Prepared for

CAPITAL CITY DEVELOPMENT CORP

BOISE, IDAHO

PARKING STRUCTURE

Design Guidelines

FINAL

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Expect More. Experience Better.

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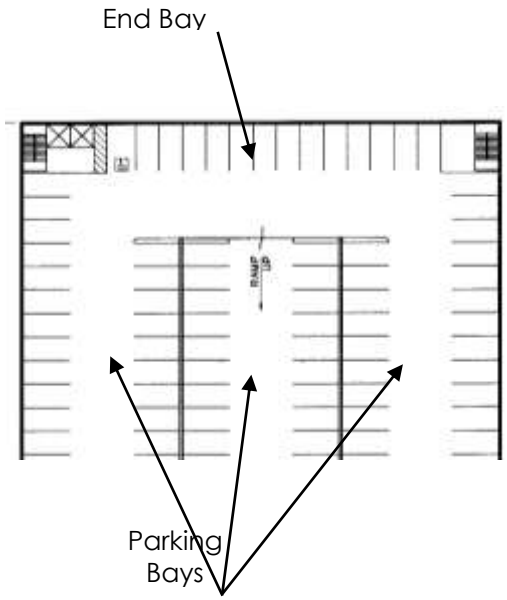
Acknowledgement: This document was originally created by Carl Walker, Inc. in 2008. CCDC requested that Kimley-Horn update this document to incorporate changes in industry standards and practices especially in the areas of sustainable design best practices.

4. Site Requirements

Large and rectangular shaped sites are ideal for parking structures. Although flat sites are generally more economical to develop, sloped sites can provide design opportunities such as access on different levels and/or no ramping between levels. For a reasonably efficient parking layout, double-loaded parking "bays" range in width from about 54 to 60 feet, depending upon the angle of parking and the width of the parking space. The overall width of the structure should be determined based upon multiples of the chosen parking bay width. An ideal length for a parking structure is at least 240 feet. Longer sites provide the opportunity to park along the end bays, which provides more parking spaces, improves efficiency, and lowers the cost per space. A longer site also allows for shallower ramps which provide improved user comfort.

Generally, parking bays should be oriented parallel to the longer dimension of the site and preferably in the predominate direction of pedestrian travel. Walking distance tolerances from parking to a primary destination are typically 200 to 300 feet for shoppers, 500 to 800 feet for downtown employees, and 1,500 to 2,000 feet for special event patrons and students.



5. Site Constraints

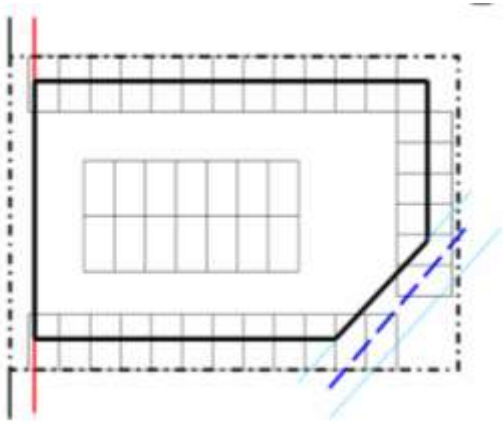
Other site issues to be considered when evaluating a potential site for a suitable parking facility include the following:

- Site Survey – a topographic survey of the site is a very important precursor to develop a conceptual plan. The site survey should delineate property lines, easements, and utility lines.

- Site Slope – The topographic information will define the slope of the site. Sometimes the slope of a site can utilized to reduce internal ramping in a parking structure, resulting in significantly lower costs (however, this should be weighed against operational concerns created by the inability to circulate within the structure). A parking structure that is built into a hillside can also reduce the visual mass of the facility.

- Geotechnical & Soils – Obtaining a soils report with sample borings and a geotechnical analysis early in the design process is prudent. If soils with poor bearing capacity are present on the site, the added cost for structural foundations can be significant.

- Codes and Ordinances – Municipal ordinances often specify setbacks, building height and bulk limitations, floor area ratio to site area, etc. that can significantly affect the allowable area on a site for a parking structure. The local planning organization may also impose development guidelines that must be followed.



6. Concept Design

Much of the remainder of these guidelines addresses issues and elements of parking structures that should be considerations during the conceptual design phase.

Parking Structures for People

An overall design principal to keep in mind is that parking structures are for people. Designing to accommodate the users of a particular structure will help produce a better parking structure.

- Different user types will have different needs
- Some user types may need to be physically separated to ensure revenue control or for security reasons
- Different users require different pedestrian circulation systems
- Parking space widths and circulation geometry needs vary depending on the user type.
- Some vehicular circulation systems are better for specific user types:
    - Residential – Regular users enter and exit two times a day.
    - Education – May have peak loads in and out.
    - Hotel – Overnight guests, maybe event parking too.
    - Office – Low turnover. Regular users enter and exit two times a day.
    - Health Care Visitors – Wayfinding very important. Need to accommodate elderly drivers and passengers.
    - Health Care Staff – Shift time overlap and loading. Security issues, particularly at night.
    - Retail – High turnover. Occasional users - wayfinding to and from vehicle.
    - Elderly or Families with Small Children – Wayfinding again important. May need larger spaces and more elevators.

- Events – Easy quick loading and unloading of structure. Multiple vehicular paths. Consider revenue collection methods, typically a flat fee on entry. Provide queuing space. Consider pedestrian flow to event - avoid crossing traffic.
- Multiuse Garages – These guidelines focus on parking garage design for downtown Boise. Most of the garages in downtown will serve at least two user groups – short-term and long-term parkers – and may serve many other user groups. This is due to the fact that future garages will be located in activity centers that include office, entertainment, special event, restaurants, retail, lodging, and residential land uses – all of which have different parking characteristics. Attention should be given to creating entry, exit, and circulation designs that are flexible and adaptable to particular situations. Dual exit lanes that allow parkers with passes to exit quickly without having to wait in line with parkers who are paying should be considered to lower frustration levels for customers.

