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From: rlajka@comcast.net [<mailto:rlajka@comcast.net>]

Sent: Saturday, June 01, 2013 2:17 PM

To: Blane Meier

Subject: Re: Parking infographics

Blane,

Very interesting parking data. It is presented in a logic fashion so that it is easier to see the differences and the resulting parking issues. It would be very helpful for the TAC review of this information (assuming its within our committee's job description) to have a one page handout showing Oregon City's parking required for each category not only listing the number but also the little graphic with the colored box for office/business, restaurant and home. Please ask John Lewis if we could get this by our June meeting.

The one implication in this study is that there are both real cost and opportunity cost if a city is requiring too much parking as if the only possible downside is recommending too much parking. There can be too little parking and I'm guessing the author was just assuming any over flow parking would park on the street. And, on street parking represents "the commons" and is paid for by everyone and can thus be abused or over used.

John

From: "Blane Meier" <bmeier@crowmail.net>

To: jeanbob06@comcast.net, "Robert Mahoney" <emahoney240@msn.com>, "Betty Schaafsma" <bettydz@comcast.net>, "Steve Johnson" <scj12@comcast.net>, rlajka@comcast.net

Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 2:34:05 PM

Subject: FW: Parking infographics

FYI... see information from Christina re national parking requirements for office, dining, and living spaces.

Blane--

From: Christina Robertson-Gardiner [<mailto:croberson@ci.oregon-city.or.us>]

Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 11:16 AM

To: Planning; 'Lloyd Purdy'; 'aholveck@oregoncity.org'; 'Blane Meier'; John M. Lewis; Aleta Froman-Goodrich; Erik Wahrgren; Todd Martinez

