CITY OF NANAIMO

PARKING REGULATIONS + BYLAW UPDATE

Overview + Background

February 2025

CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY

Parking Management in Nanaimo

The City of Nanaimo is reviewing how it supplies, manages, and regulates parking. As Nanaimo faces dynamic transportation and land use changes, parking has a broad and profound impact on the community in its building form, travel behaviours, personal well-being, and environmental sustainability.

Through the *Parking Review + Bylaw Update* process, the City is updating its off-street parking regulations and public on-street parking management approach to better align with the goals and policies in City Plan. Refreshing how we approach parking will help us achieve the City's goals and values, resulting in a formalized approach that provides more certainty and clarity to residents, land developers, Council, and staff.

Why Is Parking Management Important?

Parking management is the system of policies, regulations, enforcement, monitoring, and evaluation that together support sustainable and proactive on and off-street parking approaches to address the community's priorities, both in new development and on public streets.

Through City Plan and other initiatives, some of the ways the City of Nanaimo's goals overlap with parking management include:

- Managing the City's supply of on and off-street parking to support commercial and residential areas and minimize the impact of parking demand in neighbourhoods;
- Managing and prioritizing curb space according to its value and adjacent land uses;
- Increasing access and support for electric vehicles and e-mobility;
- Encouraging a range of sustainable transportation options, such as active transportation, shared mobility, and public transit;
- Removing and preventing barriers to people with disabilities through the availability and accessibility of mobility options; and
- Encourage cost effective forms of housing.

Applicable Bylaw Documents

Off-Street Parking Regulations Bylaw

This bylaw regulates the rate, design, and layout of off-street parking in Nanaimo. The bylaw is structured to require minimum off-street vehicle parking for standard and electric vehicles, bicycle parking, and loading supply for various land uses in the city. Amendments have been made to remove parking supply requirements for residential uses in provincially-designated Transit-Oriented Areas.

Traffic & Highways Regulations Bylaw

Identifies permitted curb uses in Nanaimo and how the City can enforce these uses, through paid parking, time limitations, commercial loading restrictions, and other applications. Off-street parking in public facilities is also regulated through this Bylaw, including the cost of parking in parkades and public parking lots.

Parking and the use of the street are addressed in several other important bylaws in Nanaimo, so the *Parking Review + Bylaw Update* process could also lead to revisions or recommended updates to the following bylaws:

- Zoning Bylaw
- Subdivision and Servicing Bylaw
- Crossing Control Bylaw

City Plan + Parking Management

City Plan is Nanaimo's Official Community Plan. The plan introduces land use designations, shown on the following page, that inform the City's approach to parking and curbside management.

Nanaimo's current and future land use is already integrated into the City's approach to parking management through parking supply rates based on location. Policy guidance from City Plan can be used to update this geographic approach to align with the plan's vision by focusing regulatory change in specific areas of Nanaimo.

