



# **PARKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

city of  
**CINCINNATI**

# INTRODUCTION

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**Chief among Cincinnati's greatest success stories over the past decade is the transformation of our Over-the-Rhine neighborhood, located adjacent to the Central Business District.**

One of the largest historic districts in the nation, Over-the-Rhine (OTR) encompasses 362 acres of Italianate and German Revival style buildings that date to the 19th Century, built primarily to accommodate an influx of German immigrants. Beginning in the 1950s, the neighborhood fell into decline as many residents moved further away from the urban basin to newer, larger housing stock in the suburbs. As a result, much of Over-the-Rhine's structures became dilapidated and a large portion were left vacant.

Since 2003, the City of Cincinnati, working with numerous organizations, has made a concerted effort to revitalize Over-the-Rhine. A combination of public and private investment has brought residents and businesses back to the neighborhood. The vibrant mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood has received national acclaim for its turnaround.

Such rapid success, however, has created new challenges. With more people choosing to live, visit or work in Over-the-Rhine, vehicular parking spaces are at a premium in the densely-packed neighborhood with narrow streets.

In late 2014, the City of Cincinnati proposed a Residential Parking Permit Plan that sought to balance the needs of residents, businesses and visitors in Over-the-Rhine. Due to a variety of factors related to pricing and implementation, that plan was shelved.

Meanwhile, parking pressures in Over-the-Rhine have increased as redevelopment activity continues.

The following Recommendations Document outlines parking challenges facing Over-the-Rhine and offers recommendations to mitigate the issue in the most balanced and reasonable manner. These efforts were initiated in response to an official City Council motion from Councilmember David Mann. The Recommendations are also in response to additional and substantial economic growth in OTR.



# INTRODUCTION

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The Recommendations Document is comprised of information, data and recommendations from the following stakeholders:

## **Walker Parking Consultants**

Walker Parking Consultants were asked to respond to the Parking Task Force's limited scope of service that addressed the motion from City Council to "identify challenges" and "make recommendations." Keeping within this scope, Walker did not conduct a detailed analysis of areas that fell out the scope of service requirements.

## **City of Cincinnati Multi-Departmental Task Force**

The Parking Task Force gathered and reviewed all existing data and studies regarding the OTR neighborhood and met numerous times to ensure the direction of the parking study was consistent with the known challenges and issues regarding parking in OTR.

## **Community Stakeholders**

Various OTR stakeholders, including the Community Council, Community Council Board, and businesses, continue to be part of the input process. Parking Task Force members are conducting initial and ongoing engagement sessions to ensure all changes affecting residents, businesses and visitors to OTR are balanced and serve the best interests of all stakeholders, while maintaining consistency with all parking, traffic and land use requirements.

Because parking conditions have changed significantly during the past several years, this report is meant to bridge the data and information from previous studies to current conditions. It outlines challenges and proposes some recommendations that can be quickly implemented, while others will require ongoing maintenance. Further, implementation of the recommendations may require substantial investments in administration, infrastructure and equipment, and funding sources will need to be determined.

Although several challenges were identified during the parking study, there are two major issues whose solutions will have the biggest impact on improving overall parking efficiency, reducing congestion and addressing the mixed-use environment in OTR. These are:

- 1) The creation and implementation of a Residential Parking Permit Program (RPPP);
- 2) Revisiting minimum parking requirements for new development, restoration and rehabilitation of existing and historic buildings.

Additional recommendations from the Walker parking study will be reviewed for appropriateness and consistency with the overall goals for City of Cincinnati parking operations.

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# BACKGROUND

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## MOTION FROM COUNCIL

The following motion from City Council (#201600136) was made in early 2016:

*WE MOVE that the Administration establish a Task Force to provide policy recommendations to the City Council on parking challenges in Over the Rhine caused by limited space; unique buildings deserving preservation; continuing development; and building and zoning code minimum parking rules.*

## STATEMENT:

*As Over the Rhine continues its renaissance, we are faced with the realities that some of our current policies may soon restrict development in the community rather than enhance and support continued growth. The city's current parking requirements for new and existing buildings are already beginning to put a strain on development that will only get worse with time.*

*The issue is complex in nature and requires a diverse group of stakeholders at the table to make the strongest recommendations. This Task Force should include representatives from the development community, 3CDC, the Over the Rhine community, Metro, and the relevant city departments including Buildings and Inspections; Planning; Law; and Community and Economic Development. Since the Neighborhood Committee oversees issues of parking, my office should also be involved and provide updates to the Committee members.*

*In a neighborhood as historic in nature as Over the Rhine, we cannot simply choose to build more parking. We must look at this more broadly and ask how we leverage other assets-parking*

*accessible in the CBD, access to transit, and other innovative parking sharing models – to find a solution that supports future growth and development in OTR.*

## TASK FORCE

In response to the motion, an OTR Parking Challenges Task Force was created in November 2016. Its purpose is to review, research and address all the concerns outlined in the motion by using internal resources and outside parking consultant services.

The Task Force was assembled with members from the City Manager's Office, the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Parking Division, the Building and Inspections Department, the Department of Transportation and Engineering, and the City Planning Department.

The multi-departmental Task Force ensures all policy recommendations to City Council will be comprehensive and address issues outlined in the motion. Further, this approach ensures the departments tasked with administering and overseeing any recommendations are fully aware of how policy recommendations will affect different parts of city government operations.

# BACKGROUND

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The Task Force met as follows:

- Meeting #1 (Nov. 8, 2016)
  - o Determined parking study was appropriate
  - o Determined the Task Force will be multi-departmental
  - o Determined that the parking study lacks funding source(s)
- Meeting #2 (Nov. 22, 2016)
  - o Outlined scope of the parking study
  - o Determine members and roles of the Task Force
  - o Discussed funding sources for parking study
  - o Determined timelines for parking study RFP release, bid, review, etc.
- Meeting #3 (March 2017)
  - o Reviewed initial scope of study from Walker (attached)
  - o Revised scope to reduce costs and better address motion
  - o Reviewed previous studies and parking data
- Meeting #4 (October 2017)
  - o Submitted revised scope to Walker
  - o Approved budget for Walker
  - o Authorized start of parking study
- Meeting #5 (February 2018)
  - o Reviewed Walker draft report
  - o Started drafting consolidated report
  - o Reviewed next steps
- Community engagement sessions
- Report and Recommendation completion
- Presentation(s) outlines

During the course of the OTR Parking Challenges Task Force meetings, the DCED's Parking Division became aware of additional due diligence that may be available related to OTR parking. 3CDC, in pursuit of various development and planning efforts in the neighborhood, had previously hired Walker Parking Consultants to conduct parking studies. 3CDC had also internally completed inventory and analysis work. This included the notes and information received during previous community and stakeholder engagement efforts.

All of this work was offered to DCED's Parking Division in an effort to reduce duplication of efforts, save financial resources, and maximize speed. DCED's Parking Division received this information, analyzed it, and passed it to Walker for examination as part of their challenges and recommendations report. This collaborative effort between 3CDC and the City was critical to ensuring that a study could be completed even without the designation of resources by City Council.



