



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Resolution a2015-366: To declare an intent to amend the official zoning ordinance for the purpose establishing bicycle parking standards, amending the off-street parking and loading requirements in certain districts to promote effective shared parking provisions, and amending the screening and buffering requirements for new parking areas.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: July 6, 2015

PETITIONER

City of Richmond
900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

LOCATION

Citywide

PURPOSE

To amend the zoning ordinance for the purpose of establishing bicycle parking standards for multi-family dwellings as well as parking decks and parking garages containing parking spaces serving non-residential uses; to amend the off-street parking and loading requirements in certain districts to promote effective shared parking provisions; and to amend the screening and buffering requirements for new parking areas.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

This Resolution would revise the City's Zoning Ordinance to improve the off-street parking and loading requirements. A new division would create requirements for bicycle parking facilities for multi-family dwellings as well as parking decks and parking garages containing parking spaces serving non-residential uses.

Other changes would amend the off-street parking and loading requirements in certain districts to promote effective shared parking provisions and encourage appropriate infill development. Effective shared parking provisions support stronger business and mixed use districts. These amendments expand the districts eligible for shared parking while modifying provisions to better meet existing conditions and constraints. Finally, these changes would amend the screening and buffering requirements for new parking areas to ensure adequate, attractive buffers.

If the Commission agrees that it is appropriate to move forward with the development of proposed amendments, it will be necessary for the Commission to approve a Resolution of Intent to Amend the Zoning Ordinance. This is the first step for any change to the text of the Zoning Ordinance. The amendment process would include the conduct of appropriate public hearings once the draft ordinance containing the text amendments is introduced. A draft of the resolution and proposed amendments are included in the agenda package for consideration.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Background

The bicycle parking requirements promote public safety by providing secure bicycle parking within the city, as well as promoting active transportation choices as envisioned in the Richmond Bicycle Master Plan.

Improving bicycle parking was identified as an important strategy in the Transportation section of RVA Green, the City's Sustainability Plan, adopted in 2011. On page 85 of the plan, RVA Green envisions "Under this initiative, the City would require the creation of dedicated spots within a parking facility for bicycle...parking....The City could revise its zoning code to require that new buildings with car parking provide bicycle parking capacity...In addition, the zoning code could be revised for new residences and office buildings to set aside space for long term and short term bicycle parking".

One of the recently-completed Bicycle Master Plan's guiding principles, in an echo of RVA Green, is that "Richmond will have more multi-modal centers, corridors, and adopt land use and parking policies that support alternative modes of transportation, walking, and biking" (p. 2.3). The City's team conducted a survey as part of the community engagement process for the Bicycle Master Plan and found that bicycle parking was a priority; "82% of survey respondents indicated that having access to bike parking will make them more likely to visit a business" (2.17). High quality bicycle parking is a necessary addition to a bicycle network since it provides a place for bicyclists to park their bicycles once they have arrived at a destination (2.17). The Implementation Section of the Bicycle Master Plan envisions developing bicycle parking policy and bicycle parking requirements – both short and long-term – like proposed in this ordinance (4.3).

Safe and secure bicycle parking contributes to many improvements in city quality of life: by increasing public safety and deterring theft; by promoting the conservation and protection of natural resources, including air quality; and promoting diverse and healthy options for mobility, transportation, and recreation.

Master Plan

The City's Master Plan states that "the City of Richmond will support bicycle travel with a safe and effective system of designated bikeways. The City will be a community where pedestrian and bicycle movements are protected as an integral part of the transportation system". It specifically recommends incorporating bike lockers into any new public facilities (38). In addition to the Master Plan, both RVA Green and the Bicycle Master Plan recommend increasing and requiring bicycle parking as a key area of focus for sustainability and improving transportation and recreation options.

The other parking amendments serve the Master Plan strategies of “encourage[ing] shared use of parking decks”.

Existing and Proposed Zoning

There are currently no bicycle parking standards in the zoning ordinance.

The proposed bicycle parking requirements would apply to two use categories in any zoning district: multi-family dwellings and parking decks and parking garages containing parking spaces serving non-residential uses.

For multi-family dwelling uses, no bicycle parking spaces would be required for buildings of less than 10 units. For buildings of containing 10 to 49 dwelling units, the developer must provide 1 long-term bicycle parking space for every 3 units. This ratio is in line with other similar localities in Virginia, including Arlington County, Alexandria, and Washington, DC. Long-term spaces are intended to provide safe, secure, and weather-protected bicycle parking for tenants and residents of a multi-family dwellings. They can be provided in many different forms and layouts, but must ensure that a bicycle and both wheels can be secured.

