



## *Planning & Community Development.*

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# ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER#050114

## CODE INTERPRETATION

### CODE SECTION: 20.50.390 Minimum off-street parking standards

#### I. ISSUE

What is the required number of parking stalls for “micro-apartments?”

#### II. FINDINGS

- Current Shoreline Municipal Code (SMC) does not define nor include parking requirements for “micro-apartments”, “residential suites”, or “A-podments.”
- The SMC defines a “*Dwelling Unit*” as a: Residential living facility, used, intended or designed to provide physically segregated complete independent living facilities for one or more persons, including living, sleeping, cooking and sanitation facilities. A dwelling unit is to be distinguished from lodging, such as hotel/motel or dormitory.
- SMC 20.20.016 defines “Apartments” as a building containing three or more dwelling units that may be located one over the other in a multi-unit configuration.
- Current parking standards under SMC 20.50.390A requires “studio units” in “apartments” to provide .75 stalls, and “two-bedroom plus units” to provide 1.5 stalls per dwelling unit.
- SMC 20.50.390B requires “Community residential facilities” and “Dormitory” must provide 1 stall per 2 units.
- Single-family detached structures are required to provide two stalls.
- City of Redmond requires “single room occupancy units” or “dormitories” to provide .5 stall per bed.
- City of Kirkland requires “residential suites” to provide .5 stall per bedroom. Kirkland defines “Residential Suites” as: A structure containing single room

living units with a minimum floor area of 120 square feet and maximum floor area of 350 square feet offered on a monthly basis or longer where residents share bathroom and/or kitchen facilities. "Residential suites" does not include dwelling units, assisted living facility, bed and breakfast house, convalescent center, nursing home, facility housing individuals who are incarcerated as the result of a conviction or other court order, or secure community transition facility. For purposes of zones where minimum density or affordable housing is required, each living unit shall equate to one (1) dwelling unit.

- City of Seattle has imposed requirements of 0 to 1 stall per micro unit, depending on the zone.

### **III. CONCLUSIONS**

Traditional apartment units can be easily distinguished by the "x"-number of bedrooms and the kitchen it contains. However, "micro-units," with a configuration where multiple bedrooms with bathrooms and one shared kitchen is provided for a congregate situation, are not a typical apartment setting. As such, standard parking ratios for apartments should not be applied to micro-units.

A configuration consisting of multiple bedrooms and one kitchen should be considered something greater than "one dwelling unit." To that extent, a threshold should be identified to establish when this determination would be applicable.

As for the ratio, research of other jurisdictions and conversation with experienced professionals familiar with micro-units the Director concludes that a requirement of at .5 stalls per bedroom is reasonable. This standard, .5 parking spaces per bedroom was then compared to the City's existing parking requirements for other similar uses.

#### **Analogous Single Family Configuration**

Single Family residences can accommodate more residents than a typical one, two or three bedroom apartment. Families, as defined by SMC 20.20.020:

An individual; two or more persons related by blood or marriage, a group of up to eight persons who may or may not be related, living together as a single housekeeping unit; or a group living arrangement where eight or fewer residents receive supportive services such as counseling, foster care, or medical supervision at the dwelling unit by resident or nonresident staff. For purposes of this definition, minors living with a parent shall not be counted as part of the maximum number of residents.

Single family residences are therefore allowed to house up to 8 unrelated individuals plus minors living with the parents. In some cases the bedrooms are rented out to individuals and the kitchen and other areas are shared by all of the residents. This type of living arrangement is analogous to micro units that are configured with 5 or more individual bedrooms w/ bathrooms that share a common cooking facility. Therefore, the parking requirements for single family

residences are being considered for comparison purposes as the City determines the parking standard for micro-units. SMC Table 20.50.390A-General Residential Parking Standards require Single Family Residences to have 2 parking spaces per dwelling unit. The same 8 bedroom single family home would require 2 parking spaces.

**Analogous Apartment Configuration**

The SMC requires apartments with more 2 or more (the upper limit not defined) to have 1.5 parking spaces per unit. Although not the standard floor plans, four bedroom apartments would be required to have at a minimum 1.5 parking spaces and an eight bedroom apartments would also be required to have at a minimum 1.5 spaces.

**Analogous to Dormitories**

Micro-units are similar to dormitories in that several individual bedrooms share common areas such as kitchens, bathrooms and recreation areas. The SMC requires dormitories to provide parking at a 1 space per 2 units. This could translate into .5 per unit.

**Proposed Micro-Unit Parking Requirements**

For an 8 bedroom/with bathroom micro units with a shared common kitchen .5 parking spaces per bedroom would be required for a total of 4 parking spaces.

**IV. DECISION**

Based on the findings and conclusions, a configuration of 8 bedrooms with a shared kitchen should not be considered a single “dwelling unit.” As such, applying the current parking requirement of 1.5 stalls equivalent to a “two-bedroom plus” apartment unit would not be adequate. Under the City’s definition of a dwelling unit each of the 8 bedrooms are not dwelling units, since the bedrooms do not contain “physically segregated complete independent living facilities”. Based on market research and comparable requirements of other jurisdictions in relation to the City’s existing parking ratios for other uses, a parking ratio of .5 stalls per bedroom shall be applicable for any multifamily configuration involving five (5) or more bedrooms (micro-units).



Director’s Signature

Ce-18-14

Date

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