

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT: ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT RELATING TO BICYCLE PARKING INCENTIVES**

**BACKGROUND:**

On March 5, 2019, the City Council directed staff to prepare a text amendment to incentivize bicycle parking for visitors to a site in commercial and industrial areas based upon a memo providing background information (Attachment A). Currently, bicycle parking is required in only a handful of commercial zones. The Downtown Gateway Commercial zone requires bicycle parking and allows for a reduction in vehicle spaces.

Staff has received inquiries from developers and business owners wishing to retrofit one or more vehicular parking spaces into bicycle parking, but the Zoning Ordinance does not currently allow flexibility in the reduction of the minimum parking requirement for this purpose.

The intent is to promote bicycle parking with options to reduce vehicle parking requirements. Staff proposes to allow, with Planning Director approval, a reduction of one vehicle parking space for every six qualified bicycle parking spaces. Note this is an adjustment since the Planning and Zoning Commission review to clear up an inconsistency in the draft ordinance and the intent of relating the number of spaces to the size of vehicle parking space. A maximum reduction of up to five vehicular parking spaces could be granted by the Planning Director, provided there is adequate vehicle parking on site.

Based upon a typical bicycle parking loop two bicycles can be parked at each loop and a standard vehicle parking stall could accommodate up three to five loops with adequate spacing and its configuration for access. Adequate space accounts for a minimum of a 2x6 foot space for a bike plus access and clearance needs. Secured bicycle parking lockers would also be eligible as a qualified facility to benefit from the parking reduction. The bicycle parking need not be located within the parking lot to benefit from the parking reduction, but it must be directly accessible to visitors of the site and within 150' of the entrance. A graphic illustrating the implications of a 150' distance is included as Attachment B. Motorized bicycle parking spaces are not eligible for the parking reduction allowance.

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the requested amendment at its August 21, 2019 meeting. The Commission discussed at length the balance of reducing vehicle parking as an incentive for creating bicycle parking. Two specific concerns discussed included 1.) How would the parking reduction affect the number of ADA accessible parking spaces if there is a reduction in the total number of spaces? 2.) How would the Planning Director determine within his/her discretion what is adequate parking to allow for a reduction? Staff explained

that ADA compliant vehicle stalls are required at fixed ratios, with the first space provided required to be an ADA compliant parking stall. With the allowed parking reduction, the greatest amount of ADA parking stall changes that could ever occur is one space by changing from one tier to another, but not to have none. Staff also explained that the Planning Director would typically approve the reduction if the site initially included the minimum required amount of vehicle parking defined by the Zoning Ordinance. However, when a site has either nonconforming parking or only a few required spaces, the Director would exercise discretion on whether to allow for the reduced vehicle parking incentive. The Commission ultimately voted 6-0 to recommend approval of the text amendment for bicycle parking standards and incentives, as proposed by staff.

Staff has prepared a second alternative to address the Planning Director discretion language if City Council has concerns about the open ended language in the draft ordinance. To ensure there is the ability to add a minimum of six bicycle parking spaces, at least a one-space reduction would be allowed, but also allow for up to a 15% reduction. For example, a site requiring 10 parking spaces could reduce the vehicle parking requirement by one space (10% reduction). A site requiring 14 spaces would be able to reduce the requirement by two spaces (14.3% reduction) by providing 12 bicycle parking spaces. A site providing 20 spaces could reduce the total by three spaces (15%) by providing 18 bicycle parking spaces.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The City Council can approve on first reading the proposed ordinance related to providing bicycle parking, including within a front yard and allowing for a parking reduction of one parking space for every six qualified bicycle parking spaces for up to five vehicle parking spaces in commercial and industrial uses.
2. The City Council can modify the draft ordinance language and approve on first reading standards for bicycle parking and allowing a parking reduction of a minimum of one parking space for six qualified bicycle parking spaces, up to a 15% reduction in vehicle parking spaces for every six qualified bicycle parking spaces.
3. The City Council can direct staff to prepare alternative language for the proposed text amendment.
4. The City Council can request additional information and defer making a recommendation.

