# Shopping Center Parking Requirements 

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This paper reports on research work carried out for the Urban Land Institute to establish the parking standards that should be used in the design of shopping centers.

An examination of the demand for parking facilities at 270 centers throughout the United States and Canada was undertaken. The research has shown that there are many factors involved in establishing these standards, such as parking habits, trading area, mode of travel, and the presence of nonretail uses in the shopping centers.

This research pointed out that at a shopping center where there is little walk-in or transit trade 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area will accommodate customer and employee parking demands on all but the three highest days of the year, with allowance for parking maneuvering. This is considerably lower than most zoning ordinances in effect throughout the country today.

The purpose of this research project was to investigate the demand for parking facilities at existing shopping centers and, on the basis of these observations to establish parking standards to be used in the design of shopping centers. These standards are to reflect the present consumer shopping habits and owner operational practices at shopping centers in the United States and Canada.

- THE RESEARCH program that was undertaken to evaluate parking standards was done in two phases. A pilot study, completed in 1963, was used to guide the establishment of the technique for a primary survey of 270 shopping centers carried out in 1964. Both of these program phases were undertaken by the Urban Land Institute with the assistance of the International Council of Shopping Centers, Inc. The Council obtained the cooperation of all the centers that were contacted and made it possible to get returns from a wide sample of shopping centers.


## THE PILOT STUDY

The pilot study was primarily exploratory in nature and was conducted in 21 centers. Automobile arrivals and departures during every hour at each shopping center were counted by shopping center personnel or by pneumatic counters on a weekday (usually December 14) and on a Saturday (usually December 17). Aerial phntngraphs taken between 11:00 a. m . and 3:00 p. m. provided a check on the reasonablences of peak-hour parking counts. An analysis of accumulation, arrival, and departure patterns of customers that was derived from the pilot study indicated that the peak parking demand occurred at about 2:30 in the afternoon or about 8:00 in the evening. Thus, in designing the primary study, it was decided to limit the counting of cars parked to those two hours on the 12 days before Christmas.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED CENTERS BY METROPOLITAN POPULATION AND CENTER SIZE

| Metropolitan Population | Gross Leasable Area in Thousands of Square Feet |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Under 100 | 100-200 | 200-400 | 400-600 | 600-1000 | Over 1000 | Total |
| Less than 250,000 | 9 | 29 | 16 | 3 | 2 | - | 59 |
| 250,000-500,000 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 7 | 2 | - | 39 |
| 500,000-1,000,000 | 10 | 10 | 13 | 8 | 2 | - | 43 |
| 1,000,000-2,000,000 | 18 | 11 | 18 | 5 | 13 | 3 | 68 |
| Over 2,000,000 | 11 | 12 | 21 | 9 | 6 | $\underline{2}$ | 61 |
| Total number of centers | 56 | 74 | 78 | 32 | 25 | 5 | 270 |
| Percent of total | 21 | 27 | 29 | 12 | 9 | 2 | 100 |



Figure 1. Geographic distribution of shopping centers.

## THE PRIMARY SURVEY

A manual was prepared to describe the procedure necessary to systematically count the parked vehicles during the 12 pre-Christmas days (Appendix B). This manual was used to assure that the data would be uniform and comparable. With accompanying questionnaires, it was sent to shopping centers which represented different metropolitan area population sizes, different center sizes, different geographical areas, different consumer incomes, and different shopping center tenants. The larger metropolitan areas to be represented were selected from different geographical areas and climates, and several centers of varying size were contacted in each area. In addition to the
numbers of parked vehicles at 2:30 and 8:00, the following information was obtained for each shopping center in the primary study: (a) gross leasable area, (b) occupied floor area, (c) activities in the center, (d) available parking spaces, (e) spaces used by employees, (f) annual sales, (g) type of customers, and (h) age of center.

## Sample for Primary Study

Questionnaire returns were obtained from 270 shopping centers. Table 1 summarizes the response on the basis of the population of the metropolitan area and the size of the center. Each population and size class appears well represented.

The 270 shopping centers which responded are widely distributed throughout the United States and Canada (Fig. 1). The San Francisco-Oakland, Chicago, and Toronto metropolitan areas are represented by more than ten centers each; and the Boston, Pittsburgh, Washinton, D. C., San Diego, Baltimore, and Houston metropolitan areas by more than five centers each. There are about 50 metropolitan areas represented in the less-than- 250,000 population class, 25 in the $250,000-500,000$ population class, 19 in the $500,000-1,000,000$ population class, 16 in the $1,000,000-2,000,000$ class, and 10 in the over-2, 000, 000 class.