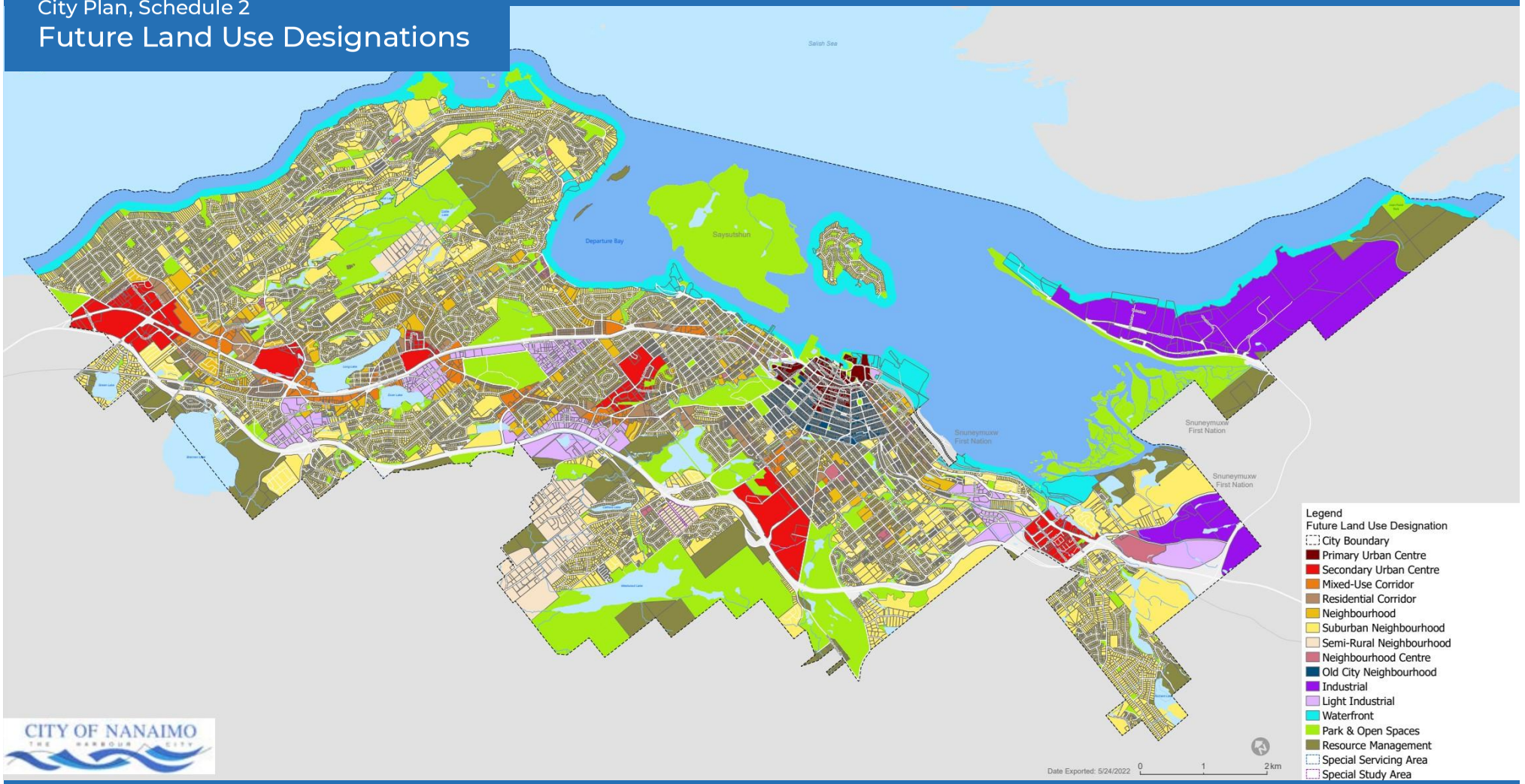
Through City Plan, land use priority has been established for where improvements to transportation and mobility will be focused, including creating mobility-rich environments that support sustainable mobility in Urban Centres, Corridors, and Neighbourhoods. Off-street parking and curbside management are to support these objectives.

Specific directions for parking management for each land use are summarized below.

Urban Centres • Primary • Secondary	D4.3.16	Discourage new large areas of surface parking or drive-thrus in Urban Centres. Under-building parking or underground parking is preferred. Continue to evolve existing auto oriented uses into more pedestrian friendly and accessible development forms and mix of uses.
	D4.3.19	Encourage locating future school sites; child care facilities; and recreational, cultural, and wellness facilities within Urban Centres, as Urban Centres will be highly accessible for all modes of transportation and will have higher population density. Recognizing that land areas are typically more constrained in Urban Centres, consider the following for urban schools and facilities: » reduced or shared parking requirements
	D4.3.32	Support removal of off-street parking minimums for all uses in the Downtown Urban Centre.
Corridors • Mixed-Use • Residential	D4.4.14	Discourage development of primary parking areas and/or drive-thrus between the front face of a building and the street. Underground or underbuilding parking is preferred.
Industrial Lands • Light Industrial	D4.6.22	Support uses that are suitable adjacent to Urban Centres, Corridors, and Neighbourhoods, and which: » do not require large customer parking lots and areas, and where parking is required, encourage underground or under-building parking and compact multi-storey building forms

City Plan, Schedule 2

Future Land Use Designations



CITY OF NANAIMO

City Plan Policies

General policies related to City Plan's goals also provide direction on how the *Parking Review + Bylaw Update* process can support the community's vision. Highlighted below are some of the key policies that are informing this project:

A Green Nanaimo	C1.1.10	Prioritize walking, rolling, cycling, and transit over other transportation modes to help Nanaimo achieve a zero carbon transportation system.
A Connected Nanaimo	C2.1.6	Prioritize the placement of high quality "first kilometre / last kilometre" (start or end of trip) amenities to encourage active and sustainable modes of travel, including transit, walking, cycling, electric vehicles, CarShare, and other options.
	C2.1.7	Manage parking city-wide with a focus on right sizing parking to continue fulfilling key needs including access, loading, and pick-up for businesses; accessible parking for people with mobility or family needs; and EV parking, while recognizing that an overabundance of cheap and convenient parking tends to increase vehicle use and reliance.
	C2.2.8	Implement Transportation Demand Management programs to shift trips to non-automobile modes, reduce automobile trips and travel distances, and reduce parking demand.
	C2.2.14	Provide convenient and secure bicycle parking in Urban Centres, along Corridors, and at key destinations, including parks.
A Healthy Nanaimo	C3.2.6	Use incentives to encourage the development of affordable and accessible rental and owned housing units. Consider providing additional density, parking relaxations, development cost charge reductions, payment of legal fees, or other types of financial measures.
	C3.2.25	Recognize that required onsite parking increases housing costs and ensure that parking requirements consider the intended resident group of new affordable housing developments, as well as road safety implications, and accommodate parking variances where appropriate.
An Empowered Nanaimo	C4.3.26	Where possible, exceed minimum requirements for universal accessibility for parking access and design standards.

