



MEMORANDUM

To: City Planning Commission Ordinance Revisions Committee

FROM: Mariana Melin-Corcoran, City Planner

DATE: July 22, 2025

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendment to Unified Development Code (UDC) –
Bicycle Parking Requirements and Standards Analysis

The Planning Commission and staff have identified the need to update the City's bicycle parking requirements and standards given the City's goals to increase bicycle ridership and to improve usability, design, and accessibility of bicycle parking. Staff and Commissioners discussed possibilities for updates at the January 28, 2025 meeting of the Ordinance Revisions Committee. Based on the direction of commissioners, staff held meetings with community groups, conducted site visits, reviewed parking guides, and consulted bicycle parking ordinances in other cities. Below are summaries of discussions, ongoing research, and commentary on potential amendments. A copy of the proposed amendments to Section 5.19 of the Unified Development Code is attached.

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Ordinance Revisions Committee

Below is a summary of major points discussed at the January 28, 2025 Ordinance Revisions Committee:

- **Review the required bicycle parking multipliers:** Consider an increase in required bicycle parking for multi-family and perhaps a decrease in the downtown areas where there is existing public bicycle parking.
- **Keep three classes of bicycle parking:** Instead of moving to long-term and short-term parking classifications, keep the existing Class A (long-term, interior), B (mid-term, covered), and C (short-term).
- **Focus on pain points:** When making updates, focus on staff issues when reviewing new development, and discuss with bike riders in the community to make updates user-friendly. Avoid making code language overly prescriptive.

Community Meetings

Staff met with community groups with a vested interest in cycling in Ann Arbor to discuss potential changes to the City's bicycle parking requirements. Meetings occurred virtually in February, March, and April of 2025. The following groups offered feedback:

- Common Cycle
- PEAC
- Walk Bike Washtenaw
- Wolverines on Wheels

Below, in no particular order, is a staff summary of major discussion topics during meetings with the above community groups:

Accessible bike parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designated spaces for accessible and non-standard bicycles (e.g., cargo, tandem) should be provided near entrances to facilitate easy maneuvering.• Bike hoops should be placed with adequate clearance from street-parked cars and pedestrian pathways to prevent obstructions.• Design considerations should prioritize ease of access. Bicycle parking should be easily reachable, incorporating ramps, single-door access, and self-opening doors where possible. Carrying bikes up and down stairs is impractical for regular use.
Interior/covered parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain and encourage covered bicycle parking, particularly in commercial areas, while ensuring sufficient maneuverability within these spaces.• Support for ground-level interior bike storage remains strong.
Signage and navigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well-marked signage is important for directing cyclists to parking and infrastructure.• In areas with multiple entrances (such as shopping malls), spaces should be distributed near multiple entrances rather than at a single location
Rack types	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vertical racks are generally acceptable as long as they are not the sole option. Inverted-U racks are broadly supported.
Student housing considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Converted single-family homes and smaller multi-family residences often lack adequate bike parking, forcing residents to store bicycles on porches.• Many students cannot bring bikes indoors due to space constraints or building policies. Shed or basement storage would be a better alternative.
Seasonal demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commercial and office spaces experience peak bicycle use in summer but significantly lower demand in winter.
Regular bike room maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular cleanouts are necessary to remove bikes left for extended periods, freeing up spaces for active use.• Providing access to essential tools for minor bike repairs would be beneficial.
Scooters and e-bikes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New facilities should account for increasing e-bike usage, with a preference for infrastructure that supports them.• Scooters occupy designated bike parking spaces, and new facilities should consider scooter accommodation.
Security measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secure parking remains a priority to prevent theft and unauthorized access. Parking should incorporate adequate lighting and security features.• Open-air bike racks experience higher theft rates. They should be positioned within sight of common areas but not directly visible from the road.• Monitoring bike storage areas can help deter theft and increase safety.

Site Visits

Staff visited bicycle parking facilities in March and April 2025 to understand current use levels. The sites visits are primarily multi-family residential and in the downtown area because of the focus on new residential development reviews as a pain point for staff. A selection of photos and observations from these visits are included below.

Table 1. Bicycle Parking Facility Site Visits

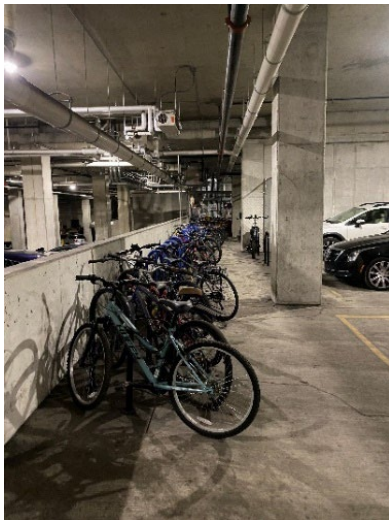
Development	Address	Zoning	Units	Existing Bike Parking
Arbor Blu	624 Church St	D1	122 (232 bedrooms)	46 Class A, 2 Class C
The Foundry	413 E Huron St	D1	208 (513 bedrooms)	78 Class A, 24 Class C
The George	2502 Packard St	C1B	230	46 Class A, 8 Class C
The Landmark	1300 S University Ave	D1	175	64 Class A, 12 Class C
The Hub	603 E Huron St	D1	125	54 Class A
Six 11	611 E University Ave	D1	90 (329 bedrooms)	61 Class A, 8 Class B, 10 Class C
The Varsity	425 E Washington St	D1	118 (415 bedrooms)	72 Class A, 37 Class B, 12 Class C
Vic Village North	1107 S University Ave	D1	43	38 Class A, 2 Class C
Vic South	1116 S University Ave	D1	133 (301 bedrooms)	104 Class A, 4 Class C
Z Place Apartments	619 E University Ave	D1	66 (248 bedrooms)	23 Class A, 6 Class C



