



LOADING ZONES

A loading zone is a dedicated space at the curbside intended for short-term use to directly service nearby businesses or properties. There are typically two types of users of loading zones – freight trucks for the receipt or delivery of goods and passengers for pick up or drop off.


Loading zones help promote a strong economy and a vibrant retail environment. A sufficient number of loading zones, appropriately located and designed, can dramatically improve the safety, operation, and vitality of a street. Locating loading zones adjacent to commercial uses may reduce the incidence of trucks double-parking and the cost of goods delivery borne by local businesses and their consumers. However, loading zones also take up space that could otherwise be used for parking, pedestrian, or transit space, and therefore should be well managed to optimize use.

USE

- Loading zones are intended for short duration parking of 20 minutes or less. Loading zones are typically reserved for only a portion of the day and used for general parking or travel at other times. Increasingly in downtown areas, off-peak loading hours are encouraged—particularly midday or late evening.
- Loading zones are generally used by a number of businesses or properties on a block and are a shared resource. There is typically one 40-foot loading zone per block.
- Alleys should be used for loading whenever possible. Off-street loading facilities are generally required for new developments and should be designed and managed to facilitate their use.

- Loading zones in high demand areas must be effectively managed to mitigate against trucks double-parking in travel lanes. Pricing is often the most effective means of managing access and balancing demand with supply, especially when pricing aligns with time-of-day strategies to shift loading activity away from periods of peak short-term parking demand.

DESIGN

- Loading zones intended for material deliveries shall be designed to accommodate, at minimum, a single-unit 30-foot delivery vehicle.
 - Loading zones shall be eight feet wide and are typically 40 feet long.
 - Loading zones shall be well-marked to indicate to other drivers they cannot park there while loading hours are in effect.
 - Loading zones should be placed near intersections, and preferably on the far side of intersections, to facilitate access to and from the rear of trucks and to have close access to sidewalk ramps for moving materials into buildings. Transit stops shall not to be used for private loading.
 - Loading zones shall not be located or sized such that they impede the use of adjacent crosswalks.
-  As with other parking lanes, permeable paving should be considered for stormwater management in the loading zone.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Sidewalk space adjacent to loading zones should be reasonably clear of furnishings, landscaping, and other obstacles.

Hydrants maybe allowed in loading zones in special circumstances, though they are strongly discouraged.

- Loading zones may be used for passenger drop-off provided trucks are not actively seeking access.
- Loading zones that are contiguous with transit stops should be monitored to ensure loading activities do not encroach into the transit zone.
- Do not plant street trees adjacent to loading zones due to potential conflicts with delivery vehicles, unless adequate space is provided for the tree canopy to grow without contacting delivery trucks.
- Taxi stands and valet service areas may be permanent or temporary, operating at specific times of day or days per year. Valet services are licensed by the City Clerk’s office in order to operate.
- Loading zones should not be placed near properties with sufficient off-street parking that could be utilized for loading and unloading.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

- Enforcement can be a significant concern and challenge for loading zones. Clear signage is necessary, but reliable enforcement is also required to ensure loading zones are not used for auto parking or longer duration parking by commercial vehicles.
- Delivery dwell time may be restricted in the loading zone to 20 minutes (maximum) to ensure turnover and prevent double-parking from other

delivery vehicles. Consider metering loading zones to encourage turn over.

- Collaboration should be encouraged among businesses to coordinate and/or stagger delivery times to discourage double-parking if multiple businesses are sharing the loading zone.
- Loading during off-peak hours (typically early morning or late evening) should be encouraged. Consider reserving zones for loading only during these preferred times.
- Use of loading zones for other uses during non-delivery hours may be permitted. Typical uses include curbside parking (after normal metered hours), taxi stands, or valet parking operations.

REFERENCES

- MMUTCD, 2011
 - Part 2 Signs: Chapter 2B. Regulatory Signs, Barricades, and Gates http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/tands/Details_Web/mmutcdpart2b_2011.pdf
 - Part 3 Markings: Chapter 3B. Pavement and Curb Markings
 - Section 3B.19: Parking Space Markings http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/tands/Details_Web/mmutcdpart3_2011.pdf

DETAILS

- MDOT Standard Highway Signs
 - SHS-E01-REG “R” Regulatory Signs http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/tands/Details_Web/mdot_signs_e01_regulatory.pdf

