

Parking Study

How simpler, smarter parking rules can make
Saint Paul an even better place to live



SAINT PAUL
PLANNING & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

STPAUL.GOV

Today, properties must include a certain amount of off-street car parking



**These are called *minimum parking requirements*,
and they apply to just about every type of property**



These are called *minimum parking requirements*, and they apply to just about every type of property



These minimum parking requirements are calculated to **exceed demand so there are always empty spaces**

All this parking is expensive to build



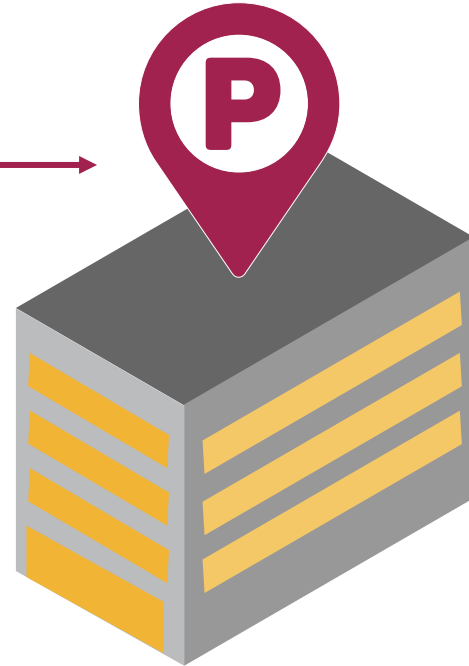
\$5,000

initial cost per space
for **surface parking**

All this parking is expensive to build

\$25,000-\$50,000

initial cost per space for
structured parking



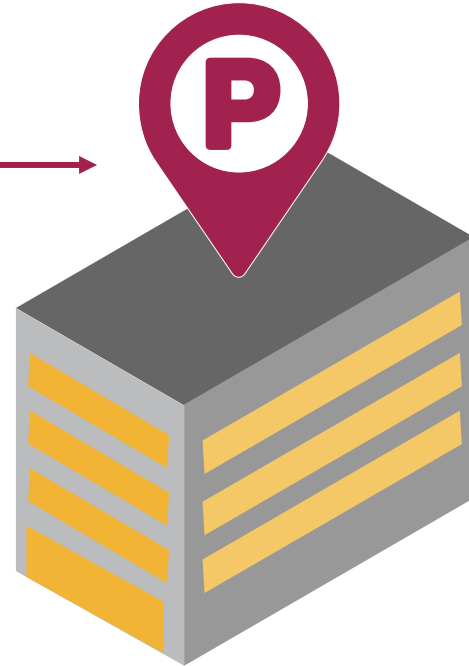
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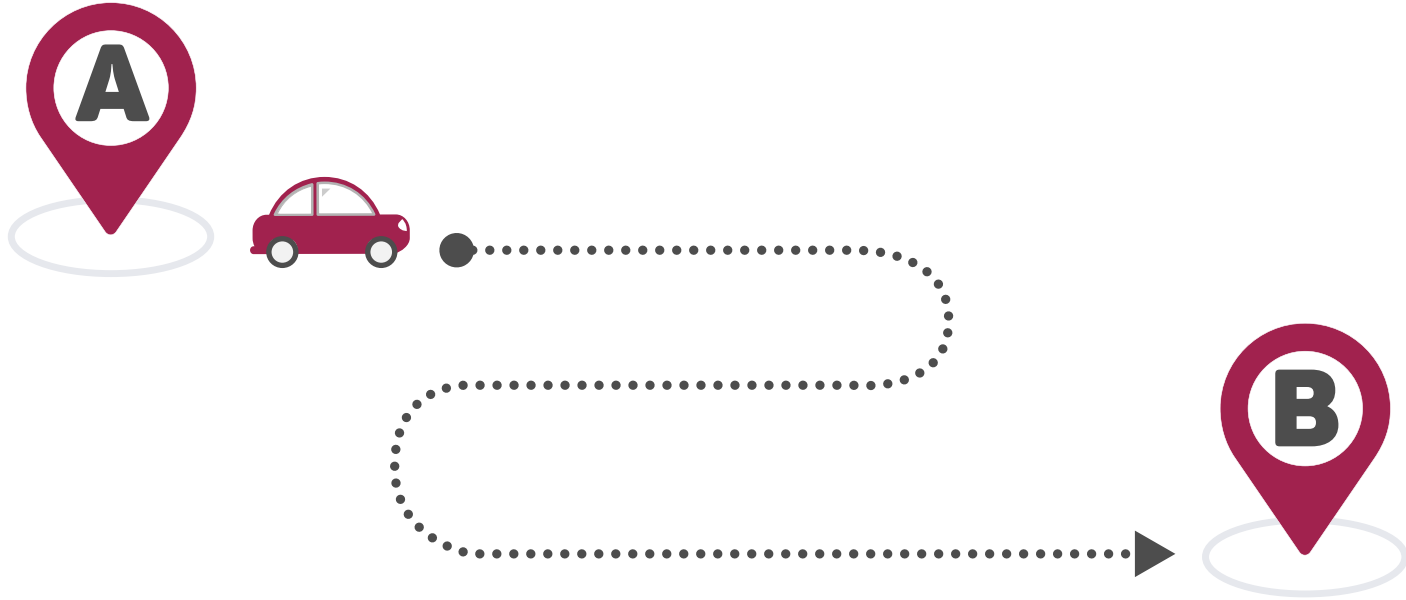
initial cost per space for
structured parking

\$\$\$

This becomes an added cost for the property: monthly operations, maintenance, and debt-service—which is passed on to residents and tenants



**And minimum parking requirements assume
that cars are the only way to get from Point
A to Point B**



An aerial photograph of a suburban development. In the center is a large green space with several winding, light-colored paths. Surrounding this central area are numerous rectangular parking lots, many of which are filled with cars. Several large, multi-story commercial or office buildings are scattered throughout the development. The entire area is bordered by major roads and highways, including a multi-lane highway on the right side of the image. The overall layout suggests a car-centric urban design.

**This shapes how we build our city,
which turns that assumption into reality**

Photo Credit: Nelson Nygaard, via Nearmap

So, why is this a problem?

1

Housing
Affordability

2

Business
Flexibility

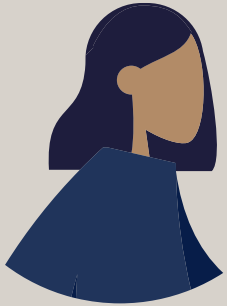
3

Economic
Development

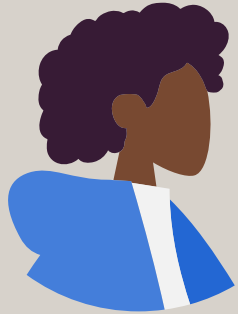
4

Transportation
Options and
Climate Change

To help explain, let's introduce five characters



Renter
Renee



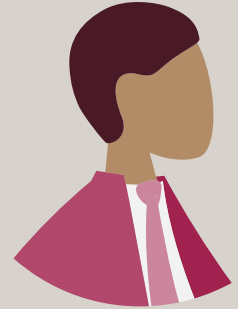
Homeowner
Harriet



Shopkeeper
Shauna



Developer
Danielle



Planner Paul

Why are parking minimums a problem?

1

Housing
Affordability

2

Business
Flexibility

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Economic
Development

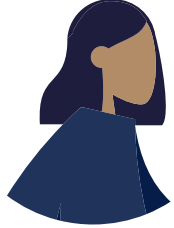
4

Transportation
Options and
Climate Change

**Parking minimums make
housing expensive**

**Parking adds \$142 per month to rent,
on average**



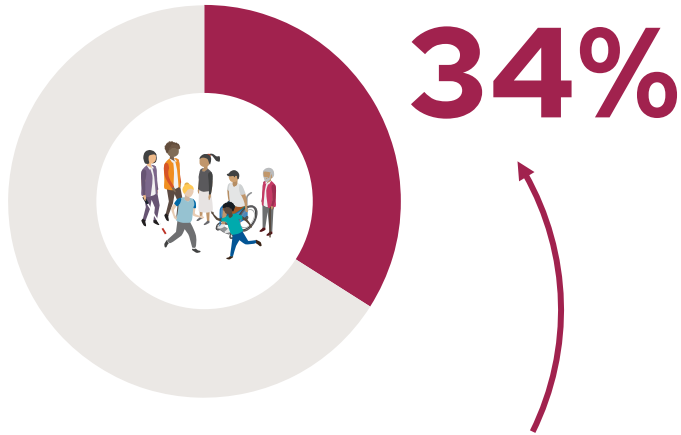


But many people don't need car parking, including Renter Renee

People who choose not to drive,
young people, older people,
people with lower incomes, people
with low vision, the list goes on



