

Residential Parking in Calgary

Summary

This attachment responds to the Council direction in EC2025-0995, as amended, to “Report back no later than Q1 2026 with revised parking including private lots and public parking strategy.”

The purpose of this attachment is to (1) clarify the off-street parking requirements in the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 (the Bylaw) that are relevant to the reversal of *Rezoning for Housing*, and (2) explain the City’s approach to on-street public parking.

As per the Council-directed recommendations of this report, parcels may be redesignated to their previous land use district. Parcels that remain R-CG (due to exemption criteria), will continue to require 1.0 stall per unit or suite, or 0.5 stalls per unit or suite if located in 81 central communities, or near transit.

In Calgary, on-street parking is adequate on most residential streets that do not have a Residential Parking Zone. There are many factors that influence parking demand including neighbourhood connectivity, level of household income, household size, proximity to facilities that generate traffic such as business, recreation facilities or hospitals, and personal behaviours. However, data show that there is no clear predictable relationship between these factors and parking demand. Where congestion does exist on some streets at certain times, The City uses management tools to control parking in accordance with the Council-approved Parking Policies.

The relationship between housing, off-street parking, and on-street parking is complex. Requiring more off-street parking or limiting the number of homes does not necessarily reduce the demand for on-street parking.

Practices observed in other jurisdictions show a trend toward a more flexible approach to off-street parking requirements, recognizing the cost of parking in terms of housing, transportation efficiency and affordability, and public health. In terms of on-street parking, there is a variety of different policies and programs used in Canada and around the world. Typically, cities only implement a program for congested areas and scale them to the extent of that congestion. Time restrictions, pricing, and permit-only parking are common on-street parking management tools.

1. Council direction and introduction

On 2025 December 15, as part of EC2025-0995 as amended, Council directed Administration to: “Report back no later than Q1 2026 with revised parking including private lots and public parking strategy.”¹ This attachment addresses “off-street parking” which refers to private parking provided on-site. It will also address “on-street parking” also known as public parking, curbside parking, or off-site parking.

2. Off-street parking

2.1 What are the required parking stall requirements relevant to the reversal of Rezoning for Housing?

Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 (the Bylaw) identifies the required minimum number of parking stalls that must be provided as off-street parking as part of new residential developments.² In 2024, as part of *Rezoning for Housing*, Council redesignated R-C1 and R-C2 parcels to R-CG and increased the minimum parking requirement for R-CG to 1.0 stalls per unit or suite or 0.5 stall per unit or suite if located in 81 central communities and those near transit. Rowhouses were changed to a discretionary use, subject to the same parking requirements as other uses within R-CG. See Table 1.

Based on Notice of Motion EC2025-0995, as amended, this report directs Administration to redesignate parcels to their previous districts (typically R-C1) and corresponding parking requirements. Parcels that remain R-CG will continue to require 1.0 stall per unit or suite or 0.5 stalls per unit or suite if located in 81 central communities or near transit. The exemption criteria are intended to exclude redevelopments initiated or approved under the R-CG zoning. See Table 1.

Table 1. Parking stall requirements relevant to the reversal of Rezoning for Housing (section numbers refer to Land Use Bylaw 1P2007)

Prior to Rezoning for Housing (pre-2024 August 06)	Rezoning for Housing (effective date 2024 August 06)	Proposed Reversal of Rezoning for Housing (Target effective date 2026 August 04)
<p>R-CG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard rate: 0.5 stalls per unit or suite (s. 546) Permitted use rowhouse: 1.0 stalls per unit (s. 347.3(1)e). 	<p>R-CG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard rate: 1.0 stalls per unit or suite (s. 546) 81 central communities (post-1960s) 0.5 stalls per unit or suite (s. 546, Table 2.1) Within 600 metres of Light Rail Transit or Bus Rapid Transit: 0.5 stalls -per unit or suite (s. 546) 	<p>R-CG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard rate: 1.0 stalls per unit or suite (s. 546) 81 central communities (post-1960s) 0.5 stalls per unit or suite (V, s. 546, Table 2.1) Within 600 metres of Light Rail Transit or Bus Rapid Transit: 0.5 stalls -per unit or suite (s. 546)
<p>R-C1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-detached dwelling: 1.0 stalls per unit (s. 171, 		<p>R-C1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single-detached dwelling: 1.0 stalls per unit (s. 171, s.

