

Legislation Text

File #: 24-485, **Version:** 1

PRESENTER:

Christopher J. Looney, AICP, Director, Planning and Development Services Department

SUBJECT:

Presentation and possible direction to amend the city ordinance regarding off-site parking.

DEPARTMENT: Planning & Development Services**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** All**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The Planning and Development Services Department is reviewing the standards outlined in Section 144-5.1-1 (i)(2) regarding off-site parking:

(i)(2) The nearest edge of the closest parking space of the off-site parking is no further than 800 feet from the lot or parcel of the premise using the off-site parking (subject property)

This section allows on-site parking minimums to be met by sharing excess parking with an off-site neighbor. The above subsection outlines the distance standard for this allowance.

ISSUE:

The Strategic Plan and Envision New Braunfels reflect our residents' desires that the City promote pedestrian-oriented development and achieve more walkable commercial areas. Parking facilities are an important part of the transportation network. To achieve both plans' goals, the requirement of no further than 800 feet of separation from the location of off-site parking to the subject property should be reconsidered. A typical pedestrian walkable distance, or pedestrian ("ped") shed, has been defined and documented by numerous urban planning and design experts as the distance that can be covered in five minutes at a normal walking pace, typically one-quarter mile or 1,320 feet, inclement weather impacts/climate notwithstanding. An increase in the allowed distance of separation will support commercial developments to better meet required parking minimums by allowing off-site parking spaces to be located at a more acceptable walking distance from the subject property.

Additionally, it is recommended that measurement of the allowed separation distance be taken along a straight line or "as the crow flies" rather than along the pedestrian route which can be an ineffective method of calculation. Pedestrian routes can change over time.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REFERENCE:

The following Envision New Braunfels' goals would be supported by this ordinance amendment:

- **Action 3.6:** Proactively provide a regulatory environment that remains business and resident friendly.
- **Action 3.22:** Encourage venues within walking distance of neighborhoods and schools.
- **Action 3.23:** Revise local ordinances so that they do not inadvertently inhibit development of venues in close proximity to neighborhoods and schools.
- **Action 7.7:** Ensure that local development codes which require sidewalks, trails, lanes or paths include

healthy living, safety, and vehicular congestion relief as an intent.

- **Action 7.8:** Enhance pedestrian quality of the City by limiting the realm of the automobile.
- **Action 7.36:** Address parking deficiencies by encouraging other modes of access.

STRATEGIC PLAN REFERENCE:

☐ Economic Mobility ☒ **Enhanced Connectivity** ☐ Community Identity
☐ Organizational Excellence ☒ Community Well-Being ☐ N/A

Enhanced Connectivity, Objective 1: Identify and establish planning, capital, and operating funding to support and maintain a well-connected transportation network serving pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, older individuals, individuals with disabilities, motorists, and freight vehicles.

Enhanced Connectivity, Objective 3: Implement improved local and regional public transportation services to connect the community to employment, education, healthcare, recreational and other destinations.

Community Well-Being, Objective 5: Look for opportunities to reconnect the community by mitigating highways, waterways and other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval. If City Council directs staff to move forward, the team will research best practices and consider all factors, including climate, to provide a data-driven recommendation. As this requirement currently resides in the Zoning Ordinance, an amendment would first require a public hearing and recommendation by the Planning Commission before a first reading of the ordinance by City Council.