

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning and Sustainability Commission
FROM: Mauricio Leclerc, Grant Morehead, and Judith Gray
DATE: September 19, 2016
SUBJECT: Parking ratios

This memo provides a summary of the work the Central City Parking Policy Update Stakeholder Advisory Committee developed related to parking ratios.

Process

In January of 2015 PBOT Director Leah Treat convened a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) to oversee the update of the transportation policies for the Central City. A 30-member committee was formed representing a variety of neighborhood, business, as well as non-profit and advocacy organizations. PBOT staff was supported by Rick Williams Consulting, Nelson Nygaard and JLA Public Involvement. The SAC met 9 times and advised staff on a number of important issues. Throughout the project, staff met on several occasions with Central City neighborhood and business associations as well as other organizations and private individuals. PBOT hosted an open house in November of 2015 to share the SAC's recommendations and solicit input. Recommendations included:

- Implementing a performance-based parking management system for public parking in the Central City.
- Maintaining no parking minimums for new development.
- Adjusting maximum parking ratios for development and streamlining the number of parking districts.
- Simplifying operating restrictions on approved parking to allow shared parking.
- Simplifying parking entitlements and the role of City in monitoring private parking.
- Placing new limitations on new surface parking development.

Parking Minimums

The SAC met several times to review recommendations related to parking ratios. One of the first SAC recommendations was to continue to allow new and rehabilitated buildings to have no parking. This was seen as a key element that has made the Central City successful, allowing the reinvestment in historic properties with no parking and the densification of the Central City. This has supported the investments in transit, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, which in turn have expanded travel choices within the Central City and thus allowed further development to happen. In addition, parking adds considerable

costs to construction and requiring parking minimums were seen as detrimental to providing more affordable development options.

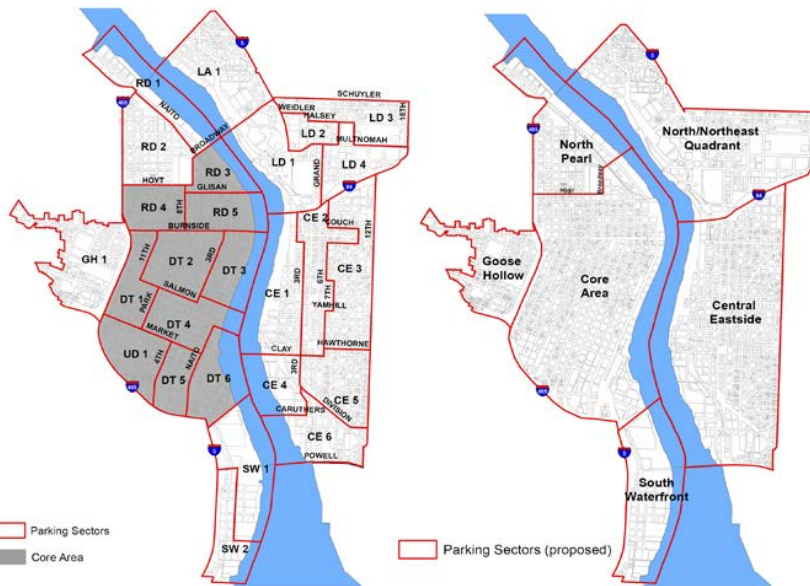
Parking Maximums

The SAC also endorsed adjusting maximum parking ratios in a manner that generally relates parking allowances to mode split targets for the Central City 2035 Plan. These targets can be found in Volume 2b page 5 of the Central City 2035 Plan package.

Significant investments in transit, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure have been made in the past 20 years throughout the Central City. The recommended ratios reflect those investments, and bring Central City business districts and parking sectors (i.e., Lloyd, Central Eastside, Goose Hollow, River District and South Waterfront) more in line with Downtown. This creates a more “level playing field” among all Central City districts, though differences among districts remain.

There are currently 26 parking sectors in the Central City that have ratios assigned to them. This has created a significant amount of code and confusion in development permitting. The recommended set of ratios reduces the number of parking sectors to 6, reflecting a more current view of land use mixes in the Central City.

Figure 1 shows existing districts (left) and proposed districts (right)



Analysis of Parking Ratios

Summary of SAC recommendations on maximum ratios

- Impose maximum parking ratios on all uses in the Central City. For example, currently residential development outside the Core sub district has no maximum ratio and many non-office uses have no maximum ratios.
- Simplify the code by reducing the number of parking sectors from 26 to 6. This results from blending parking sectors into single districts.
- Adjust ratios in all Central City districts outside the downtown downward to reflect investments in transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Adjust office ratios in three existing downtown parking sectors upward to reflect actual demand for parking in downtown, account for the loss of approximately half of the surface parking that existed when the current regulations went into effect in 1996, and in order to blend with other areas of the Core sub district that have current ratios varying from 1.0/1000sf to 2.0/1000sf.
- Standardize ratios for residential and hotels throughout the Central City.

