

Residential Parking Program Review

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation and Transit recommend that Council:

1. Approve changes and additions to residential parking policies by:
 - a. Adopting changes to the Calgary Parking Policies TP017 contained in Attachment 1, and,
 - b. Rescinding the Visitor Parking Permit Policy LUP005 (Attachment 2).
2. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw in Attachment 3 to amend bylaw 26M96 "Calgary Traffic Bylaw".

HIGHLIGHTS

- A comprehensive review of Calgary's residential parking program has uncovered several areas where improvements should be made. Updating policy and implementing a revised program will reduce red tape, improve efficiency in parking, support businesses, create better value for citizens and be better positioned for long-term sustainability.
- *What does this mean to Calgarians?* An updated residential parking policy will better meet the contemporary needs of neighborhoods and the vision of the Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan.
- *Why does this matter?* Implementing the policy will improve parking conditions for residents, visitors and businesses and provide long-term sustainability to the program.
- The recommended policy update contained in this report will modernize the residential parking program to streamline processes, improve parking access for businesses and visitors, and implement a long-term financial strategy.
- Data will be used to monitor and adjust residential parking areas, similar to how other parking areas are managed. This will allow residential parking zones to gradually and automatically right size themselves over time when they are out of step with the parking issues they are meant to address.
- Policies will also better align with other parking policy areas such as commercial parking, reducing issues where they meet and generally improve efficiency in the parking system.
- At the 2015 January 12 Meeting of Council, Council approved the Consolidated Parking Policy Work Plan (TT2014-0935) which included a review to "look at the Residential Parking Permit Program to determine if it can be revised to improve customer service, increase long-term financial sustainability of the program, ensure efficient use of street space and achieve the objectives of the MDP and CTP."
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A well-run city
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

Since 2010 Administration and Council have systematically updated The City's parking policies, bringing them together under one document and updating core policy areas one-by-one. Residential parking remains the only major parking topic without Council Policy.

Residential Parking Program Review

Parking is a valuable public asset that serves residents, businesses, visitors and customers. In busy areas the needs of these groups compete, and parking policy must manage these expectations fairly and consistently. Residential parking programs are desirable for promoting safe and viable communities where growth and change affect parking pressure in neighbourhoods. They can both support new developments by managing the risk of parking spillover and reduce parking tensions where residential and non-residential uses meet. Despite this, residential permit parking is a service that a majority of Calgarians do not have, and its policies and fees should reflect the increased level of service and enforcement.

While there are well functioning parts of the current program, there are also areas for improvement. Key updates are needed to modernize the residential parking program and to ensure that it achieves long-term sustainability. To inform the review, Administration researched other North American cities, undertook a financial analysis and engaged with Calgarians.

Five key policy principles emerged from this work:

- Achieving consistency and fairness,
- Being more flexible,
- Realizing better value from the public parking asset,
- Achieving affordability for permitholders and taxpayers, and
- Managing the public parking resource responsibly.

Using these principles, we developed a policy that includes the following changes:

- Administration will be responsible for creating zones, saving time and reducing red tape compared to the bylaw amendments used today.
- Data, along with citizen input, will be used for implementing and changing restrictions.
- Zones will be reviewed periodically, ensuring they continue to function as intended.
- Visitors and businesses will be better accommodated by maximizing the available space for short-term parkers.
- Updated criteria will clarify how multifamily buildings participate in the program ensuring fairness and transparency.
- Permit fees will be set using a sliding scale that promotes efficiency in street parking, and permits will be limited per home to ensure that available space is not oversold. These will be phased in for 2022 to allow time for permitholders to adjust.
- The system will be more affordable for taxpayers by redistributing user fees while also ensuring affordability for users with a comprehensive financial strategy.
- Special interface areas will be allowed in some neighbourhoods to leverage better value from on- street parking and better balance business and resident needs.

