

## **BYLAW 21283 - Amendments to the Traffic Bylaw 5590**

### **Recommendation**

That Community and Public Services Committee recommend to City Council:

That Bylaw 21283 be given the appropriate readings.

### **Purpose**

To amend Bylaw 5590 - Traffic Bylaw to decrease the fine amount for parking bans from \$250 to \$150, and report back on the idea of an early payment option of \$100 if paid within seven days.

### **Readings**

Bylaw 21283 is ready for three readings. If Council wishes to give three readings during a single meeting, then prior to moving to a third reading, Council must unanimously agree “That Bylaw 21283 be considered for third reading.”

### **Previous Council/Committee Action**

At the June 16, 2025, Community and Public Services Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration prepare amendments to Bylaw 5590 - Traffic Bylaw specific to parking ban violations to:

- reduce fine amounts from \$250 to \$150; and
- offer early payment alternatives to a \$100 fine if paid within 7 days of the ticket being issued.

### **REPORT**

At the November 14, 2022, City Council meeting, Council gave three readings to Bylaw 20272 - Amendment to Traffic Bylaw 5590, to increase the fine amount for parking bans from \$100 to \$250 to align with similar bylaw infractions, taking into account the cost of towing. The intent of the higher fine was to strengthen deterrence and improve compliance during declared parking bans.

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Between November 2022 and June 2025, nearly 14,000 parking ban tickets were issued, with notable year-to-year differences.

Seasonal Parking Ban Tickets		
Event	Period	Number of Tickets Issued
<b>Spring Parking Ban</b>	2023 Spring Parking Ban	N/A
	2024 Spring Parking Ban	1,067
	2025 Spring Parking Ban	5,863
<b>Winter Enforcement Season</b>	2022-2023 Season	4,067
	2023-2024 Season	736
	2024-2025 Season	2,248

At the July 4, 2022, City Council meeting, Council approved a one-time funding increase of \$4.7 million from the Financial Stabilization Reserve to initiate snow and ice control service improvements, as outlined in the June 27, 2022, City Operations report CO01277 Snow and Ice Control - Programmed Approach for the 2022-2023 Winter Season. As part of this investment, \$1.19 million was allocated to enhance enforcement for the 2022–2023 winter season and support winter parking bans. This funding allowed for new dedicated parking ban enforcement staff, including 15 seasonal temporary municipal enforcement officers and two temporary support clerks.

At the November 30, 2022, City Council - Budget meeting, Council funded ongoing enhanced snow and ice control services. However, enforcement funding was reduced from \$1.19 million to \$274,600 annually starting in January 2023. This resulted in a reduction of enforcement staff from 15 officers and two clerks to five officers and one clerk. Towing services were also limited due to capacity and later discontinued because there was no allocated budget. The changes to service make it difficult to determine the effectiveness of the fine increase.

In addition, all tickets are reviewed by Administration before processing to ensure they are complete and meet legal and procedural requirements, providing Administration with the option to request the cancellation of tickets. Tickets may be cancelled when issued in error or under valid or extenuating circumstances and at the discretion of the business area, provided the recipient makes the request prior to the ticket going to traffic court.

Tickets may also be contested in traffic court, where they would undergo further review by the prosecutor. Prior to proceeding with a trial, prosecutors have the option to withdraw tickets or offer a guilty plea to a lesser fine or offence when there are extenuating circumstances (such as compassion for medical issues, the elderly, newcomers, hardship, etc.).

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Assessing whether the increased fine has improved compliance since 2022 has been challenging. Several factors influence compliance, including consistent enforcement and public awareness of parking bans. Behavioural factors, environmental conditions and external influences such as seasonal traffic patterns or media coverage also impact compliance. Accurate assessment requires consistent enforcement efforts, comprehensive data collection and sufficient time to observe trends.

At the July 2, 2025, City Council meeting, Option 2, as outlined in Attachment 3 of June 16, 2025, Community Services report CS02945, Parking Ban Enforcement Strategies and Resource Allocation, was approved. This option provided one-time funding of \$100,000 for tow services to support the Snow and Ice Control (SNIC) program in the 2025 season. The funding was allocated from the 2025 Council Contingency Fund and concluded on December 31, 2025, as ongoing funding was not secured through the 2025 Fall Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment, service package Parking Ban Enforcement Strategies and Resource Allocation.

Towing of non-compliant vehicles continued during winter parking bans until December 31, 2025, to facilitate easier snow and ice removal. When a parking ban is declared by the City, the five dedicated officers will issue tickets and arrange for towing services in the neighbourhoods where snow and ice removal operators are currently working. Within resource capacity, vehicles violating the parking ban will be removed and relocated to the nearest available street location, allowing operators to blade curb-to-curb safely and efficiently. Vehicle owners will have access to a vehicle locator tool<sup>1</sup> on the City's website if their vehicle was removed from its original parking spot; they may also call 311 for assistance.

When no parking ban is in effect, municipal enforcement officers will prioritize "snow on sidewalk" investigations. Priority areas include those with reported low mobility concerns, high pedestrian traffic and public safety issues. This includes major bus routes, DATS pick-up zones, hospitals, seniors' centres, school zones, recreation areas and commercial and business districts. This proactive enforcement is expected to increase compliance, enhance mobility and improve safety for pedestrians.

In addition to the one-time funding approved for tow services at the July 2, 2025, City Council meeting, a reduced fine was proposed for parking ban enforcement related to snow removal and street sweeping on City streets. Amending Bylaw 5590 - Traffic Bylaw to decrease the parking ban fine amount from \$250 to \$150 would bring the fine to an amount that is more affordable. The introduction of a seven-day early payment option had a goal to provide an incentive for accelerating the payment timeframe; however, software and resource barriers will require additional funding prior to advancing this option.

