

City of Los Altos Parking Standards

Los Altos
Citywide Parking Committee

Presentation to Planning and Transportation Commission
November 19, 2015

Los Altos Citywide Parking Committee

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Los Altos Parking Standards

Efficient
Layout

Reasonable
Ratios

Shared
Downtown

Parking
Management

Questions Posed by the City Council to the Citywide Parking Committee

Reasonable Ratios

1. Do current parking ratios reflect real parking demand?

Reasonable?
Realistic?

2. How do different types of businesses generate different demands?

Usage
Profiles

3. Are current codes applied consistently?

Consistent?
Objective?

Executive Summary

Reasonable Ratios

1. Existing ratios are not reasonable or realistic.
2. Parking requirements should relate to demand in Los Altos.
3. Codes are not applied consistently. Practices are not objective.
4. Proposed parking ratios and related rules of application are reasonable and support consistent, objective application of the code.

Reasonable?
Realistic?

Usage
Profiles

Consistent?
Objective?

Research - Resources

We reviewed several relevant resources:

City Resources:

**Presentations by City Staff on recent developments;
City reports, memos, studies, City Code;
City-sponsored consultant: studies, reports, memos;
Public comments at Citywide Parking Committee meetings**

Field Resources within Los Altos:

**Site reviews of buildings and parking areas around town;
Aerial photos, public records, on-line documents**

Outside Resources:

**Parking standards of nearby cities, and their codes;
Professional publications**

Reasonable? – Realistic?

Reasonable
Ratios

What is a Parking Ratio?

Number of parking spaces/1,000 square-foot area

How is a parking ratio derived?

Counting parked cars, measuring areas by use.

Variables:

- 1 What spaces are counted, and when?
2. What areas are used and why?

Reasonable? – Realistic?

Reasonable
Ratios

What is a Parking Ratio?

Number of parking spaces/1,000 square-foot area

Variables:

1. What spaces are counted, and when?

Vehicles in parking spaces associated with the buildings, over a statistically relevant period of time.

Statistics are used to adjust for when counts were taken, and to consider circulation, and availability.

2. What areas are used and why?

The relevant area that relates to the usage: gross or net area, excluded area, accuracy of area measurement.

Reasonable? – Realistic?

Reasonable
Ratios

What's reasonable?

How do we reflect real parking demand?

Count spaces that are applicable to the building.

1. How do we count on-site spaces not available to the public?

OK for employees, residents

Not OK for customers, visitors

2. How do we count adjacent on-street public parking spaces?

Not OK for employees, residents

OK for customers, visitors

Count building area that relates to parking demand.

3. Should we not count building area that creates demand?

Must count all relevant area that creates parking demand.

4. Should we allow changes that impact parking?

Reasonable? – Realistic?

Reasonable
Ratios

What's reasonable?

How do we reflect real parking demand?

Examples	Wrong	Right	Units
Office			
Average Peak Occupancy - 158			cars
Area of building	76,400	79,150	sf
<u>Peak Parking Demand</u> – Avg.	2.07	2.00	/Ksf
Min. 1.55 Max. 2.57			
Recommended Ratio	3.33	2.25	/Ksf
Retail			
Average Peak Occupancy - 236.5			cars
Area of building	52,315	66,356	sf
<u>Peak Parking Demand</u> – Avg.	4.52	3.56	/Ksf
Min. 1.50 Max. 3.74			
Recommended Ratio	5.00	3.75	/Ksf

Reasonable? – Realistic?

Reasonable
Ratios

Parking Ratios of Nearby Cities Restaurant

Cupertino	4.00
Palo Alto Downtown	4.00
Burlingame	5.00
Palo Alto Calif. Ave.	6.45
San Carlos	6.67
Los Gatos	8.25
Sunnyvale	9.00
Mountain View	12.40
Saratoga	14.37 equivalent
Los Altos	14.33 equivalent

