

Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy

Clinton Wong

**STRONG
TOWNS
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Strong Towns, Edmonton Flavour

Core Ideas:

- Local governments must run a profit.
- Land is the base resource from which community prosperity is built and sustained. It must not be squandered.

Edmonton Focus:

- Edmonton's budget is straining.
- Edmonton needs to make its existing places more productive (lower liabilities and higher property value) long term.

Two Major Arguments

The Strategy makes Old Strathcona more walkable, increasing property values, which translates to more property tax income.

The Strategy reduces subsidized, unproductive land, raising property values which results in more property tax income.

Walkable Places Are Great For Business.



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Montreal avenue's car-free transformation proves a hit with residents, business owners

ERIC ANDREW-GEE >
MONTREAL
PUBLISHED JULY 4, 2023
UPDATED JULY 6, 2023



Why Local Businesses Shouldn't Worry About Eliminating On-Street Parking

Only a tiny fraction of people who parked on a Toronto street actually did any shopping there—and cyclists and pedestrians make more faithful customers.



Pedestrian streets boost business.

9%

drop in vacant storefronts



Each summer, Montreal pedestrianizes ten major streets across the city. On Avenue Mont-Royal, the business vacancy rate improved by 9% from 2018 to 2023 (achieving 94.4% occupancy rates along the street). Contributing to their success, the pedestrian streets are in close proximity to many resident homes, and are programmed with amenities such as art, benches, shade, and walking paths.

A study on the impacts of a placemaking program to support patios and public spaces for restaurants in Toronto found that participating restaurants saw an increase in total revenue by over 30%. Nearly \$177 million in revenue was attributed to the new patio spaces.



30%

increase in local business revenue

Reducing Subsidies and Unproductive Land

1. Reducing Street Parking
2. Repurposing the OSFM Parking Lot

Reducing Street Parking: Road Types

Road Type	Life Expectancy (years)	Replacement Cost per lane KM
Major Arterial	22	\$995,490
Local Road	28	\$716,500
Active Modes	60	\$358,297

Source: 2020 Edmonton Infrastructure Inventory State and Condition Report

The Old Strathcona Farmers Market (OSFM) Parking Lot



Parking Lots are virtually the worst way to use land.

Land cannot be squandered.

- Encourages more car use
- Forces Edmonton to build and maintain more infrastructure
- Generates the least amount of property tax per square meter
- Parking lots impede accessibility of residents.
- The benefits of free parking is outweighed by the opportunity cost (tax dollars) of what else could be built there, and the harms to walkability.