There are even minimum parking requirements for housing designed for lower income households

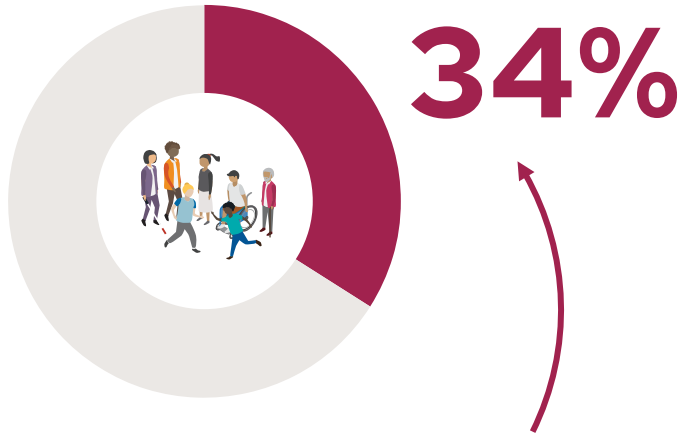


One-third of families that need and would qualify for housing affordable at 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI) **do not own a car**



Developer Danielle has to build parking, even when she knows it will **drive up rents** and **much of it will go unused**

There are even minimum parking requirements for housing designed for lower income households



One-third of families that need and would qualify for housing affordable at 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI) **do not own a car**

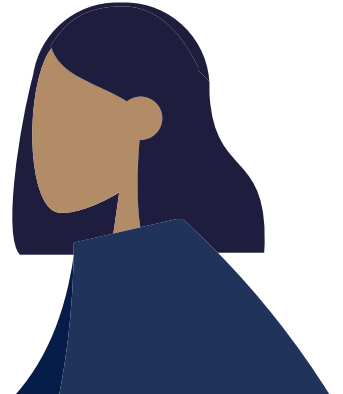


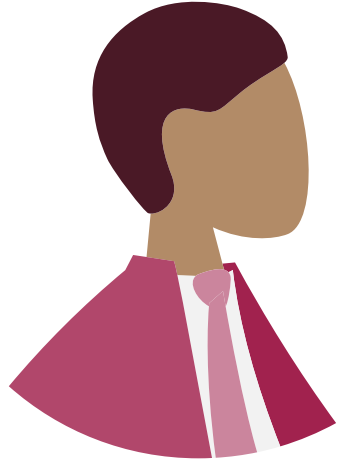
Developer Danielle has to build parking, even when she knows it will **increase rents and much of it will go unused**

Without minimum parking requirements , Developer Danielle could build more homes, more affordably priced, with less parking



Renter Renee would have more affordable housing options that better suit her budget and car-free lifestyle





And for subsidized housing, Planner Paul wouldn't have to spend public money to build parking for people who don't need it

Why else are parking minimums a problem?

1

Housing
Affordability

2

Business
Flexibility

3

Economic
Development

4

Transportation
Options and
Climate Change

**Even before the pandemic, our shopping
and work patterns were changing**

**For example,
Homeowner
Harriet was
increasingly ...**

Using ride hail



Shopping online



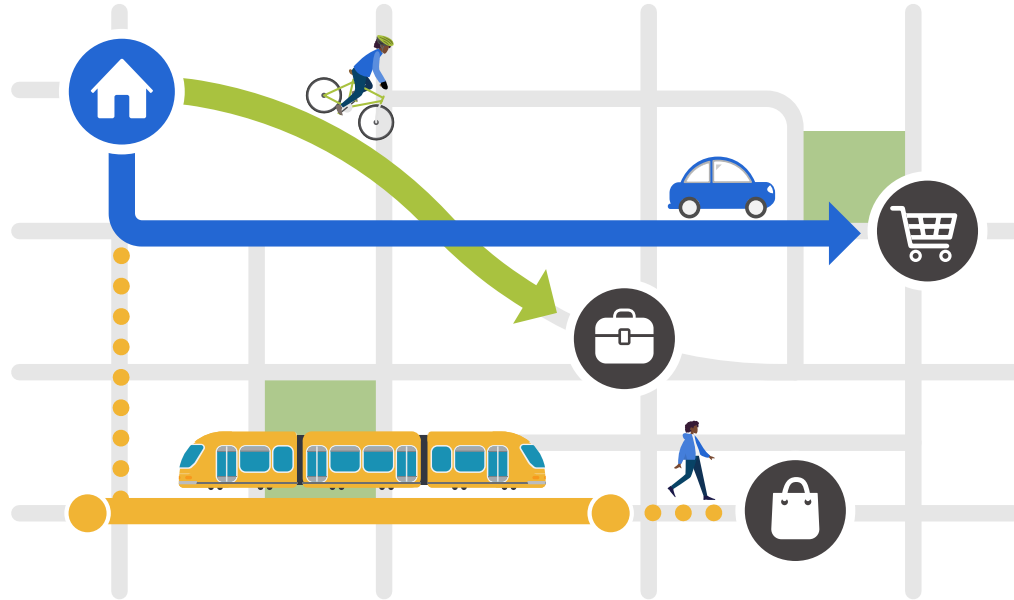
Working from home



Prioritizing
experiences
over things



Even though she has a car, she uses it less often for shopping, visiting friends, and getting to the office





Shopkeeper Shauna sees these trends ...

... and wants to attract
people like Harriet with a
better customer experience
by converting part of her
parking lot into a patio





**Not so fast:
parking
minimums!**



Why else are parking minimums a problem?

1

Housing
Affordability

2

Business
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Economic
Development

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Transportation
Options and
Climate Change

**Parking minimums can be a roadblock
to a growing economy**

**Surface parking
lots take up a lot
of space today,
thanks in part to
parking minimums**

2,600

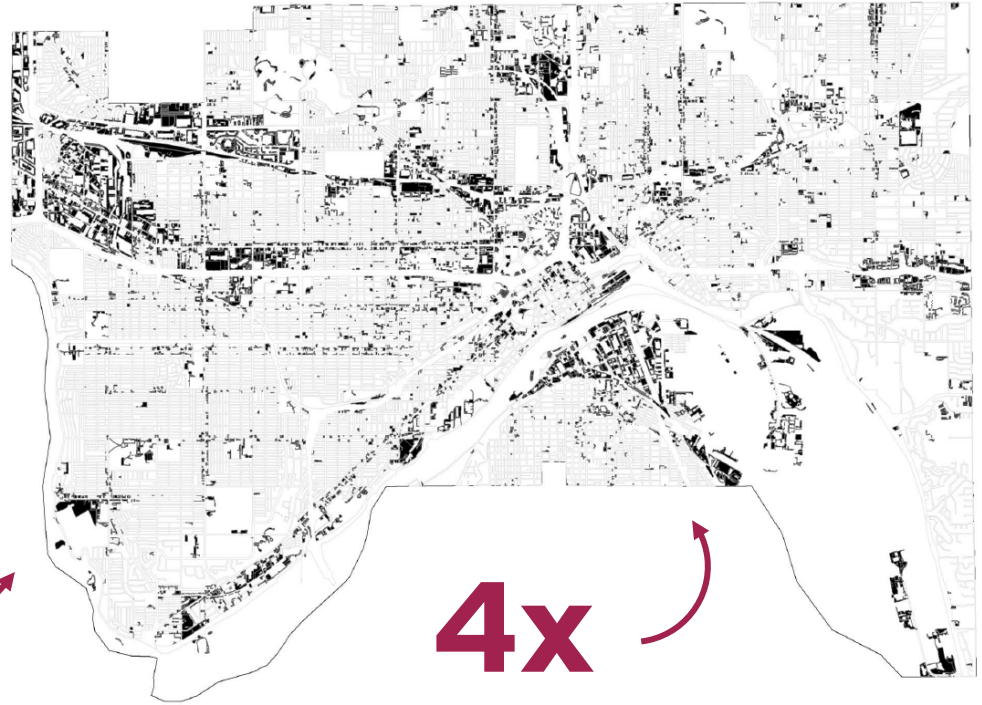
Acres of off-street
parking in Saint Paul



**Surface parking
lots take up a lot
of space today,
thanks in part to
parking minimums**

2,600

Acres of off-street
parking in Saint Paul



4x

That's four times bigger
than the entire area of
Downtown Saint Paul

Without parking minimums, we could dedicate more space to homes and businesses, which would mean ...



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More customers for Shopkeeper Shauna, and a bigger talent pool for employees



Without parking minimums, we could dedicate more space to homes and businesses, which would mean ...

More development opportunities for Developer Danielle



Without parking minimums, we could dedicate more space to homes and businesses, which would mean ...



