



## Parking Policy Best Practices

Metro Mobility Network  
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**Nelson Nygaard**  
consulting associates

## Why is Parking So Important?




Parking is an important part of the transportation network, but:

- Parking consumes land
- Parking is expensive
- Parking can work for or against the pedestrian

We need to manage and supply parking in line with broader goals because:

**PARKING IS A JUDGEMENT ABOUT A CITY'S FUTURE**

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## Sound Familiar?



"Parking's a problem."  
"Without more parking, downtown will die."  
"I don't go downtown, cause there's no place to park."

Or as Yogi Berra said:  
*"Nobody goes there anymore, it's too crowded."*

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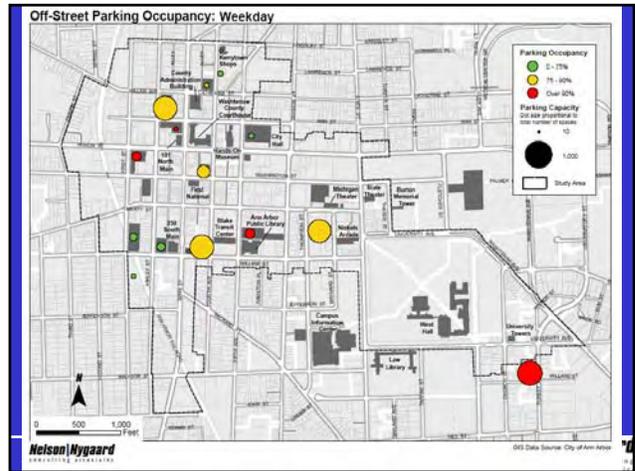
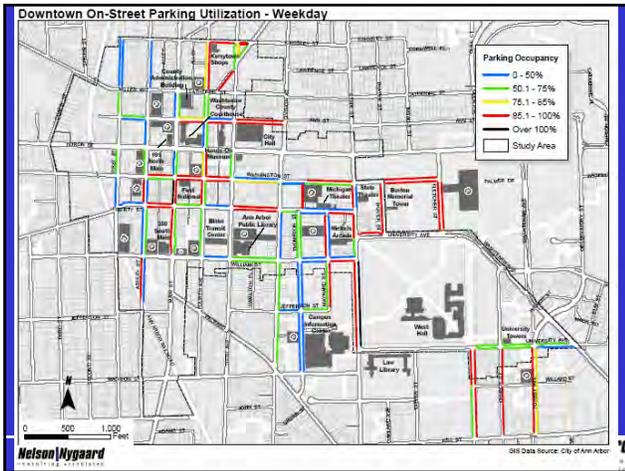
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## Ann Arbor, Michigan

Location	Spaces	Occupancy			Spaces Available		
		Week-day	Week-night	Friday Night	Week-day	Week-night	Friday Night
On-street	1,063	68%	98%	100%	339	19	2
Public Off-street	4,973	83%	37%	49%	845	3,128	2,545
Both	6,036	80%	48%	58%	1,184	3,147	2,547

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# Part I: Managing Off-Street Parking

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## Minimum Parking Requirements - Purpose



- ❑ "to give necessary access..."
- ❑ "to reduce traffic congestion..."
- ❑ to reduce "traffic from circulating in and parking on residential streets"
- ❑ "to provide for a higher standard of commercial development"

➤ In reality, minimum parking requirements *prevent spill-over parking problems*

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## Where Do On-Site Parking Requirements Come From?

Adam and Eve?  
Daniel Burnham?  
Robert Moses?

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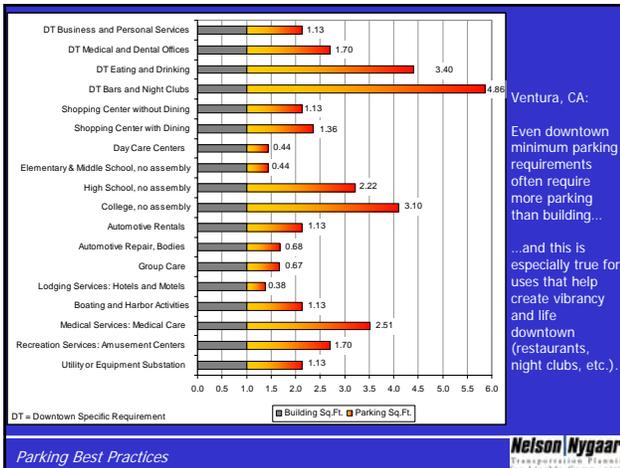
## How is Parking Regulated?



