

**Commercial Parking Standards
Draft Task Force Recommendations
November 20, 2017**

Enhanced Transit Area Map

Create a map designating an “Enhanced Transit Area”. This area includes a ½ mile buffer from existing and future Metro Stations, Transitways (Metroway, West End Transit, and Corridor B), and the following additional areas:

1. West side of Mount Vernon Avenue – the ½ mile buffer ends at Mount Vernon Ave – for consistency, commercial properties on the west side were included
2. Old Town North – the planning area was included since the recent small area plan calls for enhanced transit throughout this area
3. South Washington Street – the three southernmost blocks north of the Beltway were included since this area is well served by transit

Minimum and Maximum Parking Requirements

Establish minimum and maximum parking requirements for each land use and a different minimum-maximum range depending on whether a site is within the Enhanced Transit Area or outside the Enhanced Transit Area. The zoning requirement would be satisfied if a use provided parking within the minimum-maximum range. Requests to provide less parking than the minimum or more parking than the maximum would be considered through a special use permit.

Parking Requirements by Land Use

As part of this Study, four distinct commercial land use categories were studied: Hotel, Office, Restaurant, and Retail. Specific requirements for each land use are:

HOTEL

Base Ratio	Min (spaces per room)	Max (spaces per room)
Within Enhanced Transit Area	0.2	0.4
Outside Enhanced Transit Area	0.25	0.7

- Retail/Other Commercial and Restaurant space within a hotel will be subject to the parking requirements for those uses and eligible for the parking requirement exemption.

- Hotels with more than 5,000 sf of meeting space within a hotel shall provide additional parking equal to or greater than the minimum retail requirement, up to the maximum retail requirement.

OFFICE

	Min (spaces per 1,000 sf)	Max (spaces per 1,000 sf)
Within Enhanced Transit Area	0.25	1.50
Outside Enhanced Transit Area	0.75	2.25

RESTAURANT

Base Ratio	Min (spaces per 1,000 sf)	Max (spaces per 1,000 sf)
Within Enhanced Transit Area	1.0	3.0
Outside Enhanced Transit Area	1.0	4.0

RETAIL AND OTHER COMMERCIAL*

Base Ratio	Min (spaces per 1,000 sf)	Max (spaces per 1,000 sf)
Within Enhanced Transit Area	0.25	3.0
Outside Enhanced Transit Area	0.75	4.0

*This requirement would apply to the following uses as defined in the Zoning Ordinance:

- Retail shopping establishment
- Convenience store
- Animal care facility
- Day care center
- Personal Service Establishment
- Light assembly , service and crafts
- Massage business
- Clinics, Medical and dental
- Amusement enterprise – indoor
- Amusement enterprise – outdoor
- Private Commercial Schools
- Theaters, Auditoriums, and Assembly Halls

The Non-Retail parking requirement will remain as is to cover existing “non-retail” uses not specifically included in the list above.

Parking Requirement Exemption:

Non-residential uses that have a parking requirement of 2 spaces or less shall be exempt from providing the spaces.

- The maximum parking requirement shall apply to any parking provided.
- The exemption would be applied to individual tenant spaces with a minimum parking requirement of 2 spaces or less.

Example applications:

- 2,000 sf of commercial space in a new multifamily building – exempt from minimum parking requirement for the commercial space because:
 - Restaurant requirement – 2 spaces
 - Retail/Other Commercial or Office requirement – 1 space
- 4,000 sf of commercial space in a new office building configured as two 2,000 sf spaces – exempt from minimum parking requirement for the commercial space because:
 - Restaurant requirement – 2 spaces per tenant space
 - Retail/Other Commercial requirement – 1 space per tenant space
- 4,000 sf of commercial space in a new hotel building – minimum parking requirement could apply because:
 - Restaurant requirement – 4 spaces if entire space is used for restaurant – not exempt
 - Retail/other commercial or office requirement – 2 spaces if entire space is used for retail or office – eligible for exemption
 - If any part of the exemption is applied, conditions restricting the use allowed in the space may be required (e.g. No more than 2,000 sf may be used as a restaurant)
- 2,000 sf existing retail building converting to a restaurant.
 - Restaurant use is not grandfathered (see next section) since it is a more intense use.
 - However, it is eligible for an exemption since the minimum parking requirement is 2 spaces.

Grandfathered Parking for Existing Buildings

For new non-residential uses proposed in existing buildings that previously had a similar or less intense use, no additional parking beyond what is currently provided on site shall be required. More intense uses shall provide parking for the additional parking that is required by the change in use.

- An existing building is one that was constructed prior to [date of adoption] or built under a DSUP, DSP, building permit, or grading plan approved prior to [date of adoption].
- An existing building that is enlarged through a site plan or special use permit after [date of adoption] is no longer considered an existing building and subject to the parking requirements.
- A similar or less intense use is one that has the same or lower minimum parking requirement (based on the new requirements). A more intense use is one that has a higher minimum parking requirement (based on the new requirements).
- The new parking requirements may be applied if desired by the use.
- The maximum parking requirements shall only apply to new parking that is constructed after [date of adoption].
- A similar or less intense use would be based on the last use documented in the building prior to [date of adoption].

Example applications:

- 10,000 sf building in the Enhanced Transit Area that was previously used as a furniture store (retail/other commercial) with no parking on-site
 - Under new requirements the store would have been required to provide a minimum 3 spaces
 - New retail/other commercial or office use in the building – same minimum parking requirement – no parking is required
 - New restaurant use in the building – higher minimum parking requirement (10 spaces) – new use would be required to provide minimum of 7 spaces (10 spaces - 3 spaces)
- 10,000 sf building in the Enhanced Transit Area that was previously used as a restaurant with 2 spaces on site
 - Under new requirements the restaurant would have been required to provide minimum of 10 spaces
 - New retail/other commercial or office in the building – lower minimum parking requirement than restaurant – new use would be required to provide 3 spaces, but the 2 spaces on-site satisfy the requirement
 - New restaurant in the building – same minimum parking requirement – new restaurant would be required to provide 10 spaces, but the 2 spaces on-site satisfy the requirement
- 3,000 sf tenant space in an existing shopping center that was previously used as retail
 - New retail/other commercial or office – no additional parking required
 - New restaurant – minimum of 3 spaces required

- 100,000 sf existing office building in the Enhanced Transit Area
 - Under new requirements the office building would have been required to provide minimum of 25 spaces or a maximum of 150 spaces
 - New retail/other commercial or office in a tenant space in the building - no additional parking required
 - New restaurant in a tenant space in the building - Subject to parking requirements for a restaurant use minus office parking requirement (based on new requirements); eligible for the exemption if requirement is 2 spaces or less.

