

# Additional Regulatory Strategies

## R-1 Reduce Off-Street Parking Requirements

Parking facilities add substantial cost in the development new housing, whether it's surface or structured parking. A study conducted by the city of Portland said underground garage parking adds costs of up to \$55,000 per space, which can add up to approximately \$500 per month per dwelling unit to apartment rents.<sup>10</sup> This is why reducing parking can help with affordability. Fewer residents are likely to own vehicles in areas within walking distance to high-capacity transit, with frequent bus service, a mixture of uses, and/or in buildings with a high share of low-income households. In suburban and small city settings, such parking facilities are more important but should be balanced with aesthetics and the impact on the yield of land.

### Gaps Addressed

- Increase housing supply
- Housing diversity
- Middle-income rental housing
- Senior housing
- Small household rental housing
- Housing near transit, amenities and/or jobs

### When and Where Applicable

- While this strategy applies to all housing types, it's most critical to multifamily housing where shared parking facilities are prominent.
- [RCW 36.70A.620](#) limits the amount of parking a city may require for multifamily, senior, disabled or affordable housing, or accessory dwelling units, when located within 1/4 mile of a transit stop meeting certain service criteria.

### Potential Drawbacks

- Too little parking could overflow into on-street parking opportunities for business districts and impact other residents who have limited off-street parking options.

### Tips for Success

- Consider parking maximum standards in downtowns, neighborhood commercial districts and commercial corridors with good existing or planned transit service.
- Many downtowns have historic, nonconforming properties that rely on street parking but support businesses and residents. Consider reducing or eliminating parking requirements in such areas, especially for change of use and redevelopment, to ensure historic and compact downtown character can be retained.
- Consider reducing requirements in areas planned for redevelopment and affordable housing.
- Consider adding additional parking tools, such as contracting with car-share providers, providing transit passes to residents, shared use parking, and off-site parking.
- Rules that allow third-party sharing/rental of parking spaces can help even out parking supply and demand.
- Allow developers to reduce parking stalls if the city/county accepts a parking study by a certified transportation planner or engineer that demonstrates minimum impacts to surroundings.

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<sup>10</sup> Shoupista, "Portland's Parking Policy Puts Car Storage Before Housing Affordability," (2016), <https://pdxshoupistas.com/portlands-parking-policy-puts-car-storage-before-housing-affordability/>. Although original source is stated to be Portland [Bureau of Planning and Sustainability](#), the link is no longer active.

- Update bike parking requirements concurrently and distinguish between short-term and long-term bicycle parking.
- Encourage housing and parking to be rented separately.
- Outreach and education to developers may help raise awareness.
- Parking can be a tricky and controversial topic. One option is to reduce parking requirements for a limited time as a test. If a development features reduced parking with no impacts, it may be possible to adopt this standard long term.
- In King County, consult the [Right Size Parking](#) website.

### Time/Capacity/Skill Needed

Code changes can be completed by in-house staff. Outside services are recommended for a parking study, but numerous other parking resources are available.

### Resources

- [Right Size Parking - King County](#)
- [The Trouble with Minimum Parking Requirements - APA](#)
- [Parking Demand and Pricing - MRSC](#)
- [Downtown Parking - MRSC](#)
- [Parking and Business Improvement Areas - MRSC](#)
- [Parking and Storage of Oversized Vehicles - MRSC](#)

## Exhibit 37: Vehicle Home Ownership by Tenure of Unit in Washington State