## PARKING PATTERNS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR A ZONING STANDARD

## Daily Parking Patterns

The most important observation made during the pilot study was that, on the busiest day, shoppers tended to spread their shopping trips across the entire day. This is Ghowit in Figure 1, which compares the peoly dey with a normal duy duriny the Christmas season. Peak day trips are dispersed throughout the day, while on the other day they are concentrated into a shorter period of time. The difference between the peak parking volumes on the two days is very small, even though more than twice as many cars were


Figure 2. Accumulation pattern on peak and other days at a typical shopping center.
parked on the peak day as on the other. Some of the difference in the shapes of the parking demand curves can be shown to be the result of the normal differences between weekday and Saturday parking patterns; but there is, nonetheless, a consistent pattern of increased dispersion of trips on the peak day. Such a pattern makes it quite apparent that people do adjust their habits to avoid peak conditions and that any reasonable parking standards should take this into consideration.

## Derivation of Yearly Parking Patterns

From the survey's data on parking space provision and its usage at peak hours, it was possible to derive the number of days during a year when these levels are apt to reoccur.

1. An analysis of shopping center traffic and parking, using data from eight of the centers in the pilot study, indicated that there is a strong relationship between daily inbound traffic volumes and peak-hour parking accumulation. This finding was confirmed by the study that Cleveland and Mueller had conducted for 14 other centers ( 1 Appendix, Fig. 40). Investigation of daily inbound traffic volumes and peak-hour parking demands for each of the 12 pre-Christmas days studied, using rank-order correlation techniques, further confirmed this relationship.
2. Recognizing this correlation, an investigation was made of the daily inbound traffic volumes at the same shopping center over a $2-y r$ period. This investigation indicated that of the 12 shopping days before Christmas, the four highest were never equaled during the entire year. However, each of the fifth- through the eighth-highest days of traffic volume before Christmas was duplicated at other times throughout the year, and each of the ninth- through twelfth-highest days of traffic volume was duplicated twice throughout the year. The same patterns should occur in peak-hour parking demands, since a strong relationship exists between them and daily traffic volumes. Thus, it was possible from this analysis to relate the observations that were made for the peak hours of the peak days in the Christmas period to a yearly pattern.

To estimate the equivalents of the third-highest day or sixth-highest day in the more conventional engineering terminology of highest-hours, additional analysis of the shopping center data on traffic volumes was carried out which indicated that the thirdhighest day of the year and the tenth-highest hour of the year are approximately equivalent. Similarly, the sixth-highest day was comparable to the thirtieth-highest hour so often used in highway engineering standards. When this pattern was compared to the annual hourly traffic volume pattern at the shopping center described in the Cleveland-Mueller report, the two were found to be very similar (1, Fig. 48).

## Determination of Parking Requirements

In establishing a standard to guide the amount of parking to be provided at a shopping center, it must be recognized that, if extremely high peak parking demands occur only two or three days a year, it is unreasonable and uneconomical to provide facilities to fully accommodate them (Fig. 3). Therefore, determination of the number of parking spaces that should be provided by a shopping center is a problem analogous to highway design problems, which are generally solved by the provision of facilities to meet the thirtieth-highest hour of traffic volume (2).

A similar analysis was made of the shopping centers in the sample by estimating the frequency of occurrence of each peak-hour parking demand level in all of the centers combined, during the entire year, as previously described. The parking demand was expressed in "spaces used by customers and employees per 1000 square feet of the gross leasable area that was occupied." By ranking these observations from the highest to the lowest, it was possible to determine the level of parking demands on the second- or fourth- or sixth-highest days of the year at all of these centers combined. The result for 103 centers without theater or office space is shown in Figure 3. The vertical scale in the figure represents use of parking spaces at the various shopping centers. The horizontal scale shows the number of days during the year when the parking demand was greater than that shown by the use curves as derived from the


Figure 3. Daily parking requirements.
basic data. The chart shows that parking demand exceeds six spaces per 1000 square feet on only two days of the year and 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet on three days of the year.

To the extent that this sample is representative of all shopping centers in the United States and Canada, the same levels of parking usage can be expected at all shopping centers, and the standard described herein will be applicable to them.

If the highway officials' thirtieth-highest hour design criterion were used to determine parking requirements at shopping centers, about 4.9 spaces per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area would be required. Comparison of hourly and daily parking demands by the special analysis of traffic data for a shopping center (described above) indicates that the thirtieth-highest hour of parking demands is roughly equivalent to the sixthhighest day (Fig. 3).

Perhaps a more realistic standard in light of customers' desires would be the selection of the third-highest day as a basis for a parking standard. This is logical because, as shown by Figure 3, the curve levels off after the third-highest day. Such a standard would climinate the extremely high peaks which occur on the first-, second-, and thirdhighest days. This would mean that for each space not provided (between this standard and one which would require an additional space per 1000 square feet) about ten auto customers in a year would be unable to find a parking space immediately, since the
third-highest day is approximately equivalent to the tenth-highest hour (the average customer stays at a typical center for about an hour) (1, Figs. 41-43; 3).

From an economic point of view, such a standard is very conservative since the annual cost of providing a parking space in a shopping center greatly exceeds the profit revenue from the sales volume that ten customers would generate.