# WALKER PARKING CONSULTANTS RECOMMENDATIONS

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Walker Parking Consultants was retained to identify parking challenges in Over-the-Rhine and make recommendations for addressing the issues. Walker has conducted numerous studies in the neighborhood for the City, 3CDC and other entities, so the contracted review was designed to create a bridge from the previous studies to the present.

The influx of new residential, office and commercial development has necessitated changes to the parking system, both on-street and off-street. The mixed-use environment creates unique challenges for residents, visitors, employers and employees alike. The peak time competition for parking spaces, curbside and off-street, give the perception that a lack of parking exists at all times. Most of the recommendations for changes to the parking system in OTR revolve around minimizing peak-time congestion.

The Parking Task Force intentionally limited the study's scope to ensure Walker would review the OTR neighborhood based on the original City Council motion, which simply directed the Administration to identify the parking challenges in OTR and propose recommendations. This approach helps limit bias from all interested parties, as well as ensures balanced identification of the issues.

The City of Cincinnati has the task of managing heavy demand for public right-of-way in Over-the-Rhine. This task is one that affects not only on-street parking and transportation to and around the neighborhood, but also future development opportunities, ease of

visit and OTR's unique, urban sense of place. The preliminary recommendations made by Walker note that curb space needs to be fully researched and understood to generate exact recommendations. Walker concluded there are still areas within the parking system in Over-the-Rhine that could benefit from further research.

Walker Parking Consultants cited a number of scope additions for further study, including: a complete of on- and off-street parking inventory and occupancy analysis; turnover and duration analysis; a survey of local businesses to understand where demand is being generated; and review of site plan conditions. While potentially informative and beneficial to the City, resources for a comprehensive study of this nature were not funded.

In its report, Walker identified numerous recommendations that could occur within Over-the-Rhine and potentially extend beyond the neighborhood to the rest of Cincinnati. DCED made clear to Walker that a third-party expert opinion was of utmost importance, though it is important to note the City does not necessarily accept all the findings and recommendations in the Walker report. Each parking system possesses unique circumstances that may or may not easily conform to recommendations of a parking consultant, which sometimes uses industry standards and averages as benchmarking tools and baselines.

# WALKER PARKING CONSULTANTS RECOMMENDATIONS

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ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Generate understanding for the user groups occupying on-street spaces	Further Study
Update the residential parking permit program to be more explicit so that the City is certain the goals are being met	Included
Alleviate inconsistencies in paid on-street parking in OTR	Included
Continue to facilitate off-street parking agreements between private parking operators and residents	Further Study
Research land use-based parking demand	Further Study
Encourage and market alternative modes of transportation	Under Review
Simplify parking restriction signage	Under Review

ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Eliminate or finalize two-wheeler on-street parking pilot program	Under Review
Utilized updated enforcement technology such as mobile license plate recognition	Under Review
Charge for the use of right-of-way permits during the construction process	Completed
Implement turnover and duration study to facilitate raising the on-street rates	Under Review
Streamline and simplify parking meter types	On-Going
Create directional, vehicular and arrival signage that directs, instructs and creates a sense of place in OTR	In Progress

The recommendations are intended to provide action steps that solve or alleviate some of the parking challenges within Over-the-Rhine.

The full Walker report is attached as (Appendix A)

# COMMUNITY INPUT

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A vital part of the parking study involved receiving feedback and input from the OTR community. To ensure this happened, the Task Force has and will continue to facilitate community engagement sessions throughout the preparation and implementation of the final OTR parking recommendations. The sessions will be comprised of sharing information from previous studies, providing outlines of recommendations as they become available, and recording and analyzing feedback and input for consideration in creating a set of OTR parking recommendations. Stakeholder groups, organizations and the public have and will continue to be invited and encouraged to participate.

Community input regarding parking in Over-the-Rhine has taken place over a number of years, primarily during previous City administration considerations of a proposed residential permit program. DCED understands how important it is to ensure community stakeholders have sufficient input. For that reason, summaries of community feedback are included prominently here in this Recommendations document.

## 2014 COMMUNITY INPUT ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS (SUMMARIES)

### Engagement Session – OTR Business Owners

Sessions organized by the Over-the-Rhine Chamber of Commerce were held in 2014 to solicit input from neighborhood business owners. Some of the comments included:

- Concerns expressed about the impact on service industry workers including that flex spaces were located too far away to safely walk after 1 a.m., and that parking costs took a large portion of employees' paychecks;

- Opposition to introducing the full parking plan before the streetcar becomes operational, which they said could help alleviate some parking issues;
- Worries the plan would not solve the lack of parking on Friday and Saturday nights if there is 24/7 residential parking;
- Concerns about customers becoming angry if some parking spaces are open but not available to them;
- Preference for allowing owners to buy flex spaces for employees;
- Suggestions to start an employee shuttle to the Towne Center/CET Garage, and allow bus stops converting to parking spaces after buses stop running; and
- Creation of a business parking permit was suggested for retail and office spaces during the day.

### Engagement Sessions -- Residential Parking Permit Program

In addition to the local business perspective gathered above, the Cincinnati Center City Development Corp. (3CDC) conducted community input sessions in April 2014 to consider creating a Residential Permit Parking Program.

Under a motion from then-Vice Mayor Roxanne Qualls, City Council directed various City departments to work with 3CDC on the program. Its goal was to create an overlay map indicating metered parking spaces, residential permit parking spaces, fire hydrants, bus stops, commercial loading zones, and no parking

# COMMUNITY INPUT

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zones, which would be implemented and enforced by the City of Cincinnati.

Community input sessions were held with the following groups:

- Merchants of Main & the Central Vine Street Merchants Association (**MOM/CVSMA**)
- 3CDC's Over-the-Rhine Working Group (**OTRWG**)
- Over-the-Rhine Community Housing (**OTRCH**)
- Main/Vine Street bars & restaurants (**BARS/RESTAURANTS**)
- Various Over-the-Rhine Residents (**RESIDENTS**)

## RE: EXISTING PARKING PROBLEMS

- **BARS/RESTAURANTS:** Loading zones aren't used by delivery trucks because the trucks are too large;
- **OTRCH:** Many residents have parking tickets or jaywalking tickets that could prevent them from applying for permits;
- **RESIDENTS:** Alleys and side streets are often blocked by contractors or subcontractors;
- **RESIDENTS:** We can't send visitors to the garage to park because it costs \$8 or \$10 during events;
- **RESIDENTS:** People have been parking on both sides of 14th Street during events, and fire trucks cannot get through;
- **RESIDENTS:** Valet workers are not parking where they are allowed.

