

NEW RESIDENTIAL PARKING PROGRAM

Curbside Management Strategy Update

Recommendation

That the March 19, 2024, City Operations report CO02129, be received for information.

Requested Action	Information only		
ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle	ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals		
CONNECTED This unifies our work to achieve our strategic goals.	Urban Places		
City Plan Values	ACCESS		
City Plan Big City Move(s)	A rebuildable city	Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities	15-minute districts
Corporate Business Plan	Serving Edmontonians		
Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bylaw 5590 - Traffic Bylaw 		
Related Council Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 23, 2022, Urban Planning and Economy report UPE00228, Curbside Management Strategy - Redefining Edmonton's Curbside and Public Parking Space June 23, 2020, City Council Public Hearing, Charter Bylaw 19275, Text Amendments to Zoning Bylaw 12800 for Open Option Parking 		

Executive Summary

- Edmonton's Residential Parking Program was established in 1978 to manage curbside congestion in residential neighbourhoods adjacent to popular destinations like main streets, attractions and major institutions.

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- The program has not changed since its introduction and, over time, its application has become inconsistent. As a result, there are many variations of the Residential Parking Program throughout the city.
- Administration completed a program review in 2023 and is updating the program in alignment with the Curbside Management Strategy and The City Plan. The majority of current program areas will have alternative parking management strategies applied.
- New program criteria are data-driven, based on a GBA+ process, consider public feedback and are aligned with best practices established by other municipalities. A key program eligibility criterion is the presence of an active traffic generator (e.g. neighbourhood landmark) that results in a higher-than-expected volume of people parking in an area.
- The revised Residential Parking Program will continue to manage curbside congestion in selected residential neighbourhoods while recognizing curbsides as valuable public assets. This will provide more equitable access to parking and balance the needs of area residents, visitors and businesses.

REPORT

Curbsides—the space between the sidewalk and vehicle traffic—are important to how people move and gather in Edmonton. Curbsides are an important public asset; they are part of the roadway network and serve multiple needs beyond parking. As the City grows to two million people, competing demands for these spaces are expected to increase.

The City Plan calls for the diversification of curbsides to create vibrant urban spaces that help the city reach its economic prosperity and climate resiliency goals. Edmonton’s Curbside Management Strategy bridges the vision in The City Plan with the operational and policy changes needed to use curbsides more equitably and strategically. The strategy aims to:

- Make parking easier to find and more convenient for all.
- Respond to and direct the intensifying competition for limited curbside space, with emphasis on accessibility, efficiency and mobility equity.
- Support The City Plan target of 50 per cent of trips by transit and active transportation.
- Align with Edmonton’s shift to Open Option Parking.

One of the actions identified in the Curbside Management Strategy, endorsed by the Urban Planning Committee in August 2022, was to complete a review of the Residential Parking Program.

Residential Parking Program

In 1978, Edmonton launched the Residential Parking Program to manage curbside congestion near popular destinations such as main streets, attractions and major institutions. While the program has not changed since its introduction, over time it was also not applied consistently and as a result, the Residential Parking Programs vary in scope and size. Below are some key aspects of the current program:

- Parking in program areas is restricted to residents of single-unit homes and multi-unit residential buildings of maximum four stories, or their visitors in some program areas through annual permits issued by the City. Depending on the area, parking may not be allowed without a permit or may be restricted to certain hours and/or lengths of time.

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- Administration implements the program in response to community requests, where two-thirds or more of the impacted residents are supportive and the program area has a minimum 10-block radius. Permits are issued pursuant to Section 37 of the Traffic Bylaw 5590.
- There is no cost to the residents or the community for implementing, managing or enforcing a Residential Parking Program.

Program Review

Administration completed a comprehensive review of the Residential Parking Program, including an evaluation of the 19 current program areas (Attachment 1). Key areas for program improvement include:

- **Data-driven approach.** Evaluating parking demand and congestion as part of the implementation process for new program areas would help determine if a parking program is suitable for the area.
- **Evaluation process.** Regular evaluation of program areas would help determine whether the program is effective at balancing the needs of both residents and visitors for access to curbside space. Currently, there is no evaluation framework in place.
- **Consistent restrictions.** Implementing consistent parking restrictions across program areas, would enable more equitable access to spaces, improve resident understanding and support more efficient enforcement. Currently, some areas have full parking restrictions at all times, while others only have restrictions on event days, specific days and/or specific times of day.
- **Consistent permits.** Issuing the same types of permits in all program areas would improve equitable access for program area residents and visitors and standardize administrative processes. Currently, residents in some areas receive only household permits, while in others, residents also receive additional permits for visitors.
- **Digital permits.** Modernizing the permit process through digital permits would improve the efficiency of enforcement and data collection.

Jurisdictional Scan

Administration conducted a jurisdictional scan of other North American cities similar or larger in size to Edmonton, and/or that are considered leaders in parking management (Attachment 2). Key findings included:

- All of these municipalities have a year-round residential parking program.
- All programs include annual permit fees ranging from \$10 to \$900 per year. Variations were mostly based on area demand and resident income.
- All programs allow visitor parking in the program areas, but time limits vary between cities with options ranging from 24 hours up to 28 days.
- Most require areas to have either a traffic generator (a landmark that is likely to attract a higher-than-expected volume of people driving to a neighbourhood) and/or high occupancy.

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New Residential Parking Program Framework

Administration is modernizing the Residential Parking Program to align with the Curbside Management Strategy. Changes are based on the results of the program review, jurisdictional scan and public engagement conducted in spring 2023. The new program will include standardized, data-driven implementation criteria and application of program features to improve consistency between areas.