- 4,000 sf building used as an auto body shop (non-retail use)
 - Since the parking requirement for this use is not proposed to be changed, the existing use would have been required to provide 10 spaces (minimum of 2.5 spaces per 1,000 sf).
 - New retail/other commercial or office in the building – no requirement since retail has a lower minimum requirement than non-retail (existing standard)
 - New restaurant in the building – no requirement since restaurant has a lower minimum requirement than non-retail (existing standard)

Shared Parking

Allow shared parking between uses on the same lot or within 1,000 feet (as measured by the shortest, safe, unobstructed pedestrian path). This process would use a variation of the Urban Land Institute’s (ULI) shared parking model as a basis for determining the minimum requirement for the uses sharing the parking facility. Under this model, the parking requirement for each individual use proposed to share parking will be calculated and adjusted for each time period based on the table below. The highest parking requirement will be the minimum parking requirement for all uses sharing parking.

Time Period	Weekday Daytime	Weekday Evening	Weekend Daytime	Weekend Evening
Office	100%	5%	5%	5%
Hotel	80%	100%	80%	100%
Retail	60%	90%	100%	70%
Restaurant	50%	80%	80%	100%
Residential	60%	100%	90%	100%

Example applications:

- A new restaurant is opening in an existing building that was previously retail but has no parking on-site. The restaurant is subject to the parking requirements. Using shared parking, the restaurant can satisfy the requirement with the parking provided at the

office building across the street if the temporal demands for parking by each use do not conflict.

- A mixed use building with office and ground floor retail/restaurant applied the shared parking standards to satisfy the parking requirements for all uses within the building.

Identify previously approved and constructed development site plans that could share parking and process a group DSUP amendment to allow these buildings to apply the new parking requirements, including allowances for shared parking. This amendment would require a public hearing before Planning Commission and City Council to amend the identified DSUPs. Current property owners would have to authorize amendment of their DSUP.

Example application:

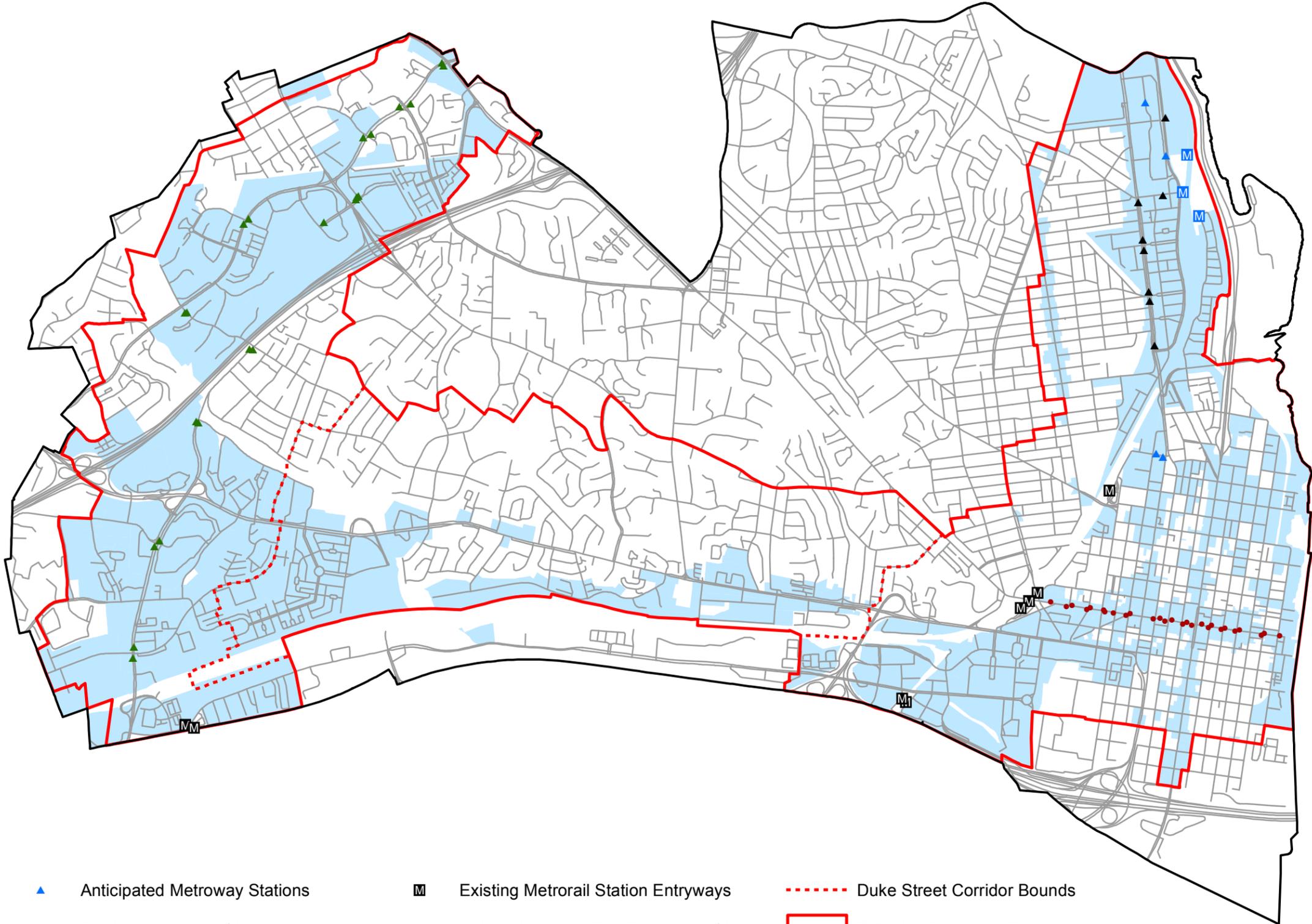
- Amend the DSUP for the Saul Center to allow the building to use the new parking requirements, which would allow some of the parking to be shared.

DRAFT

Potential "Enhanced Transit Area" Map for Commercial Parking Requirements



The map depicts an aggregate 1/2 mile transit walkshed roughly mapped to existing city streets and parcels. The walkshed is based on existing and anticipated stations and entryways. The purpose of the map is to differentiate future parking requirements for commercial developments and tenants. Requirements generated by the map are not intended to apply to residentially zoned properties that fall within the walkshed area. The map does not imply that residentially zoned properties will be rezoned as commercial for redevelopment. The light blue areas depict properties that allow commercial uses, either by-right or through the approval of a special use permit. Until a Locally Preferred Alternative is selected for enhanced transit service along the Duke Street corridor, properties within the bounds indicated by the dashed lines may use the maximums developed for properties beyond the Enhanced Transit Area. The Enhanced Transit Area minimums will remain applicable.



