

Residential Parking Program Review

RECOMMENDATION(S):

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. Endorse fee option A contained in Attachment 1 as the policy fee structure.
3. Freeze permit fees at the current levels for the remainder of the budget cycle (2021, 2022) to provide economic relief.
4. Review the program fees and cost recovery ratio in preparation for each four year budget cycle.
5. Give three readings to the proposed bylaw in Attachment 3 to amend bylaw 26M96 "Calgary Traffic Bylaw".
6. Abandon bylaw 45M2020 that was before Council on 2 November 2020 (Attachment 4).

HIGHLIGHTS

- A comprehensive review of Calgary's residential parking program has uncovered several areas where improvements should be made. Updating policy and implementing a new program will reduce red tape, improve efficiency in parking, support businesses, achieve better value for citizens and be better positioned for long-term sustainability.
- *What does this mean to Calgarians?* Residential parking policies will better address the needs of Calgarians and their neighborhoods, while better aligning to the vision of the Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan.
- *Why does this matter?* Having residential parking policy will improve parking conditions for residents, visitors and businesses while realizing needed program efficiencies such as reducing red-tape and making the program easier to understand and use.
- There is no public policy regarding residential parking in Calgary today. This policy gap has led to systemic issues and program inefficiencies.
- Managing on-street parking effectively is key to supporting community growth and change, and business vitality.
- Recent changes to commercial parking rates and pending changes to residential parking rates highlights the need to have effective on-street parking policies.
- At the 2020 November 2 Meeting of Council the report (TT2020-0923) was referred to Administration for further consultation with Members of Council and stakeholders and return through the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation and Transit.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A well-run city
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as part of Attachment 1.

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DISCUSSION

Since 2010 Administration and Council have systematically updated Calgary's parking policies by harmonizing them as one document and updating the core policy areas one-by-one. This has served to improve efficiency in parking and drive innovation and value in how it is managed. It has also transitioned parking to a data-driven service line to increase transparency and fairness.

Residential parking remains the only major parking topic without Council Policy.

Report TT2020-0923 recommended policy updates that would bring residential parking into Calgary's parking policies and modernize the residential parking program. Using five policy principles (achieving consistency and fairness; being more flexible; realising better productivity value from the public parking asset; managing affordability for permit holders and taxpayers; and managing the scarce parking resource responsibly,) Administration aims to evolve a program that has reached the end of its useful life and give residential parking a sustainable footing for the next generation. Recommended residential parking policies will lead to a more efficient program and eliminate some of the largest program expenses while achieving better outcomes for Calgarians.

Changes from previous report:

Previous Council direction directed Administration to seek long-term financial sustainability for the Residential Parking Program. Currently most permits are offered at no cost which limits the ability of the program to achieve this objective. Administration recommended both cost savings through program modernization and fees to bring the program to revenue neutrality. Further consultation with Members of Council has shown a desire to see additional fee options. Three options that provide different levels of cost recovery are outlined in Attachment 1. Though revenue achieves part of this goal, cost savings through program modernization can only be achieved with policy updates, so this is included with all three options. This allows The City to achieve the most significant cost savings associated with the program regardless of fees.

In report TT2020-0923, Committee amended Administration's recommendation to have a different threshold for what building sizes are eligible to participate in the Residential Parking Program. Currently buildings are ineligible only when there is a planning control such as a Development Permit condition or a policy within an Area Redevelopment Plan. This has led to inconsistent parking pressures associated with multi-residential buildings and a policy recommendation to set an eligibility threshold similar to other cities. Committee's change from 5 stories/40 units to 4 stories/20 units will reduce the number of properties that may participate compared to today but still aligns with practices in other Canadian cities. This more constrained threshold lowers the risk that parking is oversubscribed in a neighbourhood.

Recent developments have also increased the need to reform this program. At the 2020 November 2 Meeting of Council, Council approved removing parking minimums for commercial developments which will transfer more parking risk to streets over time. In order to manage this risk, The City needs effective tools in place to manage on-street parking for both residential and commercial areas.

These three changes are addressed in the updates to Attachment 1

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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder or customer 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 used using workshops (exploratory 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. Both were completed before the pandemic.
 - *What we heard?* A broad spectrum of opinions was 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 but 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.

Economic

These recommendations support business friendly strategies by simplifying and improving how businesses and services access customers in residential communities. Providing economic relief by maintaining fees at current levels is recommended for this program to support Calgarians.

Service and Financial Implications

The residential permitting system operates with a deficit. Nearly all permits are offered at no cost and only four per cent of permit holders pay a fee. A total of \$101,000 is collected annually, recovering only seven per cent of the program's \$1.4 million cost. To reach financial stability, fee reform is necessary.

The recommended policy aims to reduce costs and provides guidance for possible revenue tools that would stabilize residential parking program over time. Recommendation 4 will allow Administration to prepare fee options for Council as part of the 2023-2026 business cycle.

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Cost savings

\$290,000 annually (beginning 2023)

A majority of residential parking permits are provided at no cost today. The three alternate options provided in Attachment 1 offer different levels of fee and tax-support combinations that can be considered during the next budget cycle.

RISK

Administration recognizes that program costs will not be recovered at this time and there is risk of higher administrative costs without associated fees. Policy changes that aim to reduce program costs mitigate against this risk. A staged implementation along with gradual changes will allow for adjustments as 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 long-term financial model.

Furthermore, recent changes to commercial parking rates highlight the need for sound and resilient on-street parking policies.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Detailed Report and Policy
2. Visitor Parking Permit Policy (to rescind)
3. Proposed Bylaw Amendment
4. Proposed Bylaw 45M2020 (to abandon)

Department Circulation

General Manager	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Doug Morgan	Transportation	Approve