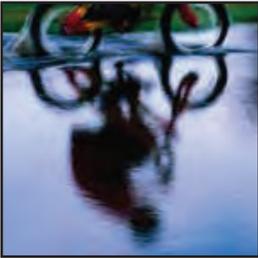




# City of Northampton

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## Bicycle Parking Guide



## DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

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For new development and redevelopment projects, bicycle parking must be provided in accordance with zoning requirements. Locations and types of bike parking must be shown in building site plans and approved by the Planning Board. Ensure that your bike racks are approved and well used by following these guidelines.

### Northampton's Bicycle Storage Requirements

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The following is a summary of the Northampton's Zoning requirements:

#### 350–8.11. Bicycle Storage

“Except in the Central Business District, bicycle racks or other provision for indoor or outdoor storage of bicycles must be provided for all uses for which the zoning requires 10 or more parking spaces. Storage must allow for the locking of bicycles to racks or inside of storage containers.

## WHY IS BIKE PARKING IMPORTANT?

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The City of Northampton promotes bicycling as a healthy, environmentally friendly way of getting around Northampton and the Pioneer Valley. Northampton is well suited for bicycling and more people are using their bikes every day for commuting, shopping, and general transportation. Enhancing and promoting sustainable transportation is a cornerstone of Northampton's climate protection policies.



Providing bicycle parking encourages people to use their bicycles as transportation. People are more likely to use a bike if they are confident that they will find convenient and secure parking at their destination.



Providing a designated area for bike parking gives a more orderly appearance to a building and prevents cyclists from locking their bikes to unacceptable fixtures, such as trees, benches, or railings. However, if a bike rack appears insecure, does not fit bikes well, or is in the wrong location, cyclists will not use it.

## Getting it Right

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When installing bicycle parking, it is important to consider the following:

- Location of building entrance(s) that the cyclists will be using
- Quantity of bikes (current or anticipated) parking at the site
- Amount of time that bikes will be parked there (a few hours versus all day)

## Acceptable Bike Racks

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There are multiple designs for bicycle racks produced by many manufacturers. Bike racks can be purchased as single units, with a capacity of 2 bikes (one on each side), or as multiple units, with a larger capacity. Only some designs have proven successful.



## Features of a good bike rack include:

- Stable structure and permanent foundation that is securely anchored in the ground
- Support for an upright bicycle by its frame horizontally in **two (2)** or more places
- Design that prevents the bicycle from tipping over
- Ability to support a variety of bicycle sizes and frame shapes
- Space to secure the frame and one or both wheels to the rack
- Keeps bike wheels on the ground



*This is an example of a good bike rack in Northampton.*

## Unacceptable Bike Racks

Bicycle racks must NOT:

- Support the bicycle at only one point
- Allow the bicycle to fall, which can damage the bike and block pedestrian right-of-way
- Have sharp edges, which can be hazardous to the visually impaired
- Support the bicycle by one wheel
- Connect to each other with a bar across the top (which blocks certain handlebars and baskets)
- Suspend any part of the bike in the air





The rack should be easily and independently accessible and accommodating for a bicycle at least seven feet in length and two feet wide while still allowing access to each space when parking area is full. Rack units that are (installed) closer than 36 inches together prevent cyclists from utilizing the racks to their fullest capacity.

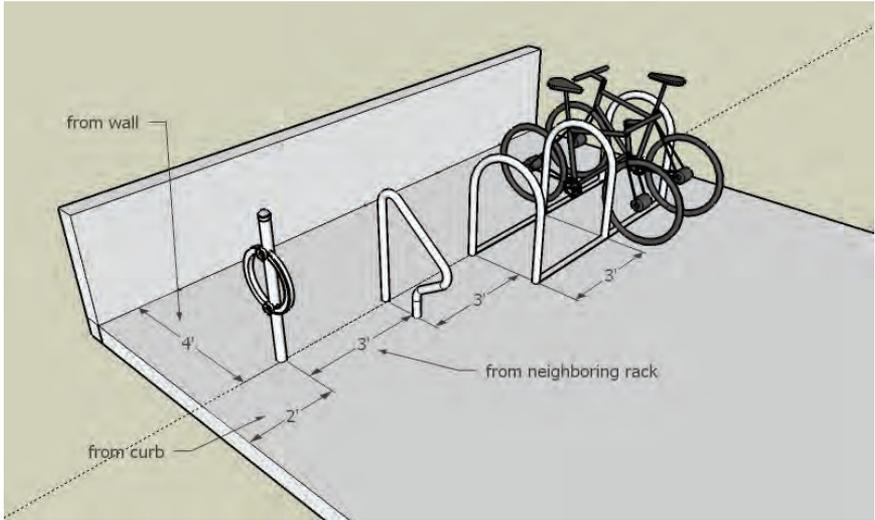
*Northampton provides public bicycle racks, so please refrain from attaching one's bike to trees, poles, etc.*



