



City of Apache Junction

Development Services Department



MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 19, 2025

TO: PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEMBERS

THROUGH: RUDY ESQUIVIAS, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR
SIDNEY URIAS, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPUTY DIRECTOR

FROM: KELSEY SCHATNIK, PRINCIPAL PLANNER

SUBJECT: RATIONALE FOR PARKING REDUCTION REQUESTS

This memo provides rationale supporting the recent support, and subsequent approval, of a guest parking reduction request for the Wolff Company multi-family, residential rental development, located in Downtown Apache Junction near the northwest corner of Idaho Road and N. Apache Trail.

At the April 8th Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, the Commission requested a follow-up explanation on why Staff would support guest parking reductions.

Background

In 2023, the City adopted a guest parking requirement of 0.3 spaces per unit for multifamily residential developments. Prior to this change, the Zoning Ordinance calculated required parking solely based on unit size: studios or efficiency units required 1 space per unit; one-bedroom units required 1.5 spaces; and units with two or more bedrooms required 2 spaces per unit. While this approach addressed resident parking, it did not account for guest parking demand. The new guest parking standard was introduced in response to concerns about inadequate visitor parking in new developments and the City's lack of authority to require additional parking beyond the bedroom-based standards.

Following the direction given to Staff to incorporate a guest parking standard for multi-family communities, this requirement was implemented with a conservative intent to ensure adequate guest parking. The 0.3 spaces per unit standard was recommended following research and comparison of guest parking requirements in neighboring communities.

Wolff Company – Project Specific Background

The proposed Wolff project includes a total of 336 units, consisting of 48 one-bedroom units and 288 two-bedroom units. Based on the City's zoning code, this unit mix results in a requirement of 749 on-site parking spaces—including 648 spaces for residents (based on bedroom count) and 101 spaces for guest parking (at 0.3 spaces per unit).

When the applicant submitted their Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application, they requested an 8.7% reduction in the total required on-site parking. The breakdown of the standard parking requirements, as well as the requested reduction, is as follows:

Resident Parking Requirement (per City Code):

- 48 one-bedroom units \times 1.5 spaces = **72 spaces**
- 288 two-bedroom units \times 2.0 spaces = **576 spaces**
- **Total resident parking required = 72 + 576 = 648 spaces**

Guest Parking Requirement (per City Code):

- 336 total units \times 0.3 spaces per unit = **101 spaces**

Total On-Site Parking Required:

- 648 resident spaces + 101 guest spaces = **749 total spaces**

Parking Provided by Applicant:

- 648 resident spaces (meets full unit count requirement)
- 36 guest spaces
- **Total spaces provided = 684**

Summary of Reduction:

- 749 required – 684 provided = **65-space reduction**
- $65 \div 749 =$ **8.7% reduction in total required parking**

Average Spaces per Unit:

- 684 total spaces \div 336 units = **2.04 spaces per unit**

Justification for Parking Reduction

The reduction request was evaluated under the criteria outlined in Apache Junction Zoning Ordinance Section 1-7-4 (A) – Parking Standard Modification, which allows the Zoning Administrator to administratively approve up to a 10% reduction in required parking if one or both of the following conditions are met:

1. Technical evidence demonstrates that the proposed use generates a parking demand at least 10% lower than the code requirement; and/or
2. Existing public parking within 100 feet of the property can accommodate a portion of the required parking.

As part of their application, the applicant submitted a professional Parking Study providing technical justification that the peak parking demand for the development would be lower than what is required by code. Additionally, the project includes the construction of 45 new on-street parking spaces along the project frontage as part of their off-site improvements. It is also important to note that there are approximately 140 public on-street parking spaces, which accounts for the new 45 additional spaces being provided by Wolff, located within close walking distance of the site, along Plaza Drive and Apache Trail.

Given the combination of technical evidence, project-specific improvements, and surrounding public parking availability, Staff determined that the reduction request met the reduction criteria, was

reasonable and aligned with the intent of the code as well as broader community planning goals within the Downtown.

Additionally, Staff reviewed guest parking requirements in nearby jurisdictions and found that Apache Junction's standard of 0.3 spaces per unit is more conservative than those applied elsewhere, further supporting the reasonableness of the requested reduction in this context.

Municipality (Multi-Family)	all inclusive	efficiency	1 bedroom	2 or more bedroom	3 or more	guest	
Apache Junction		1	1.5	2		0.3	
Gilbert			1	2		0.25	
Mesa	2.1						
QC			1.5	2	2.5 +.5 per add bedroom		
Chandler		1	1.5	2 + .25 each add bedroom		0.25	
Apache Trail & Plaza Parking Scenario			48	288			Total Required
Apache Junction Required			72	576		101	749
Gilbert			48	576		84	708
Mesa	709						709
QC			72	576			648
Chandler			72	576		84	732

Conclusion

The Zoning Ordinance is shaped by professional experience and broader planning context, but it is not a one-size-fits-all document. It serves as a tool to guide development and allow adjustments when they lead to better outcomes. Flexibility in parking and other standards helps ensure projects fit their surroundings and support community goals.

As the City works to create a vibrant, walkable downtown, unique parking challenges emerge due to the area's mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented environment. In this setting, large multifamily projects often generate variable parking demand—less during the day and more in the evening—which makes rigid, one-size-fits-all standards less effective. Applying flexibility helps avoid oversupply, supports more efficient land use, and better aligns with the character and goals of the downtown.

Parking reduction requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and are granted only under exceptional circumstances. Each proposal is carefully reviewed, with a focus on site layout, nearby land uses, walkability, and how well the project fits with surrounding development. While the City acknowledges the community's current reliance on personal vehicles due to a lack of public transit options, this does not take away from the importance of using flexible parking standards when appropriate. Any request for reduced parking must be supported by clear evidence showing that the project can still meet its parking needs without compromising functionality, neighborhood compatibility, or the City's goals for a more efficient and livable downtown.