¹ [E2025-0995 \(as amended\), Council direction. The City of Calgary. 2015.](#)

² [Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 \(current consolidated version\). The City of Calgary. Sections 546 and related sections.](#)

305) and 1.0 stall per suite (s. 153.1, 295)		305) and 1.0 stalls per suite (s. 153.1, 295)
<p>R-C2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-detached dwelling: 1.0 stalls per unit (s. 171, 305) and 1.0 stall per suite (s. 153.1, 295) • Single-detached dwelling on narrow or small parcels approved after 1982: 2.0 stalls per unit (s. 443) and 1.0 stall per suite (s. 153.1, 295) • Semi-detached dwelling: 1.0 stalls per unit (s. 297) and 1.0 stall per suite (s. 153.1, 295) • Contextual semi-detached dwelling: 2.0 stalls per unit (s. 170.2) and 1.0 stall per suite* (s. 153.1, 295) 	<p>R-C2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-detached dwelling: 1.0 stalls per unit (s. 171, 305) and 1.0 stall per suite (s. 153.1, 295) • Single-detached dwelling on narrow or small parcels approved after 1982: 2.0 stalls per unit (s. 443) and 1.0 stall per suite (s. 153.1, 295) • Semi-detached dwelling: 1.0 stalls per unit (s. 297) and 1.0 stall per suite (s. 153.1, 295) • Contextual semi-detached dwelling: 2.0 stalls per unit (s. 170.2) and 1.0 stall per suite* (s. 153.1, 295) 	

*The number of parking stalls per suite can be reduced to zero if the suite is contained within a Contextual Semi-detached dwelling or semi-detached dwelling and 2.0 parking stalls are provided for each dwelling unit.

2.2 How parking is accommodated for rowhouses and townhouses

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how parking requirements, lot location (midblock versus corner), and lane access influence the design of small parcels. While the R-CG district allows single detached and semi-detached homes, this section will focus on rowhouse and townhouse development. Parcels are limited in size and providing vehicle parking on-site competes with other uses of the site such as housing, landscaping, and trees.

Areas requiring 0.5 stalls per unit

A typical residential lot measuring 50 by 120 feet can accommodate a garage large enough for a maximum of four parking stalls. Typically, lots are developed to their maximum density with four townhouses or rowhouses with suites arranged on the site and a four-car garage accessible from the lane. This configuration allows for the provision of 0.5 parking stalls per unit or suite (see Figures 1 and 2).

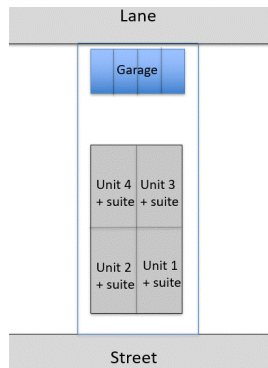


Figure 1. Midblock – 0.5 stalls/unit or suite. Not to scale.

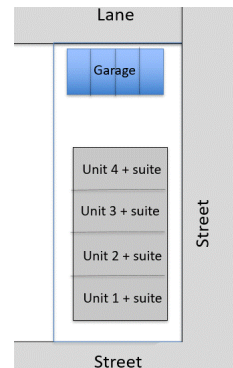


Figure 2. Corner – 0.5 stalls/unit or suite. Not to scale.

Rowhouses and townhouses are less common on parcels without lane access. On those parcels, parking is accessed via a driveway in the front or off the side street. This driveway is another spatial constraint on the site.