- ▲ Anticipated Metroway Stations
- ▲ Existing Metroway Stations
- Anticipated Metrorail Station Entryways
- Existing Metrorail Station Entryways
- ▲ Anticipated West End Transitway Stations
- Existing King Street Trolley Stations
- Duke Street Corridor Bounds
- Potential Enhanced Transit Area
- Commercially Zoned Properties within Enhanced Transit Area Boundary

DRAFT COMMERCIAL PARKING REQUIREMENTS

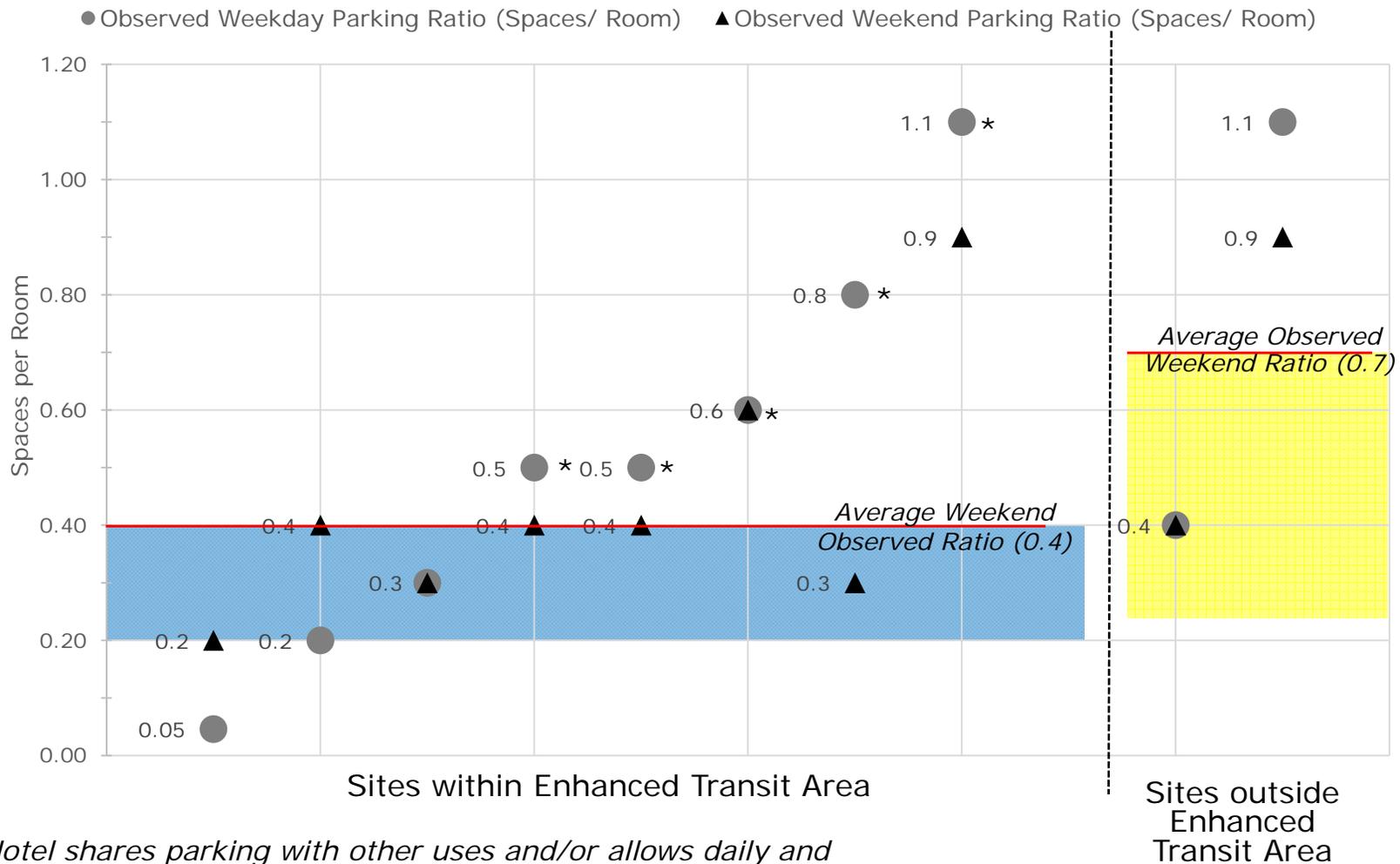


Location	Hotel		Office		Retail		Restaurant	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
	Per room		Per 1,000 sf		Per 1,000 sf		Per 1,000 sf	
Within Enhanced Transit Area	.2	.4	.25	1.50	.25	3.0	1.0	3.0
Beyond Enhanced Transit Area	.25	.7	.75	2.25	.75	4.0	1.0	4.0

Note: Similar to current regulations, requests to exceed the maximum or reduce the minimum would be considered through a Special Use Permit.

