



## City of Detroit 2021 Candidates on Parking

Detroiters for Parking Reform sent a questionnaire to candidates seeking the following offices:

- Mayor
- City Council - At Large
- City Council - District 1-7

Submitted responses are listed below.

Updated October 25th, 2021

# Survey Questions:

**1. Minimum Parking Requirement Elimination**

Do you support the elimination of city-mandated parking requirements for all new developments, as outlined in the City Planning Commission's Zone Detroit recommendations?

**2. Parking Maximum Requirements Implementation**

Do you support the implementation of parking maximum requirements in pedestrian-centric areas as recommended in the zoning analytic?

**3. New Commercial Parking Prohibition in Business Districts**

Do you support prohibiting new commercial surface parking in Downtown and Midtown, where density, walkability, and transit choice should take precedence over car-centric development?

**4. Parking District Creation**

Do you support the incorporation of "parking districts" in certain neighborhoods to require the sharing and management of off-street parking facilities, as well as requiring parking facilities in these districts to utilize best practice mobility management, such as bike storage, cash-out benefits for tenants, and guaranteed public access?

**5. Business Improvement Districts / Community Development Organizations**

Do you support an allowance for Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) or other qualified community development organizations (CDOs) to capture public parking fees in those areas for reinvestment in neighborhood beautification programs and to promote transit connectivity?

**6. Split Rate Property Taxes**

Do you support a split rate property tax structure to tax land and buildings at separate rates, providing tax relief to 96% of Detroiters, and discouraging land speculation?

**7. Comprehensive Parking Study Funding**

Do you commit to allocating funding towards a comprehensive parking study of downtown?

**8. Surface Parking Design Requirements**

Do you support strengthening the enforcement of surface parking design requirements for parking lots in business districts?

# Mayor

## Anthony Adams

**1. Minimum Parking Requirement Elimination**

Yes. Parking requirements are archaic and need to be updated to reflect a modern approach to land use planning. Creative use of planning could create more green space to be incorporated into the fabric of downtown Detroit.

**2. Parking Maximum Requirements Implementation**

Yes.

**3. New Commercial Parking Prohibition in Business Districts**

Yes. Too many surface lots litter downtown Detroit. Goal should be to encourage walkable communities and enhance public transportation through adaptive reuse of surface parking lots.

**4. Parking District Creation**

Yes. Communities need to be responsible for managing processes in their neighborhoods.

**5. Business Improvement Districts / Community Development Organizations**

Yes. More money needs to be distributed to organizations that are committed to transforming the infrastructure of Detroit--bioswells, rain parks, walking trails and bike paths.

**6. Split Rate Property Taxes**

Yes. This would require a change in state law which I would be amenable to leading the charge.

**7. Comprehensive Parking Study Funding**

Yes. Its long overdue.

**8. Surface Parking Design Requirements**

Yes. Goal is to enhance environment around such sites to include more greenery.

# City Council

## Mary Waters (At Large)

- 1. Minimum Parking Requirement Elimination**  
Yes
- 2. Parking Maximum Requirements Implementation**  
Yes
- 3. New Commercial Parking Prohibition in Business Districts**  
Yes
- 4. Parking District Creation**  
Yes
- 5. Business Improvement Districts / Community Development Organizations**  
Yes
- 6. Split Rate Property Taxes**  
Yes
- 7. Comprehensive Parking Study Funding**  
Yes
- 8. Surface Parking Design Requirements**  
Yes

## Nicole Small (At Large)

- 1. Minimum Parking Requirement Elimination**  
I support some of it but there are gaps that need to be filled.
- 2. Parking Maximum Requirements Implementation**  
For the most part but I have a few questions for clarity.
- 3. New Commercial Parking Prohibition in Business Districts**  
I support a balance approached implementing surface parking. I'm not confident the current proposal from Zoning Commission does that.
- 4. Parking District Creation**  
Only if there is equitable selection of certain districts. Additionally, I would support this if the impact neighborhoods have meaningful engagement in the decisions.

5. **Business Improvement Districts / Community Development Organizations**  
Yes
6. **Split Rate Property Taxes**  
Only if same tax breaks apply to residential homes in neighborhoods
7. **Comprehensive Parking Study Funding**  
For the most part but I have a few questions for clarity.
8. **Surface Parking Design Requirements**  
If it allows for affordability for small businesses and doesn't increase displacement.

