



REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY OF ARNOLD

APPLICATION #: 2019-38

APPLICATION NAME: Application to Amend Municipal Code Chapter 405
(Zoning) - Parking Requirements for Motor Vehicle Repair-Related Uses

APPLICANT: City of Arnold

REQUEST: A City-initiated request to amend Chapter 405, Zoning, of the Code of Ordinances to modify minimum parking requirements for various motor vehicle repair-related uses.

MEETING DATE: October 8, 2019

REPORT DATE: October 1, 2019

CASE MANAGER: David B. Bookless, AICP

RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVAL**



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BACKGROUND

The City's Zoning Ordinance was adopted by the City Council on June 30, 1977. A number of amendments have been approved with the most recent being on September 5, 2019. Periodic revision is essential if the ordinances are to maintain a rational land use pattern. Changes should not be made in an arbitrary manner. Significant updates to the Zoning Ordinance are best undertaken following an update of the Comprehensive Plan. Nevertheless, clarification of information contained in the Zoning Ordinance may be appropriate at any time.

The City has been approached by a motor vehicle repair establishment about locating on a property that formerly housed a like use on Jeffco Blvd that did not meet current parking requirements. Staff researched the requirement and found it more demanding than in nearby communities.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The analysis by Staff that follows is intended to allow the Planning Commission to reach the most informed decision possible and to facilitate discussion. Such discussion is important to identify and consider any potential unintended consequences of the proposed amendment.

CURRENT ZONING REGULATIONS

Auto Filling Stations, Auto Repair, and Auto Sales are uses in the Zoning Ordinance that relate to motor vehicle repair-related uses., and are each discussed below:

Auto Filling Stations:

"Auto Filling Station" is defined in the Zoning Ordinance as:

"Any structure or premises used for dispensing or sale, at retail, of automotive vehicle fuels or lubricants, including lubrication of motor vehicles and replacement or installation of minor parts and accessories, but not including major repair work such as motor replacement, body and fender repair or spray painting."

As described above, it appears an auto filling station would include "service stations" where one might get tires installed, oil changes, and minor repairs. That said, the above is not the format for any new filling stations and very few of such filling stations remain. Modern filling stations typically include a convenience store, some sort of prepared food sales (e.g. QuikTrip, Circle K, etc.), and sometimes a car wash.



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Both Auto Filling Stations and car washes require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Convenience stores are permitted by right as stand alone store, but in practice they would be reviewed as part of the filling station's CUP. On-site prepared food are generally considered part of the convenience store use. However, when co-branded with a restaurant (e.g. BP & McDonald's), the restaurant was allowed by a Conditional Use Permit. As part of the CUP review process, required parking has been calculated for each of the component uses in Table 1 below:

USE	PARKING
Auto Filling Station	1 per employee on the maximum shift
Car Wash, except self-service	Reservoir (line-up) parking equal to 5 times the capacity of the car wash
Car Wash, self-service	Line-up area for each wash stall of sufficient size to accommodate 4 cars
Food markets, under 5,000 square feet gross floor area (convenience store)	3 1/3 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area
Restaurants, fast-food	1 per 2 seats plus 2 per 3 employees on the maximum shift, plus reservoir (line-up) parking equal to 6 times the capacity of drive-through facilities

Example, a filling station with a convenience store would be required to be parked as follows:

3 1/3 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area of the store plus 1 per space per employee on the maximum shift.

There is a stricter parking requirement for "Gasoline Service Stations" in the Zoning Ordinance, but there is no corresponding permitted use, and based on the definition for *filling station* that includes repair work, it would not apply anyway. Staff speculates that the parking requirement might be an overlooked legacy requirement for a permitted use that was removed from the code at some point.

Auto Repair:

"Auto Repair" is not defined in the Zoning Ordinance. However, it stands to reason that such a facility could include the work conducted at an auto filling station and potentially work that is identified as being excluded from that allowed at an auto filling station.

