

# PITTSBURGH BICYCLE PARKING GUIDELINES



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## 1.1 Parts of the Streetscape

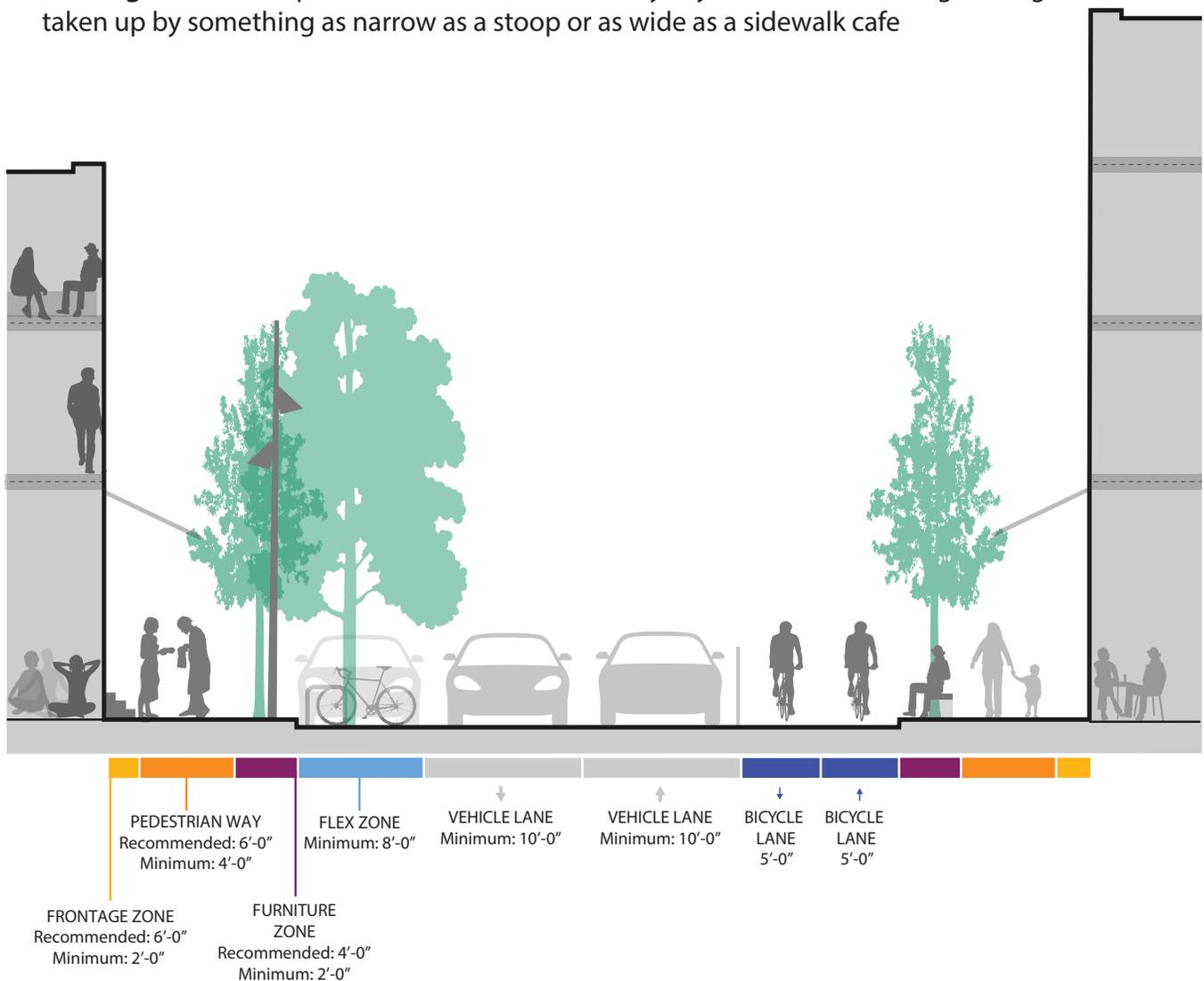
Short term bicycle parking is provided within the city's right-of-way in accordance with demand and includes sidewalk bike racks and bike corrals that are installed in the street's parking lane.

