Context & City Planning Strategic Value

While contemporary city planning frequently emphasizes reducing parking minimums to advance housing density and compact urban forms 1, managing the public right-of-way through on-street curbside management remains critical to local economic vitality, neighborhood protection, and community equity 2.
Relying on flat-rate, single-tool regulations is insufficient to manage localized traffic congestion and neighborhood spillover 3.

Major traffic generators, such as healthcare facilities, frequently distort local patterns by offloading institutional commuter parking demand onto adjacent residential streets 4.
Historically, outdated legal frameworks treated parked commuter vehicles as an inherent right of "traffic" 5. Modern cities must instead treat the curb as a finite, high-value asset optimized through three integrated disciplines
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This brief outlines specific parking products and operational frameworks from peer Canadian jurisdictions to inform the Public Service's upcoming Curbside Management Framework under the newly adopted *Winnipeg Parking and Mobility Strategy*.

Core Curbside Management Definitions

● Resident-Only Parking Zones: Street legal designations where curbside space is strictly restricted *exclusively* to local residents holding a valid zone permit during specified hours. Non-resident commuters are completely barred from parking, eliminating commuter vehicle storage on local streets.
● Institutional Buffer Perimeters: Dedicated parking management perimeters surrounding large institutional traffic generators. These frameworks separate visitor and patient curb access from local residential streets, forcing corporate/institutional commuter vehicles into dedicated on-site parkades.
● Infrastructural Tiered Pricing: A pricing structure where the cost of a residential parking permit scales based on the resident's actual access to private infrastructure (e.g., driveways or garages) rather than charging a flat, regressive municipal registration fee across all households equally.
● Transferable Household Visitor Permits: Physical or digital parking assets assigned directly to a residential household rather than a specific vehicle license plate. They grant short-term parking access for caregivers, shared vehicles, or casual guests without requiring external commercial registration.

Academic, Theoretical & Strategic Foundations

To provide an academic backing for this brief, we will examine three pieces of peer-reviewed academic literature on the topic. Here are the key findings: 2

● Inefficient and flat-rate parking regulations are inherently unsuited to managing localized congestion due "cruising for parking" and neighborhood spillover 8. Curbside space today has evolved far beyond a mere storage area for vehicles and instead forms a limited but highly valuable resource supporting competing activities like parking, deliveries, loading zones, and shared transportation options 9.

● Academic analysis demonstrates that employer-influenced parking create distortions, artificially altering car commuting patterns, land rents, and local welfare by offloading parking demand onto nearby public assets 10. In response, municipal parking systems must act as active management tools to regulate access in high-demand areas surrounding major institutional traffic generators 11.

● In residential zones facing these institutional pressures, Residential Parking Permits (RPPs) are the academically recognized mechanism intended specifically to counter parking spillovers from external commercial or business districts 12. Winnipeg's strategic framework acknowledges this by mandating that the residential permit program be reviewed and adjusted annually to maintain a proper balance between resident access and curbside management 13.

● According to industry best practices, a comprehensive framework must transition away from simple enforcement toward three integrated management disciplines 14:
○ *Space Management:* Optimizing the public right-of-way precisely where high demand exists to balance competing curbside uses like parking, loading, carsharing, and Vehicles For Hire 15.
○ *Time Management:* Analyzing area-specific duration needs and establishing limits to generate optimal space rotation and keep spaces available for incoming users 16.
○ *Elasticity Management:* Enabling the multiple, flexible use of identical curb spaces to maximize accessibility for shifting types of users across different times of the day 17.

● Progressive curbside planning requires challenging outdated legal and cultural frameworks that privilege parked commuter vehicles as an inherent right of "traffic," which historically constrains the political and operational frameworks available to municipal planners 18. Modern management instead treats the curb as a strategic element of a broader mobility network.

● While Canadian municipalities frequently seek to reduce parking minimums to incentivize compact urban forms and housing density, doing so is highly politically sensitive; for instance, homeownership is associated with a 33% decrease in a resident's likelihood to support neighborhood densification 19. Robust curbside management acts as the buffer that makes broader housing and transit density strategies acceptable to established communities 20.

Winnipeg reinforces this by structuring its parking strategy as a secondary plan operating underneath *Transportation 2050* and in alignment with *OurWinnipeg 2045*, ensuring that

localized curbside decisions actively reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles and promote sustainable choices 21.

Jurisdictional Scan

Montreal
Montreal utilizes its Secteurs Réservés aux Résidents (SRRR) system to protect residential curbsides from institutional commuter parking, restricting overnight or daytime street parking to drivers displaying a valid zone vignette. To accommodate social and caregiving networks, boroughs issue temporary daily or monthly visitor permits rather than allowing absolute exclusion from driving through the neighborhood. Near high-strain institutional perimeters like Sainte-Justine Hospital (Zone 48), curbside parking is strictly reserved for residents, meaning visiting family members or informal caregivers must utilize digital guest profiles or transient dashboard receipts, purchased via local pay stations, apps, or physical scratch-offlots, to legally bypass these commuter parking limits.
By-Law: R.R.V.M., Chapter C-4.1 - supplemented by borough-specific traffic and fee bylaws (e.g., The Traffic and Parking Regulations (No. 1171) in the borough of Outremont)
● Tiered by vehicle footprint, weight, and engine size to meet climate goals. In high-density sectors like the Plateau-Mont-Royal, annual costs scale from roughly $35 to $151 for small electric vehicles, rising to over $480 for large, high-emission internal combustion SUVs (exceeding 1,800 kg). Low-income households receive targeted relief, with baseline caps or discounts cutting those high-end fees roughly in half (approx. $240).
● Outer boroughs like Outremont allocate up to 50 daily visitor vignettes annually per household to limit total visitor volume, with ad-hoc visitor parking rates across the city ranging from $2.00 up to $16.00 per day depending on the density and demand of the sector.

