

Bicycle Parking Standards

Philadelphia, PA

By Neha Bhatt and Michael Ryan

If you build it they will come. So goes the adage, and cities are finding it to be true even in the case of bicycle parking. Bike parking provides access to shopping, services, jobs and amenities. It draws people and in many places has become an indicator of a healthy street or neighborhood. Supplying convenient and safe bike parking can also relieve pressures on transit vehicles and ease car parking demand. More and more communities have started to incorporate bike parking standards into their zoning codes to encourage cycling.



Bike parking in a garage in Fairfax County, VA. Image from www.fairfaxcounty.gov

Philadelphia, PA is one of these communities. In 2009, it amended its zoning code to include bike parking standards for new developments and major renovations. New commercial, multi-family residential, recreation, hotel, and transit-adjacent properties are now required to provide secure and convenient bike parking compliant with specific design and location standards. The requirements apply to projects that are new developments, changes in the use of an existing building, and building additions greater than 10% of the gross floor area. Additionally, recognizing that bike parking significantly expands capacity using the same amount of space required by one automobile, the zoning regulation states that for every five bicycle parking spaces provided, the car parking requirement on that project may be reduced by one space (allowing up to a 10% reduction of the overall car parking requirement). The final regulations were adopted in 2011 and are summarized below.

Philadelphia’s bike parking ordinance: <http://legislation.phila.gov/attachments/6057.pdf>

Bike parking requirements in Philadelphia	
Commercial, office, retail	2 plus 15% of the total number of car parking spaces
Multiple-family buildings	1 per every 3 units
Schools	1 per every 3 students
Hotels and temporary lodging	1 per every 5 units
Transit centers and park and ride lots	35% of the total number of car parking spaces
Public or commercial recreation uses	35% of the total number of car parking spaces



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

BILL NO. 090125

Introduced February 26, 2009

Councilmembers Reynolds Brown and Kenney

**Referred to the
Committee on Rules**

AN ORDINANCE

Amending Title 14 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Zoning and Planning," by amending Chapter 14-1400, entitled "Parking and Loading Facilities," by adding a new Section providing for bicycle parking, under certain terms and conditions.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 14-1400 of The Philadelphia Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

TITLE 14. ZONING AND PLANNING.

* * *

CHAPTER 14-1400. PARKING AND LOADING FACILITIES.

* * *

§ 14-1401. General Provisions.

* * *

(4) Bicycle Parking.

(a) Definitions. In this Section, the following definitions shall apply:

(.1) Bicycle Parking Space. A single space provided for locking a single bicycle to a rack element or in a bicycle storage facility.

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(.2) Bicycle Rack. One or more rack elements joined on any common base or arranged in a regular array and fastened to a common mounting service.

(.3) Bicycle Storage Facility. A shed, storage room, locker or similar facility designed to hold one or more bicycles.

(.4) Rack Element. The part of a bicycle rack that supports one bicycle.

(b) Required Bicycle Parking. Bicycle parking shall be provided for any new building, any change in use, or any addition or extension that increases the area of an existing building by more than ten (10) percent of the gross floor area. Such parking shall be provided in accordance with the following requirements:

(.1) Commercial, industrial, office, retail or service uses. Two (2) spaces plus fifteen (15) percent of the total number of motor vehicle parking spaces required;

(.2) Multiple-family dwellings. One space for every three (3) units;

(.3) Public or commercial recreation uses. Thirty-five (35) percent of the total number of motor vehicle parking spaces required;

(.4) Schools. One (1) space for every three (3) students;

(.5) Park and ride lots and transit centers. Thirty-five (35) percent of the total number of motor vehicle parking spaces required;

(.6) Hotels, apartment hotels, motels and similar types of temporary lodging. One (1) space for every five (5) units.

(c) Location of Bicycle Parking Spaces.

(.1) Bicycle parking spaces may be located on bicycle racks or within bicycle storage facilities, parking lots or parking garages.

(.2) All required bicycle parking shall be located on an accessible route as defined by the Philadelphia Building Code.

(.3) All required bicycle parking spaces on the exterior of a building shall be located within fifty (50) feet of the primary entrance to the building, unless the Planning Commission determines that this requirement would result in excessive

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sidewalk clutter or constitute an impediment to pedestrian circulation. In such a case, some or all of the required bicycle parking spaces may be located farther than fifty (50) feet from the primary entrance, provided there is convenient access from such spaces to building entrances that are typically open to the intended users of the bicycle parking.

(.4) Bicycle parking spaces located in attended parking lots or garages shall be located adjacent to the attendant's booth or in an area under constant surveillance.

(.5) Bicycle racks may be placed in the public right-of-way to achieve the required number of bicycle parking spaces, provided that the building owner enters into a maintenance agreement for such racks with the Department of Streets and has obtained all necessary permits for the installation.

(d) Standards.

(.1) All bicycle racks and bicycle storage facilities shall be anchored securely to the ground or the building structure to prevent them from being removed from the location.

(.2) The surfacing of bicycle storage facilities shall be designed and maintained to be mud and dust free. The use of rock or gravel areas for bicycle parking is permitted provided the edging materials, such as landscape timbers, are used so that the bicycle parking area is clearly demarcated and the rock or gravel material is contained.

(.3) Bicycle parking shall be sufficiently separated from motor vehicle parking areas to protect parked bicycles from damage from motor vehicles. The separation may be accomplished through grade separation, distance or physical barrier, such as curbs, wheel stops, poles or other similar features.

(.4) Required bicycle parking spaces shall be at least two (2) feet by six (6) feet per bicycle.

(.5) An aisle, a minimum of five (5) feet wide, shall be provided behind bicycle parking to allow for maneuvering.

(.6) Sufficient space, a minimum of twenty-four (24) inches, shall be provided beside each parked bicycle to allow access. This access may be shared by adjacent bicycles.

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(.7) Bicycle racks shall be installed a minimum of twenty-four (24) inches from any wall or other obstruction.

(.8) The design of all bicycle racks and bicycle storage facilities must be submitted to and approved by the Planning Commission.

(e) Security.

(.1) Rack elements shall support the bicycle frame at two locations, prevent the wheel of the bicycle from tipping over, and enable the frame and one or both wheels to be secured with a user-supplied locking device. Rack elements that support a bicycle primarily by a wheel, such as standard wire racks are damaging to wheels and are not permitted.

(.2) Bicycle storage facilities shall provide tamper-proof locks. When multiple bicycles are stored together, provisions shall be made for locking individual bicycles.

(f) Substitution. For every five (5) bicycle parking spaces that are provided on a lot, the number of required off-street motor vehicle parking spaces, with the exception of handicapped parking spaces, may be reduced by one space, provided the reduced number of spaces does not exceed ten (10) percent of the total number of required spaces on the lot.

SECTION 2. This Ordinance shall become effective on January 1, 2010.

Explanation:

Italics indicate new matter added.