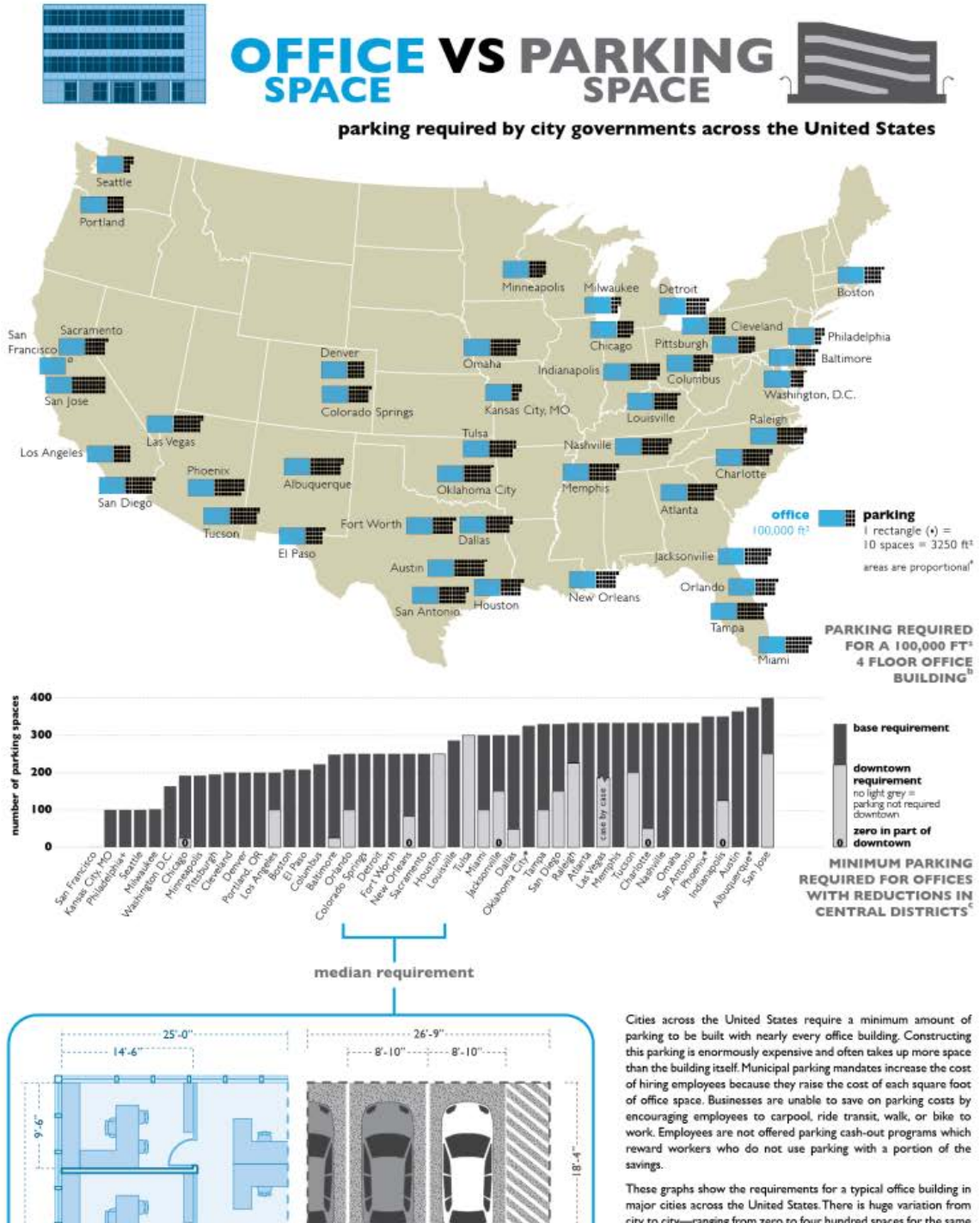
Subject: Parking infographics

<http://graphingparking.wordpress.com/>

Wanted to pass on this interesting infographic on parking requirements to you all. Link to actual page is above.

Parking Requirements for Office Buildings

17 May 2013





building. There seems to be little logic to these differences. (See El Paso vs. Albuquerque or Kansas City vs. Omaha) Which city is correct? Wouldn't it be better to let businesses decide instead?

Minimum parking requirements can lead to a massive oversupply of parking. This wastefulness hurts companies' bottom lines and the economy at large. Cities often make exceptions or reductions in special zones, but why should offices have to be located downtown to choose to build less parking? People can carpool anywhere, and while transit and pedestrian infrastructure may be less developed in some places, it would be expanded if more people demanded it. That demand is artificially stunted so long as cities deny their citizens from reaping the full benefit of making more frugal choices.

- a - parking area includes space between • symbols
- b - a list of the pertinent sections of each city's municipal code (with links) can be found at: <http://graphingparking.wordpress.com/sources/>
- c - calculations based on a general professional office building with four equal floors of 25,000 square feet each
- * requirements are based on gross leasable area instead of gross square feet; these cities' requirements may be somewhat overstated relative to others
- + no requirements in any commercial zone

This is part three of the five part series documenting parking requirements for various uses across the United States. Much of what was said about the restaurant graph applies here as well. Office building requirements are somewhat less dramatic in both size and variation but not by much. In comparing the three graphs that I have done so far, it is starting to become obvious that there is great inconsistency not only between cities but within each individual city's code. Compare for instance the restaurant requirement versus the office requirement for both Kansas City and Memphis. In examining the restaurant graph, one might assume that Memphis has by far the less onerous minimums. However, in the office graphic above, the roles are strikingly reversed. Other cities are more consistent. Seattle and Milwaukee are good examples.

One thing that has surprised me in this graph is the revelation that the *majority* of large cities exempt their downtowns from these regulations (although many still require parking for other uses such as housing). Unsurprisingly, the most conspicuous exception, Tulsa, recently won *streetsblog's* ignominious "[Golden Crater](#)" award. Obviously there can be very different definitions of what constitutes each city's downtown and so the areas not subject to parking minimums in each city will vary. Clearly, in many of these cities, the relatively small footprint of these exempt areas has failed to achieve the critical mass necessary to create robust transit ridership and fully-functioning pedestrian oriented communities. People need to travel to places outside the central business district in the course of their daily lives. Simply exempting a small area where a large portion of the population works is not sufficient to allow reliable alternatives to the personal vehicle. If transportation choice is not permitted everywhere (or at least in a sufficiently large zone) it will not exist anywhere.