**Pedestrian Way** - The sidewalk; a minimum 4' wide clear space through which pedestrians can pass comfortably and safely

**Furniture Zone** - The space that pedestrians share with benches, street trees, trash cans, newspaper boxes, and bike racks

**Flex Zone** - The edge of the street that is used for parallel parking, for bike corrals, or for sidewalk extensions

**Frontage Zone** - The portion of the sidewalk directly adjacent to the building frontage that can be taken up by something as narrow as a stoop or as wide as a sidewalk cafe



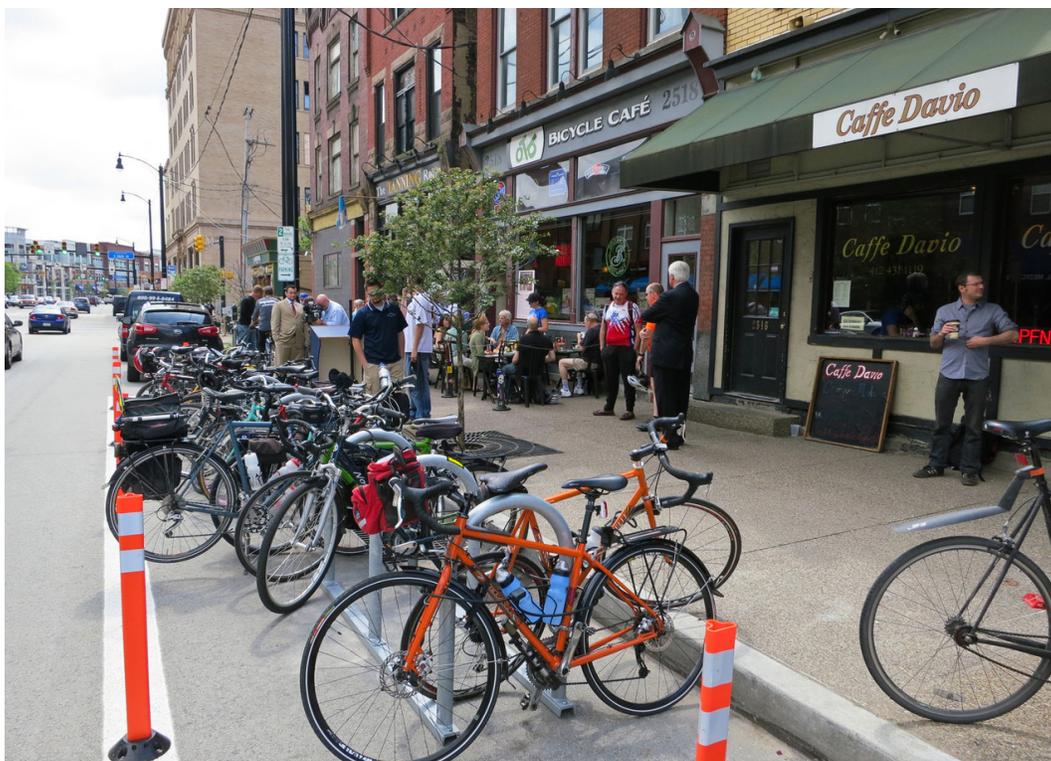
## 1.2 Background and Guiding Policies

Easy and abundant bicycle parking is essential for supporting the growing community of people who bike in Pittsburgh. Designating parking spots for cyclists is a necessary and effective way to make getting places by bicycle more convenient and appealing. Business districts benefit economically and socially from being bikable; to be bikable, they must have capacity for bicycle parking. Sufficient bicycle parking also lowers the number of bicycles locked to trees, benches, or railings, keeping the sidewalk clear for walking.

**2004:** The first Three Rivers bicycle racks were designed and installed around the city because of the collaborative initiatives of Bike Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership, and the Sprout Fund. The project represented the forging of a vital link between the City of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh's advocacy groups on the topic of bicycling.

**2010:** Pittsburgh amended its Zoning Code to both require and incentivize bicycle parking in development projects. The intent of the ordinance is to allow for increased modal flexibility and equity in addressing parking issues. Large- and medium-size projects or change of use applications will be required to provide bicycle parking based on use, building size, and/or staff size. Property owners can also choose to install bicycle parking to fulfill part of their overall automobile parking required by zoning code. For more detailed information please see Pittsburgh Zoning Code: Title 9\_Article VI\_Section 914.05. This document is also found in the appendix.

**2012:** Pittsburgh's first bicycle corral was erected in May outside of the Over The Bar (OTB) bicycle cafe on East Carson Street in the South Side. This was a landmark event for Pittsburgh's bicycle infrastructure; bicycle corrals are a major step towards a safe and legitimized bicycle parking network. Then-mayor Luke Ravenstahl named the installation day, May 15, 'Frank Lenz Day' after the Pittsburgh accountant who rode an early version of the modern-day bicycle most of the way around the world in 1892. The OTB's bike corral was the kickoff for a series of corral installations across the city. The tribute to Frank Lenz was a fitting acknowledgement of the intersection between Pittsburgh's historical and ongoing engagement with the world of cycling.



