

Reducing Parking to Increase Public Transit Use

Built Environment

Healthy City



Climate Issue: Transport Emissions

To address the climate crisis, private vehicle usage must decrease.

- Cities across the United States are seeking to increase public transit ridership
- This goal often clashes with long-held cultural preferences for private vehicle use
- The perceived convenience of driving is strongly tied to the availability of parking
- Reducing the availability of parking can shift transport behaviors toward a more sustainable model.

Solution: Reduce Residential Parking

- Currently, many cities require housing developments to construct a certain number of parking spots per residential unit
- This encourages residents to rely on private cars for transportation
- Reducing the availability of residential parking can encourage instead the use of public transportation.

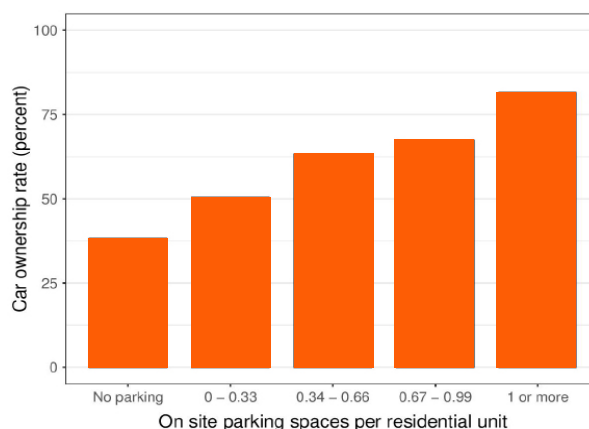
81% of households that own a vehicle in buildings with onsite parking

38% of households that own a vehicle in buildings without onsite parking

San Francisco: Putting a Cap on Parking

- San Francisco recently introduced a parking cap of one space for every two or four residential units in neighborhoods with plentiful public transit
- The data shows that these reductions in residential parking dramatically increase public transit use
- Reduced car usage has social, economic and environmental benefits
- It is important for these policy changes to be accompanied by efforts to increase public transit accessibility.

Data from San Francisco:



Millard-Ball et al., 2022

IN A NUTSHELL

- Science shows that private car usage is directly linked to parking availability
- To encourage the use of public transportation, cities can reduce residential parking
- San Francisco did this by introducing parking caps on residential developments
- Reducing residential parking can lead to long-term change in transportation behavior.

WHAT CAN YOUR CITY DO?

REPEAL local statutes that require parking quotas per residential unit for housing developments

INTRODUCE maximum permissible parking quotas

INVEST in infrastructure to ensure that public transit is equitably distributed and accessible throughout different neighborhoods

PRIORITIZE equity as you reduce residential parking. It is critical that these changes do not further disadvantage neighborhoods without easy access to public transit.

To find out more information about sustainable transport visit <https://millardball.its.ucla.edu/research/>. Case study based off Millard-Ball, A., et al. (2022). What do residential lotteries show us about transportation choices? Urban Studies, 59(2), 434-452. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098021995139>.