The Landmark



Vic Village North



The Foundry



The Varsity

Below, in no particular order, is a summary of staff observations during the above site visits:

Long-term bike storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some bicycles appeared to have been left unused for extended periods, showing signs of dust accumulation and flat tires. This may be due to seasonal usage.
Indoor bike parking near campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Indoor bike storage rooms have lower usage closer to campus. Resident managers reported fewer inquiries from residents regarding bike parking in these areas.
Electric scooters in bike rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scooters are frequently parked in bike storage areas and charged using available outlets. Resident managers expressed concerns about fire risks associated with charging bikes indoors and prefer designated storage solutions.
Rack usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some vertical racks were utilized, but most cyclists preferred hoop-style racks. Some individuals secured bikes to vertical racks without lifting them into place. Double-decker racks remained largely unused, possibly due to unclear instructions on their operation.

Accessibility challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bike racks are located both in basement parking areas and at ground level with outdoor access. However, the number of doors, elevators, and other access points required to reach bike storage pose usability challenges.
Management of bike storage rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most buildings do not actively oversee bike storage areas. There is no system for registering or monitoring how long bicycles remain in storage, and managers rarely, if ever, visit these rooms.

Document Review

Staff reviewed the following documents for guidance on dimensional requirements, parking multipliers and requirements, and design of parking facilities. Some of the language in the proposed ordinance amendments is based on the suggestions outlined in these documents.

- Downtown Development Authority – Ann Arbor Downtown Bike Parking Guidelines (February 2025)
- Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals – Essentials of Bike Parking (September 2015)
- City of Boston – Bike Parking Guidelines (January 2021)

POTENTIAL AMENDMENTS

A summary of points staff suggests to guide potential changes to the bicycle parking ordinance are shown in Table 2 below. Formal language for the proposed changes is attached.

Table 2: Summary of Potential Amendments to Bicycle Parking Requirements

Topic	Identified Issue / Need	Proposal	Not Proposed / On Hold	Notes
General Parking Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit complicated parking requirement table Request for racks to accommodate bikes of various sizes Revisit parking multipliers, particularly for residential and downtown usage Add language that staff can refer to when asked about in-unit parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplify required parking table for user-friendliness Add barrier-free parking requirements for bikes of different sizes Increase requirements for multi-family residential developments outside downtown Decrease downtown parking requirements due to existing infrastructure Add language clarifying Class A bicycle parking may not be in units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No language specific to scooters because there is generally space for them in parking facilities due to their size No charging requirements for electric bikes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The language retains Class B parking See Table 3 below to see difference in current and proposed multipliers
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More specific language needed for parking to be required near entrances Request for parking to be spaced out, particularly on larger parcels or buildings with multiple entrances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add language specifying Class B and C parking maximum distance of 50 feet from main entrances Require bicycle parking to be evenly distributed throughout a site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No requirement for Class A parking to be on the ground floor, just encouraged (or must be near an elevator) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50-foot specification is based on Boston's regulations Generally there is better lighting and visibility near building entrances
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More specific language needed for user-friendly parking facilities, particularly regarding types of racks and interior bike parking rooms More specific language needed for space-saving racks to ensure consistency when reviewing site plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reformat design section breaking out classes with specific requirements for each Add requirements to make racks more user-friendly Directly prohibit certain rack styles Add language clarifying when space-saving racks are acceptable Include dimensional requirements for parking spaces to ensure consistency 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design specifications based on Boston's regulations, but simplified to avoid being overly prescriptive
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More specific language needed for user access parking facilities with no or minimal obstacles Request for wayfinding signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General language cleanup to clarify access requirements Encourage wayfinding signage when bicycle parking is not easily visible/findable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific signage requirements due to potential conflicts with sign code 	

Table 3: Required Bicycle Parking for Recent Site Plans with Current and Proposed Multipliers

Address	Zoning	Units/Sq Ft of Non-Residential	Class A		Class B		Class C	
			Current	New	Current	New	Current	New
2511 Packard	R4B	19 new units	2	10			2	2
318 E Jefferson	R4C	6 units	1	3			1	1
2525 Ann Arbor-Saline	R4E	262 units	26	131			26	14
142 E Hoover	C2B	5,719 sq ft			0	2	1	3
3310 Washtenaw	C3	5,240 sq ft	0	0	0	2	7	3
2935 Plymouth	O	4,740 sq ft	0	0		2	3	3
3680 Packard	O	13,273 sq ft	4	0	0	6	6	3
625 Church	D1	181 / 250,000 sq ft of residential	90	37			0	19
1208 South University	D1	259 / 287,500 sq ft of residential	115	52			0	26
615 Briarwood	TC1	115,848 sq ft	12	0	6	12	6	23
2900 S Main	TC1	61 / 48,000 sq ft of residential	6	31	2	0	2	5

Potential Future Bicycle Parking Considerations

- Code language for e-bike or charging requirements
- Strategies and facilities for bicycle deliveries
- Continued communication with DDA and city Transportation staff as best practices are updated and to ensure consistency across Ann Arbor
- Developing guidelines for best practices that would not be included in the Unified Development Code, such as encouraging regular cleanout of bicycle parking rooms

Attachments

Draft Bicycle Parking Amendments
Downtown Development Authority – Ann Arbor Downtown Bike Parking Guidelines
Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals – Essentials of Bike Parking
City of Boston – Bike Parking Guidelines (January 2021)