Areas requiring 1.0 stall per unit

In areas that require 1.0 stall per unit or suite, fewer units can be built on the parcel. Parking pads may be used instead of garages because they require less space (see Figure 3).

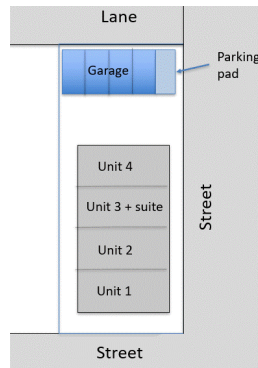


Figure 3. Corner – 1 stalls/unit or suite. Not to scale.

3. On-street parking

3.1 What is the current state of on-street parking in Calgary?

In Calgary, on-street parking is adequate on most residential streets that do not have a Residential Parking Zone (RPZ). Some streets experience higher parking congestion depending on the day of the week and the time of the day, or their proximity to non-residential attractions like downtown, campuses, or commercial areas.

The City's threshold for determining whether there is on-street parking congestion or not is greater than 80 per cent utilization in repeated studies, as stated in the Council-approved Calgary Parking Policies (CP2021-04). At this threshold, generally there are one or two parking spots available per block at most times, and people can find a parking spot within a short walk of their destination.

To develop a better understanding of the current state of parking in Calgary, The City hired an engineering consultant in 2024 to observe parking activity. The study included 17 neighborhoods across the city representing a range of neighbourhood types in terms of location and socioeconomic characteristics.³ The study showed that the citywide average usage of on-street parking in residential areas was *42 per cent occupied on weekday early evenings* (58 per cent available on-street parking capacity). The highest usage observed in any of the residential neighbourhoods was *less than 80 per cent*. Weekday early evenings tend to be the peak period of demand on residential streets as people are arriving home from work, and other people may still be visiting homes and / or businesses in the area.

In addition to the engineering study, The City conducted a third-party, statistically representative phone survey (80 per cent cell phones) of 1,000 Calgarians in 2025 to further understand the state of parking.⁴ Statistically, 91 per cent of Calgarians find it easy to park at home on-street or off-street, shown in Figure 4.

³ Calgary Residential Parking Review. The City of Calgary. EXP. 2025.

⁴ 2025 Perspectives on Calgary Parking Survey. The City of Calgary. 2025.

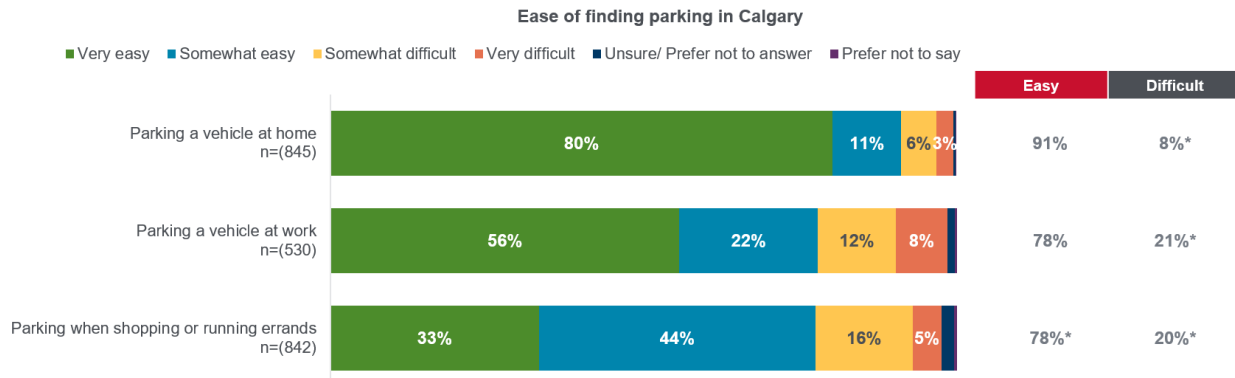


Figure 4: 1,000 Calgarians were asked by statistically representative phone survey in 2025 about the ease of finding parking in Calgary. Source: Corporate Research, Customer Service and Communications, The City of Calgary.