OTB (Over The Bar) Bicycle Cafe storefront and bicycle corral  
Pratt, Jon. "OTB bike corral: May 15th." 2012. jonpratt.com

## 1.3 Who is Involved?

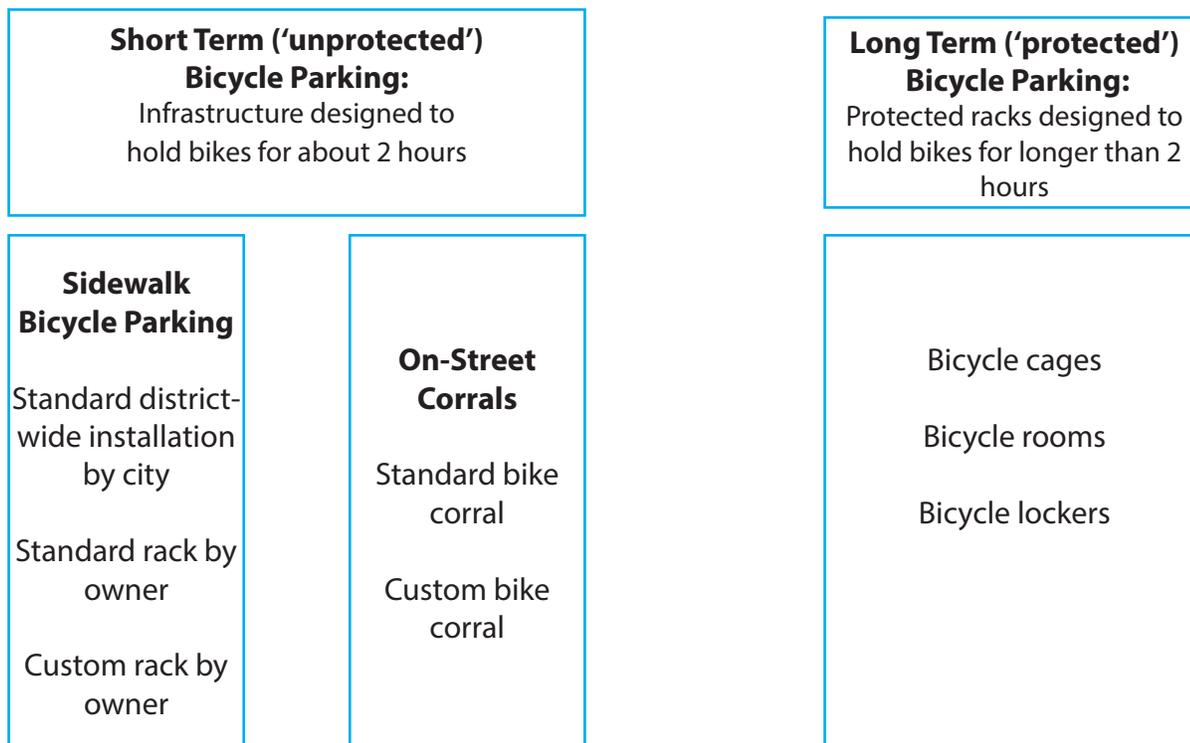
**The Department of City Planning (DCP)** receives and processes proposals for new bicycle infrastructure: they review the plans, perform site visits, then send approved projects to the Department of Public Works and/or the Art Commission if necessary. The DCP's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator facilitates this progression.

**The Art Commission** accepts and reviews applications for any custom designed bike racks on city property.

**The Department of Public Works (DPW)** does the physical assessment of any proposed infrastructure through evaluation of its installation and maintenance feasibility. DPW will do the ongoing upkeep and maintenance of publicly owned bike racks or corrals installed on city property.

**Community and advocacy groups** such as Bike Pittsburgh and various neighborhood cycling organizations have been instrumental in sparking public involvement in the city's quest for excellent bike infrastructure.

## 1.4 Types of Bicycle Parking



# 2

## Long Term Bicycle Parking

Long term bicycle parking is most commonly installed on private property for the residents, tenants, or commercial workers on that property. Within the review for the building permit, all bike parking will also be reviewed for code compliance.

### DEFINITION

Long term bicycle parking is located in secure facilities that protect the entire bike against theft and inclement weather. It is as convenient to access and as well lit as its corresponding car parking.

