<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 55.45</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>USE ZONE CHART</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 55.45</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TL 6A/6B</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>.080</th>
<th>Entertainment, Cultural and/or Recreational Facility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>See KZC 105.25.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>.090</th>
<th>Private Lodge or Club</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45' above average building elevation. See Gen. Reg. 10.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1 per each 300 sq. ft. of gross floor area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>.100</th>
<th>Attached or Stacked Dwelling Units. See Spec. Reg. 1.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D.R., Chapter 142 KZC</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10'</td>
<td>0'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65' above average building elevation. See Gen. Regs. 3 and 10.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The street level floor of the building shall include commercial use on the ground floor with gross floor area equal to or greater than 20 percent of the area of the subject property. Minor floor area reductions may be approved by the Planning Official if the applicant demonstrates that meeting the requirement is not feasible given the configuration of existing or proposed improvements and that the commercial space is configured to maximize its visibility and pedestrian orientation. The commercial use shall be oriented toward fronting streets, major pedestrian sidewalks and through-block pathways, and have a minimum depth of 20 feet and an average depth of at least 30 feet (as measured from the face of the building along the street, major pedestrian sidewalk or through-block pathway).

Lobbies for this use are allowed within the commercial frontage provided they do not exceed 20 percent of the building's linear commercial frontage along the street.

The Design Review Board may determine the orientation of the commercial use where multiple pedestrian circulation routes exist (see Plate 34C).

The Design Review Board may approve a minor reduction in the depth requirements if the applicant demonstrates that the requirement is not feasible given the configuration of existing or proposed improvements and that the design of the commercial frontage will maximize visual interest.

This requirement does not apply to ground floor residential use in TL 6A where over 80 percent of the total units in the development are affordable to households earning no more than 60 percent of King County median income, adjusted for household size.
2. At least 10 percent of the units provided in new residential developments of four units or greater shall be affordable housing units, as defined in Chapter 5 KZC. See Chapter 112 KZC for additional affordable housing requirements and incentives.

3. Chapter 115 KZC contains regulations regarding home occupations and other accessory uses, facilities and activities associated with this use.

### Residential Suites

1. The street level floor of the building shall include commercial use on the ground floor with gross floor area equal to or greater than 20 percent of the area of the subject property. Minor floor area reductions may be approved by the Planning Official if the applicant demonstrates that meeting the requirement is not feasible given the configuration of existing or proposed improvements and that the commercial space is configured to maximize its visibility and pedestrian orientation. The commercial use shall be oriented toward fronting streets, major pedestrian sidewalks and through-block pathways, and have a minimum depth of 20 feet and an average depth of at least 30 feet (as measured from the face of the building along the street, major pedestrian sidewalk or through-block pathway).

Lobbies for this use are allowed within the commercial frontage provided they do not exceed 20 percent of the building's linear commercial frontage along the street.

The Design Review Board may determine the orientation of the commercial use where multiple pedestrian circulation routes exist (see Plate 34C).

The Design Review Board may approve a minor reduction in the depth requirements if the applicant demonstrates that the requirement is not feasible given the configuration of existing or proposed improvements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residential Suites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>.105</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
proposed improvements and that the design of the commercial frontage will maximize visual interest.

2. Parking shall be provided at a rate of one stall per living unit plus one per on-site employee, and modifications to decrease the parking requirement are prohibited. However, if parking is managed pursuant to Special Regulation 3, parking shall be provided at a rate of 0.5 per living unit plus one per on-site employee.

REGULATIONS FOR THIS USE CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE
### Zone TL 4A, 4B, 4C

#### Kirkland Zoning Code

**326.6.100 Attached or Stacked Dwelling Units**


**D.R., Chapter 142 KZC**

- None
- 10' 0' 0'
- 80%

**DE 1.2 per studio unit**

1.3 per 1 bedroom unit

1.6 per 2 bedroom unit

1.8 per 3 or more bedroom unit

See KZC 105.20 for visitor parking requirements.

