

SHORT SUMMARY OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING ORDINANCE, #125558

In Ordinance 125558, passed April 2nd and effective May 14th, 2018, the City of Seattle has amended parking requirements in the Land Use Code (Title 23 SMC), and parking-related environmental policies in Chapter 25.05 (Title 25 SMC). The amendments will increase opportunities for shared parking, and implement other progressive strategies, especially in places where Seattle invests in frequent transit service.

Highlights of the legislation:

CLARIFY HOW FREQUENT TRANSIT SERVICE IS MEASURED

- Allow for more flexibility in route timing and total length of daily service by updating transit measurement to be more consistent with King County Metro's and the City's transit planning, and by simplifying provisions.
- Frequent transit service is service equivalent on average to at least four trips per hour between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. (52 total trips in each direction), and service equivalent on average to twice hourly in other timeframes weekdays and weekends.
- A new Director's Rule will include an updated map of the frequent transit service area.
- Frequent transit service area is defined as being within one-quarter mile of frequent-served bus stops, and within one-half mile of light rail stations
- SDOT will evaluate bus route frequency over time
- Applicants will no longer have to submit bus schedule data in plan sets.
- Continue the 100% reduction in parking minimum requirements for urban villages, and the 50% reduction in minimums for certain places outside urban villages in frequent transit service areas.

EXPAND ACCESS TO OFF-STREET PARKING

- Create a new use category, "flexible-use parking," to allow for greater sharing of parking in certain zones, including in: Lowrise 3, Midrise, Highrise (excluding Lowrise 1 and 2 zones), most commercial zones (excluding NC1), and industrial zones; and in mixed-use development garages in light rail station areas.
- Eliminate 4-hour parking limits for flexible-use parking.
- Allow park-and-ride facilities within garages as a permitted use in certain zones, including in Lowrise 3, Midrise, Highrise, most commercial, and industrial zones.

OTHER CHANGES IN PARKING REQUIREMENTS

- Eliminate citywide the parking requirements for rent/income-restricted housing.
- Add a new maximum parking limit for flexible-use parking, 145 spaces.
- Delete a special exception allowing more parking than the maximum parking limit in Downtown zones.

- Eliminate special parking rules in Section 23.71 for Northgate Urban Center. Instead, the parking rules for Urban Centers citywide will also apply to Northgate.
- Provide for reduced parking minimums for public uses/institutions (non-Major) in frequent transit service areas, in Urban Villages. This does not include hospitals.
- Allow required parking amounts to be reduced in any zone, except Downtown zones, to a level matching parking demand for proposed uses, as demonstrated by a parking demand study performed by a licensed professional engineer.
- Require all new parking for residential and live-work uses to meet minimum parking stall size requirements.
- In the U-District Urban Center, clarifies that the zero-minimum parking requirement for Urban Centers applies rather than the “parking impact area” requirements

BICYCLES

- Update bicycle parking requirements and performance standards.
- Make Downtown bicycle parking requirements the same as requirements for the rest of the city.
- Shower facilities required for office uses greater than 100,000 square feet in size

CHANGES TO PARKING-RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES IN CHAPTER 25.05

- Update SEPA parking policies to better align with Comprehensive Plan and City transportation policies. This newly allows for inclusion of bike-share, car-share, or similar mobility choice programs to mitigate parking impacts, where applicable.

OTHER SUPPORTING CHANGES – PARKING RENTS, AND PARKING ACCESSIBILITY

- Require “unbundling” of parking space rental from multi-family dwelling unit rental agreements, meaning parking is rented separately and a tenant has a choice to rent or not rent parking.
- This is required for all multifamily dwelling units except:
 - single-family homes,
 - rent/income-restricted housing,
 - accessory dwelling units, and
 - dwellings such as townhouses where garages are integrated into the dwelling unit.
- Unbundling also applies to new commercial lease agreements for spaces 4,000 square feet or greater in size.
- For new structures with a garage in zones where flexible-use parking may occur, require a pedestrian access route between the garage and a public right-of-way to accommodate non-resident garage access and use. This route may be through a lobby, fire door, or other new door.