A more sustainable tax base for Planner Paul to provide public services



Tax Revenue

Transit Oriented Development



- The market value per parcel square foot is \$679.42
- **The tax revenue per square foot is \$12.72**

Auto Oriented Development



- The market value per parcel square feet is \$49.16
- **The tax revenue per square foot is \$1.81**

Why else are parking minimums a problem?

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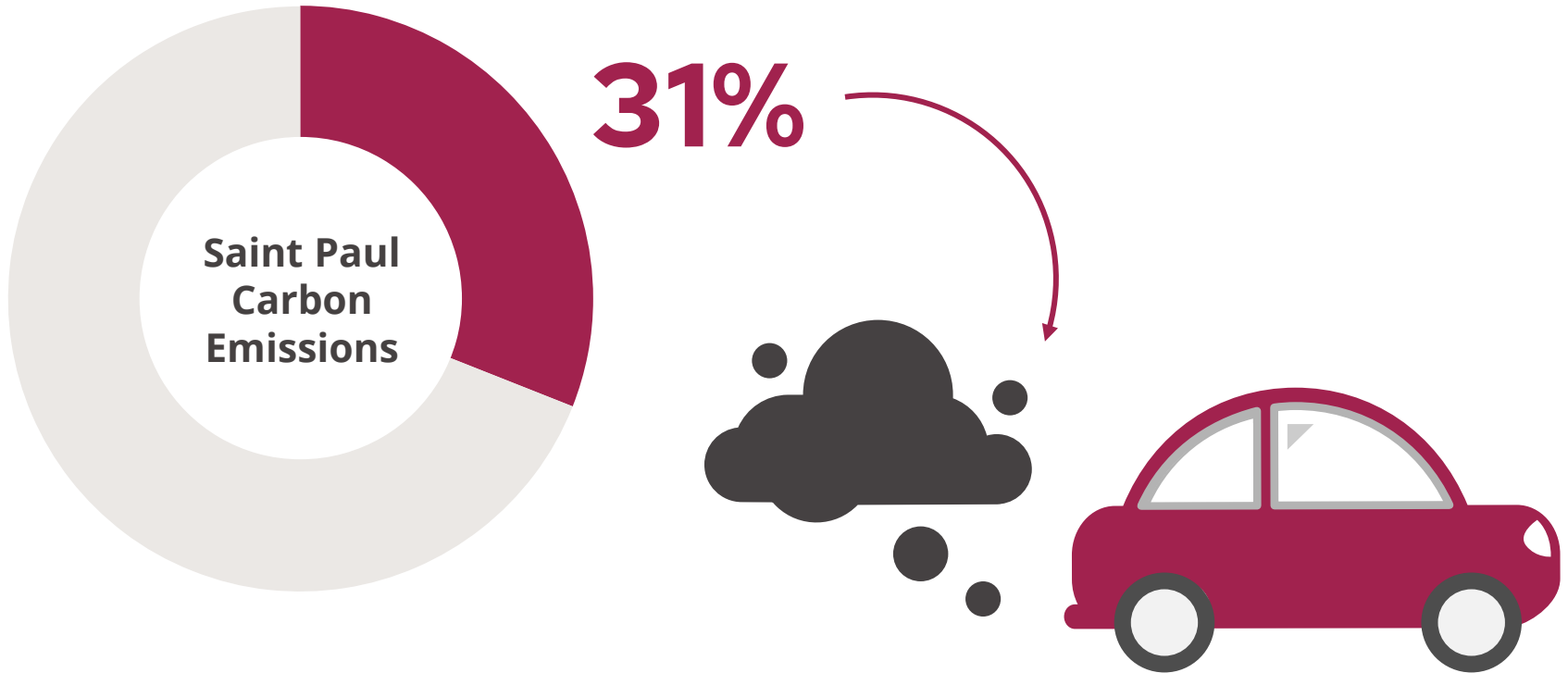
Economic
Development

4

Transportation
Options and
Climate Change

**Zooming out, we are facing a climate crisis,
and Saint Paul is aiming to be carbon neutral by 2050**

Nearly one-third (31%) of Saint Paul's carbon emissions come from vehicle travel



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Saint Paul
Carbon
Emissions

31%

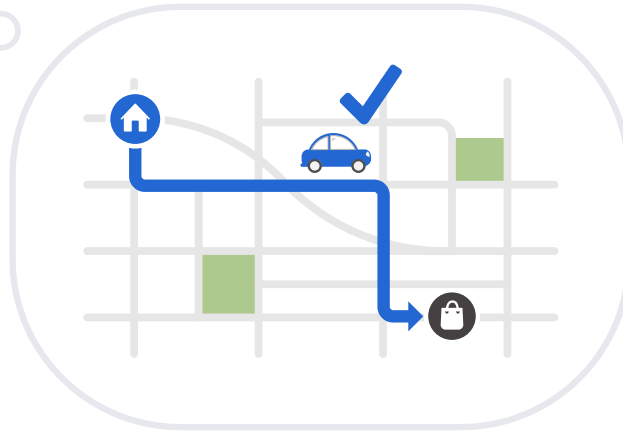
**So how does this relate to
parking minimums?**



**First, when there's a lot of parking,
people have an added incentive to drive ...**



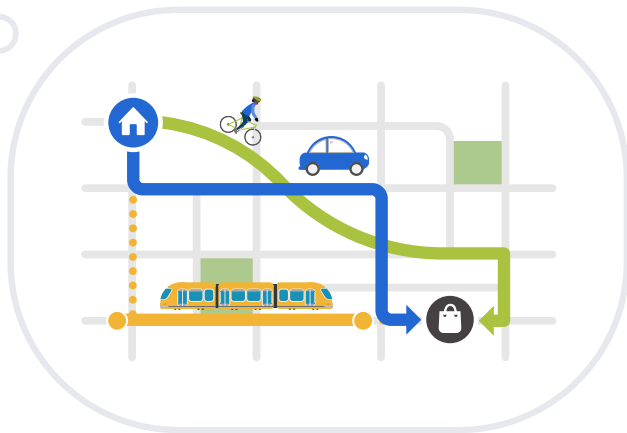
Homeowner
Harriet



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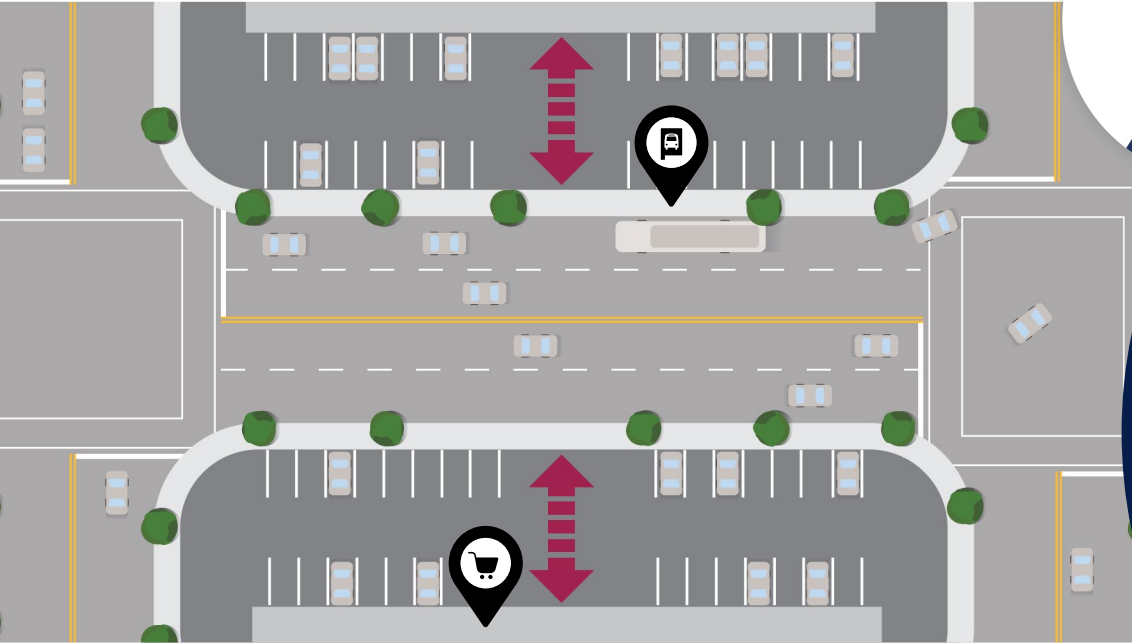


Homeowner
Harriet



**... even if they'd be happy taking lower emissions
options, like walking, biking, and transit**

Second, too much parking pushes destinations farther apart



This makes alternatives to driving—like walking and transit—less effective and unappealing



**Without minimum parking requirements, we
can reduce the incentive to drive, make
alternatives to driving more appealing ...**

**Without parking minimums, we can reduce
the incentive to drive, make alternatives to
driving more appealing ...**

... and reach our climate goal faster

Why are parking minimums a problem?

