Bicycle Parking Facilities Guidelines

Planning to Install Bicycle Parking


Installing bicycle lockers

This guide is intended to help you save money by installing bicycle parking facilities that work. Whether you are required or volunteering to install bicycle parking, you should plan thoughtfully for convenient, secure and plentiful bicycle parking. If you see bicycles locked to trees, posts or other stationary objects nearby, you probably need bicycle parking. If you have bicycle parking that is rarely used it may be poorly located or of a type that offers little security. You will find tips in this guide to help you plan for new parking or improve your current parking. The basics of effective bicycle parking are a **good rack** and a **good location**. The information on the following pages should provide you with enough knowledge to install bicycle parking facilities that work. For additional information or guidance you may contact:

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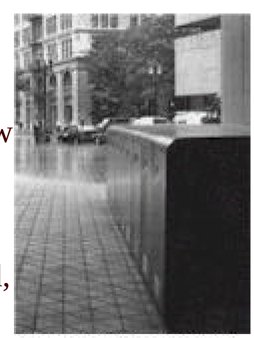
Finding a Good Location


Dry and convenient bicycle lockers

The first step in planning your bicycle parking is finding a good location. The location you choose should meet the needs of your potential users and consider where cyclists want to park, not where you might like them to park. While the new bicycle parking code requires both short- and long-term parking for most land uses and has different standards for each category, well planned bicycle parking can serve both uses. Lack of adequate bicycle parking facilities and fear of theft are major deterrents for all bicyclists. To ensure your bicycle parking will be used, be sure to choose locations that are: **convenient enough to encourage cycling**; and **secure enough to reasonably safeguard against bicycle theft.**

Rack Selection and Installation

An example of code-approved rack in use

All bicycle racks are not created equal. There are many styles to choose from. Make sure you choose yours according to the following guidelines:

What's required

Racks that allow the frame and one wheel to be locked to the rack with a high security, U-shaped shackle lock if both wheels are left on the bicycle - these racks are preferred by cyclists and can help you attract their business.

All racks (and lockers) must be securely anchored - seasoned cyclists will opt for the nearest permanent object in lieu of a poorly anchored rack.

Example of tamper-proof bolts

What works

Bicycle parking may be provided in floor, wall or ceiling mounted racks - the City of Portland Bicycle speciallist staff can help you determine whether yours meet the standards.

A creative rack design that meets City standards

Design your own rack - you can be creative in your design as long as it meets the standards.

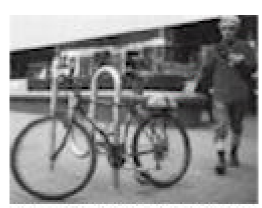
What doesn't work

Old fashioned racks that hold only the wheel of the bicycle can cause damage and are a waste of your money - seasoned cyclists will find other alternatives or take their business elsewhere.

Wall-mounted racks

Locating Short-term Parking

Short-term bicycle parking provides shoppers, customers, messengers and other visitors who generally park for two hours or less a convenient and readily accessible place to park bicycles.

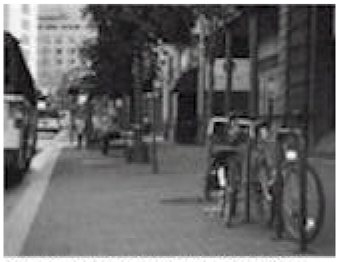


Convenient short-term parking

What's required

Locate within 50 feet of a main entrance - short-term parking should be near the entrance cyclists use.

Distribute short-term parking - where there is more than one building on a site, or where a building has more than one main entrance, the parking must be distributed to serve all buildings or main entrances.
Cover - if more than 10 short-term spaces are required, at least 50% must be covered.
A permit - if your building is built to the lot line and you plan to install parking on the sidewalk, you will need a permit.


Short term parking located near a high traffic area

What works

Locate parking in visible and prominent locations - if cyclists are unaware of the parking it won't be used.
Locate parking in areas where there is high pedestrian activity - having lots of eyes and ears nearby adds to cyclists' perception of security.

What doesn't work

Isolation - a bicycle rack that is visually or physically isolated will not be used and is a target for thieves.

Locating Long-term Parking

Long-term bicycle parking provides employees, students, residents, commuters and others who generally stay at a site for several hours a secure and weather-protected place to park bicycles. The measure of security for long-term bicycle parking must be greater than that provided by short-term parking.


Covered, secure long-term parking

What's required

Locate on site or within 750 feet of the site - daily bicycle commuters are generally willing to walk a short distance, about three blocks, if they are confident the parking is secure.
Cover - at least 50% of long-term bicycle parking must be covered.
Security can be achieved in at least one of the following ways:
1) in a locked room or area enclosed by a fence with a locked gate;
2) within view or within 100 feet of an attendant or security guard;
3) in an area that is monitored by a security camera; or
4) in a location that is visible from employee work areas.


Lockers offer high security and weather protection

What works

Secure locations - cyclists will be more likely to park where they are confident their bicycle will be there upon return.
Locate in well lit areas - lighting increases security of property and personal safety.
Install lockers - in areas where security is in question or where there is limited opportunity to provide weather protection, enclosed bike lockers are the best solution.

What doesn't work

Isolation - a bicycle rack that is visibly or physically isolated will not be used and is a target for thieves.

Spacing and Siting Standards

Each bicycle parking space should be easily accessible. Cyclists should be able to securely lock their bicycles without undue inconvenience and their bicycles should be reasonably safeguarded from intentional or accidental damage. Consider the space that a rack full of bicycles will take up, not just the rack itself. Also consider that cyclists require a sufficient pathway in and out of the parking area.