That said, there are different types of auto repair facilities: those where work is limited to mechanical repairs, accessory installations, and maintenance, including paintless dent repair, and those facilities focused on body and painting work. Most recently, the planned district ordinances governing Christian Brothers Automotive and Five Star Auto Body delineated specific parking requirement for each the sites (*See examples below*).

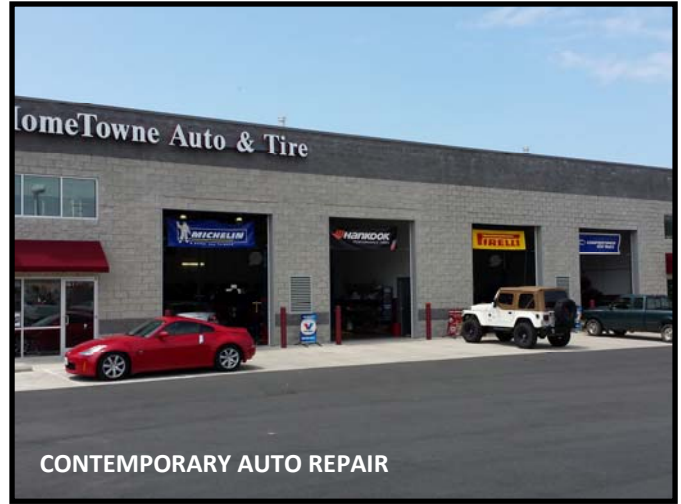


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FORMER FILLING STATION AUTO REPAIR



CONTEMPORARY AUTO REPAIR

Auto Sales:

“Auto sales” is undefined, but commonly understood. Repair work is *sometimes* associated with the use. Generally, new car dealerships and larger format used car dealerships have repair bays for work otherwise associated with auto repair facilities. And there is a parking requirement calculation for the repair component of auto sales establishments that is substantially *less strict* than that for auto repair facilities (See Table 2 below).



NEW CAR SALES - SERVICE FACILITY



USED CAR SALE - NO SERVICE

TABLE 2

USE	PARKING
Auto Repair	4 plus 6 for each bay
Auto Sales	3 1/3 per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area of sales and showroom area, <u>3 spaces for every service bay in repair garage areas</u> , and 1 space for every vehicle used in the operation of this use or stored on the premises.

*There is no corresponding permitted or conditional use

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OTHER AUTO REPAIR ESTABLISHMENTS IN ARNOLD

It appears that the current parking requirement for auto repair establishments was established in 2008, *after* Midas, Dobb’s, or Firestone were developed. The change was *prior* to the development of Christian Brothers Automotive and Five Star Auto Body, but as noted previously, Five Star and Christian Brothers were parked per the site-specific ordinances governing the planned district in which they are located rather than by standard code requirements.

PEER COMMUNITY REGULATIONS

As development patterns and demographics in Arnold are not dissimilar from those in the St. Louis area, several comparable examples of parking standards for motor vehicle-related uses are provided below.

Community	Use	Minimum Parking
Fenton	Auto Repair - All types -	1 space for every employee on the maximum shift, 3 spaces for every service bay, 1 space for every vehicle customarily used in operation of the use and 3 spaces for every 1,000 feet of retail sales area.
Maryland Heights	Auto Repair - All types -	1 space per employee on the maximum shift, 2 spaces per service bay, & 1 space per vehicle customarily used in operation of the use.
O’Fallon	Auto Repair - All types -	One (1) space per 500 sq. ft. of floor area, minimum of five (5) spaces.
St. Louis County	Auto Repair - All types -	1 space for every employee on the maximum shift, 3 spaces for every service bay, and 1 space for every vehicle customarily used in operation of the use .

The following table shows parking as provided in a number of auto repair establishments in Arnold, during peak hours, required under a CUP, and required in peer communities.