Further to the ease of finding parking, Calgarians’ expectations of parking availability are different than what is possible. People observe parking in highly localized contexts, which affects how they perceive parking congestion.

This is further demonstrated in Figure 5 below in which finding parking is contrasted with Calgarians’ expectations of finding parking. There is a gap here between expectations and the actual frequency of finding parking.

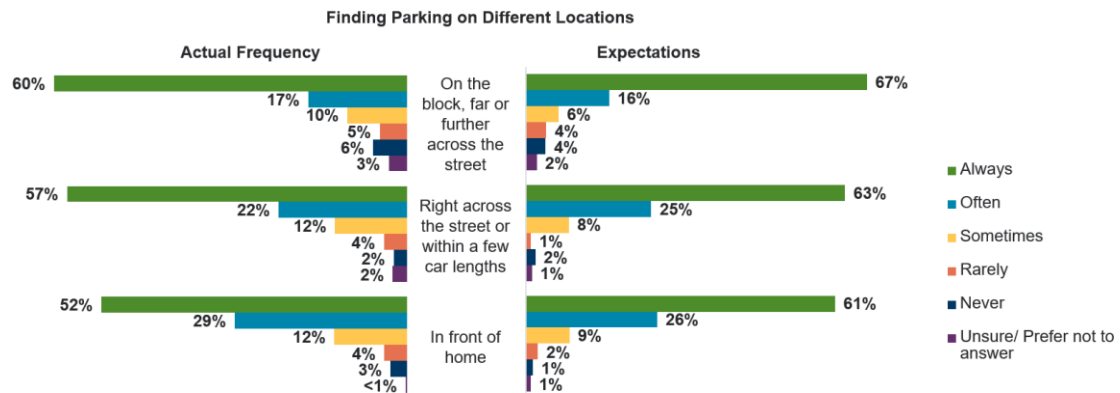


Figure 5: 1,000 Calgarians were asked by statistically representative phone survey in 2025 about the ease of finding parking in Calgary. The expectation of always finding parking is 5-10 percentage points higher than the reality of always finding parking. Source: Corporate Research, Customer Service and Communications, The City of Calgary.

3.2 What factors influence on-street parking demand?

There are many factors that may influence parking activity in urban areas, such as neighbourhood and socioeconomic characteristics. The City’s 2024 parking study considered these underlying and influencing factors of parking activity. The factors that were examined in the study included neighbourhood mobility connectivity, level of household income, and household size. The data indicated a high variability in parking demand among households that shared similar characteristics in these factors. In addition to this study, other known factors include proximity to parking generators, and personal behaviours.

The results of the data analysis point to the inability to predict parking demand with any sort of accuracy in many if not most situations. This demonstrates the complex nature of urban parking.

Further to The City of Calgary's work, The City of Edmonton's 2019 Comprehensive Parking Study showed similar results ([City of Edmonton Comprehensive Parking Study – Phase 1. City of Edmonton. Nelson Nygaard. 2019.](#)). Edmonton demonstrated that only neighbourhood mobility connectivity – measured through Walkscore – had a notable relationship with parking activity, although not a statistically significant one.

From Edmonton: "Parking is supplied and utilized at rates that have no discernable relationship with land use or neighbourhood context. This report analyzes parking supply and utilization in relation to many potential land use and demographic factors. The consistent finding is that parking supply and utilization varies widely across the city and there is no easily identifiable, consistent factor determining this relationship."

Household Size

For example, one might expect that larger household sizes would lead to more cars per household and thus there would be more demand for on-street parking. However, no clear correlation was found between household size and demand for on-street parking. Some households make choices about how many vehicles to own based on the availability of parking. Larger households tend to occupy larger homes, which tend to provide more off-street parking (often more than the minimum required through the Land Use Bylaw).

Parking Generators

Parking demand in residential neighbourhoods is also influenced by proximity to key generators like post-secondary institutions, hospitals, or commercial areas. These generators often create a significant parking demand.