If the design hour were selected solely from an economic point of view, that is, considering the shopping center developer's annual cost of providing parking ( $\$ 100$ per space) and the possible economic return on such money ( $\$ 2$ to $\$ 3$ per vehicle parking), the design hour would probably be between the thirtieth- and fiftieth-highest hours. These estimates of the annual cost of providing parking and the economic return per vehicle parking are subject to judgment but, even if the most optimistic cost estimates are used, provision of parking to meet the tenth-highest hour of parking demand will be more than adequate to meet the economic criteria.

The Recommended Standard
As shown by Figure 3, provision of parking spaces at a level which would exclude the third-highest day of demand requires approximately 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area (exclusive of theater or office space). This includes parking spaces required by employees, as well as the reserve spaces needed for parking maneuvering. The counting technique took into account the spaces needed for parking maneuvering by: (a) considering a space occupied if a car were pulling in or out of it, (b) considering a car as filling an empty space somewhere else if it were waiting to pull into a space, and (c) considering a car as filling a space somewhere else if it were parked in an illegal space. (See Appendix B for a more detailed description of the counting technique.)

Thus, a total of 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area (exclusive of theater and office space) is recommended as the parking standard for the design of shopping centers of all sizes. To the extent that the centers in this sample are like those in the United States as a whole, Figure 3 shows that this standard, on the average, will satisfy the parking demands for all but three days of the year at all of the shopping centers in the United States. This is approximately one percent of the total days these shopping centers are open during a year.

Additional analysis of the 103 centers that had no theater or office space indicates that they had the same demand on the third-highest day regardless of their size. The number of spaces used on the third-highest day by the centers in all size classes actually varied between 5.0 and 6.0 , but there was no systematic relationship between the center size and the parking demand; so it is possible to recommend a single standard of 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet for centers of all sizes. The parking demands of only one size class (composed of those nine centers with between 400,000 and 600,000 square feet of gross leasable area) differed from the recommended standard by more than 0.25 spaces per 1000 square feet, so the variations by size class were generally insignificant. The lack of a systematic relationship between parking demand and shopping center size is shown by the fact that there was only 0.2 spaces difference between the parking demands of the largest and smallest size classes.

The test of any standard is in its application. Of the 103 centers that were studied, eight centers provided spaces at the recommended level of 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area. The parking demand at these centers, as shown by Figure 4, exceeds capacity for only three days of the year-that is, during those days cars are parked illegally and queuing occurs within the center. Figure 4 also indicates that at the sixth-highest day (the standard equivalent to that used by highway engineers in the design of highway facilities, as mentioned above) the centers have a parking reserve of at least ten percent.

Parking demands on the third-highest day at those centers providing 6.0 spaces per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area are very little more than at the centers providing 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet.

Figure 4 also shows the number of spaces used per 1000 square feet of the gross leasable floor area that was occupied at centers that provided, on the average, 8. 8


Figure 4. Daily parking requirements.
spaces per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area. In these cases, the additional spaces above the recommended standard were used to some degree for the six highest days, but they only served about 30 extra cars per 1000 square feet, and after the sixthhighest day were not used at all. In other words, when about nine parking spaces per 1000 square feet of gross leasable floor area are provided, the additional spaces over the recommended standard are used only six days a year, mainly on one or two days.

Thus, the recommended standard is one that takes into consideration the customer, but at the same time recognizes that sound planning should not provide for the infrequent extremes in the peaks of parking demand.

Using thie technique on data from 103 shopping centers for the 12 days of the preChristmas sedsun has prubably pruvided a reliable estimate of parking demand levels and their frequencies during the highest three days of the year (Fig. 3), since the four highest days occur during the Christmas season. This is the portion of the curve which is most reliable and on which the recommended standard for parking space provision is based. Equally reliable cstimates of the frequencies of the lower parking demand levels would require more parking counts on more "normal" days, but such estimates are unnecessary for justification of the recommended standard. This, then, is a standard based on observed parking demands at the peak hours of the peak days of the peak season of the year.

## SPECLAL CIRCUMSTANCES MODIFYING PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Parking demands are not generated by the building space itself, but by the clientele of the center-which is determined by the location of the center, its competitive advantage, the characteristics of the trading area's population and its mode of transportation, and by the number and types of activities located in the center.

Effects of Shopping Center Location and Trading Area on Parking Requirements

Parking requirements at a shopping center are affected by the location of the center. For example, if a center is located near a physical barrier, such as a body of water or undevelopable open space, fewer shoppers can be attracted from one direction than if the center were located in an area which is easily accessible from all directions. In Figure 5, Shopping Center Number 4 illustrates this. In such cases, the parking requirements probably could be below the recommended standard.

Numerous studies in the past have indicated that the trading area of a shopping center is also affected by the location of competition and the size of the center itself. These factors are also clearly shown by Figure 5, which shows the points from which shoppers came to various shopping centers in Seattle. The size of the trading area of each center varies with the size of the center, but the influence oi competing centers modifies these trading areas, as in the case of Shopping Center Number 3.