High density covered parking

What's required

Each parking space must be accessible without moving another bicycle - generally, allow for 2 feet by 6 feet for each bicycle parking space.

Provide an aisle at least 5 feet wide behind all bicycle parking to allow room for maneuvering - just as automobile drivers need additional space to maneuver in and out of parking spaces, so do cyclists.

What works

Staggered racks - some bicycle racks can be staggered on 17 inch centers allowing room for more bicycles to be parked.


Plan your parking for bicycles, not an empty rack

Consider the space a filled rack requires - the City of Portland Bicycle specialist staff can provide you with spacing requirements for specific rack types.

What doesn't work

Installing bicycle racks too close to a wall or too close to each other - installing racks improperly can cut capacity as much as 90%.
Installing bicycle racks too close to car parking - motorists will seldom leave sufficient room for bicycles to park and maneuver if bicycle parking is not sufficiently separated from car parking.

Covered Bicycle Parking

Prolonged exposure to rain can rust a bike's metal frame and components and the sun's ultraviolet rays can deteriorate a bike's soft seat and tires. Cyclists who value their bicycles will thank you for providing weather protection by giving you their business.


Making use of an existing awning

What's required

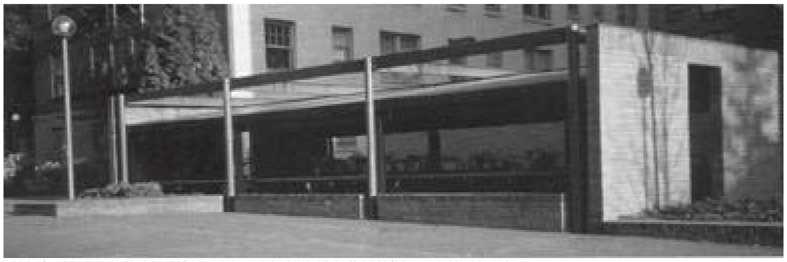
Cover must be permanent - the cover should be designed to protect the bicycle from rainfall and be at least 7 feet above the floor or ground.

What works

Take advantage of existing overhangs or awnings - this is a creative, low-cost way of providing some weather protection. Install bicycle lockers - in areas where potential for sufficient cover is limited, enclosed bicycle lockers are the best solution.

What doesn't work

Partial cover or cover that is too high - cover is intended to protect bicycles from rain and sun as well as protect cyclists from rain when they are locking or unlocking their bicycle.



Covered parking at Portland State University

Sign Parking Signs

Signs serve several purposes. They let cyclists know you have bicycle parking and that their business is valued. Signs also help cyclists find your parking if it is not immediately visible or direct long-term users to intended long-term parking, keeping more short-term parking open for your customers.

What's required

A sign must be posted at the main building entrance indicating the location of the parking - this will help your customers locate your parking if it is not visible from the street or main entrance.

What works

The City of Portland Bicycle specialist staff can provide a standard sign for publicly accessible bicycle parking that meets the expectations of the code.

A sign visible from the street

What doesn't work

Complicated signing schemes - if a complicated signing scheme is needed to find your bicycle parking, you may need to find a better location.
Signs that discourage bicycling - signs prohibiting bicycle parking when no alternative is available only create ill-will.

Table 266-6
Minimum Required Bicycle Parking Spaces

Use Categories	Specific Uses	Long-term Spaces	Short-term Spaces
Residential Categories			
• Household Living	Multi-dwelling	1 per 4 units	2, or 1 per 20 units
• Group Living		2, or 1 per 20 residents	None
	Dormitory	1 per 8 residents	None
Commercial Categories			
• Retail Sales And Service		2, or 1 per 12,000 SF of net building area	2, or 1 per 5,000 SF of net building area
	Temporary Lodging	2, or 1 per 20 rentable rooms	2, or 1 per 20 rentable rooms

• Office		2, or 1 per 10,000 SF of net building area	2, or 1 per 40,000 SF of net building area
• Commercial Parking		10, or 1 per 20 auto spaces	None
• Commercial Outdoor Recreation		10, or 1 per 20 auto spaces	None
• Major Event Entertainment		10, or 1 per 40 seats or per CU review	None
Industrial Categories			
• Manufacturing And Production		2, or 1 per 15,000 SF of net building area	None
• Warehouse And Freight Movement		2, or 1 per 40,000 SF of net building area	None
Institutional Categories			
• Basic Utilities		8	None
	Light rail stations transit centers,	10, or 5 per acre	None
• Community Service	Park and ride	2, or 1 per 10,000 SF of net building area	2, or 1 per 10,000 SF of net building area
• Parks And Open Areas		Per CU review	Per CU review
• Schools	Grades 2 through 5	2 per classroom, or per CU or IMP review	None
	Grades 6 through 12	4 per classroom, or per CU or IMP review	None
• Colleges	Excluding dormitories (see Group Living, above)	2, or 1 per 20,000 SF of net building area, or per CU or IMP review	2, or 1 per 10,000 SF of net building area, or per CU or IMP review
• Medical Centers		2, or 1 per 70,000 SF of net building area, or per CU or IMP review	2, or 1 per 40,000 SF of net building area, or per CU or IMP review
• Religious Institutions		2, or 1 per 4,000 SF of net building area	2, or 1 per 2,000 SF of net building area
• Daycare		2, or 1 per 10,000 SF of net building area	None
Other Categories			
• Aviation And Surface Passenger Terminals, Detention Facilities		Per CU Review	Per CU Review

Note: *Wherever this table indicates two numerical standards, such as 2, or 1 per 3,000 SF of net building area, the larger number applies.*