

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council**January 31, 2012**

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**SUBJECT: PARKING REGULATIONS IN THE ZONING ORDINANCE AND CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL AMENDMENTS**

The purpose of this Informal Report is to respond to the City Council's recent request for information concerning the City's current parking regulations and potential amendments to update the regulations.

The parking regulations were last reviewed by a Commercial Zoning Task Force established by the Zoning Commission in 2006, as part of a larger project to review appropriate uses and development standards in commercial zoning classifications. The review also included reconsideration of some commercial uses as neighborhood or general commercial that resulted in an August 2006 amendment to the nonresidential land use chart to reclassify certain uses (Ordinance No. 17093).

One of the outcomes of the Task Force was the determination that a minimum parking requirement was not necessary for nonresidential uses that would not affect residential areas. Commercial business operators explained that the market would determine the parking need. They felt that each individual business owner/operator would be sensitive to their customers' needs and ensure that customers can get to their business.

The Task Force recommended a minimum parking standard for those commercial areas near residential areas. Ordinance No. 17024, approved in June 2006, requires that any nonresidential use within 250 feet of one or two-family zoned property provide parking spaces based on the ratio in the Zoning Ordinance for the use. The intent was to ensure that the business operator provide all of the parking needed for the customers without any spill over or usage of residential streets for business parking. A maximum number of parking spaces is applied citywide based on each use to avoid over-parking, with additional tree planting required to mitigate extra spaces.

After a review of the parking standards by staff, a few potential amendments have been identified:

1. Remove required parking when an adjacent one or two-family residential district does not and will not include residential uses (e.g. the Trinity River, parks, utility and drainage easements, railroads, etc.).
2. Add standards for parking for gathering facilities with no permanent seating, e.g. bars and community halls. These uses typically generate large parking demands that the current standards do not address.
3. Add standards for parking for automatic car washes that are not full service. New technology allows car washes and drying to be computer-driven with self-service vacuums, which require minimal staffing.

Staff will pursue any or all of these potential amendments if requested by the City Council.

If you have any questions, please contact Randle Harwood, Planning and Development Director.

Tom Higgins
City Manager