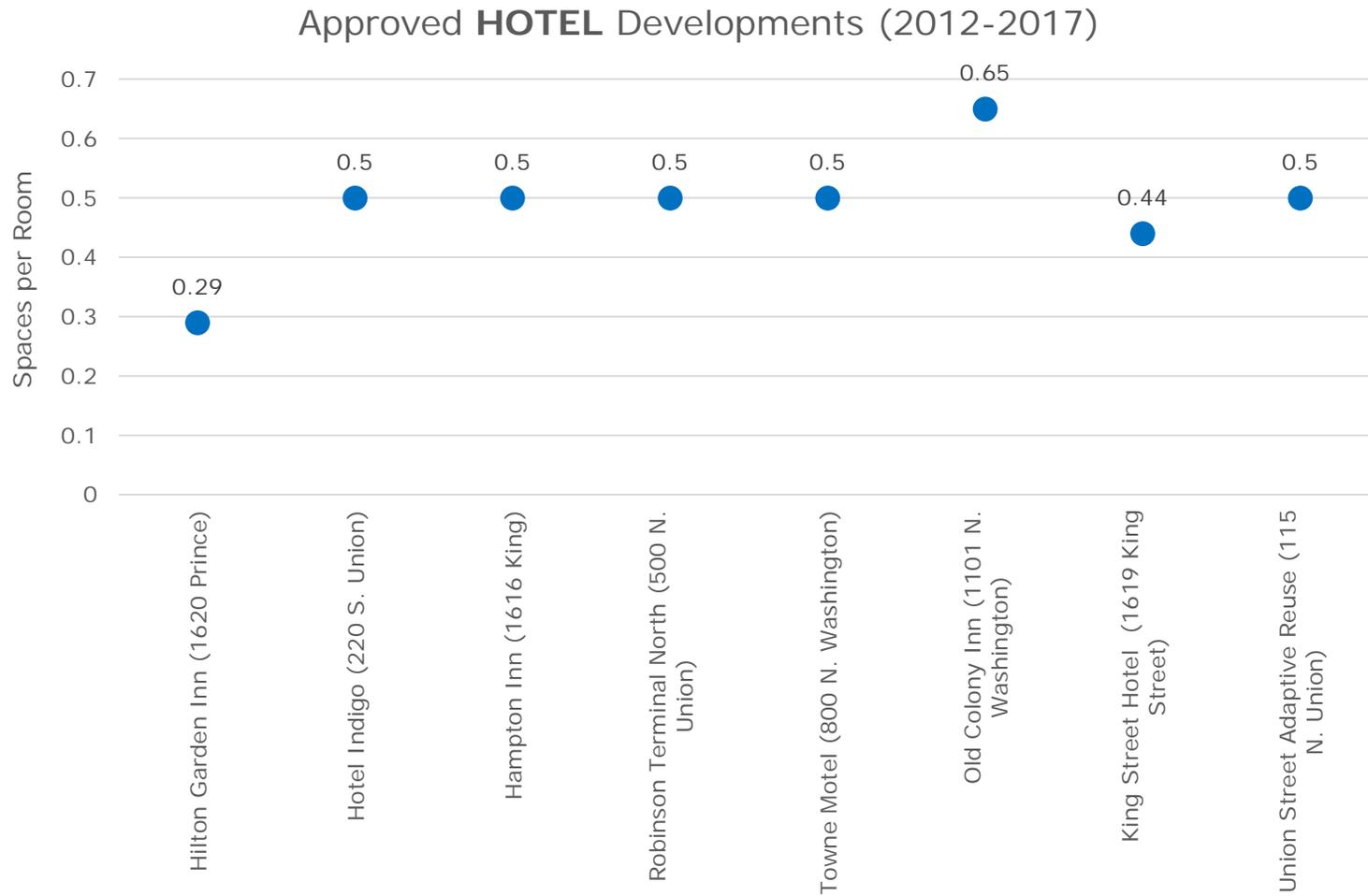


Task Force's **Draft** Recommendations for Consideration - **HOTEL**



**Hotel shares parking with other uses and/or allows daily and monthly parking for the general public*

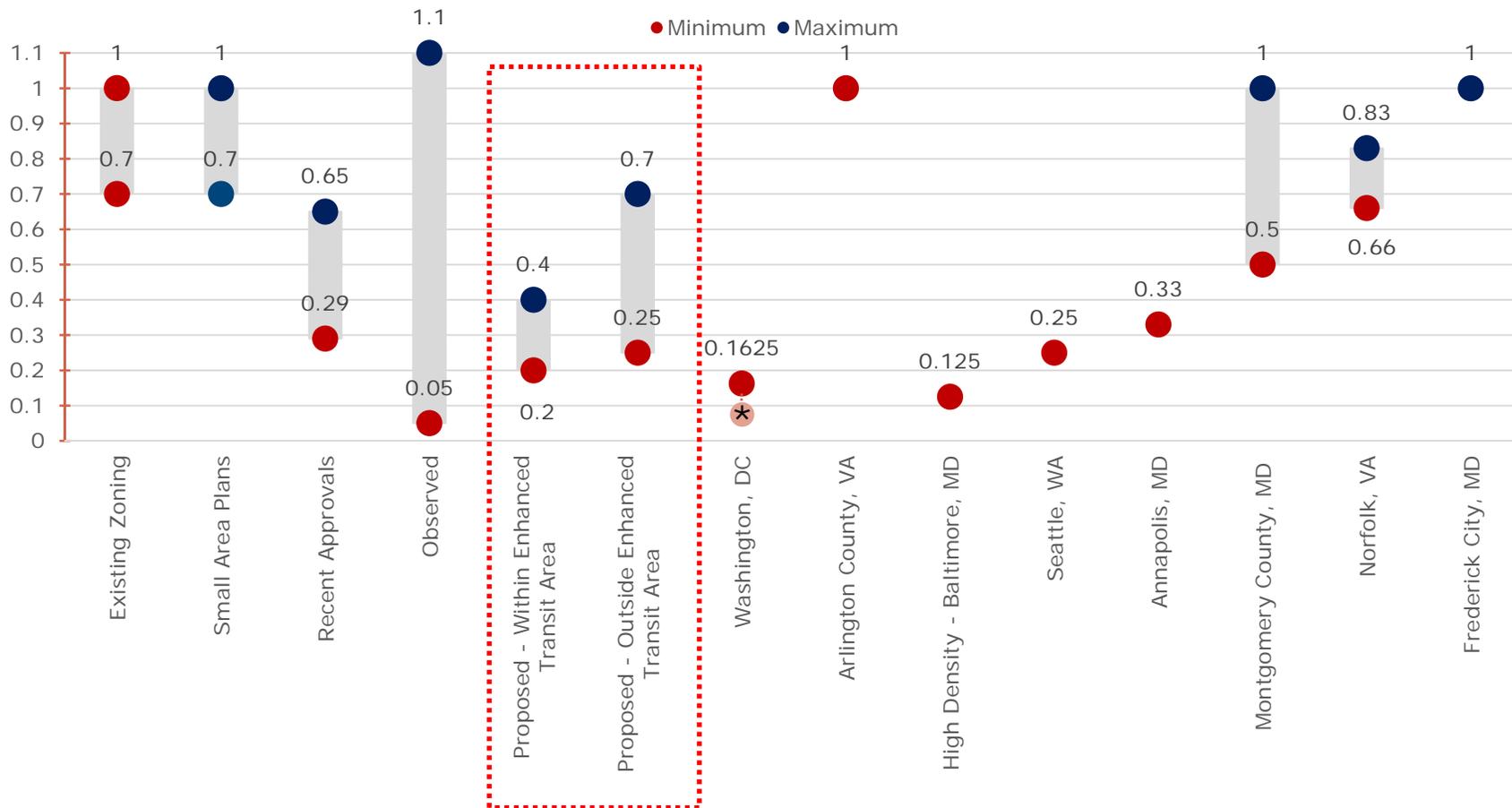
Task Force's **Draft** Recommendations for Consideration - **HOTEL**





Task Force's **Commercial Parking** Recommendations for Consideration - **Hotel**