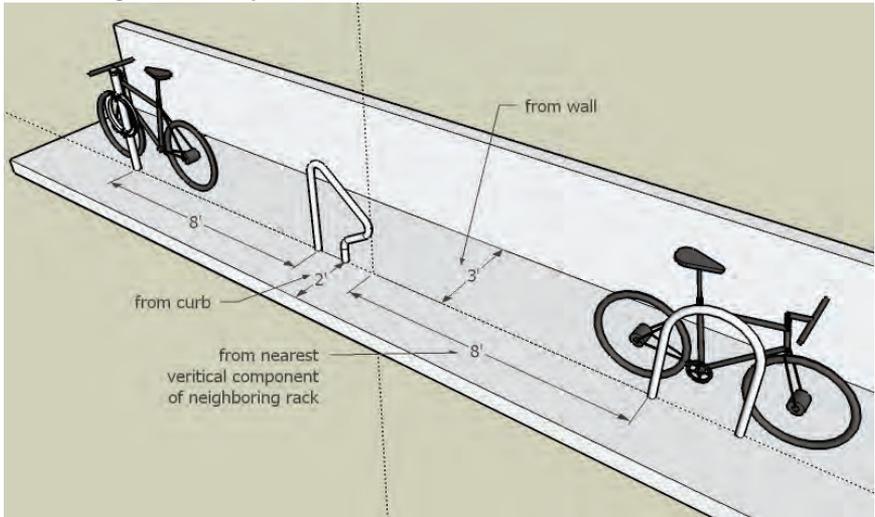
**DO NOT USE** racks that only provide one point of support or only accommodate certain bicycle shapes.

## Dimensions

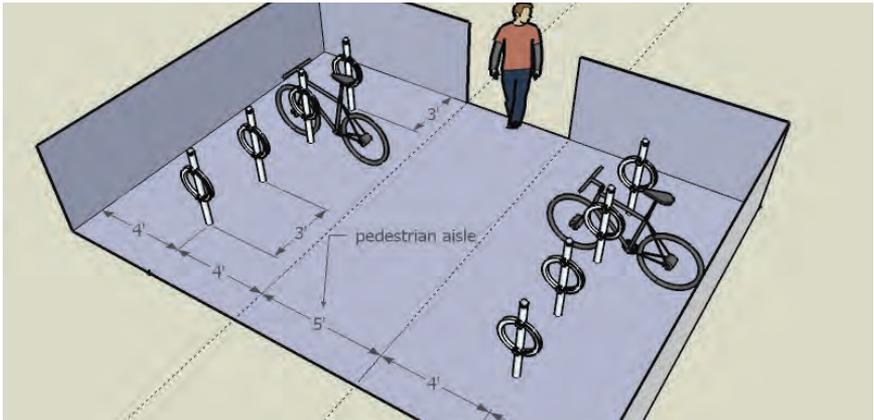
Distances between the bike rack and objects nearby vary depending on the context and the type of rack. Some racks have only one vertical component, such as the pole and ring rack, whereas others have two, such as the inverted-U rack. Measurements must be taken from the nearest vertical component of the rack to the object.



*Racks aligned side by side*



*Racks aligned end to end*



*Enclosed rack area with pedestrian aisle*

**Distance to other Racks:**

- Rack units aligned parallel to each other (side by side) must be at least 36 inches apart. This includes racks that are sold as multiple rack units attached together.
- Rack units aligned end to end must be at least 96 inches apart.

**Distance from Wall:**

- Rack units placed perpendicular to a wall must be at least 48 inches from the wall to the nearest vertical component of the rack.
- Rack units placed parallel to a wall must be at least 36 inches from the rack to the wall.

**Distance from a Curb:**

- Rack units placed perpendicular to the curb must be at least 48 inches from the curb to the nearest vertical component of the rack.
- Rack units placed parallel to the curb must be at least 24 inches from the curb to the rack.

**Distance from a Pedestrian Aisle:**

- Rack units perpendicular to a pedestrian aisle must be at least 48 inches from the rack to the edge of the aisle, and the aisle should be at least 60 inches wide.