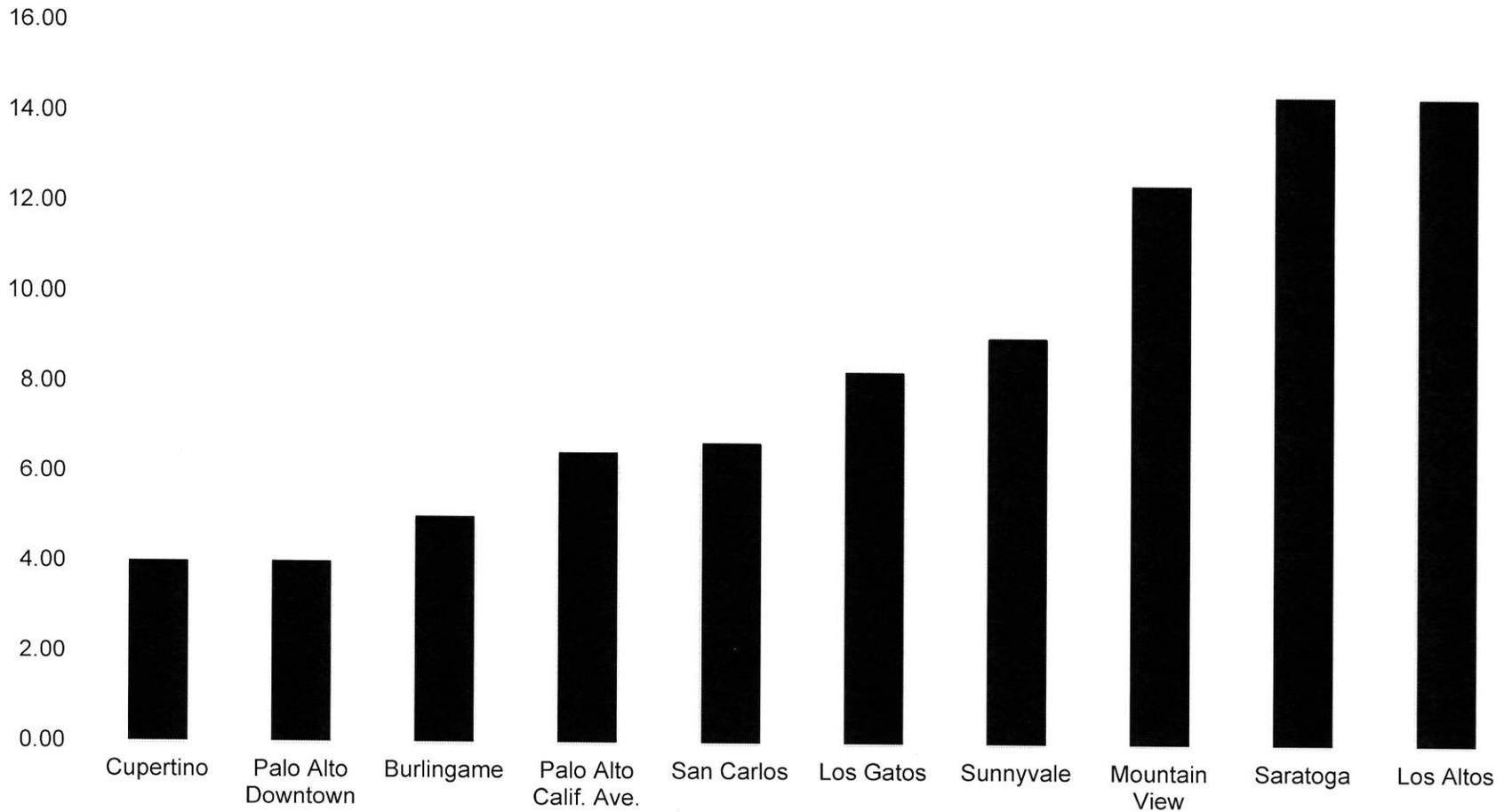
Reasonable? – Realistic?

