



Parking Code Update

City of Tacoma | Planning and Development Services

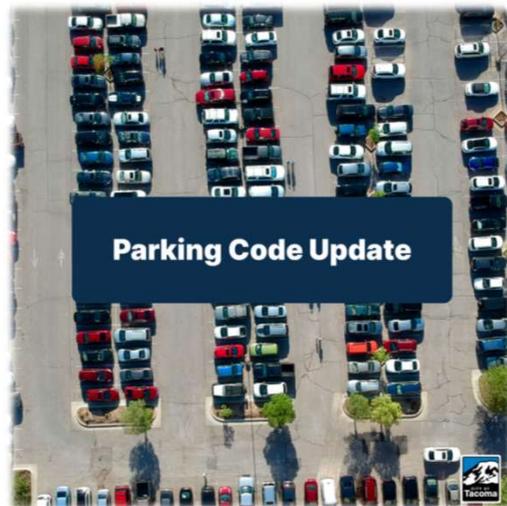
Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee Meeting
February 25, 2026



1

Agenda

- Project Overview
- Recent State Legislation
- Tacoma Parking History
- Scope Options Under Consideration
- Outreach & Engagement Approach
- Timeline & Next Steps



2



Why Consider Parking Reform?

Housing Pressures Are Real

- Population growth has outpaced housing supply in many Washington cities
- Rising rents and home prices
- Cities nationwide are examining regulatory barriers to housing production

Role of Minimum Parking

- Minimum parking is a land use regulation that requires development to provide a set number of off-street parking spaces based on use, number of units, or floor area, using standardized assumptions about peak demand.
- Can increase development costs (\$5,000–\$20,000 per surface space)
- Constrains site design and housing capacity

Policy Shift Emerging

Growing recognition that parking mandates affect:

- Housing affordability, small business viability, climate goals, walkability and transit use

3

3



New State Requirements

Recent legislation limits when cities may require minimum parking:

- **Senate Bill (SB) 5184 (2025), House Bill (HB) 1183 (2025), and HB 1491 (2025)** cap or eliminate minimum parking for many residential or commercial uses and transit-adjacent projects.
- **SB 6015 (2024)** establishes statewide standards for residential parking design and defines what must count toward required parking.
- These limits do not apply to ADA required parking.
- The legislation does not limit how much parking a property owner may choose to provide.
- Tacoma must update its parking code by January 2027.

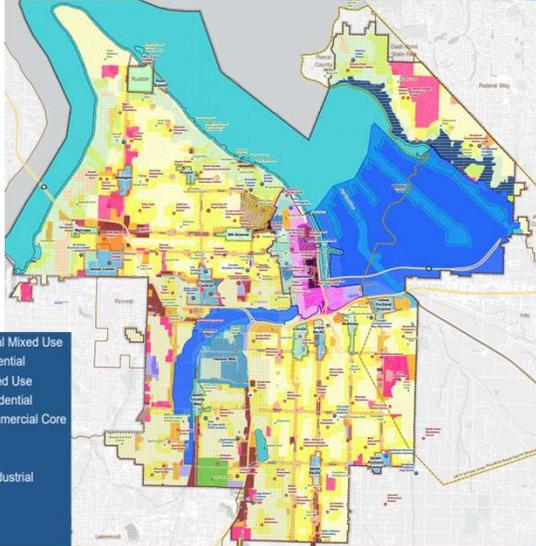
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4

New State Requirements

Minimum parking requirements cannot exceed:

- Residential uses:
 - Multifamily: 0.5 space per unit
 - Single-family: 1 space per unit
- Commercial uses: 2 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Crossroads Center ■ Neighborhood Center ■ Regional Growth Center ■ Manufacturing Industrial Centers <p>Zoning Districts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ UR1-Urban Residential 1 ■ UR2-Urban Residential 2 ■ UR3-Urban Residential 3 ■ R4-Multiple Family Dwelling ■ R5-Multiple Family Dwelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ T-Transitional ■ C1-Commercial ■ C2-Commercial ■ PDB-Planned Development Business ■ NRX-Neighborhood Residential Mixed Use ■ URX-Urban Residential Mixed Use ■ RCX-Residential Commercial Mixed Use ■ NCX-Neighborhood Commercial Mixed Use ■ CCX-Community Commercial Mixed Use ■ CIX-Commercial Industrial Mixed Use ■ UCX-Urban Center Mixed Use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ HMX-Hospital Medical Mixed Use ■ DR-Downtown Residential ■ DMU-Downtown Mixed Use ■ WR-Warehouse Residential ■ DCC-Downtown Commercial Core ■ M1-Light Industrial ■ M2-Heavy Industrial ■ PMI-Port Maritime Industrial ■ RUS-Ruston ■ Shoreline Districts
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5

New State Requirements

No minimum parking for certain size thresholds:

- Residential units under 1,200 sq. ft.
- Commercial spaces under 3,000 sq. ft.

