

From: [Kate Barsotti](#)
To: [Public Testimony](#)
Cc: [Bunch, Eric](#); [Melissa Patterson Hazley](#); [Willett, Nathan](#); [Parks-Shaw, Ryana](#)
Subject: Considerations for ordinance 260219
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Good morning:

Eliminating parking minimums may be appropriate for many neighborhoods in Kansas City at this time. Other neighborhoods, however, are not ready for this change. Implementing this policy on a broad scale, without comprehensive strategies, could be harmful.

We brought up these concerns during the public engagement and it appears that those concerns were dismissed.

1. We have been provided with no proof that development projects have been prevented due to current parking requirements, although they do add cost and may be out of date. What projects have not gone forward due to parking requirements?
2. Some neighborhoods are well served by transit currently, and some are not, with no plans or funding to change that situation. These inequities are drastic. Is the City planning on funding a high quality regional bus system?
3. The emphasis on bicycles as the solution may work for able-bodied people who have the ability to store a bicycle securely at their residence, and flexible schedules that allow for more time to travel, especially during bad weather. Many people in my neighborhood do not fit that category.

Yesterday, I gave a woman a ride to a bus stop because she was physically unable to walk a few blocks. As a public housing resident, she has nowhere to store a bicycle and would be unable to use it if she could.

We have families with many children, jobs that may be far away, and security concerns. A neighborhood is not walkable if the sidewalks are broken, transit is unreliable or infrequent, or people do not feel safe, especially after dark. How will the City address public safety concerns?

4. Leaving parking requirements up to developers is remarkably trusting, and I am curious to understand the basis for that trust. Upscale neighborhoods may experience a common sense approach. Others will not.
5. Regulating parking should not fall on a neighborhood. This ordinance could set up a situation where we are fighting in each public meeting over every single change to a property, and if we want to regulate parking, it will fall on us to do it. This is an unfair burden to place upon residents.

Considerations

There are neighborhoods that would welcome this change and are ready for it, especially if they have received substantial investment in the streetcar or other transit options. This ordinance should be coupled with an understanding of those conditions and rolled out when those conditions are in place.

The assumption that getting rid of parking minimums will somehow result in, or force, a change in desired behavior is a disservice to neighborhoods that are unlikely to receive investment. It is social engineering without strategy or funding.

Regards,

Kate Barsotti