Reasonable
Ratios

Parking Ratios of Nearby Cities

Restaurant

Parking spaces/1,000 sf



Usage Profiles

Reasonable Ratios

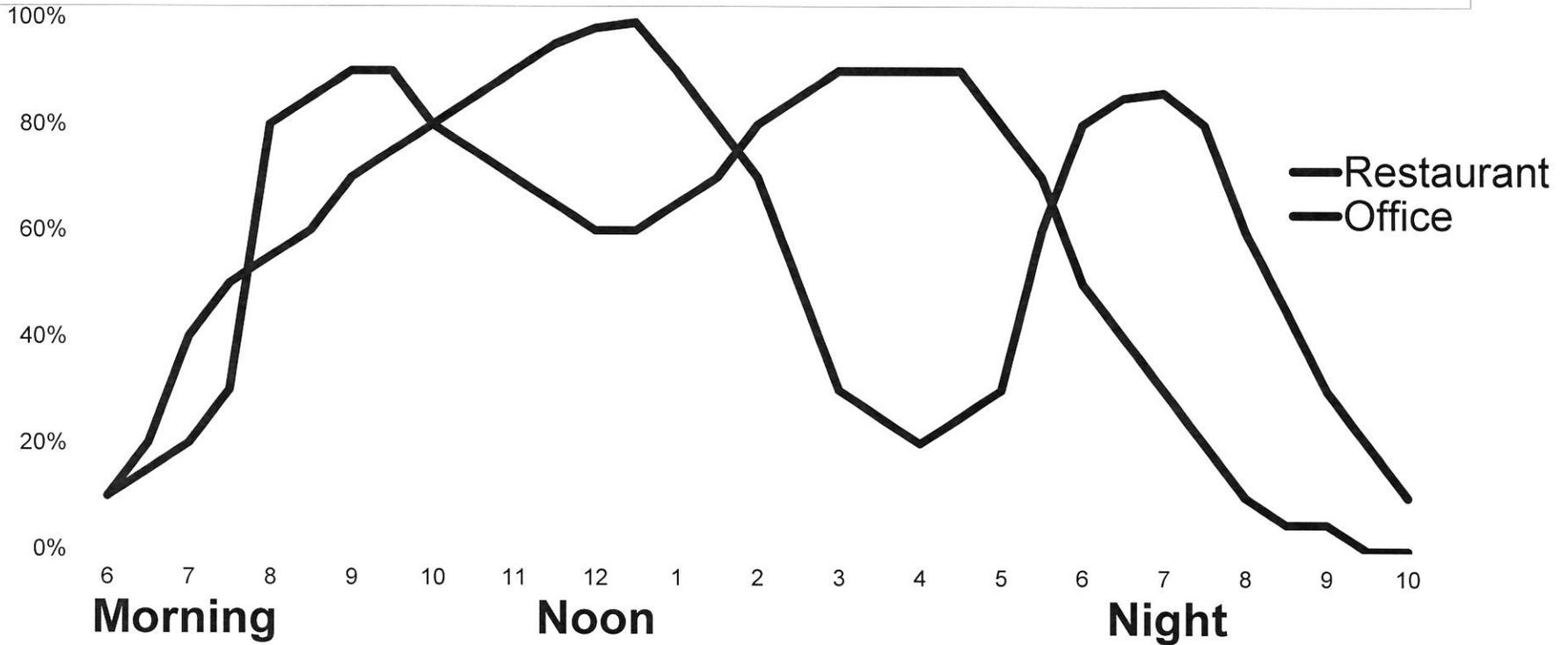
Current Conditions

<u># Type of Use</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Practice</u>	
	<u>Stand Alone</u>	<u>Stand Alone</u>	<u>Shared Parking</u>
1.a) Retail - Extensive	2.00	2.00	2.00
1.b) Retail - Intensive	5.00	5.00	2.86
1.c) Retail - Loyola Cor.	3.33	3.33	3.33
2) Service	5.00	5.00	2.86
3) Restaurant (equiv.)	14.00	5.19	3.03
4) Office	3.33	3.33	2.86
5) Grocery	5.00	3.38	
6) Clinic	3.33	3.33	
7) Hotel (by room)	*	1.00	0.50

Usage Profiles Time of Use – Compatible Mix

Reasonable
Ratios

Shared Parking – Ideal Mix



Each category has a unique usage profile over time.

Many office workers leave the office for lunch or dinner.

Consistent? Objective?

Reasonable
Ratios

The Parking Code lacks specific detail

Interpretations are made.

Interpretations can become subjective or appear subjective.

This may result in inconsistent applications of the parking code.

Examples:

Intensive vs. Extensive Retail

Parking District interpretation of 100% F.A.R exemption

Literal code interpretation

Parking credit as retail

Parking credit as restaurant

Changes in Use

Retail becomes office

Retail becomes restaurant

Consistent? Objective?

Reasonable
Ratios

Examples

Intensive vs. Extensive Retail

LAC 14.02.070 – Definitions

1. "Extensive retail" as used with respect to parking requirements, means a retail use primarily selling large commodities such as home or office furniture, floor coverings, stoves, refrigerators, other household electrical and gas appliances, including televisions and home sound systems, and outdoor furniture, such as lawn furniture, movable spas and hot tubs.

2. "Intensive retail" as used with respect to parking requirements, means any retail use not defined as an extensive retail use.

BevMo – sells beverages and more – **all defined as Intensive.**

Consistent? Objective?