1

Housing
Affordability

2

Business
Flexibility

Let's recap

3

Economic
Development

4

Transportation
Options and
Climate Change

Reducing or eliminating parking minimums would help



Renter
Renee



Homeowner
Harriet



Shopkeeper
Shauna



Developer
Danielle



Planner Paul

1

Increase housing affordability
and reduce construction costs



2

Give new flexibility to small business
owners who want to use their off-street
parking for other uses



3

Support economic growth



4

Reduce our emissions and make
walking, biking, and transit more
appealing



Reducing or eliminating parking minimums would help



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Planner Paul

1

Increase housing affordability and reduce construction costs



2

Give new flexibility to small business owners who want to use their off-street parking for other uses



3

Support economic growth



4

Reduce our emissions and make walking, biking, and transit more appealing



But minimum parking requirements are only half the story



PARKING STRATEGY

Right-size the parking supply to avoid building excess parking spaces and incentivizing driving over alternatives



TDM STRATEGIES

Manage demand for parking by providing high-quality alternatives to driving, such as walking, biking, and transit

We also want to actively make it easier and more appealing to walk, bike, and take transit



PARKING STRATEGY

Right-size the parking supply to avoid building excess parking spaces and incentivizing driving over alternatives



TDM STRATEGIES

Manage demand for parking by providing high-quality alternatives to driving, such as walking, biking, and transit

These kinds of strategies are called *travel demand management*, or TDM



PARKING STRATEGY

Right-size the parking supply to avoid building excess parking spaces and incentivizing driving over alternatives



TDM STRATEGIES

Manage demand for parking by providing high-quality alternatives to driving, such as walking, biking, and transit

TDM strategies support parking strategies and vice versa



PARKING STRATEGY

Right-size the parking supply to avoid building excess parking spaces and incentivizing driving over alternatives



TDM STRATEGIES

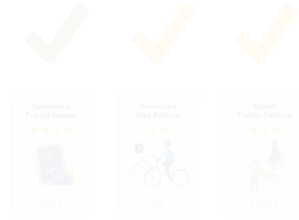
Manage demand for parking by promoting high-quality alternatives to driving, such as walking, biking, and transit

So, how does TDM work?

How the TDM program works



Planner Paul provides a menu of tools designed to make it easier to walk, bike, and take transit



Developer Danielle chooses tools from the menu for her new development

Shopkeeper Shauna chooses tools for her new store



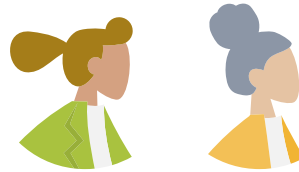
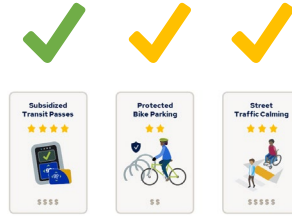
Renter Renee and Homeowner Harriet feel more empowered to walk, bike, and take transit



How TDM works



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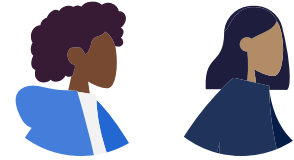
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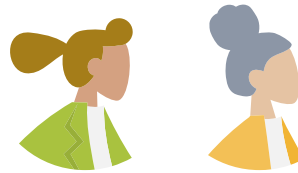
How TDM works



Planner Paul provides a menu of tools designed to make it easier to walk, bike, and take transit

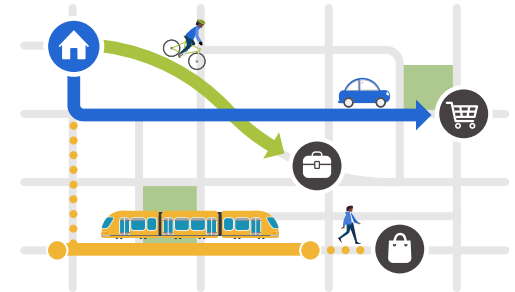
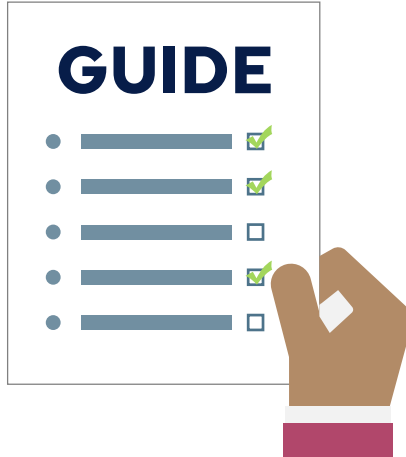


Renter Renee and Homeowner Harriet feel more empowered to walk, bike, and take transit



Developer Danielle chooses tools from the menu for her new development

Shopkeeper Shauna chooses tools for her new store



How TDM works



Planner Paul provides a menu of tools designed to make it easier to walk, bike, and take transit



Homeowner Harriet and Shopkeeper Shauna feel encouraged to walk, bike, and take transit

The menu will be called the TDM Program Standards Guide



Developer Danielle chooses tools from the menu for her new development

Shopkeeper Shauna chooses tools for her new store



The Guide will include tools like ...

Subsidized Transit Passes



\$\$\$\$\$

Protected Bike Parking



\$\$

Street Traffic Calming



\$\$\$\$\$

Move Minnesota

TDM Reviewer

The TDM Program Standards Guide will include different strategies

Move Minnesota helps both the community and the developer to find the right strategies based on the proposed project

The logo for Move Minnesota, featuring the word "move" in a light blue, cursive script font.

MINNESOTA

With more development comes more people—
customers, employees, neighbors



With more development comes more people—
customers, employees, neighbors

They all need to get around



TDM tools mean more customers, more talent,
and more neighbors in Saint Paul



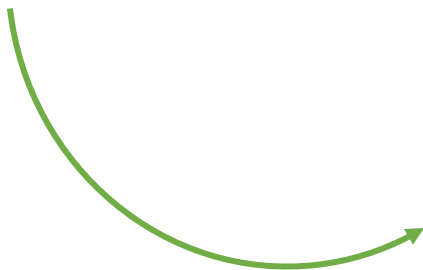
TDM tools mean more customers, more talent,
and more neighbors in Saint Paul

Without the negative impacts
on traffic and parking





**So, how do we
go from today ...**





... to this?



Saint Paul has two options on the table



R

REDUCE
parking minimums



E

ELIMINATE
parking minimums

Both options rely on a combination of parking and TDM strategies



PARKING STRATEGY

Right-size the parking supply to avoid building excess parking spaces and incentivizing driving over alternatives



TDM STRATEGIES

Manage demand for parking by providing high-quality alternatives to driving, such as walking, biking, and transit

How does the REDUCE option work?

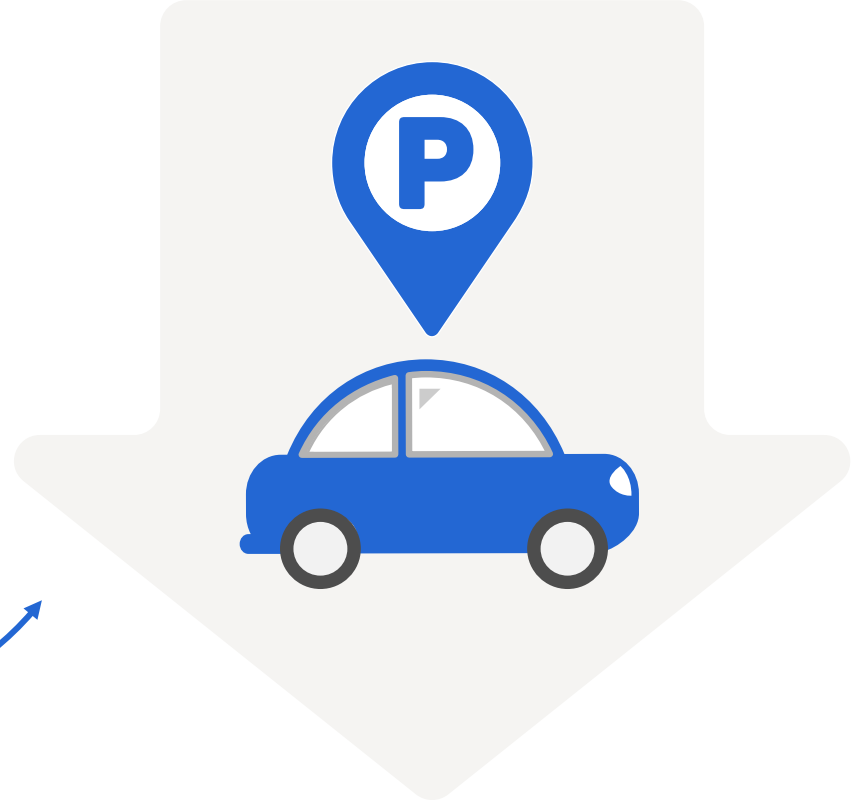
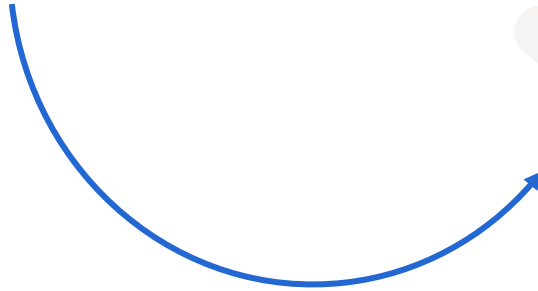


