

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC

Presentation of findings and recommendations from the Curb Pricing Study, an effort to explore the implementation of a paid on-street parking for the Downtown, BelRed, and Wilburton neighborhoods of Bellevue.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**DIRECTION**

Staff will present recommendations identified in the Curb Pricing Implementation Strategy, including public feedback received and data collection findings. Following discussion, staff seek Council direction to develop an ordinance, draft city code changes, and advance administrative tasks that would allow for paid on-street parking in Bellevue for action at a future meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Consider directing staff to proceed with necessary administrative tasks that would allow for the advent of paid on-street parking in Bellevue's Urban Core neighborhoods of Downtown, BelRed and Wilburton and prepare an ordinance and amendments to the Bellevue City Code for consideration and action at a future meeting.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**Background**

Due to Bellevue's recent urban growth, as well as significant evolutions in transportation options over the last two decades, the city's transportation system has become increasingly complex. Rising use of rideshare services, e-commerce deliveries, employer-based shuttles, and on-street dining areas have joined traditional uses such as on-street parking and public transit to place immense burden on curbside zones within Bellevue's roadway system. City resources to manage and enforce curbside uses have historically not kept up with demand – left unchanged, this would result in declining safety and efficiency to the city's transportation system.

In 2023, to address these mobility-related challenges, City Council unanimously adopted the Curb Management Plan (CMP), a long-range roadmap that aims to address curbside challenges over time. As part of the CMP, over two dozen Curb Practices were identified to address specific curb management concepts. One high-priority practice in the CMP aims to explore the implementation of a paid on-street parking system for Bellevue to better manage curbside demands. The Transportation Department launched the Curb Pricing Study in 2024 in support of this practice.

Curb Pricing Study

Staff and the consultant team collaborated with the Transportation Commission in 2024 and 2025 on the Curb Pricing Study to consider the implementation of paid on-street parking in designated locations

within the Downtown, BelRed, and Wilburton neighborhoods of Bellevue. Adding pricing for curbside parking is considered a national best practice for managing overall curbside demand. Curb pricing also reflects the inherent economic value that on-street parking spaces help create. While overburdened curbsides have been shown to increase traffic congestion, reduce roadway safety, reduce curbside availability for other transportation uses, and add to overall traveler frustration, the advent of curb pricing has been shown to reduce instances of overburdened curb activity. Goals for the Bellevue Curb Pricing Study include:

- **Improve curb access:** Establish a pricing approach that results in 80% occupancy during peak times. This 80% occupancy goal means the curb is still well-used but there are 1-2 parking spaces available per block at any given time, granting access to the curb for those who need it most.
- **Improve parking compliance:** Update Bellevue's parking and curbside enforcement strategies to encourage curbside reliability, improve roadway safety, and incentivize compliance with posted parking time limits.
- **Achieve equitable outcomes:** Implement a pricing program that balances overall curb demands while continuing to provide parking capacity for visitors who drive.

The project team collected curbside parking data around the study area in September 2024 and throughout 2025 to better understand occupancy and turnover trends. Today, most on-street parking is set up as 2-hour parking and enforced from 7am – 6pm on all days except Sundays and holidays. Data collection results show that most locations throughout the study area are over the 80% occupancy threshold by late morning or early afternoon, indicating overcapacity for many hours of the day.

The project team conducted a robust public outreach process between February and August 2025 to share project concepts, receive feedback from the community and use input to inform recommendations. In February 2025, the project team hosted virtual and in-person open houses, conducted stakeholder focus groups, hosted stakeholder interviews, conducted field surveys, and published an online questionnaire. Between June and August 2025, the project team hosted tabling events near Downtown Park and went door-to-door to discuss paid parking concepts with local businesses. The project team met with community organizations and business groups like the Old Bellevue Merchants Association, Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, Bellevue Downtown Association, HopeLink, The Spring District, Bellevue's Network On Aging, and the Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network to share input and collect feedback. Feedback from stakeholders varied; while some stakeholders expressed hesitancy to implement paid on-street parking, others recognized the need to implement the program to better balance curbside and parking demands around busy areas like Downtown, Old Bellevue, and the Spring District. Stakeholders expressed more openness to paid parking concepts as the engagement process progressed over time.