**At least 20 percent of the total gross floor area located on the street level floor of the building shall have commercial use. The commercial use shall have a minimum depth of 20 feet and an average depth of at least 30 feet (as measured from the face of the building along the street). In TL 4A, parcel 282605-9043 is exempt from this special regulation, due to the limited visibility and access to this parcel.**

**The Design Review Board may approve a minor reduction in the linear commercial frontage requirements if the applicant demonstrates that this requirement is not feasible given the configuration of existing or proposed improvements, and that the commercial space is configured to maximize its visibility and pedestrian orientation. The commercial use shall be oriented toward facing streets, and have a minimum depth of 20 feet.**

**Lobbies for this use are allowed within the commercial frontage provided they do not exceed 20 percent of the building's linear commercial frontage and access from this area will not interfere with the design of the commercial frontage.**

**Special Regulations**

(See also General Regulations)**

### REGULATIONS:

- Required: Review Process
- Reg: Review Required
- Size
- MINIMUM
- MAXIMUM
- REQUIRED YARD
- Lot-Coverage
- Minimum Height
- Structures
- Landscape Category
- Sign Category
- Parking Spaces
- Special Regulations

### DIRECTIONS: FIRST read down to find use...THEN across for REGULATIONS.
### Residential Suites

See Spec. Reg. 1. D.R., Chapter 142 KZC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Review Process</th>
<th>MINIMUMS</th>
<th>MAXIMUMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lot Size</td>
<td>Front</td>
<td>Side</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Special Regulations**

(See also General Regulations)

---

1. This use is permitted only in the TL 4A subarea.

2. At least 20 percent of the total gross floor area located on the street level floor of the building shall Development must include commercial use on the ground floor with gross floor area equal to or greater than 20 percent of the area of the subject property. Minor floor area reductions may be approved by the Planning Official if the applicant demonstrates that the requirement is not feasible given the configuration of existing or proposed improvements and that the commercial space is configured to maximize its visibility and pedestrian orientation. The commercial use shall be oriented toward fronting streets and have a minimum depth of 20 feet and an average depth of at least 30 feet (as measured from the face of the building along the street). In TL 4A, parcel 282605-9043 is exempt from this special regulation, due to the limited visibility and access to this parcel.

The Design Review Board may approve a minor reduction in the depth requirements if the applicant demonstrates that the requirement is not feasible given the configuration of existing or proposed improvements and that the design of the commercial frontage will maximize visual interest.
Lobbies for this use are allowed within the commercial frontage provided they do not exceed 20 percent of the building’s linear commercial frontage along the street.

3. Parking shall be provided at a rate of one stall per living unit plus one per on-site employee, and modifications to decrease the parking requirement are prohibited. However, if parking is managed pursuant to Special Regulation 4, parking shall be provided at a rate of 0.5 per living unit plus one per on-site employee.

4. The required parking shall be 0.5 per living unit where the parking is managed as follows and the property owner agrees to the following in a form approved by the City and recorded with King County:
   a. Rentals shall be managed such that the total demand for parking does not exceed the available supply of required private parking. If the demand for private parking equals or exceeds the supply of required private parking, the property owner shall either restrict occupancy of living units or restrict leasing to only tenants who do not have cars.
   b. The property owner shall prepare a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) for review and approval by the City and recording with King County. At a minimum the TMP shall include the following requirements:
      1) Charge for on-site parking, unbundled from the rent, for tenants who have cars.
      2) Bus pass or equivalent alternative transportation mode subsidies for tenants who do not have cars.
      3) Lease provisions and monitoring requirements for the property owner to ensure that tenants are not parking off site to avoid parking charges.
      4) Adequate secured and sheltered bicycle parking to meet anticipated demand.

REGULATIONS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
## USE ZONE CHART

### Mixed Use Development Containing Attached or Stacked Dwelling Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 55.51 USE</th>
<th>REGULATIONS</th>
<th>MINIMUMS</th>
<th>MAXIMUMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required Review Process</td>
<td>Lot Size (See Ch. 115)</td>
<td>REQUIRED YARD</td>
<td>Height of Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.R., Chapter 142 KZC. See Gen. Reg. 3.</td>
<td>1.5 acres</td>
<td>10' 0' 0'</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Zones Allowing Residential Suites
Totem Lake Business District and Urban Center

Zones where Residential Suites are allowed are indicated with a star:
Hi Dorian,

We would like to affirm the following to be brought forth to the City Council’s Planning and Economic Development Committee:

1. The expansion of Residential Suites to the Housing Incentive Areas (TL 10B, TL 10C, TL 10D) in Totem Lake.
   a. We believe the Council is supportive of Residential Suites zoning wherever other residential areas occur in Totem Lake
   b. This expansion gives Residential Suites the best opportunity to be built in Totem Lake in order to bring much needed affordable housing to the area.
2. The addition of Residential Suites to the Residence XII property (TL 10A)
   a. They are naturally residential lots and not commercial lots because of their small size.
   b. Possible apartments to be included in the design, similar to the Plaza project, for a mix of housing types and choices.
   c. To expand the 10 minute neighborhood concept – the property is within a short walk of the City’s justice center.
3. The Totem Lake commercial standard to apply to CBD side streets.
   a. Given the amount of retail being created at Kirkland Urban (approximately 200,000 square feet) together with the additional retail at the old hardware site, the antique mall site, and now proposed at the Wendy’s site, downtown Kirkland will have a great influx of retail in the near future.
   b. We feel that the small “side streets” should be allowed to provide services.
   c. In order for the 10 minute community to really work, services (doctors, dentists, day cares) are necessary in combination to retail.
   d. Side streets such as 4th Street, north of Central, at Plaza, which is located behind the gas station and across the street from office zoning is better suited to service type destinations, much like the Overlake clinic off of 3rd Street.

Sincerely,

Robert Pantley
Its Manager and CEO
Natural and Built Environments LLC

Angela Rozmyn, LEED AP
Director of Sustainable Development
Natural and Built Environments LLC
Hi Dorian – please see below. Let me know if it needs more explanation.

Doug

---

Hi Doug,

Some brief thoughts:

2 of the items the City seems to want included in each new development is parking and retail space in sufficient quantity. The 75 foot height limit would allow an additional floor for a 5 over 2 building. The additional floor of concrete could help provide the additional parking and retail space the City requires.

Hope that helps,

Ann
Hi Ann – They are once again looking at making chances to the zoning. Dorian at the city mentioned another developer asked that they go to 75 feet so that they could do 5 over 2. Would you agree and if so could you elaborate on the benefits so that I can pass those along to the city?

Thanks...

Doug Waddell
February 6, 2018

Kirkland City Council
c/o Dorian Collins
City of Kirkland, Planning Department
123 Fifth Ave.
Kirkland, WA 98033

Kirkland City Council:

I am writing you to ask that you direct the planning department to look at updating the zoning code and guidelines for our property located at 12427 NE 124th Street, which is in the TL6A zone. There has been a recent interest in medical office however the height restrictions are actually 20 feet lower than stacked dwelling units. I am not really sure why that is, but I would request that the height restriction become consistent, at 65 feet, for apartments, office, hotel and assisted living/nursing home.

In addition, numerous developers have looked at it from an apartment development standpoint, and all have of them have come back stating that the ground floor commercial requirements are too high for such a thoroughfare. I think it would make more sense to let the amount of ground floor commercial be market driven versus code driven. In other words, have the code make that an option but not a requirement. At the very least, they should reduce the amount that is required.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Signature]

Doug Waddell
President
Hi Dorian – please see below. Let me know if it needs more explanation.

Doug

---

Hi Doug,

Some brief thoughts:

2 of the items the City seems to want included in each new development is parking and retail space in sufficient quantity. The 75 foot height limit would allow an additional floor for a 5 over 2 building. The additional floor of concrete could help provide the additional parking and retail space the City requires.

Hope that helps,

Ann
Hi Ann – They are once again looking at making chances to the zoning. Dorian at the city mentioned another developer asked that they go to 75 feet so that they could do 5 over 2. Would you agree and if so could you elaborate on the benefits so that I can pass those along to the city?

Thanks...

Doug Waddell
Totem Lake Business District
Housing Incentive Areas

Figure TL-9: Totem Lake Housing Incentive Areas
### Residential Suites

*See Spec. Reg. 1.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>USE</th>
<th>REVIEW</th>
<th>Regulations</th>
<th>MINIMUMS</th>
<th>MAXIMUMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55.33a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REQUIRED YARD**  
(See-Ch. 115)

**Lot Size**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Side</th>
<th>Rear</th>
<th>Lot Coverage</th>
<th>Height of Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Special Regulations**  
(See also General Regulations)