REDUCE
parking minimums



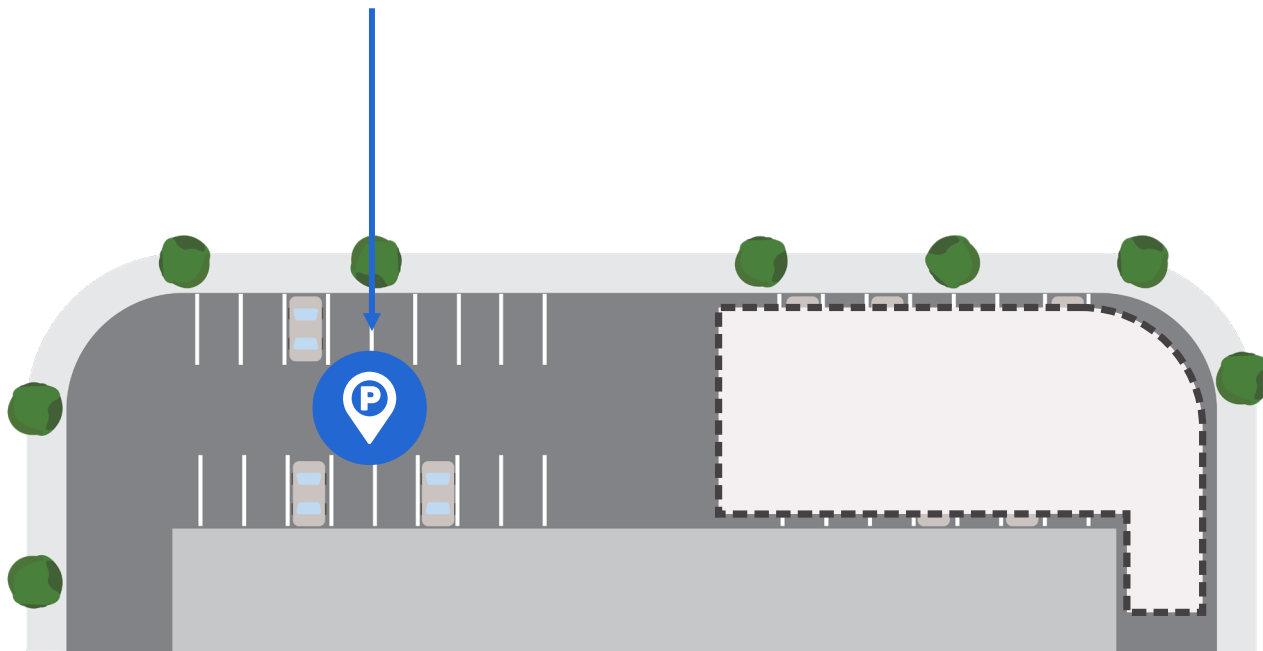
ELIMINATE
parking minimums

**The REDUCE option
reduces parking
minimums overall**



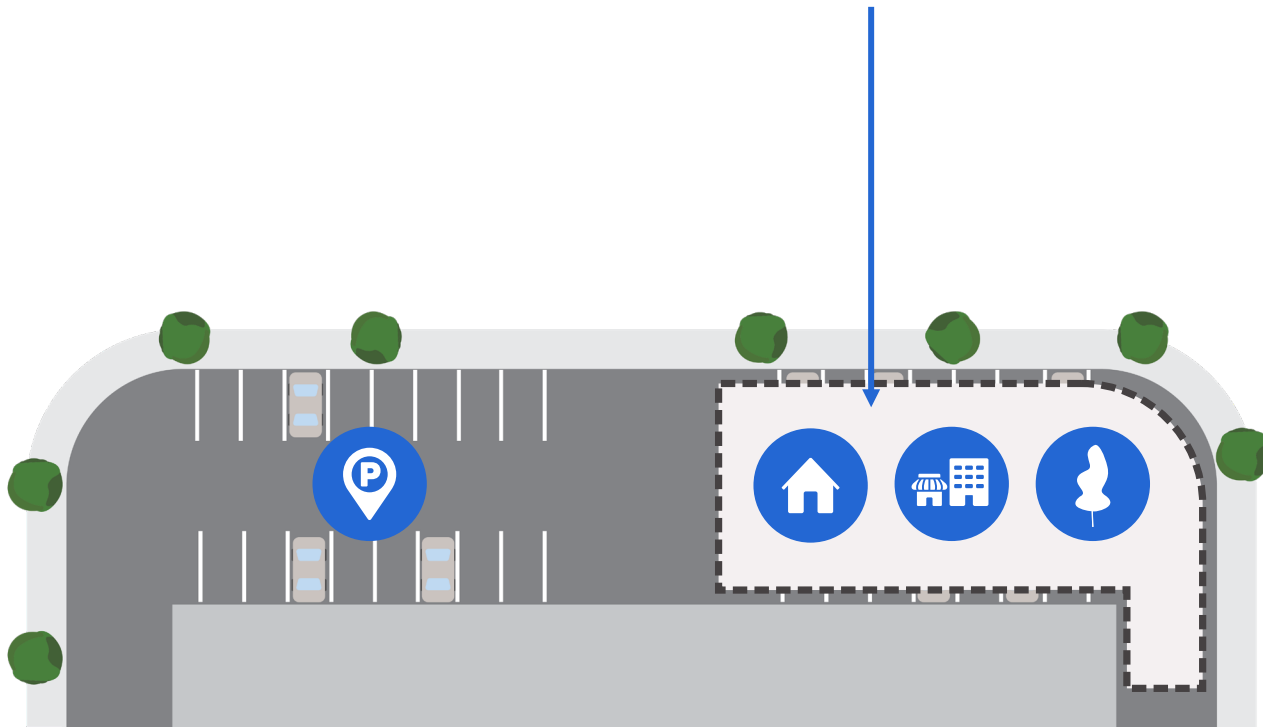


**This means Developer Danielle
still needs to build *some* parking
for her new development, but the
minimum is lower**