Personal Behaviour

Finally, on-street parking activity is influenced by residents' preference to park on-street and use their garage for other purposes, shown in Figure 6. Approximately one-third (33 per cent) of Calgarians who have dedicated parking space on their property still park a vehicle on the street. One half (51 per cent) do so because they have more vehicles than privately-owned parking spots. However, one-in-five indicate it is done for convenience (22 per cent), or because their off-street parking space is being used for other purposes, including household storage or something else (18 per cent). When on-street parking is free and readily available, households can make different decisions about how to use privately-owned space.

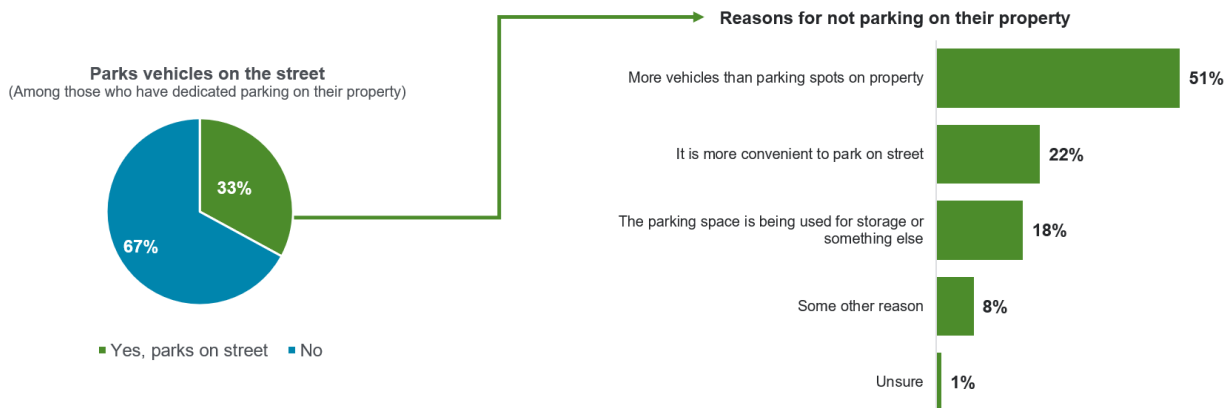


Figure 6: Calgarians park on-street for different reasons. Source: Corporate Research, Customer Service and Communications, The City of Calgary.

3.3 How is on-street parking managed in residential areas?

On-street parking occurs along the curbside. Curbside space is a shared public asset and should be available for different activities and modes of transportation.⁵ On-street parking, as one such use of the curbside space, is guided by the Council-approved Calgary Parking Policies.⁶ These policies recognize the need to balance the competing curbside demands of several regular user groups which include transit as well as parking for area residents and their guests, employees and customers of local businesses, and skilled trades, deliveries, and other services provided in the area.

In most residential areas, the on-street parking supply is much higher than the demand for on-street parking. When the demand for on-street parking regularly exceeds the available supply, The City of Calgary's Parking Policies provide management strategies appropriate to the residential context.

When residents request parking management, The City assesses the need through data collection. Parking management is considered appropriate when on-street parking usage regularly exceeds 80 per cent of available supply. Once congestion is determined then a Residential Parking Zone (RRZ) can be established and residents in that zone can participate in the Residential Parking Permit (RPP) program. The program allows residents to have preferential access to public on-street parking while non-permit holders are subject to more restrictive conditions, like two-hour time limits.

Once an RPZ is established, parking restrictions follow a sliding-scale approach based on the level of congestion:

1. The first stage is the introduction of maximum two-hour time restrictions except by permit.
2. The second stage is no parking except by permit.

Parking congestion is periodically reevaluated, and the parking management approach is adjusted.

The Calgary Parking Policies guide eligibility for parking permits. Only residents of the RPZ are eligible for permits. The number and type of permits that residents may receive depend on the housing form, building height, and age.

