



Board Summary Report

File #: 25-117

Agenda Date: 2/18/2025

Agenda #:

To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Bryan Weimer, Director, Public Works & Development

Prepared By:
Jason Reynolds, Planning Division Manager, Public Works & Development

Presenter: Jason Reynolds, Planning Division Manager, Public Works & Development

Subject:
11:00 AM *HB24-1304 Parking Requirements near Transit

Purpose and Request:

In 2024, the Colorado Legislature approved several land use and housing bills, including HB24-1304 regarding minimum parking requirements. This study session will provide an overview of Arapahoe County's obligations and options under the bill and seek Board direction on additional potential parking modifications.

Background and Discussion: HB24-1304 prohibits communities from enforcing or enacting minimum off-street parking requirements on multi-family housing and some mixed-use developments in certain locations around rail transit stations and bus transit corridors. Developers are allowed to voluntarily include off-street parking. The attached maps depict areas of unincorporated Arapahoe County where those prohibitions apply. The law becomes effective June 30, 2025; after that date, any multi-family development in those areas will not be subject to minimum parking requirements. This includes redevelopment of existing multi-family projects; for example, an existing multi-family property could remove parking to install additional amenities or residences.

For reference, our current multi-family parking regulations require 1.5 spaces per 1-bedroom unit, 2 spaces for 2- or 3- bedroom units, and 2.5 spaces for 4-bedroom units, plus 0.25 spaces for guest parking per unit. A 12-unit apartment building with all 2-bedroom units would require 27 off-street parking spaces, which would occupy more than 7,000 square feet of land.

Sometimes funding for affordable housing projects requires minimum parking standards and the law allows communities to require minimum parking requirements necessary to comply with funding conditions. If a developer obtains affordable housing funding with parking requirements, the developer may provide those parking spaces.

Arapahoe County's parking standards were last updated in 2017; while those changes primarily focused on clarifications and ADA compliance, they incrementally reduced some off-street parking requirements for uses such as restaurants. Even with those changes, the Arapahoe County off-street parking standards still require more parking than some peers. For some land uses, our parking standards exceed the off-street parking demand shown in the Institute for Traffic Engineers Parking Generation Manual. Recent research supports removing

minimum parking standards altogether: off-street parking increases development costs, is often underutilized, increases impervious area/stormwater runoff, occupies valuable land, increases vehicle miles traveled (and thus traffic congestion), and results in reduced bicycling and walking. (sources cited in the Legislative Declaration: What do residential lotteries show us about transportation choices? By Millard-Ball, West, and Desai in Urban Studies Vol 59 Issue 2; and Effects of Parking Provision on Automobile Use in Cities: Inferring Causality by McCahill, Garrick, and Polinski in Transportation Research Record Vol 2543, Issue 1; while not cited, the publications of Donald Shoup, author of *The High Cost of Free Parking* provide additional insight, particularly for parking management for public property) This is all to say that the state's mandate provides an opportunity to examine and potentially update Arapahoe County's off-street parking standards.

Fiscal Impact: No direct fiscal impact.

Alternatives: Staff is seeking Board direction on potential code changes; Arapahoe County must update its parking regulations to align with state law. However, as described above, this is an opportunity to reevaluate our approach to off-street parking, not just near transit and not just for multi-family and mixed use. Based on previous Board direction, staff contracted with Clarion Associates to revise parking standards to align more with peer suburban jurisdictions including Centennial and Aurora. The draft decreased parking requirements for many uses (25% reduction in retail parking, 60% reduction in restaurant parking, etc.), added bicycle and electric vehicle requirements, and allowed more exemptions; it also retained many minimum standards. In addition to meeting state requirements, staff is seeking direction on potential additional revisions to the off-street parking regulations.

Revise parking codes to align with the HB24-1304 requirements

Staff recommends this as a baseline option. If this option is chosen, staff will draft updated parking language that eliminates minimum parking standards for multi-family and mixed-use projects near transit while allowing minimum standards for affordable housing projects with parking requirements. The state has provided sample language that can be inserted into our regulations before the June 30, 2025, deadline.

Adopt HB24-1304 requirements and collect public input on current draft

If this option is chosen, staff would perform the task above and collect input on the draft regulations. As noted above, the draft regulations reduce parking requirements, using standards from peers such as Aurora and Centennial.

Adopt HB24-1304 requirements and consider more significant changes

If this option is chosen, staff would draft code to meet state requirements and return at a future study session with more significant parking reductions: no minimum parking for any uses around transit areas and more significant reductions, including the possible elimination of minimum parking countywide.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- Be fiscally sustainable
- Provide essential and mandated service
- Be community focused

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends adopting the state-mandated parking regulations and returning to discuss more extensive revisions. However, the current draft regulations represent a strong incremental improvement and are a viable option.

Concurrence: PWD staff has reviewed this item.