Thus, there may be instances where a shopping center, because of unique location, would have higher or lower parking requirements than indicated by the recommended standard. Where such conditions are not likely to change with time, modification of the


Figure 5. Trading areas of shopping centers in Seattle.
standard is in order. In such circumstances a specialized study should be undertaken to establish the parking requirements. In the case of a proposed center, this would call for the application of a mathematical model that adequately simulates shopping patterns. Where an existing shopping center is to be expanded, analyses of existing parking practices and a study of projected parking requirements should be undertaken before such modifications can be considered.

## Effects of Mode of Travel on Parking Requirements

The data for the shopping centers included in this study show the characteristics of their suburban locations and, as is typical of such outlying areas, the elements of walkin trade and dependence on public transportation are missing. The customers arrive principally by private automobile. Suburban shopping centers have the greatest parking demands per unit of gross leasable floor area. Where a shopping center (or a shopping district) is located in a central city area served by mass transportation and where a high volume of walk-in trade comes from the surrounding neighborhoods, the parking requirements are reduced by as much as two-thirds from those found in suburban areas. This finding comes from a traffic engineering survey of parking demand in the Baltimore metropolitan area. (This information comes from a special investigation of data developed in comnection with the market potential and site evaluation studies on multi-purpose centers for the Baltimore region by Alan M. Voorhees and Associates, Inc.) Similar reductions in parking requirements for retail shopping districts have been observed from comparable parking demand studies conducted in Detroit (4).

Since the recommended parking standards are for a center with little walk-in trade or transit usage, an increase in the importance of either of these factors would call for a corresponding reduction in parking requirements.

## Effects of Tenant Composition on Parking Requirements

The recommended parking standard might be modified if the array of shopping center tenants were unusual. For example, if the center's tenant composition were to include furniture stores or other such specialty tenant classifications, the parking requirement could be reduced, since such stores generally do not generate the parking requirements that are normally observed at shopping centers with predominantly apparel, drug, variety, hardware, and foud stures and services (3, Table 5; $\underline{5}$, Table 14).

## Effects of Offices and Theaters on Parking Requirements

The 270 shopping centers in this study reported the floor area, if any, devoted to office use. An analysis was made to determine what impact the office use might have on parking requirements at the peak hours of the third-highest day. It was found that office floor area was not a significant predictor of parking space demand in regression analysis.

Office space does not generally have an impact on peak-hour parking requirements at the third-highest day because when this peak hour occurs offices are not normally open. For example, at the centers in the sample only 13 percent of the peak demands on the third-highest day occurred when the offices were in full operation. These peak demands usually occurred on evenings, Saturdays, or the day before Christmas when, generally, office activities were below normal.

Generally, it was found that normal hours of office operation only began to coincide with the peak hours occurring on the sixth-highest day of parking demand. Figure 3 shows that there is a difference of one-half space per 1000 square feet (of the gross leasable area that was occupied) between the peak parking demands on the third-highest day and the sixth-highest day. This number of spaces would accommodate normally about the parking requirement for 200 square feet of office space, assuming that 2.5 spaces per 1000 square feet of office space use are adequate to satisfy normal office parking requirements in shopping centers. This means that for every 1000 square feet of gross leasable area at a shopping center an additional 200 square feet in office use may exist without increasing parking demand for the third-highest day. Thus, if up to

20 percent of the gross leasable area of the center is in office space the center's parking requirement based solely on gross leasable area is adequate. When more than 20 percent of the gross leasable area of the center is in office use, provision should be made for office parking according to the generally accepted standard of 2.5 spaces per 1000 square feet in office use.

It is possible that those centers which have large concentrations of offices with tenants such as doctors and dentists, who serve the public directly and may have extra demands during Christmas vacations, would generate enough parking demands at the tenth-highest hour to require more than 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet, but these effects were not observed in the present study.

An analysis of the impact that theaters may have on parking requirements at shopping centers was also undertaken. Although statistically significant results were obtained by multiple regression techniques, indicating that the presence of a theater in a shopping center generates additional parking demand, it was felt that in light of the sample size (only 28 shopping centers had theaters) and the dominance of retailing activities at the centers studied, additional research should be undertaken. Appropriate research should analyze the nature of parking demand generated by a theater at a shopping center by determining: (a) the extent to which theaters have a multiplier effect on retail parking demands, (b) the interchange of parking spaces between theater and retail


Figure 6. Parking spaces required by existing zoning by gross leasable area in relation to recommended standard.
activities, and (c) the influence that the location of the theater within the shopping center has on parking requirements.

