

May 28, 2019

**DRAFT PHAC POSITION STATEMENT on Bicycle Parking Regulations
To guide discussion with PBOT staff**

The Portland Housing Advisory Commission appreciates the importance of providing transportation and mobility options for all Portlanders as a means of addressing climate change, public health, congestion and neighborhood vitality. However, we are concerned about the potential for new bicycle parking requirements to limit housing development in the following ways:

- Building dedicated bike parking facilities within the envelope of residential buildings may raise the cost of development, making it more difficult for non-profit developers to finance and build new affordable housing.
- Requiring that valuable floor area be dedicated to bike parking will cause developers -- for-profit and non-profit alike -- to build fewer units, or to build units with fewer bedrooms.

These potential impacts are all the more concerning given Portland's ongoing affordable housing crisis, and history of transportation policies and infrastructure that harm people of color. Notably, PBOT has a history of rolling out pedestrian/bike projects and policies in Portland's Black neighborhoods that address not the needs of current residents, but of those that will subsequently displace them.

Neighborhoods across the city are grappling with gentrification and displacement. Boosting the production of regulated affordable housing is a key strategy for achieving Portland's goals, and PHB is investing hundreds of millions of dollars toward this end. We worry that the proposed bicycle parking regulations will be counterproductive to our affordable housing goals, by increasing the cost of development and limiting the production of new housing.

Even as we worry about these impacts of bicycle parking requirements, we believe that all renters deserve equal access to whatever amenities are required by the zoning code, without distinction between tenants who live in market-rate and regulated-affordable buildings. We support uniform standards.

In order to reconcile these positions, we see only three possible strategies, all of which would advance PHAC's primary goal: habitable floor area should not be sacrificed for bike parking.

1. Require fewer bicycle parking spots per unit;
2. Allow for more of the required spots to be located within units;
3. Allow developers greater flexibility to creatively locate bike spots so that they do not occupy space within the building that could otherwise be used for housing. For example, in separate secured structures on-site, under an extended eave or overhang inside a locked enclosure, or in individually-secured lockers on the outside of the building.

We think that strategy #3 holds the greatest promise for meeting PBOT's bicycle parking goals without jeopardizing Portland's affordable housing goals. We encourage creative thinking, partnerships with architects and designers, and flexible regulations that can achieve both sets of goals: adequate bicycle parking *without* sacrificing housing.

In addition, we call for consideration of the following measures to reduce impacts on affordable housing development and make this amenity more universally useful to diverse household types:

- Delay the implementation of the bike parking code update for two years, so that developers do not need to rework plans and financing for developments that are already in the works;
- Allow additional residential density in order to offset any reduction in density triggered by allocating space for bicycle parking.
- Allow bicycle parking facilities to be designed as flexible storage space for residents -- in which bicycles *and* other items (e.g. strollers, mobility devices) could be stored -- so that families that do not use bicycles can still benefit from this amenity.
- Provide a direct subsidy to non-profit developers to pay for bicycle/flexible-storage spaces, or waive or reduce the transportation portion of SDC charges in order to offset developers' cost to build these parking/storage facilities.
- Pair this policy with equitable transportation infrastructure investments and policy across the city, responsive to the needs and explicit feedback of neighborhoods' residents.