

ON-STREET PARKING BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Section A: City of Victoria Curb Management Approaches

On-street parking restrictions and other curb uses are regulated through definitions in the *Streets and Traffic Bylaw*. Different restrictions for on-street parking are imposed based on the surrounding land uses and parking demand. Commercial, passenger and transit loading zones are also marked on the street through signage and curb paint.

Providing for car-share vehicles, passenger and commercial loading and electric vehicle charging is increasing competition for curb-space beyond traditional car parking. Furthermore, established City goals and policy for greater urban tree canopy, improved pedestrian facilities and prioritizing sustainable travel modes such as transit and active transportation mean a necessary deprioritization for storing private vehicles in the public right of way.

Paid parking is offered through on-street parking meters, and by city owned and privately operated parkades and parking lots. These offer hourly, daily and monthly parking for commuters, shoppers and visitors downtown. Paid parking is implemented to encourage parking turnover. Providing a range of maximum stay limits helps to increase availability for customers and visitors in support of local businesses.

Unrestricted Parking

Unrestricted parking is found on streets with no meter parking, time limited parking or residential parking restrictions. Sections of yellow curb which indicate no parking to enhance visibility may be installed near to intersections and crosswalks, or around fire hydrants and electrical infrastructure that require 24-hour access. With updates to provincial regulations and guidelines, as well as the city's continued roll out of road safety improvements, the *Streets and Traffic Bylaw* should be updated to include a defined distance for these parking restrictions.

The *Streets and Traffic Bylaw* also does not define a maximum time limit a vehicle can be on a street within unrestricted parking and residential parking areas. This means there is no clear definition of what constitutes an abandoned vehicle, and what action should be taken to remove a suspected abandoned vehicle.

Unrestricted parking accounts for around 30% of total curb space, the most widely used curb regulation in the city. Generally, this is found in low density residential neighbourhoods where demand for on-street parking is lowest, away from village centres or other commercial/employment uses.

Meter Parking

The intent of meter parking is to encourage turnover in parking to make curb space available for more drivers making short visits to downtown businesses and discourage all-day parking by commuters or downtown residents.

Maximum permitted stays range from 90 minutes to 24 hours, and hourly rates range from \$1.50 to \$3.50. Meter prices are set to target a curb space occupancy of 85% to reduce the number of circulating vehicles and encourage the use of parkades for longer visits.

Parking meter zones are almost exclusively located within the downtown, with selected streets around the legislature in James Bay also subject to meter parking. A block will typically be converted to meter parking where other parking restrictions, such as time limited parking, have proved ineffective in managing demand and creating parking turnover. Generally, the hourly rate decreases, and the permitted length of stay increases towards the periphery of the downtown parking meter zone, reflecting the lower demand and associated need to encourage turnover.

Time Limited Parking

Areas with a significant commercial or employment use tend to have a higher proportion of on-street parking that is time-limited (i.e. North Park, Burnside, James Bay). Areas further away from downtown tend to have longer time limits.

The City monitors time-limited parking near the downtown core. Where time-limited zones are creating traffic, for instance where commuters are reparking throughout the day, as opposed to increasing turnover, the City converts these zones to paid parking. By converting time-limited streets to paid parking, parking turnover is more likely, creating “parking reliability” where a driver can set off with a comfortable expectation of finding an available parking spot a convenient distance from their destination, helping the economic viability of the area.

Residential Parking Only and Residential Parking Permit zones

Low density residential neighbourhoods generally have unrestricted parking. Those located adjacent to “parking generators” such as the Royal Jubilee Hospital, Hillside Mall and other commercial areas may have Resident Parking Only (RPO) restrictions. RPO has also been implemented to discourage commuter parking on streets within easy walking distance of employment centres in James Bay and Hillside/Quadra.

Within an RPO zone, the driver of a vehicle may only park if they reside on that block, are visiting a resident there, or are performing work/providing services on a property on that street. Their vehicles license plate must be registered with the City. It is important to maintain sufficient on-street parking capacity to accommodate the likely demand on a street-by-street basis, as residents are only permitted to park on their own block.

