Sunnyvale

Study Issue CDD 19-07:
Evaluate the Minimum Off-Street Automobile Parking Requirements for Residential Uses

George Schroeder, Principal Planner
City Council, March 19, 2024

Study Issue Background

- Planning Commission sponsored the study issue in 2018
  - Referred by the City Council in 2022
  - Modified scope to evaluate single-family & multifamily parking standards
  - Compare the standards with other jurisdictions

Brief History of Residential Automobile Parking Requirements

- **1951, First parking requirements:** 1 space/unit
- **1959:**
  - **Single-family:** 2 spaces/unit + 1/each employee
  - **Multifamily:** 1.5 spaces/unit + 1/each employee
- **1966 & 1972, Multifamily:**
  - Add'l parking required for more than 1 bdrm
- **1986:** Compact allowed in **multifamily**
- **1996:** Increased parking for **SFR & multifamily**
- **2015:** Tandem & mechanized parking

State Law's Impact on Residential Parking

- **AB 2097:** **No parking** within half-mile of major transit stop
- **State Density Bonus:** Automatic **reduced parking** for BMR housing
- **SB 330/SB 8:** New residential requirements must be **"objective"**
- **ADUs:** **No parking req.;** can convert (e) parking without adding parking
- **DUOs:** **One covered space;** no parking if half-mile to El Camino Real
- **New 2023 laws (in effect Jan 2024):**
  - AB 1308: **No additional parking for single-family home remodels**
  - AB 1317: **Unbundled parking**
  - AB 894: **Shared parking**

Current General Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Requirements

Single/Two-Family

- 2 **covered** + 2 **uncovered** min.
  - 400 s.f. min garage or carport
  - 17’ x 20’ driveway
  - Must **upgrade covered parking** for certain additions
  - **Tandem** allowed for **existing nonconforming parking** in certain situations
  - Add’l 0.4 spaces for properties with **limited street parking**

Multifamily

- 1 **covered assigned**/unit min.
- Add’l **unassigned** based on unit bedroom & parking structure type
  - Results in 1.5-2.65+ total/unit
  - Up to 10% unassigned may be **compact**
  - **Tandem/mechanized** for up to 50% of units
  - Add’l spaces by review body (*non-objective*) for properties w/ **limited street parking**

Current Area and Specific Plan Requirements

Downtown Specific Plan

- 1 min. covered assigned space/unit
  - **SFR:** 1 add'l uncovered space
  - **MFR:** Add'l unassigned based on BR type
- **Tandem** for 100%

El Camino Real Specific Plan

- **Nodes:** 1 to 1.7 min.; 1.5 to 2 max
- **Segments:** 1 to 2 min.; 1.5 to 2.25 max

LAWRENCE STATION AREA PLAN

- Mirrors ECR node standards

PEERY PARK SPECIFIC PLAN

- Mirrors general SMC standards

Moffett Park Specific Plan

- No min. parking requirements
- Max parking of 1 space/unit
  - Can exceed maximums by 50%, only if shared
- **Tandem** for 100%

Parking Requirements For Other Residential Product Types

- **Single-Room Occupancy**
  - 0.25 to 1 space/unit, based on unit size
- **Mobile Home Parks**
  - 2 spaces/unit + 1/employee + 1/sp. vehicle
- **Senior Housing**
  - Affordable: 0.6 spaces/unit
  - Standard: 1 space/unit
- **100% Affordable**
  - 1-2.15 spaces/unit, based on bdrm size
- **State law** has additional reductions

Additional Residential Parking Provisions

- **Shared Parking**
  - Allowed with a discretionary permit
- **Parking Management Plans**
  - Required for all new residential development
- **Unbundled Parking**
  - Only allowed in MPSP and LSAP
- **Electric Vehicle (EV) Parking**
  - Required for **single-family** & **multifamily** per Reach Codes
- **Compact Parking**
  - Up to 10% of **multifamily** unassigned spaces
  - Not allowed in mobile home parks

Parking Requirements in Other Jurisdictions

- **Data Comparisons:**
  - All 14 other cities in Santa Clara County
  - 8 other Bay Area peer jurisdictions (e.g., Redwood City, Fremont, Walnut Creek)
- **Observations:**
  - Many cities do not have covered/assigned distinction; only total spaces/unit
  - Parking requirements generally not based on parking structure type
  - Sunnyvale's parking requirements are higher for both product types
    - **Single/Two-family:** Other cities = 2 req. spaces; Sunnyvale = 4
      - Most jurisdictions require front yard setbacks to accommodate add'l driveway spaces
    - **Multi-family:** Most other cities prescribe ratios on bedroom count + add'l for guests

