Parking Advisory Board Issue Paper

Parking Requirements

June 3, 2010

The Parking Advisory Board proposes changes to the parking requirements in CBD zones 1, 2, and 8. Redevelopment in downtown Kirkland is difficult, with its legacy of older and small buildings without on-site parking. We propose modifications to the parking requirements that will encourage shared parking to support mixed use development. Our analysis indicates parking requirements can be reduced if parking is well managed and parking is shared among uses. The PAB proposes two methods by which to change parking requirements. The first method is a direct reduction, and the second is to develop guidelines for developers to follow in applying for a reduction of parking requirements in downtown Kirkland. Both methods pose problems that need discussion and further analysis. The problem with a direct reduction is the lack of data that provides a basis for amounts of reduction. The problem with the second method is the analysis burden it places on applicants, particularly of small developments. Consequently, we propose direct reductions for development of small parcels and propose guidelines for developers of large development projects to use in determining parking requirements.

In addition, there are three unique challenges in Downtown Kirkland. Parking requirements often do not apply to the redevelopment of the ground floor area of existing buildings in downtown that fully occupy their lot. This is referred to as "grandfathering" redevelopment rights of legacy buildings. Second, parking does not generate revenue in Kirkland, but structured parking is expensive and revenue-producing development is needed to offset its cost. Height limits and other zoning provisions can restrict the amount of revenue producing development to make parking feasible. Third, parking requirements ought to incentivize assembly of parcels in the redevelopment process.

Proposed Changes to Parking Requirements under Zoning

Introduction

Parking requirements are based on the premise that a single land use is only accessible by auto in a "cornfield" without opportunity for off-site parking, and should provide free parking for all users on the busiest day and busiest hour. The purpose of parking requirements is to provide adequate parking for all users and to avoid spillover parking. However, strict application of parking requirements leads to over provision of parking for most hours, particularly in downtown areas where there are other parking opportunities, where some users of businesses arrive on foot or by transit, where some users park once and perform multiple activities, where parking supply is shared among businesses with different patterns of parking demand, and where parking charges lead to reduced parking usage and duration.

If downtown were to redevelop under current parking requirements there would be an oversupply, but current requirements make it unlikely that redevelopment will occur, netting very little new supply.

Some critics of parking requirements call for their elimination entirely, letting developers determine what is needed to make their projects feasible. Yet others call for parking maximums so as not to over provide rather than minimum parking requirements that we now have. Neither of these two extremes

is well suited to downtown Kirkland. They are better suited to larger downtowns with a well functioning parking marketplace.

The Parking Advisory Board recommends a middle approach to assess parking requirements that apply to new development or redevelopment in downtown Kirkland. There are two ways to address minimum parking requirements that would lead to over provision. One is to directly reduce the parking ratios of land uses in areas where uses are mixed and complementary, where there are alternative modes of travel, and where parking is shared and managed for efficient utilization. The second approach is to require developers to perform analysis to support a reduction in parking requirements. A third way is a mix of the two approaches. A mixed strategy is proposed for downtown Kirkland.

Step one is to develop a rationale for a general reduction in parking requirements that reflect the mixed use nature of downtown, the opportunity for access by alternative modes of travel, and a managed public parking supply. This approach should be based on a parking study thatdetermines actual demand and confirms is a reduction is warranted. However, it is unlikely that a study would provide definitive results. This would require developing a consensus on how many hours per year is a parking shortfall acceptable, and then estimating how many hours per year there is a shortfall of parking supply. Even then the results would be highly variable. Parking demand varies from business to business, and among types of business. Consequently, the proposed general reduction in parking requirements based upon guidelines from national studies, which range from 10 to 50 percent.

Step two is a process that developers can follow to request an additional reduction in parking requirements that is based on the nature of the proposed development and additional parking management strategies. Guidelines for developer applications will need to be developed.

