Commercial Parking Standards Update
City Council Legislative Session
October 24, 2017
What is included in this study?

• Review of parking requirements for:
  • Office
  • Hotel
  • Retail
  • Restaurant
  • Child care

• Develop a process for Shared Parking
How were our current parking requirements created?

- 1930s - Overcrowded curbspace led to:
  - Parking Meters
  - Off-street parking requirements

- Cities started adopting requirements
  - Usually based on little to no research
  - Often copied from similar jurisdictions

- 1963 – Alexandria’s last comprehensive update
How are the current parking requirements working?

- A LOT of parking has been built
  - Parking is still a big City concern

- Suburban style development
- Reduced mobility
- Expensive development
- Contributed to environmental issues such as stormwater runoff

- 40% of the commercial cases (SUPs & DSUPs) reviewed in the last 5 years have included a parking reduction
  - ALL were approved
Commercial Parking Standards

**Why is the City updating its parking requirements?**

- Current standards are over **50 years old**
- **Urban vs. Suburban Development**
- **Reduce burden on:**
  - Small businesses
  - Residents
- **Commercial trends**
- **Technology opportunities**
- **Environmental leader**
How is the City updating its parking requirements?

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<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>APPOINTEE</th>
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<td>Planning Commission (1)</td>
<td>Nathan Macek, Chair</td>
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<td>Transportation Commission (1)</td>
<td>Melissa McMahon</td>
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<td>Traffic and Parking Board (1)</td>
<td>James Lewis</td>
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<td>Former Old Town Area Parking Study Work Group (1)</td>
<td>John Gosling</td>
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<td>At-Large Alexandria Residents with Expertise in Regional Transportation or Parking Issues (1)</td>
<td>Cathy Puskar</td>
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<td>At-Large Alexandria Residents (3)</td>
<td>Christopher Ferrara, Danielle Fidler, Shari Simmans</td>
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<td>NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association (1)</td>
<td>Michael Workosky</td>
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<td>Mixed-Use Developer with experience in Alexandria and other urban areas (2)</td>
<td>Austin Flajser, Jeremy Lena</td>
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The Task Force has held monthly meetings that are open to the public since March 2017.
What are some assumptions for updated parking requirements?

- People will still drive
  - How many people? How often?

- Travel preferences are changing

- Alexandria is seeing more transit-oriented urban development

- Old Town has different parking conditions

- Must be sensitive to spillover impacts
  - May require different on-street management
What are the goals for updated parking requirements?

- **Consistent** with City policies and plans
  - Increase non-SOV trips
  - Support investments in transit

- Promote and encourage **Small Businesses**

- Attract **quality development** and investment

- Support good quality of life for **residents** by providing sufficient parking

- **Simplified and flexible** ratios

- Consistent with **market trends**
What are the major takeaways from the study data?

60 sites surveyed throughout the City
What are the major takeaways from the study data?

• Every site except 1 had a lower parking demand than required

• 59% Average peak occupancy

• 32% travel to hotels via taxis, Uber, and Lyft

• 52% of restaurant trips did not drive

• Some sites are leasing spaces to others to utilize excess parking
Task Force’s **Draft Recommendations for Consideration**

1. **Simplified map**

   Acknowledges different requirements based on access to current and future transit
Task Force’s Draft Recommendations for Consideration

2. ‘Minimum and Maximum’ Ratios

- Currently: Zoning Ordinance only has a minimum requirement
- Recommendation - Establish a parking range with a minimum to ensure some parking is provided and a maximum to prevent overbuilding

Why?
- Allows flexibility among different tenants and locations
- Accommodates future changes in parking needs
- Parking Modification process to build outside the range
3. ‘Combined Retail’ Ratio

• Currently: 8 different parking requirement categories

• Recommendation - Simplify into a “retail and other commercial” category

Why?

• Easier to understand, apply & ensure adequate parking provided for all uses

• Standardizes for changes in use

• Allows for flexibility among different types of tenants in the same space
4. Neighborhood businesses exemption

- Currently: Many small businesses incur costs of delayed opening and fees solely to request parking reductions
- Recommendation - No parking requirements for businesses under a certain size
  - Similar to existing exemption on King Street and Mount Vernon Avenue

Why?
- Consistent with Small Business Zoning effort
- **Eliminates last major hurdle** for neighborhood businesses
- Encourages **ground floor retail**
- Promotes small infill development and **reinvestment in existing buildings**
5. Shared Parking

• Currently: Zoning Ordinance forces each use to provide its own parking, even when not used

• Recommendation – Create an approval process to consider shared parking

Why?

• **More efficient** use of existing parking
• **Helps small businesses** meet their parking requirements
What are the next steps?

**October/November**
- Continue outreach
  - (9 public meetings in addition to open Task Force meetings)
- Receive feedback
  - City Council
  - Other stakeholder groups

**November**
Finalize Task Force recommendations

**December**
Public Hearings on proposed amendments
Thank You!

Questions?