7. Circulation and Ramping

The basic circulation element for a parking structure is the continuous ramp with parking on both sides of the drive aisle. In continuous ramp structures, some of the parking floors are sloped in order for traffic to circulate from one level to another. Only on a sloping site that permits direct access to each level from the exterior roadways are ramps unnecessary; but they still may be desirable for internal circulation.

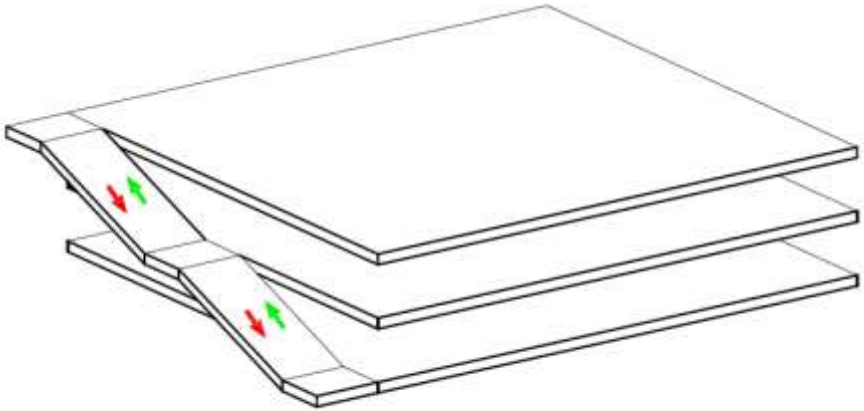
The basic criteria for choosing a circulation system are the simplicity or complexity of the system and the architectural compatibility. Ingress and egress capacities are also a consideration in the selection of a circulation system. Some circulation systems provide the opportunity for level façades which may be desirable.

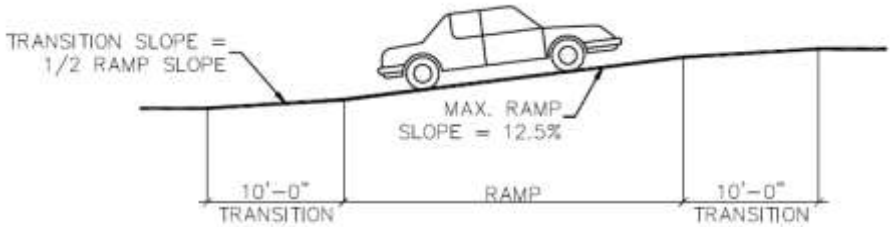
A parking ramp slope of 5% or less is preferred, although parking ramp slopes up to 7% are tolerated by the public in very dense urban areas. Parking ramp slopes should not exceed a 6.67% slope, which is the maximum parking slope permitted in the International Building Code (IBC). The acceptable ramp slope must also conform to the current Boise City Building Code.

Non-parking ramps are often employed at airports, casinos, large retail structures, for special event structures, and on small and irregularly shaped sites. Non-parking ramps consist of circular helixes (most common), express ramps (external), and speed ramps (internal). Non-parking ramp slopes should have a maximum slope in the 12% to 14% range. Non-parking ramp slopes up to 20% are sometimes considered if covered or equipped with snow melt systems.

Parking structures with non-parking ramps tend to be less efficient in terms of square feet of structure per parking space which directly increases the construction cost per parking space.

A grade difference of 8% or more requires transition slopes so vehicles do not "bottom out". Recommended are minimum 10'-0" transition slopes at the top and bottom of the ramp that are one-half of the differential slope. For instance, two 10'-0" transition ramps sloped at 6.25% would be required at the bottom and the top of a ramp sloped at 12.5%.





8. One-Way vs. Two-Way Traffic

One of the primary factors in the design of parking structure is determining the traffic flow: one-way or two-way. Typically, a parking bay for a one-way traffic flow is narrower than for a two-way flow. The available site dimensions will influence the parking bay width and thus also influence the circulation pattern. There are advantages and disadvantages to both circulation patterns. One-way traffic flow should never be combined with 90° parking. In parking facilities with one-way traffic flow, the angle of the parking stalls establishes the direction of vehicle traffic.

Advantages of One-Way Traffic Flow:

- Easier for parkers to enter/exit parking spaces.
- Vehicles are more likely to be centered in angled spaces.
- Less circulation conflict and reduced potential for accidents.
- Better visibility when backing out of a stall.
- Separation of inbound and outbound traffic and improved flow capacity of the circulation system.
- The intended traffic flow is self-enforcing.
- One-way traffic allows the angle of parking to be changed to accommodate changes in vehicle sizes.

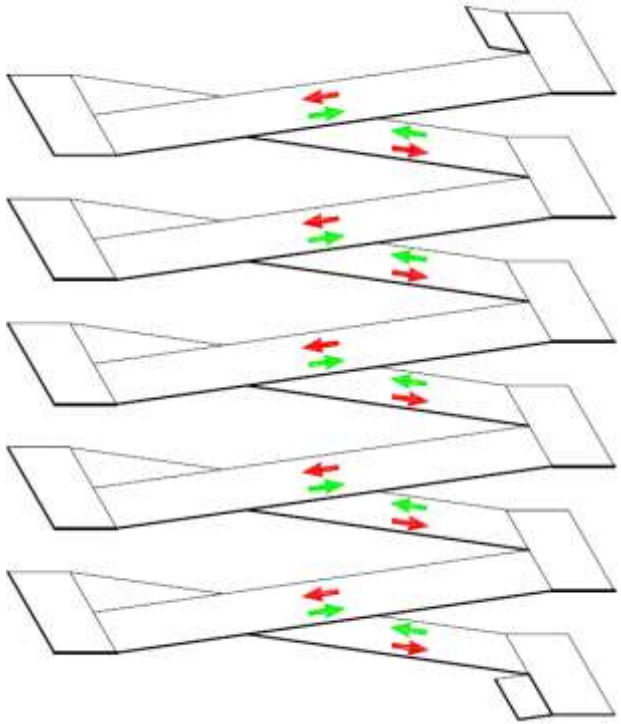
Advantages of Two-Way Traffic Flow:

- Wider drive aisles allow parkers to pass other vehicles.
- Wider drive aisles are safer for pedestrians.
- Better angle of visibility when searching for a parking space.
- Traffic flow follows its own pattern rather than one that is forced.
- Two-way traffic and 90° parking makes more efficient use of parking aisles (more spaces in a run).
- Two-way parking facilities can essentially operate as one-way facilities when there is heavy directional traffic.