## RE: PARKING METERS IN OVERLAY AREA

- **BARS/RESTAURANTS:** Commercial districts should be meters only;
- **BARS/RESTAURANTS:** Have metered parking areas transition into residential later at night;

- **BARS/RESTAURANTS:** Stop metering to 5 p.m. so we don't deter customers who are here for long periods of time, such as a two-hour wait for a restaurant;
- **BARS/RESTAURANTS:** Keep meters on the same hours as downtown so people don't get confused;
- **OTRCC:** Meters around churches should not be in effect during service hours;
- **DEVELOPERS:** Add meters to every block, and do not have any block face with all residential;
- **DEVELOPERS:** Extend metered parking until 2 a.m.
- **MOM/CVSMA:** Make sure the commercial districts (Vine & Main) are strictly meters, no residential
- **OTRCH:** Have 15-minute meters in front of OTRCH office on 14th;
- **OTRCH:** Add meters on Vine street by Buddy's Place;
- **OTRCH:** Add meters around Washington Park; and
- **OTRWG:** Every block should have some meter spots, none should be all residential

## RE: RESIDENTIAL PARKING SPACES

- **OTRCC:** No more meters anywhere, residential only where currently unmarked;
- **OTRCC:** Make residential parking 24/7;
- **RESIDENTS:** Both the metered and residential spaces should be marked with individual space lines;
- **RESIDENTS:** Add residential parking at the SE corner of 12th and Race;
- **RESIDENTS:** Add residential and meters on 14th street between Vine and Walnut; and
- **RESIDENTS:** Have some long-term residential parking area



# COMMUNITY INPUT

## 2018 COMMUNITY INPUT ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS (SUMMARIES)

While relatively robust engagement had been completed during the 2014 iteration of OTR parking efforts, DCED felt it important to provide further opportunities for community input.

### Initial Engagement Session – OTR Community Council Board

DCED staff attended the OTR Community Council's Parking and Transportation Committee meeting May 3, 2018. Some concerns and requests included:

- Walker or another consultant should do a Supply and Demand Study;
- A Residential Parking Permit Program should be created;
- City officials need better engagement with the OTR Community Council;
- The City is responsible for solutions, not residents;
- Concerns related to potential problems caused by an FC Cincinnati stadium; and
- More consistent enforcement (sometimes enforcement is too aggressive and other times there isn't any).

The OTR Community Council's Parking and Transportation Committee said residents should be the top priority. The committee heard there was a group already working on parking recommendations, and was upset it had no representation on the group while 3CDC does.

DCED was careful to correct the notion that 3CDC had representation on the departmental OTR Parking Challenges Task Force. Staff made clear that 3CDC's role was in providing to the City previous study and engagement work completed, and that

3CDC was not on the Task Force.

In addition to the May 3, 2018 meeting, DCED received a number of letters from the OTR Community Council. All of these communications are provided in the appendix to this document.

### OTRCC letter regarding parking principles:

- We would like the cost of the permit to be \$30.
- The RPPP should be implemented ASAP, within 3 months.
- More community engagement is requested
- No cap should be placed on the number of permits issued.

### Engagement Session -- OTR Community Council

- DCED staff attended the OTR's Community Council's Transportation Committee meeting on May 17, 2018. Some concerns and requests included: There should be one, flat fee for the RPPP, no two-tier pricing split;
- The money from permits should go to improving Over the Rhine;
- The money from the fines should help pay for the program to reduce cost of program;
- There should be more of an emphasis on helping visitors find parking;
- A need for creative solutions and collaboration with private businesses, whether it be Road trippers to help create an app that helps you find parking, or a Church that may have a parking lot that can be used in the evenings;
- A shuttle system from various garages to Over the Rhine.

### Presentation Made, Feedback Taken:

- OTR Community Housing (June 27)
- OTR Brewery District (June 20)
- Findlay Market (June 13)
- OTR Chamber of Commerce (June 13)



# CITY RECOMMENDATIONS

The City recommends the following changes as the basis for addressing parking challenges in Over-the-Rhine. The recommendations are made with input from Walker Parking Consultants, the OTR Parking Challenges Task Force, OTR community groups and organizations, development organizations and the public.

The City recommends the following changes, updates or further review related to the following:

- Special Parking Permit Area
- Parking Minimums
- On-Street operations
- Off-Street operations
- Reviews/ongoing collaboration with stakeholders

These recommendations are further described individually on the following pages.

## SPECIAL PARKING PERMIT AREA (SPPA)

OTR Special Parking Permit Area

### Background

The City of Cincinnati has explored methods for alleviating insufficient available parking for the residents of Over-the-Rhine. Often residents are forced to park at meters or find other parking options that are sometimes financially burdensome or not available at all. This has worsened in recent months with the finished redevelopment of key corridors in the neighborhood. There are now even more parkers, both transient and workers, competing for the limited amount of spaces that Over-the-Rhine can offer.

One option to help with the growing problem is the development and implementation of a paid Special Parking Permit Area (SPPA) for the neighborhood. Similar programs already exist in Pendleton, the Clifton Gaslight District and Walworth Street in Columbia Tusculum.

### Current SPPA information:

- Outlined in Chapter 514 - PARKING PERMITS of the CMC (included)
- 2018 SPPA issuance
  - o Pendleton 208
  - o Clifton 38
  - o Walworth Street 22

There are two existing permitting programs in the marketplace currently in use that may be emulated here in Cincinnati and Over-the-Rhine. Additionally, there is a third permitting plan concept that may prove viable with testing. The three plans are:

### Traditional Hang Tags or Window Stickers

Traditional hang tags and window stickers are a low cost, proven solution that has been in use for decades. It involves the citizen applying and paying for the permit. The permit is then issued, and the resident is given a tag or sticker to display in their vehicle as it is parked in the restricted permit zone. Enforcement officers patrol their assigned areas and if a vehicle does not have the valid permit, a citation is issued. Little is needed to implement this plan aside from the cost of the new tags/stickers and signage. The backend infrastructure is already in place for other residential zones in the City of Cincinnati.

# CITY RECOMMENDATIONS

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## **RFID Digital Scanning**

This plan calls for integrating Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) technology with traditional hang tags or window stickers. The system would involve the application of one or two RFID-equipped tags in a vehicle. An enforcement vehicle would be outfitted with RFID antennas, scanners and a laptop computer equipped with database software that would identify valid parkers.

An additional benefit would be that enforcement vehicles would gather data regarding parking habits. There is no way to integrate walking enforcement officers' equipment with the technology, however, and they would have to rely on conventional visual enforcement. Likewise, no data can be gathered by the walking officers.

## **LPR Digital Scanning**

The final option involves the use of license plate reading (LPR) technology. This system is widely used and accomplishes two purposes simultaneously: It scans license plates via a digital camera mounted on top of an enforcement vehicle for scofflaw violations; and checks the permit's validity.

All information is handled by a third-party vendor and is accessible by an individual account per permit. The system has a high reliability rate and is user-friendly. All valid permits can be entered in a "whitelist" and even geofenced for accuracy. The information is displayed onto a mounted laptop in the vehicle and audibly alerts the officer when a car is parked in a space where it isn't allowed.

## **City of Cincinnati Recommendation**

The use of traditional hang tags and stickers are a proven enforcement technique for permit parking. The permits are clearly visible, when applied correctly. The infrastructure required to implement this type of plan is minimal and already in place. Costs are low as the initial and ongoing costs primarily consist of enforcement and signage.

The integration of RFID technology with the existing tags or stickers is a unique idea that may prove viable. As of now, the technology has not been used in this capacity: The scanner is fixed and the tag is moving, usually in vehicles as they pass by a fixed object such as poll stations or garage exit gates. Costs are similar to the conventional system, but require additional equipment and modifications to an enforcement vehicle. Extensive testing and modification would be required to prove the technology can be used for this application.