Curb Pricing Implementation Strategy

Data collection findings and stakeholder feedback have been integrated with best practices, peer city reviews, and local assessments to create the draft Curb Pricing Implementation Strategy document (Strategy). The Strategy is intended to act as the primary reference framework to establish a curb pricing program in Bellevue. Parameters identified within the Strategy include:

- **Approach to set rates:** City Council would establish a rate range for paid on-street parking, while specific rates would be set administratively by the Transportation Director within the adopted range.

Rates would be adjusted on a regular basis (annual or less) based on regular curb data collection. Rates would nominally increase or decrease depending on curb occupancy and other metrics.

- **Expanded enforcement:** Current enforcement is funded through the General Fund and budget for this work has not been able to keep pace with the growth of the city or cost of providing enforcement. The Strategy outlines an enhanced curb enforcement approach funded through the parking revenue that would allow more active monitoring of parking overstay, load zone usage, travel lane blockages and other safety and operational issues. Increased enforcement resources would also actively monitor parking lots at city parks in the study area, as well as occasional active enforcement of Residential Parking Zones (RPZs) adjacent to the study area.
- **Payment approaches:** The program would feature various options to pay for parking. Users would be able to pay at physical pay stations, pay with mobile apps, or pay directly online without the need of a mobile app. Payment information would be accessible and offered in multiple languages.
- **Adjusted hours of operation:** The Strategy recommends shifting the hours of operation to begin later in the day and extend later in the evening in areas with restaurants that stay open late. All areas would be enforced seven days a week. Additionally, the Strategy proposes increasing time limits to 3 hours from the existing 2-hour parking arrangement to allow visitors more time to shop, dine, and explore the area.
- **Equity and Mitigation:** To minimize the impact of curb pricing on vulnerable populations, such as small business employees, the Strategy recommends several mitigation strategies. Approaches include: promoting transit and ORCA Pass programs, exploring employee permit parking arrangements for wage workers in targeted districts and providing funding to BellHop to transport workers from nearby transit hubs at the end of late restaurant shifts.
- **Capital costs, operating costs, and revenues:** Implementing a curb pricing program will require an initial one-time capital investment to install physical pay stations, fund mobile app development, replace existing parking signage, support public outreach activities for program launch, and fund other required tasks to institute the program. Once established, operating costs will include parking enforcement, staff costs to manage the program, service fees, and recurring maintenance needed for physical assets.
- **Reinvestment concepts:** Based on financial modeling completed during the Curb Pricing Study process, operating revenues are anticipated to exceed operating costs within one year of full implementation of paid on-street parking. Net revenues from curb pricing will be directed towards implementing Curb Practices identified within the CMP, as well as other ideas proposed by the community during the Curb Pricing Study engagement process. Key curb enhancements include improved management of passenger and commercial load zones, American Disability Act (ADA) compliant on-street parking, wayfinding to on-street and off-street parking and improvements to the pedestrian realm adjacent to the curb.
- **Advisory Committee:** To ensure program transparency and establish continuous communication between city staff and the community at large, the Strategy recommends the creation of a “Curb Pricing Advisory Committee” (CPAC) that would be leveraged to help inform program direction and reinvestment priorities. The CPAC would consist of community stakeholders affected by curb pricing approaches.

Next Steps

If directed by Council, staff would return in Q1-2026 to present the ordinance language and code changes required to implement paid on-street parking. Upon approval of the code changes, staff would work through various administrative tasks through the remainder of the year with a goal of deploying the program in Q1-2027.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

The Curb Pricing Study and associated Implementation Strategy are aligned with the following Comprehensive Plan policies:

- TR-34: Consider implementation of a pay-for curb use program.
- TR-39: Develop and implement a curb management plan that designates a curb typology, establishes a pay-for curb use program recommendation, facilitates dynamic curbside management and accounts for various movement, access, and placemaking functionalities.

Fiscal Impact

Initial one-time capital investments will be addressed through a budget proposal in the 2027/28 biennium. Once operational, revenues from the curb pricing program will reimburse these one-time costs and cover annual operating costs. Any additional revenue will be reinvested towards curb practices identified in the CMP and other concepts identified in the Implementation Strategy.

OPTIONS

1. Direct staff to proceed with administrative tasks that would allow for the advent of paid on-street parking in Bellevue's Urban Core neighborhoods of Downtown, BelRed and Wilburton and prepare an ordinance and amendments to the Bellevue City Code for consideration and action at a future meeting.
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Curb Pricing Implementation Strategy

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A