1. This use is permitted only in the TL 4A and TL 4B subareas.
2. Development must include commercial use on the ground floor with gross floor area equal to or greater than 20 percent of the area of the subject property. Minor floor area reductions may be approved by the Planning Official if the applicant demonstrates that meeting the requirement is not feasible given the configuration of existing or proposed improvements and that the commercial space is configured to maximize its visibility and pedestrian orientation.
3. In TL 4A, parking shall be provided at a rate of one stall per living unit plus one per on-site employee, and modifications to decrease the parking requirement are prohibited. However, if parking is managed pursuant to Special Regulation 4, parking shall be provided at a rate of 0.5 per living unit where the parking is managed as follows and the property owner agrees to the following in a form approved by the City and recorded with King County:
   - a. Rentals shall be managed such that the total demand for parking does not exceed the available supply of required private parking. If the demand for private parking equals or exceeds the supply of required private parking, the property owner shall either restrict occupancy of living units or restrict leasing to only tenants who do not have cars.
   - b. The property owner shall prepare a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) for review and approval by the City and recording.

**For TL 4A:** See Spec. Regs. 3 and 4.  
For TL 4B:  
1.2 per studio unit.  
1.3 per 1 bedroom unit.  
1.6 per 2 bedroom unit.  
1.8 per 3 or more bedroom unit.  
See KZC 105.20 for visitor parking requirements.  

### DIRECTIONS:

1. **FIRST**, read down to find use... **THEN**, across for REGULATIONS.
### Residential Suites (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section: 55.33a</th>
<th>USE</th>
<th>Required-Review Process</th>
<th>MINIMUMS</th>
<th>MAXIMUMS</th>
<th>Special-Regulations (See also General-Regulations)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lot Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Front</td>
<td>Side</td>
<td>Rear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.105</td>
<td>Residential Suites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Regulations continued from previous page

7. Developments containing this use shall provide common living area available to all residential suite residents. Common living area shall consist of areas such as shared kitchens, dining areas, and community rooms. Areas such as bathrooms, laundries, utility rooms, storage, stairwells, mailrooms, and hallways shall not be counted as common living area. The minimum amount of common living area for each project shall be 250 square feet plus an additional 20 square feet per living unit.

8. Section 105.103.c provides a process to grant a decrease in the required number of parking spaces.

### Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>.110</th>
<th>D.R., Chapter 142 KZC</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>10'</th>
<th>0'</th>
<th>0'</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>65' above average building elevation.</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 for every 4 people based on maximum occupancy load of any area of worship. See also Spec. Reg. 2.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. May include accessory living facilities for staff persons.
2. No parking is required for day-care or school ancillary to this use.
## USE ZONE CHART

### Section 55.81

**USE REGULATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 55.81</th>
<th>USE</th>
<th>Required Review Process</th>
<th>MINIMUMS</th>
<th>MAXIMUMS</th>
<th>LANDSCAPE CATEGORY (See Ch. 9a)</th>
<th>SIGN CATEGORY (See Ch. 100)</th>
<th>Required Parking Spaces (See Ch. 105)</th>
<th>Special Regulations (See also General Regulations)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.010 D.R., Chapter 142 KZC</td>
<td>Attached or Stacked Dwelling Units</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td>5' but 2 side yards must equal at least 15'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Where adjoining a low density zone, 30' above average building elevation. Otherwise, up to 65' above average building elevation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>See Spec. Reg. 3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Revised 12/17)
### USE ZONE CHART

**Section 55.81**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UC Zone</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Minimum Setback (feet)</th>
<th>Side Yards (feet)</th>
<th>Maximum Building Height (feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.032</td>
<td>Warehouse Storage Service</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>20'</td>
<td>5' but not less than 2 side yards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.043</td>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>D.R., Chapter 142 KZC</td>
<td>10'</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.054</td>
<td>Industrial Laundry Facility</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>0'</td>
<td>0'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.065</td>
<td>Wholesale Printing or Publishing</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>0'</td>
<td>0'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.076</td>
<td>Wholesale Establishment or Contracting Services in Building Construction, Plumbing, Electrical, Landscaping, or Pest Control</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>0'</td>
<td>0'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. **Section 105.103.c provides a process to grant a decrease in the required number of parking spaces.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Where adjoining a low density zone, 30' above average building elevation. Otherwise, up to 35' above average building elevation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1 per each 1,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. May include, as part of this use, accessory retail sales, office or service occupying no more than 20 percent of the gross floor area. The landscaping and parking requirements for these accessory uses will be the same as for the primary use.
2. Outdoor storage for this use must be buffered as established in Chapter 95 KZC for Landscaping Category A.
3. Refer to KZC 115.105 for provisions regarding outdoor use, activity and storage.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Zoning</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.090</td>
<td>Office Use</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>If a medical, dental, or veterinary office, then 1 per each 200 sq. ft. of gross floor area. Otherwise, 1 per each 300 sq. ft. of gross floor area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.100</td>
<td>Attached or Stacked Dwelling Units</td>
<td>D.R., Chapter 142 KZC</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. If this use is located in Housing Incentive Area 4 (see Plate 37, Chapter 180 KZC), maximum building height is 65 feet above average building elevation.
2. The following regulations apply only to veterinary offices:
   a. If there are outdoor runs or other outdoor facilities for the animals, then use must comply with Landscape Category A.
   b. Outside runs and other outside facilities for the animals must be set back at least 10 feet from each property line and must be surrounded by a fence or wall sufficient to enclose the animals. See KZC 115.105, Outdoor Use, Activity and Storage, for further regulations.

