

I HAVE LAND AND I WANT TO BUILD A PARKING LOT.....



KNOW YOUR LIMITS. CHECK WHAT ZONE ALLOWS YOU TO PURSUE YOUR IDEA.

You will find the City of Albany's Zoning Ordinance at:
<https://ecode360.com/documents/AL0934/source/eX-AL0934-1497472247239.pdf>

Need help understanding the Zoning requirements?
Contact the City's Vacant Property Coordinator - (518) 434-5250



GET THE LAY OF THE LAND

Understand the neighborhood. Visit at different times of day. Observe the traffic, the sun exposure, the storm water, etc. Connect with the neighbors and attend a community meeting.

If you have a permitting issue, you will need support.
<http://albany.ny.mapgeo.io>



HAVE A PLAN.

Parking lots require more space than you think. Plan it out. Measure the property and create a scale drawing of it. If your measurements don't match up with the tax map ask adjacent owners if they have property surveys.

A parking space must be 9' wide by 18" long. The driving lane must be 25' wide to allow cars to back out of the parking spaces.

A typical 25' x 100' lot might accommodate four parking spaces if the terrain and conditions are favorable. Drivers will need to make a 5-point turn in order to get out, and one on-street parking space will be lost to create a driveway (curb-cut).

Divide your total expenses by the number of spaces created. Be sure your investment is not higher than the value of the improved land.

A good reference for parking design from NYC Dept of City Planning
http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans/parking-lots/parking_lot_present.pdf



HAVE A BUDGET

Whatever you plan to do with your lot, you will have expenses to pay. Estimate all the possible costs and be sure you have the money to make your plan into reality. You will have short-term and long-term costs. Don't take on more than you can support.

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CALCULATE THE TAXES BY LEARNING THE ASSESSMENT.

If you are not purchasing from ACLB you may have to pay back taxes or liens owned by the seller, to the city, or others.

<http://www.albanyny.gov/Government/Departments/PlanningandDevelopment/BZA.aspx>

Albany City Assessor - (518)434-5155



CALCULATE THE ANNUAL WASTE WATER DISPOSAL FEE.

There will be a water fee even if you do not have running water on the site

City of Albany Water Board

<http://albanyny.mapgeo.io>



JUMP THROUGH THE HOOP

You are going to need site plan approval, you may want to hire an architect, landscape architect, or planner. All parking lot projects require approval by the City's Planning Commission.

This can take one or more months, obtain your approvals before you buy. Make your purchase contingent on the approvals.



"THEY PAVED PARADISE!"

Pavement can be porous so it lets storm water flow through. Rain gardens help retain and filter storm water. Trees reduce the heat island effect of urban paving. Do the right thing. Design your parking facility so it is not harmful to the environment.

Plan a place where snow will be stored, in a garden bed or on a lawn so it will dissipate into the ground as it melts.



CHECK THE PRICE TAG.

You will have short-term and long-term costs. Don't take on more than you can support.

Curb cuts can be expensive and they eliminate on street parking spaces. They create conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. They may cost you more than they save. Park off the alley if you have access.

Plan for lighting. Is there power on site, or a streetlight close by?

A large lot with non-porous pavement will require a storm water tie into the nearest manhole. This gets pricey!

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MEET THE NEIGHBORS.

Introduce yourself again and let neighbors know your schedule for clean-up, maintenance, and construction work. It's disappointing to have a new owner take over a vacant lot and then let it sit without maintenance.



CLEAN IT UP. BUT TEST THE SOIL FOR HAZARDS FIRST!

Dig right in as soon as possible, but be careful! Every new owner, no matter the planned use, should test the soil for heavy metals, primarily lead. Broken glass and metals are common hazards too. Use good work gloves and hard-toed boots. Protect against ticks and insects.

Cornell Cooperative Extension: (518) 765-3500

<http://albany.cce.cornell.edu/agriculture/soils-climate/how-to-take-a-soil-sample>



TAKE IT AWAY.

Understand the regulations for disposal of debris and vegetation from the lot. You may need to schedule a dumpster. You may want to rent a chipper for small trees.



COVER IT UP.

If it's going to be a while before you get around to improving the lot, ground cover helps keep weeds from growing back. Some ground covers will help revitalize soil.



STAKE YOUR CLAIM.

Consider whether fencing is necessary. A fence may provide safety, but it may also be damaged by plowing.



DIG SAFE !!

ALWAYS contact Dig Safely New York before you excavate or dig. An inspector will come to the site and mark out and electrical or natural gas utility lines near your site. You do not want to accidentally discover these utilities on your lot. Most empty lots were once buildings with utility lines that may not have been properly terminated.

1-800-962-7962

<http://www.dps.ny.gov/W/PSCWeb.nsf/SN/DigSafely>

<http://www.digsafelynewyork.com>