### REQUIREMENTS

New land uses require long term bicycle parking in order to fulfill Pittsburgh zoning code. Refer to the developer guide in the appendix for the complete parameters of the code.

### COMMON TYPES

A **bicycle locker** is a hefty, grounded box that fully closes and surrounds a bicycle on all sides. Bicycle lockers generally hold one bicycle at a time.

**Bicycle cages/rooms** are secure spaces, usually equipped with rows of racks, that store many bicycles inside for long periods of time.

### SIGNAGE

Bicycle parking signs should be installed to direct cyclists from entryways; these are best sourced from the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).



Bicycle locker



Bicycle room in Bakery Square  
Perelman, Danielle. 2013. bakeryliving.com



Bicycle Parking Sign  
Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

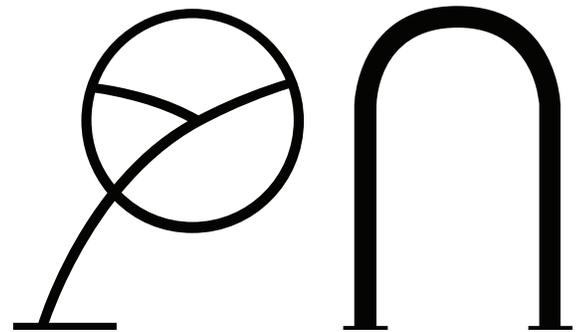
# 3

## Short Term Bicycle Parking

- 3.1 Standard Bicycle Racks
- 3.2 Standard Bicycle Racks Installed by a Private Party
- 3.3 Custom Bicycle Racks Installed by a Private Party
- 3.4 Gifting Bicycle Racks on a District Scale
- 3.5 On-Street Bicycle Corrals

### 3.1 Standard Bicycle Racks

The City of Pittsburgh installs and maintains bicycle racks across the city free of charge district by district. We welcome your suggestions for new bicycle rack locations and will take them into account when planning for the future. Please submit these suggested locations through our online form found on the bike parking home page: [pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/bicycleparking](http://pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/bicycleparking)



Pittsburgh standard bicycle racks

### 3.2 Standard Bicycle Racks Installed by a Private Party

This section is most relevant to new businesses required by zoning to install bicycle racks or existing businesses who would like to install a standard bike rack in a specific place in front of their property without waiting for DPW's district-wide installations. For these instances we offer a bicycle rack permit.

#### APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

1. **Applicant** submits a completed bicycle rack application (found in the appendix) to City Planning.
2. The **Department of City Planning** and the **Department of Public Works** review the application with special attention to bicycle rack selection, mounting hardware, sidewalk material, and site plan.
3. Upon approval, the **applicant** stencils the exact installation locations of the proposed rack(s) and Department of City Planning staff perform a site visit.
4. If there are no necessary changes, the **Department of City Planning** issues an installation permit and a notice to proceed.
5. **Applicant** installs the rack and submits photos of installed rack to Department of City Planning staff, who issue a formal acceptance of the bicycle rack and commit to maintaining it.

### 3.3 Custom Bicycle Racks Installed by a Private Party

Individual businesses or property owners can decide to fund and install customized bicycle racks in the sidewalk directly adjacent to their property. To privately install custom bicycle racks in the public right-of-way, a proposal must go through a review and permit process, be passed by the Art Commission, and comply with the City of Pittsburgh's bicycle rack specifications outlined in Chapter 4.

#### APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

1. **Applicant** sends a completed Art Commission Application (found in the appendix) to the Department of City Planning.
2. The **Art Commission** reviews the custom design;
  - Department of City Planning** examines the application and potentially provides a letter of support;
  - Department of Public Works** assesses the design's eligibility for the street.Each department is entitled to necessitate revisions or updated drawings from the applicant.
3. If approved, the **applicant/property owner** sign the City's certificate of acceptance and permit at the Department of Public Works' permit office.
4. Then, the **property owner** assumes insurance for the bicycle rack, commits to owning and maintaining it, and installs it accordingly with the methods outlined by the approved application.



Cultural district rack designed by Toby Fraley



Cultural District rack designed by Carin MinceMoyer Fleming, Marc; Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. 2014.

## 3.4 Gifting Bicycle Racks on a District Scale

When neighborhoods or districts want to purchase bicycle racks for an area, they may gift bike racks to the Department of Public Works who will own, install, and maintain the racks at no ongoing cost to the group. Gifted racks can be off-the-shelf or of a custom design. Custom designs must conform to the City of Pittsburgh's rack specifications detailed in section 3.5. Both options must be approved by the Department of City Planning, the Department of Public Works, and the Art Commission. Once approved, DPW must take action to accept the gift. Due to the extensive staff time necessary in formalizing and receiving gifts to the city, DPW accepts a minimum of 50 racks as a gift.

### APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

1. **Applicant** submits a completed Art Commission Application to the Department of City Planning. Not all 50 sites need to be outlined for the initial application.
2. The **Art Commission** reviews the custom design;  
**Department of City Planning** examines the application and potentially provides a letter of support;  
**Department of Public Works** assesses the design's eligibility for the street.  
Each department is entitled to necessitate revisions or updated drawings from the applicant.
3. The **Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator** provides a letter of support for the bicycle rack if the previous steps are successful.
4. The **Department of City Planning** takes action to accept the gift and set it as the standard for the relevant district.
5. The **Department of Public Works** stores, installs, and maintains the new district rack.



Yerba Buena District bike rack, San Francisco  
David Baker Architects. n.d. dbarchitect.com



Squirrel Hill bike rack on Forbes Ave, Pittsburgh

## 3.5 On-Street Bicycle Corrals

On-street bicycle parking corrals are placed in locations where the demand for bike parking is greater than can be accommodated with sidewalk bicycle racks. They consist of multiple bicycle racks in one parallel car parking space that is outlined in white and is protected by flexible vertical delineators. A wheel stop may be added where other vehicles are likely to back into the corral.

The City of Pittsburgh prefers to locate bicycle corrals at block corners because they make pedestrians at the crosswalk more visible and improve sightlines for cars turning into traffic from side streets. With input from the applicant, the Department of City Planning ultimately decides where on the block to place the potential bicycle corral.

Bicycle corrals are installed in partnership with a sponsoring property owner/business who then performs minor, regular maintenance of the facility. The bicycle corral is permitted through the City of Pittsburgh DPW and the permit can be revoked if the terms of the maintenance agreement are not upheld. If the bicycle corral is proposed on a state highway, the City will apply for a Highway Occupancy Permit on the applicant's behalf; this will take some time. Custom bicycle corral designs must go through the Art Commission process outlined in section 3.3 of this guide.

### APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

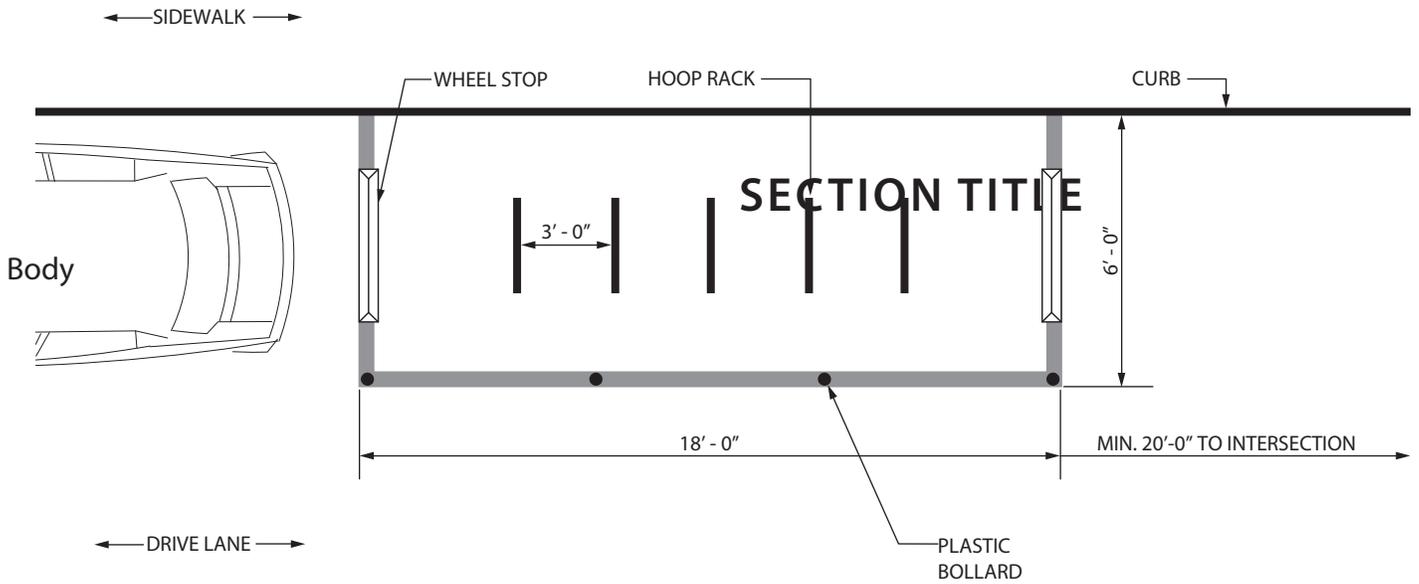
Property and business owners may request a bicycle corral by submitting an application to City Planning. Applications are processed twice a year based on the schedule below. The applicant is encouraged to show support from neighbouring businesses and property owners as well as to demonstrate the need for a corral through photos of existing bike parking demands.

