



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

ORD. 2017-019: To amend and reordain City Code §§ 30-440.1 and 30-440.2, concerning permitted principal and accessory uses and principal uses permitted by conditional use permit in the B-4 Central Business District; 30-442.1 and 30-442.1:1, concerning permitted principal and accessory uses and principal uses permitted by conditional use permit in the B-5 Central Business District; 30-710.1, concerning the number of off-street parking spaces required for particular uses; and 30-1045.6, concerning specific conditions applicable to conditional use permits for particular uses, for the purpose of eliminating parking areas and parking lots as a principal permitted use of property in the downtown area.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 21, 2017

PETITIONER

City of Richmond

LOCATION

Citywide

PURPOSE

To amend the official zoning ordinance for the purpose of removing parking lots and parking areas as a principal use, allowing for parking lots and parking areas as a conditional use, and reducing the off-street parking requirements for dwelling, hotel and motel uses within the B-4 and B-5 Central Business Districts.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

This amendment would revise the City's Zoning Ordinance for two central business districts, the B-4 and B-5, to remove parking lots and parking areas as a principle use within the district. The amendments also reduce the residential and hotel parking requirements within these two districts.

These amendments help implement the vision of the Downtown Master Plan, as well as the underway Pulse Corridor Plan, of allowing the market to determine parking requirements for downtown development overall, and particularly allow for more contextual, small-scale infill in the Downtown areas. They implement a vision of not allowing surface parking as the primary use of property in the Downtown. They also make improvements to screening and circulation requirements to ensure that any development of future surface parking lots on a conditional basis is not a detriment to a walkable downtown.

Staff recommends approval of the proposed ordinance.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Background

In the Spring of 2016, the Planning Commission discussed their concern about the development of new surface parking lots within downtown, specifically regarding the new lot installed on the parcel between the Dominion Arts Center and the 600 block of East Broad Street. The Commission asked Staff to investigate surface parking in the Downtown and report back with recommendations that would address surface parking without impeding economic development. Concurrently, the Department of Planning & Development review has been conducting the Pulse Corridor Plan to develop transit-oriented development strategies for the areas along the Pulse BRT route, including downtown. The Pulse Corridor Plan closely examines the form and function of future development, particularly infill development in the Downtown. The proposed amendments match the recommendations presented to the public as part of the Pulse Corridor Plan in November 2016.

In December 2016, the Planning Commission passed a Resolution of Intent to Amend the Zoning Ordinance and reviewed a draft ordinance and proposed amendments. Further public outreach and hearings have been conducted as part of the Pulse Corridor Plan process since then, including meetings with neighboring civic associations.

Master Plan

The Downtown Master Plan has very specific recommendations regarding “reconsidering parking requirements for urban buildings” and particularly the Downtown (3.7).

A key implementation step of the plan is that “the Downtown parking system should be reformed. While the existing system is quite progressive, allowing for parking reductions and waivers in mixed-use, walkable districts, the calculation standards must be reformed and Downtown’s existing parking supply must be better maintained. Underground parking is recommended in the core. Minimum parking requirements for buildings should be abolished. Shared parking systems should be encouraged, in which different businesses with different peak hours of use can share parking spaces. These parking spaces can be created and maintained by a centralized parking authority. The location, rates, and quantity of these shared parking spaces will be determined by market forces” (3.8).

The plan also has specific language regarding surface parking lots, stating that “surface parking lots, while they provide low cost vehicle storage, are detrimental to the walkability of Downtown streets. The long-term goal of Downtown development should be to transform all sizable surface lots to underground or above-ground structured parking with liner buildings” (7.6).

The Downtown Plan also anticipates the tradeoff of reducing surface parking lots and parking requirements as “urban areas with high levels of transit accessibility and walkability, such as the future vision for Downtown, are expected to have fewer parking spaces and/or more expensive parking spaces, compared to areas that are less urban and have lower levels of transit and walkability. This means that residents in the study area should not

expect to have the level of parking accessibility that residents and employees in lower-density, less-urban parts of Richmond experience. The trade-off is that Downtown residents will have much higher access to transit and will enjoy a vibrant, walkable community” (5.29).

Existing and Proposed Zoning

Currently, parking lots and parking areas are permitted as a principal use within the B-4 and B-5 districts, provided that any card reader or other access control device at an entrance to a parking area or parking lot shall be provided within not less than one stacking space situated off of the public right of way. The proposed amendments eliminate parking lots and parking areas as a principal use within the B-4 and B-5 districts; parking areas and parking lots would instead be permitted as an accessory use customarily incidental and clearly subordinate to uses permitted in the district. Parking lots and parking areas as an accessory use would be subject to the same provision for access control devices currently in the ordinance. The amendments also propose adding parking lots and parking areas, subject to the existing access control provision, to the enumerated principal uses permitted by conditional use permit. Additionally, the amendments provide for additional review by the Urban Design Committee, to provide a recommendation to the Planning Commission, when parking areas and parking lots are sought through the conditional use permit process.