The LPR technology offers the most information for the expense. After initial equipment costs, only a small \$5-\$10 per permit fee is charged for its use. The ability to simultaneously scan for valid permits and scofflaw violations is a bonus. The system provides access to a provided Internet website, where users may update or change information concerning their account. Backend data is stored and accessible for a multitude of detailed reports, analysis and decision-making regarding infrastructure, traffic and forecasting. Enforcement is much quicker as the City can rely on vehicle specific enforcement. This technology would be the best option for the implementation and continued enforcement of a residential permit parking program in Over-the-Rhine.

We will immediately begin collecting data to study and possibly recommend the RFID solution to the City Manager.

# CITY RECOMMENDATIONS

SPECIAL PARKING PERMIT AREA					
	INITIAL COSTS	ON-GOING COSTS	ADMINISTRATION	PROS	CONS
PHYSICAL PERMITS					
HANG TAGS	\$122,000	\$126,500	DOTe incorporates new zone into current zone administration	Easily seen when displayed correctly. Low cost. Reliable.	Enforcement time. Displayment. Transferable. No data gathering.
WINDOW STICKERS	\$122,000	\$126,500	DOTe incorporates new zone into current zone administration	Low cost. Reliable. Non-transferrable. Moderate visibility.	Enforcement time. No data gathering. Less visible than hang tags.
RFID DIGITAL *CONCEPT ONLY					
HANG TAGS	\$125,513	\$126,500	Parking Facilities managed database. DOTe would still issue permits.	Easily seen when displayed correctly. Data gathering. Enforcement time.	Concept only. Low scanning range. Transferable. Displayment. Scanner not designed for mobile vehicle applications. Walking officers can't utilize.
WINDOW STICKERS	\$125,443	\$126,500	Parking Facilities managed database. DOTe would still issue permits.	Data gathering. Enforcement time. Tamper-proof. Non-transferrable.	Concept only. Higher cost. Low scanning range. Scanner not designed for mobile vehicle applications. Walking officers can't utilize.
LPR DIGITAL					
WHITELISTING/ GEOFENCING	\$122,000 + \$24,000 for new outfitted enforcement vehicle. Fees are \$5-\$10 per permit issued.	?	Third party vendor hosts portal and maintains list.	Simultaneous scoflaw/permit verification. Data gathering. Enforcement time. On-line customer portal access.	License plate scanning angles. High initial equipment cost.

# CITY RECOMMENDATIONS

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## **Walker Parking Consultants Preliminary Recommendations**

Walker made statements about the existing Residential Parking Permit Program as defined by the Cincinnati Municipal Code. Walker concluded that the program is incomplete and subject to discretion as opposed to statistical measures. For example, an RPPP area must be large enough to discourage non-residents from parking in adjacent non-permit areas. It is unclear how this is defined in the current ordinance. They noted that an RPPP area must have more registered vehicles or residences than there are available on-street parking spaces; the Code doesn't define how availability should be defined by inventory, occupancy and/or walking distance.

Nonetheless, Walker determined that an RPPP is a viable alternative. Walker's opinions concluded that RPPP limitations must be carefully defined and restricted to true periods of residential inconvenience and frustration. Walker recommends that RPPPs should not grant resident parking privileges 24 hours a day, instead limiting the residential timing from 5 p.m. to midnight, or a similar high-demand time period.

Walker's preliminary recommendation was to rewrite CMC Section 514-5, which defines an RPPP, or create a clearly defined code and criteria that is unique and specific to Over-the-Rhine. The wording would define creation criteria including occupancy percentages, out-of-area vehicle percentages, boundary of the

specific zone, time during which restrictions would be enforced, and ongoing data collection.

If implemented in this limited manner, during non-RPPP hours, curbside spaces could be managed using parking durations or meters to encourage turnover to support commercial businesses, or they could remain unrestricted to satisfy long-duration, out-of-area parkers.

## **Over-the-Rhine Special Parking Permit Area Design Recommendations**

The below categories and details serve the recommend structure of an SPPA for Over-the-Rhine. This approach balances expert opinion, neighborhood input, industry standard practices, and unique aspects of the increasingly dense urban neighborhood of Over-the-Rhine.

### **Hours of enforcement**

- SPPA enforcement during metered parking enforcement
  - o 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday – Wednesday
  - o 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Thursday – Saturday
- Dedicated SPPA enforcement
  - o 2-10 hours of dedicated (after meter enforcement hours) per week
- Times can be adjusted to meet peak demand for residential parking spaces

# CITY RECOMMENDATIONS

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## Cost of permit

- TBD annually per permit, prorated for a half-year purchase, collected by the DOTE Permit Desk in City Hall; rent subsidized dwelling units will pay a reduced rate.
- Initial costs \$121,000 (administrative costs, DOTE, Public Services, Law, CAGIS and signage)
- Initial costs are part of the annual costs, and calculated and amortized over fifteen years

## Residency Verification

Valid driver's license or vehicle registration for the dwelling unit and a utility bill or signed lease with the same address. To receive the reduced rate for rent-subsidized housing, proof of residency in a subsidized unit (a lease or voucher) within the residential permit parking zone must be provided.

## Income Verification

In order to keep the subsidized cost low, DCED's Parking Division recommends only one document serve as proof of income for the purposes of garnering a low-cost SPPA permit. Verification documents are still to be determined. The document should be submitted to DOTE at the time of application in order to verify the income of the applicant.