The amending bylaw is provided as Attachment 1 and the redlined version, showing only the portion of the bylaw that has been amended, is included as Attachment 2.

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<sup>1</sup> "Winter Parking Bans," City of Edmonton, [https://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/on\\_your\\_streets/seasonal-parking-ban](https://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/on_your_streets/seasonal-parking-ban)

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### **Early Payment Options**

The proposed amendment to Bylaw 5590 includes lowering the fee to \$150 from the original \$250 fine, but does not include an option for early-payment fine reduction due to the structural and resource barriers to such an option, as outlined below.

- Existing City FINES software does not support an early payment discount option. Implementing new functionality would require system enhancements, as well as time, resources and funding.
- A large part of the current process of issuing and processing tickets is manual. Management of a tiered fine system (early payment option) would require ongoing additional staffing and resources.
- The online payment option is not available until three to five business days after the date of the offence (i.e. physical ticket placed on vehicle) due to operational and processing constraints; therefore, limiting the window for early payment.
- Physical tickets placed on vehicles may be overlooked or lost. Formal notices are mailed out two weeks after a ticket is issued. This would make the seven-day early payment window insufficient to take advantage of the discount.

Should Council wish to proceed with an early-payment fine reduction option, a budget request and project plan would need to be established prior to writing such options into any bylaw. Preliminary estimates indicate additional funding of close to \$80,000 would be necessary. Further details of costs and implementation are discussed in the Financial Implications section below.

### **Community Insight**

In recent years, Administration has conducted multiple studies to track residents' understanding and perceptions of the City's snow and ice clearing program (SNIC) and the two-phased parking ban. The findings from these studies are used to inform communication improvements as recommended in the 2021 Snow and Ice audit.

A Snow and Ice Communication survey has been conducted annually in the spring since 2022 to track public understanding and identify opportunities for improvement in snow and ice communications. The survey is distributed to the Edmonton Insight Community, as well as the broader public through an open link on the City's website, and promoted via social media and the weekly engagement public service announcement. A total of 4,138 respondents completed the 2025 survey.

Key findings include the following (Attachment 3):

- Seventy-eight per cent understand there are different snow and ice clearing levels for different types of roads and active pathways in Edmonton
- Seventy-one per cent understand how a Phase 1 parking ban works
- Sixty-seven per cent understand how a Phase 2 parking ban works

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- Fifty-two per cent reported being aware of the Phase 2 Parking Ban, which was in effect from January 7 to January 24, 2025. This was the first time a Phase 2 parking ban had been called since January 2023.

### **Budget/Financial Implications**

At the November 14, 2022, City Council meeting, Council gave three readings to Bylaw 20272 - Amendment to Traffic Bylaw 5590 to increase the fine amount for parking bans from \$100 to \$250, factoring in the cost of towing.

The number of seasonal parking ban tickets issued in a year depends on several factors, including weather and the amount of resources allocated for enforcement. The number of these tickets issued between 2020 and 2024 averaged 2,325 per year. Approximately 7,500 tickets have been issued year-to-date in 2025 as a result of added enforcement resources, which are set to conclude in the first quarter of 2026 and are therefore not included in the average. Based on the five-year average, reducing the fines to \$150 per ticket would result in an annual revenue reduction of approximately \$232,500. Factoring in an early payment option would have a further impact of \$23,250 to \$93,000 per year, based on a range of 20 per cent to 80 per cent, respectively, representing a total potential revenue reduction of \$255,750 to \$325,500, based on the five-year average. If the lower rate is approved, a revenue reduction will be included as an adjustment in the 2026 Municipal Tax Levy confirmation, which will be presented to Council in April 2026.

In addition to a revenue reduction, the City's budget would be impacted by the cost of implementing an early payment option, which would require a new fine structure and additional resources to administer. Due to the manual nature of the fines administration program, it is estimated that one full-time employee would be required at an ongoing cost between \$70,000 and \$89,000 to manage the increased call volume and administrative processes specific to parking ban violations and early payment option inquiries. Other ongoing staffing, resource needs for system maintenance and other administrative costs remain unknown at this time. Further, one-time costs of approximately \$80,000 would be required for system enhancements, resources and training necessary to establish the new tiered fine structure. If funding is approved, system updates would take approximately three months to complete. Implementation would align with the following parking ban season.

### **Legal Implications**

Providing an early payment option within seven days of the date of the offence is likely to create legal difficulties in determining if early payment was made on time.

Due to operational and processing constraints, online ticket payment will generally not be available until three to five business days after the date of the offence. Online payment can not be accepted until the ticket is entered into the system.

There are also challenges with early payments submitted by mail, as regular mail is presumed to have been served on the City seven days from the date of mailing (*Interpretation Act*, section 23). Early

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payments sent by mail may not arrive within the seven-day timeframe, and proving whether the early payment was mailed or served in time will very likely require more time and effort from both Administration and prosecutors. It is also likely that more parking ban tickets will be challenged when individuals attempt, but are unable, to take advantage of the early payment option due to operational and service limitations, which could result in perceived unfairness.

It is likely that, unless payment is made in person within the seven-day early payment period, it will be very difficult for people to exercise the early payment option with the current system. The seven-day early payment option presents a legal risk in establishing service of early payment within the relevant timeframe.

There are no legal concerns associated with reducing the fine amount from \$250 to \$150, without the option for early payment.

### **Attachments**

1. Bylaw 21283 - Traffic Bylaw 5590 Amendment No. 158
2. Traffic Bylaw 5590 - Amendment No. 158 - Redline
3. 2025 Snow and Ice Control Communications Survey Final Report

### **Others Reviewing the Report**

- M. Gunther, Acting City Solicitor