Single Threaded Design

In order to develop a reasonably efficient free-standing parking structure, the **minimum** dimensions needed are about 122 feet in width by 155 feet in length. A width of 122 feet allows for a two-bay facility with two-way traffic flow and 90-degree parking. A facility with two-way traffic and a five-foot rise along each bay requires approximately 155 feet in length for a minimum floor-to-floor height of about ten feet. That is, one 360-degree turn within the facility equates to a vertical rise of ten feet. A structure in this configuration has sloping floors along both façade sides. However, sloping floors can make façade treatments challenging. On larger sites that allow a structure length of about 255 feet, one bay can be sloped rising 10 feet with opposite façade having a "level" floor.

Because of the number of 360° turns needed to ascend in a single threaded structure, the number of levels (floors) should preferably be limited to a maximum of six, otherwise the number of turns required and the number of spaces passed becomes inconvenient. A structure with a two-bay single thread design has a capacity for a maximum of approximately 750 spaces. The isometric diagram to the right represents a two-bay single-threaded helix.



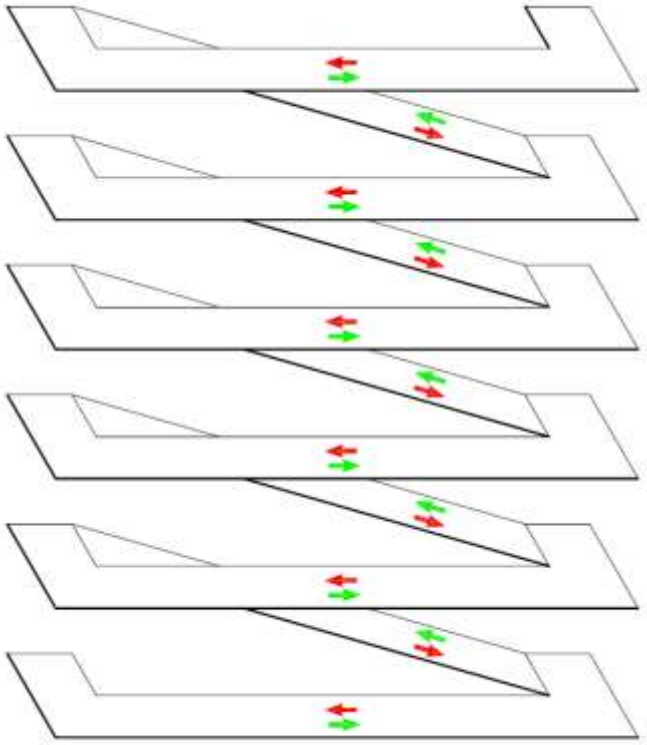
Single Threaded Helix with Sloping Floors

Principal Advantages of a Single-Threaded Helix:

- Repetitive and easy to understand for users.
- Potentially more flat-floor parking and level façade elements.
- Better visibility across the structure, which enhances security.

Principal Disadvantages of a Single-Threaded Helix:

- More revolutions required going from bottom to top and top to bottom.
- Two-way traffic bays have less flow capacity than one-way traffic bays. Traffic in both directions is impeded by vehicles parking and vacating a space.

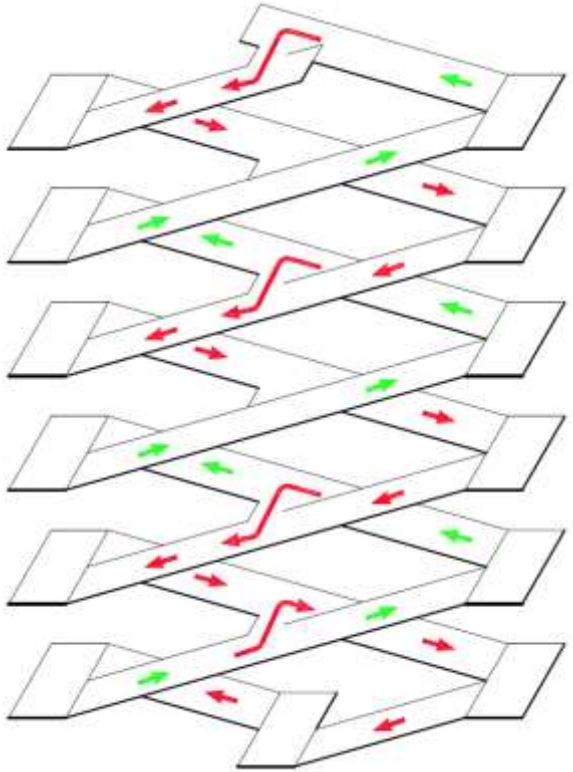


Single Threaded Helix with One Level Bay

Double Threaded Design

A facility with a one-way circulation system and angled parking can be provided in a double-threaded helix with modules ranging from 54 to 58 feet in width, depending upon the angle of parking. The preferred angles of parking for an efficient layout are 60°, 70° and 75°. A double thread, which requires a ten-foot rise along each module, requires 240 feet in length. More efficient layouts can be achieved on longer sites. The isometric to the right represents a two-bay double-threaded helix with one-way traffic.

A double-threaded helix can work with either one-way or two-way traffic flow, although one-way traffic is more common. A two-way double threaded design can be configured as two separate structures with no vehicular connection. A double-threaded helix rises two levels with every 360 degrees of revolution, which allows for two intertwined "threads" and the opportunity to circulate to an available parking space without passing all parking spaces as inbound and outbound traffic can be separated. Because of this, double-threaded helixes are often recommended for larger facilities with seven or more levels. A two-bay double thread has a functional system capacity for up to approximately 2,000 spaces with angled parking and one-way traffic flow.