Application Deadline	Review	Installation Begins
February 1 July 1	Feb-March July-August	April September

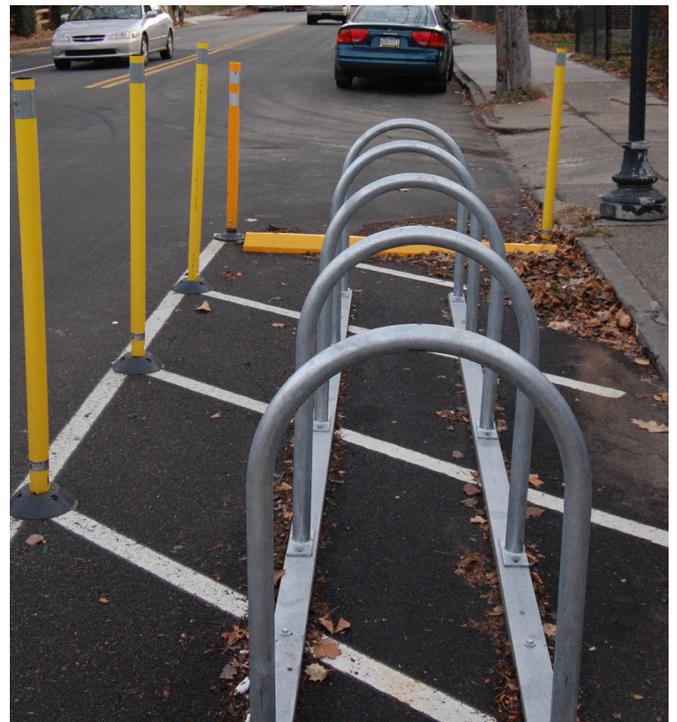
1. **Applicant** completes the bicycle corral application and sends it, with any associated drawings, to the Department of City Planning's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator. ([kristin.saunders@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:kristin.saunders@pittsburghpa.gov))
2. The **Department of City Planning** reviews the application and site conditions, including existing bicycle parking and demand for the corral. If a bicycle corral is not optimal, the Department of City Planning will look for additional bicycle parking opportunities nearby.
3. The **Department of City Planning** confirms the site location with the Department of Public Works for review if the site is appropriate for a bicycle corral. If necessary, the Department of City Planning will apply for a Highway Occupancy Permit.
4. **Applicant** finalizes an agreement with the City to clean and monitor a standard corral or to clean, monitor, and structurally maintain a corral of a custom design.
5. Once the bicycle corral is approved and the neighbors have been notified, the **Department of City Planning** generates a work order for the Department of Public Works to install the corral.

## Intro text IMAGES AND DESIGN DRAWINGS

The layout of a bike corral varies greatly based on site conditions. The basic dimensions and safety elements are shown in the drawing below:



Standard bike corral on Smallman Street in the Strip District



Standard bike corral on Shady Avenue in Squirrel Hill

# 4

## Standards, Requirements and Specifications

Bicycle racks are an important streetscape element. They must be economical, functional, and easy to maintain.

- 4.1 Pittsburgh Standard Bicycle Racks
- 4.2 Design Requirements
- 4.3 Site Requirements
- 4.4 Materials and Finish

### 4.1

#### Pittsburgh Standard Bicycle Racks

Any designs besides these must be approved through the Art Commission before they can be installed.



U-rack



3-Rivers rack



U-rack corral standard



Incoming corral standard  
Fisher Architecture. 2012.

## 4.2 Design Requirements

### Design:

1. Should support the bikes in at least two places, including one wheel.
2. Must be easy to lock a bike to with a typical "U" or cable lock.
3. Must have steel base plates of a minimum of 1/4" thickness that can be bolted to a concrete pad in four places. Installing a rack on pavers or bricks requires a concrete pad to be poured before install.
4. The top of the bicycle rack design must be a minimum of 36" tall.

