

## Columbus Proposed Parking Code

### Modifications in response to Stakeholder Input

August 28, 2009

This document outlines key modifications proposed for the public review draft of the City's parking code revisions in response to stakeholder input. In cases where code language is included, new text is reflected in underlined italicized type. Strikeout text is used to reflect proposed deletions. Code numbers are for reference and refer to the public review draft only. Sections will be renumbered to accommodate incorporation of updates.

#### Commitment to Two-year Review

The parking code revision proposal includes many new ideas and updates to existing requirements, some of which have been unchanged for decades. While significant care has been taken to develop a highly functional draft, it will be important to monitor the new code to determine its effectiveness. Consequently, the proposal includes a commitment to undertake a two-year review of the new code and suggest areas which may require additional consideration.

#### 3312.01 Purpose.

Add the following text to the purpose statement to strengthen support for green initiatives.

Encourage the incorporation of environmentally sustainable design elements.

#### 3312.21 Landscaping and screening.

Add the following sentence to the opening paragraph of the Landscaping section to strengthen support for native species and bio-retention. Note: make native plant list available through Building Services Division office.

Landscaping may be combined with storm water control measures as approved by the Director of Public Utilities. The applicant should consider the use of low-impact development strategies for managing storm water runoff and alternative pavements for reducing glare and mitigating the heat island effect from parking lot surfaces. Appropriate native plant species are recommended for landscaping and screening requirements.

Modify items 1 and 2 in section A to read to clarify standards and respond to concerns that the proposed requirements are too restrictive and will not allow for logical incorporation in parking lot traffic patterns. New tree island definition intended to allow for flexibility of arrangement provided minimum tree protection area is observed.

1. Trees shall be a minimum of two inches in caliper at time of planting;
2. Trees shall be planted in landscaped islands or peninsulas ~~at least four feet in width and~~ containing a minimum soil area of 145 ~~462~~ square feet per tree, allowing for flexible arrangement but designed in such a way that each tree is surrounded by a minimum radius of four feet of soil area. Islands and peninsulas shall be curbed and filled with suitable topsoil and covered with live vegetation, decorative gravel or mulch. Curbs on landscaped

islands or peninsulas may contain openings to receive storm water runoff if islands or peninsulas are part of bio-retention or other storm water control measure approved by the Director of Public Utilities.

Note: Staff is currently working to establish guidance for this section requiring that landscaping islands have adequate soil depth and be free of construction material, debris, etc.

Add the following clause to section B to recognize needed flexibility in setback area.

*The lot area between the right-of-way and the parking setback line shall be landscaped with plant material and shall not be paved except for approved walkways, bikeways, driveways, graphics, and other approved amenities and site elements. Vision clearance at driveways shall be maintained.*

### **3312.45 Required surface for parking.**

Modify this section to reflect calls to provide a stronger endorsement for consideration of permeable surfaces and/or higher light reflectivity.

*The surface of any parking area; including but not limited to a parking, loading or stacking space; circulation area; aisle or driveway shall be designed to control storm water runoff and be improved with Portland cement, asphaltic concrete or other approved hard surface other than gravel or loose fill. Applicants are encouraged to consider use of permeable surfaces as a means of reducing storm-water runoff. Applicants may also consider lighter color finishes for surface materials, which reflect solar energy and minimize heat "islands." Hard surface materials other than concrete and asphalt are subject to additional review and prior approval by relevant departments and divisions. This section is intended to apply to any parking, loading, stacking or maneuvering area regardless of whether such area is required. Exception: The director may waive the hard surface requirement for a use located in a manufacturing district when the proposed parking space is located at least four 400 feet from any residential district*

### **3312.31 Parking space.**

Modify this section as follows to expand the exception clause to incorporate multi-family units with individual driveway/garage arrangements.