## RECOMMENDED STANDARD COMPARED TO EXISTING ZONING REQUIREMENTS

Forty percent of the centers in the survey reported information making possible an accounting of the number of parking spaces required by the provisions of a local zoning ordinance. These parking space requirements are plotted in relation to the gross leasable area of the shopping centers in Figure 6. A line representing the recommended standard of 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area in the center (exclusive of theater and office space) is also shown. This figure shows that the ratios of number-of-spaces-required-by-zoning to center-size vary widely. It also shows that 56 percent of the shopping centers shown were located in areas where the local zoning ordinance parking requirement was higher than the recommended standard.

Since the area required by a parking space varies with a parking lot's layout, this study uses the parking index, or number of car spaces provided per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area, rather than the parking ratio, which relates the area of the parking space to the building area.

Many of the dots above the line representing the recommended standard indicate zoning requirements based on the parking ratio of three-feet-of-parking-area to one-foot-of-building area now in common usage. Assuming 400 square feet per parking space, this is equivalent to 7.5 spaces per 1000 square feet of floor area. The recommended standard of 5.5 spaces per 1000 square feet is equivalent to 2.2 feet of parking area for one foot of floor area. In other words, a 2.2 to 1 ratio is more appropriate than a 3 lot ralin, if the ration furmula is to be nsed in moning ordinances.

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## Appendix A

## DE FINITIONS

The data collected from the 270 shopping centers which returned questionnaires are tabulated in Appendix C. Some explanation of definitions and methods of derivation of the data shown is necessary to understand the tabulation, but many items are self-explanatory.

Gross Leasable Area-The total floor area designed for tenant occupancy and exclusive use, including basements, mezzanines, and upper floors, if any, as expressed in square feel measured from center lines of joint partitions and exteriors of outside
walls. This does not include office buildings in which medical, dental, research, and other kinds of special organizations are housed, nor theaters, although it does include banks and other such activities which are part of the shopping center (6). It should be noted that this definition of gross leasable area does not include space in office or theater use.

Parking Spaces Available-The total parking spaces available within the center provided for all purposes, whether used by employees or customers. They were determined by actual count. (A few centers excluded those spaces for employees which are so located that customers never use them; e.g., in rear service areas.) The number of spaces used by employees was determined by counting the number of cars parked in the lots before the stores opened in the morning. These spaces were then subtracted from the total to get the number of spaces available for customer parking. For the 31 cases in which customers park outside the center the number of parking spaces thus used was estimated, using information provided by the questionnaires.

Peak Parking Demand-The peak customer and employee parking demand for each day at a shopping center shown here as the higher of the afternoon and the evening counts. (The number of customer cars parked is derived by subtracting the number of empty spaces counted from the number of spaces available to customers both inside and outside the center.) The day in the 12-day period which had the highest number of parked cars is shown in the column labeled "Max. Day." The numbers of cars parked at the peak times on the second- and third-highest days are also shown. In some instances the same peak parking demand occurred at a given center on two or three of the top three days, so the first, second or third observation might be the same.

Estimated Parking Spaces Required by Zoning-Several shopping centers gave the actual number of parking spaces required by their zoning ordinances, while others gave only the zoning standards from which the numbers of spaces required were estimated. Since the floor area definitions used by the various ordinances had minor differences, the numbers shown here vary slightly in their degrees of accuracy. (These calculations assumed 400 square feet per parking space.)

## Appendix B

## SURVEY TECHNIQUE

The following excerpt from the instruction manual sent to all shopping centers participating in the survey describes the counting procedures used (6).

Survey Technique
In setting up the program to count the empty parking spaces, the following steps should be carried out.

1. A person at the management level should be selected to head up this program.
2. He should be assigned a man who is to do the actual counting. This may be a full-time employee or a part-time worker.
3. The manager of this project should go through all the procedures with the counter to be sure he is doing an adequate job to get a good approximation of the number of empty spaces. These would include:
a. Dividing the area up into clusters or units of about 300 parking spaces and selecting a walking pattern around the Center that will permit one to count all the empty spaces that exist in each cluster around the Center. It might be helpful to first lay out such a pattern on a site plan, like Figure 1, and then go out and actually review it with the counter. At this time it should be possible to determine how long it will take to walk around the Center, thereby making it possible to set up a time schedule for the counter.
b. The manager should then instruct the counter on what is meant by an empty space. For example, if a car is pulling in or out of a space, that space should
be considered occupied. If a car is waiting to pull into a space that car should be considered as filling an empty space somewhere else. If a car is parked in an illegal space, it should be considered as filling a space somewhere else.
c. After the walking pattern has been determined, a trial run should be made to determine what is the best way to record the empty spaces. If a hand-counter is available, this should be used. In other cases, it may be possible for the man to continually count the number of spaces until he goes all the way around the lot, and then record the number on the form (Table II). Or, you might develop a tally sheet to record empty spaces in each cluster or unit.
d. Once the test program has been set up, the starting times for the count should be the same for each day-2:30 and 8:00 p. m. The counts should be taken each day between December 11 and 24. The counter should always start from the same starting point.

## Reference

6. Manual for Developing Parking Data at Shopping Centers in the United States and Canada During the Pre-Christmas Season, 1964.

