

COMMERCIAL ON-STREET PARKING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the 2013 May 27 Regular Meeting of Council, Council approved the Commercial On-Street Parking Policy and accompanying actions. Administration implemented the first set of parking price changes on 2013 July 01 to establish the 27 pricing areas approved in the policy. The first set of price changes based on the policy using parking data is planned for 2014 January 01 and is outlined in Attachment 1. The price of parking will now vary across four time periods during weekdays. Going forward, prices will automatically be adjusted annually using the policy and parking demand data for each pricing area.

Administration reviewed 30-minute and 1 hour maximum parking zones in the downtown for low usage and has proposed converting 15 of these zones (79 spaces total) to 2 hour maximum parking, as identified in Attachment 2. A review of low-use loading zones was also conducted. Attachment 3 identifies where these zones are proposed to be converted to 2 hour maximum parking. This exercise will make an additional 20 parking stalls available in the downtown.

Administration circulated the planned prices to area Business Revitalization Zones (BRZs) for information and feedback the first week of December. Additionally, Administration met with the Calgary Downtown Association (CDA) on 2013 December 3 to discuss the proposed parking and loading zone changes.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the SPC on Transportation & Transit recommend that Council receive this report for information.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT, DATED 2013 DECEMBER 13:

That the Administration Recommendation contained in Report TT2013-0795 be approved.

Opposition to the Recommendation:

Opposed: S. Keating

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At the 2013 May 27 Regular Meeting of Council, Council approved the following recommendations in report TT2013-0225 (Commercial On-Street Parking Policy Implementation):

That Council:

1. Approve amending Council Policy TP017 "A Parking Policy Framework for Calgary" as follows:

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- a. Replacing the entirety of Section 5 (City-Wide Parking Strategies) with the contents of Attachment 3.
 - b. Adding a new Appendix 1 to the end of the document (containing the proposed pricing areas) with the contents of Attachment 4.
 - c. Adopting the revised Council Policy Template in Attachment 5 reflecting the above changes.
 - d. Updating the table of contents and pagination to reflect the above changes.
2. Adopt the recommended initial pricing area prices on page 3 of Attachment 6 for implementation as of 2013 July 01.
 3. Direct Administration to use the policy to prepare parking price changes for 2014 January 01.
 4. Direct Administration to report back on the status of implementation activities, updated occupancy information and anticipated price adjustments to the SPC on Transportation and Transit no later than 2013 December.

BACKGROUND

Council approved the Commercial On-Street Parking Policies to form part of “A Parking Policy Framework for Calgary” Council Policy TP-017 at their 2013 May 27 meeting. The main objectives of these policies are to:

Promote Efficiency: Manage on-street space so that price and time restrictions best meet area demand. In areas where prices are too high parking spaces may be sitting empty and parkers parking in less desirable areas (such as neighbourhoods). In areas where prices are too low, parkers again may have difficulty finding a space and spend time cruising around the business area (and surrounding communities) looking for parking. Better matching prices and time restrictions to parking demand should reduce these impacts.

Set Expectations and Reduce Uncertainty: All stakeholders can have a common expectation around how The City will address on-street space and deal with parking congestion.

Ensure Fairness: By adopting a standard set of policies, parking policy for areas is more likely to be based on the broader objectives of Council than of individual opinions or influence.

Ensure Consistency: A standard approach to on-street parking management reduces exceptions and ensures a more predictable experience for parkers.

Provide Predictability: The City and Calgary Parking Authority can use the policies to better forecast revenue. Businesses and the public will be able to know when prices will be reviewed and adjusted and prepare accordingly.

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Provide Transparency: Changes in prices can be demonstrated to the public by making ParkPlus data available and showing how it is used to determine price adjustments.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Subsequent to approval of the Commercial On-Street Parking Policy in 2013 May, Administration has undertaken the following activities to implement the policy:

Initial Price Changes as of 2013 July 01

Administration, in conjunction with the Calgary Parking Authority, implemented the 27 new Pricing Areas approved under the policy that were identified in TT2013-0225 as of 2013 July 01. Attachment 1 indicates the price that was set for each pricing area at this time. This step was necessary to allow the policy to adjust prices based on parking demand going forward.

Planned Price Changes for 2014 January 01

Using the parking demand data collected from the ParkPlus system for the period from 2013 July 01 to 2013 October 31, Attachment 1 identifies the parking demand generated in each pricing area across 5 time periods. Per the approved policy (5.1.2 – 10 c-i):

- i) If occupancy is greater than or equal to 80 per cent, the price shall be increased by a \$0.25 per hour increment for the subsequent year.
- ii) If the occupancy is less than or equal to 50 per cent, the price shall be decreased by a \$0.25 per hour increment for the subsequent year.
- iii) If the occupancy is between 50 and 80 per cent, the price will remain the same for the subsequent year.

Attachment 1 indicates the resulting price changes that will be implemented give the parking demand. The planned price changes for January will be the first time that the parking price will vary across the 4 time periods during the weekday. The observed data indicates that prices will, in general, drop in the morning period, remain the same over the lunch period and early afternoon and drop during the late afternoon. Several areas will also see a drop in the Saturday hourly parking rate. There are some areas where demand is high enough that a price increase will be warranted.

