



# City of Sunnyvale

## Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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File #: 24-0430, Version: 1

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### REPORT TO COUNCIL

#### **SUBJECT**

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

**File #:** 2022-7404

**Environmental Review:** The action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a).

**Project Planner:** George Schroeder, (408) 730-7443, [gschroeder@sunnyvale.ca.gov](mailto:gschroeder@sunnyvale.ca.gov)

#### **SUMMARY OF COMMISSION ACTION**

The Planning Commission considered this item on February 26, 2024.

Commissioners had questions on unbundled parking, shared parking, parking maximums, on-street parking permits, parking studies, and the current requirement for additional parking when there is limited street parking. The commission was generally supportive of reductions to parking minimums and also supportive of exploring parking maximums. One commissioner was opposed to making changes to current requirements. No members of the public spoke or provided written comments on the item.

Several motions and friendly amendments were made until the Planning Commission ultimately voted to recommend to the City Council Alternative 2 - Alternative 1 with the below modifications:

- Explore allowing unbundled parking for existing tenants.
- Explore eliminating minimum parking requirements for residential uses altogether and instead require Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plans for all new multi-family projects.

The vote was 6-1, with Vice Chair Iglesias dissenting (See Attachment 9, Excerpt of Draft Minutes of the Planning Commission Meeting of February 26, 2024). The Planning Commission's recommendation has been reflected in Alternative 2 to this report.

#### **PUBLIC CONTACT**

Public contact was made by posting the Council meeting agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board at City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Public Library and in the Department of Public Safety Lobby. In addition, the agenda and this report are available at the NOVA Workforce Services reception desk located on the first floor of City Hall at 456 W. Olive Avenue (during normal business hours), and on the City's website. A notice was also published in the *Sun* newspaper.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Direct staff to conduct community outreach and prepare amendments to the Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) and applicable Specific Plans' parking regulations, to be considered at

future hearings. The amendments to be studied include:

- a. Clarifying parking standards to be objective and without discretionary review.
- b. Single/Two-Family Residential:
  - i. Lowering minimum off-street parking spaces per property, with flexibility in type and arrangement.
  - ii. Exploring maximum number of parking spaces and allowing tandem parking.
- c. Multi-Family Residential:
  - i. Introducing unbundled parking.
  - ii. Adjusting/simplifying the unassigned space requirement (currently dependent on the type of covered assigned space provided).
    1. For example, require the minimum parking standards to be a flat rate of 1 space per zero to one-bedroom unit; 1.5 spaces per two to three-bedroom unit; and 2 spaces for units with four or more bedrooms.
  - iii. Examining maximum amount of parking required, except for areas within a half-mile of major transit stops.
  - iv. Allowing flexibility in type (covered, uncovered) and arrangement, including a tandem allowance for up to 100% of units.
  - v. Evaluating continued use of compact parking spaces.
  - vi. Updating the Limited Street Parking Provisions to specify objective parking requirements in certain conditions.
2. Alternative 1 with the Planning Commission recommended additional items:
  - a. Explore allowing unbundled parking for existing tenants.
  - b. Explore eliminating minimum parking requirements for residential uses altogether and instead require Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plans for all new multi-family projects.
3. Alternative 1 with modifications.
4. Do not modify parking requirements.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Recommend Alternative 1 to direct staff to conduct community outreach and prepare amendments to the Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) and applicable Specific Plans' parking regulations, to be considered at future hearings. The amendments to be studied include:

- a. Clarifying parking standards to be objective and without discretionary review.
- b. Single/Two-Family Residential:
  - i. Lowering minimum off-street parking spaces per property, with flexibility in type and arrangement.
  - ii. Exploring maximum number of parking spaces and allowing tandem parking.
- c. Multi-Family Residential:
  - i. Introducing unbundled parking.
  - ii. Adjusting/simplifying the unassigned space requirement (currently dependent on the type of covered assigned space provided).
    1. For example, require the minimum parking standards to be a flat rate of 1 space per zero to one-bedroom unit; 1.5 spaces per two to three-bedroom unit; and 2 spaces for units with four or more bedrooms.
  - iii. Examining maximum amount of parking required, except for areas within a half-mile of major transit stops.
  - iv. Allowing flexibility in type (covered, uncovered) and arrangement, including a tandem allowance for up to 100% of units.

- v. Evaluating continued use of compact parking spaces.
- vi. Updating the Limited Street Parking Provisions to specify objective parking requirements in certain conditions.

Reasonable reductions in the amount of required parking not only assists property owners, but also contributes to decreased housing costs, increases the number of available units, avoids an oversupply of parking spaces, reduces impervious surface area, discourages higher rates of vehicle ownership, and promotes climate-friendly modes of transportation such as walking, bicycling, carpooling, and taking transit.

Directing staff to study policy updates based on Alternative 1 would allow property owners of single/two-family dwellings to more easily expand and remodel without the constraint of accommodating a total of four parking spaces onsite. Reducing the area dedicated to parking allows more space available for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and extended families living together in one house. It also would align the City's standards with those of other jurisdictions within Santa Clara County and throughout the Bay Area.

The recommended reduction in minimum requirements for multifamily developments would have a limited impact overall, since reduced parking requirements are already in place for certain Specific Plans, areas within one half-mile of transit, and projects utilizing density bonus reduced parking allowances. The tradeoff for such a reduction is likely fewer unassigned/guest parking spaces onsite.

Housing Element programs related to parking (Programs H21, H22 and H23) could be combined with the follow-up study items on parking.

Prepared by: George Schroeder, Principal Planner  
Reviewed by: Shaunn Mendrin, Planning Officer  
Reviewed by: Trudi Ryan, Director of Community Development  
Reviewed by: Connie Verceles, Deputy City Manager  
Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- 1. Report to Planning Commission [24-0141, February 26, 2024] (without attachments)
- 2. Study Issue Paper, CDD 19-07
- 3. General Plan Goals and Policies
- 4. Residential Parking Requirements Timeline
- 5. Single/Two-Family Parking Data for Other Jurisdictions
- 6. Multifamily Parking Data for Other Jurisdictions
- 7. Demographic Data for Santa Clara County Jurisdictions
- 8. Demographic Data for Peer Jurisdictions

## **Additional Attachments for Report to Council**

- 9. Excerpt of Final Minutes of the Planning Commission Meeting of February 26, 2024