Integrated Action Plan

Nanaimo's *Integrated Action Plan* (IAP) highlights the City's key actions to implement the policies of City Plan. This includes ongoing actions, and those identified to be completed over the immediate and long term.

Actions from the IAP that are relevant to parking and curbside management include:

A Connected Nanaimo	C2.1.3	Implement pay parking technologies that allow multiple payment methods and remote payment (e.g., online, phone) for extending parking.
	C2.1.2	Incorporate public parking strategies into Urban Centres Area Plans.
	C2.1.5	Prepare a public parking strategy to help support investment in streets.
	C2.1.8	Promote the use of smaller and quieter service and delivery vehicles for the "last-mile".
	C2.2.4	Continue to work with private employers and developers to encourage and create incentives for walking, cycling, rideshare, and transit commuting and reduce parking demand.
	C2.2.6	Develop Bike Parking / End of Trip facilities for short and long-term bicycle parking around key trip generators such as urban centres, transit exchanges, and destination parks.
	C2.2.9	Update Traffic and Highways Bylaw 5000 to support walk, roll, cycle, and emerging active mobility options.
A Healthy Nanaimo	C3.1.34	Implement a Parking Facility Security Assessment in the downtown area (Bastion, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, and Harbour Front Parkades).
	C3.2.25	Conduct a parking supply and demand assessment study for non-market and rental housing projects located near frequent transit, to support changes to parking requirements and/or support parking variances based on findings.
A Green Nanaimo	C1.1.33	Through the use of incentives and education, work with existing building owners to provide EV parking, in compliance with City Parking Bylaw.
	C1.1.38	Review City parking facilities and rates to identify potential spaces for zero-emission vehicles and other type of vehicles that support transportation mode shift and lower Greenhouse Gas emissions.

Potential Directions

Off-Street Parking

- Evaluate different approaches to required off-street vehicle parking supply rates that integrate land use, mobility, and other directions provided in City Plan.
    - Consider unique parking supply requirements for Urban Centres, Corridors, or others area, including potential to eliminate minimum parking requirements, to align with Transit Oriented Areas (TOAs) and Downtown Nanaimo.
- Review cash-in-lieu of parking regulations to better align rates with the value of unbuilt parking spaces and geographically expanded more broadly through the community.

Accessibility

- Adjust off-street accessible parking requirements to maintain an appropriate number of accessible parking spaces.
- Align off-street accessible parking design requirements with best practice and introduce requirements for van-accessible and mobility scooter parking.
- Retrofit and expand on-street accessible parking spaces to ensure accessible parking is available and well-designed.

Bicycle Parking

- Increase bicycle parking supply rates for select land uses and require short- and/or long-term bicycle parking to support the City's cycling mode share target.
- Pursue unique bicycle parking supply requirements for areas without minimum parking requirements to ensure adequate bicycle parking supply to support non-vehicular travel options.
- Update bicycle parking design regulations and guidelines, to support non-standard (oversized) bicycle parking, e-bike charging, and stacked bicycle parking.
- Introduce supply and design requirements for cycling end-of-trip facilities in commute land uses (i.e., showers, changeroom, lockers), where appropriate.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

- Consider expanding baseline and/or incentive-based TDM requirements to support mode shift for residents, employees, and visitors.

Off-Street Loading + Delivery

- Pursue requirements for conventional vehicle sized loading spaces to support short-term parking and retail delivery in select uses (i.e., meal delivery, online retail delivery, etc.).
- Consider off- and on-street loading approaches, with corresponding adjustments to off-street loading supply rates.

Curbside Management

- Establish a curbside priority framework and policy to guide decisions on how curb space is allocated, focusing on areas where off-street parking supply requirements could be reduced or eliminated or in residential areas with high demand and/or where off-street parking spillover occurs.
- Assess and implement the highest and best use of curbside space. On-street parking spaces cost taxpayers to construct and maintain and we will review this expenditure in alignment with OCP priorities.
- Explore new tools to support curbside management such as:
    - Dynamic parking management approaches to paid parking and time limitations that reflect demand patterns.
    - Retrofitting and expanding on-street accessible parking supply.
    - Formalizing the approach to on-street loading activities.

Public Parking Facilities

- Review how public parkades and parking lots complement on-street parking management practices, such as differentiated pricing and updating the monthly parking permit system.
- Evaluate opportunities to expand the availability of supporting infrastructure and amenities in public parking facilities, such as bicycle parking and EV charging.