

CNO Policy on Public Parking and the Pedestrian Realm
for the Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan area east of 21st Avenue

Geographical Description

The "Corcoran Transit Zone" is defined as the area adjoining the Lake Street Hiawatha LRT Station, and is bounded on the north by Lake Street, on the west by 21st Avenue, on the south by 32nd Street, and on the east by Hiawatha Avenue.

Historical, Social, Economic, and Planning Context

The Corcoran Transit Zone encompasses an established regional activity center that includes the YWCA Midtown, Minneapolis Public Schools' Adult Basic Education courses and Welcome Center, the Midtown Farmers Market, and lies directly adjacent to the South High School campus (to the west.)

Since passenger service began in 2004, the station at Lake and Hiawatha has emerged as one of the busiest stations on Hiawatha Light Rail Transit line. The station is a critical commuter and local transit link connecting rail users, local bus service on Lake Street, and cyclists using the nearby Midtown Greenway, 32nd Street, and south Hiawatha bike paths.

Metro Transit's free Park & Ride lot located adjacent to the LRT Station bridgehead is currently used by over 170 daily transit users. Metro Transit established the facility in 2004 as a temporary amenity whose use was to be phased out with the construction of Park and Ride structures outside the urban core. These projects are now completed. Continuation of the Park & Ride lot at the Lake street station is not endorsed nor encouraged by the policies of the Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, and the City of Minneapolis.

While automobile-dependent uses and abundant surface parking have characterized the Corcoran Transit Zone since the 1960s, recent City planning and zoning policies have been enacted to reduce free-of-charge, off-street parking requirements along urban transit corridors. The Lake Street and Hiawatha corridors have been re-zoned to exclude automotive uses and to encourage Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

In 2010, a parking study related to current parking usage within the Zone was completed through a partnership with the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA). The CURA study provides insight into current parking demand, as well as national development and planning policy trends. The report points out that the abundant free parking now available in the Corcoran Transit Zone is counter-productive to creating a pedestrian friendly, TOD, mixed-use urban development.

Standards for Automobile Parking in the Corcoran Transit Zone

The Corcoran Neighborhood Organization (CNO) Board of Directors recognizes the need to move away from auto-centric land use in the Corcoran Transit Zone, and to adopt a car parking policy that is consistent with and pro-actively supports Transit Oriented Development principles. The CNO Board hereby adopts as official policy the following parking policy statements for new development within the Corcoran Transit Zone.

1. **Eliminate the Park and Ride.** The existing Park & Ride lot located to the West of Hiawatha Avenue and adjacent to the Lake Street LRT Station currently discourages commuters from utilizing alternative modes of transit to access LRT. A continued or relocated Park & Ride lot within any new development in the Zone is discouraged.
2. **Discourage free parking.** Free on-street and off-street parking is discouraged within the Corcoran Transit Zone for non-resident uses. Free parking is a proven disincentive to other modes of travel like walking, biking, bus transit and rail. Inversely, charging drivers for parking provides an incentive to seek other means of travel. Non-resident on-street parking within the Zone should be either metered or limited to short term pick-up/delivery and drop off zones.
3. **Eliminate surface parking.** Off-street surface parking lots (whether free, metered, or ticketed) are not allowed anywhere in the district. Off-street parking is limited to below-grade and above-grade structured parking. Grade level off-street parking is allowed if a perimeter lining of new development at least 20' deep is provided between the parking and the street.
4. **Minimize new parking construction.** Sharing of parking between entities with complimentary parking demands should be encouraged (for example: daytime versus evening uses, weekday versus weekend uses). CNO will support and facilitate discussions amongst the Midtown Farmers Market, developers, and stakeholder groups in order to put parking sharing agreements in place that reduce the Zone's parking stall count per acre.
5. **Encourage alternatives to car use.** New development should incorporate alternative facilities and business that reduce car dependency and encourage biking, walking and transit. These can include car-sharing and hourly rental programs, bike depot and bike rental facilities (for example, "Nice Ride"), transit information and ticketing kiosks, improved local bus/shuttle service, and sheltered transit transfer/waiting locations.
6. **Design streets for people, not cars.** New street designs should give preference to the needs and safety of pedestrians and bicycles. Road designs should always place the ease of movement of cars as a secondary concern to the much more crucial functional and experiential quality of the pedestrian or bicycle rider.
7. **Deploy traffic calming design.** Street designs should optimize safety to pedestrians and bicycles, and should include bulb-outs at intersections and/or bay parking along streets, raised pedestrian platforms, bold striping at crosswalks, striped and signed bicycle lanes, avoidance of "free-right" turn lanes, and should provide four-way stops at all intersections.
8. **Use parallel parking for temporary on-street car storage.** Streets with angled or perpendicular "nose-in" parking are equivalent to drive-through parking lots. The extra distance between sidewalks and abundance of fenders erodes the quality of the pedestrian experience. Parallel parking on new streets is preferable.
9. **Design new streets as two-way, "complete streets".** One-way streets reduce car and bicycle access by half, increase driving speeds, and push traffic to neighboring streets. To maintain bicycle and vehicular ease of access throughout the Corcoran Transit Zone, and to ensure continuity with the existing grid of two-way streets, only two-way streets are allowed.