



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**To:** Jim Scholl, City Manager

**Through:** Sarah Hannah Spurlock, Assistant City Manager

**From:** Kevin Bond, AICP, Acting Planning Director / Senior Planner

**Meeting Date:** March 3, 2015

**RE:** Consideration of an ordinance to invoke the Zoning-in-Progress doctrine; declaring that the City is considering amendments to its Land Development Regulations to reduce the need for parking variances; directing Planning Department staff to defer the acceptance and processing of applications for parking variances and bicycle substitutions; continuing this policy until new or amended Land Development Regulations are adopted by the City Commission or until the passage of 360 days from the date of this ordinance, whichever occurs first; providing for severability; providing for repeal of inconsistent provisions; providing for an effective date.

### **ACTION STATEMENT**

**Request:** Consider invoking Zoning-in-Progress to amend the Land Development Regulations as needed to reduce the need for parking variances.

**Location:** Citywide

### **BACKGROUND:**

On January 7, 2015, Commissioner Teri Johnston requested that the City Manager prepare an ordinance invoking a second Zoning-in-Progress (ZIP) doctrine to address the proliferation of parking variance requests in Key West. Previously, the City Commission invoked a 360-day ZIP through the passage of Ordinance No. 13-20, which started November 6, 2013 and ended November 1, 2014. During that time, the City was unable to accept or process any variance applications that would have involved a reduction in required parking or substituting vehicular parking spaces for bicycle parking.

While the ZIP was in effect, the City took several steps to alleviate the demand on available parking. Last fall, the City initiated its new residential parking program, which requires proof that vehicles are registered to City residents or business owners, rather than any Monroe County resident. The City is currently investigating the potential construction of two new parking

garages in Old Town near the central business area. And the City is beginning a comprehensive update to its land development regulations (LDRs), including looking at innovative techniques to reduce the number of parking variances required by the City Code.

**ANALYSIS:**

Over the last few years, requests for variances to the City's off-street parking requirements have become more frequent as the local economy has recovered from the national recession. As properties have proposed new development or redevelopment, particularly within the Old Town historic district, property owners have frequently needed to apply for parking variances. This is because new or expanded uses, and changes of use to uses with higher parking requirements (i.e., restaurants, bars and lounges) trigger full compliance the minimum off-street parking requirements of the LDRs. Often times, there is already inadequate space to provide additional on-site parking, especially on built-out properties in Old Town. As a result, property owners have opted to apply for a parking variance. With a ZIP in place, property and businesses owners would have little choice but to defer their development plans or would be limited to the existing amount of development on their properties.

The purpose of a ZIP declaration is to give the City Commission and City staff up to 360 days to explore potential solutions and possible LDR amendments. Parking is a complex issue in Key West and there are many potential ways to alleviate the problem. Staff has identified the following issues that should be considered if the City Commission wishes to invoke a ZIP for parking variances:

1. How to overcome the already limited space available for on-street and off-street parking, particularly on built-out property in Old Town;
2. The availability and proximity of private and public parking lots to attractions and services;
3. Modifying the historic commercial pedestrian-oriented area, either by expanding the boundaries and/or amending the applicability and exceptions;
4. Modifying existing or creating new parking programs for residents, employees, etc.;
5. Consider transportation demand management techniques to encourage alternative modes;
6. Consider allowing shared use parking calculations and parking demand studies to substitute for the standard parking requirements and encourage mixed uses and reduced parking need;
7. Adequacy and convenience of public transit service for different types of riders (e.g., residents, tourists, commuters, etc.);
8. Review Zoning Maps and district standards to ensure that mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented and transit-oriented development are effectively encouraged through the allowed uses and maximum density and intensities.

The ZIP would begin as of the first reading of the ordinance on March 3, 2015 and would remain in effect for 360 days, or until new or amended LDRs are adopted, whichever occurs first.

**PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning Board reviewed the proposed ordinance on February 4, 2015 and by a unanimous 7-0 vote passed Resolution No. 2015-07 recommending that the City Commission not pass or adopt a second Zoning-in-Progress for parking variances and bicycle substitutions. The Board's preference would be to allow property owners to apply for parking variances as currently provided by the LDRs, rather than re-impose another Zoning-in-Progress.