### Materials and Finish:

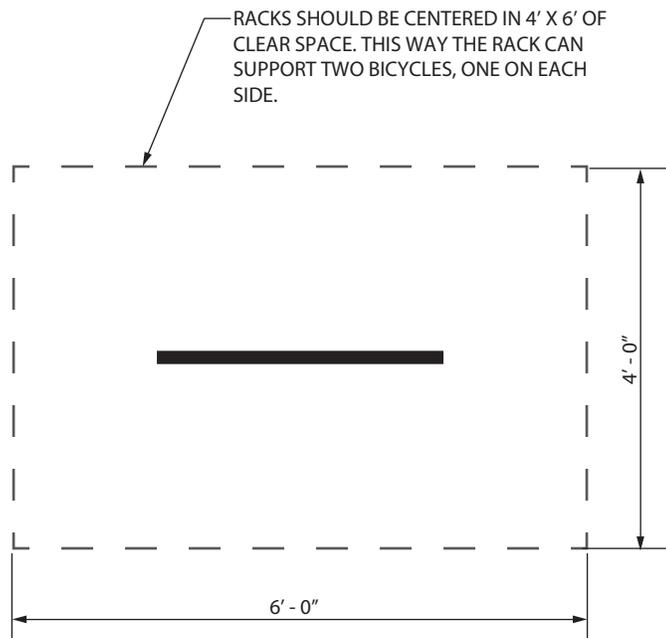
Bicycle racks must be galvanized steel (raw and/or powder coated), aluminum, or stainless steel. No other finishes, including hand-painted finishes, will be accepted unless approved by the Art Commission.

### Safety:

1. Adhere to all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for protrusions in the right-of-way, including the ability to detect the rack with a cane.
2. Except for the bicycle rack supporting brackets, the shortest section of the bicycle rack must be a minimum of 27" tall, tall enough to be perceived by pedestrians and avoid tripping hazards.
3. The space between the rack features must be larger than 9" and smaller than 3.5' to keep children from trapping their heads.
4. The design must not include sharp edges.

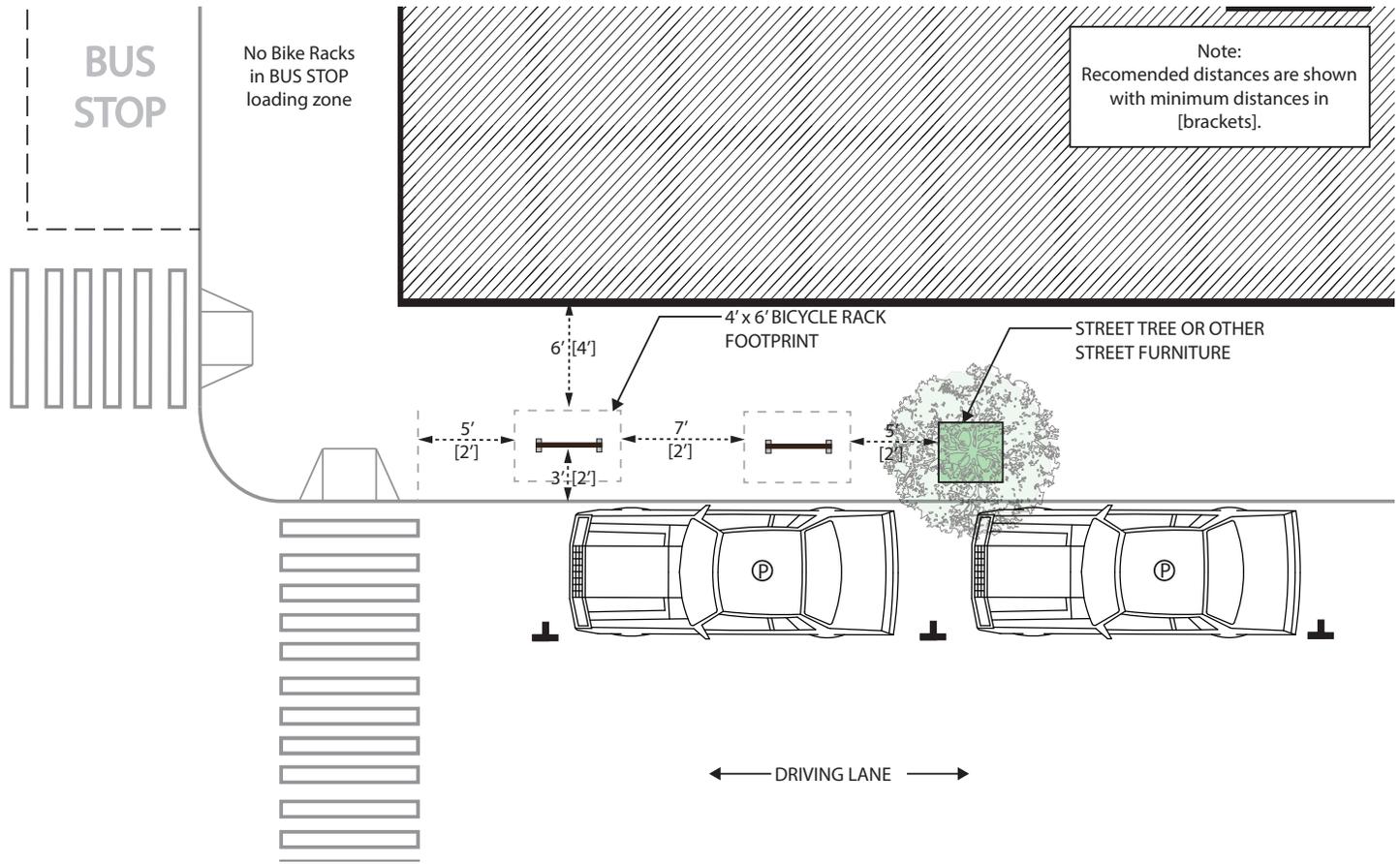
### Footprint:

