



AGENDA
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
40TH CITY COUNCIL
OAK PARK, MICHIGAN
MARCH 17, 2025
6:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. SPECIAL BUSINESS

A. Parking Reform Presentation - Municipal Services Department

4. CALL TO THE AUDIENCE

Each speaker's remarks are a matter of public record; the speaker, alone, is responsible for his or her comments and the City of Oak Park does not, by permitting such remarks, support, endorse or accept the content, thereof, as being true or accurate. "Any person while being heard at a City Council Meeting may be called to order by the Chair, or any Council Member for failure to be germane to the business of the City, vulgarity, or personal attacks on persons or institutions." There is a three minute time limit per speaker.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The City of Oak Park will comply with the spirit and intent of the American with Disabilities Act. We will provide support and make reasonable accommodations to assist people with disabilities to access and participate in our programs, facilities and services. Accommodations to participate at a Council Meeting will be made with 7-day prior notice.



CITY OF OAK PARK, MI STAFF REPORT

3.A

AGENDA FOR: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Parking Reform Presentation - Municipal Services Department

DEPARTMENT: Economic and Community Development

FROM: Salam Habhab, Economic Development and Planning Specialist, Kim Marrone, Director of Municipal Services

SUMMARY: One of the most pressing issues affecting many urban communities is the legacy of off-street parking mandates. These mandates, established decades ago, have shaped our cities into vehicle-centered communities, increasing real estate prices, encouraging dependence on cars, reducing the use of public transportation, and contributing to high levels of air pollution and carbon emissions. Many cities across the country are now prioritizing parking reform to create more people-centered communities.

In recent years, the Economic Development and Planning Department has incorporated parking reform practices into the zoning ordinance, including shared parking, parking reduction strategies, and requirements for bicycle parking. These changes have attracted businesses and promoted a pedestrian-friendly environment.

The Economic Development and Planning team believes that integrating further parking reform strategies into the zoning ordinance will enhance the city's ability to create a more sustainable, livable, and people-centered community. This presentation will highlight national and local parking reform strategies and their potential benefits.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT: N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Discuss the next steps for implementing further parking reform into the city's zoning ordinance.

EXHIBITS:

1. Parking Reform Presentation 3-17-25

An aerial, top-down view of a city street grid, rendered in a light teal color. The image shows a complex network of streets, buildings, and urban infrastructure, including what appears to be a large circular plaza or roundabout in the upper right quadrant. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern, with a focus on the geometric patterns of the city layout.

Rethinking Parking

A City for People, Not Cars

Economic Development & Planning

Parking Reform

- Cities and towns across the U.S. introduced minimum parking requirements during the 1950s.
- Parking takes up about one-third of land area in U.S. Cities. Nationwide, there are an estimated **eight parking spaces for every car**.
- Parking mandates have become a contentious 21st-century challenge.
- In 2017, Buffalo, NY, became the first U.S. city to eliminate the parking mandates.
- Many cities are now considering reforms.

Resource: [Parking Reform as Urban Game Changer – GreenBuildingAdvisor](#)

Shifting Focus

Cities across the country are recognizing the negative impacts of excessive parking requirements.

- Complete Removal (●)
- District Exemptions.
- Parking Maximums.
- Significant Reductions.
- Parking Guidance.



[Parking Mandates Map - Parking Reform Network](#)

Potential Benefits - Community

Imagine a city where space is maximized for housing, green spaces, and local businesses rather than endless parking lots.

- Increases Housing Affordability.
- Enhances Land Use and Urban Design.
- Encourages Sustainable Accessibility and Mobility.
- Promotes Mixed-Use Development
- Revitalizes Economic Development.

Potential Benefits - Developers

"Why would we know the needs of business parking better than the businesses do; why prioritize car storage at the expense of other uses that could house people, jobs, etc." Ann Arbor, philosophical approach.

- Reduces Construction Costs.
- Increases Development Flexibility.
- Enhances Project Viability.
- Facilitates Market-Driven Parking Solutions.



[NYC's Chance to Lift Parking Mandates - Parking Reform Network](#)

Parking Reform in Michigan

- **Eliminated Parking Mandates Citywide**

- Ann Arbor
- Mt. Pleasant
- River Rouge
- Ecorse
- Lake City
- Kalkaska
- Mancelona
- Escanaba
- Calumet
- Ferndale: **Parking Manual with review from the CED Director**

- **Eliminated Parking Mandates in Specific Districts**

- **Detroit:** B5, PC districts, central business district
- **Dearborn:** Public parking sector within the west downtown districts
- **Hamtramck:** Central business district
- **Pontiac:** Central business districts (C-2)
- **Flint:** Downtown core
- **Lansing:** Downtown core..
- **Grand Rapids:** TN & CC districts
- **Traverse City:** Residential, regional central (C-4), Grand Traverse Commons, properties within 500 ft from public transit center or parking decks
- **Marquette:** Central business district

[Parking Mandates Map - Parking Reform Network](#)

How Off-Street Parking Mandates Impact Land

A restaurant's parking lot may be three times the size of its dining area.