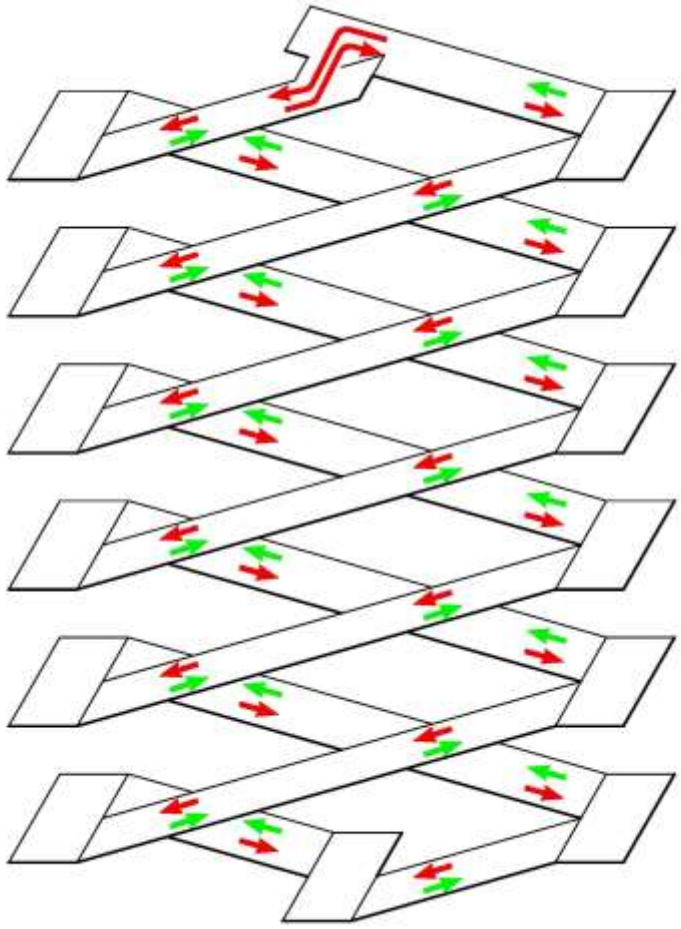
One Way Double Threaded Design

Principal Advantages of a Double-Threaded Helix:

- Efficient circulation and more traffic flow capacity
- Pass fewer spaces both inbound and outbound.

Principal Disadvantages of a Double-Threaded Helix:

- Can be complex and confusing, particularly in finding one's vehicle upon return to the parking facility.
- Two-sloped bays and minimal flat-floor parking.



Two Way Double Threaded Desian

10. Access Design

Vehicle entrances should be visible and easily identifiable. The minimum distance of entry/exits from corner intersections is at least 75 to 100 feet (preferably 150 feet). Entrances and exits should have clear lines of sight. It is preferable to enter a facility from a one-way street or by turning right from a two-way street and to exit a facility by turning right on a low-volume street. High traffic volumes and left turns can slow exiting and cause internal traffic backups. Consideration should be given to acceleration/deceleration lanes on busy streets. Gates should be located far enough away from the street to allow at least one vehicle behind the vehicle in the service position (at a ticket dispenser, card reader or cashier booth) without blocking the sidewalk. Entry/exit areas that have parking control equipment should have a maximum 3% slope.

It is very important to provide the appropriate number of entry/exit lanes to meet projected peak traffic volumes. The number of lanes is a function of user groups served, peak-hour traffic volumes, and service rates of the parking control equipment. It is recommended to have a parking professional prepare a lane and queuing analysis to guarantee sufficient entry and exit capacities.

Cross-traffic at entry/exits should be minimized and preferably eliminated. When placing vehicle entries and exits together on one-way streets it is preferable to avoid "English" traffic conditions where traffic keeps to the left instead of to the right. Pedestrian/vehicular conflicts should be minimized by providing a pedestrian walkway adjacent to entry/exit lanes. Stair/elevator towers should be located so pedestrians do not have to cross drive aisles on their way to primary destinations.

Important Issues for Vehicle Entry and Exit Lanes:

- The approach and the departure area from the lanes will also affect the rate of flow into or out of the structure. Tight turns equal a slower throughput.
- Pedestrian safety at entry and exit portals is paramount. Consider the vision cone of drivers entering or exiting the facility. Utilize "transitional lighting" at entry/exits.
- Check and recheck vehicle turning radii at all entry / exit lanes and adjacent ramps.
- Vehicle queuing analyses should be performed to ensure traffic does not back-up onto the exiting street system or the inside of the facility during peak periods of traffic flow.

11. Parking Geometrics

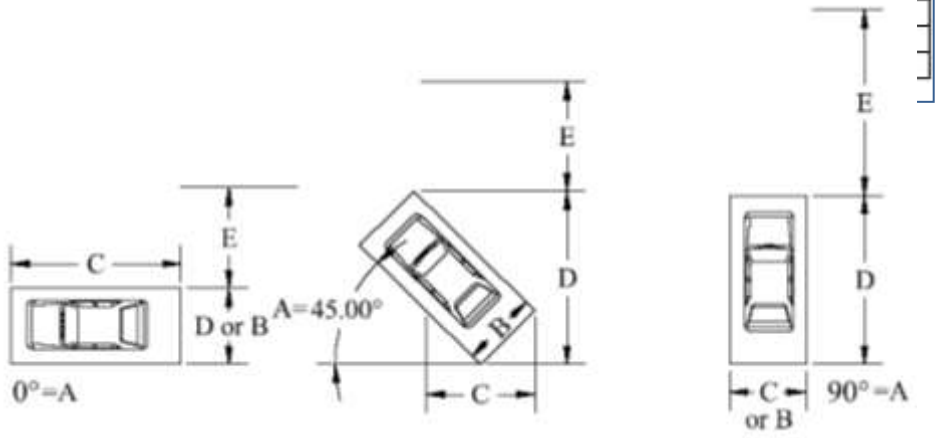
Parking geometrics refers to parking stall and drive aisle dimensions. Parking dimensions have been developed to comfortably accommodate the composite design vehicle, which refers to the dimensions of the 85th percentile vehicle in the range of vehicles from smallest (zero percentile) to largest (100th percentile). The composite design vehicle is the size of a Ford F150 truck (6'-7" x 17'-3").