1. This use is permitted only in Housing Incentive Area 4 (see Plate 37, Chapter 180 KZC).
2. Developers and residents in this zone should be aware that this property lies within a district containing and allowing future development of uses of a light industry/office nature, and impacts typically associated with these uses, such as noise and odor, may be experienced by residents.
3. For Attached or Stacked Dwelling Units, at least 10 percent of the units provided in new residential developments of four units or greater shall be affordable housing units, as defined in Chapter 5 KZC. See Chapter 112 KZC for additional affordable housing requirements and incentives.
4. Chapter 115 KZC contains regulations regarding home occupations and other accessory uses, facilities and activities associated with this use.
5. The side yard may be reduced to zero feet if the side of the dwelling unit is attached to a dwelling unit on an adjoining lot. If one side of a dwelling unit is so attached and the opposite side is not, the side that is not attached must provide a minimum side yard of five feet.
6. Section 105.103.c provides a process to grant a decrease in the required number of parking spaces.
IKE A LOT OF CITIES, Minneapolis has experienced the dual trends of rising multi-family rents and dwindling housing affordability. For years it offered the usual carrots of tax incentives and development subsidies for residential projects with affordable units. But three years ago, it tried a different strategy: The city slashed its multi-family parking requirements in certain parts of town.

The usual ratio of one parking space for every one unit was cut in half for larger apartment projects and was eliminated entirely for projects with 50 or fewer units located near high-frequency transit. Lo and behold, the market mostly responded in the exact ways planners had predicted.

Apartment developers proposed projects with fewer parking spaces. That lowered the cost of construction. So, such projects began offering rents below the market's established levels. New studio apartments, which typically went for $1,200 per month, were being offered for less than $1,000 per month.

"There's definitely a new type of residential unit in the market that we haven't seen much before," says
Nick Magrino, a Minneapolis planning commissioner who has researched apartment development trends since the parking code change. “Outside of downtown, there’s been a lot of infill development with cheaper, more affordable units.”

Tinkering with minimum parking requirements is not new. Cities have been fiddling with regulations for decades, sometimes raising them, sometimes lowering them, and sometimes giving variances for specific projects. What’s different now is an evolving understanding that urban lifestyles are changing, traditional parking ratios are outdated, and too much supply can be as harmful as too little.

So there’s a burgeoning movement of municipalities across the U.S. reducing or eliminating parking requirements for certain locales or certain types of development or even citywide.

“This would have seemed inconceivable just a few years ago,” says Donald Shoup, FAICP, a Distinguished Research Professor in UCLA’s Department of Urban Planning who has studied and written about parking policies for years and is considered the godfather of the current reform movement. (See an article based on his new book, Parking and the City, on page 33.)

Over the past three years, a Minnesota-based smart-growth advocacy organization called Strong Towns has compiled, through crowdsourcing, more than 130 examples of communities across the country addressing or discussing parking minimum reforms. And that list hasn’t captured all the cities taking actions.

Communities are reforming these regulations in a variety of ways.

Some have ditched parking minimums entirely. Buffalo, New York, in early 2017 became the first U.S. city to completely remove minimum parking requirements citywide, applied to developments of less than 5,000 square feet. Late last year Hartford, Connecticut, went a step further and eliminated parking minimums citywide for all residential developments.
Some have targeted their reforms to certain areas or development districts. Lexington, Kentucky, earlier this year scrapped parking requirements in a shopping center corridor to allow the development of new multifamily housing. Spokane, Washington, this past summer eliminated parking requirements for four-plus-unit housing projects in denser parts of the city.