## Violation Rates

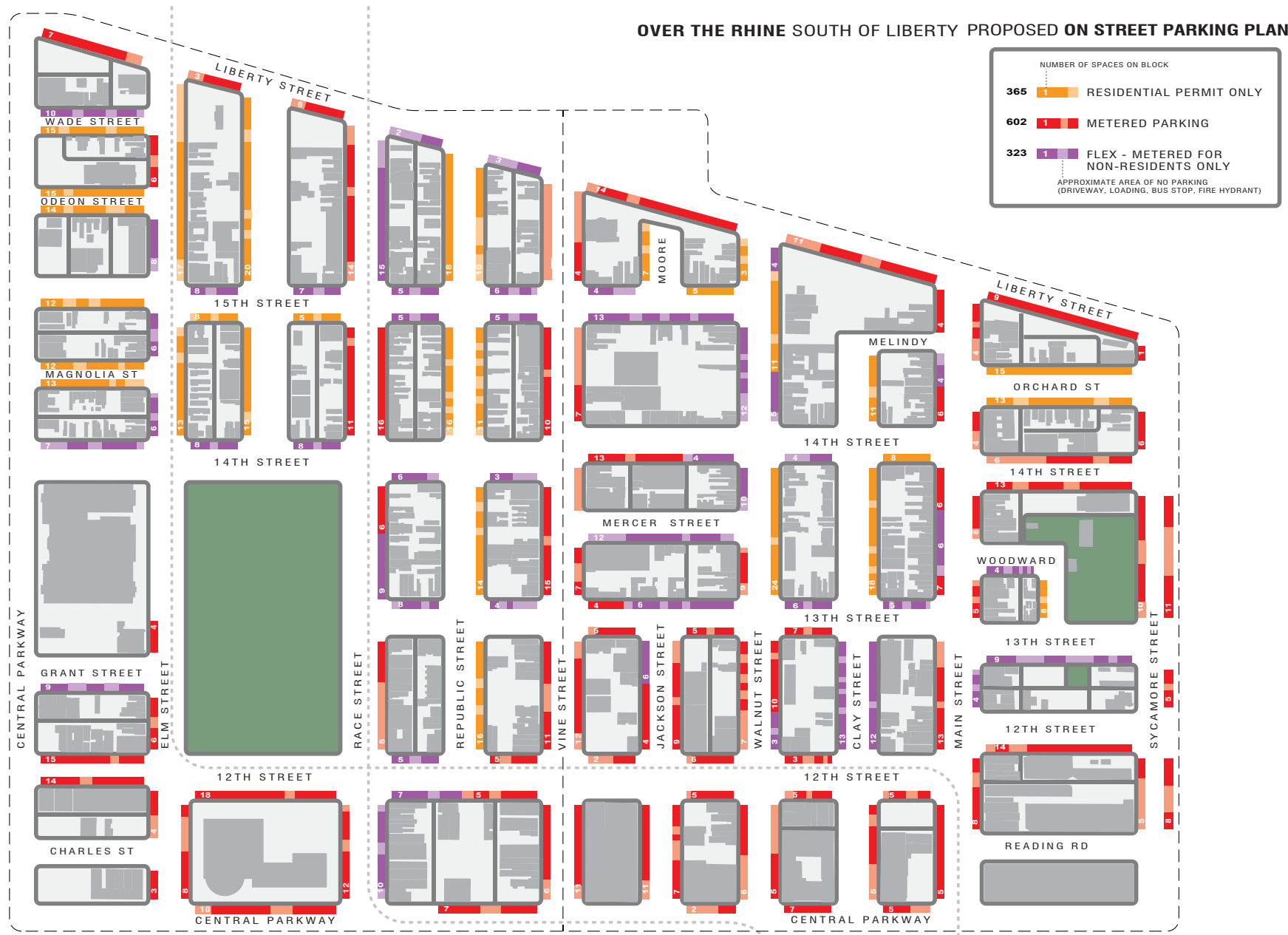
Consistent with current CMC (\$50 initial, \$60 after 15 days, and \$100 after 21 days)

## Boundaries (*DOTE Implementation*)

- Phase I (South of Liberty)
- Phase II (TBD)



# CITY RECOMMENDATIONS





# CITY RECOMMENDATIONS

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## **Current Cincinnati Municipal Code - RPPP Chapter 514 - PARKING PERMITS**

### **Sec. 514-3. - Designation of Restricted Parking Areas.**

The City Council may designate, by resolution, areas within the city in which the parking of vehicles may be restricted, in whole or in part, to holders of valid parking permits issued pursuant to this chapter. At its discretion, the appropriate committee of council may hold a public hearing when considering such a resolution.

To determine whether an area shall be designated a residential parking permit area, the traffic engineer will conduct, upon a petition by a majority of the households in such area, an engineering study prior to submitting a resolution to City Council to establish the designation or withdraw an existing designation. For the purposes of this chapter, a dwelling unit is any postal address occupied by one or more persons in a residential parking permit area or a proposed residential parking permit area.

*(Ordained by Ord. No. 644-1980, eff. Jan. 24, 1981; reordained by Ord. No. 394-1997, eff. Dec. 15, 1997)*

### **Sec. 514-5. - Residential Parking Permits Criteria.**

The City Manager shall establish the criteria for the creation of residential parking permit area. At the minimum a residential parking permit area shall:

- (a) Be zoned residential and used exclusively for residential purposes.
- (b) Have more registered vehicles or residences than there are available on-street parking spaces.

(c) Have the total number of spaces actually occupied by vehicles exceed 75 percent of the number of spaces available for parking during two typical 8-hour periods, excluding weekends, as disclosed by an engineering study.

(d) Be large enough to discourage non-residents from parking in adjacent non-permit areas.

(e) Have mass transit service available within at least two city blocks.

(f) Have available for the general public either off street or meter parking.

*(Ordained by Ord. No. 394-1997, eff. Dec. 15, 1997)*

### **Sec. 514-7. - Permit Types, Qualifications and Fees.**

There shall be three types of Residential Parking Permits: a resident's parking permit, a visitor's parking permit and a temporary parking permit. Permits shall be sold only to occupants of dwelling units. Resident parking permits are limited one per person and two per dwelling unit. Visitors parking permits are limited one per dwelling unit. There is no limit on the number of temporary parking permits which may be issued to an occupant of a dwelling unit. Residents and visitors parking permits are valid for either six months or one year and shall cost fifteen and thirty dollars respectively. Temporary parking permits are valid for two weeks and shall cost five dollars.

*(Ordained by Ord. No. 394-1997, eff. Dec. 15, 1997)*



# CITY RECOMMENDATIONS

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## **Sec. 514-9. - Administrations.**

The City Manager, or the manager's designee, shall issue parking permits and cause parking signs to be erected in the area indicating the times, location and conditions under which parking shall be by permit only. Upon application, approval by the Public Works Department and payment of the appropriate fee, a permit shall be issued to the owner or operator of a motor vehicle who resides in a dwelling unit on a street, avenue or other location within the residential parking permit area.

*(Ordained by Ord. No. 394-1997, eff. Dec. 15, 1997)*

## **Sec. 514-11. - Parking Restrictions.**

No person shall park a vehicle in a residential parking permit area, unless such vehicle displays a valid residential parking permit permanently affixed to, and clearly visible through, the front windshield of the vehicle or front fork of a two-wheeled vehicle. Visitor permits may be displayed on the dashboard. The holder of a residential parking permit is permitted to stand or park a motor vehicle displaying such permit in the designated residential parking area where parking is otherwise authorized by law.

A residential parking permit does not authorize the holder thereof to stand or park a motor vehicle in such places or during such times as the stopping, standing or parking of motor vehicles is prohibited or reserved for specific vehicles, nor exempt the holder from the observance of any traffic or parking regulation.

*(Ordained by Ord. No. 544-1980, eff. Jan. 24, 1981; reordained as C.M.C. 514-11, eff. Dec. 15, 1997)*

Cross reference— Penalty, § 514-99.

## **Sec. 514-13. - Fee Schedule.**

The following are exempt from the provisions of this Chapter:

- (a) A vehicle bearing the special handicapped license plate as provided in Ohio Revised Code 4503.44 or a similar license plate issued by any other state.
- (b) A vehicle bearing the special disabled veterans license plates as provided by Ohio Revised Code 4503.41 or a similar license plate issued by any other state.
- (c) A truck, commercial vehicle or a vehicle operated by a utility company, or a governmental entity when the driver is making a delivery, pickup or service call in the normal course of employment.
- (d) Parking necessitated by emergency or mechanical failure.
- (e) Any vehicle exempted in the aforementioned provisions may not violate any other traffic or parking regulation or control device.

