

**BRIEFING PAPER**  
**City of Spokane**  
**Plan Commission Workshop**  
**February 11, 2015**

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Subject

Neighborhood Retail Parking Standards

Background

In June of 2014, staff presented a study workshop to Plan Commission to review the location and parking standards of Neighborhood Retail (NR) zones. The preliminary staff discussion with the Plan Commission focused around potentially adopting the Centers & Corridors parking standards for the NR Zones. Staff heard from the commissioners that this was too broad an application due to the diversity of size and location of the NR zones. Commissioners were especially concerned with the potential for “neighborhood spillover”.

In October and December of 2014, staff presented a revised proposal which focused on a 3,000 square foot building size exemption. Council Member Stuckart also spoke to the Plan Commission regarding his interest in this topic and his support for change in the Neighborhood Retail zone parking standards. In addition, staff recommended adding a “director’s discretion” clause that would provide relief if development met specific standards such as being neighborhood serving. Some of the feedback was that such a provision could potentially be inconsistently applied. The guiding principle has been balancing the need to provide relief to small scale, neighborhood serving businesses and lessen the need to use adjacent properties solely for parking while avoiding “spill-over” into neighborhoods. Some background information on Neighborhood Retail Zones is provided below:

- There are 72 small commercial areas within the city, most with historic roots as local community or “streetcar” business locations that are zoned Neighborhood Retail (NR).
- The median size for these areas is 1.4 acres, the largest is 14.6 acres, and smallest is 0.14 acre; 30 are at or under one acre, 33 are between one to five acres, and 9 are over 5 acres.
- Currently these areas are required to follow the same parking standards that other commercially zoned properties are required to follow.

In the draft before you today staff is recommending the following changes to meet the need of providing development cost relief while avoiding spillover:

1. Retain current parking standards for Neighborhood Retail Zones. This ensures adequate parking is provided, especially on larger lots/bigger structures.
2. Adopt exemption for existing, new, or building addition with a floor area of 3,000 sq. feet or less. This provides relief for small scale structures.
3. Adopt smaller parking stall size to match standards of Centers & Corridors zones. This allows for more space within a parcel to meet parking requirements.

4. For buildings less than 5,000 sq. feet of floor area, provide credit of 3,000 sq. foot exemption. For example, the parking requirement for a 4,000 sq. foot building would be calculated by subtracting 3,000 from 4,000. This would leave 1,000 sq. feet that parking calculations would be made upon.

#### Impact

This proposal focuses providing parking relief to smaller size buildings while balancing the need to retain standards for larger scale developments. The chart below shows reductions achieved for parking requirements for a structure with 5,000 sq. feet and 3,000 sq. feet of floor area for several use types in Neighborhood Retail Zones under this proposal:

What This Means for a building with 5,000 sq. feet of floor area in NR Zone				3,000 sq. feet of floor area
Neighborhood Retail Zone Use Category	Current Parking Standard	# of Spaces Currently Required	# of Spaces Required with 3,000 sf credit	# of Spaces Required for 3,000 sf of floor area under proposal
Office	1/500 sf	10	4	0
Retail, Restaurants/ Bars	1/250 sf	20	8	0
Retail – Other	1/330 sf	15	9	0
Community Service	1/500 sf	10	4	0
Daycare	1/500 sf	10	4	0
Medical Centers	1/500 sf	10	4	0
Religious Institutions	1/100 sf	50	30	0

#### **Action**

The Plan Commission is being asked to provide direction on this proposal. If this is a suitable solution, staff is recommending moving forward with the code amendment process.

#### **Funding**

Council interest has led this activity. This is part of staff's regular work program for 2015.

#### **Attachments**

- Proposed amendments to SMC Chapter 17C.1230 Parking & Loading
- Neighborhood Retail Zones Map