4. What is the relationship between off-street parking requirements and on-street parking?

The relationship between off-street parking requirements and on-street parking is complex. Raising off-street parking requirements does not necessarily mean that on-street parking congestion will be reduced, as people park on-street for many reasons.

For example, The City currently regulates parking mainly by housing type through the Land Use Bylaw. As shown in Figure 7, there is a relationship between housing type and the number of vehicles parked – single detached or semi-detached homes generally tend to own and park more vehicles than townhomes or apartments. However, there is also a high variability (spread) in vehicle ownership and parking need by housing type in Calgary. This can lead to specific pockets of parking congestion depending on the residents of a particular block.

⁵ [Calgary Transportation Plan. The City of Calgary. 2009.](#) Page 69.

⁶ [Calgary Parking Policies. The City of Calgary. 2024.](#)

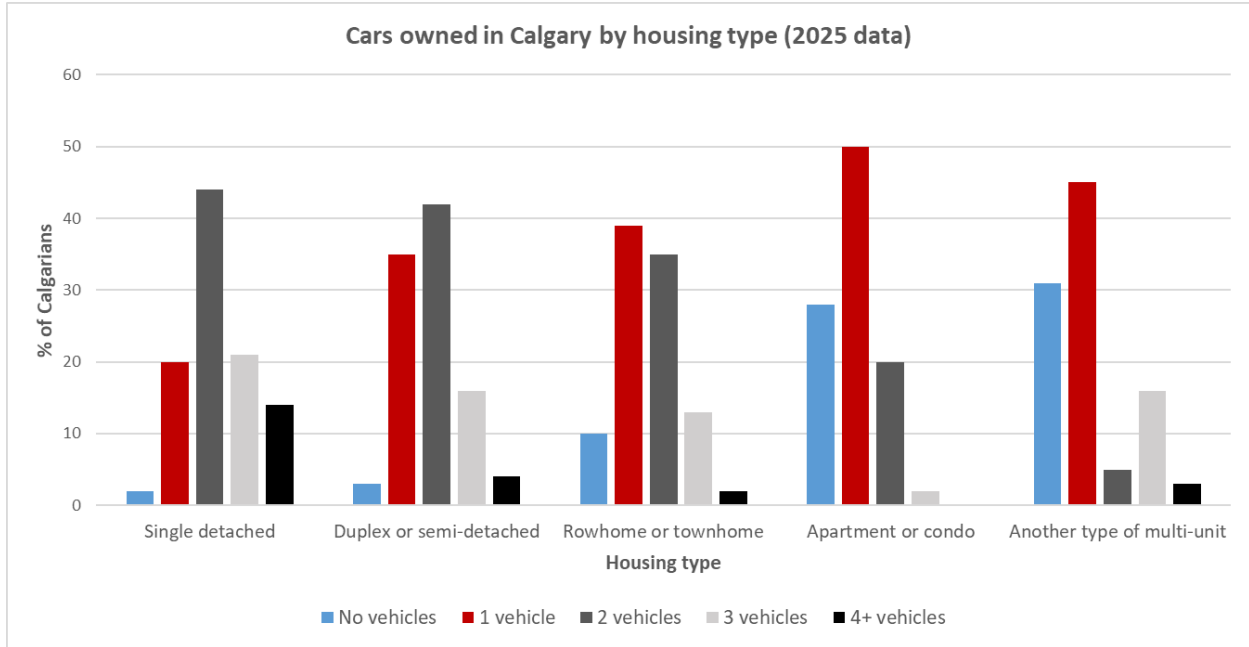


Figure 7. While households in single detached or semi-detached homes generally tend to own more vehicles than those in townhomes or apartments, there is a wide range of ownership within each housing form. As a result, parking requirements based solely on housing form capture some, but not all, observed parking behaviour. Source: Corporate Research, Customer Service and Communications, The City of Calgary.

There is also a relationship between the R-CG parking rates in the Bylaw and the number of vehicles owned and parked, shown in Figure 8. However, again, like housing type, there is a wide range of vehicles parked that is not captured through flat-rate parking requirement ratios.