*(Ordained by Ord. No. 544-1981, eff. Jan. 24, 1981; reordained as C.M.C. 514-13, eff. Dec. 15, 1997)*

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## **Sec. 514-15. - Violation and Revocation.**

It shall constitute a violation of this chapter for any person to falsely represent himself as eligible for a residential parking permit or to furnish any false information in an application to obtain a residential parking permit.

The City Manager is authorized to revoke the residential parking permit of any permittee found to be in violation of this chapter and, upon written notification thereof, the permittee shall surrender such permit to the City Manager or the manager's designee. Failure to surrender a revoked residential parking permit when requested shall constitute a violation of this chapter.

*(Ordained by Ord. No. 544-1981, eff. Jan. 24, 1981; reordained as C.M.C. 514-15, eff. Dec. 15, 1997)*

## **Sec. 514-17. - Rules and Procedures.**

The City Manager, or the manager's designee, is authorized to establish administrative regulations and procedures consistent with the intent of the chapter.

*(Ordained by Ord. No. 394-1997, eff. Dec. 15, 1997)*

## **Sec. 514-99. - Penalty.**

Any person who violates section 514-11 shall be guilty of a Class A civil offense. Any person who violates section 514-15 shall be guilty of a Class C civil offense.

*(Ordained by Ord. No. 544-1980, eff. Jan. 24, 1981; reordained as C.M.C. 514-99, eff. Dec. 15, 1997; a. Ord. No. 394-2011, § 1, eff. Jan. 14, 2012)*



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## PARKING MINIMUMS (LDC) CHANGES

### Background

During the 19th and 20th centuries, American cities grew rapidly due to the Industrial Revolution and related technological advances. As the nation's economy expanded, its metropolitan areas also grew. However, the growth America saw in the latter half of the 20th century is strikingly different from previous urban growth. As *Plan Cincinnati* explains in its Introduction:

*Over the past half-century, our development patterns, even in cities, have largely been driven by suburban models and guided by regulations that encourage suburban form. This includes separation of uses, lower residential densities, and a reliance on the automobile to get from place to place. This has a huge implication for cities because the types of development that helped create the compact, walkable, urban communities that built our cities and made them great have been routinely prohibited under modern development regulations and replaced by incompatible suburban form.*

Although these regulations were created with good intentions, the unintended consequences were severe. From the destruction of communities' unique characteristics to the hollowing out of vibrant urban centers, automobile-oriented design policies continue to adversely affect urban quality of life. Cincinnati is no stranger to these design policies. For example, Liberty Street — once a dense corridor with wonderful architecture and thriving small businesses — was widened to accommodate automobile traffic. The widening of streets, construction of freeways through vibrant neighborhoods, and the destruction of iconic architecture to build parking lots have all contributed to our city's decay over the past half-century.

### Parking Minimums Explained

As early as 1944, the United States began seeing cities require off-street parking minimums; that is when the Los Angeles County Planning Commission concluded cities should require each building to provide at least as much space for parking as there is floor area for stores or offices. Throughout the rest of the 20th century, planning departments across the U.S. began including parking minimums in their zoning codes. As Donald Shoup cites in his book *The High Cost of Free Parking*, most municipalities base their codes on other cities' parking minimums. Even when parking minimums have been based on data, it is typically based on the peak demand for free parking in areas that are non-urban/suburbanized. Shoup explains that “no textbook explains the theory of parking requirements because there is none.” Moreover, parking requirements have been and continue to be arbitrary, based on an ideology of the automobile's primacy.

According to Cincinnati's Zoning Code (section 1425-01), the purpose of parking minimums is to reduce traffic congestion and allow for efficient on-street parking. Although these are noble goals, we now understand three crucial pieces of information:

- 1) Parking demand is what is known as “derived demand.” Derived demand is demand for a commodity that is a consequence of the demand for something else. Parking demand is derived from the ability to travel easily and cheaply by automobile. The more parking that is built, the more people will drive, traffic does not get reduced, and pedestrian connectivity and safety does not improve.
- 2) When, correctly managed, parking operators can efficiently manage on-street parking operations. Additionally, on

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street parking management is supplemented with garages as well as the Residential Parking Permit program.

- 3) Parking minimums have detrimental implications for cities — especially urban cores.

In a memorandum from Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, a consulting firm focused on holistic transportation planning, to the City of Covington in Washington state, several adverse consequences of parking minimums are outlined. They include reducing streetscape quality, reducing development feasibility, promoting automobile traffic, diminishing economic vitality, and discouraging mixed-use development.

Additionally, a dense, historic district such as Over-the-Rhine faces other consequences due to these mandates. Stringent parking minimums are increasingly making it harder to renovate buildings due to the limited amount of vacant space available. Moreover, parking minimums incentivize the destruction of historic and non-historic buildings, as it encourages converting unused buildings or vacant lots into parking for other developments.

Perhaps the most sinister aspect of parking minimums is their impact on artificially increasing market-rate rents, as well as increasing the cost of goods and services. These induced increases happen directly by increasing the cost of developing a building and owning and operating a business. These increased costs are passed down to consumers and renters in the form of increased prices for rent, goods and services.

Moreover, parking requirements impose an artificial cap on

housing supply. This cap manifests itself to the public indirectly through market forces by putting upward pressure on rents and through the limiting of density based on nearby parking availability.

Shoup's most recent book, *Parking and the City*, was published in April 2018. The author found that construction of underground parking costs on average \$33,000 per space, and that above-ground parking costs \$24,000 per space. In his study, this increased construction costs on average by 30 percent. Further, the marginal cost per space increases when multiple levels of parking are created due to the construction costs of building ramps as well as the loss of spaces due to those ramps. In summary, the author explains the relationship between housing and parking as “more parking for cars means less housing for people.”

This connection was further documented as an economic reality in a study by C.J. Gabbe and Gregory Pierce titled, “Hidden Costs and Deadweight Losses: Bundled Parking and Residential Rents in the Metropolitan United States.”

Gabbe and Pierce used American Housing Survey data to determine the cost of garage parking to renter households is approximately \$1,700, or an additional 17 percent of a housing unit's rent. The high cost of parking gets redistributed from those who drive to those who take other forms of transportation. These costs created by parking minimums are hidden and not obvious in the zoning code, but they are real and unavoidable.

These costs are increasingly being manifested in Over-the-Rhine. DCED has witnessed several developments being halted or long-



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delayed by parking minimums. One project that will renovate a building (vacant for nearly 20 years) and will be occupied by a local small business almost didn't move forward because the project could not afford to provide the eight parking spots necessary to meet the zoning code.

Another development turned a future development site into a parking lot to meet the parking minimums for parts of its project; additionally, a large portion of the commercial spaces in the same building will remain vacant because of their inability to meet the parking requirements.

A third project in Pendleton nearly rejected a company from moving jobs into the city because our parking minimums require the developer or tenant to provide parking spaces, when neither the developer nor tenant felt the parking spaces were necessary. Although these examples are striking, there may potentially be numerous projects that were not even able to retain financing to cover the costly expense that parking minimums impose on developers.

Parking minimums are well-intended, but they are an unnecessary regulation that violate their own stated goals of reducing traffic, threaten walkability, and lead to blight in our cherished urban fabric in Over-the-Rhine.