### **CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

As the City continues to support multi-modal transportation and development of more "complete street" options it will be beneficial to the City to promote bicycle parking at commercial destinations. The proposed language creates an optional bicycle parking standard that is incentivized by allowing for a reduction in vehicle parking. The allowance still requires that vehicle parking be provided, but that it may be reduced while also providing for bicycle parking. Residential areas are not included in the incentive at this time, because minimum parking requirements are associated with the permitting and occupancy of rental housing. Additionally, staff has seen the market adapt to people's biking interests with new

apartment developments providing for resident bike parking so that there does not appear to be a need to incentivize the provision of bicycle parking in the case of residential uses.

**Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative #1 as described above.**

## ATTACHMENT A:



# Memo

Department of Planning & Housing

*Caring People  
Quality Programs  
Exceptional Service*

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Department of Planning and Housing

**DATE:** January 18, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Bicycle Parking Standards

The following information was originally provided to City Council at their request in September 2017. City Council requested in August 2018 that staff resend the memo for their review prior to determining if the issue should be placed on an agenda for discussion. This memo includes an overview of general bicycle parking considerations and examples from other Midwestern communities.

Bicycle parking requirements are intended to help meet the day-to-day mobility needs of residents, employees, and visitors. Bicycle parking ordinances help to expand mobility choices by providing a greater expectation that secure parking will be available near destinations for those who may choose to cycle, rather than drive. Lack of bicycle parking at a destination may deter bicycle ridership or result in use of unintended site features, e.g trees, signs, to secure bikes.

Bicycle parking includes two separate types of user needs. **Long term secured parking for a bicycle is most commonly used for residential and employee related needs.** Secured parking often takes the form of a bike locker. Some cities also address needs for locker rooms with long term bike parking requirements. **Unsecured bicycle parking spaces are for short term use and commonly available for customers or visitors to a site.** Short term parking for bicycles is consists of bicycle racks where an individual secures their bicycle to the apparatus. Bicycle parking ordinances commonly address the mix of long and short term parking facilities, location of facilities, and dimensions of bicycle parking facilities.

**Bicycle parking can be mandatory, incentivized as an allowable substitute for vehicle parking, or a combination approach of both mandatory and allowing for substitutions.** Parking requirements can be based upon the number of required vehicle parking spaces, square footage of the use, or expected occupant levels. One common approach is to require a minimum number of bicycle parking spaces (2 to 5 spaces) and scale up to approximately 5%-10% of the vehicle parking on a site. Cities with a high share of bicycle ridership may have higher standards to meet community needs.

Substitutions can be based upon the amount of space needed for bicycle parking or the percentage of bicycle spaces provided on a site. Depending on the type of rack design and its placement, each "loop" can serve two bicycles. One example would be for substitution of one vehicle parking space for every 5 bicycle parking spaces with a cap on the total amount of parking space substitutions.

There are a larger variety of cities with bicycle parking ordinances. Staff identified a short list of cities from the Midwest as examples below. Attached to this memo is the Des Moines 2017 proposed bicycle parking standards.

1) Bicycle Parking Minimum Standards:

Dubuque,  
Iowa City,  
Des Moines,\*  
Champaign (IL),  
Columbia (MO),  
Lawrence (KS),  
Minneapolis (MN)

2) Bicycle Parking Substitution:

Minneapolis (MN)  
Cedar Rapids,  
Des Moines\*

\* denotes proposed ordinance

Cedar Rapids Substitution example:

*A reduction in parking shall be granted at a rate of one (1) space for each five (5) rack bike stand. Required bicycle parking must be within fifty-feet (50') of a principal entrance and shall permit the locking of the bicycle frame and one (1) wheel to the rack frame.*

**135-4.5 Bicycle Parking<sup>3</sup>**

**4.5.1 MINIMUM BIKE PARKING RATIOS**

Long-term (Class A) and short-term (Class B) bicycle parking spaces must be provided in accordance with the minimum ratios established in Table 4.5-1. Uses for which no bicycle parking ratio is established in Table 4.5-1 are not required to provide off-street bicycle parking.

TABLE 4.5-1. BICYCLE PARKING RATIOS		
USE CATEGORY	Minimum Spaces Required	
Use Subcategory	Class A Bicycle Spaces	Class B Bicycle Spaces
Specific Use Type		
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>		
<b>Household Living</b>		
Buildings with 6 or fewer dwelling units	None	None
Buildings with 7 or more dwelling units	1 per dwelling unit for first 50 units, then 1 space per each additional 2 dwelling units	1 per 15 dwelling units; minimum 2 spaces
<b>Group Living</b>	0.33 per staff	1 per beds; minimum 2 spaces
<b>PUBLIC, CIVIC AND INSTITUTIONAL</b>		

<sup>3</sup> Entire section is new.

