

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 11/03/08		Item Number: <u>A-5</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: Authorize the Preparation of an Amendment to Zoning Code Section 17.220.035, Commercial Downtown District Requirements, of the Culver City Municipal Code to Increase the Quantitative Parking Requirement for Restaurants in Downtown Culver City.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Thomas Gorham Todd Tipton		Phone Number: (310) 253-5727 and 5783.	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☒ No ☐	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒	Attachments: ☒
Public Notification: Master E-Mail Notification List (10/22/08) (10/29/08); the Downtown Business Association on (10/22/08); downtown Culver City property and business owners on 10/17/08; and, the Chamber of Commerce on (10/22/08).			
Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld (10/22/08)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (10/22/08)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (by M. Noller) (10/22/08)		City Manager Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (10/22/08)	

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council consider a possible amendment of Section 17.220.035, Commercial Downtown District Requirements, of the Culver City Municipal Code ("CCMC") to increase the parking requirements for restaurants in downtown Culver City ("Downtown").

BACKGROUND:

The Downtown revitalization has created more parking demand than is supported by the current area parking supply. Over the last five years a number of restaurants have been opened and many include significant outdoor dining areas. Zoning Code Section 17.220.035, Commercial Downtown (CD) District Requirements, specifies the number of parking spaces required for restaurants.

The existing requirement for restaurants is the same as that for retail which is one parking space for each 400 square feet of gross floor area. This parking requirement does not include outdoor dining area. Staff believes the new restaurants and related outdoor dining areas have increased the demand for parking in downtown.

Most of the recent downtown revitalization has occurred through the rehabilitation of existing buildings located on lots where it is infeasible to provide additional on-site parking. The restaurant parking has been permitted under the pooled parking program in Section 17.320.025.C of the

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Zoning Code. The pooled parking program was created to spur downtown reinvestment as part of the "Downtown Overlay Zone" adopted in the mid 1990's and enabled new uses to rely on the public parking in the downtown area to meet their code required parking.

In late 2005, these requirements were incorporated into the new Commercial Downtown (CD) zoning district when Title 17 of the CCMC underwent a comprehensive revision. Currently any new use (restaurant or retail) taking over a tenant space can utilize the pooled parking so long as the use is not increasing the square footage of the tenant space.

DISCUSSION:

Since 2005 there has been dramatic reinvestment in the downtown with a corresponding increase in parking demand. The total number of parking spaces in the downtown is approximately 1750.

In order to balance the supply and demand of downtown parking, staff recommends that parking requirements be reevaluated. Some of the issues to consider in potential changes to the parking requirements of the CD zone include:

- Outdoor dining area is currently exempt from parking requirements, although in some cases these areas exceed the indoor dining space.
- The downtown parking requirements are less restrictive than other areas of the City.
- The downtown has parking demand that changes during the day and evening hours, creating excessive parking demand in the evening when the restaurants are most heavily used.
- Restaurants, with higher parking demand, generally "outbid" other uses such as retail, creating a scarcity of retail in the downtown.
- Modification of the pooled parking program.

The City Council has authorized a study of downtown parking supply and demand, however, completion of the study is not expected until June 2009. The parking study, which will take several months to complete, will evaluate parking operations, curb parking, public parking structures and the special parking needs of the studios and downtown employers. Due to the rate at which parking spaces availability appears to be decreasing, staff recommends the potential changes identified above be considered now.

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This trend toward increased restaurant use also forecloses the opportunities to attract alternative uses since most downtown parking must now be provided under the pooled parking program with a limited downtown parking supply. The City should evaluate whether creating a broader mix of downtown uses is desired and whether more restrictive parking standards for restaurants can help achieve this objective.

To address the above concerns, staff believes the parking requirement for downtown restaurants should be the same as those in other areas of the City. In other areas of the City restaurants that are equal to or less than 1,500 square feet require one parking space for each 350 square feet of gross floor area and restaurants that are greater than 1,500 square feet require one parking space for each 100 square feet of gross floor area.

Further, these standards should include all dining gross floor area whether it is inside or outside of the building. In addition, modifications to the pooled parking program should be considered to address restaurant parking issues.

Should the Council authorize the preparation of an amendment to Section 17.220.035, Commercial Downtown District Requirements, of the Culver City Municipal Code to increase the quantitative parking requirements for restaurants in downtown Culver City, such Ordinance will first be presented to the Planning Commission for recommendation to the City Council.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

If the quantitative parking requirement for restaurants is increased and the pooled parking provisions are modified to address restaurant parking issues, the number of restaurants will be limited as few existing buildings have sufficient parking to satisfy the proposed quantitative requirement.

Because few new restaurants would open, staff proposes to maintain existing revenues by pursuing high quality, unique retail businesses. Staff believes the addition of unique, high quality retail businesses will diversify Downtown economically, maximize revenues, increase dwell time and create a complete experience for patrons.

For your information, staff has attached a matrix from the HDL Companies that depicts the amount of sales tax generated by various retail businesses.

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ATTACHMENT:

1. 2007 Retail store taxable sales estimates from HDL Companies.

MOTION:

That the Culver City Council:

Direct staff to prepare an amendment to Section 17.220.035, Commercial Downtown District Requirements, of the Culver City Municipal Code to increase the quantitative parking requirements for restaurants in downtown Culver City.