The proposed reduction in parking requirements is contingent on the introduction of pricing of on-street parking in the downtown to foster the turnover of parking, which is a necessary ingredient to reduce parking requirements. Also, the proposed reduction in parking requirements is contingent upon increasing the amount of shared public parking.

The proposed reduction is based upon the following principles:

1. The redevelopment of older buildings in downtown is hindered by current parking requirements. Parking requirements should encourage assembly of parcels in the redevelopment process to better integrate parking with the development.

2. On-site parking should not be required for redevelopment of small parcels in downtown. Shared parking is preferable. Exemption of parking requirements for the existing amount of floor area when small parcels are redeveloped will be continued.

3. Parking shall not be required for redevelopment in CBD2 subject to one- or two-story height restriction. Instead, below grade of Central and Lake Street parking shall be encouraged by means of a bonus floor above the one- or two-story limitation in CBD2.

4. Fee in-lieu of on-site parking is encouraged for redevelopment of small parcels and medium sized parcels. Large parcels should provide on-site parking.

5. A general reduction in parking requirements in downtown Kirkland is warranted to reflect the mixed use nature of downtown, the opportunity for access by alternative modes of travel, and a managed public parking supply.

6. A detailed analysis to determine the amount of parking reduction is required for the redevelopment of large parcels, and a transportation demand management plan will be developed and implemented to reduce parking demand.

7. The Engineering News Record Construction Price Index shall be used to make current the fee in-lieu and to make current any prior assessments for shared public parking.

8. Parcels that meet current parking requirements will have reduced assessments for future shared public parking.

Conceptual approach and rationale for a general reduction of non-residential parking requirements in downtown Kirkland

Public parking opportunities, both on street and off street, is sufficient rationale for a general reduction of parking requirements for new development in downtown Kirkland. *20 percent*.

Shared parking opportunities allow a further reduction for some mixed use developments. *Parking requirements are reduced by 50 per cent for the retail portion of Mixed Use developments of Office and Retail in downtown Kirkland where office is over 60 per cent of the floor area.*

Small scale redevelopment has a de minimus impact on parking supply or demand. *Single-story retail redevelopments on parcels of 10,000 sf or less shall be exempt from parking requirements*.

Small scale development is typically not able to accommodate on-site parking due to limited lot size. *Multi-story developments on parcels of 10,000 sf or less are encouraged to pay fee in-lieu instead of providing on-site parking.*

If multiple parcels are assembled to a size 10,000-15,000 sf, parking requirements that apply to parcels of less than 10,000 sf shall apply.

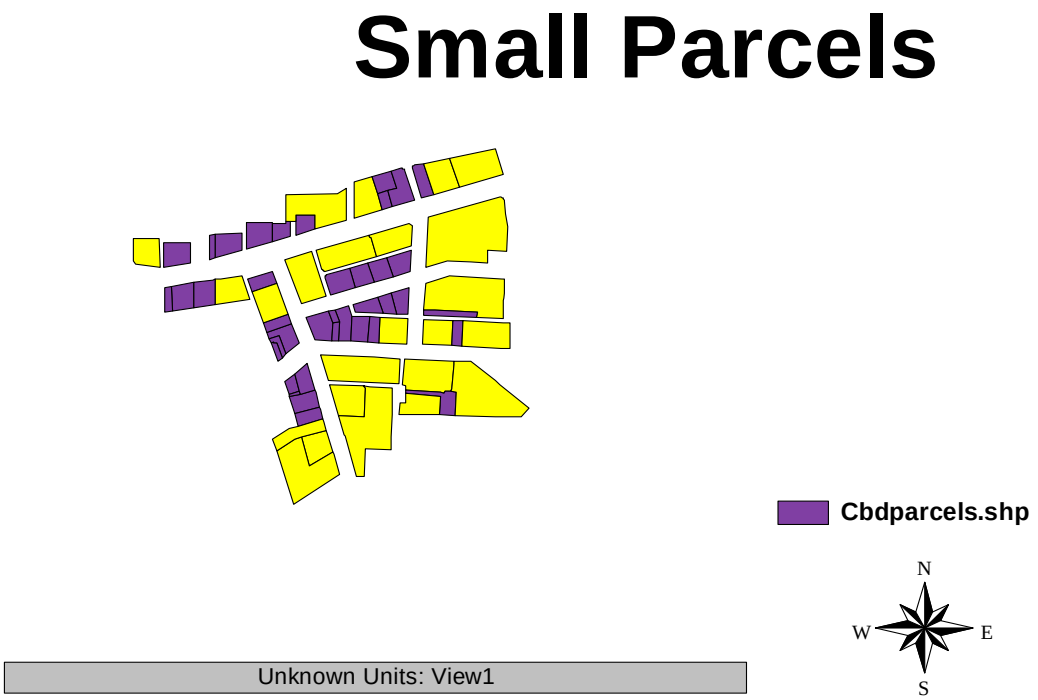
Parking shall not be required for redevelopment in CBD2 subject to one- or two-story height restriction. Below grade of Central and Lake Street parking shall be encouraged by means of a bonus floor above the one- or two-story limitation in CBD2.