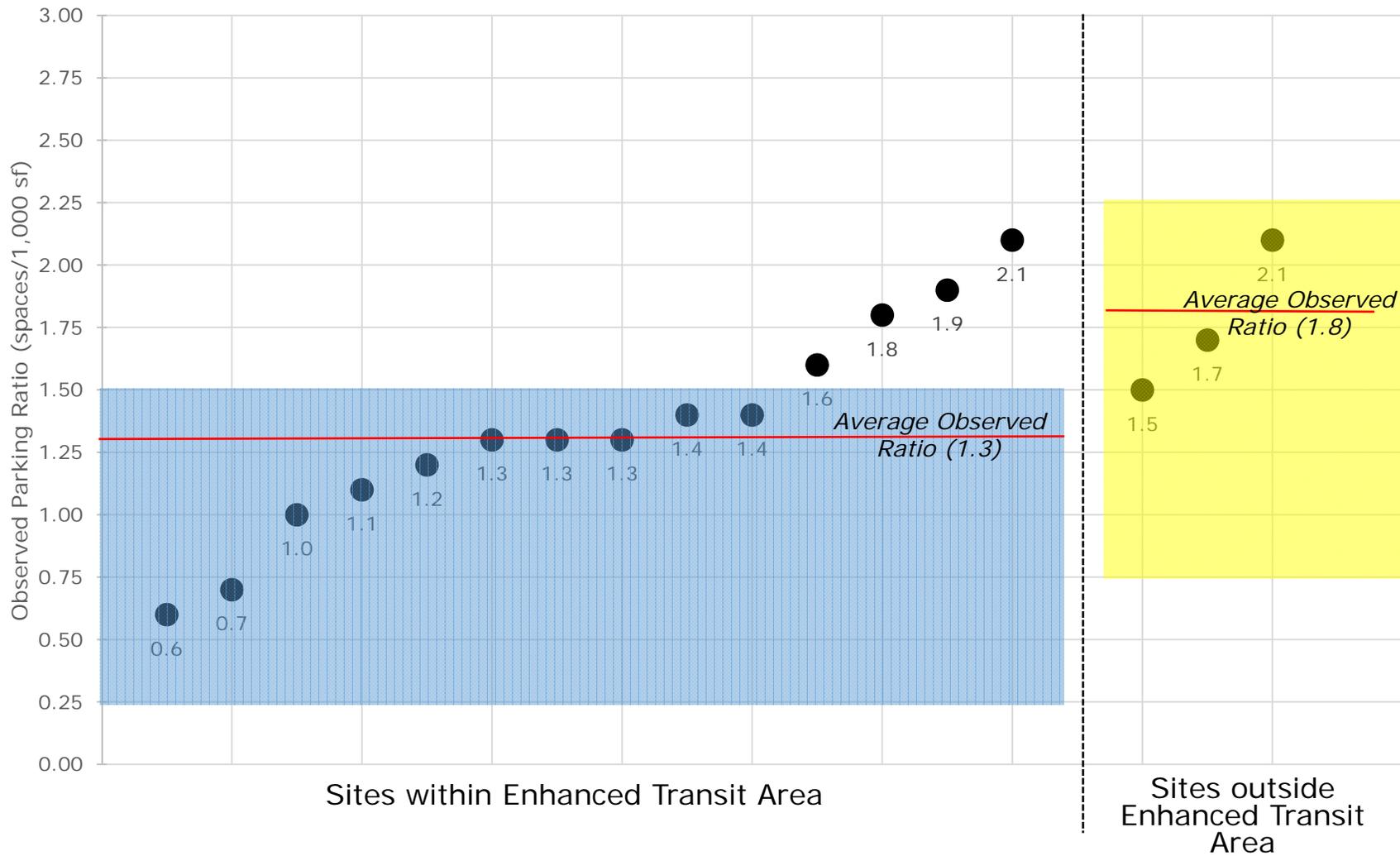
Comparison of Parking Requirements



* DC allows a 50% reduction for transit



Task Force's **Draft** Recommendations for Consideration - **OFFICE**

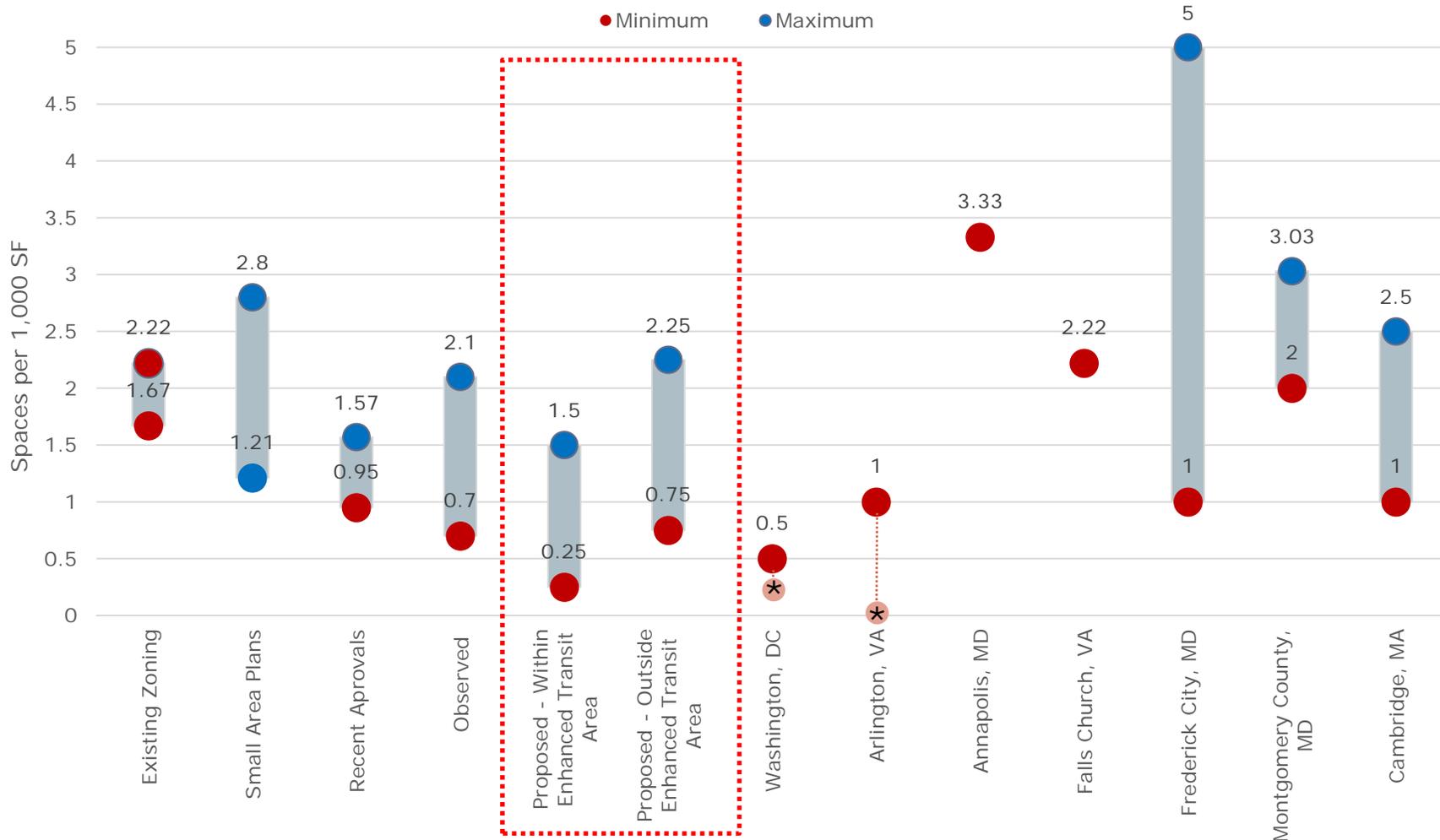


PARKING STANDARDS FOR
NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



Task Force's **Commercial Parking** Recommendations for Consideration - **Office**

