The book that answers the “how much parking?” question

FOREWORD BY DONALD C. SHOUP

PARKING
REFORM
Made Easy

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Parking requirements create one of the most wasteful elements of transportation and land use systems: unoccupied parking spaces.

Did you know that there are over 3 spaces for each car in the U.S.?
This is a view of a typical suburb. The dark gray areas are parking, much of which is unoccupied. Land uses are separated, with each one providing parking to meet its peak demand.

This pattern of parking wastes land and favors automobile use. Alternative travel modes such as transit, walking, and cycling cannot compete.
This is an on-the-ground view of the shopping mall in the previous slide. These spaces are occupied during the peak shopping season, but they sit empty the rest of the year.
This image shows the fine-grained built form found in older neighborhoods. Off-street parking does not dominate the built form or street experience.

There is a parking requirement problem here as well – excess requirements hamper revitalization and business creation by preventing new restaurants from locating in historic buildings.
Storefronts, street trees, awnings, and on-street parking create a good pedestrian environment, but free on-street parking reduces shared use of off-street parking, justifying excessive parking requirements.
The circle of vice

Parking requirements shape land use patterns, transportation systems, and travel behavior. The next slide illustrates the consequences when minimum requirements exceed parking utilization.
Code requirements > use

- Expectations
  - Undersupply anxiety
  - “Level” playing field
  - Spillover fears

- Site impacts - auto
  - Lower density + automobile-oriented site design = more auto use

- Shared parking
  - Not worth the trouble
  - Lack of innovation

- Site Impacts - non auto
  - Poor walk, bicycle, transit access = less non-auto use

- Market norms
  - Developers, lenders, tenants raise parking expectations

- Pricing impacts
  - Parking supply > demand, so price = $0 = more auto use
The process of establishing parking requirements is often perceived to be a technical matter. Rather, it is primarily a policy decision. The next slide shows that parking requirements are linked to four key community goals.
Putting parking requirements in their place

Parking requirements are but one way of ensuring accessibility. The next slide shows a range of planning strategies that provide access. When we *start* with parking requirements, we treat them as an end not a means. Said another way, it is a case of “the tail wagging the dog.”
Goal

- Access between land uses

Method

- Land use planning
  - Land use proximity
  - Density
- Telecommunication substitution
  - Teleconferencing
  - Social media
- Transportation infrastructure and services
  - Private vehicle
  - Transit
  - Human powered

Technique

- Parking requirements
  - Parking supply
  - Parking demand management
  - Private market provision
  - Public provision
  - Roadway capacity
  - Vehicle parking
  - Support systems
Habit, leverage, addiction, or what?

Habit: “That’s the way we’ve always done it”

Leverage: “Excessive parking requirements help me negotiate for other public benefits”

Addiction: “My community needs plentiful and free parking”
A twelve step program...

The next slide shows twelve steps for reforming parking requirements. The process starts with local parking utilization data and makes a series of analytic and policy adjustments to account for future conditions, local plans, and policy decisions regarding parking supply.
Requirement options...and developer responses

The next slide shows different types of parking requirements, from traditional to deregulated. The right approach for your community depends on local conditions and policy choices.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Developer Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Minimum &gt; utilization</td>
<td>Rarely build more than requirement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No maximum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate reform</td>
<td>Minimum = utilization</td>
<td>Assess market for project, may exceed minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No maximum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big city approach</td>
<td>Minimum = % of utilization</td>
<td>Market decision whether to supply minimum or build to maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum = ratio or % of minimum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial deregulation</td>
<td>No minimum</td>
<td>Market decision whether to supply parking or build to maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum = ratio or % of minimum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deregulation</td>
<td>No minimum or maximum; Performance measures, e.g., traffic impacts</td>
<td>Market decision on whether/how much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Bells and whistles...

Parking requirements deal with a lot more than minimum ratios. On the next slide, the list on the left shows ways of “taming” the negative impacts of parking; on the right side are examples of varied parking supply requirements.
“Taming” Parking

• Driveway regulations
• Prohibit surface
• Ground floor retail
• Height restrictions
• % of block facades for garage doors
• Discretionary design review
• Shading
• Permeable pavement
• Solar
• Real-time information
• Guidance systems

Supply Regulations

• Eliminate minimums
• Maximums
• Discretionary determination
• Tandem
• Re-use projects
• Overlays zones
• On-street credit
• Performance-based
• In lieu/access fees
• Carsharing
• Off-site parking
• Pricing, unbundling, cash-out
• TDM
• Bike parking
• Electric vehicle parking
Politics and participation

*Everyone* likes to complain about parking, hoping that someone else will provide a space where it is wanted, when it is wanted, and for free. Parking requirement reform requires stakeholder engagement, political support, and a good public participation process.
Tying parking reform to a broader community vision produces the best results.
If Joni Mitchell and Bob Dylan wrote a song together...
...it would be entitled...
Paved Paradise Revisited

It’s time to reform parking requirements!