TABLE 4.5-1. BICYCLE PARKING RATIOS		
USE CATEGORY	Minimum Spaces Required	
Use Subcategory	Class A Bicycle Spaces	Class B Bicycle Spaces
Specific Use Type		
<b>College or University</b>	Established in accordance with 135-4.3.7.	
<b>Fraternal Organization</b>	0.125 per 1,000 sq. ft.	0.25 per 1,000 sq. ft.
<b>Hospital</b>	0.067 per 1,000 square feet (1/15,000 sq. ft.)	0.033 per 1,000 square feet (1/30,000 sq. ft.)
<b>Library or Cultural Exhibit</b>	0.125 per 1,000 sq. ft.	0.5 per 1,000 sq. ft.
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>	Established in accordance with 135-4.3.7.	
<b>Religious Assembly</b>	None	1 per 200 seats; minimum 2 spaces
<b>School</b>	0.25 per classroom	1 per classroom
<b>COMMERCIAL</b>		
<b>Adult Entertainment</b>	0.125 per 1,000 sq. ft.	0.25 per 1,000 sq. ft.
<b>Broadcast or Recording Studio</b>	0.125 per 1,000 sq. ft.	0.02 per 1,000 sq. ft.
<b>Business or Trade School</b>	0.1 per classroom	1 per classroom
<b>Commercial Service</b>	Capacity of more than 500 = 4 spaces plus 1 space per 500-person capacity	0.25 per 1,000 sq. ft.
<b>Eating &amp; Drinking Places</b>	0.125 per 1,000 sq. ft.	0.25 per 1,000 sq. ft.
<b>Entertain. &amp; Spectator Events</b>	500 seats or less = 4 spaces More than 500 seats = 10 spaces	500 seats or less = 1 space per 125 seats More than 500 seats = 4 spaces plus 1 space per 250 seats
<b>Financial Service</b>	0.125 per 1,000 sq. ft.	0.25 per 1,000 sq. ft.
<b>Lodging</b>	1 per 40 rooms	1 per 40 rooms; minimum 2 spaces
<b>Office</b>	0.125 per 1,000 sq. ft.	0.02 per 1,000 sq. ft.
<b>Parking, Non-Accessory</b>	None	1 per 25 motor vehicle spaces
<b>Retail Sales</b>	0.125 per 1,000 sq. ft.	0.25 per 1,000 sq. ft.
<b>Sports and Rec., Participant</b>		

**4.5.2 FLOOR AREA USED FOR BICYCLE PARKING**

Areas within a building that are used to provide bicycle parking that complies with the bicycle parking design and location requirements of this section will not be counted as floor area for the purpose of calculating motor vehicle parking requirements.

**4.5.3 GENERAL BICYCLE PARKING DESIGN AND LOCATION REQUIREMENTS**

All bicycle parking spaces are subject to the following general design and location requirements.

- A. Bicycle parking spaces must be illuminated if accessible to users after dark.
- B. Bicycle parking spaces must be located to be readily visible by the public or by building users, except in the case of Class A parking spaces located in secure areas accessible only to employees, staff or residents;
- C. Bicycle parking spaces must be accessible without climbing stairs, going up or down a slope of more than 12%, and via a route on the property that is designed to minimize conflicts with motor vehicles and pedestrians.
- D. All bike racks must be located at least 2 feet in all directions from any obstruction, including other bike racks, walls, doors, posts, or columns.
- E. Nonresidential uses may use up to 2 required automobile parking spaces as space for providing bicycle parking.
- F. All required bicycle parking spaces must have minimum dimensions of 2 feet in width by 6 feet in length, with a minimum overhead vertical clearance of 7 feet.