Larger multi-family buildings containing 50 or more dwelling units require 1 long-term bicycle parking space for every 4 dwelling units. This ratio is in line with downtown Norfolk, VA and Nashville, TN’s requirements. Large multi-family buildings are also required to provide short-term bicycle parking that is publicly-available for deliveries, messengers, guests, and all other visitors to a building. Short-term bicycle parking spaces are intended for parking of limited duration, and thus do not need to be protected from weather, but must provide a structure to secure a bicycle and both wheels.

Proposed Bicycle Parking Requirements for Multi-Family Dwellings:

<u>Number of Dwelling Units</u>	<u>Number of Long Term Bicycle Parking Spaces Required</u>	<u>Number of Short Term Bicycle Parking Spaces Required</u>
<u>Less than 10</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>None</u>
<u>10 to 49 dwelling units</u>	<u>1 space for every 3 dwelling units or major fraction thereof</u>	<u>None</u>
<u>50 or more dwelling units</u>	<u>1 space for every 4 dwelling units or major fraction thereof</u>	<u>2 spaces for 50 dwelling units; 2 additional spaces for every 50 dwelling units or major fraction thereof</u>

The second use that would require bicycle parking is parking decks and parking garages containing spaces serving non-residential uses. The requirement would be determined by the number of automobile spaces in the garage or deck; 5-20 spaces would require 1 bicycle parking space, 21-40 would require 2 bicycle parking spaces, and decks and garages with over 40 automobile spaces would require 1 bicycle parking space for every 10 automobile parking spaces. These spaces can be provided as long-term bicycle parking spaces or short-term bicycle parking spaces.

Proposed bicycle parking requirements for parking garages and parking decks containing parking spaces serving non-residential uses:

<u>Number of Parking Spaces</u>	<u>Minimum Number of Bicycle Parking Spaces Required</u>
<u>0 to 4</u>	<u>None</u>
<u>5 to 20</u>	<u>1 space</u>
<u>21 to 40</u>	<u>2 space</u>
<u>Over 40</u>	<u>1 space per every 10 spaces or major fraction thereof</u>

The other amendments would improve off-street parking and loading requirements so that no parking would be required for single attached and detached dwellings and two family detached dwellings on existing lots with a width less than 35'. This provision already applies to single-family detached dwellings, so this extends it to single family attached and two family detached on existing narrow lots. Furthermore, it would make no parking required for single family attached and detached or two family detached when no alley access is available and the Department of Public Works will not issue a curb cut.

They also would improve shared and off-premise parking provisions in certain mixed use and business districts to increase clarity and ease of compliance. Shared parking is currently allowed in the UB, UB-2, B-6, B-7, RF-1, and RF-2 districts. These amendments would add the B-1, B-2, and B-3 business districts as eligible for shared parking provisions. They would also allow credit for on-street parking, as is currently permitted in RF-1 and RF-2, in UB, UB-2, B-1, B-2, B-3, B-6, and B-7 districts.

Off-premise parking requirements would be altered so that:

1. The radius would change from 300' to 500' for all eligible districts. It is already 500' in B-4, B-5, B-6, B-7, RF-1, RF-2, CM, and DCC districts.
2. If any portion of the parking area is within the 500' of the entrance, all of the spaces in the parking area can be used to meet the requirement. Currently all the spaces must be within the 500' radius to meet the requirement.

3. Existing parking decks can be used to meet the parking requirement regardless of zoning. Currently, existing parking decks must be within an off-premise parking eligible zone. This provision in practice would affect the Retreat Hospital deck at 100 N Robinson St, an existing deck at 1104 W Franklin St, and the Chippenham Hospital Deck at 7101 Jahnke Rd as examples.
4. Signage does not have to be installed identifying off-premise parking spaces if an affidavit is signed. Currently, signage is required.
5. The use requiring off-premise parking must advertise the spaces provided on their website, if it exists. Currently, there is no requirement to do this.

Finally, it would remove certain buffer alternatives from the landscaping requirements for new parking areas. Buffers I, J, and K as currently designated in the zoning ordinance would be removed as eligible buffers. In practice, these designated landscaping requirements have found to be inadequate and undesirable compared to the other buffer options within a variety of zoning districts. Other existing landscaping requirements, and the options eligible within different zoning districts, would be maintained.

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