An additional change is to phase out the “CBZ” parking area in Eau Claire. This zone was created in 1997 to help ease the transition away from on-street parking while the area adapted to new growth and change. The zone is not consistent with Council’s guiding principles for parking policy or the principles of the Residential Parking Program and should be phased out after an adjustment period. Attachment 1 provides additional detail on this issue.

By implementing these policies, the parking experience will improve across user groups. Businesses will be able to more easily serve their customers in residential parking areas, and visitors will have more convenient access to friends and family. Residents will see clear eligibility criteria, and a standardized approach to parking restrictions will make the program

Residential Parking Program Review

easier to understand and use. Finally, Calgarians as a whole will benefit from a sustainable financial model for residential parking that lowers reliance on tax support.

As a related matter of housekeeping, Administration recommends rescinding the outdated Visitor Parking Permit Policy (LUP005). This policy was incorporated into the Traffic Bylaw in 1986 leaving the policy superseded and no longer used. Therefore, Administration recommends rescinding this Council Policy.

Next Steps

Upon approval, the residential parking policy will be implemented in a staged approach. Beginning in 2021 Administration will begin collecting data which will be used in the creation and ongoing operation of residential parking zones. Permitholders that are no longer eligible under the revised program will begin having permits phased out in 2022. Revised permit fees will also be implemented beginning in 2022. This provides permitholders time to adjust to changes and allows more time for economic conditions to normalize.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken
 - *Who was involved?* Calgarians city-wide were invited to participate in various engagement formats. Community groups, Business Improvement Areas and industry groups helped build a broad perspective on residential parking and parkers.
 - *What we did?* A two-phased engagement process was undertaken using workshops (walking workshops in RPP areas,) open houses and online engagement. Phase one focused on program successes and problems while phase two explored different solutions to common issues. All engagement was completed before the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - *What we heard?* A broad spectrum of opinions were heard highlighting the competing needs of different users. Fairness was a predominant theme for all participants.
 - *What was done?* Findings from engagement were used to build a coherent policy that both respects the preferences of Calgarians and is feasible to implement as a residential parking program. Attachment 1 includes further information on engagement.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Updating residential parking supports social inclusion by removing barriers Calgarians face when visiting friends and neighbours. Parking access will be improved for visitors and businesses through better availability and predictability.

Environmental

More efficient parking reduces cruising behaviour (circling a neighbourhood looking for a stall) and parking related traffic. These reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions.

Residential Parking Program Review

Economic

These recommendations support business friendly strategies by simplifying and improving how businesses and services access customers in residential communities.

Service and Financial Implications

The residential permitting program currently operates with a deficit. Nearly all permits are offered at no cost and only four per cent of permit holders pay a fee. Approximately \$100,000 is collected annually, recovering only seven per cent of the program's \$1.4 million cost.

The recommended policy aims to achieve revenue neutrality for the residential parking program. This will improve The City's financial position by offsetting program expenses with revenue from fees. If the program achieves this, Council can choose to allocate any surplus to the Parking Revenue Reinvestment Fund, returning parking revenue back to communities for investment in local infrastructure and priorities.

Increase in rates or fees

\$50 to \$125 annually

Program losses today are primarily expensed to Calgary Parking Authority, effectively reducing net revenue and their financial returns to The City. New program fees will offset this expense. Fees will be phased in in 2022 allowing time for permit holders to adjust and avoiding the current economic situation.

RISK

Administration recognizes that the number of permits issued and associated revenue from fees may change with policy changes. A staged implementation is proposed to allow for adjustments if needed.

There is also significant risk from not implementing changes. Calgary's residential parking program has little longevity in its current form due to a lack of clarity and an unsustainable financial model. This can be mitigated through an updated policy.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Residential Parking Program Review Detailed Report
2. Visitor Parking Permit Policy LUP005
3. Proposed Bylaw Amendment

Department Circulation

General Manager (Name)	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform (Pick-one)
Doug Morgan	Transportation	Approve
Moe Houssaini	Calgary Parking Authority	Inform