Reasonable
Ratios

Examples in Parking District

Parking District interpretation of 100% F.A.R exemption

Hotel

Literal code interpretation

Parking credit as retail (5/1,000 sf)

Parking credit as restaurant

Under-parked by 11 spaces

Adequately parked

Over-parked

Restaurant (2,500 sf)

Literal code interpretation

Parking credit as retail (5/1,000 sf)

Parking credit as restaurant

* Counting outdoor seating

Adequately parked*

Under-parked by 24 spaces

Adequately parked**

Under parked by

of outdoor seats/3

**Not counting outdoor seating

Adequately parked

Consistent? Objective?

Reasonable
Ratios

Examples not in Parking District

Changes in Use

Retail becomes Office

Mixed-use Retail/Office/Residential (not in Parking District)

Permit Application – 1st Floor Retail (5/1,000 sf)

Occupancy – 1st Floor converted into Office (3.33/1,000 sf)

Over-parked, yet under-parked per Code by 26 spaces at time of application, and by 5 spaces after conversion to office.

Inner Court and Atrium area gets filled in for Office use.

Increased usable area increases parking demand.

Most on-site parking is behind closed gate – not available to the public
Most convenient parking is on the adjacent Parking District Plaza.

Impacts public parking on the Parking District Plaza.

Consistent? Objective?

Reasonable
Ratios

Examples not in Parking District

Changes in Use

Retail becomes Restaurant

Mixed use Retail/Office (not in Parking District)

Permit Application – 1st Floor Retail (5/1,000)

Occupancy – 1st Floor Restaurant (14/1,000 equiv.) plus Retail

Under-parked by 54 spaces per current Code requirements

On-site office parking behind closed gate is not available to the public.

Most convenient parking is on the adjacent Parking District Plaza.

Impacts public parking on the Parking District Plaza.

Reasonable Range of Parking Ratios For Los Altos

Reasonable Ratios

#	Type of Use	Reasonable Range
1.a)	Retail – Extensive	2.00 - 4.00
1.b)	Retail – Intensive	3.50 - 4.00
2)	Service	3.00 - 5.00
3)	Restaurant	8.00 -10.00
4)	Office	2.00 - 3.00
5)	Grocery	3.00 - 4.00
6)	Med. Clinic/Dental Off.	4.00 - 6.00
7)	Hotel (by room)	0.50 - 1.00

plus Hotel Conference & Public Restaurant per Restaurant ratios above

Proposed Parking Ratios for Los Altos

Reasonable Ratios

#	Type of Use	Reasonable Range	Stand Alone	Shared Parking	
				10% NCC	20% Dwntn
1.a)	Retail – Extensive	2.00 - 4.00	3.00	N/A	N/A
1.b)	Retail – Intensive	3.50 - 4.00	3.75	3.38	3.00
2)	Service	3.00 - 5.00	4.00	3.60	3.20
3)	Restaurant	8.00 -10.00	9.00	8.10	7.20
4)	Office	2.00 - 3.00	2.50	2.25	2.00
5)	Grocery	3.00 - 4.00	3.50	3.15	N/A
6)	Med. Clinic/Dental Off.	4.00 - 6.00	5.00	4.50	4.00
7)	Hotel (by area)	1.00 - 3.00	2.00	1.70	1.60
	or Hotel by Room	0.50 – 1.00	1.00	0.90	0.80

plus Hotel Conference & Public Restaurant per Restaurant ratios above

Conclusions

Reasonable Ratios

Reasonable? Realistic?

1. Proposed parking ratios are reasonable and reflect real parking demand.

Usage Profiles

2. The proposed ratios, properly applied, respect how different types of businesses generate different demands.

Optimizing the mix: increases shared parking, reduces parking demand, and decreases unnecessary traffic.

Consistent? Objective?

3. Proposed parking ratios are:
 - consistent with a village or small-town character;
 - more realistic, reducing need for exceptions, variances;
 - more specific, for consistent and objective application.

Recommendations

**Reasonable
Ratios**

Reasonable & Realistic

1. Approve the proposed parking ratios along with associated application rules, as described in the Parking Ratios Report.

Usage Profiles

2. Encourage as policy an optimum mix of uses that tend to:
 flatten the parking demand curve during peak usage
 and encourage shared public parking use.

Consistent & Objective

3. Direct the City Attorney to revise the City Code to include the approved parking ratios and unambiguous rules for application of those parking ratios.

The Citywide Parking Committee

Thanks:

City Councilmembers Jeannie Bruins and Jean Mordo

for oversight to the Citywide Parking Committee;

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Los Altos Village Association (LAVA), & Chamber of

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The Planning and Transportation Commission

for review and consideration of our work;

The City Council (next)

for review, consideration, and deliberation of our work.