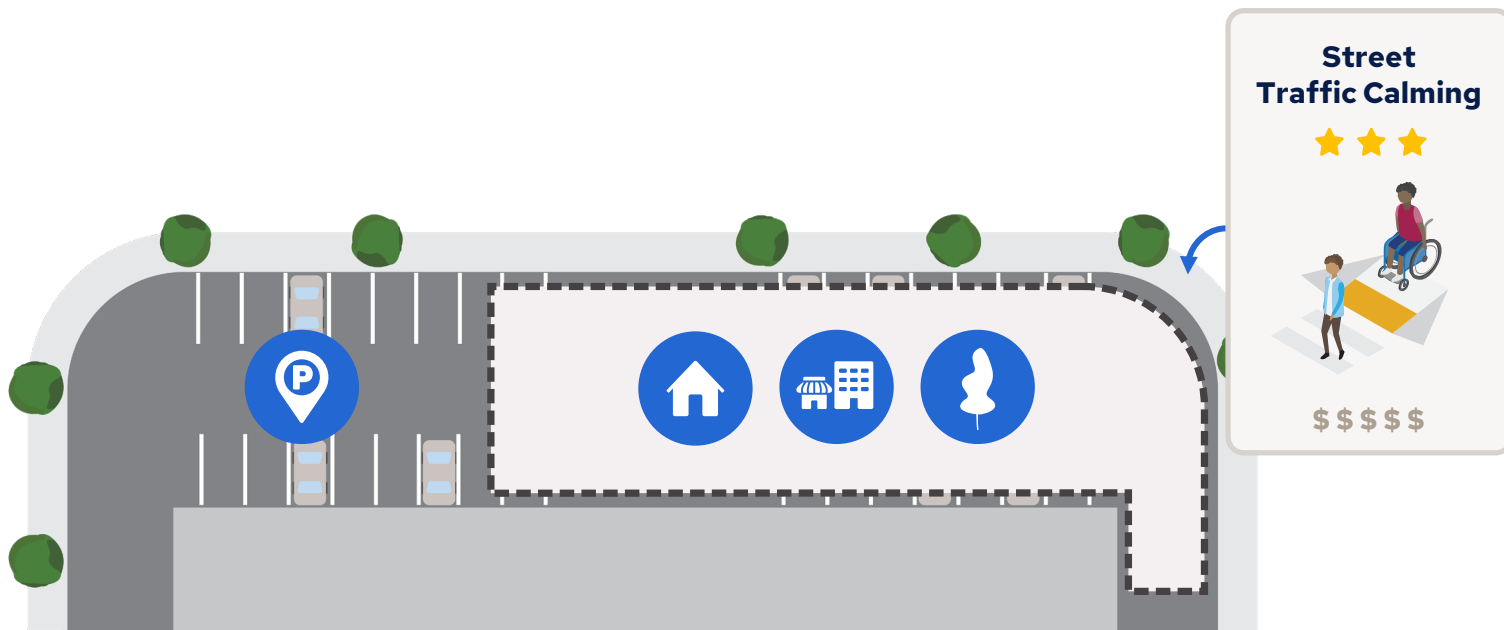


**She can use the extra space for
more homes, businesses, or
amenities, if she wants**



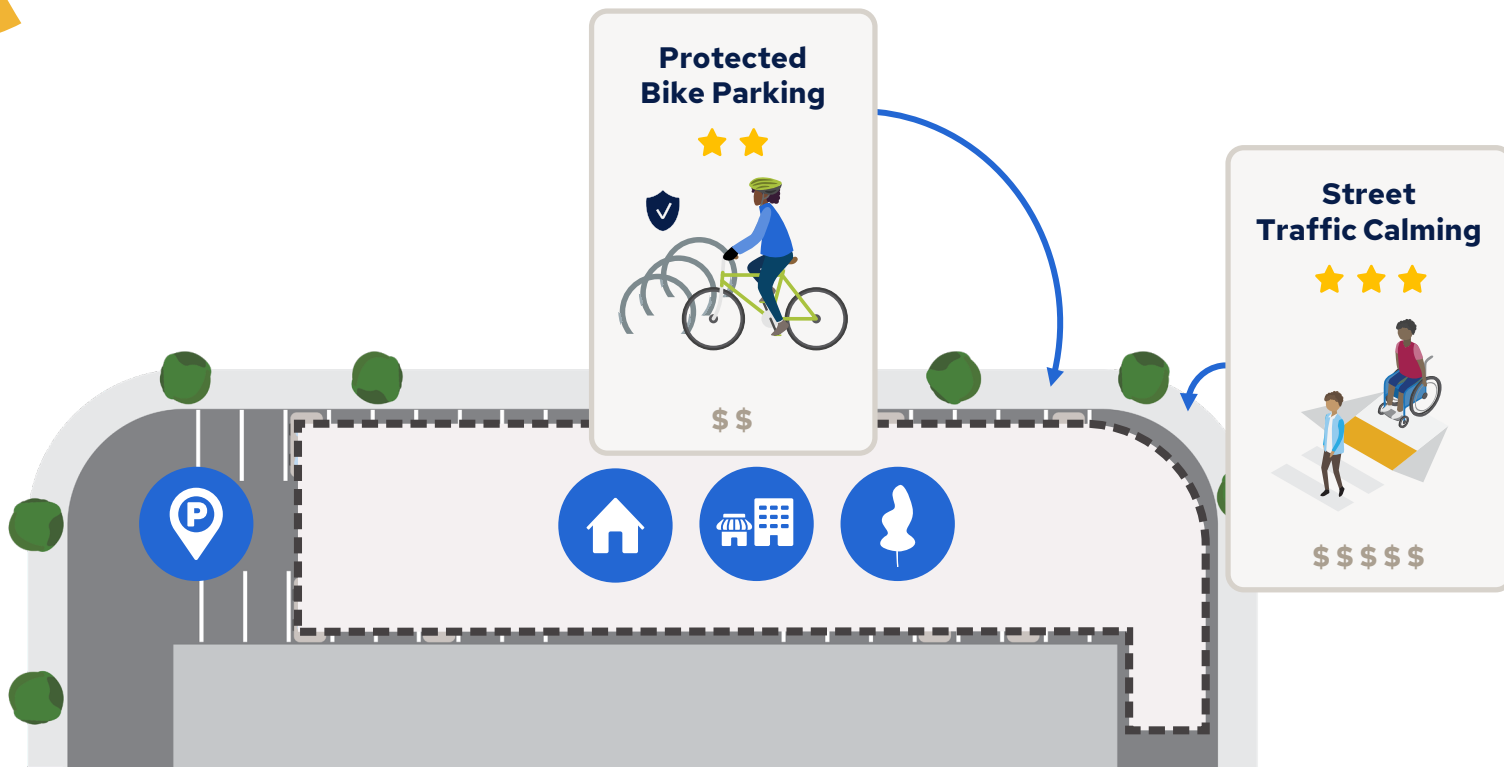


**She could reduce her
minimums further by investing
in TDM strategies**



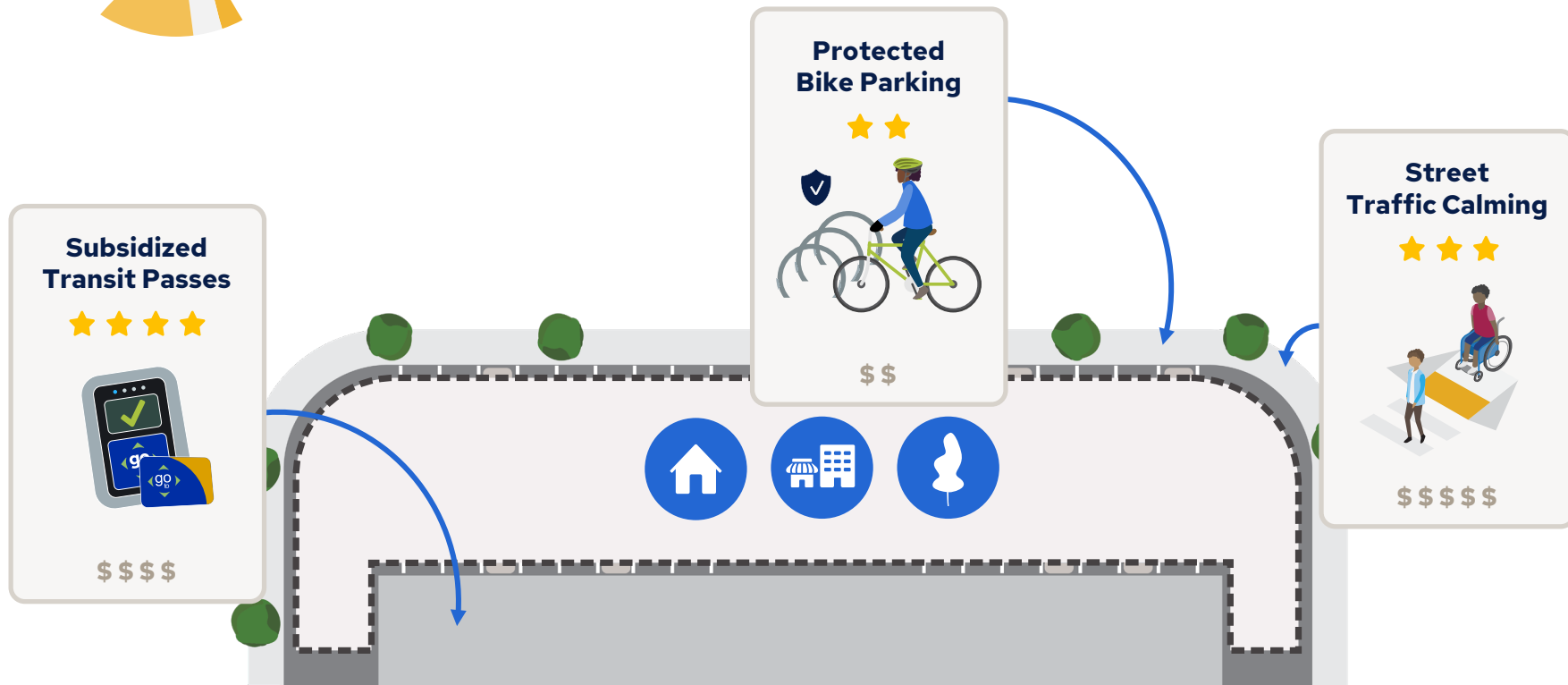


The more TDM investments, the less parking required ...





