



April 22, 2026

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board

FROM: Natalia Gomez Rojas, AICP, Planner IV - Planning Director's Office

SUBJECT: Legislative Drafting Request LDR-94-2026
Development Standards - Off-Street Parking and Loading

The Prince George's County Planning Department's legislative team has reviewed the proposed legislative amendment to the Zoning Ordinance and presents the following evaluation and findings leading to a recommendation of **APPROVAL on the condition the Council adopts a parking minimum per Dwelling Unit as opposed to per bed.**

I. BACKGROUND

- A. Purpose:** To increase the minimum number of required off-street parking spaces for apartment housing for elderly or physically disabled families.
- B. Impacted Property:** This bill would impact properties in the Rural and Agricultural Base Zones, the Residential Base Zones, the Nonresidential Base Zones, and Planned Development Zones.

II. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposed legislative amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are reviewed under the requirements of Section 27-3501, Legislative Amendment, of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Department has considered the following in reviewing this proposed legislative amendment:

- A. The Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance;
- B. *The Plan Prince George's 2035 Approved General Plan;*
- C. The current area master plans, sector plans, and functional master plans for Prince George's County;
- D. The Prince George's County Climate Action Plan; and
- E. Referral comments.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH LAW, ASSESSMENT OF TECHNICAL DRAFTING CONVENTIONS, AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The Department has determined that the proposed bill was drafted in a manner consistent with the legislative style and conventions of the current Zoning Ordinance.

IV. POLICY ANALYSIS

LDR-94-2026 proposes an amendment to Section 27-6305(a) of the Zoning Ordinance that would increase the minimum number of off-street parking spaces required for apartment housing serving elderly or physically disabled families. Specifically, the bill would revise the current standard from one parking space per four beds to one space per two beds.

The “Apartment housing for elderly or physically handicapped families” use was added to the Zoning Ordinance in the 1960’s and, absent one amendment in 2005, the definition has remained the essentially the same since that time. Until 2005, the use required just one member of the household to be age 62 or over. The 2005 amendment expanded the use to include apartments where 80 percent of the units contained at least one person age 55 or over. The remaining 20 percent of the units could contain persons under age 55.

In 2018, the new Zoning Ordinance consolidated many uses and made substantial changes to the minimum parking requirements. A new definition for “Elderly Housing” limited the use to buildings occupied by persons 62 and over while the “Apartment housing for elderly or physically handicapped families” use was retained. The minimum parking requirement for both uses was also amended from 0.66 per Dwelling Unit to 1.0 per 2 beds. Under the prior Zoning Ordinance only parking for Hospital and Nursing Home uses was based on “per bed” and staff was unable to locate any reason why the change was made from DU to per bed as it appears to have been made late in the drafting process since earlier versions of the draft Ordinance did not contain either use.

The impact of the change in parking minimums has been significant. For example, under the prior Zoning Ordinance, a 101-unit 55+ age restricted apartment building (DSP-16059) was required to provide 67 parking spaces (although its location in a Revitalization Tax Credit District allowed for a 30% reduction). Under the current Zoning Ordinance, an 87 unit “Apartment housing for elderly or physically handicapped families” use which permits the same 55+ (DET-2025-010) was only required to provide 24 spaces.

The “Apartment housing for elderly or physically handicapped families” use is somewhat misleading because for most people the term “elderly” does not suggest 55-year-olds. In addition, the law only requires 80 percent of the units to be occupied by a person 55 and over and the remaining members of the unit, as well as all of the persons in the remaining 20 percent of the units, may be under 55. Accordingly, the use is more similar to a traditional apartment building that is not age restricted than to a Hospital or Assisted Living facility use.

Based on the findings above, **the Department recommends the sponsor amend LDR-94-2026 to set the Minimum Number of Off-Street Parking Spaces for the “Apartment housing for elderly or physically disabled families” use at a rate of 0.66 per “Dwelling Unit” not per “bed.”** This approach aligns with the historic parking standard and actual

definition of the use and insures that there will be an adequate number of parking spaces for senior developments while, at the same time not burdening the financial feasibility of such projects by imposing the parking requirements otherwise applicable to non-age restricted apartment buildings (which range from 1.0 to 2.0 parking spaces per dwelling unit).

The Background Information provided with the LDR did not identify any data or analysis to support the proposed increase from 2 to 4 beds and no policy objective was stated. Staff, therefore, was unable to comment on the policy. If the Council should proceed with implementing the historic parking ratio of 0.66 per Dwelling Unit, however, staff is available to work with the sponsor and the Council in the future to undertake further research and study of parking minimums for this and other similar residential uses within the County's broader housing and land use objectives. Staff also recommends the Council consider grandfathering provisions to protect projects currently in the pipeline intended for the "Apartment housing for elderly or physically handicapped families" use.

V. COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

Pursuant to Section 27-3501(c)(2)(B), staff finds the following with respect to the proposed amendment:

(i) Is consistent with the goals, policies, and strategies of Plan Prince George's 2035 (or any successor General Plan), area master plans, sector plans, functional master plans, and any other applicable approved plans;

Policy TM-8 of Plan 2035 recommends the County "ensure that minimum and maximum parking requirements for transit-accessible areas are appropriate to advance the overall goals of Plan 2035", including promoting multimodal transportation, reducing automobile dependency, and supporting sustainable development patterns.

In evaluating consistency of LDR-94-2026 with other applicable plans, it is also important to consider the transportation guidance provided in the GO Prince George's, as well as any applicable master and sector plans. These policy documents collectively emphasize the need for context-sensitive parking standards that reflect transit availability, walkability, and evolving travel behaviors.

(ii) Addresses a demonstrated community need;

"Identified community need" is not defined by the Zoning Ordinance and is subjective. At this time, the Department has not received sufficient input from the bill sponsor or from residents to demonstrate that additional parking constitutes a community need. However, in 2025 the Council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee favorably reported legislation that would ensure senior-serving developments located in transit-oriented zones provide a limited number of parking spots for those seniors unable to access alternative means of transit.

- (iii) Is consistent with the purpose and intent of the zones in this Ordinance, or would improve compatibility among uses and ensure efficient development within the County;**

LDR-94-2026 may appear inconsistent with the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance to support pedestrian-friendly, higher-intensity, mixed-use development in the appropriate locations, including support and emphasis upon a framework for multi-modal forms of mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists. To advance these goals, however, the Zoning Ordinance already provides for reduced off-street parking requirements for developments located near high-service transit, as outlined in Table 27-6305(a). It also establishes maximum parking limits to help prevent an oversupply of parking in areas where alternative modes of transportation are readily available.

- (iv) Is consistent with the implementation of the strategies and priority recommendations of the Prince George’s County Climate Action Plan;**

Staff find that this bill may be inconsistent with the Prince George’s County Climate Action Plan, as it allows for increased parking rather than reducing reliance on automobiles.

- (v) Is consistent with other related State and local laws and regulations; and**

LDR-94-2026 complies with this criterion.

- (vi) Would avoid creating significantly adverse impacts on the natural environment, including but not limited to water, air, noise, stormwater management, wildlife, vegetation, wetlands, and the natural functioning of the environment.**

Staff does not have sufficient information to determine if LDR-94-2026 complies with this criterion.

VI. PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

Section 27-3501(c)(2)(D) requires the Prince George’s County Planning Board to hold a public hearing and make comments on the proposed legislative amendment within 30 days of the date of the transmittal of the Clerk of the Council. Said public hearing must be noticed by electronic mail at least 21 days prior to the public hearing, sent to every community organization in the County registered pursuant to Section 27-3407(b)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance, and to any person or organization registered pursuant to Section 27-3402(d) of the Zoning Ordinance.

Notice for the public hearing on LDR-94-2026 was sent on April 16, 2026, as required by the Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Board public hearing will be held on May 7, 2026, thus meeting the notice requirement of the Zoning Ordinance.

Comments offered by the public prior to and during the Planning Board’s public hearing will be summarized, along with the Planning Board’s comments, in the Board’s recommendation to Clerk of the Council.

VII. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Following review of LDR-94-2026 the Department has offered the necessary technical drafting convention edits that are necessary for this proposed bill in Section II, above. As to the substantive aspects of the bill, the Department does offer the following additional amendments:

TABLE 27-6305(a): Minimum Number of Off-Street Parking Spaces								
Principal Use Category	Principal Use Type	Off-Street Parking Standards						All Other Areas in the County
		RTO and LTO Zones (Base and PD)		TAC Zone (Base and PD)		NAC (Base and PD)	Inside the Capital Beltway	
		Core	Edge	Core	Edge			
		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Group Living Uses	Apartment housing for elderly or physically disabled families	Not applicable					[1.0] <u>0.66</u> per [4 beds] <u>DU</u>	[1.0] <u>0.66</u> per [4 beds] <u>DU</u>
		*	*	*	*	*	*	*

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Planning Department’s legislative team recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and recommend Planning Board **APPROVAL on the condition the Council adopts a parking minimum per Dwelling Unit as opposed to per bed** on LDR-94-2026.