

SE Quadrant Transportation Working Group: Meeting #1 Primer
Meeting date: Friday, February 21, 2014, 8:30 – 10:30 AM
Portland Building, Room B (2nd Floor)
1120 SW 5th Ave

Overview of Zoning Code Regulations for Off-street Parking

The current approach to parking management stems from the 1975 *Downtown Parking and Circulation Policy*, which focused on limiting parking capacity for commute-to-work trips as a way to improve air quality. The Federal Clean Air Act required mitigating actions by the City, enforced by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, to combat carbon monoxide pollution. This approach was applied to the entire Central City with the 1995 *Central City Transportation Management Plan*. Robust parking management was one element in a series of actions to ensure livability with growth; other key actions included the development of infrastructure for alternative modes such as streetcar and MAX light rail, and the growing bicycle network.

Parking regulations are found in the Central City Plan District, which supersedes base zone regulations. There are no minimum parking requirements in the Central City. Maximum parking entitlements are allocated by Parking Sector, of which there are six in the Central Eastside (see map below). Maximum entitlements were established based on transit capacity during the evening peak, and on the density of existing and planned land uses.

There are five main types of parking: Growth, Residential/Hotel, Visitor, Preservation, and Undedicated General. The sections below describe how these types of parking are regulated in the Central Eastside.

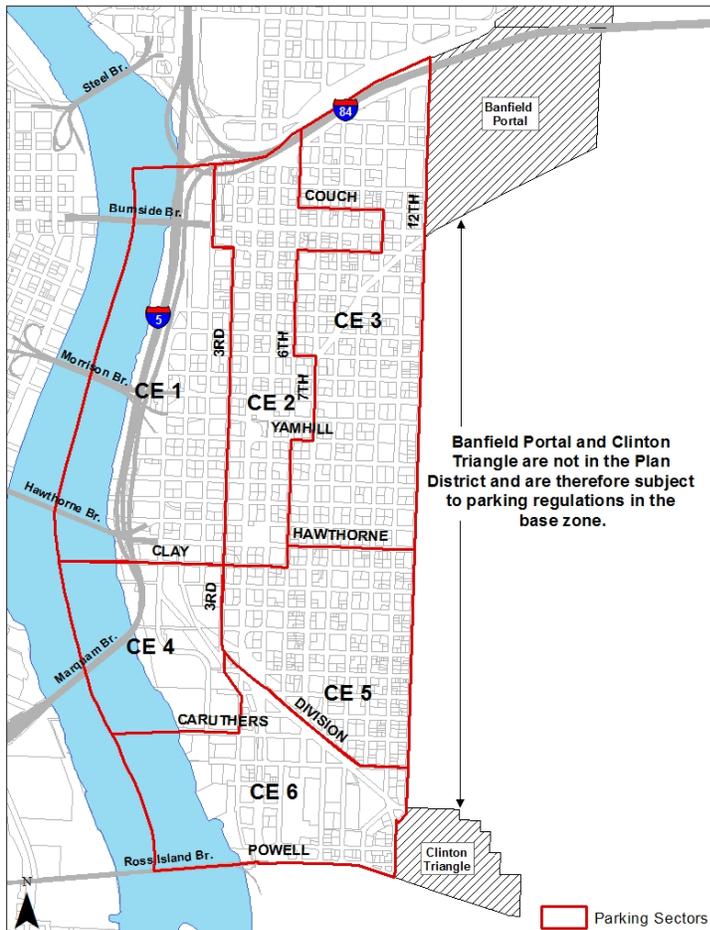
Growth Parking

When a **new commercial development** is proposed, the parking element of the proposal is categorized as Growth Parking. In the Central Eastside (Sectors CE1 – CE6), maximum entitlements are only applied to office uses:

- 3.4 spaces/1,000 square feet in Sectors CE1, CE4, CE5, CE6
- 2.5 spaces/1,000 square feet in Sectors CE2, CE3

Commercial uses that are non-office in the Central Eastside have neither a minimum nor a maximum entitlement. This includes industrial uses.

Map 1: Central Eastside Parking Sectors



In addition to how much parking may be built, the Plan District regulations stipulate how parking may be used. In the Central Eastside, the following regulations apply:

- Parking accompanying a new office development may be operated as **commercial** parking (i.e., rented hourly, weekly, monthly) at all times.
- Parking accompanying a new commercial, non-office development must be operated as **accessory** (i.e., may only be used by occupants of the new development) from 7:00AM – 6:00PM on weekdays. It may be operated as commercial at other times.
- If a new development has more than 60 spaces, annual usage reports must be submitted to the Bureau of Transportation.

