

Olympia Planning Commission

May 1, 2023

Olympia City Council
PO Box 1967
Olympia, WA 98507

Dear Mayor Selby and City Councilmembers:

The Olympia Planning Commission (OPC) considered amendments for residential parking requirements and issued its recommendation on April 17, 2023. The Commission had three briefings on the topic, conducted a public hearing on March 20, 2023, and provided an extended public comment period. There were several comments received and considered on this proposal.

While the motion to approve the amendments, including removing minimum motor vehicle parking requirements for all residential uses, carried with a vote of 7 to 2, there were dissenting opinions the Commission would like to share for your consideration as Council makes a decision on the proposal.

Concerns that were raised include:

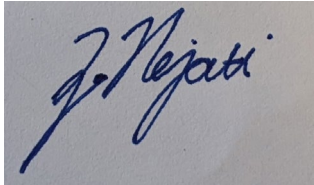
- Accessible parking. Concern that persons with disabilities may not have access to accessible parking near their residence. For example, accessible parking spaces at a new apartment development is only required to be provided when parking is provided. If no parking is required then parking may not be provided. And if no parking is provided, then accessible parking would not be required.
- Safety. Concern that people may need to walk a block or more from where they find parking to where their residence is located. This may include when carrying groceries or other items, when it is dark and rainy, or with young children. This would also make it difficult for people to keep an eye on their cars to help prevent break-ins or to at least be aware of a break in more quickly if one does occur.
- Emergency Vehicles. An increase in on-street parking could make streets more congested and may make access by emergency vehicles more challenging.
- The amount of required parking should be a government decision rather than left to developers or others to decide.

Other issues discussed included that transit service is not always adequate (e.g. it may not run late enough in the evenings) to meet transportation needs, and that many residences are occupied by people who have multiple cars.

Further, if the City does approve these amendments, we recommend reassessing the parking situation in 2-3 years to ensure it is working or to consider additional revisions (including the possibility of re-instating minimum parking requirements for residential uses), if warranted.

Thank you for considering these additional comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Z. Nejati", is displayed on a light-colored rectangular background.

Zainab Nejati, CHAIR
Olympia Planning Commission