The table on this page lists City of Boise parking geometrics by parking angle for standard and compact spaces.

Parking Angle A	Stall Width B	Curb Length Per Car C	Stall Depth D	Driveway Width E
0°	9'- 0"	23'- 0"	9'- 0"	12'- 0"
20°	9'- 0"	26'- 4"	15'- 3"	11'- 0"
30°	9'- 0"	18'- 0"	17'- 8"	11'- 0"
40°	9'- 0"	14'- 0"	19'- 6"	12'- 0"
45°	9'- 0"	12'- 9"	20'- 5"	13'- 0"
50°	9'- 0"	11'- 9"	21'- 0"	14'- 0"
60°	9'- 0"	10'- 5"	21'- 10"	16'- 0"
70°	9'- 0"	9'- 8"	21'- 10"	18'- 0"
80°	9'- 0"	9'- 2"	21'- 4"	20'- 0"
90°	9'- 0"	9'- 0"	20'- 0"	22'- 0"

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR COMPACT VEHICLES

Parking Angle A	Stall Width B	Curb Length Per Car C	Stall Depth D	Driveway Width E
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]



The city's parking dimensions for standard spaces exceed industry standards. The table on the following page lists parking geometrics by User Comfort Factor (UCF) which correlates with a Level of Service (LOS) approach. Traffic engineers developed the LOS approach to classify traffic conditions on roadways from A (free flow) to F (gridlock). The UCF/LOS approach has been adopted by many parking consultants to help classify conditions in parking facilities. The recommended UCF categories for parking geometrics are as follows:

UCF 4 = LOS A = Excellent
UCF 3 = LOS B = Good
UCF 2 = LOS C = Acceptable

LOS criteria should be related to the needs and concerns of users. Generally, users with low familiarity and high turnover should be accorded a higher UCF. If the city's parking standards are not used, we recommend minimum UCF 3 geometrics for moderate to high turnover parking (visitor, retail, etc.) and minimum UCF 2 geometrics for low turnover parking (employee, commuter, resident, etc.).

We recommend using "one-size-fits-all" parking spaces rather than segregating standard and small car spaces. However, if they are used, small car spaces should not exceed 15% to 20% of the total capacity of a facility.

Although parking garages can be custom designed to fit most sites of adequate size, in general, the minimum footprint dimensions for an "efficient parking garage" (in terms of square feet per stall) is approximately 125' x 300'. A base parking stall dimension, for most uses should be approximately 9.0' x 18.0'.

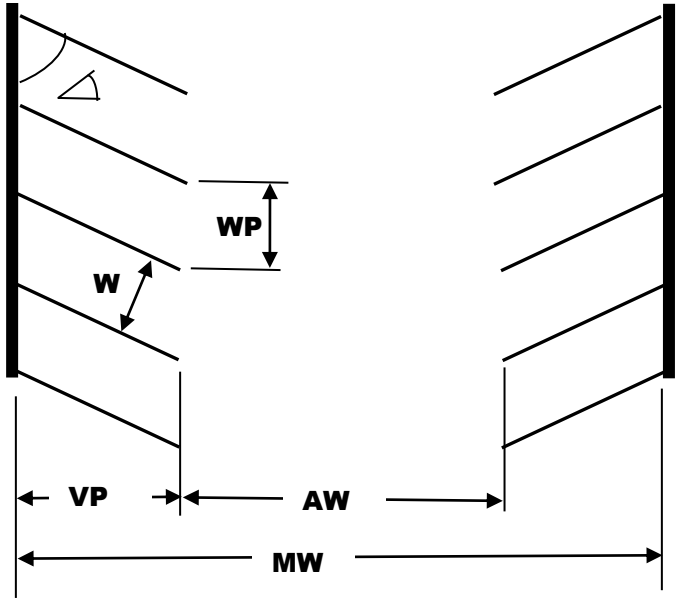
12. Parking Layout Dimensions

The following tables summarize parking layout dimensions by User Comfort Factor categories.

PARKING LAYOUT DIMENSIONS

Parking Angle	Stall Width Projection (WP)	Module Width (1) (MW)	Vehicle Projection (VP)	Aisle Width (AW)
User Comfort Factor 4				
	w = 9'-0"			
45	12'-9"	49'-10"	17'-7"	14'-8"
50	11'-9"	51'-7"	18'-2"	15'-3"
55	11'-0"	53'-0"	18'-8"	15'-8"
60	10'-5"	54'-6"	19'-0"	16'-6"
65	9'-11"	55'-9"	19'-2"	17'-5"
70	9'-7"	57'-0"	19'-3"	18'-6"
75	9'-4"	58'-0"	19'-1"	19'-10"
90	9'-0"	62'-0"	18'-0"	26'-0"
User Comfort Factor 3				
	w = 8'-9"			
45	12'-4"	48'-10"	17'-7"	13'-8"
50	11'-5"	50'-7"	18'-2"	14'-3"
55	10'-8"	52'-0"	18'-8"	14'-8"
60	10'-1"	53'-6"	19'-0"	15'-6"
65	9'-8"	54'-9"	19'-2"	16'-5"
70	9'-4"	56'-0"	19'-3"	17'-6"
75	9'-1"	57'-0"	19'-1"	18'-10"
90	8'-9"	61'-0"	18'-0"	25'-0"

