

SACRAMENTO CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

REPORT OF PLANNING DIRECTOR, R.L. RATHFON

DECEMBER 14, 1965

MEMBERS IN SESSION:

SUBJECT: Parking Requirements

Section 6-A-13 of Zoning Ordinance No. 2550, 4th Series, sets the parking requirement for retail stores and shopping centers at a minimum of one (1) parking space for each two hundred fifty (250) square feet of gross floor area. This requirement applies uniformly throughout the entire City.

This current requirement is an increase in the amount of required parking over that previously indicated in the former zoning ordinance. This increased requirement has had little effect on shopping center development in the newer areas of the City for many reasons: (1) there is adequate undeveloped land available in these suburban areas to provide for a good ratio of parking to building area; (2) the per unit cost of land in these areas is less when compared to an equal area within the central part of the City; (3) the ratio of parking now voluntarily provided in these developments is usually at least equal to and more often greater than current requirements.

In the central area of the City, however, it is a different story. The present requirement has apparently caused some difficulty. Here again there appear to be obvious reasons for this dilemma: (1) there is a lack of large vacant areas necessary to provide for this high ratio of parking to building area; (2) raw land cost is high and becomes even higher when clearance of existing buildings is involved; (3) the typical suburban type shopping center is not the major development in this part of the City - there are many more independent single purpose retail establishments which do not have the same parking demands as a typical shopping center either in the amount of required parking or in peak hour loads.

Another look at the application of current parking requirements for this land use in the "Old City" area appears justified and the recent Urban Land Use Technical Bulletin No. 53, "Parking Requirements For Shopping Centers " November, 1965, confirms this opinion:

"The basic data for the shopping centers included in this study show the characteristics of their suburban locations and, as is typical of such outlying areas, the elements of walk-in trade and dependence on public transportation are missing. The customers arrive principally by private automobile. Suburban shopping centers have the greatest parking demands per unit of gross leasable area. Where a shopping center (or a shopping district) is located in a central city area served by mass transportation and where a significant volume of walk-in trade comes from the surrounding neighborhoods, the parking requirements are reduced by as much as two-thirds from those found in suburban areas. This finding comes from a traffic engineering survey of parking demand in the Baltimore metropolitan area. Similar reductions in parking requirements for retail shopping districts have been observed from comparable parking demand studies conducted in Detroit.

Regardless of where a proposed development is located, it must be a feasible project capable of being assembled and financed. If the current parking requirements, as applied to the "Old City", for this type of land use are stifling development and revitalizing of this area, a recommendation for modification of these requirements is in order.

It is therefore recommended the Commission consider an amendment to Section 6-A-13 of the Zoning Ordinance to modify current parking requirements for the classification of retail stores and shopping centers as follows:

Inside the "Old City"- One (1) parking space for each four hundred (400) square feet of gross floor area for buildings up to but not in excess of ninety-six hundred (9600) square feet of gross floor area. For buildings in excess of ninety-six hundred (9600) square feet of gross floor area, one parking space for each two hundred fifty (250) square feet of gross floor area.

Outside the "Old City" - retain the current flat requirement of one parking space for each two hundred fifty (250) square feet of gross floor area.

The recommended change is based on allowing a multiple of the common "Old City" 40 x 160 lots to be developed up to 9600 square feet of floor area with its required accompanying parking at a ratio of 1 to 400.. It is felt that this combination is the most feasible maximum for developments in this area. If a project larger is attempted it begins to resemble a project of suburban size and capability and should provide the greater current requirement of a 1-250 ratio. It should also be noted that the proposed 1-400 ratio is the same as that now required in the Old City for office buildings - the other largest land use in the "Old City" area besides retail stores.

You sometime hear the expression -"you can't have too much parking". Certainly this is true inside the Central area of the City; however, if any area of an urban complex is to survive and make its maximum contribution to the needs of its people it must continually rebuild itself as its land use pattern and demands change or it is bypassed and becomes either a business slum or a second rate retail area. To adopt and continue application of any regulation which because of its intensity seriously hampers or restricts this rebuilding and revitalizing process, is an error which should be rectified at the earliest practical date.

SACRAMENTO PLANNING COMMISSION
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80X160' = 12,800 sq. ft.

1 space each 250 sq. ft. = 51 spaces (Ordinance.)

51 spaces at 400 sq. ft. per space = 20,400 sq. ft. area
needed to park 51 cars.

80X160' = 12,800 sq. ft.

1 space each 400 sq. ft. = 32 spaces (Ordinance.)

32 spaces at 400 sq. ft. = 12,800 area needed to park 32 cars.
1/2 building, 1/2 parking

80X160' * 1/2 = 6,400 sq. ft. building sq. footage.

1 space for each 250 sq. ft. = 25 spaces (Ordinance)

25 spaces at 400 sq. ft. = 10,000 sq. ft. - area needed
to park 25 cars.

1 space for each 400 sq. ft. = 16 spaces (Ordinance)

16 spaces at 400 sq. ft. = 6,400 sq. ft. - area needed
to park 16 cars.

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