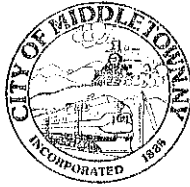




**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA
OCTOBER 21, 2025**

1. ROLL CALL
2. NEW BUSINESS
Bulk Table Requirements
3. ADJOURNMENT

Joseph M. DeStefano
Mayor



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City of Middletown

16 James Street, Middletown, New York 10940
Established 1888

MEMO

October 11, 2025

To: The Honorable Members of the Common Council
From: Mayor Joseph M. DeStefano
Re: Modernizing Downtown Parking Requirements

Dear Members of the Common Council,

As we continue to revitalize Middletown's downtown and support its next chapter of growth, it is important that our zoning and development policies reflect the realities of how our city works today—not how it functioned decades ago. One of the most significant opportunities before us is to modernize our **parking requirements in the downtown business district** to better encourage redevelopment, small business investment, and new housing.

Across Upstate New York and the nation, communities large and small have reduced or eliminated off-street parking minimums in their downtowns. Cities like **Hudson, Canandaigua, Schenectady, and Buffalo** have already taken this step, recognizing that rigid parking minimums can stifle redevelopment, especially in older downtown areas where existing buildings and lot sizes make new parking impractical or impossible.

Middletown's downtown is no different. Many of our historic properties were built long before modern parking rules existed. Requiring each new use or apartment to provide off-street parking per the current bulk table requirements for UR 3 zone can make adaptive reuse or upper-floor housing financially unfeasible—leaving buildings vacant instead of vibrant. Other bulk table requirements such as play area, minimum 1-acre lots and others need changing to encourage the continuation of downtown redevelopment.

By **reducing minimum parking requirements** in the downtown district, we can:

- Encourage the **reuse of historic buildings** and fill vacant upper floors with housing or small businesses;
- Support **walkability and transit use**, consistent with our investments in sidewalks, streetscapes, and public spaces;

- Make **development more affordable and flexible**, particularly for small businesses and local property owners; and
- Ensure that parking needs are met through **existing municipal lots, future garages, shared parking, and on-street spaces**, rather than forcing each project to build its own.

Our goal is not to eliminate parking—but to **remove unnecessary barriers** to investment and allow the market to respond to actual demand. The City can continue to manage downtown parking strategically through municipal lots and timed spaces, while freeing property owners to put their resources into improving and reusing their buildings.

I respectfully request that the Common Council refer this matter to the **Planning Committee and Economic and Community Development Office** for study and recommendation, with the goal of drafting amendments to the zoning ordinance that align Middletown with best practices seen across New York State for the DMU District.

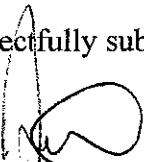
While there are many changes that need to consideration, we can approach this incrementally considering that we at least have one project on board that would move forward if some of these changes are implemented. I would recommend the following for consideration immediately as we continue to review the bulk requirements in the DMU:

1. 1 Bedroom current 1.75 spots change to 1.5 spots
2. 2 Bedroom current 2 spots change to 1.5 spots
3. 3 Bedroom current 2.5 spots change to 2 spots
4. Lot coverage- speak with DPW Commissioner for recommendation
5. Play Area- Remove requirement downtown

I have attached some guidelines that other communities are following for reference.

Together, we can keep Middletown moving forward by ensuring our zoning construction requirements supports, rather than hinders, the continued growth and vibrancy of our downtown.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph M. DeStefano
Mayor, City of Middletown

Mayor's Notes Urban Parking District- DMU

The number of **parking spaces required per apartment** in upstate New York depends on the **local zoning ordinance**, but most small and mid-sized upstate cities follow **similar patterns**. Here's a breakdown of what's typical — and how it varies depending on the setting:

Trends and Flexibility

Many upstate municipalities are **loosening** these rules to:

- Encourage downtown redevelopment and housing reuse.
- Support walkability and transit.
- Reduce project costs for affordable and senior housing.

Common flexibility provisions:

- Waivers by the Planning Board.
- Reductions for proximity to transit.
- Shared parking arrangements.
- Payment-in-lieu of parking (fee to city instead of building spaces).

NYS Cities / Towns with Parking Minimum Reforms

City/Town	Approx Population / Scale	What Has Been Reformed / Proposed	Key Details
Canandaigua, NY	~10,000	Removed all off-street parking minimums citywide in 2020. <u>Strong Towns+1</u>	Now developments of a certain size must include a parking demand analysis instead of a fixed minimum. <u>belonging.berkeley.edu+1</u>
Hudson, NY	Small city (Columbia County)	In 2019, Hudson eliminated parking minimums for <i>both commercial/retail and residential</i> uses citywide. <u>belonging.berkeley.edu+1</u>	
Schenectady, NY	~65,000	Downtown / "city center / business district" has no minimum parking requirement for <i>commercial properties</i> . <u>Parking Reform Network</u>	Also has parking maximums in downtown (to limit oversupply) relative to outside-downtown minimums. <u>Parking Reform Network</u>

City/Town	Approx Population / Scale	What Has Been Reformed / Proposed	Key Details
Binghamton, NY	~45-50,000	Proposed zoning changes (as of 2024) to eliminate parking requirements for new developments (especially senior & affordable housing), reduce requirements up to 75%, etc. binghamtonhomepage.com	These are proposals—not fully adopted yet. So checks needed to see current status. binghamtonhomepage.com

Typical Parking Requirements (Upstate NY Cities)

1. Downtown / Central Business Districts

- **0 to 1 space per unit**
- Often **no minimum requirement** for apartments above ground-floor commercial spaces or within a designated downtown overlay zone.
- Some cities (like **Buffalo, Hudson, and Canandaigua**) have **no parking minimums at all**.

Example:

Schenectady, NY (Downtown District) — No off-street parking required for residential or commercial uses.

Ithaca, NY (CBD) — 0 spaces required for residential uses in the CBD; parking requirements apply only outside downtown.

2. Urban Residential or Mixed-Use Districts (near downtown)

- **1 space per dwelling unit** is common.
- Sometimes reduced to **0.75 spaces per unit** for small apartments or affordable housing.

Examples:

Kingston, NY — 1 space per dwelling unit in most residential zones; waived in Uptown and Midtown business districts.