Parking Angle	Stall Width Projection (WP)	Module Width (1) (MW)	Vehicle Projection (VP)	Aisle Width (AW)
User Comfort Factor 2				
	w = 8'-6"			
45	12'-0"	47'-10"	17'-7"	12'-8"
50	11'-1"	49'-7"	18'-2"	13'-3"
55	10'-5"	51'-0"	18'-8"	13'-8"
60	9'-10"	52'-6"	19'-0"	14'-6"
65	9'-5"	53'-9"	19'-2"	15'-5"
70	9'-1"	55'-0"	19'-3"	16'-6"
75	8'-10"	56'-0"	19'-1"	17'-10"
90	8'-6"	60'-0"	18'-0"	24'-0"

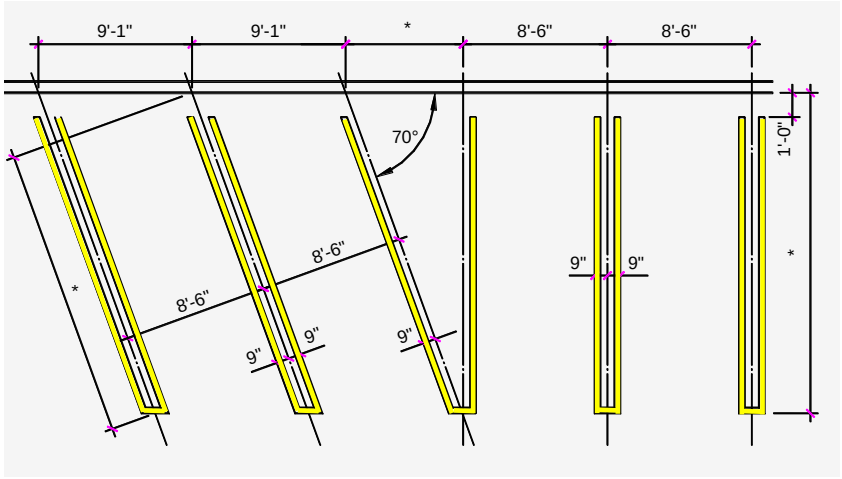


Note: (1) Wall to wall, double loaded aisle.

Parking spaces adjacent to walls, columns, elevators, stairs, etc. should be widened, if possible, by one foot so that vehicle doors can be more easily opened.

End bay drive aisles with two-way traffic should be a minimum of 26' wide for improved turning maneuverability. Wider end bay drive aisles are recommended for high turnover parking facilities. If possible, it is also suggested for more comfortable turns to hold back the first stall on either side of the turning bay. Small-Car-Only (SCO) spaces are also recommended at the ends of interior parking rows. It is very difficult to make a turn around only one row of parking. Refer to the following graphic.

Double stripes for space striping are recommended as they help parkers center their vehicles between stripes, maximizing the space between vehicles (refer to the graphic below). Also recommended is the use of traffic yellow paint for stall striping as yellow paint is more visible over time than white paint.



14. Pedestrian Requirements

Pedestrian traffic is equally as important in a parking structure as vehicle traffic. A safe, secure and well signed pedestrian path must be provided. Pedestrian access at the grade level should be separated from vehicular ingress and egress. Pedestrian access is usually adjacent to stair/elevator towers. It is also desirable to place a dedicated pedestrian aisle adjacent to a vehicle entry/exit because pedestrians are naturally attracted to these openings. Maximum lines of sight for both pedestrians and vehicles should be provided, and mirrors and warning devices should be incorporated when necessary. Access locations should be restricted to a few locations for security reasons.

A minimum of two stairs are required to meet code-required means of egress for fire exits in parking structures. Stairs shall be open or glass enclosed and be visible to the street for security reasons. The minimum stair width in parking structures is 44" and wider stairs are required for special events. Travel distance between exit stairs is specified in the IBC and is a maximum 300 feet without a sprinkler system and 400 feet with a sprinkler system. Stairs are usually placed in dead corners.

Elevators should be located at the facility terminus in the direction of pedestrian travel. Hydraulic elevators can be used for up to 5 levels or 50' to 60'. Traction elevators should be used beyond 5 levels. The minimum capacity and size is 3,500 lbs. and 5'-0" x 7'-0". The number of elevators is based on the number of spaces, the number of levels, user group(s) served, peak-hour flow rates, and the size and capacity of the elevator. A parking consultant can provide a preliminary indication of the number of elevators based on a formula that takes into account the information presented above. **We highly recommend that elevators have glass backs for security reasons.** Enclosed lobbies are recommended for protection from the elements on the top level.

15. Accessible Parking Requirements (ADA)

The following table presents the required number of accessible parking spaces based on the total number of spaces provided in any given facility.

The accessible parking requirement for an institution like a hospital campus is not based on the total parking capacity but rather on the capacities of the individual facilities within a parking system, which always results in the provision of more accessible spaces overall. Accessible spaces for the institution do not have to be provided in each parking area, but can be supplied at a different location provided at least equivalent accessibility in terms of distance, cost, and convenience is provided.

All accessible spaces are 8' wide with either a 5' or 8' access aisle. An accessible space and access aisle cannot be placed at a location with a running or cross slope greater than 1:50 (2%).

The current 1 to 8 ratio for the provision of van accessible spaces is changing to 1 to 6, and it is required to round up to the nearest whole number when determining the number of van spaces. The barrier free section of the International Building Code (IBC) has the same requirement. It is recommended to use the new 1 to 6 ratio when determining the number of van spaces. Van accessible spaces require minimum 8'-2" vertical clearance and have 8'-0" wide access aisles.

Each accessible space must have a sign showing the international symbol of accessibility mounted at least five feet above the pavement. All van accessible spaces must have an additional "Van Accessible" sign mounted below the symbol of accessibility (mount minimum of 5' above pavement with other sign above).
ADA requires rounding up to the next whole number when calculating the required number of spaces based on a percentage or ratio. For example, a parking facility with 810 spaces will have 17 accessible spaces (810 x .02 = 16.2 = 17 spaces), and 3 spaces will have to be van accessible (17 ÷ 6 = 2.833 = 3).