## **Plan Cincinnati**

"Plan Cincinnati describes our shared values of living in a thriving

urban city and defines how it is operationalized in both a physical and a policy framework. It refocuses on the human scale with a conceptual framework that guides future development building on our historic building pattern."- *Plan Cincinnati*

The elimination of parking minimums fits neatly into the Guiding Policy Principles outlined in *Plan Cincinnati*.

1. The first guiding principle of the *Plan* is the goal of increasing population. There is a market demand for housing in Over-the-Rhine that does not provide parking. Increasingly residents are moving into the neighborhood without cars; by putting immoderate parking minimums on development in Over-the-Rhine, we face the risk of turning away potential residential development that consequently will decrease housing options for residents who desire to live in the City.
2. The second guiding principle of the *Plan* is to build on our assets. Some of Cincinnati's most notable assets are our historic buildings, our unique neighborhood character and our culture. The current zoning policy for parking currently incentivizes the destruction of these cherished resources.
3. Additionally, as mentioned in *Plan Cincinnati*, our goal is to be aggressive in growth and development. We need to continue to capitalize on areas such as Over-the-Rhine where investment momentum exists.
4. Three final guiding principles of the *Plan* that are intertwined with one another and this initiative to reduce

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parking requirements are to: preserve a pedestrian scaled city, develop a culture of health embodied by thriving residents, and facilitate sustainable development. By excessively mandating parking in our zoning code, we are disincentivizing the furtherance of a walkable, pedestrian friendly neighborhood. As we look toward the health of Cincinnatians and our environment, a general promotion of walkability, public transit, and bike transit will be essential.

Beyond these bigger picture, guiding principles, the *Plan* explicitly states that within one to three years Cincinnati should “revise the City’s Building and Zoning Codes... with standards that emphasize traditional neighborhood development over suburban development.” This comprehensive revision has not been done yet, but it is clear that removal of parking minimums is an initiative in the spirit of traditional neighborhood development over suburban, automobile-oriented design. The removal of parking minimums in Over-the-Rhine is not only supportive of the principles of *Plan Cincinnati*, it will be essential to seeing its fulfillment.

## Building Density

*Plan Cincinnati* explicitly calls for the enhancement and increase of compact and walkable development. This is a desirable goal, but not simply because it is written in the 200-plus pages of *Plan Cincinnati*. Density is a desirable goal because it promotes our other, larger societal goals such as environmental sustainability, equity, fiscal sustainability, small business development, and preservation of historic architecture. One of the largest reasons that a dense urban environment is more environmentally sustainable is because of its departure from

the dependency on the automobile to move around. Dense urban environments promote walking, biking, public transportation and other forms of transit besides the automobile. These modes of transportation significantly reduce the emissions of greenhouse gasses.

Increasing density also fosters a more equitable society in the long run. A city that is more pedestrian friendly, has a bike path system and includes accessible public transit allows commuters to use alternate transportation and be spared the costs associated with automobile ownership. Increased density also has the potential to foster a more culturally and economically integrated city. Parking minimums increase society’s reliance on the automobile and inevitably move us away from an equitable urban form.

Parking minimums are costly and place a cap on housing supply. By mandating parking, developers and small business owners are forced to pass those costs onto consumers and renters, making goods, services and housing less affordable.

Dense urban design provides a more fiscally sustainable balance sheet for municipalities. Increasing population inevitably leads to an increase in revenues from income taxes and sales taxes. This increased revenue allows us to more adequately fund our essential public and social services. Specifically, as it pertains to parking minimums, parking lots generate significantly less tax revenue than a typical mixed-use development.

Density allows for the micro-economic phenomenon that fosters small businesses. In Over-the-Rhine’s case, this will allow for

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historic preservation as more development happens. Parking minimums additionally require small businesses and small developers to incur costs that they might not be able to afford.

## Peer Cities

Cities across the nation are removing parking minimums in their business districts and their urban cores. In fact, Buffalo, NY, recently removed parking minimums throughout the entire city. Cities that have removed their parking minimums in their business districts and urban cores have all done so for reasons that are in line with *Plan Cincinnati*.

For example, Indianapolis drastically reduced its parking minimums to “fit in with their livability and sustainability principles.” Kansas City, MO, removed parking minimums along its streetcar route and in several business districts because “excessive off-street parking conflicts with the city’s policies related to transportation, land use, urban design and sustainability.”

Cleveland removed parking minimums in new areas of its downtown and other up-and-coming business districts with the goal of incentivizing the use of existing historic buildings. Nashville changed its parking minimums because the current zoning was not compatible with the new developments being proposed there.

Although the specifics of their reasons vary slightly, our peer cities have all removed their parking requirements in various business districts and their urban core because it is in line with their larger goals of sustainability, equity, growth, and preservation. The results have been varied but promising. In

Nashville, smaller infill projects were able to move forward by taking advantage of the reduced requirements. Cleveland found the removal of parking minimums helped with the development of sub-market-rate housing.

## Conclusion

The City recommends the establishment of an Urban Parking Overlay District in the Over-the-Rhine, Pendleton, the Central Business District, and part of the West End and Mount Auburn neighborhoods. DCED believes this change aligns with the principles of *Plan Cincinnati* and our larger societal goals. Although the removal of parking minimums is not the be-all and end-all of our movement toward a pedestrian-oriented city, it is clearly a step in the right direction. With this action, we hope to discourage the building of surface parking lots in Cincinnati’s most dense and historic neighborhood and incentivize smaller infill projects, job creation, residential density, and urban quality of place.

Additionally, the City may consider applying more urban parking overlay districts in other neighborhoods, if the results in the initial areas are successful.

Although there may be some initial challenges with this recommendation, the City hopes to mitigate them through a robust, creative, and flexible Residential Parking Permit Program. This is part of a much larger process to remove regulations that have been detrimental to quality of life in Cincinnati; this is part of the process to create a people-oriented, environmentally friendly, fiscally and economically sustainable Cincinnati.



