

Aurora Parking & Mobility Enterprise

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Parking Code Analysis and Recommendations

*Includes a review of existing
City of Aurora parking code and
recommendations for changes and
additions needed to support the Parking
and Mobility program.*



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A decorative graphic consisting of a vertical green line on the left side. From the bottom of this line, a horizontal green arrow points to the right. From the top of the green line, a horizontal orange arrow points to the right, positioned above the green arrow. The text "Parking Code Analysis and Recommendations" is centered between these two horizontal arrows.

Parking Code Analysis and Recommendations



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This section of the Parking and Mobility Enterprise Business Plan provides a specific review of the primary codes and policies governing today’s parking environment for the City of Aurora. The intention is to provide guidance on changes that need to be made and specific policy changes that need to be enacted to help implement the Parking and Mobility program. Each section provides a summary of each element of the various codes, followed by recommendations for needed changes and in some cases, examples for review.

Code of Ordinances

City regulation of parking is limited to supply and design triggered by development and by nuisance and safety standards. The City’s municipal code of ordinances specifies where parking is allowed from a public safety perspective (e.g., not on a sidewalk, a certain distance from a fire hydrant, etc.). These regulations are outlined in Chapter 134, Article 1. A vehicle is considered illegally parked, and may receive a citation if they are in violation of any of the regulations specified in that Article. The traffic and vehicle enforcement practices are currently overseen by the Traffic Violations Bureau. Upon receiving a violation for parking, a person is subject to the processes specified under Chapter 134, Article 2, which defines the procedure for paying a fine or appearing at court to contest the fine. Within the code of ordinances, there are a few sections that define parking specific regulations. These are documented below.

RESIDENTIAL PERMIT PARKING (ARTICLE X)

This code includes guidance for the implementation of residential permit parking areas, including:

- » Governing department or manager (Public Works)
- » Issuance of permits, including fee description
- » Application and implementation of permit areas
- » Permit terms
- » Requirements for permit areas
- » Establishment of a district

Recommended Changes

- » Rename policy from Residential Permit Parking to Neighborhood Permit Parking
- » Change all references from Public Works director to Parking and Mobility Program Manager
- » 134-422(b) needs to be modified to make the application of a Neighborhood Parking Permit (NPP) more flexible so that the City can define locations that may need a permit before the residents request the permit. Application of permits should always be completed in partnership with residents, but the City may be able to anticipate a needed permit location based on changing station area demands and proactively protect parking before residents feel impacts.
- » Current language allows flexibility in permit management, fee setting, and duration, and should be maintained. However, language should be established allowing Parking and Mobility Manager and/or Public Works director to establish fees and permit duration through a simple memo or policy document.
- » Revise 134-423 to provide City the flexibility to manage and implement the district proactively
- » For neighborhood initiated requests, require an occupancy count to determine validity of district (modify 134-423.a.5 to state this)
- » Add language providing reasons for dissolving existing NPP’s based on neighborhood feedback and/or professional study, but not limited to utilization of permit program

ABANDONED VEHICLES

This code includes guidance for identifying and removing abandoned vehicle, including:

- » Definition of types of abandoned vehicles
- » Time requirements for investigating, marking, and removing vehicles
- » Abandoned vehicles on private property
- » Impoundment and violations

Recommended Changes

- » In general, the term limits need to be shortened. Various references to 7 days, 21 days, and 3 hours could be cut in half or more
- » For on-street parking locations, the staff of the Parking and Mobility Program should be allowed to make the judgement or assessment of an abandoned vehicle. May need to update to include both Police and Parking and Mobility as investigators
- » More clearly define violation amounts and tie to the parking enforcement code

BUILDING AND ZONING/PARKING ORDINANCE (ARTICLE 15, CHAPTER 146 OF AURORA MUNICIPAL CODE)

The City of Aurora has long regulated parking supply and design associated with individual land uses. The current code requirements date from 2005. They focus mostly on the provision of on-site parking (how to calculate demand, design criteria, and shared parking). This section is summarized generally below. In general, this code language governs the provision and design of parking spaces for private development, including:

- » Use and place restrictions
- » Requirements for a site parking plan
- » Amount of on-street parking required
- » Methods for calculating parking demand and shared parking
- » Use by use parking minimums
- » Variances for business and industrial districts
- » ADA and accessible parking requirements
- » Bicycle parking requirements
- » Design, construction, and maintenance of parking facilities
- » Landscaping, lighting, and traffic access
- » Construction and maintenance

Recommended Changes

The document outlines traditional parking planning for suburban parking at mixed-use commercial and office centers. For its intended use, the parking ordinance is appropriate. However, in the station areas, the planning for parking needs to be governed by the transit-oriented development zone district, adopted in 2009. This code is summarized on the following page.



TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) DISTRICT - PARKING REQUIREMENTS

That document includes the following:

- » Definition of parking policy based on shared parking principles
- » Parking plans that are more appropriate for TOD districts
- » Reductions to minimum parking requirements (before and after rail service is initiated)
- » Bicycle parking requirements
- » Allowance for use of on-street parking to meet supply needs on site
- » Requirements for allowance of shared parking
- » Parking design standards, with emphasis on urban design principles

This policy further defines permitted uses and features of the TOD district. Wherever possible, this document should guide provision and design of parking.

Recommended Changes

- » The use of minimum and maximum parking requirements is good and promotes an environment that is not over-reliant on parking. However, over time, maximums should continue to be evaluated as the area redevelops and the dependence on automobile transportation is modified.
- » Remove on-street parking allowance for developments
- » Shared parking allowances provide a good foundation, but an incentive needs to be in place to support the usage of shared parking versus on-site construction. While not initially recommended as part of this study, the City could evaluate the use of an in lieu payment to promote use of centralized shared facilities.