Some have tied new policies specifically to spur affordable housing. Seattle this past spring eliminated parking requirements for all nonprofit affordable housing developments in the city, among other provisions. A couple of years ago, Portland, Oregon, waived parking requirements for new developments containing affordable housing near transit. Also in 2016, New York eliminated parking requirements for subsidized and senior housing in large swaths of the city well served by the subway.

Even some suburbs are doing it. Santa Monica, California, removed parking requirements entirely last year for new downtown developments as part of a new Downtown Community Plan. And this year, the Washington, D.C., suburban county Prince George’s, Maryland, revised its zoning code to significantly reduce parking minimums.

“We’re trying to create a new model of mobility and not emphasize the car as much as we’ve done in the past,” says David Martin, Santa Monica’s director of planning and community development.

Catalysts for change

Three primary factors are driving this new reform:

1. CITIES ALREADY HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH PARKING. The Research Institute for Housing America, part of the Washington, D.C.-based Mortgage Bankers Association, used satellite imagery and tax records this year to tally parking space totals in different-sized U.S. cities, and determined that outside of New York City, the parking densities per acre far exceeded the population densities.

Meanwhile, two different groups—TransForm, which promotes walkable communities in California, and the Chicago-based Center for Neighborhood Technology, a nonprofit sustainable development advocacy group—have both conducted middle-of-the-night surveys of parking usage at apartment projects on the West Coast and in Chicago, respectively. They consistently found one-quarter to one-third of spaces sat empty. The Chicago center concluded “it is critical to ‘right size’ parking at a level below current public standards.”

2. TRANSPORTATION PREFERENCES ARE SHIFTING. A variety of converging trends point to the possibility of fewer cars in the future. Fixed-rail transit lines continue to be developed in more urban centers, and millennials are not driving as much as previous generations. Meanwhile, transportation alternatives are proliferating, from passenger services such as Uber to car-sharing services such as Zipcar. Then there’s the potential of driverless cars and the expansion of retail delivery services.

3. BOTTOM LINE: WE’RE GOING TO NEED MUCH LESS SPACE TO STORE CARS. In fact, Green Street Advisors, a commercial real estate advisory firm, analyzed what it calls the “transportation revolution”—encompassing ride-hailing services, driverless cars, etc.—and estimated that U.S. parking needs...
could decline by 50 percent or more in the next 30 years. (See “Future-Proof Parking, March: planning.org/planning/2018/mar/futureproofparking.”)

"In the old days, you built an apartment and you expected it needed two cars," says Doug Bibby, president of the National Multifamily Housing Council, an apartment trade association in Washington D.C. "Those parking ratios are outdated and no longer valid in any jurisdiction."

**Concerns about housing affordability**

With the U.S. economy reasonably strong and most urban crime rates on a long-terms decline, housing costs have increasingly emerged as a hot-button issue. In Boston University's nationwide Menino Survey of Mayors last year, housing costs were cited as the number one reason residents move away, and more affordable housing was the top-ranked improvement mayors most wanted to see.

"It's on the minds of mayors now more than it has been in the past," says Kimble Ratliff, the National Multifamily Housing Council's vice president of government affairs.

They're concerned because there's ample evidence of a continued national shortage of affordable housing. The latest "State of the Nation's Housing" report from Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies noted that a decade-long multifamily construction boom has increased total occupied rental units by 21 percent, but mainly at the top end of the market. Total units deemed "affordable"—costing less than 33 percent of median income—have remained basically static during the last decade, while the number of extremely low-income renter households has grown by more than 10 percent. The 2018 report concluded that there is a "tremendous pent-up demand for affordable rental housing."

So as cities have searched for ways to generate more affordable housing, parking has emerged as an easy target. Parking ratios are simple to change, and the process doesn't lead to future cost obligations like subsidies do.

"That was the approach taken by Seattle this year. "The number one issue facing our city is the lack of housing options and affordability. We're looking to remove any barriers to the supply of housing, and parking is one of them," says Samuel Assefa, the director of Seattle's Office of Planning and Community Development.

**Impacts on housing costs**

Planners' shifting strategies toward parking are now supported by a growing body of evidence that parking requirements negatively impact multifamily housing, especially affordable projects.

In a nutshell, building parking costs a lot, and that cost usually ends up raising tenant rents.