- ❖ Usually based on standards in neighboring jurisdictions, or derived from ITE *Parking Generation*

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## Select Minimum Parking Requirements

- ❖ Gas Station – 1 space per fuel nozzle
- ❖ Mausoleum – 10 spaces per maximum number of interments in a one-hour period
- ❖ Swimming pool – 1 space per 2,500 gallons of water
- ❖ Nunnery – 1 space per 10 nuns

How do we know how many nuns own cars?

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### 3 Broad Approaches for Local Jurisdictions



- ❖ Tailor off-street minimum parking requirements to match demand
- ❖ Incentivize or require parking strategies to reduce vehicle trips
- ❖ Abolish parking requirements – let the market decide

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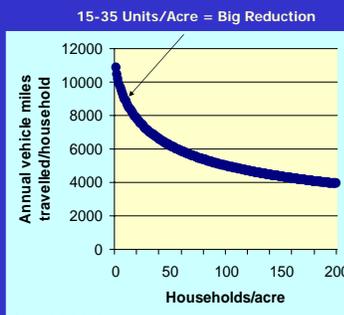
### Option 1: Supply Side Economics

Tailor parking requirements to match unique & highly localized demand

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### Tailor Parking Requirements

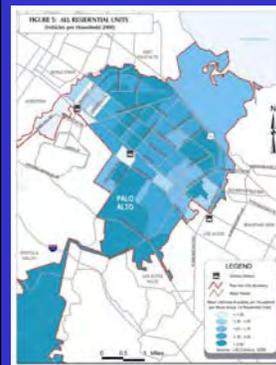


- ❖ Parking demand varies with geographic factors:
  - Density
  - Transit Access
  - Income
  - Household size
- ❖ Cities can tailor parking requirements to meet demand, based on these factors
- ❖ Neighborhood context more important than on-site land use

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### Tailored Requirements



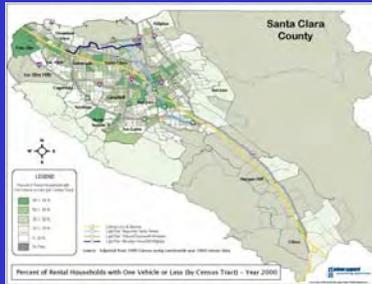
Examples:

- ❖ Seattle – reduced parking requirements in mixed-use areas
- ❖ Portland and Arlington – reduced parking requirements close to transit
- ❖ New York City – wide variations in parking requirements between zoning districts

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## Tailored Requirements



### Advantages:

- ❖ Avoids spillover problems
- ❖ Reduces impacts of minimum parking requirements

### Disadvantages:

- ❖ Complex to introduce effectively
- ❖ Does not constrain parking demand

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## Option 2: Supply + Demand

Incentivize or require parking strategies to reduce vehicle trips

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## Constrain Supply



- ❖ Overall principle: encourage less auto-oriented development
- ❖ Promotes self-selection – residents with fewer cars live close to transit
- ❖ Different approaches:
  - Parking maximums
  - Requirements/incentives for demand management
- ❖ Needs to be complemented with Residential Permit Parking or other strategies to combat overspill

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## Parking Maximums



- ❖ Promotes alternatives to the private automobile
- ❖ Can tackle congestion if related to roadway capacity or mode shift goals
- ❖ Maximizes land area for other uses
- ❖ Appropriate in areas with strong real estate market where priority is to minimize auto dependence
- ❖ Examples: Manhattan, downtown San Francisco, Portland, Cambridge

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### Option 3: Don't Play the Game

Abolish parking requirements

### Abolish Parking Requirements

- ❖ Let developers, the public, and the market decide
- ❖ Create a level playing field
- ❖ Need to manage on-street parking



### Successful Precedents

Reviving neighborhoods by abolishing minimum parking requirements:

- Coral Gables, FL
- Eugene, OR
- Fort Myers, FL
- Fort Pierce, FL
- Great Britain (entire nation)
- Los Angeles, CA
- Ann Arbor, MI
- Arlington, VA
- Milwaukee, WI
- Olympia, WA
- Portland, OR
- San Francisco, CA
- Seattle, WA
- Spokane, WA
- Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

### High & Low Traffic Strategies

	<u>Typical Minimum Requirements</u>	<u>'Tailored' Minimum Requirements</u>	<u>Abolish Minimum Requirements</u>	<u>Set Maximum Requirements</u>
<b>Typical Tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Requirement &gt; Average Demand</li> <li>❖ Hide all parking costs</li> </ul>	Adjust for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Density</li> <li>❖ Transit</li> <li>❖ Mixed Use</li> <li>❖ 'Park Once' District</li> <li>❖ On-street spaces</li> <li>❖ ...etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Market decides</li> <li>❖ Garages funded by parking revenues</li> <li>❖ Manage on-street parking</li> <li>❖ Residential pkg permits allowed by vote</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Limit parking to road capacity</li> <li>❖ Manage on-street parking</li> <li>❖ Market rate fees encouraged/required</li> </ul>