## Appendix $C$

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## Discussion

A. JAMES BATES Barton-Aschman Associates--The shopping center parking index findings of Mr. Voorhees and Mrs. Crow are very welcome as a standard with which a designer or planner may compare his own recommendations. Data at my disposal for large, regional centers tend to confirm the authors' findings that 5.5 stalls per 1,000 square feet of leasable retail space will accommodate all but the highest parking peaks.

I have never seen year-long data on daily accumulations or traffic movements. However, my observations which were gathered for specific problem analysis and are not directly comparable, one to another or to the authors' findings, bring me (along with the authors of this paper) to the tentative conclusion that the busiest four or five days of the year do occur within the twelve pre-Christmas days. Records of day-today sales volumes even more strongly support the dominance of the pre-Christmas shopping season. If one accepts the fact that a regional shopping center will use more than 5.5 spaces per 1000 only during the pre-Christmas season, then some accumulation curves which were plotted from 1964 and 1965 Christmas seasons counts can be interpreted to support the contention that each 1000 feet of rented space would be only about ten customers a year better off for having 6.5 rather than 5.5 parking stalls. For a $1 / 2$ million-sq ft center, this would mean that 500 additional stalls would accommodate 5000 extra customers.

It might be wise to provide these extra stalls. I was unable to define circumstances so stringent that it could conceivably cost more than $\$ 50$ per year to provide a parking stall. The authors suggested a figure of $\$ 100$. Furthermore, marginal stalls need not be as heavily constructed as those which receive daily usage, nor must they be lighted or kept free of snow after the Christmas season. Where these economies are invoked, and land costs and taxes are not excessive, it should be quite possible to own a marginal parking stall for $\$ 30$ per year.

I do not know exactly what the authors mean by "the possible economic return on such money ( $\$ 2.00-\$ 3.00$ per vehicle parking)." My records suggest that during peaks, other than the Christmas peak, the occupants of each car which is parked spend between $\$ 9$ and $\$ 14$. Even if Christmas shoppers do not spend more than other shoppers, there should be a gross mark-up of between $\$ 2.00$ and $\$ 5.00$ on the merchandise purchased by each carload of people during the Christmas peak. Because these are "extra" sales, it is realistic not to assign any fixed overhead to them. Therefore, almost the entire gross mark-up can be applied against stall ownership and the balance, if any, be considered profit.

Ten parked cars, each providing a gross mark-up of $\$ 2.00$ to $\$ 5.00$, certainly make it feasible to own a $\$ 30$ per year stall. An interview study conducted concurrently with the authors' study suggested that a staggering $\$ 30$ to $\$ 36$ is being spent by Christmas shoppers from each parked car.

How much is a marginal stall worth to a shopping center? Those shopping centers which have ample supplies of parking appear more conspicuously successful than those which are inadequately supplied. I analyzed some of the authors ${ }^{\dagger}$ data in an effort to check out this impression. Those shopping centers in which only retail space was provided, and for which annual sales figures were given, were analyzed in two groups. For the first group, that in which the available parking was not filled, even at the highest observation, it was found that shopping centers which offered more than 5.5 stalls per 1000 did an annual business of $\$ 56$ per square foot. On the other hand, those which provided 5.5 square feet or less, averaged only $\$ 44$.

Similarly, for the second group, that in which the available parking was saturated during the peak, it was found that centers providing in excess of 5.5 stalls per 1000 did a $\$ 66$ annual business, while those providing 5 . 5 or less did an annual business of only $\$ 60$.

Did the provision of additional stalls cause the success or did the success prompt the provision of additional stalls? Perhaps all that can be inferred is that there is a correlation.

In any case, although 5.5 stalls seem to cover most situations, I would be inclined to recommend the provision of 6 or 6.5 stalls. After all, the developer who is looking
at our recommendations is doing so in hopes of having a "better" shopping center. Why recommend nothing more than an "average" parking supply to him?

The authors categorically state that the parking index is independent of the size of the center. Intuitively I mistrust this. Limited observations suggest that the smaller centers ( 400,000 square feet and less) are more responsive to sales, special events, and other influences, and that they may hit peaks more frequently. If so, they would utilize a higher parking ratio advantageously.

My studies show that the smaller, convenience-oriented centers attract more cars proportionally per day than the larger ones, but that cars do not remain parked as long at the smaller centers. For instance, my data show that the average parking duration for regional shopping centers is something over $11 / 2$ hours. This suggests that the 1 -hr average duration, found in the Cleveland-Mueller study, was influenced by a briefer parking period at the smaller centers.

Possibly, the shorter parking durations offset the greater relative automobile attraction of the smaller center and the number of cars parked per 1000 square feet at a given time is irrespective of center size. However, as turnover rates increase, a higher percentage of the total automobiles within the center is circulating in the aisles. For the center to operate safely and smoothly, there should be enough empty spaces available so that this higher proportion of cruising vehicles can come to rest relatively quickly. For this reason alune, a somewhat higher index of parking for the smaller center would appear advisable.