Various studies indicate that surface parking lot spaces cost upwards of $5,000 each, while above-ground parking garages average around $25,000 per space and below-ground garages average around $35,000 per space. That can translate into higher rent, particularly in big cities. Two UCLA urban planning professors studied U.S. rental data and reported in the journal *Housing Policy Debate* in 2016 that garage parking typically costs renter households approximately $142 per month, or an additional 17 percent of a housing unit's rent. Other studies have found even larger impacts on rents.

"That can be a significant burden on lower-income households," says David Garcia, policy director of the Terner Center for Housing Innovation at the University of California–Berkeley.

Changing that equation can help produce additional affordable housing. That's a scenario actually playing out in Portland, Oregon.

In 2016 the Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, a nonprofit developer and manager of low-income housing, began planning a 35-unit...
senior housing project called Kafoury Court. At the time, Portland's code required providing five parking spaces for the project, and the developer was struggling to find financing. But late that year, the city changed its parking requirements, and Kafoury now only needs to provide two spaces.

While that change doesn't seem like much, it allowed the development to be totally redesigned. A first-floor parking garage was no longer needed, so the building has been scaled back from five stories to four stories, which led to cost-saving ripple effects. "This has made the project financially feasible," says PCRI's Julia Metz.

She adds: "We prefer to build houses for people, not cars. When it comes down to choosing space for people or parking, we're going to choose people."

Affordable housing projects, with their lower rent revenue streams, are already challenging to finance. So parking is an increasingly key factor in whether or not a project works financially. But to developers, reducing or removing parking requirements does not mean eliminating parking supply. It simply allows developers to decide how many spaces to build based on market and locational demand.

"I've had developers say to me, 'Hey, I could make this deal work if I only had to build a garage that's one-third smaller,'" says Greg Willett, chief economist of RealPage, a provider of property management software and services. "Any way you can take costs out of the deal is meaningful."

"The debate is now won"

When it comes to utilizing parking to augment planning and development policies, U.S. cities still have a long way to go to catch up to some European counterparts. Zurich, Switzerland; Copenhagen, Denmark; and Hamburg, Germany, have all capped the total number of allowable parking spaces in their cities. Oslo, Norway—where a majority of center-city residents don't own cars—is pursuing plans to remove all parking spaces from that district, to be replaced by installations such as pocket parks and phone-charging street furniture.

And last year the largest city in North America, Mexico City, eliminated parking requirements for new developments citywide and instead imposed limits on the number of new spaces allowed, depending on the type and size of building.

In the U.S., however, parking is still sacred in many places. Sometimes when parking reductions are proposed for a certain urban district or a specific new development, nearby residents complain it will force new renters to park on their residential streets. Because so many people still own cars, the National Multifamily Housing Council's 2017 Renter Preferences Report ranked parking as renters' second-most desired community amenity, behind only cell-phone reception.

Not surprisingly, then, some places are still demanding more parking, not less. In Boston, for instance, an influx of new residents clamoring for parking in the booming South Boston neighborhood led to zoning code changes in 2016 that require developers to build two-thirds more off-street parking than before.

Nevertheless, the movement to reduce parking is now widespread, involving big cities and small towns, urban districts and suburban locales, affordable housing and market-rate units. "It's pretty well accepted now that reforming parking minimums is a good way to manage cities," says Tony Jordan, founder of Portlanders for Parking Reform, which has advocated for better parking policies. "The debate is now won."

The lessons for planners are, first, to be open to adjusting parking policies in zoning codes and comprehensive plans and, second, to be flexible in crafting new parking limits depending on the location or desired outcome, such as spurring affordable housing development.

"As we update our policies, we as planners need to learn from the past and adjust," says Seattle planning director Assefa. "We constantly need to tweak our policies and face the challenges of what's not necessarily working. More often than not, there's significant space dedicated to the car that is not utilized."  

Jeffrey Spivak, a market research director in suburban Kansas City, Missouri, is an award-winning writer specializing in real estate planning, development, and demographic trends.

**RESOURCES**

FROM APA

APA Knowledgebase Collection, "Rethinking Off-Street Parking Requirements": planning.org/knowledgebase/parkingrequirements.

MORE

Harvard University Joint Center for Housing Studies, The State of the Nation's Housing 2018: factfinder.harvard.edu/state-nations-housing-2018.