*A. A parking space shall be a rectangular area of not less than 9 feet by 18 feet, exclusive of any driveway or other circulation area; shall be accessible from a street, alley, or maneuvering area; and shall be designed for parking a motor vehicle. Exception: For single-family, two-family dwellings, and multi-family units with individual garage/driveway arrangements, one vehicle may be stacked behind (parked in tandem to) each required off-street parking space and be located between the parking setback line and the street right-of-way line. Tandem parking must be located in a driveway, and not in any other part of a required yard. Required vision clearance shall be maintained. Stacked parking spaces may not be attributed to units not served directly by the driveway/garage.*

### 3312.51 Minimum/Maximum numbers of parking spaces required.

This section is a central element of the code. Numerous comments were made by stakeholders expressing support for and concerns about various aspects of this section.

**Residential:** Eliminate caps for all residential uses. Residential parking needs can vary widely dependent on location, design, etc.

**Restaurants:** Establish a uniform maximum parking ratio of 1:50sf for all restaurants regardless of size or presence of pick up unit. This responds to observations that the maximum previously proposed for smaller restaurants with pickup units (1:100sf) was too restrictive. Different minimum requirements will be maintained to allow smaller restaurants with pickup units to provide less parking.

#### Shopping Centers

- Propose new parking maximum ratio of 1:200 in response to concerns that 1:250, which is the current minimum requirement, is too restrictive.
- Propose a new category of smaller shopping centers in recognition that they also realize parking efficiencies due to combinations of uses. The general definition of this new category is as follows:

*Smaller Shopping Centers: Are those shopping centers with total area of greater than 75,000 sf, but less than 150,000 sf., which have a minimum of three distinct businesses. No more than 30% percent of such centers may be allocated to restaurant uses. Proposed parking minimum: 1:275, proposed parking maximum, 1:200.*

**Retail:** Propose new parking maximum ratio of 1:200 for all categories of retail in response to concerns that 1:250, which is the current minimum requirement, is too restrictive. Note: the current size category distinctions contained in the proposal regarding allowable minimums will remain in place.

**Theaters:** Observations have been made that the City's requirements for theater parking are excessive. The standard currently used is that for auditoriums, which requires one space per 30sf of gross floor area in the auditorium. While staff concurs that the existing requirement may need modification, additional research is necessary to propose a new standard. The proposed draft will be augmented with this new information as it becomes available.

**Call Centers:** Stakeholder comments included the observation that call center type offices requires more parking than traditional office uses. Staff proposes a new category to address this use, generally defined as:

*A call center is a centralized office used for the purpose of receiving and transmitting a large volume of requests by telephone communications. Such centers may operate with extended hours and typically have a higher density of employees per square foot than traditional office uses. Proposed minimum parking ratio 1:300, proposed maximum parking ratio: 1:200.*

**Patios:** The addition of patios to restaurants and bars, currently triggers a parking requirement at the same rate per square feet as the underlying use. Stakeholder comment suggested that parking requirements for patios be calculated at a substantially reduced rate – or in some cases not required based on their limited impact on total business activity. While staff agrees that a reduction for patio parking is appropriate, a more limited factor of 50% is supported.

*Patios/outdoor dining areas may receive up to a 50% reduction of the parking requirement associated with the primary use.*

### **3312.53 Minimum number of loading spaces required.**

Alter this section to reflect stakeholder input that loading space requirements are excessive. Further modifications to this section are under consideration, including allowance for smaller truck dimensions. The proposed draft will be augmented with this new information as it becomes available.

*B. Each commercial or industrial type use involving the retail or wholesale exchange, sale, storage, processing, or manufacturing of merchandise or personal property of any type, which is permitted in any commercial or manufacturing district, shall provide loading spaces based on gross floor area as follows:*

- 1. Under 10,000 square feet; none.*
- 2. 10,000 square feet or more but less than 20,000 square feet; one space.*
- 3. 20,000 square feet or more but less than 30,000 square feet; two spaces.*
- ~~*1. Under 5000 square feet; none.*~~
- ~~*2. 5000 square feet or more but less than 10,000 square feet; one space.*~~
- ~~*3. 10,000 square feet or more but less than 30,000 square feet; two spaces.*~~
- 4. 30,000 square feet or more but less than 90,000 square feet; three spaces.*
- 5. 90,000 square feet or more but less than 150,000 square feet; four spaces.*
- 6. 150,000 square feet or more but less than 250,000 square feet; five spaces.*
- 7. 250,000 square feet or more; five spaces plus one for each 80,000 square feet or fraction thereof in excess of 250,000 square feet.*

### **3321.02 Lighting.**

Modify this section to eliminate all references to foot candle in response to observations that ratings are unrealistically low and not enforceable. Staff considers other design parameters to be more useful in reducing offsite impacts.