Residential Parking Permit (RPP) zones have been established on five blocks throughout the City where RPO has proven to be ineffective. Existing RPP zones only extend for a maximum of one city block, similar to an RPO zone. A vehicle may park in a designated RPP zone only when a valid permit is displayed. Permits are issued by the Director of Engineering, following the written application from a resident within a RPP zone, and payment of an annual fee of \$20. This fee has not been consistently updated since it was first established.

Permits are only issued after staff have considered the space available for parking on the street to which the permit applies, to try and ensure all permit holders can be accommodated. A permit is valid for one year, and an application can be refused, or a permit revoked at any time due to misuse

or if the space available for on-street parking within a RPP zone is reduced for any reason. If a permit holder ceases to be the resident of the address shown on the permit, the permit expires immediately.

A person may not hold more than two permits at any time, and the permit does not exempt a vehicle or person from any other provision of the *Streets and Traffic Bylaw* or *Provincial Motor Vehicle Act*.

Enforcement of both RPO and RPP zones is primarily complaint based, although Parking Services staff do patrol the RPP zone on Green Street during events at the Memorial Arena and Royal Athletic Park, when a higher rate of infraction can be expected. Typically, 6,000 to 8,000 parking citation tickets are issued per year in RPO zones, with around 2,000 of these later cancelled as they were issued for legitimate resident or visitor vehicles that had not been registered with the City.

Passenger Loading Zones

Passenger zones have a maximum stay of three minutes to allow for the loading and unloading of passengers. They are generally found within the City's downtown, or adjacent to the front entrance of multi-family developments, particularly on streets with time-limited or metered parking.

Through an amendment to the *Streets and Traffic Bylaw*, these spots could also be made available as short-term parking for drivers with accessible parking permits, increasing the curb space available to people with disabilities across the city.

An emerging curb use within the City is for ride-hail services. Currently demand is not at a level that causes an impact on existing curb space, however in time it may be beneficial to restrict the use of certain passenger zones for such services or designate specific curb space for pick up and drop off for ride hail operators.

Co-op Car Share Parking

A car share co-op Parking Zone is a designated and signed parking stall where only a car-share co-op vehicle is permitted to park. These are installed in conjunction with the car share operator, at the discretion of the Director of Engineering. Stopping or parking in that zone by any other vehicle is prohibited. There is currently no fee associated with a co-op parking zone. As more car share spaces (and associated vehicle charging infrastructure) are installed, there is an opportunity to better regulate car share parking zones through an update of the *Streets and Traffic Bylaw*, to provide more flexibility in their use and recapture some costs associated with this curb use.

The City intends to work with a provider to introduce an e-bike share system in 2026. As part of this process, a new definition for bike share parking zones will need to be included in any update of the *Streets and Traffic Bylaw*, to allow for the provision of these within the public right of way where there is insufficient appropriate space elsewhere.

Commercial Loading Zone

Commercial loading zones are located throughout downtown and close to other commercial land uses such as village centres. Generally, they will be placed on a block subject to time limited or meter parking curb regulations. Additional commercial loading zones are added, or existing ones relocated based on requests from businesses or changes to nearby land uses.

A permit for a commercial vehicle less than 6m in length costs \$100 per year and can be used whilst actively loading and unloading at a 20-minute metered space, a commercial loading zone or a passenger zone. This permit is frequently used by food delivery services, who use the 20-minute parking meters for collecting or delivering food. Non-permitted vehicles parked in a commercial loading zone are subject to an \$80 fine (\$50 if paid within 14 days).

A permit for a commercial vehicle greater than 6m in length costs \$300 per year. They may be used while actively loading and unloading at truck loading zones, commercial loading zones, or passenger zones after 4pm.

Bus zone

Bus zones at transit stops are demarcated through signage and red curb. They are reserved for the exclusive use of scheduled buses. No other vehicle may stop or park in a bus zone at any time.

Out of town tour bus zones and shuttle bus zones have different restrictions and accommodate different vehicles. Allocating curb space to accommodate the requirements of sightseeing vehicles and buses is increasingly becoming an important factor in the City's support of the tourism industry.