Model Traffic Code

This ordinance includes guidance and regulations for the following:

- » Stopping, standing or parking prohibitions
- » Unattended motor vehicles
- » Parking at curb or edge of roadway
- » Disabled parking privileges

Recommended Changes

- » This document provides a good foundation for parking prohibitions in a non-parking setting, but needs to better define parking regulations, especially as they would relate to on-street parking areas.
- » Every violation in this ordinance carries a Class B traffic violation. The City and the Parking and Mobility Manager need to define specific parking violations and their violation rates. Examples and recommendations are provided in the Parking Management section of this Business Plan.
- » The ordinance provides good guidance for the provision and management of parking for disabled persons. This includes not restricting parking for disabled persons. Where this policy needs work is the provision of free disabled parking in any location. Many jurisdictions who have implemented this type of policy have created an issue where the provision of free parking incentivizes the fraudulent use of handicapped parking placards by non-handicapped patrons. In recent years, a few new options have been tested in various communities, including:

- » Requiring payment for parking for disabled patrons, but allowing unlimited time for parking
- » Requiring payment for parking, but providing dedicated on-street spaces limited to handicap use
- » Requiring multiple tiers of handicap placards, with the highest placard being designated for those with handicaps that restrict movement and a lower tier for less extensive handicaps. The highest tier is allowed free parking, while the second must pay and abide by regulations. Illinois and Oregon have enacted these types of legislations in recent years.

Additional Code Recommendations

The following elements are not found in any of the existing parking codes and should be developed and included to help implement the intent of the Parking and Mobility Program:

- » The City should adopt an ordinance to implement the Parking and Mobility Enterprise Fund (it may be necessary to set this up as a special revenue fund initially until the program is closer to being self-sustaining)
- » Consolidate parking regulations under a specific section of the Code. It should include where parking is allowed, what the regulations are (hours, rates, payment, etc.), and how they will be enforced.
 - » Parking enforcement and adjudication ordinances should be consolidated under the same section with other parking ordinances.
- » The ordinance should specify the City's authority, organization, responsibility and obligations toward the management of parking.
- » Language for the policies should be flexible so that the City is able to implement a number of the strategies presented in this Business Plan.
 - » Regulations should be added that define the price for parking, both on-street and off-street. The ordinance should provide the City with the flexibility to adjust parking rates as necessary in specific locations, usually accomplished by defining a range of parking rates that can be implemented throughout the community. Parking rates throughout the system should be reviewed and analyzed annually, or more frequently if desired.
 - » Regulations should be added to define hours for when parking for certain uses and in certain locations is allowed and/or enforced. The language should be flexible to allow the City to change these hours as necessary dependent upon data analyses, however, they should also be clearly stated with regard to how they will be implemented and enforced.
- » The ordinances should include language on how and where patrons are to pay for parking and penalties for neglecting to pay for parking, in both on- and off-street facilities.
- » Policies should address and encourage mobility of all users.
 - » Allow for the provision of a variety of bicycle parking, on-street, off-street, and along the sidewalk or at business entrances (e.g., bike lockers, racks, corrals, etc.). The ordinance should also specify the placement and number of bike spaces associated with bike parking.
 - » Encourage connectivity for pedestrians by specifying how, when, and where to connect with sidewalks and pathways in parking lots and garages.



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- » The ordinance should allow for the designation of special areas, such as special management areas, TOD zones (although the City already has a TOD ordinance, it should be coordinated with other parking regulations), and parking benefit districts. The ordinance language should describe what strategies and policies are associated with each special area, specify how these special areas can be initiated, managed, and enforced.
- » Regulations should be identified that deal specifically with how parking meters are implemented and enforced. The Code should include the following sections in relation to parking meters:
 - » Designation of parking meter spaces
 - » Placement of meters
 - » Time limits and charges
 - » Signs and marking on meters
 - » Manner of parking
 - » Parking meter violations
 - » Damage
 - » Collections
 - » Permit fees for bagging meters
 - » Enforcement of existing meters
- » The Facility Design Guidelines, which are presented under a separate cover, should be adopted by the City to provide design standards for facilities.
- » The City should develop ordinances that define parking enforcement on private property, including businesses, offices, and medical centers. In general, there are two options for approaching private parking enforcement.
 - » Public Enforcement of Private Parking Assets – in some situations, the City of Aurora may find itself in a position to enforce private parking assets. In all likelihood, this will be the result of a management agreement between the business and the City. In most cases, this would occur because the City is proposing to manage private spaces as a public assets. An example would be spaces near the Florida Avenue RTD station, which could potentially be used for commuter parking during the day and business parking in the evenings. In this case, the City of Aurora Parking and Mobility Services group could manage and enforce the parking, based on the ordinances defined in City code. In other cases, cities will allow private businesses to call in parking citations and have an ambassador come to their site to initiate a parking citation. Milwaukee, WI has such an ordinance that defines the process and results of such a practice .
 - » Private Enforcement of Private Parking Assets – in other situations, businesses may intend to manage their own parking and prohibit unauthorized parkers from using their spaces. In most cases, this will include signage that defines who is prohibited from parking in private spaces, and the penalty, which is traditionally booting or towing by a private impound company. The City should adopt ordinance policies that discourage or prohibit predatory booting or towing on private sites, but allows for private business owners to protect their property. The ordinance should require proper signage warning motorists of the potential booting or towing as well as define who should be allowed to operate towing/impounding services. The City of Denver code (Section 54-811) provides a good example of these stipulations.