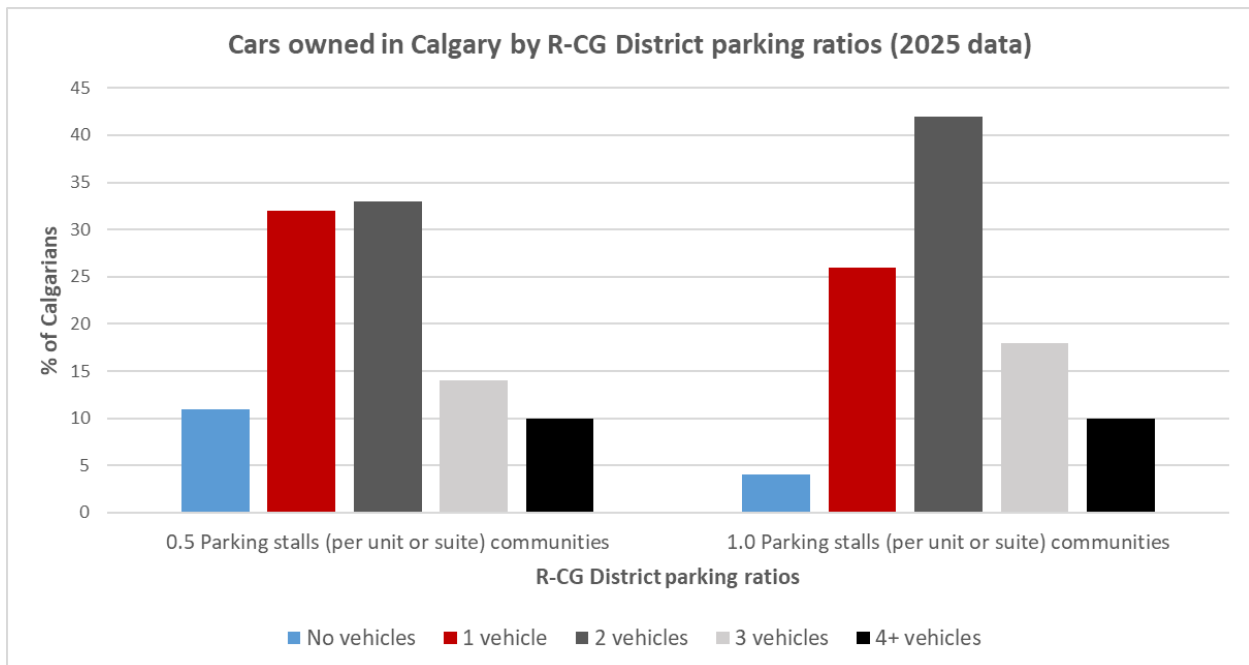


Figure 8: There is high variability of vehicle ownership by R-CG parking ratio communities. The 1.0 communities do have more Calgarians with 2 or 3 vehicles than the 0.5 communities, but there is not a clear, fixed pattern. Source: Corporate Research, Customer Service and Communications, The City of Calgary.

Further, data show that a higher proportion of rowhomes and apartments use off-street parking as compared to single detached and semi-detached homes. Singles and semis are more likely to only use on-street parking or use both on- and off-street parking, as shown in Figure 9.