# Urban Parking Overlay District #1, "Walkable Urban Core"



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## ON-STREET OPERATIONS

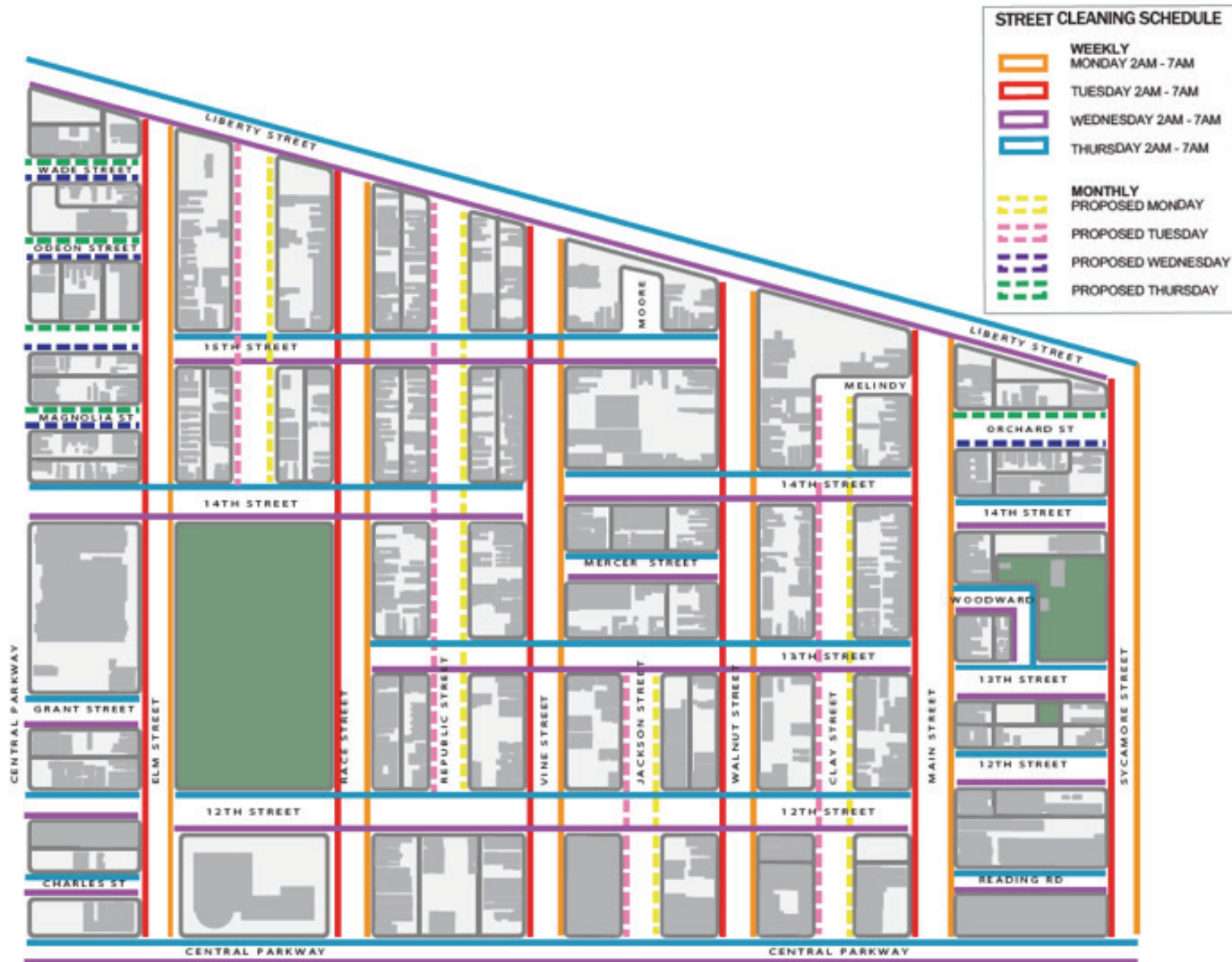
Over-the-Rhine consists of approximately 1,500 curbside spaces currently designated as metered parking or various restricted parking spaces (i.e., truck loading, valet, no parking, etc.). The following recommendations maximize the limited curb space capacity, allowing businesses, residents and visitors adequate and accessible parking in OTR.

Curb space maximization and efficiency is achieved by balancing the number of metered parking spaces with the number of residential and restricted curbside spaces. Furthermore, proper enforcement and proper meter rates encourage parkers to choose the appropriate parking space, either on-street or offstreet, based on their anticipated stay.

The City recommends implementation of the following regarding on-street operations in the OTR neighborhood:

- Signage updates (non SPPA implementation)
  - o Coordinated with DOTE and Public Services
    - Design, cost, schedule
  - o Parking-specific (instructional)
  - o Duration
  - o Zone
  - o Payment
  - o Wayfinding, corrected (Walker report)
- Space demarcation (Conduent study)
  - o The City recommends the demarcation of all on-street spaces in OTR. Studies now indicate that unmarked spaces actually reduce the number of curbside parking spaces, especially relating to the use of multi-space meters.
  - o Coordination with DOTE to determine schedule and budget is in progress.
- Liberty Street project impact
  - o The City recommends reviewing and analyzing the potential impact to parking because of the eventual changes to the Liberty Street corridor.
- Street sweeping schedule -
  - o Current signage indicates that vehicles parking in restricted spaces during street sweeping are subject to a citation and towing, however, the City has not consistently enforced these areas, resulting in many streets not being swept for weeks or months
  - o We recommend moving forward with a progressive enforcement policy of warning tags, tickets, and then and towing of cars in violation
  - o The City recommends adjusting the current street sweeping schedule based on the following schedule (indicating current weekly and proposed monthly sweeping).

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## OFF-STREET OPERATIONS

Over-the-Rhine has a limited number of off-street parking spaces; this coupled with the relatively small supply of curbside parking creates problems for businesses, employees, visitors and residents. Proper enforcement of curbside spaces and appropriate metered parking rates will assist in a balanced approach to maximizing each.

Additionally, when studying a specific area or neighborhood, it is necessary to review adjacent areas to determine what parking assets located on the periphery can serve as overflow or relief for congestion and parking shortages.

The City recommends exploring and reviewing the following related off-street parking to subvert on-street congestion:

- Private parking assets cooperation
- Capacity (OTR and adjacent areas)
  - o Public
  - o Private
- Towne Center garage
- Kroger garage at Court & Walnut (3CDC)
- Streetcar (as a connection to off-street spaces)
  - o Number of spaces connected via streetcar
  - o Marketing connected spaces to OTR



*Areas for potential new parking garages*

As DCED moves to implement the recommendations proposed in this document, we will also act to ensure public and private offstreet parking opportunities are pursued. This approach – providing an on-street Special Parking Permit Area while also providing off-street capacity to reduce peak-time barriers – is the balanced approach necessary for meeting neighborhood, City administration and stakeholder needs.

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## REVIEWS

Parking studies and reviews are conducted in response to both triggered and scheduled criteria. The City recommends the following regarding future parking reviews of the OTR neighborhood.

- Scheduled
  - o Limited (observation, occupancy and utilization data, etc.)
    - Bi-annually
  - o Comprehensive (stakeholder engagement supply and demand, on-street data, etc.)
    - Semi-annually

- Triggered
  - o Significant land-use changes
  - o Parking generators (additions/reductions)
  - o Residential/commercial mix changes
  - o Traffic grid changes
  - o Public transportation changes
  - o Economic climate changes
  - o Liberty Street narrowing project (DOTE)





# CONCLUSION

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Any proposal to mitigate parking problems in our urban core neighborhoods, including Over-the-Rhine, must use a comprehensive approach to balance the often competing needs of residents, businesses and visitors. The recommendations include both the removal of parking minimum requirements and a residential parking permit program. To implement one without the other would merely create a new set of issues that would need to be addressed.

Although this document offers a series of recommendations for solving many of the parking issues facing Over-the-Rhine and adjacent areas, technical details will be decided later by the City

Manager after further review and input. These details include the number of residential parking permits that will be issued and the cost of the permits. Any approved recommendations will be implemented by the City's Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTE). The initial timeline, which is subject to change, is to complete implementation by January 2019.

If implemented, the recommendations are designed to be flexible. Monitoring of usage and compliance patterns will be ongoing, and the administration will be responsible for making data-based recommendations to the City Manager for any changes that may be necessary.