Whether or not 5.5 stalls per 1000 is the right number, I do not recommend that parking, even for "ordinary" shopping centers, be estimated on a single, rigid index. The varying parking needs of the anticipated tenants should be considered. Among the shopping centers with which I am familiar, those that are more or less dominated by a store with hagher prices and a fine quallity repulation, seem to do vory woll finan cially on substantially fewer parked automobiles than do the centers which are dominaled by merchants offering a more competitive line. The convenience center depends on an even greater, relative number of cars per day.

These traffic-generating characteristics of the various tenants proposed for a center should be taken into account and balanced against one another, not only for determining the total amount of parking, but also for distributing this parking about the center and for determining the locational and capacity requirements of the entrances and exits.

A pronnunced example of a use which requires special consideration is the tire, battery, and accessory operation. With the reservoir space required for vehicles awaiting service, and for those left outside the service area to be picked up, a much higher parking index than 5.5 becomes appropriate.

There is a recent trend in larger centers toward the establishment of a convenience goods cluster which is physically removed from the shopping goods area. Where this principle is being employed, a very careful analysis of the relative needs of the two sectors of the center is appropriate.

The authors' conclusions about the provisions of parking for office space (namely, that if the square footage of office space does not exceed 20 percent of the retail space, no special parking need be provided) seems to be applicable to only certain, limited situations.

The 2.5 parking stalls per 1000 square feet which they recommend will suffice for certain types of decentralized office development; for instance, an insurance company home office. However, shopping center offices, appropriately, have a strong tendency to attract tenants such as doctors and dentists who serve the public directly. Clearly, 2. 5 parking stalls per 1000 square feet will not support a dentist's office on a Saturday afternoon when the usual six patients are in the waiting room. Unfortunately, at this time, his parking demands are in direct conflict with the retail merchant's weekly peak. Similarly, seasonal peaks may conflict; for instance, many school children have dental work done during Christmas vacation. If the general public is to be served, the parking requirements of these offices should be studied carefully.

In summary, it appears that an "ordinary" shopping center will work with 5.5 stalls per 1000 square feet. Perhaps the authors' earlier recommendation of 7 stalls per 1000 for the first 200,000 , and 5.5 for the balance, better recognizes the special problems of the smaller center.

Some questions still to be answered are these:

1. What is a parked car worth to a merchant during the pre-Christmas peak?
2. Shouldn't our recommendations follow the experience of the successful rather than the average operator?
3. Shouldn't we seek a set of factors which accounts for the differences between centers rather than a standard for all centers?

HENRY K. EVANS, Wilbur Smith and Associates-Mr. Voorhees' conclusion concerning a past tendency to provide too much shopping center parking in many instances is sound, I believe. However a great deal of caution is necessary in using the simple rule of thumb figure he has proposed--5. 5 spaces--and I am sure he will agree on this.

For example, the 115 figures for third-highest day parking (tenth-highest hour) in Appendix C, exhibit a variation between 1.6 and 10.8 spaces per $1,000 \mathrm{sq} \mathrm{ft}$ and only 29 of the 115 fall between 5 and 6 . (Mr. Voorhees' explanation in the Urban Land Institute Bulletin is that "the so-called 'third-highest day' and the 'tenth-highest hour' are approximately equivalent." Thus, it appears that the "3rd day" column shown in Appendix C indicates approximately the tenth-highest hour.) The great majority (74 percent) of the cases average between 3 and 6 , with an overall average close to 5. 0. I assume an allocation added as a reserve to enable free movement, as mentioned in the paper, brings the figure up to 5. 5 .

This points up the need to evaluate each center according to its own requirements, as it may actually require parking considerably above or below the norm.

The findings shown in Figure 3 of the Urban Land Institute Technical Bulletin 53 version of Voorhees' paper would seem to suggest that if the entire sample had been taken from shopping centers with space ratios of 8.8 or better, the tenth highest hour would have been higher than that actually found in the study. It is almost as if there were a capacity restraint working on the two lower curves. If all 103 shopping centers had offered unlimited parking, I feel there is a strong likelihood the tenth highest hour would have been at 6.2 or higher. Perhaps we should be guided more by such an uninhibited assignment of demand which would argue for a ratio higher than 5. 5. More research among centers with space ratios of 10 or more would help answer this question.

