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SUBJECT PARKING & CURBSIDE MANAGEMENT: ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN NANAIMO

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To present information and seek feedback from the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusion on parking and curbside management challenges and opportunities in Nanaimo.

BACKGROUND

Nanaimo, one of Canada's fastest-growing communities, is experiencing increased pressure on its transportation system. In response, the City is updating its parking regulations through a Parking Review and Bylaw Update, aimed at improving the management of off-street parking and public on-street parking.

This review aligns with the goals of City Plan: *Nanaimo Reimagined* and the *Nanaimo Transportation Master Plan* which emphasize reducing reliance on personal vehicles and promoting walking, cycling, and transit. The objective is to ease congestion, preserve essential services, and prioritize alternative mobility options. Effective parking management and the distribution of curb space—such as for sidewalks, trees, green space, transit stops, and public amenities—are central to this strategy.

To guide the review, the City is engaging the community to better understand parking challenges and inform potential recommendations. The update will involve changes to the Off-Street Parking Regulations, Traffic and Highway Regulation, and Crossing Control Bylaws to support the City's evolving transportation needs.

The need for this comprehensive review arises from several factors:

- **Overabundant, low-cost parking:** Nanaimo has historically had an overabundance of parking spaces, often provided at little or no cost. This trend is being reconsidered as the City moves towards a car-light culture.
- **Emerging transportation trends:** The rise of active transportation, e-bikes, cargo bikes, and increasing demand for food delivery services has highlighted gaps in current parking regulations, particularly concerning bike and e-mobility parking, as well as appropriate facilities for pick-up and drop-off services.
- **Curbside management:** The ways that people engage with the public realm is changing how we think about the highest and best use for limited road right-of-way that has traditionally been allocated to (often free) curbside parking.

City Plan Policy C2.1.7 advocates for a proactive approach to parking management across Nanaimo. This strategy aims to right-size parking to meet diverse needs, such as accessible parking, loading and pick-up zones, and electric vehicle parking. The current system is fragmented, and calls for a more coordinated, City-wide approach.

We are now in the engagement phase, gathering input from the public, development community, and the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusion. Your feedback will inform the recommendations for updated parking regulations. |

DISCUSSION

The ongoing engagement phase focuses on gathering input from residents and stakeholders about the future of parking in Nanaimo. Discussions will address potential updates to parking regulations, including accessible parking, electric vehicle spaces, and facilities for active and e-mobility users. This feedback will help shape the final recommendations, ensuring the updated strategies meet the needs of the City's growing and diverse population.

Key considerations include:

- **Accessible parking:** Ensuring that people with mobility challenges, including seniors and families with young children, have easy access to appropriate parking spaces.
- **E-mobility infrastructure:** As e-bikes and other electric mobility devices become more common, the City could create infrastructure, such as designated parking and charging stations.
- **Pick-up and drop-off spaces:** With the growth of e-commerce and food delivery services, there will be an increasing demand for designated pick-up/drop-off zones to ensure these services can operate efficiently without obstructing traffic or posing safety risks.

This comprehensive city-wide approach aims to provide equitable access to mobility infrastructure for all residents, regardless of their transportation needs or abilities. |

CONCLUSION

The review of Nanaimo's parking regulations is a key component of the City's broader vision for a Green, Connected, Healthy, Empowered, and Prosperous community. Through thoughtful planning and public engagement, the City aims to develop a parking management strategy that supports growth, mobility goals, and accessibility. The final recommendations and bylaw updates are expected to be implemented by summer 2025.

This process will ensure that Nanaimo's parking policies align with the City Plan and Transportation Master Plan, providing a framework to meet the diverse needs of a growing and evolving city.

SUMMARY POINTS

- **Parking Update:** Nanaimo is updating parking regulations to support growth and promote sustainable mobility.
- **Inclusive Infrastructure:** The update will address accessible parking, electric vehicle needs, and pick-up/drop-off spaces.
- **Community Input:** The City is gathering feedback to ensure the regulations meet local needs, with updates planned for summer 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

- ATTACHMENT A: Staff Report 2024-DEC-09 Nanaimo Parking Review and Bylaw Update – Parking Conditions Report
- ATTACHMENT B: Nanaimo Parking Review and Bylaw Update – Parking Conditions Report dated November 29, 2024, prepared by Urban Systems
- ATTACHMENT C: Urban Systems Slide Deck 2024-DEC-09 Nanaimo Parking Review and Bylaw Update
PowerPoint Presentation

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