



Sunnyvale

## **Study Issue CDD 19-07:**

*Evaluate the Minimum Off-Street Automobile  
Parking Requirements for Residential Uses*

George Schroeder, Principal Planner  
Planning Commission, February 26, 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 & multi-family 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%

## LAWRENCE STATION AREA PLAN

- Mirrors ECR node standards

## PEERY PARK SPECIFIC PLAN

- Mirrors general SMC standards

## 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

## 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

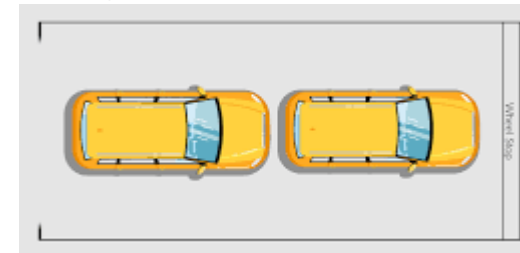
# Options to Consider – Moderately Reduce Res. Parking Minimums

- **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:**

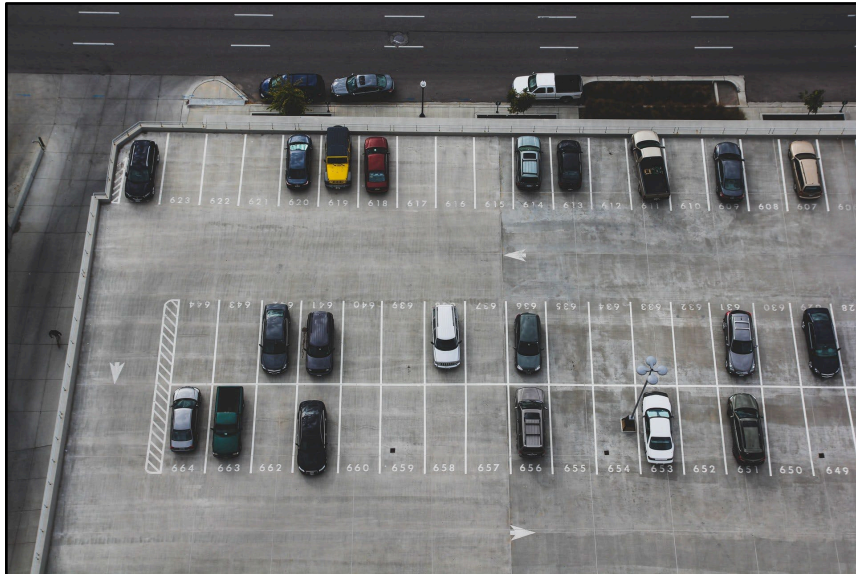
- ◆ Simplify min. standards to flat rates that align with state density bonus law
  - **Zero/1 bedroom:** 1 space/unit
  - **2-3 bedroom:** 1.5 spaces/unit
  - **4+ bedroom:** 2 spaces/unit
- ◆ Evaluate reductions to compact allowances and increases to tandem allowances



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

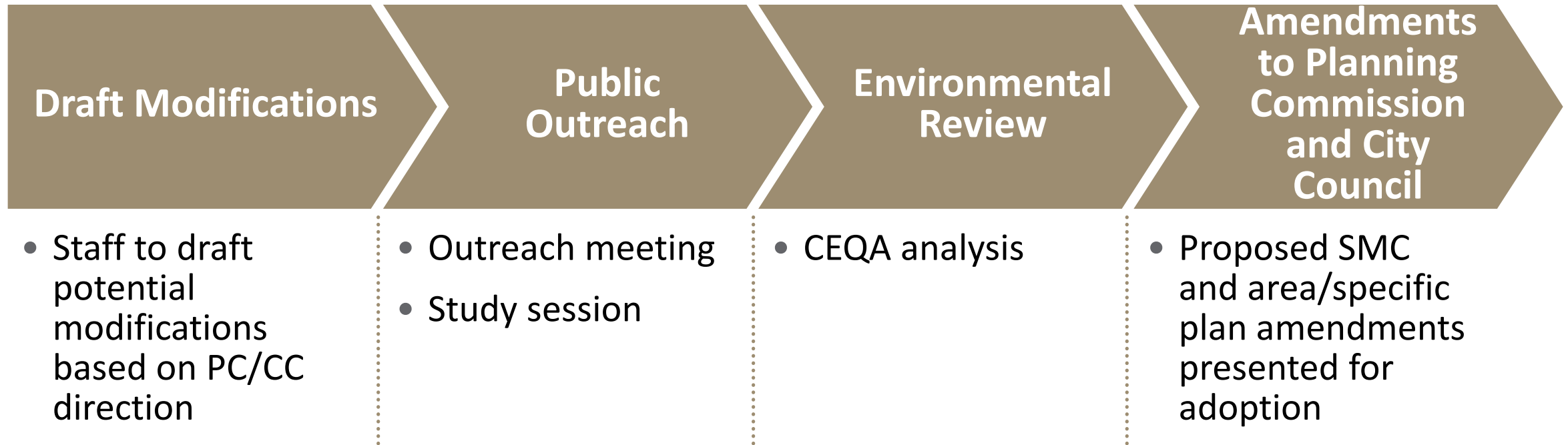
# Other Options to Consider

- **Eliminate** Residential Parking Minimums
  - ◆ City of San Jose – requires TDM plans instead
  - ◆ Implement parking maximums
    - SF, Alameda, Berkeley, Emeryville
- **Maintain** Current Parking Requirements





# Potential Next Steps following City Council Direction



# Recommendation to the City Council

## 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 modifications.
3. Do not modify parking requirements.

## Staff Recommendation

Alternative 1 - Direct staff to conduct outreach and prepare SMC and area/specific plan amendments for moderate reductions to single-family and multifamily parking requirements; and make parking standards objective and without discretionary review.