Business	Year Built	# of Bays	Spaces Provided	Peak Use	Arnold CUP	St. Louis County	Fenton	O’Fallon	Maryland Heights
<i>Former Midas</i>	1980	6	28	-	40	21	22	8	15
Dobb’s	1990	8	28	34	52	39	41	15	31
Firestone	1998	10	34	24	64	39	40	19	29
Plaza Tire	2003	10	36	22	64	39	40	16	29
AutoTire	2005	10	24	19	64	30	33	12	26
Christian Bros	2011	9	30	23	58	33	35	10	24



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THE QUESTION FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Based upon an informal visual survey, filling station and auto sales parking requirements appear to be appropriately calculated. The question at hand is whether or not the *six (6) spaces for each repair bay* portion of the calculation is appropriate for *auto repair establishments* given their relative usage and the requirements of peer communities. As discussed in the background portion of the report, Staff became aware of the issue when approached by an auto repair establishment looking to locate in Arnold on a property that has significantly fewer parking spaces than required by Code and had been utilized as auto repair establishment dating back to 1980 with no known complaints about parking or traffic safety.

IMPLICATIONS OF MAKING NO CHANGES TO THE CURRENT REGULATIONS

By maintaining the current minimum requirement for parking spaces at auto repair establishments, the City risks such business uses no longer seeing Arnold as a market in which they want to locate. This is particularly true given that other nearby communities have less stringent requirements, thereby putting Arnold at a competitive disadvantage. Should any of the “under parked” existing shops close and nonconforming status be lost, the reuse of such otherwise fully functional properties may prove difficult, resulting in vacancies that could be long-term, and lead to the loss of revenue for the City and convenience to its residents.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE

Based upon the history in Arnold, the apparent demand based upon actual field surveys of usage, and similar requirements for peer communities, Staff recommends revising the requirement for auto repair facilities by differentiating between general auto repair and auto body shops, as delineated below:

- All references to *Gasoline Service Stations* are to be deleted.
- The parking requirement for “Auto Repair” should be deleted and replaced as follows:
 - **Automotive Repair, general**
 - 1 space for every employee on the maximum shift plus 3 spaces for every service bay plus 1 space for every vehicle customarily used in operation of the use.*
 - **Automotive Repair, body and paint**
 - 4 spaces plus 1 space for every employee on the maximum shift plus 1 space for every vehicle customarily used in operation of the use, all exclusive of screened outdoor storage areas as otherwise authorized by CUP.*

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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

SUCH AMENDMENT IS REQUIRED BY PUBLIC NECESSITY AND CONVENIENCE AND GENERAL WELFARE

The Community Development Director finds that the text amendments contained within application number 2019-38 are warranted by the public necessity and convenience to provide reasonable and fair regulations in the Zoning Ordinance that is not substantially more burdensome than that in other nearby communities.

The Community Development Director finds that the text amendments contained within application number 2019-38 are warranted by the need to promote and protect the general welfare by protecting the economic and tax base of the City, preserving and enhancing the values of property owners and users, promoting the orderly and harmonious development and redevelopment of the City, preserving and promoting the character and stability of the City and its various residential and commercial neighborhoods, improving the appearance of the City, and promoting the best use and development of commercial land in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

The Director of Community Development finds that the proposed text amendments meet or exceed review criteria and further advances the intent of Chapter 405. Based on this finding the Director of Community Development requests favorable consideration of the draft amendments.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. B. Bookless".

David B. Bookless, AICP
Community Development Director



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ATTACHMENTS

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DRAFT AMENDMENTS SUMMARY

Amend Sections 405.310(n) and 405.320(q) by *deleting* the parking requirement for "Gasoline service stations" of "4 plus 6 for each bay."

Amend Section 405.330(u) by *deleting* the parking requirement for "Auto repair" of "4 plus 6 for each bay."

Amend Section 405.330(u) by *adding* the following uses and corresponding parking requirements:

Automotive Repair, general	1 space for every employee on the maximum shift plus 3 spaces for every service bay plus 1 space for every vehicle customarily used in operation of the use.
Automotive Repair, body & paint	4 spaces plus 1 space for every employee on the maximum shift plus 1 space for every vehicle customarily used in operation of the use, all exclusive of screened outdoor storage areas as otherwise authorized by CUP.