

# Overview & FAQ

## Legislation to Remove Parking Minimums in San Francisco

Paul Chasan, Senior Planner/Urban Designer

paul.chasan@sfgov.org | 415-575-9065

### How to Find the Legislation

1. Go to: <https://sfgov.legistar.com/>
2. Click the “**Legislation**” tab
3. Search for “**Minimum Parking**” and set year to “**2018**”

### What the Ordinance Would and Would Not Do?

- Most zoning districts in the City already don’t have minimum parking requirements, these zoning districts would not be affected.
- All zoning districts have maximum parking requirements. The ordinance would NOT make any modifications to maximum parking requirements.
- Most zoning districts have requirements for off-street loading. The ordinance would not waive or reduce any off-street loading requirements
- The ordinance would remove minimum parking requirements where they exist in the code. Project sponsors working in these districts would be able to choose how much parking they include in their projects provided they don’t exceed the maximum allowed under their zoning district. They could choose to build to the maximum allowed, build some parking or build none. We anticipate most market rate projects would still include off-street parking.

### Where do Minimum Parking Requirements Apply?

#### **Minimum Parking Requirements Apply in the Following Zoning Districts:**

- Low-density residential Districts like RH-1, RH-2 and RH-3 with one, two or three dwelling structures.
- Residential Mixed Districts (RM-1, RM-2, RM-3, and RM-4), which allows moderate scale apartment buildings.
- Most but not all Neighborhood Commercial Districts (NCDs), but not Neighborhood Commercial Transit Districts (NCTs).
- Some, but not all industrial districts (PDR-1-B, PDR-2, M-2).

#### **Minimum Parking Requirements Do Not Apply in the Following Zoning Districts:**

- Neighborhood Commercial Transit Districts (NCT).
- Mixed Use Districts, such as Chinatown and Eastern Neighborhood Districts.
- Downtown Office Districts (C-3).
- Residential-Commercial (RC) Districts, found in the Tenderloin and around Van Ness Avenue.
- Some industrial districts (M-1, PDR-1-D, PDR-1-G)

### Benefits of Removing Parking Minimums

- Reduced Cost of Constructing Housing<sup>1</sup>
- Underground parking space in SF - \$38,000 / space
- Above ground parking space in SF - \$29,000 / space

- Anecdotal conversations by Planning staff with local developers indicate these numbers are grossly underestimated. We believe the actual cost of building off-street parking in San Francisco to be \$70,000-\$80,000 / space.
- **Increased Housing Production** – Not building parking frees up space for more productive land uses like housing. On small or irregularly shaped sites sponsors may not be able to fit their required parking spaces. This limits the overall unit count they can legally build, constraining the overall density of the building.
- **Reduced Reliance on Cars and Better Support for Neighborhood Retail** – People who don't have access to parking spaces are more likely to use transit and more likely to shop locally.
- **Increased Safety for People Walking and Biking** – Less parking means fewer cars crossing the sidewalk.
- **Support Neighborhood Diversity** – Diverse housing stock supports diverse family sizes and lifestyles. While many people will still use their cars, other San Francisco residents don't own or need a car.
- **Better Architecture** – mandatory off-street parking results in bulky buildings, because parking garages require a lot of space. Parking driveways result in inactive building facades.
- **Improved process for Small Property and Business Owners.** The primary beneficiaries of this legislation will likely be small property owners/homeowners and small business owners. While the Planning Code has numerous options for project sponsors to reduce off-street parking (see below), doing so requires a level of technical expertise that disproportionately benefits larger projects who can afford to hire consultants to help them navigate our complex process.

## Existing Options for Reducing Required Parking under the Planning Code

There are numerous pathways in the Planning Code that allow development projects to reduce or eliminate required off-street parking spaces:

- **Replace with Bike Parking** – Any project may replace any required off-street car parking with off-street bike parking.
- **Affordable Housing Exemption** – Any 100% affordable housing project may waive off-street parking requirements in any zoning district except for RH1, and RH2.
- **ZA Exemption** – The Zoning Administrator may administratively waive any off-street parking requirements for any project in a Neighborhood Commercial District.
- **TDM Ordinance** – Any project that triggers the City's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance may reduce parking below required levels if, and to the extent in which such a parking reduction is used to meet their TDM requirements. These tend to be larger projects.
- **Home SF** - San Francisco's local density bonus program is designed to incentivize building more affordable and family-friendly housing in neighborhood commercial and transit corridors through zoning modifications such as waiving minimum parking requirements.
- **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance** - ADUs in San Francisco are not required to include off-street parking
- **Protected Streets** - In certain zoning districts, project's whose sole frontage is on a protected street (fronting the bike network, key transit routes or neighborhood commercial street) are not required to include off-street parking.

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## Key Takeaways

- Incrementalism
- Empower your legislators to think big and be bold...But Notice the Legislation Aggressively
- This was a team effort.