Comparison of Parking Requirements

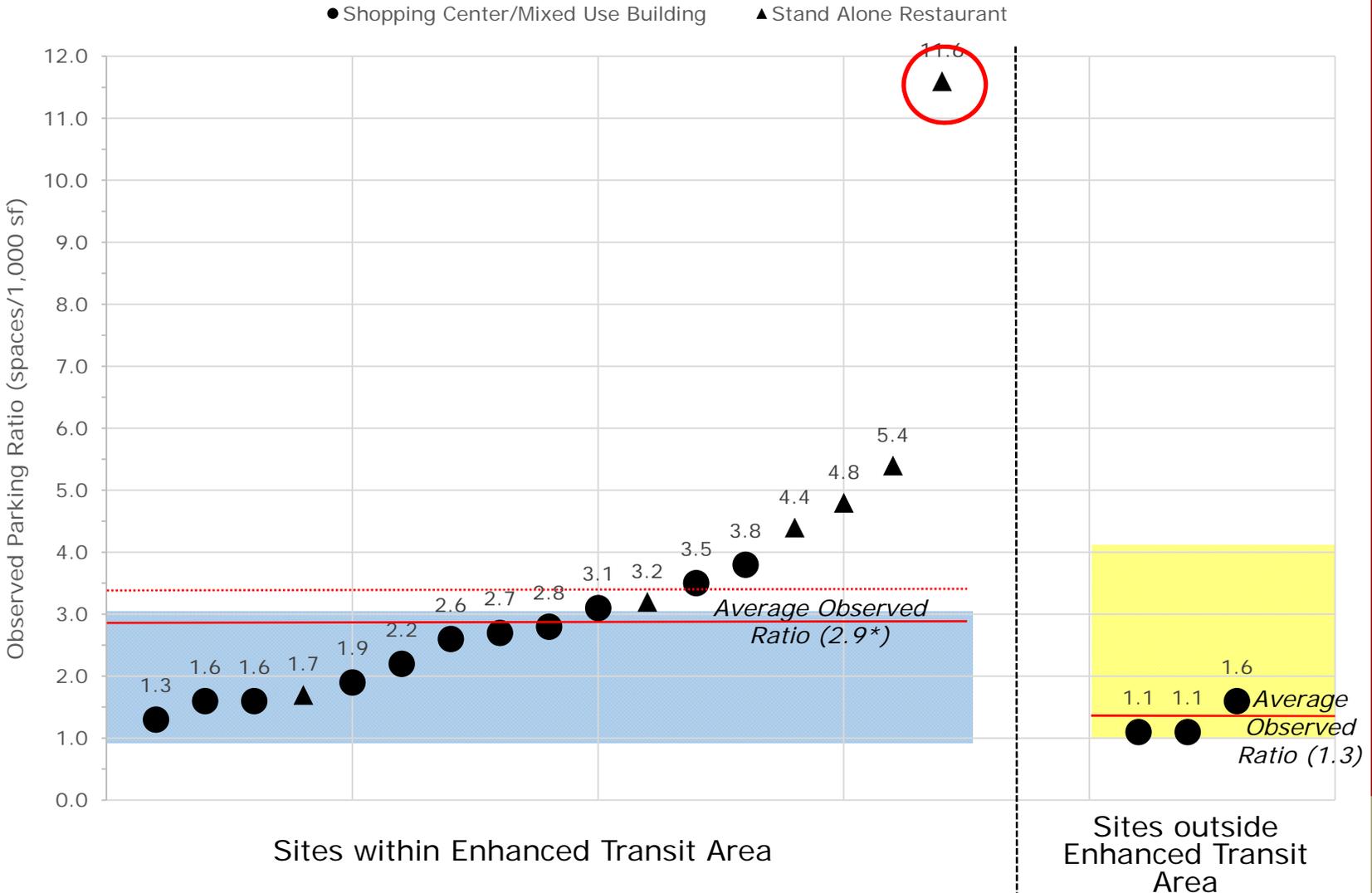


* DC allows a 50% reduction for transit; Arlington allows lower ratios through additional TMP contributions