**4.5.4 DESIGN AND LOCATION OF CLASS A BICYCLE PARKING SPACES**

In addition to the general bicycle parking design and location requirements of 135-4.5.3, all required Class A bicycle parking must meet the following requirements:

- A. Class A bicycle parking spaces may not be in dwelling units or on dwelling unit balconies.
- B. Unless clearly visible from the main building entrance, a sign indicating the location of all Class A bicycle parking spaces must be prominently displayed near the main entrance to the building or facility, and additional signs must be provided as necessary to ensure easy way-finding. A "bicycle parking" sign must also be displayed on or adjacent to any indoor room or area designated for bicycle parking.
- C. Class A bicycle parking spaces must protect the entire bicycle, its components and accessories against theft and inclement weather, including wind-driven rain and snow. Acceptable forms of protection include (i) individual bicycle lockers, (ii) attended parking areas, (iii) monitored parking areas, (iv) restricted-access parking areas, or (v)

other comparable arrangements approved by the community development director.

- D. Except in the case of bicycle lockers with a separate access door for each bike or attended facilities, all Class A bicycle parking spaces must be designed to allow bicycles to be securely locked to a bicycle rack.

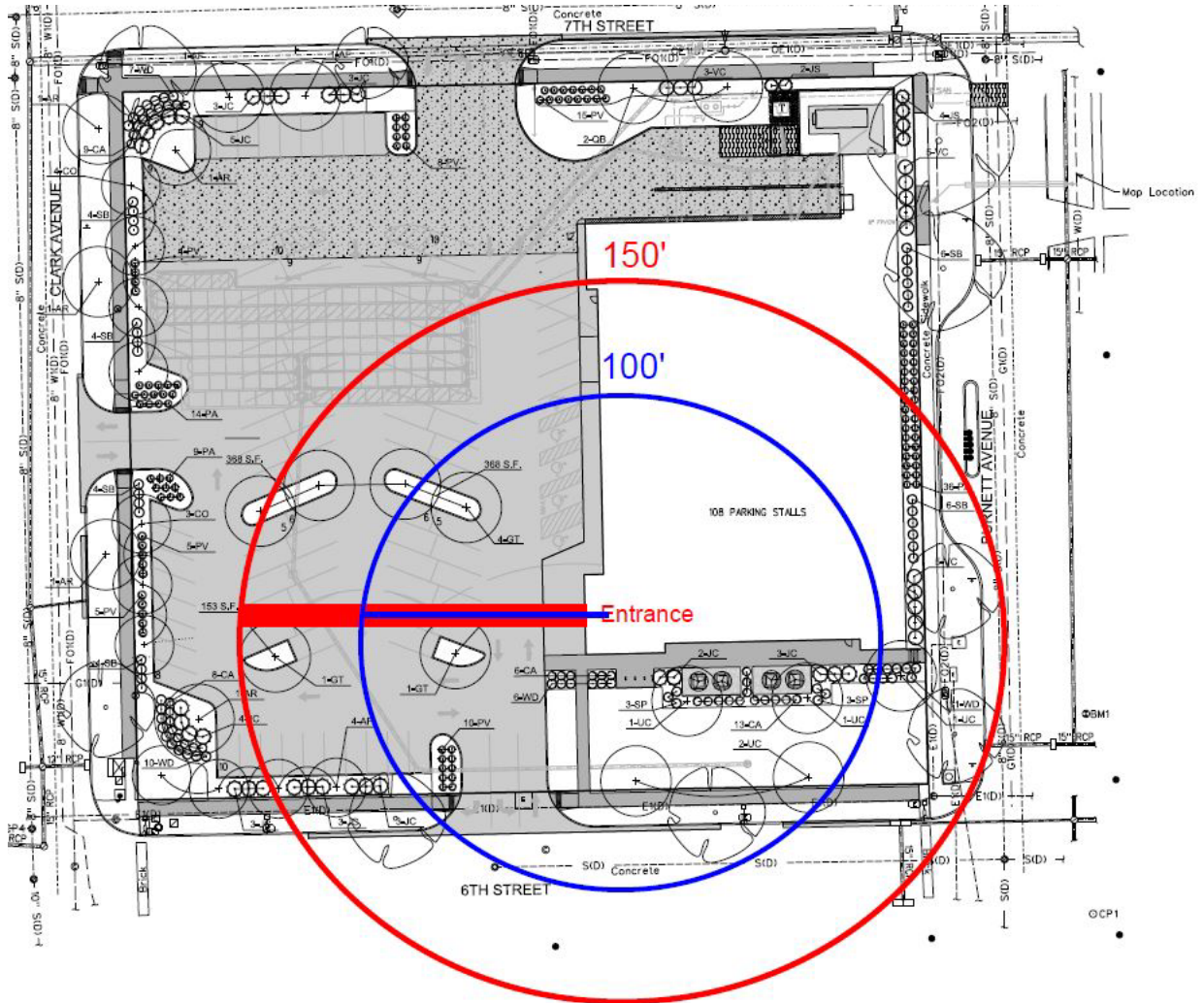
**4.5.5 DESIGN AND LOCATION OF CLASS B BICYCLE PARKING SPACES**