Demographic Data Comparison with Other Jurisdictions

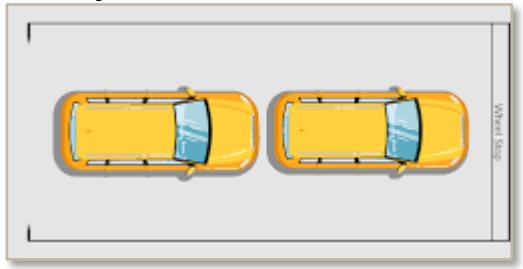
Source	Households with No Vehicle Available	Households with More than One Vehicle Available	Average Persons per Household
Sunnyvale	6.5%	58.3%	2.69
Other SCC Jurisdictions	4.1%	71.2%	2.84
Peer Jurisdictions	6.5%	61.6%	2.84

Source: ACS Community Survey, 5-year Averages, 2021

Options to Consider – Moderately Reduce Res. Parking Minimums

- **Single/Two-Family:**
  - Min. of 2 spaces
    - Flexible: Covered or uncovered; side-by-side or tandem
  - Remove requirement to upgrade for additions

- **Multifamily/Area/Specific Plans:**
  - Simplify min. standards to flat rates that align with state density bonus law
    - **Zero/1 bedroom:** 1 space/unit
    - **2-3 bedroom:** 1.5 spaces/unit
    - **4+ bedroom:** 2 spaces/unit

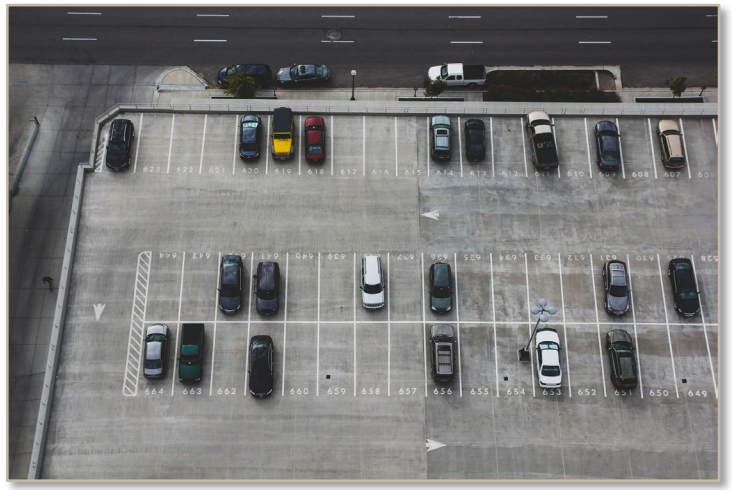


  - Evaluate reductions to compact allowances and increases to tandem allowances

- Make standards objective and without discretionary review
- Address recent state laws, Housing Element, and MTC policies

Other Options to Consider

- **Eliminate** Residential Parking Minimums
  - Requires TDM plans instead (e.g. San Jose)
    - Included in Planning Commission recommendation
  - Implement parking maximums
    - SF, Alameda, Berkeley, Emeryville
- **Maintain** Current Parking Requirements



Potential Next Steps following City Council Direction

Draft Modifications

- Staff to draft potential modifications based on Council direction

Public Outreach

- Outreach meeting
- Study session

Environmental Review

- CEQA analysis

Amendments to Planning Commission and City Council

- Proposed SMC and area/specific plan amendments presented for adoption

Planning Commission Recommendation

Recommendation on February 26, 2024

- Alternative 2 – Staff's recommendation plus modifications:
  - Explore allowing unbundled parking for existing tenants
  - Explore an option of eliminating parking minimums
    - Require transportation demand management programs (TDM) instead

Staff Recommendation

Alternatives

1. Direct staff to conduct outreach and prepare SMC and area/specific plan amendments for moderate reductions to single/two-family and multifamily parking requirements; and make parking standards objective and without discretionary review.
2. Alternative 1 with the Planning Commission's additional items.
3. Alternative 1 with modifications.
4. Do not modify parking requirements.

Staff Recommendation

Alternative 1.