A common off-street parking ordinance:

- Restaurants: 1 space per 100 square feet of floor area
- Parking space measures 180 square feet [9'x20']
- Additional space for maneuvering drive lanes and driveways
- Dining area of 1,000 sq. ft.
- The zoning ordinance requires 10 parking spaces
- Each parking space = $9 \times 20 = 180 \times 10 = 1800$
- Plus: maneuvering drive lane 22 feet
- Total area of parking lot = 2,790 sq. feet (exclusive of driveways)

OP Strategic Economic Development Plan, 2014

RECOMMENDATIONS // POLICY IN ACTION

3.3 Off-Street Parking

Off-street parking requirements should be aligned with standards for a walkable community that aims to create active building frontage on streets, prioritize pedestrians, screen surface lots from street view, and reduce the burden on developers and business owners.

Currently, Oak Park's commercial areas are dominated by surface parking that consume vital land, reduce perceptions of safety, and are unattractive. These surface lots and other parking configurations that prioritize automobiles severely limit opportunities for pedestrian-oriented retail development.

Mechanisms for pursuing off-street parking standards for a walkable community include reducing or altogether eliminating parking minimums, replacing parking minimums with maximums, and implementing shared parking, which reduces the amount of land needed for parking and maximizes existing parking capacity. Parking placement is also important to creating a walkable environment. Wherever possible, surface lots should be located to the rear of buildings or screened from street view to ensure active street frontage and a contiguous street wall.

Strategies

- 1 Revise off-street parking requirements using best practices of peer cities as a guide (strategies include reducing minimum parking requirements, eliminate parking minimums and instituting parking maximums, eliminating both minimums and maximums.)
- 2 Prohibit new surface parking lots as primary uses adjacent to pedestrian-oriented commercial corridors.
- 3 Where existing surface parking lots abut the right-of-way, require landscaping and/or low walls to screen the parking from street view and separate the area from pedestrian traffic.
- 4 Increase regulations and enforcement of landscaping requirements in off-street parking lots.
- 5 Identify potential shared parking locations.
- 6 Allow and encourage shared parking as a preferred and readily achievable option for fulfilling parking requirements.
- 7 Create a payment in lieu of parking program, where developers have the option to reduce their on-site parking requirement by paying an in-lieu fee into a shared parking facilities fund.

OP Strategic Economic Development Plan, 2014

RECOMMENDATIONS // COMMERCIAL SUB-DISTRICTS

7.1 9 Mile & Coolidge



Bird's eye model of existing conditions at 9 Mile & Coolidge, viewing northeast.

Existing Conditions

The 9 Mile Road and Coolidge Highway intersection is considered Oak Park's main shopping cluster. Although the area has seen recent streetscape enhancements, the auto-oriented design (drive-thrus, gas stations, parking lots at street corners) has prevented this area from becoming an attractive retail destination because it is not walkable. Overall, there is a lack of street frontage, especially at the intersection's corners where it is most desirable. Places like these - low-rise shopping centers that are setback from the street and surrounded by parking lots - are auto-oriented, not pedestrian friendly, and not successful layouts for retailers, as exemplified by the vacant retail spaces in all four quadrants.

9 Mile and Coolidge has potential for both new development and redevelopment with 30,000 to 40,000 SF estimated supportable retail, or 10 to 12 stores. Long-term strategies focus on creating a walkable, mixed-use retail destination by encouraging development that fronts the street, high-quality public spaces that catalyze new development, and multi-family housing connected to retail by comfortable non-motorized paths.

In the short-term, low cost, high impact projects can be implemented to get the community thinking about this area differently, such as activating underutilized parking spaces with movable chairs, food trucks, and Wi-Fi hot-spots.



Existing: Lack of building frontage



Existing: Excess parking



Existing: Auto-oriented signage

Photo credits (top to bottom): facebook.com/CityofOak, HAA, HAA

RECOMMENDATIONS // COMMERCIAL SUB-DISTRICTS

7.1 9 Mile & Coolidge (cont.)



Bird's eye model of potential development concept at 9 Mile & Coolidge, viewing northeast.