... all the way down to
zero parking at all



Speaking of zero, many properties would become exempt from parking minimums altogether



Speaking of zero, many properties would become exempt from parking minimums altogether such as ...

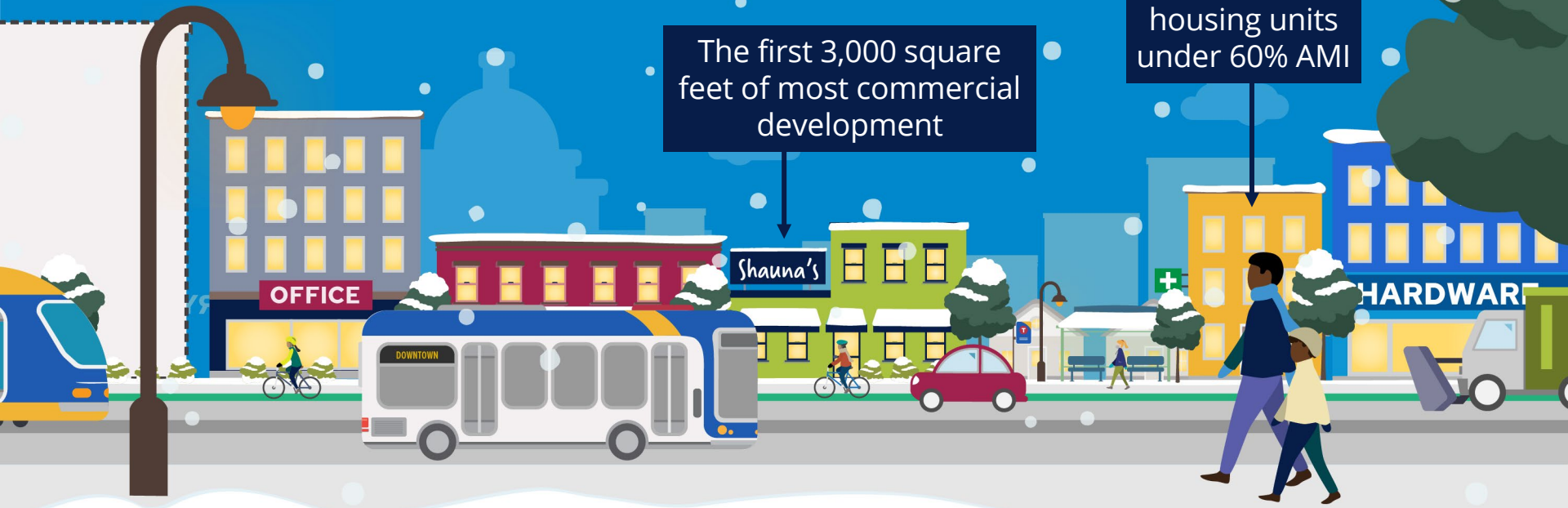
The first 3,000 square feet of most commercial development



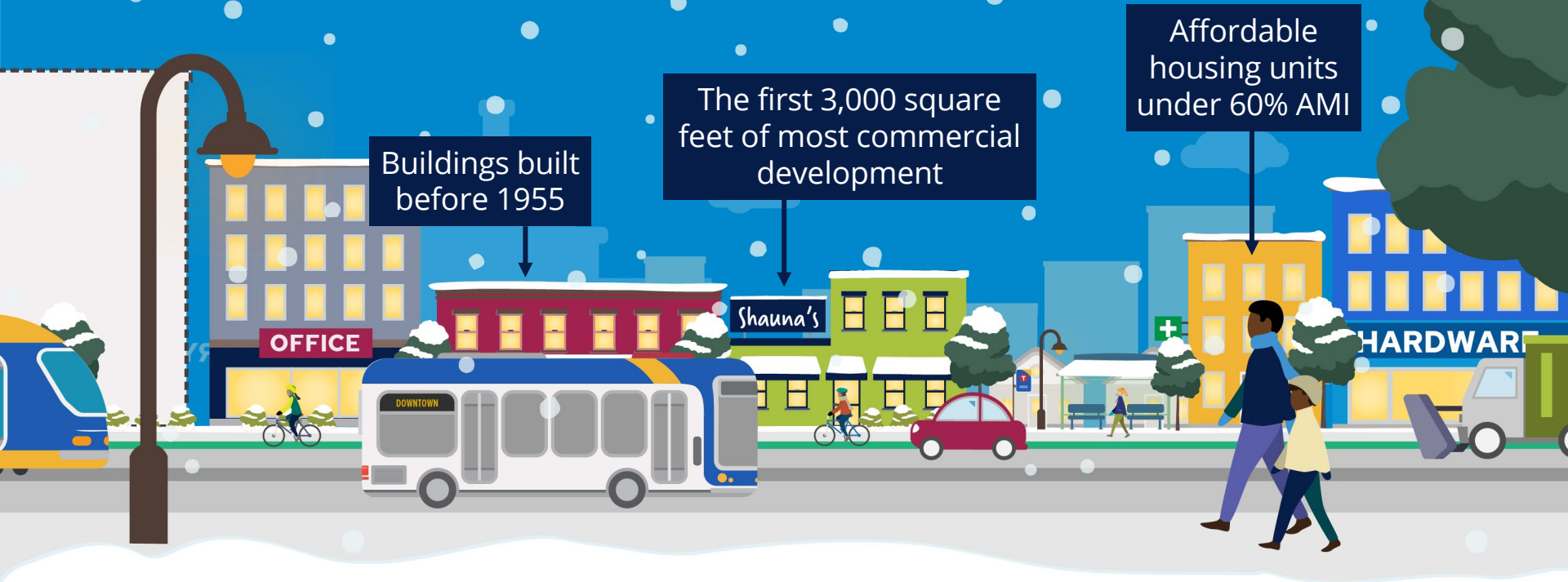
Speaking of zero, many properties would become exempt from parking minimums altogether such as ...

The first 3,000 square feet of most commercial development

Affordable housing units under 60% AMI



Speaking of zero, many properties would become exempt from parking minimums altogether such as ...



Speaking of zero, many properties would become exempt from parking minimums altogether such as ...

Properties near Light Rail, Streetcar, or Bus Rapid Transit

Buildings built before 1955

The first 3,000 square feet of most commercial development

Affordable housing units under 60% AMI



The REDUCE option provides flexibility for developers and small business owners



Renter
Renee



Homeowner
Harriet



Shopkeeper
Shauna



Developer
Danielle



Planner Paul



REDUCE parking minimums

More affordability



More flexibility



Simpler
admin



More
leverage



Most affordability



Most flexibility



Simplest
admin



Less
leverage



ELIMINATE parking minimums

How does the ELIMINATE option work?



REDUCE
parking minimums



ELIMINATE
parking minimums



**The ELIMINATE option
is easier to explain:**

**No required
parking minimums
in Saint Paul, period**



**PARKING
MINIMUMS**



**The ELIMINATE option
is easier to explain:**

**This doesn't stop developers from building
more parking if they wish to ... up to the maximums**

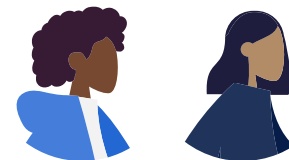
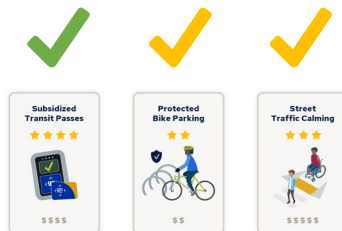
**No required
parking minimums
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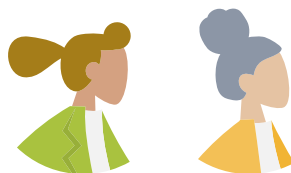
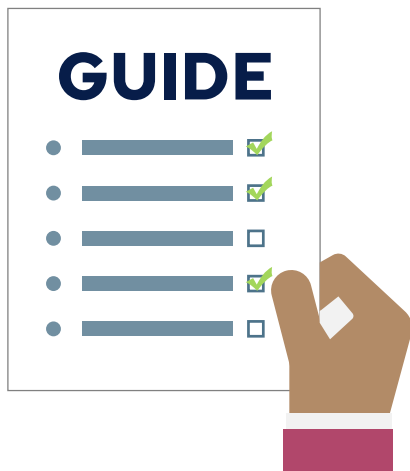
The TDM Guide would still exist



Planner Paul provides a menu of tools designed to make it easier to walk, bike, and take transit

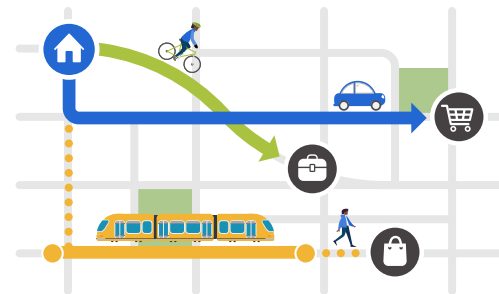


Renter Renee and Homeowner Harriet feel more empowered to walk, bike, and take transit