Residential ratios

Today, not all subdistricts have residential parking maximums. PBOT analyzed land use records going back to 1995, when the current parking code was adopted. Since then, there have been 85 new residential buildings in the Central City. The average parking ratio by building built since 1995 was .85 stalls per unit. That includes about 14% of buildings which did not build any parking. For new buildings with parking, the average ratio was 1.0 per unit. A quarter of the buildings had ratios above the proposed maximum ratio of 1.2 stalls per unit. There were not significant differences in ratios based on geography and allowed ratios. The proposed maximum residential ratio of 1.2 stalls per unit for the entire Central City was considered to provide flexibility to the market at the same time that it will likely push down on the average ratio built. As a theoretical example, if the maximum parking ratio for all Central City residential buildings in 1995 had been the proposed 1.2/unit throughout the Central City (whereby buildings that provided parking in excess of 1.2/unit would have provided no more than 1.2/unit), the average ratio for the combined residential buildings built since 1995 would have been .78/unit.

Commercial ratios

For commercial properties, since 1995 there were insufficient new commercial buildings constructed with similar geography, land use mix and allowed ratios to determine statistical trends. In general, the proposed parking ratios were set according to general accessibility to non-auto modes, with centrally located areas such as the Core sub district (which includes Downtown, Old Town, south Pearl District and the University District) having the lowest ratios, followed by North/Northeast, North Pearl and Goose Hollow, and finally by South Waterfront and the Central Eastside.

Most of the 26 maximum parking ratios for office use were significantly reduced, with the exception of three downtown sub districts that are part of the Core subdistrict and have current ratios ranging from .7/1000sf to .8/1000sf. In the Core sub district, a maximum parking ratio of 1.0/1000sf is being proposed. This ratio would apply to areas in downtown, River District, West End and University District that currently have ratios ranging from .7/1000sf to 2.0/1000sf. The Core subdistrict has and will continue to have the most stringent ratios in the City. Since 1995 half of the surface parking lots in the Central City have been redeveloped, many in the areas in and around downtown, leading to fewer stalls to serve the district. The proposed ratio allows the sub district to continue to rely on non-auto trips for its growth yet it provides more flexibility to the market in some areas of downtown to support redevelopment. Overall, the reductions in parking ratios in the Core subdistrict were larger than the increases, leading to a net decrease in the amount of parking allowed (please see next section for more information).

Impact on Potential Development

Maximum ratios do not by themselves tell how much parking will be built. This is particularly true in the Central City where there is no minimum parking required, there are limits to how much parking can be built on surface lots and the significant investments on non-auto transportation accessibility have increasingly allowed developers to build without having to provide as much parking as other areas of the region.

Nonetheless, PBOT studied the impact of the proposed maximum ratios on development. The main purpose of maximum ratios is to limit the amount of parking a development builds. The best way to compare the impact of this policy is to consider how much parking would be built if every building had to, by code, build to the maximum ratio under current and proposed regulations (also assumed is that all new workers would be office workers, to simplify the exercise). This analysis indicated that the proposed ratios would lead to:

- A reduction by about 30% in the number of residential parking stalls built by 2035 compared to current ratios.
- Close to 25% fewer growth parking stalls built by 2035 compared to current ratios.
- Reduction in Office parking in all subdistricts, ranging from 12% (Core) to 35% (NE Quadrant).
- Reduction in Residential parking in all subdistricts, ranging from 18% (Core) to 40% (NE Quadrant, Central Eastside and Goose Hollow).

The analysis took into consideration the redevelopment potential of each parking sector and applied the existing and proposed ratios to future development using growth numbers provided by Metro's transportation model. Again, given other parking policies, present and future transportation investments and past trends, it is unlikely that this scenario will come to pass. Yet this exercise shows how the proposed ratios will help the Central City meet its land use and transportation policies by significantly limiting the amount of parking that can be built.

Table 1. Existing and Proposed Ratios if All Development Built to Parking Maximum Ratios

PARKING SECTOR	OFFICE			RESIDENTIAL*		
	EXISTING COMBINED RATIO	PROPOSED COMBINED RATIO	% CHANGE	EXISTING COMBINED RATIO	PROPOSED COMBINED RATIO	% CHANGE
Core	1.13	1.00	-12%	1.46	1.20	-18%
North Pearl	2.00	1.50	-25%	1.70	1.20	-29%
NE Quadrant	2.07	1.35	-35%	2.00	1.20	-40%

Central Eastside	2.82	2.00	-29%	2.00	1.20	-40%
South Waterfront	2.40	2.00	-17%	1.70	1.20	-29%
Goose Hollow	2.00	1.50	-25%	2.00	1.20	-40%
Central City	1.87	1.44	-23%	1.73	1.20	-31%

*For residential uses, where no maximum ratio exists, it was assumed 2/1000, based on the highest residential ratio built since 1995

Impact on the Transportation System

To gauge the impacts of these and other changes on the transportation network, Metro and City staff will perform a transportation model run for the Central City 2035 Plan that will include relevant land use changes, transportation projects and changes to parking policies. The model run is scheduled to follow the final run for the adopted Comprehensive Plan, which will become the official Base for which to test the impacts of the Central City 2035 Plan.

Absent the model run, staff expects that the significant reduction in the allowed parking throughout the Central City and the almost complete restriction of new surface parking, point to a net decrease in auto trips. It is important to point out that there are many factors that affect mode split besides parking, including land use mix, densities, infrastructure projects, street connectivity, and others. Metro's model may not have the sophistication to estimate subtle differences in ratios and parking policies and Metro's transportation analysis zones may not match parking subdistrict boundaries.