In addition to the general bicycle parking design and location requirements of 135-4.5.3, all required Class B bicycle parking must meet the following requirements:

- A. Class B bicycle parking must be visible from the main public building entrance and be at least as conveniently located as the most convenient non-disabled motor vehicle parking space serving the subject use. If no motor vehicle parking is provided, Class B bicycle parking spaces must be located within 75 feet of a building entrance.
- B. Class B bicycle parking spaces must be located on private property unless the city engineer approves a location within the public right-of-way.
- C. Class B bicycle parking spaces must be provided in the form of bike racks that comply with the city's "Bike Rack Policy."



Attachment B  
Example of 150' Distance for Bicycle Parking  
This example illustrates the new Fareway store at 619 Burnett Ave.



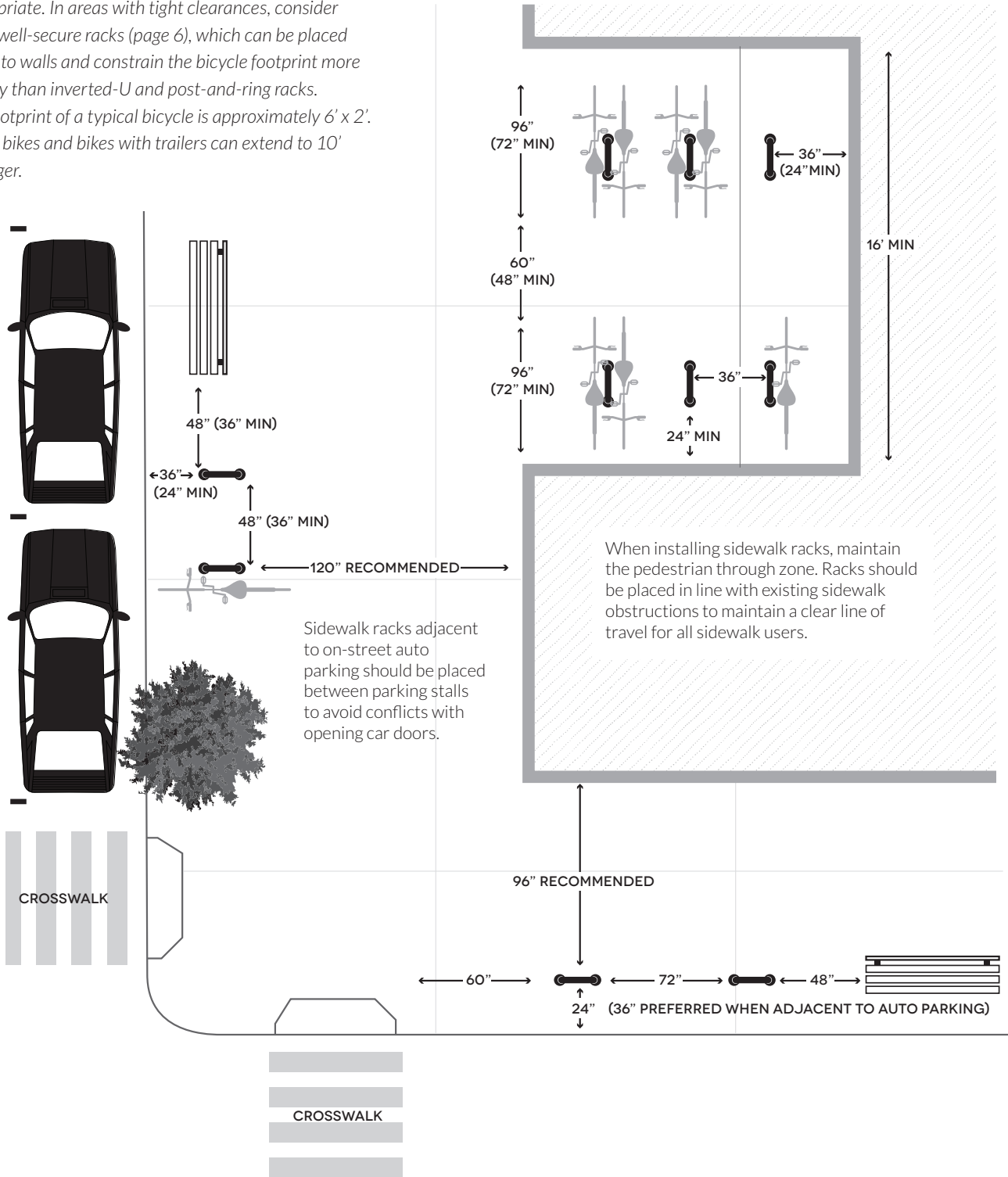
# Attachment C: Example of Bicycle Dimension Guidelines