As we well know, no two department stores, or banks, or offices generate traffic alike. I would like to refer to a roundup of actual parking demand ratios which I made recently. This appeared in the April 1963 issue of the Eno Foundation Traffic Quarterly with the title "Parking Study Applications." The figures demonstrate clearly the large range of demand ratios. For example, 19 banks' space requirements ranged between a low of 1.8 and a high of 10.8 spaces per $1,000 \mathrm{sq} \mathrm{ft}$. Nineteen retail stores we studied showed a smaller range-1. 4 to 5.1 -but still a substantial variation. (These are normal demands, not seasonal peaks.) In planning a given shopping center, separate factors have to be applied to each different building type, employing judgment of course as to whether the figure would be on the low, middle, or high end of the range for any particular building category. I would agree with Mr. Voorhees' rule of thumb index of 2.5 for offices in general, but in a particular case this may be considerably low, or high, as he has pointed out. The 20 percent additional office usage may or may not be added without noticeable increase in parking demand. At the 2.5 ratio, the 20 percent office space would bring demand on weekdays up to the tenth highest hour level, according to Voorhees' paper but, not being open on Saturdays, would not add to the retail peaks on Saturdays before Christmas. But a bank, medical center, post office, or some other office use with high generation potential would not fall under this case, and additional parking would certainly be required.

The point is well made that special circumstances will modify parking needs and it is stated that parking requirements are reduced by as much as two-thirds in a central city area where mass transportation and walk-in trade exist. This sounds somewhat extreme, when applied to the recommended 5.5 index, as this would reduce the design
index to 1.8. I can report on a recent study of ours revealing how important the transit and walk-in trade are to an urban center in San Francisco, Calif. The Stonestown center, with 59 stores including the Emporium, City of Paris, a large supermarket, restaurant, post office, beauty parlor, bank, automotive outlet, and five-floor medicaldental office building, totaling $1,040,000 \mathrm{sq} \mathrm{ft}$ of floor area, has 3,349 parking stalls. It is well served by a street-car line and two bus companies, and is surrounded by residential apartment buildings. Of all entering persons, 7 percent come by transit and 7 percent walk. The peak parking demand of 2.3 spaces occupied per $1,000 \mathrm{sq} \mathrm{ft}$, which occurred on a Saturday, would have been raised only to 2.7 if all pedestrians and transit riders had used autos instead. Or to put it another way, the effect of walkin and transit is to reduce parking requirements by only 11 percent at this center.

Mr. Voorhees' paper brings to mind a problem we encounter regularly in making business district parking needs studies. I refer now to the problem of estimating peak demands, or "design demand" figures on the basis of parking studies taken in off-peak seasons. If we find a demand for, say, "X" parking spaces during a study in May of the year, and relate that to capacity " $Y$ " to obtain a deficiency "D," this obviously understates the parking deficiency for some other times of the year, notably Christmas. I have frequently employed historical parking meter revenue data to assist in adjusting a particular month's demand to the peak month, or perhaps the eleventh highest month. This method is admittediy rather unsure, since we do not know fur a fact that peak parking accumulations are proportional to parking revenues. In a special study on shopping centers by LARTS ("Preliminary Results 1961 Shopping Center Study-Los Angeles Regional Transportation Study," prepared by California Division of Highways) the variation in retail sales was suggested as a possible means of handling this problem.

For the six centers they studied, the peak month, December, represented 17.6 percent of the total year's total, or shghtly over double the gverage month. Further research work is suggested, perhaps in correlating systematic traffic volume counts from fixed counters with parking demand for a given business district.

It would be desirable to see some further correlations made with the data assembled for the subject paper. How does the tenth highest hour compare with the average annual demand? How does the parking index relate to customer income class, and to annual sales per unit area (it appears logical that there would be a positive correlation)?

And finally, more consideration might well be given to exploring demand ratios where no capacity restraint exists.

ALAN M. VOORHEES and CAROLYN E. CROW, Closure--The authors are in general agreement with the point made by both discussants that unique shopping center characteristics must be considered in determining how many parking spaces a particular shopping center should provide. However, it seems to us that selection of a single standard for parking requirements for all shopping centers is desirable even though it has limitations. Municipalities are presently using such standards in their zoning ordinances, although most of those in use are poorly substantiated and not based on empirical research. It is far better to have a standard based on relationships between parking demands and retail floor area, which have been observed at a broad sampling of shopping centers, recognizing at the same time that there are shopping conters which differ from the "average" center and that there are unique situations which must be provided for.

We explored the possibilities of developing techniques which could be used to modify the basic parking requirements, but found that there were too many variables involved to quantify all of these in light of the data we had obtained. Therefore, in the section on Special Circumstances Modifying Parking Requirements, we have attempted to outline the kinds of factors that create different parking requirements at shopping centers and to give some guidelines regarding the effects of these factors.

The discussants expected that a shopping center's size and the nature of its office activities would influence its parking requirements. Our findings are more explicitly mentioned in this draft of the text than in the earlier drafts seen by the discussants.

As was indicated by the discussants, it was quite clear that the capacity of the lot had some influence on shopping center usage and, therefore, had some influence on parking demand. However, as shown by Figure 4, this impact was greatest at the highest hours of the year, while the parking demands were quite similar at the tenth-highest hour and very comparable at the thirtieth-highest hour, regardless of the capacity of the lot. As described, the economic return for providing a large amount of extra parking certainly is not justified.