Strategies

- 1 Work to create a community vision and set of guiding principles for this site.
- 2 Identify opportunities for small-scale pop-up stores or events that begin to change the perception of the shopping center.
- 3 Identify space for placemaking in underutilized parking spaces.
- 4 Identify ideal funding strategies such as the creation of a Principal Shopping District (PSD) or a Business Improvement District (BID) to utilize tools such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF).
- 5 Change zoning to Mixed Use.
- 6 Encourage the extension of the street grid through superblocks and large parcels.
- 7 Encourage walkable, mid-rise, mixed-use development.
- 8 Maximize multi-modal access by incorporating pedestrian connections, bike racks, and bus stops.

Photo credits (top to bottom): Leewood Park Place, KS (getchimgone.com), Annapolis, MD (greatstreets.org), HAA



Precedent: Programmed public space



Precedent: Active retail at street level



Precedent: Townhomes

Key Design Concepts

- A Activate the four corners: mid-rise, retail at street level with residential and/or office above, outdoor dining.
- B Incorporate programmed public space fronted by multi-family residential and retail on 9 Mile.
- C Reconfigure strip retail centers: on-street parking, landscaping, wide sidewalks, outdoor dining.
- D Renovate existing buildings where possible to be mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented.
- E Locate surface parking behind buildings.
- F Connect neighborhoods with new streets lined with multi-family housing (e.g., townhomes).
- G Incorporate multi-family housing: townhomes or stacked flats.
- H Incorporate multi-family housing: senior living.

Note: The visualization is intended to illustrate the key design concepts; it is just one of many potential development scenarios for this area.

Oak Park - Parking Reform Strategies

- **Eliminate Parking Minimums**
 - Citywide.
 - In certain areas (e.g., B-1, MX-1, MX-2, IF).
- **Lower Parking Minimums**
 - Reduce the amount of parking spaces required for various land uses.
 - Consider tiered reductions based on factors like proximity to transit, walkability, and the availability of alternative transportation options.
- **Implement Parking Maximums**
 - Convert the minimum parking requirements to maximums.
 - Encourage developers to consider alternative transportation options.

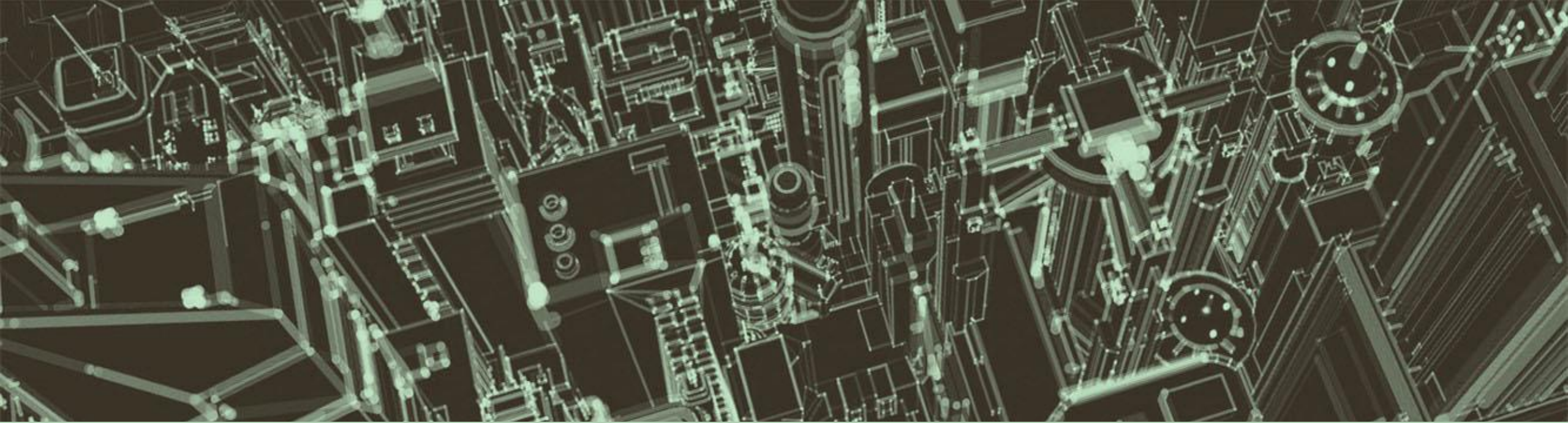
Oak Park – Residential Parking Permit Program

Restricts on-street parking in designated, high-traffic residential areas to permit only residents of those areas.

- Prioritizes Residential Parking
- Reduces Non-Resident Parking
- Enhances Neighborhood Quality
- Provides Flexible Implementation



[Residential Parking | City of Rochester, MI - Official Website](#)



THANK YOU

Kim Marrone, Municipal Services Director
Salam Habhab, Economic Development & Planning Specialist