## Mary Sheffield (District 5)

1. **Minimum Parking Requirement Elimination**  
I support the direction and intent of the potential elimination of city-mandated parking requirements but I believe in community engagement for each individual project and looking at the need for parking on a case by case basis. The elimination of city-mandated parking requirements must be congruent with a comprehensive transportation plan in order to ensure low-income residents and the elderly have the ability to get to work and access much needed services.
2. **Parking Maximum Requirements Implementation**  
Yes, I believe parking maximum requirements in pedestrian-centric areas would increase public safety, encourage more walkable community design and improve neighborhood aesthetics in certain areas.
3. **New Commercial Parking Prohibition in Business Districts**  
I am a strong opponent of surface parking and I often encourage developers to consider other options. With that said, placing a prohibition on new commercial surface parking in downtown and midtown requires changes in the availability of transportation options and analyzing how the absence of parking in a new development may affect surrounding neighborhoods. I believe we have some work to do as a City in the areas of transportation and community engagement before we can prohibit new commercial surface parking.
4. **Parking District Creation**  
Absolutely, the incorporation of parking districts in certain neighborhoods is key to creating a more walkable and car alternative community in downtown, midtown and other high density areas within the City. Parking Districts, in my opinion, are also an important part of the way forward towards the elimination of City-mandated parking requirements and a prohibition on new commercial surface parking.
5. **Business Improvement Districts / Community Development Organizations**  
I absolutely support the concept of capturing parking fees to promote transit connectivity but not so much for neighborhood beautification programs. Parking fees are an important

revenue source for the Municipal Parking Department to operate and we must ensure parking fees remain affordable for low income residents. While I support investing in neighborhood beautification programs, I believe the funding should come from other sources such as the philanthropic and surrounding business community through grants and Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) funding.

**6. Split Rate Property Taxes**

While the concept and intent of a split rate property tax structure is noble, I'm unsure of the consequences it would have on minority property owners who, historically, have not been afforded the access to capital to become developers. I support providing tax relief to Detroiters and have been working on a number of ways to do so through reducing the millage rate and pursuing a Long-term Owner Occupant Program (LOOP) in Detroit. However, supporting a split rate property tax structure would require more introspection and analysis of the application of such a system.

**7. Comprehensive Parking Study Funding**

I, emphatically, commit to allocating funding towards a comprehensive parking study of downtown and midtown.

**8. Surface Parking Design Requirements**

I absolutely support strengthening the enforcement of surface parking design requirements for parking lots in business districts. While most view downtown as a personal playground, it is the neighborhood for a significant number of Detroit residents and the owners of surface parking lots should treat it as such by engaging with the community to design their lots with safety and aesthetic value in mind.

## Gabriela Santiago-Romero (District 6)

**1. Minimum Parking Requirement Elimination**

Yes. City-mandated parking requirements pose unnecessary restrictions on development, limiting the proliferation of dynamic city spaces. Lots without sufficient space to meet minimum parking requirements may serve as a disincentive for investment by developers, and serve as a drag on creative land use. It's also important to not develop parking just for the development of parking, especially when we have so much already available and not in use.

**2. Parking Maximum Requirements Implementation**

I support a solution that simultaneously institutes parking maximums in pedestrian-centric areas and expands Detroit's public transit system. We should also be more development oriented around our existing transit system. If we are going to reduce the availability of parking, we must couple that with solutions that make such policy changes worthwhile, or else we may create further problems.

**3. New Commercial Parking Prohibition in Business Districts**

Yes. About half of the area of downtown Detroit consists of surface parking lots, many of which are regularly vacant except during special events. These empty lots reflect our city's

antiquated focus on car-centric development, scarring the cityscape, and destroying walkable urban density that make city spaces unique. In addition to halting the creation of new surface parking, we need to expand Detroit's transit system, which would greatly reduce the need for downtown parking. We should also focus on parking management and tools that allow us to use already existing parking options.

**4. Parking District Creation**

Yes. One of the tenets of my campaign is investing in solutions that improve the city's air quality. Programs such as parking cash-out incentivize people to choose environmentally friendly commuter options, such as biking or public transit. It is essential then that these "parking districts" be located in areas where there is need.

**5. Business Improvement Districts / Community Development Organizations**

I would support a collaboration between the city government and a Business Improvement District to identify neighborhood beautification needs and administer related programs using captured fees. The West Vernor & Springwells Business Improvement District, for example, has an excellent reputation in my district due to their various neighborhood beautification projects. I would support a similar collaboration between the city government and a community development organization with expertise in transportation needs. Although capturing fees and reinvesting them back into the neighborhood the fees where originally collected from sounds good, I would rather the fees be pooled into one bucket and have discussion around where there is the most need to ensure equity. The fees collected in Midtown would look different than fees collected in Southwest Detroit in the Chadsey Condon neighborhood where I'm from.

**6. Split Rate Property Taxes**

I believe this is a powerful tool and we need to ensure it works when implemented. A split-rate property tax system would penalize property owners who fail to develop vacant land and therefore incentivize development in the city. Moreover, a study conducted in Pennsylvania concluded that one of the primary effects of a split-rate tax system is an increase in the density of housing units, pointing to its potential for use as an anti-sprawl tool.

**7. Comprehensive Parking Study Funding**

Although Detroit City Council does not have fiscal authority, I would support including funding for a comprehensive parking study of downtown in our proposed city budget.

**8. Surface Parking Design Requirements**

I do support increased enforcement of surface parking design requirements for lots in business districts. For many years, organizations and business entities have avoided investment in interior landscaping. Now that the language in the ordinance stipulating these investments has been appropriately updated, I strongly support its enforcement.