



# Parking Standards Can Promote Development and Protect the Environment

## Thoughtful Approach to Parking Can Pave the Path to Better Development

Community leaders are becoming increasingly aware of how thoughtful approaches to parking standards can promote economic development - especially redevelopment - and improve a town's image, help protect the environment, and signal a smart approach to how land is used.

One of the ways McKenna's planners and urban designers have helped communities to spark redevelopment activity is by reclaiming under-utilized parking lots developed under outdated zoning requirements. These reclaimed parking lots have been put to use as programmed public space, with a burst of foot traffic and increased community interest to help revitalize key districts.

Additionally, McKenna's zoning team members have worked on recalibrating parking requirements to more closely match community values as well as market demand. "In many cases, the excessive parking - often required by obsolete zoning regulations - can be repurposed for out-lots that provide economic benefits to a developer and provide better community design, tipping the district toward economic vitality" said Executive Vice President, John R. Jackson, AICP. "Excessive parking requirements result in higher costs of development and faster consumption of commercial land. Parking standards that are based on shared uses, proximity to residential neighborhoods, and other community-specific factors can significantly improve the image and economics of a place."

While communities must take care not to relax parking requirements to the point that customers are deterred, in most cases, the reduction in parking ensures that long-term planning goals are not compromised. For example, parking requirements can even be modified to provide incentives for adding or substituting bicycle parking for vehicle requirements. By allowing context-sensitive parking standards, communities may achieve other goals, like encouraging redevelopment and promoting attractive public gathering places.

To determine whether your community should update their parking standards or to get more ideas about how to spark economic vitality, contact your McKenna Planner or John Jackson at [jjackson@mcka.com](mailto:jjackson@mcka.com) or 888.226.4326 or email us at [info@mcka.com](mailto:info@mcka.com).

