

**DEPARTMENT OF  
CITY PLANNING**

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(213) 978-1300

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200 N. SPRING STREET, ROOM 525  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-4801  
(213) 978-1271

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Effective Date: October 24, 2019

**EXHIBIT A  
ADVISORY NOTICE RELATIVE TO ABOVE-GRADE PARKING**

TO: PROJECT APPLICANTS WITH ABOVE-GRADE PARKING  
FROM: THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
EFFECTIVE DATE:

**APPLICABILITY AND INTENT OF THIS NOTICE:**

This notice serves to advise applicants of the Commission's concerns on the potential impact that parking facilities, and especially above-grade parking, can have on the quality of the public realm and the pedestrian environment. To address these concerns, the Commission has outlined below a set of strategies, for projects that include above-grade parking, that should be considered during the project design phase.

**BACKGROUND:**

As Los Angeles transitions from an auto-oriented metropolis to a more transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly city, few design features can so easily detract from a vibrant public realm as above-grade parking. Parking podium design demands concerted attention from the Commission to make structured parking consistent with the City's three design approaches that serve as the basis for the updated Citywide Design Guidelines: Pedestrian-First Design, 360 Degree Design, and Climate-Adapted Design.

- Pedestrian-First Design | Project designs should be configured to promote an active public realm with "eyes on the street" to enhance safety, economic vitality, and the quality of public space. Parking podiums physically separate residents and commercial users, do not promote an active street, and detract from the ability of pedestrians to fully engage with more active uses in the built environment. Multiple curb cuts and driveways to access above-grade garages interrupt safe sidewalk paths for pedestrians, compromising the City's goal to eliminate pedestrian fatalities and collisions.

- 360 Degree Design | All sides of a building matter and new projects should thoughtfully relate to their surrounding context, in all directions. Exposed parking podium levels may negatively impact neighboring uses, directing views of car headlights and noise from turning movements into nearby residences or businesses. Above-grade and podium-style parking has also often resulted in blank facades that can appear as a single uninviting mass, creating an imposing visual relationship to its surrounding community.
- Climate-Adapted Design | The design of above-grade parking facilities should carefully consider energy performance, the unique Mediterranean climate of Southern California, and future adaptability to other uses. Design treatments that reduce visual impacts of parking, such as fully enclosing above-grade garages, may involve environmental trade-offs by requiring mechanical ventilation.

In particular, to help address the updated Citywide Design Guideline #5, “Express a clear and coherent architectural idea,” the spatial mass of structured parking should also be incorporated into a project’s design in a way that it becomes a cohesive element of the overall design strategy. Parking podiums that are wider and/or deeper than a project’s overall structure can draw undesired visual attention to the parking and undermine the public realm.

**DIRECTION FOR PROJECT APPLICANTS:**

The strategies described below shall be used to guide applicants during project development with respect to the extent, placement, design, and environmental performance of all on-site parking. Particular attention should be given to ensure that projects are designed in a uniform and cohesive manner, inclusive of any parking elements.

**Priority Parking Strategies:**

1. Minimize the amount of parking provided, utilizing available zoning tools and incentives, including Density Bonus incentives, Transit Oriented Communities incentives, and the City’s bicycle parking ordinance. Consider automated parking as a tool to reduce the amount of physical space required by the parking.
2. Place all project parking below ground.

**Above-Grade Parking Design Strategies:**

All projects that include above-grade parking will be reviewed by the Department of City Planning’s Urban Design Studio for design feedback. The Project Planner shall share the

feedback with the applicant team. The application of the following strategies will be evaluated:

- Fully integrate parking into the design and form of the project. The parking should reflect the overall design intent of the project and should not be recognizable as parking during either day or nighttime hours.
  
- Minimize the visibility of parking:
  - Buffer parking from view by wrapping the parking with active uses such as office and/or residential spaces. On larger sites with multiple buildings, isolate the parking in a single stand-alone structure internal to the site, surrounded by other uses.
  
  - Where it is not possible or desirable to wrap the parking with active uses (e.g., due to proximity to a freeway, an industrial use, or alley), the parking should not be expressed as a separate element but instead should be concealed with visually opaque materials or treatments.
  
- To facilitate the future adaptive reuse of a parking garage, incorporate flat floor levels along with the future structural needs and potential floor-to-ceiling heights when designing and engineering parking garages.
  
- If a parking structure has a top deck, incorporate green roofs, solar panels, or open space amenities.