Toronto
Toronto utilizes a demand-managed residential parking permit framework to protect high-density neighborhood curbsides from commuter saturation, pushing long-term institutional traffic into off-street facilities. This dynamic is highly pronounced around major employment hubs like the University Avenue hospital network, where strict municipal daytime and overnight permit restrictions, backed by heavy non-compliance fines, effectively displace commuter vehicles into dedicated institutional parking structures.

Concurrently, the city manages commuter spillovers by utilizing independent provincial mandates like the HPASS program, which requires hospitals to offer discounted, multi-day parking passes specifically to alleviate financial pressure on patients and frequent visitors.
By-Law: Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 950, Traffic and Parking. - 2026 Fees

Infrastructural Tiering & Price Points: Rather than charging a flat fee, Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 925 ties permit pricing directly to a household's on-site infrastructure access, charging a premium for the discretionary use of public space:

● Primary Vehicle (No On-Site Access): $24.23 / month (~$290/year). This baseline rate protects residents in older, high-density fabric (such as laneway-less row houses) who have zero access to private driveways or garages.

● Convenience Permit (On-Site Access Exists): $97.97 / month (~$1,175/year). This premium rate applies to residents who possess a private driveway or garage but choose to utilize public curbside space for vehicle storage.
● Subsequent Vehicles: $70.35 / month (~$844/year) for a second or additional vehicle registered to the same address to disincentivize multi-car street hoarding.
● Temporary Visitor Permits: Managed via an online portal to accommodate short-term guests and caregivers, priced at $20.74 for 24 hours, $29.97 for 48 hours, or $44.94 for a 7-day pass.

Ottawa
Ottawa counteracts high-density parking pressures by allowing residents to digitally sponsor short-term curbside parking exemptions for out-of-town guests, shifting the administrative verification process to the homeowner via the MyServiceOttawa portal.

To protect residential streets from commuter vehicle saturation without creating paper overhead, the city utilizes a digital validation system. Residents must log in to register their guest's vehicle registration data. To prevent local commuter abuse, these visitor permits are legally restricted to non-residents living at least 30 kilometers outside the National Capital Region. Furthermore, instead of scaling prices by localized traffic density, Ottawa ties its fee schedule directly to winter climate operations, massively adjusting rates during snowy months to disincentivize street storage and keep lanes clear for municipal plows.
By-Law: City of Ottawa Traffic and Parking By-law (No. 2017-301)
● Annual Resident Permits: Priced at a flat $792.00/year city-wide. If purchased monthly, the rate dynamically shifts from a low-impact summer baseline of $37.00/month up to a premium winter rate of $172.00/month to account for snow-ban operational overhead.
● Sponsored Visitor Permits: Issued digitally for a maximum of two weeks per vehicle. Rates reflect the seasonal framework, costing $9.25/week during the summer and climbing sharply to $43.00/week during the peak winter monitoring cycle.

Vancouver
Vancouver uses targeted market pricing in dense urban neighborhoods to curb excessive demand, phase out street-parking subsidies, and encourage drivers to utilize existing private building infrastructure.
In high-density corridors like the West End, Vancouver enforces a strict dual rate structure. Residents moving into newer properties or households with access to off-street building parkades are charged an unsubsidized market rate for curbside storage. Conversely, low-income households or residents meeting historical longevity criteria are insulated via fixed, sub-market legacy rates.
By-Law: STREET AND TRAFFIC BY-LAW NO. 2849
● Market Rate Annual Permit: $497.73/year (inclusive of GST), eliminating municipal on-street vehicle storage subsidies.
● Non-Market Legacy / Low-Income Exempt Rate: Fixed at $210.00/year to preserve neighborhood equity for vulnerable residents.
● Temporary West End Visitor Permit: $27.69/week, preventing long-term commuter vehicle dumping while accommodating genuine guests.

Calgary

Calgary uses an entirely automated, license-plate-based platform designed around user-fee cost recovery principles, pairing incremental multi-car penalties with location-stratified building rules.

Calgary ensures curbside programs recover their actual $1.5M administrative costs by shifting away from flat-rate registration. Standard single-family homes face an ascending price scale for every additional personal vehicle permit tied to the residence. Furthermore, residents living in multi-family buildings constructed after 1945 are entirely excluded from standard cheap permits; instead, they must purchase location-stratified "Market Permits" to protect public curb space from multi-residential vehicle hoarding.

By-Law: Residential Parking Permit (RPP) Program

● Standard Residential Permits (Ascending Scale): $30/year for the 1st vehicle; $45/year for the 2nd vehicle; $70/year for the 3rd vehicle.

● Standard Visitor Permits: $45/year.

● Post-1945 Building Market Permits: Tiered by urban density to reflect true land values: $105/month ($1,260/year) in the City Centre; $75/month ($900/year) in the Inner City; $50/month ($600/year) in the Suburbs.

● Low-Income Market Permit: Reduced to $2.50/month ($30/year) to protect equitable mobility access.

Summary

While reduced parking minimums does allow for increased housing density, proactive curbside management is vital to secures community buy-in and preserves local economic vitality.

Rather than relying on flat-rate tools, peer Canadian cities manage the curb as a premium asset. Montreal scales permits by vehicle emissions, Toronto charges a heavy premium to residents who already have private driveways, and Ottawa surges winter rates to fund snow clearing.

Vancouver and Calgary are phasing out public subsidies entirely with market-rate fees up to $1,260/year.

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