Program Criteria

To implement a new Residential Parking Program Area and to re-assess existing Residential Parking Program Areas, new criteria was developed based on data, a GBA+ process, consideration of public feedback and best practices established by other municipalities and includes:

- The program will be residential and year-round. High parking demand must be observed year-round (i.e. at least two times per week) to warrant a program in the neighbourhood.
- The program area must be located within a maximum of 800 meters (approximately 10 minute walk) of a traffic generator or up to the nearest arterial road.
- The program area must have at least one traffic generator, including
 - Post-secondary institutions with at least 5,000 students.
 - Major event venues with over 10,000 attendees that have no private parking options.
 - Active LRT stations with adjoining transit centres that have no public and/or private Park & Ride facility.

Program Features

- The City will implement an annual fee structure of \$120 per permit starting in fall 2024 that will be prorated for the year (\$40 for September to December). The City will offer discounted rates for students and low-income residents as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency's Annual Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO) figures, which is consistent with the current City's Leisure Access and Ride Transit Programs.
- A maximum of two permits per household will be issued in an active program area.
 - Student permits are exempt from the two permit maximum for students enrolled in a post-secondary institution who reside in the applicable program area.
 - Residents living in multi-unit residential buildings of all sizes, including higher than 4 stories, that are located within active program areas will be eligible for parking permits.
- Program hours will be aligned to current EPark operational hours of Monday to Saturday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. to provide consistency across the city. There will be no parking restrictions outside of established program hours, except winter parking bans.
- All program areas will include two-hour visitor parking with no permits required during the program hours. This will improve equitable access to the area while ensuring parking turnover for competing demands.

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Program Options

Administration reviewed the Residential Parking Program and developed three program options, as noted below and detailed in Attachment 3.

- **Option 1** would involve program updates, including updating program hours and including two-hour visitor parking with no permits during program hours to create consistency across program areas. All 19 Residential Parking Program areas would continue and the new annual fee structure would be postponed.
- **Option 2** would include all operational changes included in Option 1, yet would introduce the new fee structure of \$120 per permit starting in fall 2024.
- **Option 3** would include a full program update with the new program criteria and features, along with implementing a fee structure.

Administration is proceeding with Option 3, as it aligns with the Curbside Management Strategy, jurisdictional scan, public engagement and review of program operations. Both Option 1 and 2 are not recommended as they do not align with the Curbside Management Strategy and risk having a program in an area where there is no significant traffic generator.

Next Steps

All 19 current Residential Parking Program areas have been reviewed and Administration has determined that the majority do not meet the criteria for continued operation. Program changes will be communicated to all impacted residents beginning in April 2024 as all active Residential Parking Program permits will expire on May 31, 2024.

- Program areas that meet the new framework will be issued a new digital permit before May 31, 2024. This automated permit process will replace the manual process currently in place.
- Program areas that do not meet the new framework will be removed. Some program areas that are continuing will be reduced in size to align with the new framework. Administration has identified alternative strategies for managing non-parking-related concerns, such as speeding, that may have been a factor in the initial program implementation. Strategies will be implemented or further consultation with communities may be conducted as necessary.
- Parking program sign removals will start in June and continue until completed. Program areas will be prioritized based on seasonal needs.
- Applications will be open for new program areas starting in 2025.

Budget/Financial Implications

Additional costs associated with updating the program, such as signage removal and replacement, and implementing new technology, will be funded within the existing Parks and Roads Services budget. Additional revenue may be generated once a permit fee is introduced.

Reducing the number of permit-controlled parking areas may reduce enforcement revenue due to the difference in fines issued for parking without a valid permit (\$100) and parking over the

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marked time limit (\$75). Enforcing time-limited parking areas is also more time and resource-intensive than enforcing permit-controlled areas.

Community Insight

In April and May 2023, Administration gathered feedback from Edmontonians, including those who lived or visited a Residential Parking Program area, on their experiences with the program. The online survey received over 2,689 responses and 3,600 people visited the Engaged Edmonton page. Full results are available in the What We Heard report (Attachment 4). Key findings included:

- A majority of all respondents (79.5 per cent) can easily find parking in a program area.
- Of the respondents, 490 identified as program area residents who park on the street, while 78 (16 per cent) indicated they do not have private parking spaces at all. Others indicated they use the program to park on the street for convenience, flexibility, because they cannot park in their garage or they have more vehicles than available space on their property, or they have mobility challenges.
- Respondents shared that increased visitors and parking in neighbourhoods have resulted in unintended consequences, such as traffic and safety concerns, crime, accidents, speeding, littering and noise.
- Respondents identified the need for additional available visitor parking to support residents' guests or access to home businesses.
- Respondents requested regular bylaw enforcement of parking restrictions.

GBA+

The Residential Parking Program's purpose is to ensure that on-street parking is available for neighbourhood residents, but it could also result in fewer parking options for visitors. As outlined in The City Plan, curbsides are a public asset intended for public use. The updated program provides visitors the opportunity to park in these areas while still balancing the needs of residents who require the space.

Reduced or no parking availability means residents and/or visitors to an area may need to walk or roll (if using wheelchairs, strollers, etc.) longer distances. This may have a disproportionate impact on families with young children or those with limited mobility such as seniors or persons who use mobility devices. During winter months, the need to walk further may increase the risk of slips and falls because individuals may encounter more slippery or icy surfaces compared to a shorter walk. The City offers accessibility parking options which may help to mitigate the impact on residents, including the addition of accessible parking zones in front of homes belonging to eligible residents.

The implementation of parking permit fees will have a financial impact on residents who live in program areas. However, these areas will be receiving an extra service that is not offered elsewhere. The updated program will offer low-cost options for low-income students and residents.

Attachments

1. Residential Parking Program Changes
2. Jurisdictional Scan

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3. Residential Parking Program Alternative Options
4. What We Heard - Residential Parking Program