It would be interesting to know if higher parking requirements have an effect on the design of office buildings. Since open office designs fit more people than a similarly sized building with personal offices, one might expect to see more open offices in cities with high requirements in order to avoid having more parking spaces than people. I personally like open office environments, but I don't think that parking should be driving the decision to build them.

I welcome any thoughts you might have to add, and as always, I have provided an editable vector version: [office](#)

Edit: 29 May 2013

Tom Radulovich at Livable City was kind enough to help me make this graph more accurate with respect to San Francisco. He writes:

At this point, a majority of the city by area is subject to Section 151. These districts include most of the city's residential districts (RH and RM) and the majority of the City's neighborhood commercial districts. However, these districts don't permit office development. The only remaining district in Section 151 that permits office is C-2, and most of the remaining C-2 parcels are included in Special Use Districts where the minimum parking requirements are waived, and in the remaining C-2 districts, a waiver from minimums can be granted ministerially.

So it's accurate to say that most housing in San Francisco is still subject to minimum parking requirements (1:1 in most cases), but also that nearly all office development has no minimum requirements.

The intent of the map is to show the minimum parking requirement for what would be considered the typical office building in each city. It seems that in San Francisco that minimum is zero. I have updated the graphic accordingly. Additionally I have added a note clarifying that the absence of a light grey bar in the bar graph indicates that no parking is required for office buildings in that city's downtown.

[Parking Requirements for Restaurants](#)

[6 February 20131](#)

12 EMPLOYEES
2500 FT²

INCLUDING AISLES
6500 FT²

each diner in a full service restaurant requires between 15 - 18 ft² of dining space per seat. (pp. 557)
d - median of cities that use gross square feet to calculate minimum parking

This is part two of the five part series documenting parking minimums for various land uses in cities across the United States. I found the graphs above to be quite stunning and while I was working on them I often had to remind myself that these are not worst case scenarios, these are minimums. Much more so than the previous entry on apartments, this set of graphics illuminates the huge amount of real estate that city governments require to be set aside for parking. The spacial mismatch between cars and people is jarring, and it becomes obvious that creating a humane, walkable urban environment is totally impossible so long as these ordinances stand.

Equally important, the vast discrepancies between different cities' standards begins to emerge more clearly and suggests the haphazardness and lack of clear reasoning behind specific requirements. A couple of comparisons stood out to me in particular. Why, one wonders, does Nashville require over two and a half times the parking of Memphis? Is there really such a vast difference from middle to western Tennessee? What about Pittsburgh vs. Columbus? Perhaps Pittsburgh is inundated with overflow parking while Columbus features perfectly unclogged streets. I've never been to either city, so I must plead ignorance.