PARKING STANDARDS FOR
NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



Task Force's **Draft** Recommendations for Consideration - **RESTAURANT**

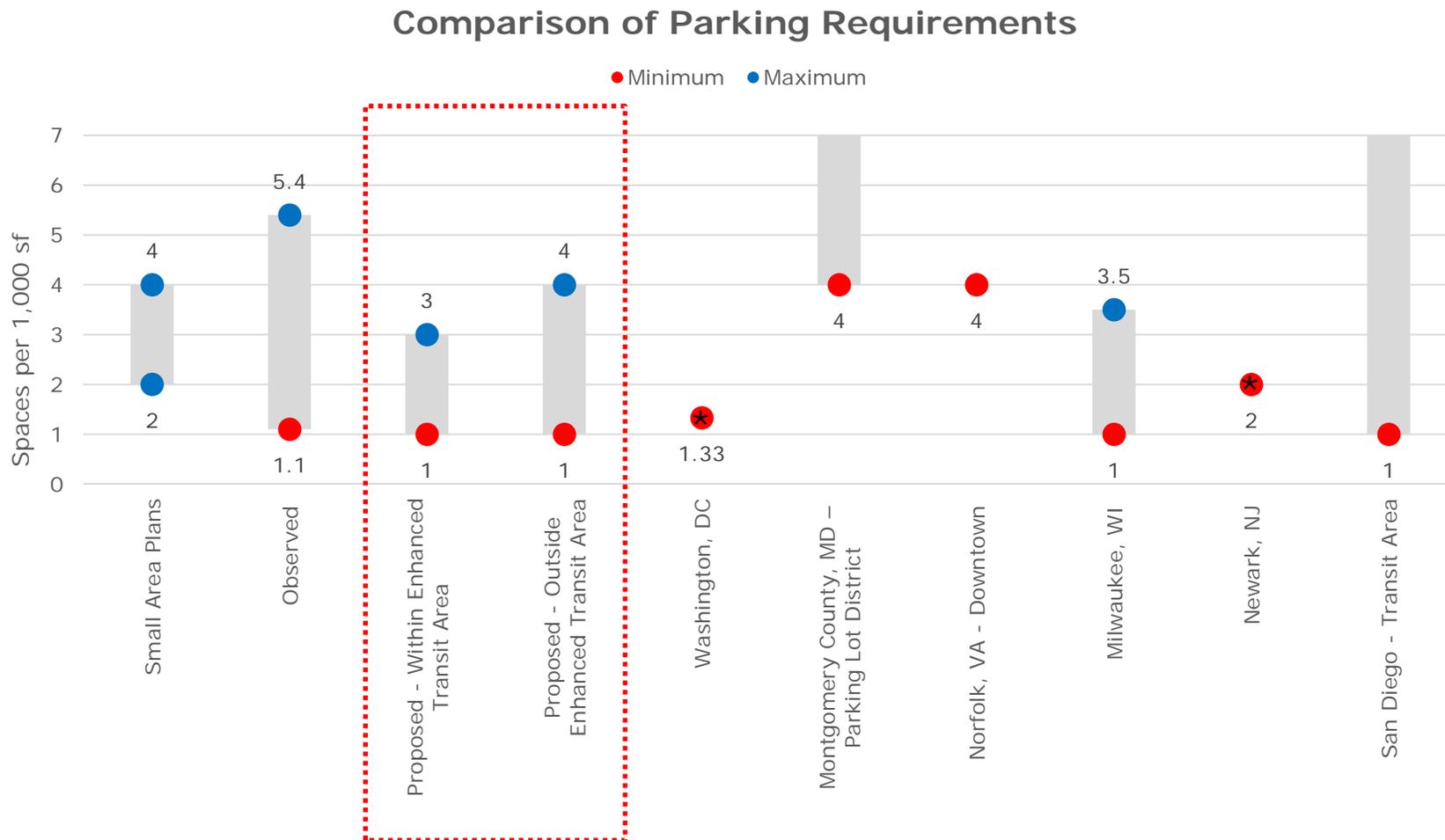


*Average without outlier; Average including the outlier is 3.4

Task Force's **Commercial Parking** Recommendations for Consideration - **Restaurant**



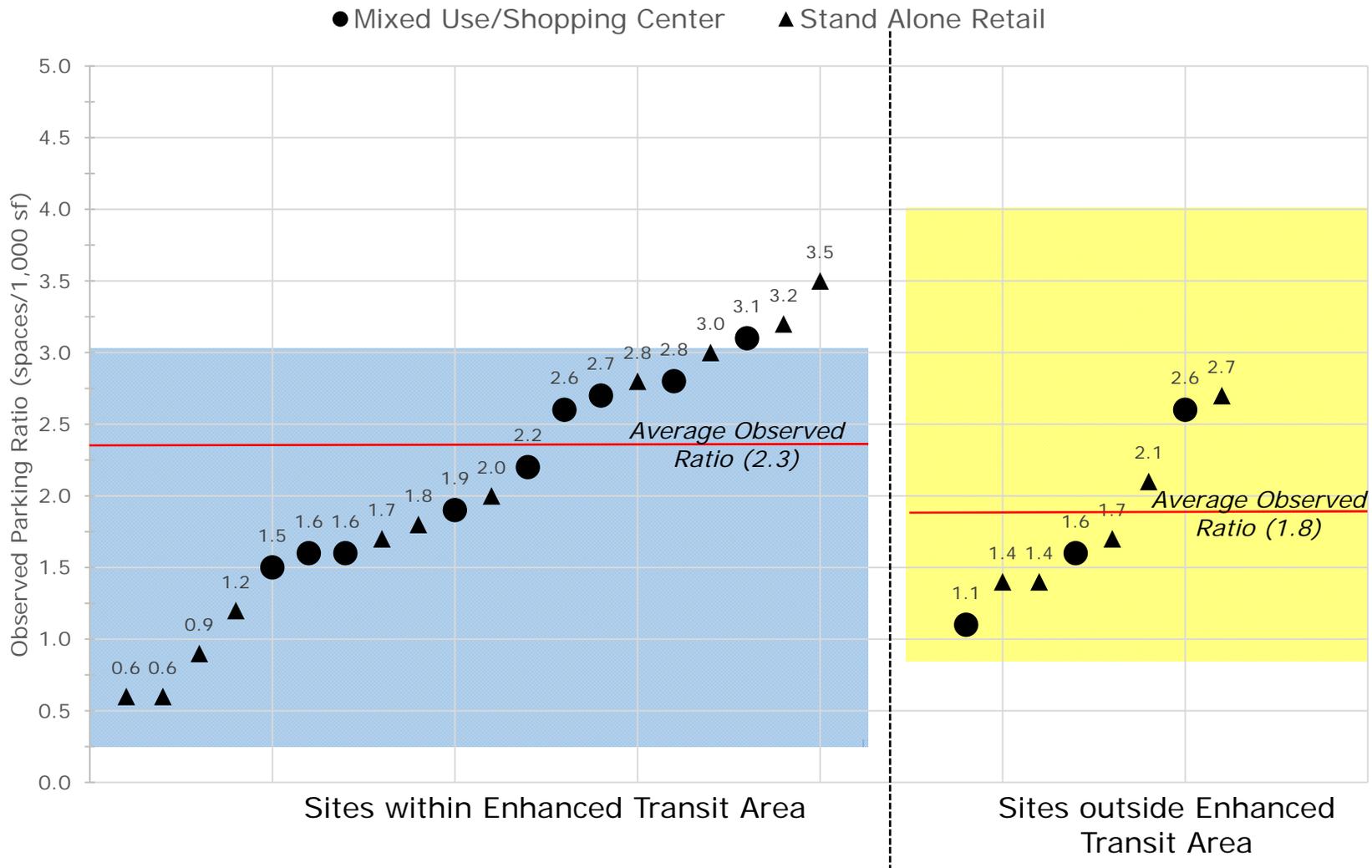
PARKING STANDARDS FOR
NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