If these amendments are adopted, existing parking lots and parking areas that are a principal use of property would become non-conforming within these zoning districts. There are currently 163 parcels that have surface parking as the principal use in the B-4 and B-5 districts; many of these parcels are operated together as a collective discreet parking lot.

Parking decks and parking garages would continue to be a permitted principal use, subject to existing screening and principal street frontage requirements as detailed in the zoning ordinance.

The other amendments concern off-street parking and loading requirements for multi-family dwelling uses, as well as tourist homes, hotel or motel uses. Currently, within the B-4 and B-5 districts, off-street parking is not required except for dwelling uses, hotels, and motels. The proposed amendments reduce parking requirements of these uses to encourage contextual, small scale infill development; to encourage the adaptive reuse of historic buildings for dwelling, hotel, and motel uses; and move to a demand-driven market for off-street parking and loading within the B-4 and B-5 downtown business districts.

Currently, the off-street parking regulations governing the number of spaces required for a hotel, motel, or tourist home use requires 1 parking space per guestroom up to 100 rooms, plus 1 per every 2 guestrooms over 100 rooms. The amendments propose reducing this requirement to 1 parking space per every 4 guestrooms; this is equivalent to the current dwelling use parking requirement for the district. Reducing this requirement would allow hotels and motels to reduce the amount of parking they are required to provide, through on-site construction or through off-premise leasing, within the B-4 and B-5 districts.

Proposed changes to the off-street parking regulations:

(7)	Tourist home, hotel, or motel:		
	a.	RO-3, HO, B-4, B-5 , B-6, B-7, RF-1, RF-2, CM and DCC districts (Ord. No. 2006-168-189, § 2, 7-10-06; (Ord. No. 2010-19-31, § 3, 2-22-2010)	1 per guestroom up to 100 rooms, plus 1 per every 2 guestrooms over 100 rooms
	<u>b.</u>	<u>B-4, B-5</u>	<u>1 per every 4 guestrooms</u>
	c.	All other districts	1 per guestroom

Currently the off-street parking requirement for multi-family dwelling uses within the B-4 and B-5 districts, as well as a number of other business districts, is None for 1 to 3 units; otherwise, 1 per 4 dwelling units where such units are contained within the same building as a non-dwelling use. The proposed amendments create a new category for the B-4 and B-5 as central business districts, and propose the new parking requirement to be None for 1 to 16 dwelling units; 1 per 4 dwelling units over 16 units, regardless of whether such units are contained within the same building as a non-dwelling use. Additionally, within the B-4, the amendments propose to have no parking required for dwelling units when such units are contained within the same building as a non-dwelling use. B5-Conditional zonings, where the property is rezoned to include conditions, will not be subject to the proposed changes if their conditions are specific to parking lots and parking areas as a principal use, or parking requirements for multifamily dwelling, hotel, or motel uses.

Proposed changes to the off-street parking regulations are in the table that follows.

(4.1)	<p>Dwelling unit: (Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008)</p> <p>a. Ord. No. 2006-168-189, § 2, 7-10-06) (Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008)</p> <p><u>b.</u></p> <p><u>c.</u></p> <p>d. (Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008)</p>	<p>In B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4, B-5 and UB districts where such units are contained within the same building as a non-dwelling use</p> <p>(Ord. No. 2006-168-189, § 2, 7-10-06) (Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008)</p> <p><u>In B-4 and B-5 districts</u></p> <p><u>In B-4 district where such units are contained within the same building as a non-dwelling use.</u></p> <p>In UB-2 district where such units are contained within the same building as a non-dwelling use.</p> <p>(Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008)</p>	<p>None for 1 to 3 units; otherwise, 1 per 4 dwelling units.</p> <p>(Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008)</p> <p><u>None for 1 to 16 dwelling units: 1 per 4 dwelling units over 16 units</u></p> <p><u>None</u></p> <p>1 per 2 dwelling units (Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008)</p>
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	e. (Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008; Ord. No. 2010-19-31, § 3, 2-22-2010)	In B-6, B-7, RF-1 and RF-2 districts (Ord. No. 2006-197-217, § 4, 7-24-06) (Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008) (Ord. No. 2008-36-57, § 3, 3-24-2008; Ord. No. 2010-19-31, § 3, 2-22-2010)	1 per dwelling unit (see section 114-446.3) (Ord. No. 2008-2-55, § 2, 3-24-2008; Ord. No. 2010-19-31, § 3, 2-22-2010)
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A map showing the distribution of B-4, B-5, and B-5 Conditional zoning in different council districts is attached, showing where these changes would take effect. Another map shows the distribution of parking areas and parking lots as a principal use within those districts.

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