



American Planning Association

Making Great Communities Happen

ZC 08-06-02

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Zoning Commission
District of Columbia
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

August 29, 2008

Dear Commissioners:

The American Planning Association is pleased to offer its support to the District of Columbia Zoning Commission and the Department of Planning as it considers changes to the city's zoning regulations, which would eliminate minimum vehicle parking requirements and add requirements for bicycle parking, among other related provisions.

We believe that the elimination of such parking minimums help communities become more sustainable, walkable, and bicycle-friendly places.

As a founder and steering committee member of the National Complete Streets Coalition – a broad collection of advocates and transportation professionals who work to enact complete streets policies across the country – APA recognizes that street networks should be designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street.

Consequently, creating transit-oriented communities and complete street networks means that planning and transportation agencies must change their orientation toward building primarily for cars. The elimination of minimum parking requirements allows developers the opportunity to create residences and retail spaces that stress sustainable designs; maximize space intended for people, not automobiles; and encourage existing and future transit systems and bike corridors.

Additionally, a recent APA Planners Press book, *The High Cost of Free Parking*, by Donald Shoup, underscores how parking requirements have contributed to auto dependence, rapid urban sprawl, extravagant energy use, and a host of other problems. Planners often mandate parking to alleviate congestion, but end up distorting transportation choices, debasing urban design, damaging the economy, and degrading the environment.

Based on our research, we believe that the elimination of minimum parking requirements will bolster the District of Columbia's ongoing economic development initiatives, while expanding the city's commitment to being a transit-, bicyclist-, and pedestrian-friendly community.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey L. Soule, FAICP
Director of Outreach and International Programs

cc: Harriet Tregoning, Planning Director, District of Columbia

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 08-06-2

EXHIBIT NO. 85

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