



Tiny Homes, Townhouse, Duplex, Triplex & Fourplex Units: Parking

August 2017

Question: What should the requirement be for off-street parking? Should it be different in certain areas?

Current Olympia Approach:

Olympia currently requires off-street parking be provided with new residential construction (in most cases). This generally ranges from 1 – 2 off-street parking spaces per unit. The off-street parking must be hard surfaced and may be inside a carport or garage.

Current City requirements are generally:

- 2 spaces per unit for single family homes, duplexes, townhomes, and manufactured homes
- 1.5 spaces per unit for apartment buildings of three or more units of one bedroom or more
- 1 space per unit for ADUs, cottage housing, studio apartments, and group living facilities

What is current approach intended to accomplish?

Off-street parking requirements are primarily intended to ensure parking demand for individual residences can be met within very close proximity to the home. Auto ownership patterns and residential parking demand in individual neighborhoods are dynamic, and are influenced by many factors, including household size, individual lifestyles, availability of alternative travel modes, and proximity to services.

On-street parking availability varies throughout Olympia’s residential neighborhoods. It may be available on one or both sides of a street, or may not be available at all on some streets. Some City rights-of-way are wide enough for on-street parking but are only paved to a much narrower width than needed to accommodate on-street parking. City staff began working on a city-wide map of on-street parking availability; however, initial data showed large areas of residential neighborhoods do not have wide enough paved streets to provide for on-street parking.

Alternative Approaches:

Below is a table of some other cities’ approaches:

Jurisdiction/Off-Street Parking Requirement	Tiny House (on foundation)	Each Townhouse	Each Duplex Unit	Each Triplex Unit	Each Fourplex Unit	Studio Apt
Olympia	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	1
Tumwater	2	2	2	1.5 per 1-2 bdrm units; 2 per 3+ bdrm units; + 1 guest space per every ten units	1.5 per 1-2 bdrm units; 2 per 3+ bdrm units; + 1 guest space per every ten units	1

Jurisdiction/Off-Street Parking Requirement	Tiny House (on foundation)	Each Townhouse	Each Duplex Unit	Each Triplex Unit	Each Fourplex Unit	Studio Apt
Lacey	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	
Bremerton	2	2	2	≤ 1 bdrms = 1.5; 2 bdrms = 1.75; ≥ 3 bdrms = 2; MF in Center = 1	≤ 1 bdrms = 1.5; 2 bdrms = 1.75; ≥ 3 bdrms = 2; MF in Center = 1	1
Vancouver, WA		1	1	1.5	1.5	
Vancouver, BC	<i>Requirements vary by district – includes max. # of spaces</i>					
Seattle <i>Different standards for MF with income criteria</i>		1		1/unit or 1/each 2 small efficiency units	1/unit or 1/each 2 small efficiency units	1/unit or 1/each 2 small efficiency units
Portland, OR	1 / unit, except Single Room Occupancies exempt and in RH, where it is 0 / 1-3 units and 1 / 2 units for 4+ units					

Alternatives include:

1. Retain the current off street residential parking requirements.
2. Reduce the minimum parking requirements for Tiny Homes on Foundations, Townhouses, and Duplexes to 1 off street parking space per unit when located within a certain distance (e.g. ¼ mile, ½ mile) of a transit route or commercial zoning district.
3. Reduce the minimum parking requirements for Tiny Homes on Foundations, Townhouses, and Duplexes to 1 off street parking space per unit.
4. Reduce the parking standard for Duplexes to 1.5 spaces per unit.

Analysis:

The factors for consideration discussed by the Missing Middle Work Group are:

- **Affordability**
Providing an off-street parking space may affect affordability, depending on the configuration and existing situation on the property. Low-impact development regulations now emphasize permeable pavement use for driveways in many locations, which may increase the cost of providing a new off-street parking space. It is uncertain what, if any, impact on the rental rate or sale price there would be from any additional cost of providing an off-street parking space or savings resulting from providing less parking.

- **Variety of housing types**
Depending on the configuration of the property, it may be difficult and more expensive to provide current levels of off-street parking spaces for a wider variety of housing types. This may affect a decision by a property owner whether to proceed with constructing a duplex or other housing types. Removing or reducing parking requirements may result in an increase in construction of more housing types; however, there may be other contributing factors to that increase as well. Typically parking is not the limiting factor, other provisions are generally more directly related to what gets built on residential lots.
- **Ability to accommodate growth**
If off-street parking spaces are not required at the current levels, it may increase the likelihood of additional housing types being constructed. However, if adequate parking is not available it could affect the ability of residents in the neighborhood or their visitors to find convenient parking close to their residence.