

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR ENRIQUE J. PEPÉN



CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY SIX

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO EXPLORE THE USE OF PARKING STRUCTURES

WHEREAS, Parking is an issue that animates many in Boston, with residents having varying concerns on the supply of parking, illegal or double parking, street parking, and what the City is doing to address these topics; *and*

WHEREAS, Many large neighborhoods in Boston are less dense and lack access to frequent, reliable, and abundant transit options, which make using a car the most efficient means of transportation; *and*

WHEREAS, Car-centered communities are less healthy, less safe, and can be less economically resilient when compared to communities that prioritize more active forms of transportation like walking, biking, and using transit; *and*

WHEREAS, One of the most challenging aspects of car-centered communities is the land which must be set aside for parking and storing cars, which is unsustainable in a City with finite land and a growing rate of vehicles per household; *and*

WHEREAS, The City has taken on approaches to planning and infrastructure development that incentivize active transportation and a reduced dependency on cars as part of efforts to make Boston safer, greener, healthier, and more resilient; *and*

WHEREAS, Squares + Streets is one such approach to neighborhood planning which seeks to make neighborhood commercial centers more densely populated to promote the high levels of local foot traffic needed to create resilient main streets in a growing City; *and*

WHEREAS, As the selected neighborhoods undergo this update to zoning, community members have raised genuine concerns about the state of parking in their neighborhoods, due in part to the Squares + Streets program's bold step in not requiring parking minimums for projects in new zones; *and*

WHEREAS, As these communities undergo this important transition away from the car, the City should work to support communities throughout the adjustment including businesses whose current models rely on clients coming via car, residents who work outside the city in car-centered suburbs, addressing transit gaps with bus and train service adjustments, and encouraging active transportation and carsharing programs as alternatives to costly private vehicle ownership; *and*

WHEREAS, Paved parking lots and spaces represent large amounts of private and public land solely dedicated to the temporary or long term storage of cars, reducing the amount of potentially productive land, especially on our main streets; *and*

WHEREAS, Municipal parking lots, often located near commercial centers represent an opportunity for the City to potentially reevaluate the use of street space and potentially implement other installations like outdoor dining and tree planting; *and*

WHEREAS, Municipal parking lots, transformed into parking structures, could absorb parking spots from the main streets of our neighborhoods and provide relief for employees and residents who need a place to store their vehicles; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing on the use of parking structures. Administration officials from the Streets Cabinet and Planning Department will be invited to testify.

Filed on: April 29, 2026