2021 Regional Plan
Programs and Policies

PARKING MANAGEMENT

Parking management aims to make the right amount of parking available when it is needed and price it so that alternative commutes are encouraged; construction costs are lowered; affordable housing is developed; and accessibility, equity, and economic development are promoted.

Abundant free parking encourages people to drive alone, and high-traffic areas can become more congested as drivers search for parking.

Existing parking policies often result in parking spaces that are underused and expensive to build.

The expense of building parking in many neighborhoods is absorbed by the people who live or do business there—even if they do not have a car, the cost is passed on to them through rent and the price of goods they purchase. The result is that free parking increases the overall cost of living.

As the region implements the 5 Big Moves, parking policies should evolve so we can use land more efficiently and encourage people to consider switching from driving alone to walking, biking, taking transit, carpooling, and using shared mobility. Parking policies should also adapt to the anticipated decline in parking demand as initiatives such as Transit Leap and Flexible Fleets make alternatives to driving alone more attractive.

A study in Los Angeles revealed that within one 15-block area, cars travel about **950,000 miles** annually looking for parking, which consumes **47,000 gallons of gasoline** and emits **730 tons of carbon dioxide**.
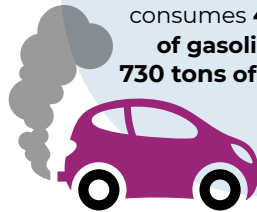
Building one parking space per housing unit increases total project costs by about **12.5%**. Building two parking spaces per housing unit can increase total project costs up to **25%**.

How would it work?

Reduced parking requirements: Many cities require new developments to include a minimum number of parking spaces per housing unit or per square footage of commercial space built. However, if parking requirements were reduced or eliminated, developers would have greater flexibility to consider transit availability, walkability, cost, and other factors in their parking design. Additionally, having fewer parking spaces near transit may reduce demand for driving or owning a personal vehicle.

Unbundled parking and parking cash-out: The expense of building parking is usually passed on to renters or included in the purchase price of a home whether or not residents own a car. "Unbundled parking" refers to renting or selling parking spaces separately, a practice that promotes choice and equity. Parking spaces can also be leased temporarily at workplaces, allowing employees to either pay for parking or receive a cash reimbursement if they commute to work in another way.

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#SDForward #5BigMoves
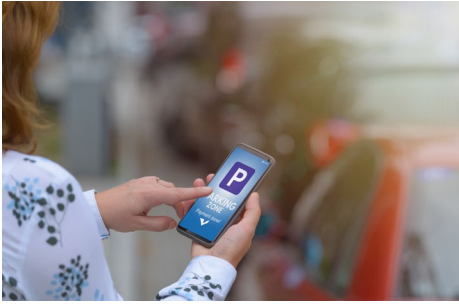
Parking pricing: Charging for parking spaces encourages turnover, which may help boost economic activity. Parking revenues can help recover the cost of building parking infrastructure, fund other local improvements, and provide enhanced mobility options.
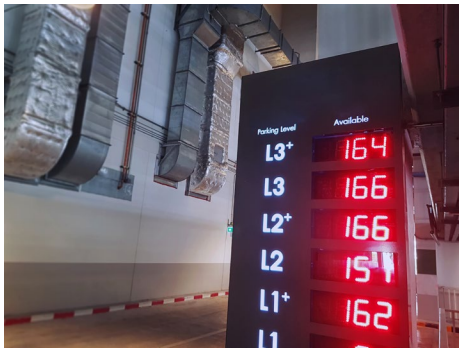
Real-time parking information: The Next OS will make it possible for signs and apps to display parking information in real time, making it easier to find a space.

What should I know about parking management policies in the San Diego region?

In the San Diego region, each jurisdiction is responsible for implementing its own parking policies. Several cities have implemented parking pricing, including the cities of Oceanside, Del Mar, La Mesa, Coronado, and San Diego. The City of San Diego was one of the first in the region to set limits on the number of parking spaces that developers can build for new residential developments. It also eliminated parking requirements in Transit Priority Areas (areas near high-quality transit). To further reduce the need to own or drive a car, the City uses parking revenues to help fund more travel choices like Neighborhood Electric Vehicle shuttles.

What could SANDAG do?

- Update the SANDAG Regional Parking Management Toolbox to account for emerging trends in mobility and parking.

- Provide technical resources for local jurisdictions to manage parking equitably, support the region's economy, and promote implementation of the 5 Big Moves.

- Partner with local jurisdictions to support the planning and implementation of parking management strategies that will support development of Next OS, such as smart parking pilot programs.

Resources

SANDAG Regional Parking Management Toolbox
SDForward.com/parkingtoolbox

City of San Diego Transit Priority Areas Parking Reform
sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/tpa

Victoria Transport Policy Institute–Parking Management Comprehensive Implementation Guide
vtpi.org/park_man_comp.pdf