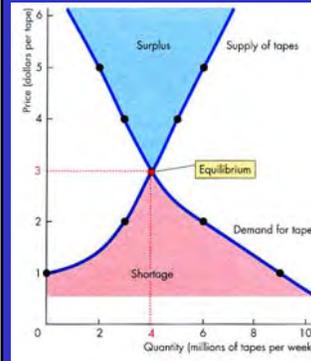


## Part II: Managing On-Street Parking

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## Economists' Laws of Supply and Demand



Source: Economics, Michael Parkin

❖ *The Law of Demand:* Other things being equal, the higher the price of a good, the lower the quantity demanded.

❖ *The Law of Supply:* Other things being equal, the higher the price of a good, the greater the quantity supplied.

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## On-Street Management

1. If there is demand for parking spaces, someone is willing to provide the supply.
2. If there is greater value in one type of space over another (closer versus farther), the value should be reflected in the management.



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## Manage On-Street Parking

- ❖ Parking Meters
  - Create turnover
  - Prioritize shoppers
  - Translates the value of the service to the user
- ❖ Residential Permits
  - Ensure residents can find parking
  - Make other parking management options work
  - Can sell surplus to commuters (*Boulder, West Hollywood, Santa Cruz*)



*On-Street Management is the Only Alternative to Unlimited, Free Parking*

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## Tools: Price

- ❖ Parking charges reduce parking demand by 7% - 40%
- ❖ Parking price elasticity of demand
  - -0.1 to -0.6
  - Typical: -0.3
  - Each 10% rise in parking fees is accompanied by a 3% decrease in demand
- ❖ If the land uses are attractive, price reduces vehicular demand, not trip demand



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## Tools: PBD's, PMD's, PID's, TID's

- ❖ Devote meter & permit revenue to district where funds raised
- ❖ Example: **Old Pasadena**
  - Meters installed in 1993: \$1/hour
  - Garage fees
  - Revenue: \$5.4 million annually
  - Tiny in-lieu of parking fees
- ❖ Funds garages, street furniture, trees, lighting, marketing, mounted police, daily street sweeping & steam cleaning
- ❖ Focus on availability, not price
- ❖ Responds to local priorities



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## Spending the Revenue (FY 2001)

- ❖ Debt service on sidewalk & alley improvements: \$448,000
- New city services:
  - ❖ Additional police foot patrols: \$248,000
  - ❖ Lighting services: \$21,000
- Revenue allocated to old Pasadena's BID:
  - ❖ Additional sidewalk and street maintenance: \$411,000
  - ❖ Marketing: \$15,000
- Total expenditures:
  - ❖ \$1,142,000



*The meters yield about \$50 per foot length per year*



" This place, it's perfect, really. They've kept the buildings and the streets well. That makes it so attractive.

People are walking around because they like the way it looks and feels. It's something you just don't see in Los Angeles.

As a driver, I don't mind paying more for what you have here. I tell you what: For this, I will pay.

- Shopper interviewed by the Los Angeles Times

## Lessons Learned

- ❖ Cities should dedicate parking meter revenue to the districts that produce it
- ❖ Merchants will insist on charging market prices for curb parking
- ❖ Local management can respond to local priorities
- ❖ Meter revenues can greatly improve the public infrastructure of older areas
- ❖ Dedicate some/all of the revenue to the priorities of the area



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## A Comprehensive Approach

1. Reduce/remove the requirements for off-street parking
2. Charge fair-market prices for curb parking
3. Protect residential neighborhoods
4. Spend the resulting revenue to pay for neighborhood public improvements

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## What About Garages?

- ❖ Parking is a community resource (means) that should only be expanded to support the community's goals (ends). What are the trade-offs and options?
- ❖ The community must decide if building parking is the priority compared to:
  - What other uses could go on that land?
  - What will be the impact on community character, including height, shadows, visual, curb cuts?
  - What else could be funded with the initial investment?
  - If it will be profitable, why does the public sector need to lead?
- ❖ If new parking is warranted, make it on the community's terms...

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## Provide Shared Garages for Modes and Uses



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## Expand Transportation Choices



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## Avoid Parking Oriented Development



Ground floor devoted to restaurant space, not a blank façade.



Upper floors of the garage are configured as a normal building.

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## For More Information



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