*To establish standards for exterior lighting in Commercial Planned Development, Planned Unit Development, and limited overlay zoning districts.*

#### *A. Single-family residential districts*

- 1. Street lighting must meet the requirements of the Department of Public Utilities Division of Electricity.*
- ~~*2. Lighting shall not exceed .1 foot candle anywhere along a property line.*~~

#### *B. Multi-family residential districts*

- 1. Light standards shall not exceed 18 feet in height.*

2. *Lights shall have fully shielded, recessed lamps directed downward to prevent glare and shine above the horizontal plane.*
3. *For aesthetic compatibility, lights shall be from the same or similar type and color.*
4. ~~*Lighting shall not exceed .1 foot-candle anywhere along a property line.*~~

**C. Commercial districts**

1. *Light standards shall not exceed 28 feet in height except lights located within 100 feet of a residentially used or zoned property shall not exceed 18 feet in height.*
1. *Lights shall have fully shielded, recessed lamps directed downward to prevent glare and shine above the horizontal plane.*
2. *For aesthetic compatibility, lights shall be from the same or similar type and color.*
3. ~~*Lighting shall not exceed .1 foot-candle along the property line of a residentially used or zoned property.*~~

**D. Manufacturing districts**

1. *Light standards shall not exceed 28 feet in height except lights located within 100 feet of a residentially used or zoned property shall not exceed 18 feet in height.*
2. *Lights shall have fully shielded, recessed lamps directed downward to prevent glare and shine above the horizontal plane.*
3. *For aesthetic compatibility, lights shall be from the same or similar type and color.*
4. ~~*Lighting shall not exceed .1 foot-candle along the property line of a residentially used or zoned property.*~~

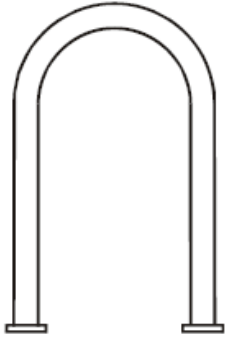
**New 3312 Section – Bike Parking Standards**

This section is proposed in response to comments made regarding bike parking requirements. Stakeholder input was predominantly supportive of the general requirement, but urged additional specification in the code itself regarding the design and location of bike parking facilities. The following section is intended to provide basic parameters for bike parking, but allow flexibility for additional guidance to be developed and applied as experience warrants.

*Bicycle Parking Design and Location Requirements*

- *Bicycle parking must be located in highly visible areas near the intended use.*
- *Bicycle parking racks must be positioned out of walkway clear zones and not pose a tripping hazard for visually impaired pedestrians.*
- *Bicycle parking racks must be located to avoid potential conflict with parking and circulation of motor vehicles.*
- *Bicycle parking racks must be of the inverted “U” type design, unless an alternative design has been approved by the Public Service Department. See figure XYZ.*
- *Bicycle parking racks must support a bicycle upright in two places.*
- *Bicycle parking racks must enable the bicycle frame and one or both wheels to be secured through use of a “U” type lock.*
- *Bicycle parking racks must be securely anchored to an approved hard surface.*
- *A two foot by six foot space is required to accommodate two bicycles (facing alternate directions).*
- *Parallel bike racks must be a minimum on-center spacing of 30”. Spacing of 48” is optimal.*
- *Additional guidance/requirements as necessary will be maintained by the Public Service Department*

**Figure XYZ**



**Inverted “U”**

One rack element supports two bikes

*Note: Bicycle design and location is subject to approval by the Public Service Department.*

**Related Changes to Commercial Overlays**

The proposed changes to the parking code make certain portions of the City’s commercial overlay code sections redundant or unworkable. The parking code revision ordinance submitted to City Council will include a section modifying the Urban, Community, and Regional Commercial Overlays to eliminate such sections. That information will be made available for public review prior to Development Commission consideration.