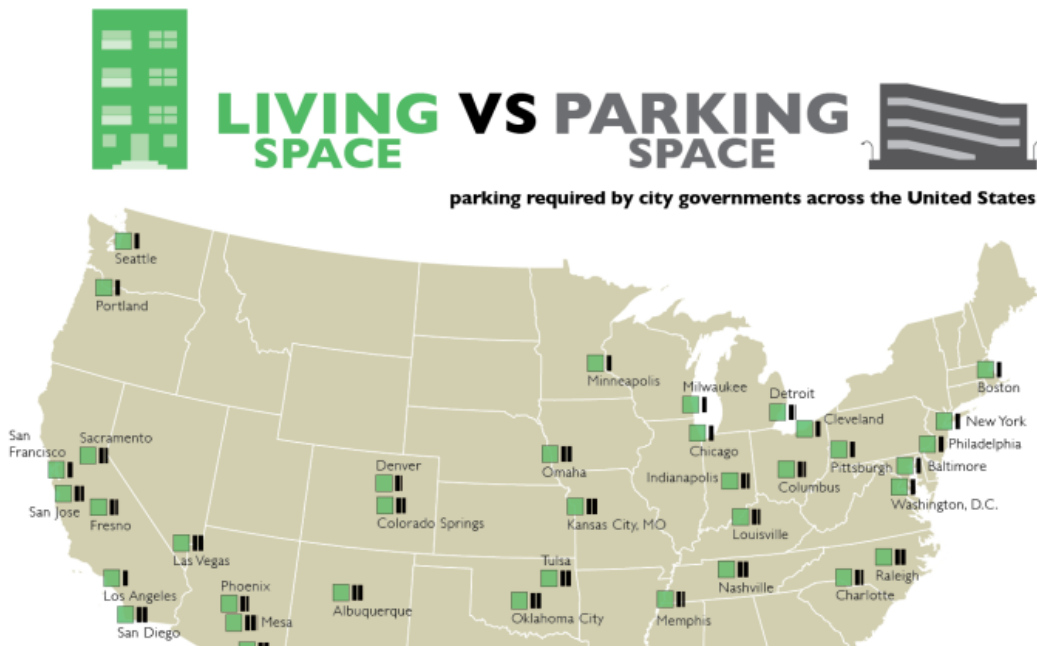
Also notable about parking minimums for restaurants are the different methods by which cities calculate the requirements. I had a hard time trying to make a fair comparison between cities because of this, but I believe that my example is a just representation of a typical restaurant. Nevertheless, if my assumptions about the seating capacity, staffing, or kitchen to dining space ratio are off, it would change the relationships between some cities. The different bases of calculation might discourage or encourage certain kinds of restaurants over others. For example, cities that base their standard on public dining space would put an especially high burden on fine dining establishments that tend to have more dining space per patron than more affordable restaurants. On the other hand, those that count seats might discourage restaurants with high density seating typical of inexpensive diners. It's interesting to note that these alternative methods of calculating minimums (that is, those not based on gross square footage) tend to cluster on the bar graph, suggesting that these cities are copying one another's requirements. They don't however seem to cluster geographically.