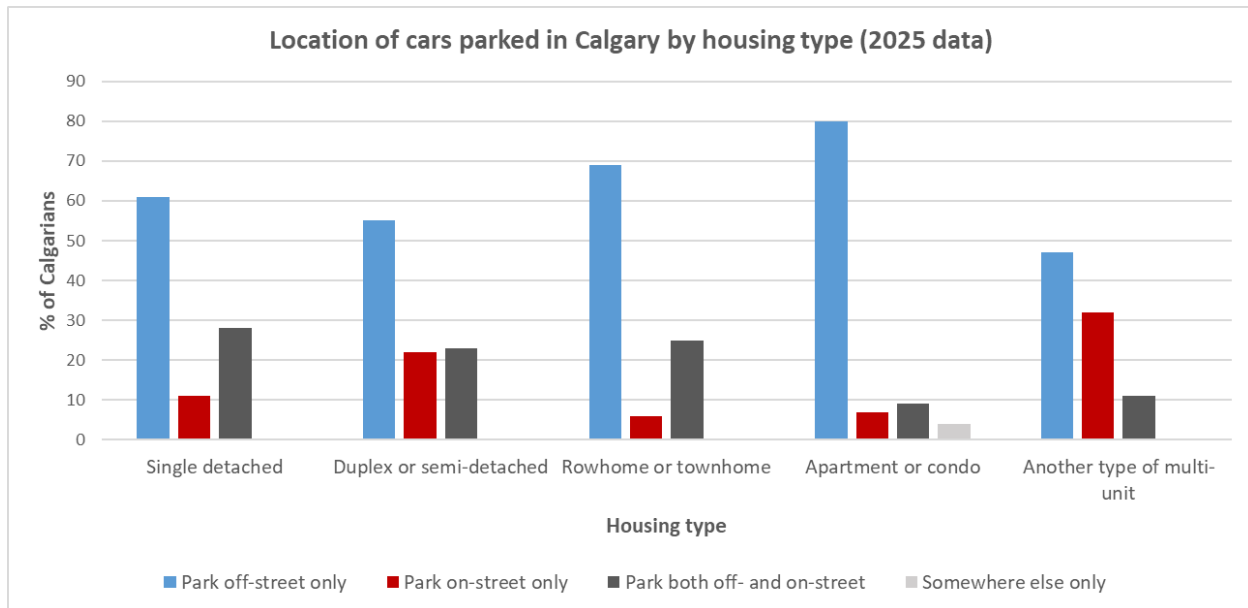


Figure 9: Most Calgarians park off-street only no matter the housing type. However, the households in rowhomes and townhomes, and apartments and condos park the least on-street. Source: Corporate Research, Customer Service and Communications, The City of Calgary.

When there is an ample supply of free parking in the area, people who live there often respond by making choices that take advantage of that opportunity – owning more vehicles per household or using off-street parking spaces for other purposes. In places where parking supply is limited or has a cost associated with it, people respond by owning fewer vehicles or making more use of private garages and driveways to store the vehicles they own.

5. How could proposed changes to R-CG influence parking?

Notice of Motion EC2025-0995, as amended, directs Administration to reduce the density for R-CG from 75 units per hectare to 60 units per hectare. If this change is approved, fewer homes and households can be accommodated on each site. It is difficult to predict what impact this change will have on on-street parking because on-street parking demand is influenced by a combination of interrelated factors and how residents choose to use available parking.

Density can be associated with different on-street parking demand depending on household composition, vehicle ownership and how residents use off-street parking. As a result, on-street parking impacts cannot be determined based on density alone.

6. What are other cities doing with respect to parking?

6.1 What are other cities doing to regulate private parking in their land use bylaws?

A review of other jurisdictions' approach to off-street parking requirements, including Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal, identified a trend towards a more flexible approach by reducing or eliminating minimum off-street parking requirements.

6.2 What are other cities doing in on-street management?

A variety of different residential parking programs are used in Canada and around the world. Typically, cities only use a program for congested areas and scale them to the extent of that congestion. However, there can be different ways that programs and parking restrictions are implemented. For example, in Montreal it is common to see residential streets with permit parking on one side and timed or unrestricted parking on the other. This balances the competing demand from residents and visitors like Calgary's two-hour parking except by permit.

A common thread between programs is a move toward data-based decision-making. In recent years, many Canadian cities including Vancouver and Saskatoon have modified their programs to be data-driven, following the Calgary model. This method ensures that the management tools are only used where needed (controlling costs) and drive efficiency (the degree of parking management is tied to the degree of parking congestion.)