Required Accessible Spaces	
Total Spaces in Facility	**Minimum Accessible Spaces**
1 to 25	1
26 to 50	2
51 to 75	3
76 to 100	4
101 to 150	5
151 to 200	6
201 to 300	7
301 to 400	8
401 to 500	9
501 to 1,000	2% of total
1,001 and over	20 plus 1 for each 100 over 1,000

Accessible stalls cannot share access aisles when the parking is angled. Access aisles for van spaces must be on the passenger side when the parking is angled because vehicles cannot back into these spaces.

All accessible spaces must have an accessible route to public streets or sidewalks, accessible elevators, or accessible building entrances. An accessible route must have a minimum unobstructed width of 3'. A vehicle way (drive aisle) may be part of an accessible route, although it is preferred to place the accessible route at the front of the stalls. An accessible route can only pass behind other accessible spaces. It is permitted to cross a vehicle way with an accessible route. Automatic or push button door opening devices will be needed if the accessible path includes doors that patrons will need to enter/exit.

The running slope along an accessible route cannot exceed 1:20 (5%) and the cross slope cannot exceed 1:50 (2%).

It is recommended to cross hatch all access aisles and accessible routes.

Ultimately, accessible parking must be provided as required by existing city building and zoning codes. However, it is recommended that the standard ADA requirements detailed in this section be used if they exceed existing city requirements.

16. Safety and Security

Because curbs can be a potential tripping hazard, curbs in all pedestrian areas (at the end of parking rows, around stairs and elevators, dead corners, etc.) are strongly discouraged. The faces and edge of curbs that remain should be painted traffic yellow to enhance visibility.

Glass-backed elevators and glass enclosed and/or open stairways, visible to the adjacent street, are highly recommended for enhanced security. Security fencing should be installed below stairwells to eliminate the possibility of a person hiding under the stairs.

Lighting that enables users to see and be seen is one of the most important security features of a parking structure. A separate discussion on lighting is included in these guidelines.

Other important aspects of security design:

- Short span construction is not recommended. In short span construction, the columns are placed more closely together; thereby adding additional obstructions to lines of sight.
- Security fencing at the ground level should not be climbable. Security fencing ensures pedestrians enter/exit the facility only at designated pedestrian points.
- Landscaping should not provide hiding places.
- Security cameras are a deterrent to criminal activity.
- Panic alarms and two-way communication systems are recommended in prominent locations on each level.

In general, assure that as much openness as possible is provided in the design to improve sight lines, eliminate hiding places, and enhance perceived security.

17. Lighting

The following are key lighting considerations in parking facility design:

- Lighting is a key security measure
- Good lighting enhances user comfort & perception of safety
- Good lighting is a business attraction amenity
- Good lighting permits safe movement for pedestrians and vehicles
- Enhances signage visibility and readability
- Typically, light levels are not code regulated
  - Except emergency lighting @ 1 footcandles minimum
- Industry Standards
  - Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA)
  - IESNA publishes minimum lighting standards by building type
  - Liability risk for non-compliance

The recommended lighting standards listed in the table to the right, slightly exceed the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IES) lighting standards for parking facilities. Staining the ceilings and walls white to enhance light levels is suggested.

IES also recommends higher light levels at facility entry/exit points ("transitional lighting").

Recommended Parking Structure Lighting Standards

Areas	Minimum Horizontal Illuminance on Floor Footcandles	Minimum Vertical Illuminance at 5 feet Footcandles	Maximum to Minimum Uniformity Ratio
General Parking & Pedestrian	2	1	10:1
Ramps and Corners			
Days	2	1	10:1
Nights	1	0.5	10:1
Entrance Areas			
Days	50	25	10:1
Nights	1	0.5	10:1
Stairways	7 avg.		10:1

18. Signage and Wayfinding

Parking facilities can be very large, complex, and confusing. A well-designed graphics and signage system will effectively communicate necessary information to patrons, reduce confusion, improve safety, and enhance the overall user experience.

Sign messages should be simple and succinct. Messages on signs that are to be read quickly, such as vehicular signs, should be no more than 30 characters and six words in length. The typeface used should be simple and easy to read, and there is a general preference for Helvetica medium in the parking industry. Signs with lower case letters and initial caps are most easily read. The simple block arrow is recommended for parking signs. If a left turn is required, the arrow should be placed on the left side of the sign. The opposite is true for a right turn.

In parking structures, signs with a dark background and white letters are more easily read than signs with a white background and dark letters. The opposite is true in surface lots, where signs with white background and dark letters are better.

Vehicle Signs

Examples of vehicular signs include "Park" and "Exit" directional signs. Vehicular signs are ten or twelve inches in height with six or seven inch letters. Ten-inch signs are recommended for precast structures where sign visibility can be a problem. Vehicular signs should be centered over the drive lane or centered over the drive aisle when signs are mounted back-to-back.

Pedestrian Signs

Examples of pedestrian signs include "Level #," "Remember Level #," "Row #,"and "Stair" and "Elevator" identification and directional signs. Pedestrian signs can be all one color or be color-coded by level. Pedestrian signs should be clearly distinguishable from vehicle signs so as not to interfere with vehicular traffic. Pedestrian signs in parking bays are most effective if located perpendicular to traffic flow, and they should be placed at the rear of parking stalls. Color-coding is often used to help patrons find their vehicles. It is not necessary to provide color-coding in parking facilities that are three levels or less. When color coding, it is recommended to use primary and secondary colors including red, blue, yellow, orange, purple, and green. If there are more than six levels that need to be color-coded, it is recommended to use white, brown, and black. Confusing colors such as turquoise (blue or green?) and taupe (brown, tan, or gray?) should be avoided.

The elevator core area provides an excellent location to utilize super graphics. Super graphics is defined as a graphic that covers a large area and is generally painted on a vertical surface, such as painted walls or elevator doors, with level designation incorporated.

Once colors have been determined, the color coding must appear on each parking floor (e.g., on columns and walls) and adjacent to elevator lobbies and stairwells – as well as inside elevators.