apbp  
Association of Pedestrian  
and Bicycle Professionals  
Expertise for Active  
Transportation

## PLACEMENT

The following minimum spacing requirements apply to some common installations of fixtures like inverted-U or post-and-ring racks that park one bicycle roughly centered on each side of the rack. Recommended clearances are given first, with minimums in parentheses where appropriate. In areas with tight clearances, consider wheelwell-secure racks (page 6), which can be placed closer to walls and constrain the bicycle footprint more reliably than inverted-U and post-and-ring racks. The footprint of a typical bicycle is approximately 6' x 2'. Cargo bikes and bikes with trailers can extend to 10' or longer.





ORDINANCE NO.

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA, BY ENACTING NEW SECTIONS 29.201(22.1), 29.402(2)(a)(II)(r), AND 29.406(2)(e), AND AMENDING SECTION 29.201(153), FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING BICYCLE PARKING INCENTIVES; REPEALING ANY AND ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT TO THE EXTENT OF SUCH CONFLICT; PROVIDING A PENALTY; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**BE IT ENACTED**, by the City Council for the City of Ames, Iowa, that:

Section One. The Municipal Code of the City of Ames, Iowa shall be and the same is hereby amended by enacting new Sections 29.201(22.1), 29.402(2)(a)(ii)(r), and 29.406(2)(e), and amending Section 29.201(153) as follows:

**“Sec. 29.201. DEFINITIONS.**

Except as otherwise defined in this Ordinance or unless the context may otherwise require, the following words are defined for the purpose of this Ordinance as follows:

\*\*\*

(22.1) **Bicycle Parking System** means a fixed structure that allows bicyclists to park one or more standing bicycles by locking the bicycle frame and one wheel to the structure or the storing of a bicycle within a secured space, such as a locker.

\*\*\*

(153) **Parking Space** means any area designed and used for temporary location of a vehicle. "Parking space" shall not include any vehicular storage areas. Bicycle Parking is not a parking space, although it may be located within a parking area.

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**Sec. 29.402. SETBACKS.**

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**(2) Extensions into Required Building Setbacks.**

(a) Principal Buildings.

\*\*\*

(ii) Full projections allowed. In addition to the minor projections listed in the previous section, the following features are allowed to fully project into required setbacks:

\*\*\*

r. Bicycle Parking Systems. Bicycle Parking Systems may be located in the front setback of nonresidential zoning districts when it is no higher than four feet in height and it does not interfere with required landscaping. This exception does not allow for parking areas where otherwise not permitted.

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**Sec. 29.406. OFF-STREET PARKING.**

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**(2) Required Parking Spaces . . . .**

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(e) The Planning Director may approve a reduction of required parking spaces for nonresidential uses that have adequate vehicle parking, at a ratio of one parking space for every six Qualified Bicycle Parking System spaces up to a maximum reduction of five spaces.

(i) Qualified Bicycle Parking Systems shall have the following attributes as determined by the Planning Director:

- 1. Located on a paved surface, unless otherwise authorized for an alternative all-weather improved surface.
- 2. Located to provide adequate space for direct and convenient access and use by the bicyclist.
- 3. Located within 150 feet of the main entrance or a customer entrance.
- 4. Located in manner that does not interfere with the flow of pedestrians or vehicles.

\*\*\*”

Section Two. Violation of the provisions of this ordinance shall constitute a municipal infraction punishable as set out by law.

Section Three. All ordinances, or parts of ordinances, in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict, if any.

Section Four. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law.

Passed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
John A. Haila, Mayor