Residential/Hotel Parking

When a **new residential or hotel development** is proposed, the parking element is categorized as Residential/Hotel Parking. In the Central Eastside, there are neither minimum parking requirements nor maximum entitlements for residential and hotel developments. However, the following operational regulations apply:

- Residential parking must be operated as **accessory** at all times.
- Hotel parking must be operated as **accessory** from 7:00AM – 6:00PM on weekdays. It may be operated as commercial at other times.

Visitor Parking

Visitor Parking is intended to serve shoppers, tourists, and other such visitors who make occasional trips to the area. It is not associated with particular development. There are no maximum entitlements; rather, the appropriate number of parking spaces allowed is based on a demand analysis, traffic analysis, and other considerations specified in the approval criteria. No parking using these provisions has been constructed in the Central Eastside.

Preservation Parking

Preservation Parking is intended for **existing, older buildings** with no or limited off-street parking. When new parking is intended to be Preservation Parking, the owners of the parking and the owners of the building for which it is intended must have an agreement stipulating how much of the parking will be available for the existing building. Agreements must last a minimum of ten years. Sites with more than 60 Preservation Parking spaces must submit annual usage reports to the Bureau of Transportation.

Eligibility for Preservation Parking

All non-office buildings in the Central Eastside are eligible for Preservation Parking. There is no maximum entitlement for non-office uses. Preservation Parking for non-office uses must be operated as accessory on weekdays from 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM.

For office uses, the regulations stipulate that only buildings on the Preservation Parking Eligibility List may apply for Preservation Parking. The maximum entitlement is the same as for Growth Parking. Operational rules are complex: generally, Preservation Parking for office uses may be operated as commercial if the parking is created within an existing building; otherwise it must be accessory on weekdays from 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM. However, there are several caveats and exceptions to these rules.

Undedicated General Parking

Undedicated General Parking is a special category assigned to **existing parking** when the current regulations were adopted (see below). New Undedicated General Parking in the Central Eastside is prohibited.

Implementation of the current regulations

Existing Parking

The current regulations went into effect on January 8, 1996. The following regulations were applied to parking that legally existed on that date:

- Parking operating as commercial parking was converted to Undedicated General Parking. Prior to the new regulations, these facilities operated under Conditional Use permits. All previous conditions of approval for individual facilities continue to apply.
- Parking operating as accessory to office uses was converted to Growth Parking for office uses.
- Parking operating as accessory to uses other than office, residential or hotel was converted to Growth Parking for non-office uses.
- Parking operating as accessory to residential or hotel uses was converted to Residential/Hotel Parking.

Operational rules for each type of parking described above now apply to the parking that existed when the regulations took effect.

New Parking

Since the current regulations were adopted, only about 150 new parking spaces have been built in the Central Eastside: one Preservation Parking request for an office building at Water Ave and Clay St., and one residential project at 6th and Couch. A 2009 analysis by the Bureau of Transportation showed that throughout the entire Central City, developments subject to maximum ratios have, on average, built less than the total entitlement (data are from 1996 – 2009):

- 62% of the maximum for residential development (average of 0.9 spaces/unit)
- 86% of the maximum for office development (average of 1.5 spaces/1,000 square feet)

Parking Utilization

There are approximately 8,200 off-street parking spaces in the Central Eastside. A 2010 usage survey determined that during the peak hour (noon-1 PM), occupancy was only about 60%. This translates to over 3,200 empty parking spaces. These underutilized parking spaces are generally distributed uniformly throughout the district.

Discussion Questions for Transportation Working Group

- Simplifying the regulations:
 - Are 6 parking sectors needed? The boundaries are not contiguous with current zoning or transit service. The only difference among them is the maximum entitlement for office uses.
 - Should accessory use requirements be relaxed? Current rules governing operations discourage sharing of existing parking resources and are difficult to enforce.
- Parking ratios:
 - Do we have the right parking ratios to incent development and protect livability? Or are ratios needed at all?
 - Should maximum parking ratios apply to more than just office uses?
 - Is requiring minimum parking appropriate in the Central City?
 - Are there incentives or programs (bike parking, car share/bike share, in-lieu fees for local transportation improvements, etc.) that could be integrated into parking policies to provide more efficient parking?
- Buildings with little or no dedicated parking:
 - Is there a more effective way to provide parking for older buildings? There is no Preservation Parking Eligibility List; eligibility is determined case-by-case. The regulations regarding both creation and use of Preservation Parking are complex, and compliance with Preservation Parking agreements is difficult to enforce.