No minimum parking for certain types of uses:

- Affordable housing
- Senior housing
- Licensed childcare facilities
- Ground-floor nonresidential spaces in mixed-use buildings

No minimum parking for change in use:

- New housing units added to an existing building
- Conversion of commercial to residential use or change of commercial use

No minimum parking for certain locations:

- Housing for people with disabilities within ¼ mile of high frequency transit
- Residential or mixed-use development within transit station areas

No minimum parking for certain building types:

- Passive House projects (new construction or retrofit)
- Modular construction
- Mass timber construction

6

6

One Tacoma Plan Alignment

The Comprehensive Plan calls for:

- Compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods
- Transit-oriented growth in centers and corridors
- Housing affordability across all income levels
- Reduced reliance on single-occupancy vehicles
- Climate-responsive land use

The Plan encourages:

- Removing regulatory barriers to housing by creating flexible development standards
- Parking requirement reductions as a housing incentive
- Support for middle housing and infill development and maximizing housing densities within transit walksheds
- Limiting new surface parking near major transit and redeveloping surface parking into housing



7

Tacoma Off-Street Parking History

Pre-Growth Management Act:

- The first off-street parking requirements did not apply to existing structures; generally focused on use classification

Early 1990's – GMA + Centers Established

2009 Mixed Use Center Update

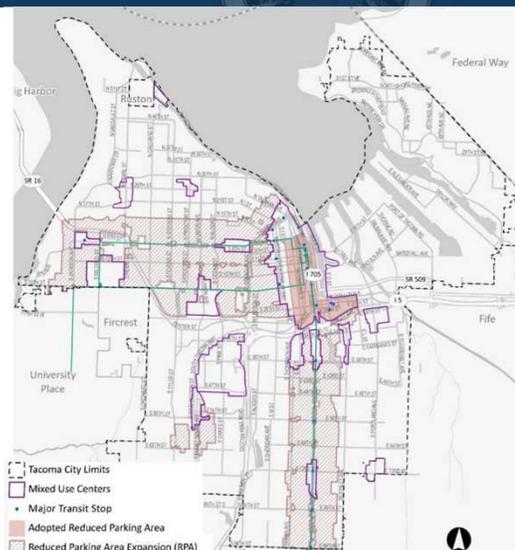
- Reduced minimum parking; established parking credits

2012 – Downtown Reduced Parking Area (RPA) Established

2014 – Expanded Downtown RPA

2024 – Home in Tacoma (Phase 2) – Urban Residential RPA:

- Applies to UR-1, UR-2, UR-3 zones, areas zoned C-1 ≥20,000 sq. ft., and High-Density Multifamily areas
- Must be within ½ mile of major transit stops
- No minimum off-street parking required for residential projects or residential units within mixed-use projects (except ADA stalls)



8

Tacoma Off-Street Parking History

2024 – Home in Tacoma (Phase 2)

- **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs):** No parking is required for ADUs
- **UR District Bonuses:**
 - Tier 1: Bonus units exempt from parking
 - Tier 2: Entire development exempt from parking
- Reduced parking for new residential uses to support housing production

Tacoma's Approach to Parking Reform:

- Tacoma has gradually evolved its parking policies over time
- Paired parking updates with broader zoning and housing reforms

9

9

Scope Options

Option A: Meet State Mandates

- Update the code strictly to meet state requirements
- Less change to commercial and non-residential standards
- Faster path to adoption

Option B: Citywide Parking Reform

- Consider eliminating parking minimums citywide
- Aligns more closely with One Tacoma Plan goals
- More engagement will be needed

10

10



Outreach & Engagement

Commissions & Advisory Groups	External Government Coordination	Public Outreach	Other Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation Commission Climate & Sustainability Commission Commission on Disabilities Parking Technical Advisory Group Permit Advisory Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puyallup Tribe of Indians Pierce Transit Parks Tacoma Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department Tacoma Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project webpage Virtual informational meeting Social media Business districts Neighborhood Councils Online survey Translated materials Cultural ambassadors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility advocates (transit, bike, pedestrian) Businesses & economic development groups Environmental organizations Other community-based organizations

11



Tentative Schedule

Phase	Timeline	Key Activities
Project Launch & Initial Code Options	Dec 2025 – Mar 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce project to Planning Commission Launch project webpage & FAQs Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee briefing Planning Commission direction on scope option
Early Engagement & Code Development	Feb – Apr 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal and external engagement, early public outreach and informational meeting
Public Review Draft & Planning Commission Recommendation	Apr – Jul 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Release draft code and 30-day comment period (mid-April) Unified Engagement Planning Commission public hearing Planning Commission recommendation
City Council Review & Adoption	Aug – Oct 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Planning Commission recommendations City Council public hearing Adoption
Post Adoption	Fall 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify affected parties Internal staff training

12

Next Steps



- Is this the right time to consider removing minimum parking requirements citywide?
- What additional data or policy analysis would be helpful as we move forward?

13

13



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14