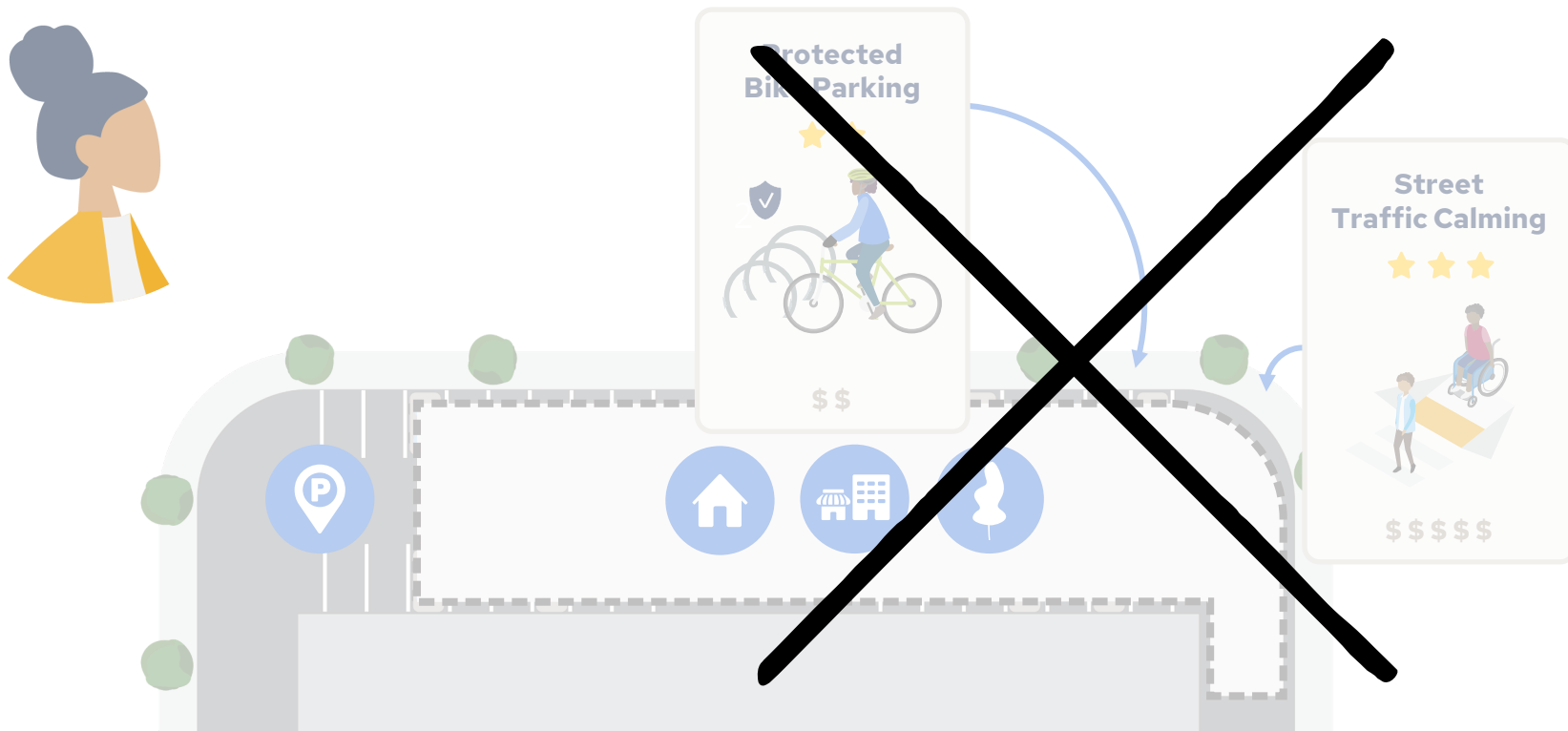


Developer Danielle chooses tools from the menu for her new development

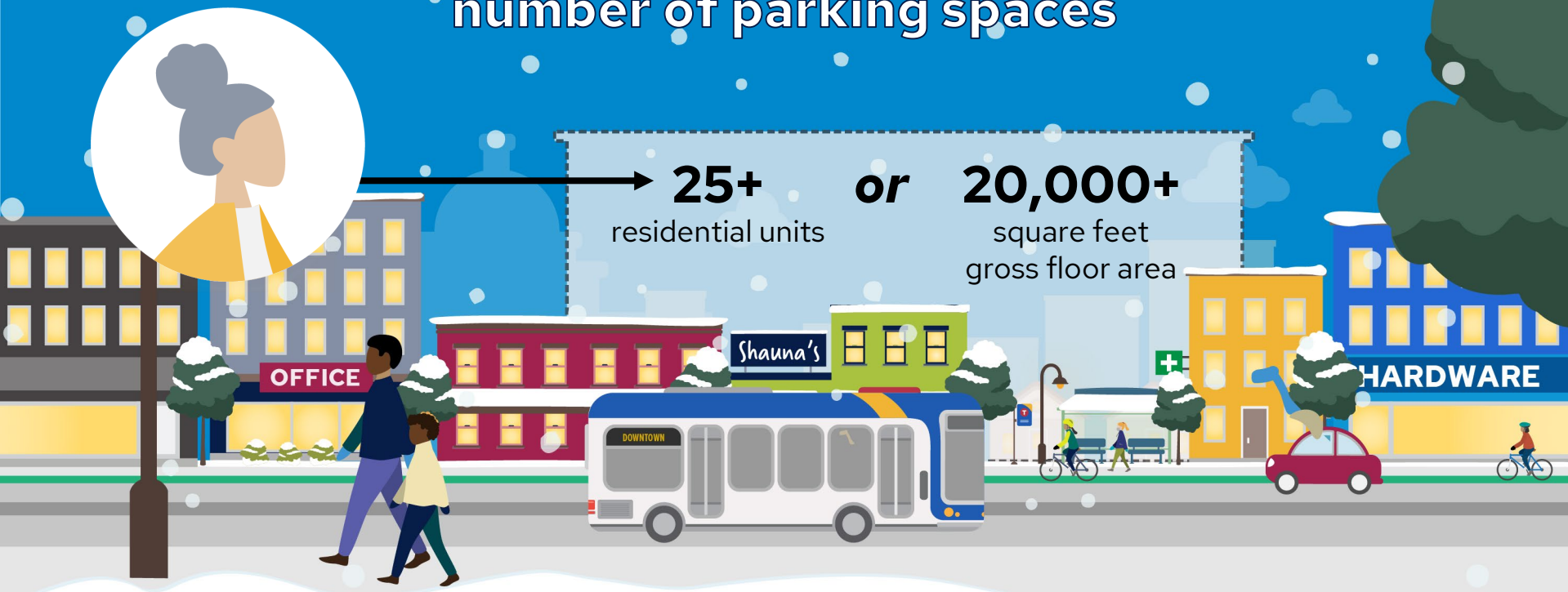
Shopkeeper Shauna chooses tools for her new store



**But there would be no tradeoff between
TDM and parking requirements**



Certain investments in TDM would be required
for large developments, unrelated to the
number of parking spaces



The ELIMINATE option reduces administrative burden for the City, small businesses and developers

R REDUCE parking minimums

E ELIMINATE parking minimums



Renter
Renee



Homeowner
Harriet



Shopkeeper
Shauna



Developer
Danielle



Planner Paul

More affordability



More flexibility



Simpler
admin



More
leverage



Most affordability



Most flexibility



Simplest
admin



Less
leverage

Each option has different benefits



Renter
Renee



Homeowner
Harriet



Shopkeeper
Shauna



Developer
Danielle



Planner Paul



REDUCE parking minimums

More affordability



More flexibility



Simpler
admin



More
leverage



Most affordability



Most flexibility



Simplest
admin



Less
leverage



ELIMINATE parking minimums

But both options help us:



Renter
Renee



Homeowner
Harriet



Shopkeeper
Shauna



Developer
Danielle



Planner Paul

1

Increase housing affordability and reduce construction costs



2

Give new flexibility to small business owners who want to use their off-street parking for other uses



3

Support economic growth



4

Reduce our emissions and make walking, biking, and transit more appealing



We need your voice!

- Public comment can be submitted online at stpaul.gov/Parking-Study or on the phone at the **public hearing on April 30, 2021**
- After the hearing, the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee will make a recommendation to the Planning Commission
- Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council
- The **City Council will also hold a public hearing**, and will vote to adopt one of the options