Section B: Potential Meter Parking Locations and Parking Benefit Districts

To increase parking turnover and make more spaces available for customers visiting businesses outside of the downtown core, there is potential to explore new areas of meter parking in other commercial and employment areas. This is consistent with Strategy 5.16 of *Go Victoria*, the City's Sustainable Mobility Strategy, and Local Area Plans such as *The Hillside/Quadra Neighbourhood Plan*.

A report from Urban Systems provided criteria that should be considered when identifying an area for parking meter expansion. These include:

- **Surrounding land use-** meter parking should be focused in commercial or mixed-use areas where available parking spaces are valuable for customers and visitors
- **Existing management-** locations with time restrictions or other non-priced approaches (such as time limited parking or RPO), including an understanding of level of compliance within that area
- **Parking utilization-** locations where parking occupation exceeds a set limit (typically 85%) over an extended time period
- **Parking turnover-** Where parking turnover is too low and vehicles parked over long periods of time impede access to parking in areas of high demand
- **Adjacent Development-** where new development will add further parking demand to the street and there is a need to maintain adequate turnover and utilization levels

Based on these criteria, the following locations were suggested for consideration for the first phase of implementation. The city would likely select one of the areas identified above as a pilot location

for meter parking. As with the current process of extending meter parking, consultation and engagement with local businesses would be key:

- Cook Street Village
- James Bay (focused on Menzies between Superior Street and Niagara Street)
- North Park Village
- Quadra Village
- the Industry, Arts and Innovation District
- new Town Centres as defined in the updated OCP

The streets surrounding Jubilee Hospital have also been identified by staff as being a potential location for meter parking, allowing more parking options for visitors to the hospital on occasions when the hospital parkade is fully occupied. The wider area around the hospital is currently resident parking only, to deter inappropriate hospital employee parking. Some meter parking in this area would benefit visitors to the hospital and allow the City to better manage on-street parking and keep the impact on surrounding residents to a minimum.

Parking Benefit Districts

One of the potential benefits of meter parking, as identified by the consultant, is for the accompanying implementation of a Parking Benefit District. A Parking Benefit District (PBD) allows for a portion of the revenue generated by parking meters within a defined area to be reinvested in local projects, including improvements to the public realm and placemaking events.

The Industry, Arts and Innovation District, identified as one of the potential areas for a PBD, is subject to an action plan currently being reviewed for approval. One of the actions identified includes exploring the feasibility of establishing a PBD within this area. As such, staff recommend that this area be considered as one of the priority areas for further exploration of PBD.

Key considerations when implementing a PBD include:

- **Location** – Conduct detailed studies of areas in Victoria where a PBD is being considered, including the number of parking spaces required in that district to ensure sufficient revenue can be generated to cover administrative costs. Implementing PBDs in high-demand parking areas is typically desired, where meter parking is likely to be an effective tool in managing parking supply.
- **Engagement** – Before establishing the district, residents and stakeholders should be engaged to discuss the implications and implementation of the PBD. As with the introduction of pay parking in any area, concerns will be raised over the availability of on-street parking, and engagement should be used as an opportunity to identify opportunities to seek out mitigation strategies and revenue investment priorities.
- **Pricing** – Parking costs within the district must be carefully set to ensure the parking management objectives are achieved first, before focusing on potential reinvestment. In

other communities, dynamic, market-based pricing has proven effective in hitting occupancy targets, typically 85%, and ensuring higher value locations reflect their worth

- **Awareness** – Sharing information on how the PBD functions is essential to sustainable implementation. By identifying the PBD process and projects which have been completed through funds collected and disbursed through the district, more people will understand why pay parking is being used and how it benefits them. Information could be shared on parking meters or stations or through online platforms maintained by the City or local organizations.
- **Investment** – Provide a transparent process for the collection and reinvestment of revenue in the PBD, including how funds will be allocated between the City and local projects, when they will be disbursed, and how they will be held by the City.

Best practice from North America suggests that the minimum number of meter parking spaces required for an effective PBD is approximately 100 spaces. This allows for the strategy to be tested across a large enough area and sufficient revenue generation to support the multiple objectives of the PBD. To support transparency and applicability, the PBD should also be contained within a well-defined neighbourhood or urban area so revenue reinvestments can be demonstrated to residents and local businesses and the boundaries of the PBD are more readily defined.

