

Summary of MNCPPC Parking Study

Study Background

Minimum Parking Requirements

Parking requirements within municipal zoning codes are a powerful tool for shaping transportation and development character, but decades of over-requiring parking in urban centers have shown that it can create a number of unwanted effects, including:

- Reducing infill development viability;
- Encouraging auto travel options;
- Eroding pedestrian environments; and
- Adding to the cost of living.

Therefore, the County and Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission engaged in a comprehensive assessment of whether existing minimum requirements in mixed use urban districts should be changed.

Parking Management Districts

Montgomery County also operates a number of Parking Lot Districts (PLDs) within urban districts that supplement the zoning code. The PLDs assess a property-value (Ad Valorem) tax for any development building less than the minimum requirement, generating revenue to create shared parking and other transportation benefits in that district. Developers who meet the parking requirements on-site can apply for an exemption from paying this tax. The effect of changes to the minimum requirements must be carefully weighed against the impact on PLD revenues.

Study Scope

The Parking Study conducted a number of efforts to evaluate the existing parking code and the PLDs:

- A review of shared parking, management districts, and peer systems
- Interviews of stakeholders to identify and assess approach options
- Applying the approaches by identifying land uses, setting baseline standards, weighting contextual reduction factors, and creating a parking requirements calculator
- Considering options that promote multi-modal development

Study Recommendations

Parking Lot District Review

The PLD review found the 60+ year old program remains an exemplary model of a parking management district. Opportunities for improvement include:

- Focus Curb Management on Performance and Customer Service
 - Establish performance-based approach with 15% availability goal for on-street spaces
 - Provide PLD administrators with authority to adjust meter rates in response to demand
- Formalize current off-street supply expansion policies
 - Formalize policy to expand supplies only when new/ expanded facility is self-funded
 - Implement a demand-responsive pricing strategy for all off-street parking
 - Seek capacity-expansion: improved wayfinding, parking shuttles, facility sharing, etc.
- Coordinate PLD, TMD, and Urban District programs
 - Enhance and formalize current program coordination practices

- Re-brand program as “Parking Benefit Districts” or “Transportation Benefit Districts”
- Replace or restructure the current Ad Valorem tax revenue
- Create a program-expansion plan to address countywide urbanization
- Additional Recommendations
 - Provide parking for car-share vehicles
 - Enhance bicycle parking within PLD facilities
 - Invest in a coordinated availability information system
 - Eliminate time-limits for on-street parking once consistent availability achieved

Parking Standards Review

The following parking standards are recommended for mixed-use districts:

Land Use Category	Metric	Shared Parking Ratio	Reserved Parking Ratio
Residential			
Market Residential	Dwelling Unit	1.20	1.10
Non-Market Residential	Dwelling Unit	0.60	1.10
Non-Residential			
Office & General Work Space	1,000 SF of GFA	2.00	1.75
General Commercial	1,000 SF of GFA	1.25	0.20
Restaurant	1,000 SF of GFA	1.75	0.25
Events-Based	1,000 SF of GFA	0.75	0.10
Hotel	Guest Room	0.33	0.33

- Shared Parking Ratio = Number of spaces required to be provided for building tenants, building visitors, and the general public
- Reserved Parking Ratio = Restriction placed on accessory spaces reserved exclusively for building tenants and visitors

Contextual Factors

To account for the expected impact of County demand-management investments (commuter benefits programs and employer-participation mandates are two typical examples) in areas with an official non-auto-drive mode share (NADMS), parking-standard reductions are recommended, based on:

- The specific, applicable NADMS for the proposed site; and
- The anticipated employee-parking demand share of overall parking demand.

To account for the expected impact of Transit-Proximity, the following reduction factors are recommended:

- 10% for all uses within 1/2-mile of a rail transit station;
- 25% for all uses within 1/3-mile of a rail transit station; and
- 50% for Residential and Office/ General Work Space uses located within 1/4-mile of a rail transit station.

Beyond Minimums and Maximums

Recommendations for additional, supportive parking standards include:

- Expanded bicycle parking requirements with quantitative and qualitative standards
- Requirements and incentives for car-share parking
- Promotion of unbundled parking
- Multi-Modal Credits toward minimum requirements:
 - On-Street Credits
 - Car-Share Spaces
 - Motorcycle and Scooter Parking
 - Bicycle Parking
 - Rideshare Support
 - Transit Investments
 - TDM Commitments