**Other Distances:**

- Racks should be no more than 30 feet from the building entrance that they serve.
- Allow at least 4 feet for safe pedestrian clearance.
- 14 feet from curbside fire hydrant.
- 6 feet from a wall fire hydrant.

## Choosing a Location

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Location is an extremely important factor in the utility of a bike rack. The rack should be located in a safe and accessible space.

### Safe locations are:

- In full view, maximizing visibility and minimizing vandalism, near pedestrian traffic, windows, and/or well-lit areas
- Under cover, to protect bikes from inclement weather
- Far enough away from the street or parking spaces so that bikes will not be damaged by automobiles, on a setback if possible
- Not obstructing pedestrian traffic



### Accessible locations are:

- Between the road/path that cyclists use and the entrance of the building
- Not up stairs or large curbs, preferably near handicap accessible ramps
- Spacious enough to allow room for bikes of all shapes and sizes to use the racks to their fullest capacity.
- Close to the main entrance that cyclists use for the building

Private developers and property may not install racks in the public right of way without formal permission from the City.



*Weather protected bicycle parking is desirable at locations where bikes may be parked for extended periods.*

## Short-Term Versus Long-Term Parking

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Another factor in bike rack choice is the amount of time that each cyclist is expected to park at the rack. Bike parking for a commercial area, such as a restaurant or store, is considered short-term, as cyclists are expected to park there for a couple of hours (at the most). The main concerns for short-term bike parking are close proximity to the building entrance and visibility.

For long-term parking, such as at transit stations, workplaces, or residential areas, where cyclists may park all day or overnight, it is better for bikes to be parked in lockers, covered storage areas, parking garages or indoors. Safety is the main concern with long-term parking. Bikes need to be sheltered from inclement weather, under cover or in a locker. To prevent vandalism, racks should be within view of any parking attendant, security guard, or transit worker.



*Although weather-protected bicycle parking is not currently available in Northampton, the City is interested in providing it in the future. Weather protected bicycle parking is appealing to cyclists and is twice as likely to be used as unprotected parking options. Bicycle parking lockers housed inside parking garages is a desirable choice for cyclists.*

## Parking Garages

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Northampton supplies an employee bicycle room in its parking garage for those who work for the city. When new parking garages are built, we encourage them to include bicycle storage facilities.

## Locking

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The rack must allow for the convenient securing of the bicycle frame and both wheels using a chain, cable or U- lock. Chains and cables vary in length from 2' to 6'. U-locks, which cyclists frequently use to attach their frame and one wheel to a rack, are usually between 3.25" and 5" wide and vary in length from 5.5" to 12".



Chain Lock



U-Lock

The locking surface on the rack must be thin enough for cyclists to use these popular locking mechanisms, yet thick enough not to be cut by hand tools, such as bolt cutters, pipe cutters, pry bars and wrenches.

## Brochure Credits:

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Much of this brochure was based on a similar brochure that Cambridge made. Thanks very much to Cambridge for allowing us to use their format and many of their text and pictures.

## Bike Rack Manufacturers

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There are many bicycle rack manufacturers who can supply high quality racks that meet Northampton specifications. The following bicycle rack manufacturers meet the City of Northampton's specifications:

- Bike Lid (<http://www.bikelid.com>)
- Creative Pipe (<http://www.creativepipe.com>)



- Cycle Safe (<http://www.cycle-safe.com>)
- DERO Bike Racks (<http://www.dero.com>)
- Function First Bike Security (<http://www.bikerack.com>)
- Huntco Supply, Inc. (<http://www.huntco.com>)

Custom designs and “artistic” racks can also be used, provided they meet the performance criteria for bicycle racks.

Images on this page show examples of such racks.

Northampton staff are always available to assist with reviewing the performance standards for bicycle racks, including custom designs, as well as rack selection and placement; please feel free to contact us at <http://www.northamptonma.gov/>



**Photo Credits:**

With appreciation to the following individuals and companies for use of their photographs: Dero Bike Rack Company (pp. 4, 9, 11); Susan Cooper (p. 11); John Luton (p. 8); Norman Cox (p. 10); Mark Horowitz (p. 9); Shannon Simms (pp. 5, 10); Jessica Zdeb (p. 3)

**City of Northampton**

Office of Planning and Development  
210 Main Street, Rm. 11, City Hall  
Northampton, MA 01060  
Telephone: 413-587-1249    Fax: 413-587-1275  
Web: <http://www.northamptonma.gov/opd/>  
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