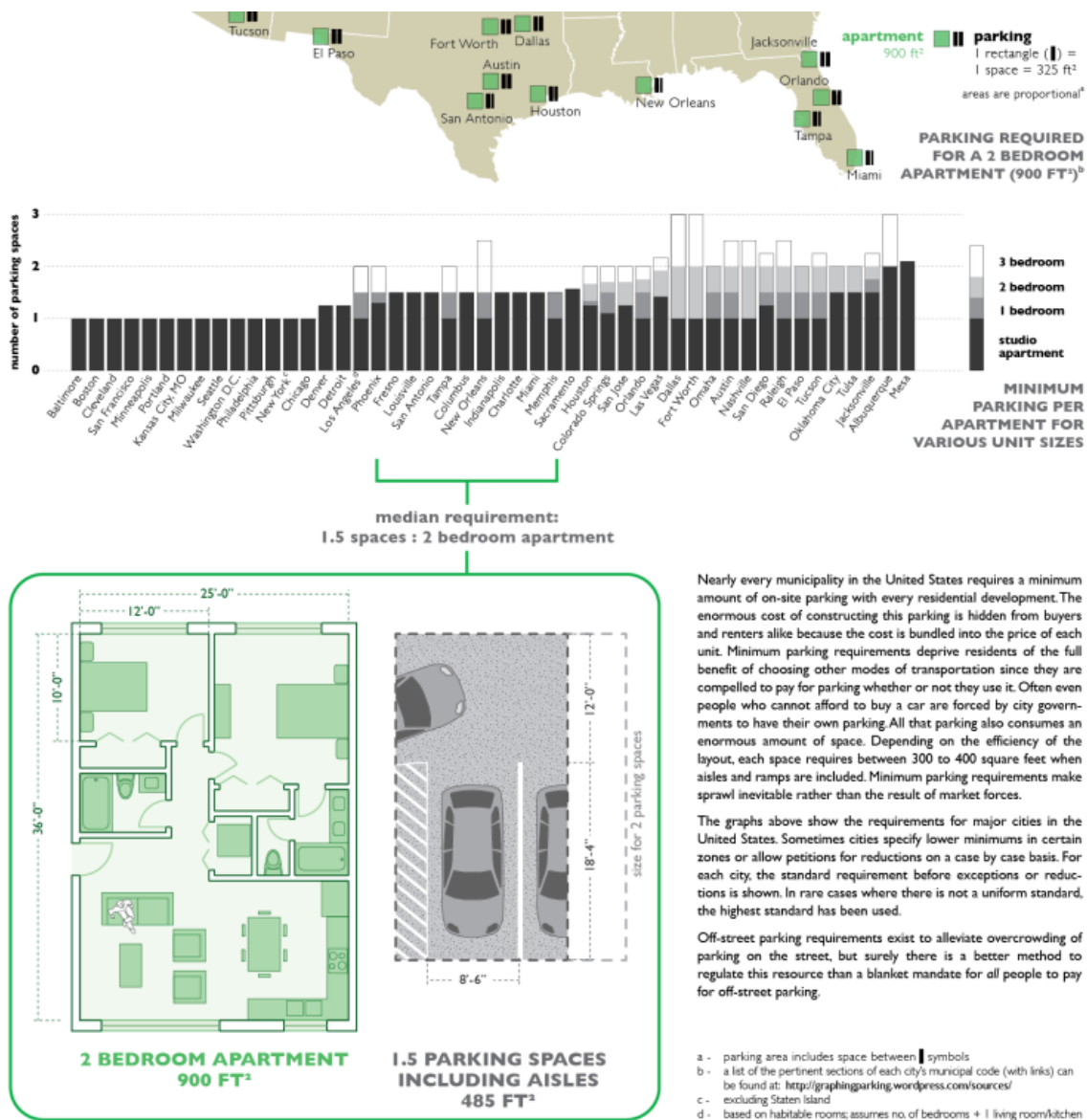
The next installation isn't likely to be ready for quite some time, and I probably won't begin promoting the blog until I have a little more material, but I hope that these first two graphics have been interesting for those who have managed to stumble upon them.

As will always be the case, I offer a vector version (PDF) of the graphic here: [restaurant 2500sf](#)

Residential Parking Requirements

[25 January 2013](#)





This is the first of a five part series. My intention is to demonstrate the prevalence, scale, and inconsistency of parking requirements across the United States for various land uses. This will likely be the least dramatic of the series which will include requirements for restaurants, offices, schools, and places of worship. Even still, this graph starts to reveal regional differences. It also raises questions such as: why would a two bedroom apartment in Omaha need twice the parking as the same apartment in Kansas City, MO? I found the bar graph particularly interesting because cities seem to fall into one of three categories:

- 1) cities that require one parking space per apartment regardless of size
- 2) cities that require about one and a half parking spaces per apartment regardless of size
- 3) cities that have variable requirements but have the most onerous standards for multi-bedroom units

It would seem to me that cities in the first two categories might have a higher prevalence of multi-bedroom units than cities in the third category since the cost of parking could remain constant. One would think that especially in the case of Fort Worth, there would be very few three bedroom apartments. Might there also be an effect on the percentage of families with children that live in multi-unit dwellings? Perhaps young people would be more likely to live with roommates in cities that do not vary their requirements. It would be interesting to test these hypotheses but I'm not sure how to go about that.

Finally, the plans at the bottom of the infographic demonstrate just how big all that parking really is, while hinting at the

opportunity cost of building it. Could the person sitting on the couch have afforded an additional bedroom or study if not for the parking? Maybe a balcony or garden space could have replaced the pavement...

An editable PDF version is available [here](#). I invite you to use it freely but ask that you attribute the work.

Updated: 31 March 2013 to reflect more recent source on Dallas

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