Mid scale developments may be able to provide some on-site parking and could contribute to a more effective supply of shared parking. *Developments on parcels of size 10,000 to 15,000 sf may meet parking requirements by means of a mix of fee in-lieu and on-site provision.*

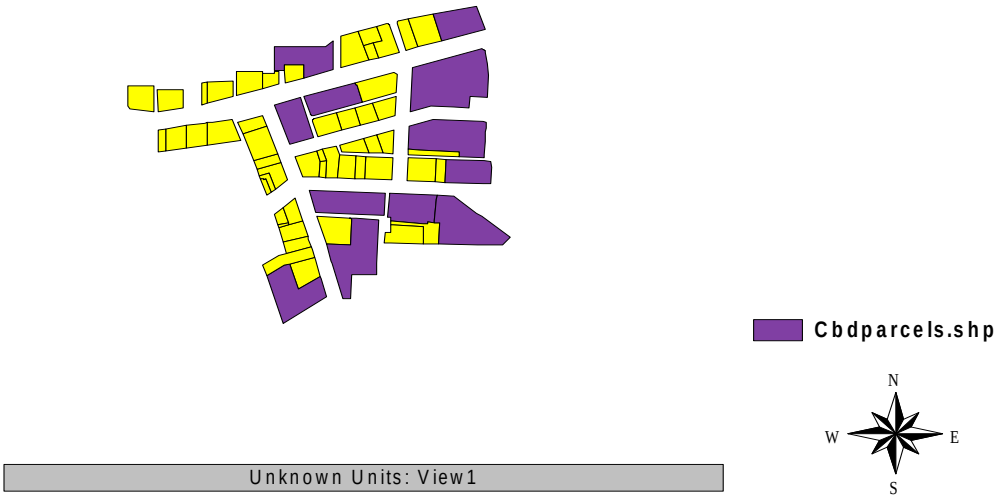
Larger scale developments are more capable of providing on-site parking and can provide for shared parking within the development. *Developments on parcels of 15,000 sf or greater in downtown Kirkland may request a parking requirement reduction greater than the general reduction of 20 per cent by application of the process described in the following section.*

Process for an additional reduction in non-residential parking requirements for large developments

Some flexibility in parking requirements is still necessary to accommodate unique project conditions. *Applicants for development permits in downtown Kirkland may request a parking requirement reduction greater than the general reduction of 20 per cent. Such requests must be based on an analysis by a traffic engineer and a parking management plan that includes shared parking and a transportation demand management program. The analysis shall include an estimate of hourly arrivals and departures of vehicles by land use that takes into consideration modal shares, vehicle occupancy, and seasonal factors. The modal and occupancy analysis shall consider transportation demand management strategies to reduce auto use and the demand strategies shall be included in a transportation management program that will be implemented to manage the on-site parking supply.*



Map 1 Small Parcels, less than 10,000 sf



Map 2 Large Parcels, greater than 15,000 sf