance and often differentiate between bus and rail service, and sometimes require that the transit available have high frequencies of service.

Parking Maximums

Developers are limited in the number of parking spaces that can be built for each unit.

Affordable Housing Parking Ratio Reductions

Units or buildings that have income requirements qualify for a reduction in minimum parking requirements.

Parking Ratio Reductions for the “Bikeability”/“Walkability” of the Development Site

Similar to the transit overlay zone concept listed above, parking requirements differ based on the ease and safety with which individuals are able to travel around the site by biking or walking (also known as “bikeability” and “walkability”). Measures of “bikeability” and “walkability” are evolving, and staff will discuss various options for measuring these concepts at Meeting Six.

On-Site Shared Parking

For mixed-use buildings that share one garage the parking requirements for each use are reduced since multiple uses can use the same spaces at different times of day.

Off-Site Shared Parking

A developer can count excess parking supply elsewhere towards the new building’s parking requirements. Jurisdictions will frequently require a signed agreement or lease in order to allow reductions for off-site parking and may require that the off-site location be located within a certain distance of the new building.

Parking Ratio Reductions/Relief for Small Development Sites

The cost of building off-street parking is determined, in part, by the buildable area of the development site. Sites may be too small or too irregularly shaped to fit the parking that is required simply because parking spaces, access aisles, driveways, stairwells, and elevator banks have minimum dimensions that cannot be reduced. Underground parking also requires access ramps down from the street level, and on small development sites, these ramps could take up all or most of any space that might otherwise house ground-floor retail. In these situations, parking requirements are reduced so that development of the site can move forward.

TDM Requirements for Sites with Parking Ratios that are Low and Sites with Parking Ratios that are High

In Arlington, as in other jurisdictions, additional TDM conditions are added when a developer gets approval to build fewer parking spaces than usually required. The logic here is that the developer must take actions that will minimize parking demand so that these sites do not generate overspill parking. Other jurisdictions impose TDM requirements when projects build parking in excess of some amount. In these cases, the logic is that sites with abundant parking will attract residents with more cars who are then more likely to drive, adding to air pollution and use of the road network.

In deciding on TDM requirements, the Working Group may consider each of the following.

On-Site Car-sharing Spaces/Service

Developers reserve off-street parking spaces for a car-sharing service. A further step that a developer can take is to arrange a contract with a car-sharing service provider in which the developer guarantees a level of revenue in order to keep the service operating on-site for a given period of time. This measure is also an approval and development phase strategy if the developer is allowed to count those spaces towards their minimum off-street parking requirements.

Free Car-sharing Memberships

A developer may offer free car-sharing memberships to tenants in order to encourage use. The offer of free membership may or may not require that the resident does not park a vehicle on site.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

In the residential case, this can include improvements to sidewalks or building new pedestrian and bicycle paths that connect the site to the rest of the bicycle and pedestrian network. For example, at a site with a steep slope at one side, the developer might build a pedestrian staircase to help residents reach a sidewalk on the ground above the site. Providing secure bicycle parking is another measure. Note that such facilities are already part of Arlington County's standard Site Plan conditions. However, some communities allow secure bicycle parking to serve as an approval and development phase strategy when the developer is allowed a reduction in the parking requirements based on the amount of bike parking provided.

Incentives for Transit

The developer agrees to subsidize transit fares for residents. The subsidy may come either in the form of an on-going transit pass that reduces or eliminates the cost of transit for residents or a one-time pass designed to encourage the resident to "try" transit. Like car-sharing memberships, the offer of the subsidy may require that the resident not park a vehicle on site.

Pricing and Unbundling of Parking Costs

Instead of incorporating the cost of a parking space into a lease or sales contract, the developer offers parking spaces separately from the housing unit for a fee. Note that if the fee is low relative to the local market for parking or relative to the cost of the housing unit, then pricing will have little effect on demand. Unbundling of Parking Costs is already a standard Site Plan condition in Arlington.