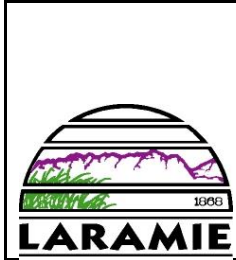


CITY OF LARAMIE COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING October 19, 2021



Agenda Item: Orig. Ordinance - 2nd Reading

Title: Original Ordinance No. 2031 amending Table 15.14.040-3: Off Street parking Standards of Laramie Municipal Code regarding Residential Parking Standards.

Recommended Council MOTION:

Move to **approve** Original Ordinance No. 2031, amending Table 15.14.040-3: Off Street Parking Standards of Laramie Municipal Code, as recommended by the Planning Commission, on second reading, in accordance with findings of fact and conclusions of law.

Administrative or Policy Goal:

Under Section 15.04.050.A the City Manager's Office shall have the authority to review and make recommendations to the appropriate decision making authority for Text Amendments. Under Section 15.06.060.A states the purpose of a text amendment is for the purpose not to relieve particular hardships nor to confer special privileges or rights on any person, but rather to make adjustments to the text of this code that are necessary in light of changed conditions, changes in the comprehensive plan, public policy, or that are necessary to advance the general welfare of the city. As well, under Section 15.02.050 states that this code should be regularly reviewed, evaluated and amended, if necessary, based on private and city economic conditions, vision for the community, changing planning and zoning principles, frequent difficulty in implementing or enforcing any specific standard(s), or changes in the state, federal or case law.

Background:

The present amendment is initiated by the City of Laramie as part of the continual effort to keep the Unified Development Code (UDC) accurate, correct concerns, and remove potential avenues of confusion. All prior revisions to LMC Chapter 15 (Unified Development Code) can be found online at www.cityoflarmie.org/UDC. Additionally, these changes are focused on meeting implementation strategies found in in the 2015 Housing Study, Economic Development Plan and Laramie Housing Strategy 2020; all which are intended to improve the housing options in our community.

The proposed text updates are being proposed to encourage housing affordability. The proposed amendment will decrease the parking requirements in all residential uses that comprise of two or more units. Single family parking requirements will remain the same. Additionally these changes will allow for more sustainable land use practices, remove parking burdens from developers, prepares Laramie UDC for the autonomous automobile technology and public transit..

This Text Amendment is being considered after Planning Commission and Council have participated in work sessions related to Community Builders and the work they have done for the City of Laramie in hopes of combatting the City's housing challenges. These decreases were spurred through national best practices, observations and gathered public comments through the Thrive Laramie Economic and Housing process. In this work, Community Builders has stated that it's reasonable to require new buildings to provide new

parking spaces in neighborhoods where there is not sufficient parking already available, however setting your parking requirements even just a little too high can make it impossible or unaffordable to build many kinds of homes – especially some of the more compact, affordable homes that are needed in Laramie. Simply put, parking competes with leasable space. The more parking required, the fewer units a site can accommodate, and a developer can build. As a result, the developer must charge more rent per unit to make the project financially feasible. These parking changes are one component of the overall approach that the City is taking to improve housing affordability. Future changes to the R2, R2M and R3 zoning districts, as well as these parking changes will complement each other in solving our housing challenges.

Parking is also expensive. These costs can be broken down into two categories. One is the initial cost of constructing parking spaces, which can make or break a small project. A typical surface parking stall costs between \$3,000 and \$10,000 to construct (including the value of the land it occupies). A parking space in a garage can cost \$25,000 to \$50,000 a space. The second of the construction cost is additional costs related to drainage infrastructure and loss of space on the lot for units, meaning that less space can be dedicated to their building square footage. These two construction costs together end up raising rents for the units or monthly mortgage; essentially these costs are passed along to the renter or owner.

Another impact related to parking is the loss a community may feel within what would be the opportunity cost, affecting tax income, housing units, business space or even something as simple as a courtyard that could benefit the neighborhood. Jackson, WY has over 100,000 parking spaces, whose eventual replacement cost is a staggering \$192,000 per household (Quantified Parking: Comprehensive Parking Inventories for Five U.S. Cities, 2018, <https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/more-evidence-that-we-have-too-much-parking>). These high, retrofitting costs will be passed onto the home owner or tenant, increasing our unaffordable housing concern, of which has a direct effect on the sustainability of Laramie's growth.

Other future considerations related to parking must also be considered when considering these changes. Autonomous vehicles are expected to change how parking in cities will be shaped. With cars being able to park themselves with no door having to open, parking lots will need less space. Also, a typical vehicle spends 95 percent of its lifetime "parked", but with autonomous vehicles, a car may drop off a passenger and then park itself at home, rather than taking valuable space in a commercial corridor, downtown, or a large, surface parking lot that could be used as another business or the car may just cruise around in order to avoid paying for parking. It is difficult to imagine this future, but a step in this direction is already here with companies such as Lyft and Uber. Also, vehicle ownership is down, with less and less people, especially younger people opting not to even own a car. While these trend may not be being observed in Laramie at the moment, our reliance on vehicles is changing and we should be prepared.

PROPOSED CHANGES

As shown in the amended table in Attachment A of the ordinance, these changes are only affecting residential developments with two or more units, single family units will remain the same. Code defines multi-family as any property with 3 or more residential units, of which would then require these units to comply with all multi-family design requirements, including parking. These requirements include perimeter landscaping, parking, building design and building layout. No matter how the units are constructed, cottages, apartments, townhomes, etc., they will fall under the multi-family design requirements. Based on these proposed changes, new parking spaces will still be required for any additional units placed on a property, including units added onto existing single-family home properties.

Finally, the proposed parking changes are minimal, but impactful to housing affordability. Changes to two-family units (i.e. duplexes), will now be 1 space per unit vs. by bedroom. In most cases this will not necessarily mean that there will be less parking, as many duplexes currently being built have 2-4 parking spaces per unit, but will now provide the option to create product with less parking. Additionally, staff notes that parking for multi-family will be similar to what we require for single family and two family, except for the added requirement of visitor parking for each development.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

Planning Commission recommended approval of TA-21-01 at the September 13, 2021 meeting with a vote of Aye: 5. Nay: 0. Absent: 2.

Legal/Statutory Authority:

- Laramie Municipal Code: Title 15 (Unified Development Code)
 - Wyoming State Statutes Title 15 Cities and Towns, Article 5 Planning
 - Wyoming State Statutes Title 15 Cities and Towns, Article 6 Zoning
 - Laramie Comprehensive Plan
 - Thrive Laramie Economic Development Plan
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Responsible Staff:

Todd Feezer, Assistant City Manager,
721-5304

Derek Teini, Planning Manager,
721-5245

Future dates are subject to change

Advertised	
Public Hearing (PH) Held	October 19, 2021
PH Advertised	October 2, 2021
Introduction/1 st Reading	October 5, 2021
2 nd Reading	October 19, 2021
3 rd Reading	November 2, 2021

Attachments:

- Proposed Ordinance No. 2031
- Attachment A
- Planning Commission Staff Report (September 13, 2021)
 - Support Letters (6 pages)
 - Community Builder Draft Report (4 pages)
- Additional Public Comments:
 - Freestone Apartments Letter and supporting data (16 pages)