20. Open or Enclosed Parking Structure

Natural ventilation requires openings in exterior walls of sufficient size distributed in such a way that fresh air will enter the facility to disperse and displace contaminated air. The 2003 and 2006 International Building Code (IBC) states:

> *"For natural ventilation purposes, the exterior side of the structure shall have uniformly distributed openings on two or more sides. The area of such openings in exterior walls on a tier must be at least 20 percent of the total perimeter wall area of each tier. The aggregate length of the openings considered to be providing natural ventilation shall constitute a minimum of 40 percent of the perimeter of the tier. Interior walls shall be at least 20 percent open with uniformly distributed openings."*
>
> *"Exception: Openings are not required to be distributed over 40 percent of the building perimeter where the required openings are uniformly distributed over two opposing sides of the building."*

Setbacks can affect openness as firewalls are required if certain distance requirements from property lines and other buildings are not maintained. Parking structures are typically classified as enclosed if other uses (retail, office, residential) are located above the parking, but may remain open if parking is above or adjacent other uses. When a parking structure is positioned below grade, areaways can be used to achieve natural ventilation. The building code addresses the geometry required to permit acceptance of an areaway.

Parking structures classified as "open" do not require mechanical ventilation, fire suppression (sprinklers), and enclosed stairs.

"Enclosed"

- **Enclosed Shafts**
- **Mechanical ventilation**
- **Increased illumination**
- **Increased fire rating**
- **Fire sprinklers**

"Open"

- **"Open" structures are allowed much larger floor plates and many more levels**
- **"Open" structures are naturally ventilated, so do not usually need mechanical ventilation**
- **"Open" structures do not require stairs to be enclosed**
- **"Open" structures allow a lot of natural light**

21. Structural Systems

Following are the advantages and disadvantages of the three primary structural systems commonly used in parking structures today:

- ***Cast-in-Place Concrete***
- ***Precast Concrete***
- ***Steel Framed***

The selection of the structural system should be given careful consideration. The decision is often made based on the following:

- Owner preference
- Design team preference
- Development Review Agency (or Agencies) input
- Schedule
- Construction budget
- Openness and perceived headroom
- Owner's tolerance and budget for maintenance
- Local availability of product and labor

Cast-in-Place Concrete

Advantages of Cast-in-Place Construction:

- Monolithic construction so fewer sealant joints
- Positive drainage is easier to achieve
- Post-Tensioning forces reduces slab cracking
- Floor vibration imperceptible
- Flexible column spacing (20' to 27')
- Generally no shear walls
- Lower maintenance cost
- Wide beam spacing creates more open feeling with perception of higher ceiling
- Accommodates parking structures on irregular sites, beneath buildings, and underground

Disadvantages of Cast-in-Place Construction:

- Potentially higher construction cost
- Quality control is more difficult to attain due to exposed weather conditions
- May require architectural cladding to improve exterior aesthetics
- Less adaptable to winter construction in cold climates
- Longer on-site construction schedule
- Closer expansion joint spacing
- Congestion of tendons and rebar at beam column joints
- Larger on-site staging requirement

Precast Concrete

Advantages of Pre-Cast Construction:

- Quality control because members are fabricated at a plant
- Potentially lower construction cost in some regions
- Shorter on-site construction schedule
- Greater expansion joint spacing (up to 300 feet)
- More adaptable to winter construction
- Architectural façade spandrels also serve as structural load bearing elements

Disadvantages of Pre-Cast Construction:

- More propensity for leaking at the joints
- Higher maintenance cost for sealants
- The close spacing of thee tee stems creates the perception of lower ceiling height
- Garage structural "tee stems" can block signage and interfere with lighting distribution
- Shear walls affect architecture at the exterior and reduce visibility at the interior
- Reduced drainage slopes
- More bird roosting ledges
- Might not be performed by local subcontractors

Steel Framed

Advantages of Steel Construction:

- Flexible column spacing of 18' to 22'
- Generally no shear walls
- Can be performed by local subcontractors
- Shorter on-site construction schedule
- Potentially lower construction cost
- Easily accommodates vertical expansion

Disadvantages of Steel Construction:

- Erection concerns due to mixing foundation, steel, and precast subcontractors
- Not recommended where the steel is required to be fire rated by the building code
- Depending upon code requirements, steel structure may need to be fireproofed
- Steel painting for corrosion protection
- Maintenance of steel paint system
- Steel delivery times can fluctuate
- Extensive bird roosting ledges on the beam flanges

23. Incorporating Other Land Uses

Many cities today are encouraging or requiring the design of parking structures that enhance the urban environment. Design Guidelines have been established that require parking structures to have level façades on the street sides (no exposed ramps) and pedestrian-active uses on the ground level. Even if not required by local code, there has definitely been a trend away in recent years from stand-alone, single-purpose parking structures. The development of ground-floor retail space in parking structures is often encouraged as even second-rate retail space will typically generate more income per square foot than a good parking space. This is an important consideration as most new parking structures are not self supporting. When selecting a site for the development of a parking structure, the site that offers the best possibility for ground-floor retail space should be an important consideration.

- New parking structures should incorporate other land uses (e.g., first level commercial space or commercial/residential space wrapping one or more sides) whenever physically/financially possible.
- First level commercial space will increase first level floor-to-floor heights and may necessitate adjustments to the structure's ramping scheme (e.g., inclusion of non-parkable speed ramps).
- Designs should minimize the impact of commercial space on the first level circulation system.
- Designs may need to consider loading dock space and garbage space in the parking structure.
- Restaurant space will need adequate ventilation, which may impact parking efficiency on the levels above the space.
- Entry/exit locations should be adequately positioned to account for adjacent traffic patterns and roadway conditions. Entry/exits should provide for easy identification and access from adjacent streets.

- Parking demand for the integrated commercial/residential land uses should be included in the parking supply and demand analysis for the structure.

- If there is no current market for additional commercial space, the parking facility could be designed to accommodate additional land uses in the future when market conditions warrant.