To be adequately useful, bike racks require more space than what the rack itself takes up. There must be a 4' x 6' space centered on the bicycle rack, which leaves enough room to lock one bike to each side of the rack.



# 4.3 Site Requirements

**Sidewalk bike racks** need to leave adequate room for the bikes that will be locked to them as well as bus stops, accessible parking spots, and predesignated walkways. They should be accessible without impeding pedestrian traffic. The figure below illustrates the spatial buffers necessary for a sidewalk bike rack.



# Appendix

## CONTACTS

### General Inquiries

Kristin Saunders  
City of Pittsburgh  
Department of City Planning  
Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator  
kristin.saunders@pittsburghpa.gov  
412-393-0150

### Art Commission

Morton Brown  
City of Pittsburgh  
Department of City Planning  
Public Art Director  
morton.brown@pittsburghpa.gov  
412-255-8996

### Market Based Revenue Opportunity Program

[http://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/finance/Appendis\\_F\\_MBRO\\_Design\\_and\\_Criteria\\_Standards.pdf](http://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/finance/Appendis_F_MBRO_Design_and_Criteria_Standards.pdf)  
Chuck Durham  
City of Pittsburgh  
Department of Finance  
Market Based Revenue Specialist  
chuck.durham@pittsburghpa.gov  
412-255-2327

## GLOSSARY

**Long-term parking** - infrastructure designed to hold bikes in place longer than 2 hours; these include lockers and indoor garage space

**Short-term parking** - infrastructure designed to hold bikes in place for about 2 hours; these are mostly unclaimed by any one business or private owner but rather live in open, public space

**On-street** - the channel of sidewalk and street that belongs to pedestrians, vehicles, the city

**Off-street** - private space; more likely to be a space for long-term parking

**Bicycle corral** - a pod of short-term bicycle parking that lives in the parking lane: generally consists of a series of bike racks, surrounded by a painted white box on the street with flexible vertical delineators and a wheel stop where vehicles are likely to back into the adjacent parking spot

**Bicycle rack** - a piece of infrastructure, on-street or off-street, designed to host two bicycles short-term.

**Work order** - an order received by the Department of Public Works from a client regarding the manufacture of a product (in this case, bicycle racks/corrals)

**Street furniture** - an umbrella term for any of the structures that populate a streetscape: bicycle racks, streetlights, parking meters, benches, stop signs

**Sidewalk extension (bump-out)** - a widening of the sidewalk that curves into the street, mainly at pedestrian crossings, to calm traffic and extend pedestrian space

**Crosswalk** - the area marked by white lines that defines the pedestrian right-of-way across a street

**Curb cut** - the sloped concrete that connects the curb to the street at intersections, driveways, etc.

**Driveway** - the paved route that leads a vehicle from the street to their private parking space

**Edge zone (door zone)** - portion of the sidewalk between the curb and the furnishing zone, used for getting in and out of parked vehicles

**Furnishing zone** - portion of the sidewalk between the edge zone and throughway that contains street trees, plantings, lighting, and street furniture



Polish Hill  
DECO Resources. 2014. deco-resources.com