The Opportunity Cost: Cedar Manor

10145 84 Ave NW

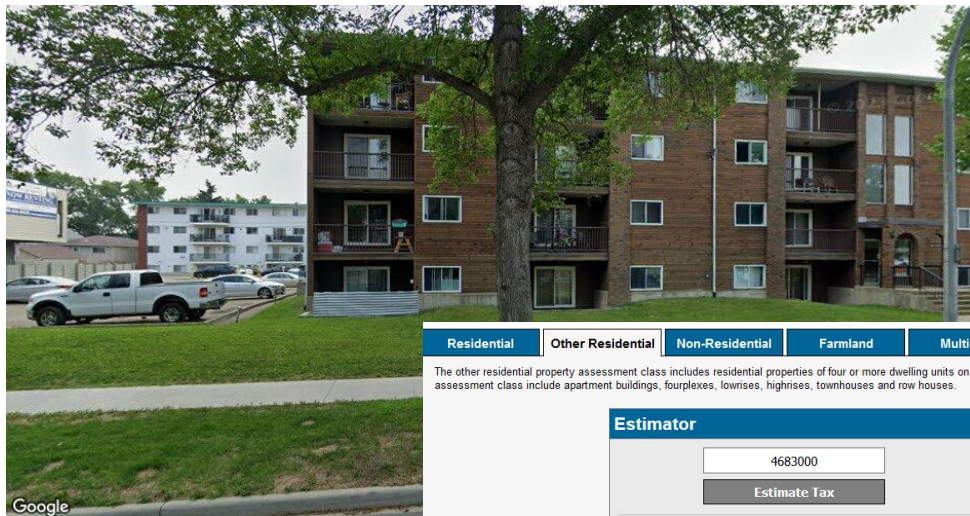
Lot Size: 2436.437 m²

Year Built: 1983

Assessed Value: \$4,683,000

Property Tax: \$51,951.33 annually

Or \$21.32 per m²



Residential	Other Residential	Non-Residential	Farmland	Multi-use
The other residential property assessment class includes residential properties of four or more dwelling units on one assessment class include apartment buildings, fourplexes, lowrises, highrises, townhouses and row houses.				
Estimator				
<input type="text" value="4683000"/>				
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Property Tax Breakdown				
<small>[see where your municipal tax dollars go]</small>				
Municipal Tax		\$40,201.68		
Provincial Education Tax		\$11,749.65		
Estimated Property Taxes for 2024		\$51,951.33		
Estimated Monthly Payment for 2024		\$4,329.28		

The Opportunity Cost of Land

~275 Parking Spots

Edmonton's Standard Parking Size: $5.5\text{m} \times 2.6\text{m} = 14.3\text{ m}^2$

$275\text{ Spaces} \times 14.3\text{m}^2\text{ per space} = 3,932.5\text{m}^2$

Hypothetical Housing Property Tax:
 $3,932.5\text{m}^2 \times \$21.32\text{ per m}^2 = \$83,851$

To leave the parking lot as-is, is to squander the infrastructure investments on that land, such as:

- Water pipes
- Sidewalk
- Gas, Electric, Internet lines
- Sewer Pipes

And also squander the potential of that land being walking distance to great amenities.

The Subsidy and Manufactured Demand

Edmonton gives OSFM a 2-for-1 deal:

- \$1 annual rent for their building
- Market rent for parking lot, and OSFM gets all parking fares.

OSFM can give free/cheap parking because Edmonton subsidizes their rent.

The Parking Lot isn't, and doesn't have to be productive, so long as our public gift exists.

OLD STRATHCONA FARMERS' MARKET - LEASE APPROVAL

- Old Strathcona Farmers' Market Society has prepared a revitalization plan for the facility which would see it undergo various internal improvements and increase the hours of operation.
- Administration recommends entering a new lease agreement, as it will allow the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market Society to secure grant funding from the provincial and federal governments for the proposed renovations and increase the facility's activation.
- If the recommendation is approved, the City and the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market Society will enter into a new five-year lease agreement, with an additional five-year tenant option at a nominal lease rate of \$1 per year under the terms and conditions outlined in Attachment 1.
- The lease requires Executive Committee approval as it does not meet the requirements of the 1999 Non-Profit Leasing Guidelines, as the operation is commercial in nature.

REPORT

The Old Strathcona Farmers' Market Society (OSFM) has leased the Strathcona Bus Garage (the Facility) on Gateway Boulevard and 83 Avenue since 1986. The Facility, originally constructed in 1951, is listed on the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton. OSFM is responsible for all building operating costs, including capital replacement costs in their current and proposed new lease agreements. The current lease agreement has a 10-year term, which expires April 5, 2025. OSFM has met its obligations under the lease agreement terms throughout this lease term.

OSFM also leases the parking lot adjacent to the Facility through a separate lease agreement for which they pay market rent. The lease for the parking lot also expires on April 5, 2025, but is not being contemplated for lease renewal due to the ongoing Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy, a draft of which is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2023. A component of the Public Realm Strategy is reviewing how to make best use of vacant or underutilized City land assets.

But where will I
park?

- Bus, Bike, Walk
- Valet Parking Service
- Shuttle Bus Service
- Park N' Ride
- Home Delivery Service

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Thank you.

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