Section C: Parkade Location Analysis

Introduction

Downtown Victoria's status as the commercial and employment centre of the region suggests that population growth across the CRD will contribute to increased vehicle trips to the core. With the CRD population expected to increase by around 20% from 2019 levels by 2038, greater demand for commuter parking is expected.

In May 2024 Council advised staff to explore options for a new parkade to be constructed outside of downtown, to reduce private vehicle movements within the city's historic core, shift parking stalls from downtown to peripheral areas and to provide last-mile solutions to facilitate the easy movement of people between the new parkade and their final destinations. A suggestion was made that the funding of a new parkade could be found in whole or in part by the sale or redevelopment of an existing downtown parkade.

Existing parkade supply, utilization and revenue

The City currently operates five parkades providing more than 1800 parking stalls. There has been no new parkade facility constructed since the 1980's, however recent upgrades to the existing stock have included increased provision of car share spaces, electrical charging infrastructure, accessible spaces and live parking availability signage.

Parking supply at each location varies, ranging from 188 stalls in Centennial Square to 544 stalls in Broughton Street. View Street has the second highest supply of spaces (531) and highest overall utilization. This may be indicative of a high-demand location, and potentially shorter-term transactions and greater parking turnover compared to other parkades.

Two City-operated surface parking lots are located downtown, one on the corner of Blanshard and Courtney Street, with space for 44 vehicles, and one on Wharf Street with space for 120 vehicles.

In 2023 (latest available year of data) the City generated more than \$6 million in revenue from parkade use, at an hourly rate of \$2.50 (increased from \$2 per hour from May 1st, 2023) with daily parking rates ranging from \$12.50 to \$17.50. Average annual revenue per stall was \$291. The highest revenue per stall came from the Johnson Street parkade (which is the second smallest facility with 232 stalls), whilst the highest overall revenue came from the Broughton Street parkade. Centennial Square parkade provided both the lowest overall revenue and fewest number of stalls.

In 2023, across all parkades, drivers used the ParkVictoria app to pay most frequently (73% of the time) followed by credit card (20%).

City-owned parking facilities are complemented by a further six parkades and 37 parking lots operated by private parking companies. These provide over 3,000 additional parking spaces, offering short term, daily and long-term contract parking.

Interception of Vehicle trips prior to entering historic downtown

The CRD's 2022 Origin and Destination study suggests that of the 18,580 trips to downtown Victoria during the AM peak period on a typical weekday, more than 6,000 originate from Saanich, Langford and Colwood alone. Most of these journeys are likely to arrive via Highway 1 and Highway 17. For comparison, the estimated number of vehicle trips originating from Victoria South (covering James Bay, Fairfield, Gonzales, Rockland and parts of Fernwood and North Park) during the same time period is fewer than 900.

A parkade facility to the north of downtown would capture trips originating from other municipalities on the Saanich Peninsula and Westshore, as well as vehicles arriving from elsewhere on the island via Highway 1 and from the mainland via Swartz Bay ferry terminal. The highest vehicle volumes on the northern approaches to downtown are seen on Douglas Street and Blanshard Streets, suggesting that a parkade should be located in the vicinity of these two arterial roads.

The established maximum distance a person is likely to walk from a parking spot to their destination is 400m, whereas with provision for last-mile cycling or e-bike connections this is increased to 1-2km. The area of downtown with the highest employment density extends south from Yates Street and West of Blanshard. A 1km range from there northwards extends to Bay Street. As such, an initial analysis suggests that opportunities should be explored for a parkade in the vicinity of Douglas and Blanshard St, between Cormorant Street and Bay Street in order to meet the intention of the Council motion.

This analysis does not take into account other factors that may influence the optimal location for a parkade, such as the change in parking demand associated with new land use designations in the updated OCP (including the new Mid-Town Centre just to the north of Bay Street), Action Plan priorities to support the Industry, Arts and Innovation District, and opportunities for a parkade that could also serve events at the Memorial Arena and Royal Athletic Park. Ongoing mobility projects to support Rapid Transit on Douglas Street may also impact vehicle volumes and movements, and an analysis of potential changes associated with this should be included as part of a more detailed report.