The attachment also gives a comparison to the parking demand observed over the entirety of 2012. Significant changes in parking demand are highlighted. Given that the 2013 data only looks at the months of July to October there may be some influence of seasonal variations in some pricing areas. The impact of the June flooding on some areas may be reflected in the reduced parking demand in some locations and increased parking demand in other locations. The impact on parking demand due to the price changes implemented on July 1 would also be reflected. Over 2013, additional checks to ensure that the parking supply is being accurately

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captured in all areas were conducted by CPA. This has led to some adjustments to the parking supply numbers that may be affecting the occupancy in some areas, though generally the pricing decisions are unaffected and the true parking supply is better reflected in the results.

To help minimize any confusion with the public on the new price structure, Administration and CPA are working together to ensure that pricing information is readily available and easy to understand. The ParkPlus machines will automatically take the different prices into account when determining the cost of parking. The benefit to the public is that they will save money when they choose to park during times where there is less parking demand.

On a go-forward basis, parking prices will automatically be adjusted annually based on the approved policies, using data from November 1 to October 31 of the previous year. This will eliminate any impact from seasonal variations going forward.

Application of a two-hour maximum time restriction in the CBD

As indicated in the May report, Administration has conducted a review of all paid parking zones under 2 hours in maximum time within the CBD (Attachment 2). The intent of reviewing these zones was two-fold: to align to the new policies where possible and to better utilize low-use zones while preserving existing high-use non-two hour zones. CPA's ParkPlus data was used to determine the usage of these zones. Of these, 15 were identified as having low usage (under 50% use) comprising of 79 parking spaces total. The low-usage zones will be converted to two-hour parking in the new year. Administration met with the Calgary Downtown Association on December 3 to discuss the findings and identify any concerns.

Review of Loading Zones in the CBD

Also indicated in the May report was that Administration would review loading zones in the CBD to see if low-use zones could be removed or if multiple zones on a block could be consolidated. Policy 5.1.2.22 states "If a loading zone is found to have fewer than an average of five users per day, it may be subject to removal." To determine the usage of the loading zones, CPA enforcement staff observed loading zone usage between October 26 and November 8. An occupancy was calculated for each loading zone. For the purposes of implementing policy 5.1.2.22, zones below an occupancy of 18.5% were considered as having fewer than five users per day. Attachment 3 identifies zones that are proposed to be converted to 2 hour parking due to not meeting the minimum occupancy. Of the zones identified for removal, officers observed the usage of the loading zones on a minimum of 10 separate occasions. This analysis identified 10 low-use zones for removal. This will result in an additional 20 on-street parking spaces in the CBD. Administration will continue to work to identify low-usage zones, as well as opportunities to consolidate existing loading zones, to ensure the on-street space is well used.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Administration circulated the planned prices to area Business Revitalization Zones (BRZs) for information and feedback the first week of December. Additionally, Administration met with the

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Calgary Downtown Association (CDA) on 2013 December 3 to discuss the proposed parking and loading zone changes.

Strategic Alignment

Managing parking pricing through demand directly supports the Calgary Transportation Plan, particularly policy 3.9.d – “Technology, time restrictions and pricing should be used for addressing parking demand issues, instead of increasing supply in existing areas of the city.”

Implementing the proposed policies also aligns with the current Transportation business plan, by implementing Council priority 1M2.3 – “Implement the Council-approved Parking Policy Framework for Calgary”.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Social: A consistent approach to parking policy will ensure fair treatment for all businesses. Parking access should be improved for all users by providing a wider variety of parking options through more varied pricing.

Environmental: The focus on reducing vehicle cruising for parking spaces will have positive impacts on GHG emissions.

Economic: The proposed policies focus on solving the problem of available parking space in congested areas. By working to make parking consistently available in business areas, customers are less likely to avoid the area due to a lack of parking supply. This will increase business vitality.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

CPA anticipates that the planned price changes will be revenue neutral over 2014. The expectation is that increased parking demand will offset revenue reductions from decreased prices.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

The costs to implement 2 hour maximum signage in low-use loading and short-term parking areas in the CBD will be about \$3000 and will be accommodated in CPA's budget.

Risk Assessment

There are some risks to implementing the planned price changes:

- Where parking prices increase, The City's reputation may be negatively impacted even though the policy rationale for the increases has been outlined.
- The public may be confused by the variation in parking prices over the day.

The risks of not implementing the planned price changes include:

- Parking prices may remain artificially high in locations where parking demand does not support the current hourly price.
- Parkers in lower-demand periods would be subsidizing parkers in higher-demand periods.

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- The City's reputation may be negatively impacted since The City would not be adjusting prices per the recently approved policy.

Risks of removing low-use loading zones and 30-minute / 1 hour maximum zones include:

- There may be unique reasons or histories for some zones that have not been identified with the current analysis that may result in unwanted removal (Administration will work with stakeholders should they identify this after removal has occurred).
- It may be more difficult for individuals seeking short-duration parking to find parking opportunities in 2-hour maximum locations.

Risks of not removing low-use loading zones and 30-minute / 1 hour maximum zones include:

- Stagnant zones reduce potential parking opportunities while not serving any demand
- The reputation of 30-minute zones as 'ticket traps' could persist.
- Existing zones may be misaligned with the approved policy direction.
- Expectations may be raised to accommodate additional low-demand zones if existing low demand zones continue to be permitted.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

Aligning the parking prices with area demand will work to ensure that parking spaces are available in high demand locations and that parkers are saving money when visiting areas with less demand or in lower demand time periods. Converting low-usage 30-minute, 1 hour and loading zones to 2 hour maximum parking will improve the efficiency of the street space. Business vitality should be improved as a result.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Summary of Planned Price Changes for 2014 January 01
2. Analysis of Non - 2 Hour Parking Zones in the CBD
3. Analysis of Loading Zones in the CBD