* Allows for exemptions for small uses



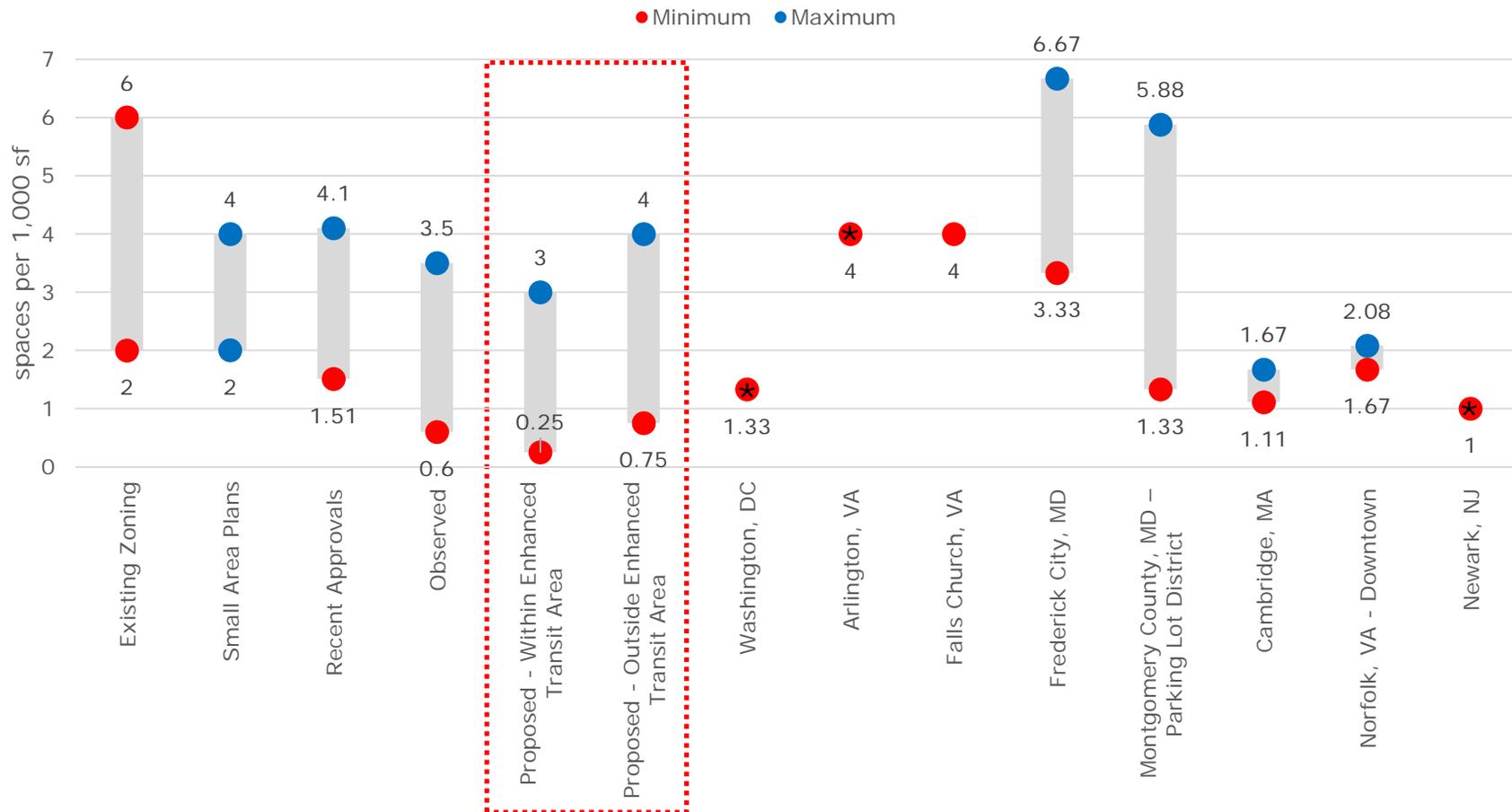
Task Force's **Draft** Recommendations for Consideration - **RETAIL**





Task Force's **Commercial Parking** Recommendations for Consideration - **Retail**

Comparison of Parking Requirements



* Allows for exemptions for small uses and/or proximity to Metro



November 5, 2017

The Parking Standards for New Development Project Task Force
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Updating the Commercial Parking Standards for New Development Projects

Dear Members of the Parking Standards for New Development Projects Task Force:

On behalf of the Environmental Policy Commission (EPC), I'm writing to share our comments on the draft recommendations for updating Alexandria's commercial parking standards for new development projects. I would like to thank Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) staff and the Task Force for providing the draft parking study report for discussion at our October 16th monthly meeting. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input to the Task Force in advance of finalizing its recommendations.

The EPC strongly supports the draft recommendations aimed at reducing or "right-sizing" commercial parking in new development projects based on the study of existing parking needs, as well as anticipated reductions in parking demand based on mass transit improvements anticipated along the Beaugard and Duke Street corridors.

EPC supports the Task Force recommendations to:

- simplify zoning map into two zones, designating lower minimum parking ratio requirements in areas with enhanced transit access (includes current anticipated transit systems),
- lower the minimum parking ratios,
- add maximum parking ratios,
- combine retail types into one retail category to the extent the new requirements can meet anticipated need and enable flexibility in changing types of retail uses in a space,
- exempt small businesses below a certain square footage from providing required parking, and
- develop a process to allow for shared parking between businesses.

These recommendations are more flexible and reduce obstacles for businesses inclined to reduce parking. Reduced parking is consistent with the City's environmental goals as outlined in the Environmental Action Plan (EAP), as part of a strategy to "create a holistic city transportation system that puts the health, mobility, and accessibility of "people first" by implementing development and transportation programs and projects consistent with the

following level of precedence: pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation, shared motor vehicles and private motor vehicles.”

While the EPC supports the Task Force’s draft recommendations, we have the following comments, questions, and proposed additions:

- **Three to Five Year Evaluation Cycle:** The EPC recommends that the final recommendations include a proposal for the parking standards to be reviewed every three to five years. The next update should not take another 50 years. Given rapid changes in mobility from the growing popularity of shared riding services to the emergence of self-driving cars, it is likely that parking standards will deserve more frequent reconsideration to ensure that they are properly attuned to local needs.
- **Regular Collection and Analysis of Parking Data:** To support the more regular re-evaluation of these parking standards, the EPC encourages the Task Force to request that Staff collect data annually to monitor how people are using parking to ensure that the policy is working as intended. Sensors and computer vision technology now make collecting such data much easier and cost effective. For example, the City should track regularly how many people are using shared-ride services and for what use cases. As more people use shared ride services, the need for parking may decrease over time. It is the EPC’s observation that debates around parking are too often influenced by personal anecdotal evidence rather than empirical data. The City can help educate the public and right-size its parking requirements by more regularly collecting and reporting parking data.
- **Lower maximum ratios.** The EPC recommends that the Task Force consider further lowering the proposed maximums and, in the event there is a reasonable need for more parking, developers would be required to submit an exemption request. Given that the idea of a maximum is new for the City, it would seem logical to the EPC for it to be set low enough that some developers would be expected to seek an exemption. Having businesses justify the need for additional parking would be an opportunity for the City to negotiate development that ties the parking standards to environmental and transportation plans and policies. The exemption process would allow an opportunity to collect data about under what circumstances developers request to build more parking.
- **Lower minimum ratios.** While the EPC supports the proposed lower minimum ratios, we would be interested in understanding why the Task Force rejected lower or even the total elimination of the minimum parking requirement. Eliminating or lowering even further minimum ratios would support the growing adoption of alternative modes of transportation, and alleviate the administrative burden on staff and businesses by eliminating the need to apply for parking reduction exemptions.
- **Demand-related policies.** The EPC was disappointed to learn that the Task Force was only asked to review parking ratios and not more comprehensively how to meet evolving parking needs in the City. The EPC would encourage the Task Force to highlight the limitation of its mandate and recommend that Staff pursue a follow-on effort that examines dynamic pricing and other policies to address demand rather than just focusing on supply through parking minimum and maximum ratios. Dynamic pricing would enable the City to match parking demand with current and anticipated parking supply.

Finally, the EPC believes that updating the City's parking standards should also be an opportunity to encourage alternate modes of transportation and advance the City's sustainability goals. The draft recommendations reflect the current state of transportation and parking in the City, but should contemplate more directly what kind of transportation and parking resources we want to have in the City in the future. This means not only reacting to the market, but putting in place policies to shape it. The EPC welcomes future collaboration with the City and Task Force to define what kind of parking and transportation options we want to have in the future.

Thank you for your consideration.



Jim Kapsis
Chair
Environmental Policy Commission

cc: Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission
Alexandria Transportation Commission
Yon Lambert, Director, T&ES
Katie North, Principal Planner, T&ES