

# Bellevue Curb Pricing Study

## Question and Answers from Virtual Open House

The Curb Pricing Study is an initiative aimed at managing the growing demand for curb space in the city's Urban Core neighborhoods, including Downtown, BelRed and Wilburton. The study is exploring strategies to optimize curb usage, improve curbside accessibility and potentially implement a curb pricing program.

Two public open houses were held in February 2025 to gather feedback from the community and provide project information. The following is a compilation of questions and answers from the virtual open house held on Monday, February 10, addressing various aspects of the study.

- 1) Where would money collected from a curb pricing program go?
  - a. The financial modeling exercise has not yet been conducted at this stage in the project. However, the city intends to have revenues support the program, which would include increased data collection, enforcement and curb use monitoring. If there was excess revenue, the city would seek to reinvest it back into the community.
- 2) Why not make the study citywide?
  - a. The Curb Pricing Study is focused on the Urban Core neighborhoods of Bellevue (Downtown, BelRed and Wilburton). This is where the majority of mixed-use density, shopping and other major destinations lie. Most other areas of Bellevue have primarily residential parking on-street, which sees less demand on curb space generally. This means pricing would not be an effective tool in these lower density areas.
- 3) Why not monitor the curb more first and see how that impacts utilization and turnover?
  - a. Current enforcement resources are not sufficient to properly monitor and enforce curbside violations. Demands at the curb have increased significantly in the last decade while curb enforcement resources have stayed consistent. However, additional monitoring alone would not solve existing problems.
- 4) How will the plan improve accessibility?
  - a. Many areas of the curb are not accessible today due to overuse, so when people try to find a parking space, they are unsuccessful. Some blocks were

recently observed to be more than 100% occupied, which means illegal parking was happening, such as double parking. Paid street parking helps manage demand. When we study other communities, implementing paid parking helps organize the curb better. There are more resources to ensure compliance, and prices are set appropriately to manage demands. We don't want to continue the condition where people are unable to find spaces and eventually choose to avoid that area.

- 5) How will this affect people parking who have a disability? Will the spots be free?
  - a. The [Curb Management Plan](#) (CMP) has strategies to expand the use of accessible parking spaces in the study area. State law (RCW 46.61.582) dictates free parking for displaying an ADA placard, although there are nuances. Creating this curb pricing program would aim to ensure that spaces would be available more frequently in front of destinations, which would minimize mobility challenges.
- 6) Does this project apply to parks in the study area, such as Downtown Park and Ashwood Park?
  - a. At this time, parking areas at city parks are not part of the study. The project team is working with the city's Parks and Community Services Department to improve enforcement and compliance with posted time limits at the parks.
- 7) What was the point of the mentimeter exercise during the virtual Open House?
  - a. It was to engage with the project team and help the project team better understand who was attending the meeting.
- 8) What will public survey data be used for?
  - a. The project team intends to report findings back to the Transportation Commission and highlight the demographics of survey participants. We also understand that these events do not capture the entire community but simply provide a snapshot of sentiments.
- 9) How many parking spaces are at the (Bellevue Square) Mall?
  - a. We have not done a survey of any off-street parking inventories as part of this project. However, a study completed in 2013 identified roughly 42,000 off-street parking spaces in the downtown vicinity. Today, there are approximately 500 on-street parking stalls in the area encompassing

Downtown and Old Bellevue. On-street parking supply is likely less than 1% of total parking in all of downtown.

10) What other options did you consider before deciding payment had to be implemented?

- a. No determination has been made yet on whether payment will be implemented. The Transportation Commission will work to provide a final recommendation to council on whether to implement curb pricing in the fall of 2025. Other approaches have been attempted in the past, including targeted enforcement, direct community outreach, data collection and reaching out to shuttle operators and rideshare companies to improve conditions. During development of the CMP, the Transportation Commission followed best practice guidance which primarily focuses on a paid parking approach. Curb pricing is the best way to ensure the curb is accessible and balanced.

11) Will there be a parking permit program for residents?

- a. There are no plans to create a residential permit program for the study area. Most parking needs are achieved with off-street parking. Some adjacent neighborhoods have residential parking zones (RPZs) where street parking is primarily used by residents. The purpose of these RPZ programs today is to prevent general visitor parking overflow that may arise from Downtown.

12) Have we considered expanding the Bellevue shuttle service in downtown to encourage drivers to park further away?

- a. This shuttle is called Bellhop and is run privately by Visit Bellevue. It is not a city program. Visit Bellevue is looking for ways to expand in the future, pending funding.

13) How will the city manage delivery vehicles?

- a. Part of the broad curb management strategy is to open up more curb space for delivery activities where needed. Many delivery vehicles are parking illegally today. Curb pricing will help get us to that desired accessibility and target 80% occupancy goal while hopefully reducing illegal parking.

14) Will a meter program require more employee time? What is metering versus monitoring?

- a. Many cities have a combination of payment collection hardware on the street and mobile payment options. Since the pandemic, more cities have moved to using mobile options. Staff time to monitor the system would be paid for through the program. Metering is focused on collecting payment, while monitoring is focused on observing behavior and improving compliance.

15) How will monitoring help if you aren't going to monitor more than every two hours?

- a. The curb pricing program will aim to improve monitoring, both in terms of efficiency and frequency. Right now, enforcement officers cannot manage illegal parking activity or load zone violations.

16) Was monitoring conducted during the data study? How many Diamond Parking employees monitor downtown?

- a. Yes, monitoring was conducted during the study. There is one Diamond Parking officer who enforces parking in the study area. Diamond Parking is the company that currently holds the city contract for parking enforcement in downtown.

17) Why is there light enforcement today?

- a. The city budget has many competing needs, and there is not enough money currently to fully manage and enforce the curb areas in the study area today. Enforcement costs have risen while budget allotment has stayed the same.

18) How do we know people are circling the block?

- a. Typically, people circle the block when the curb is full. Also, the project team conducted intercept surveys on the street which asked for people's experiences of parking at that moment. Some respondents indicated they circled the block before finding parking.

19) How do delivery services impact illegal parking and circling? How will paid parking solve the issue?

- a. Delivery services have been observed to park in illegal spots because they cannot get to the curb. The CMP outlines steps to get a better handle on delivery zones. Improved enforcement can help change behavior.

20) Have we investigated painting lines to delineate spots?

- a. In some other cities, painted lines create less efficiency. As vehicles get larger, sometimes we have to make stalls to fit them, so that there are more gaps with stalls when smaller cars are parked.

21) Who is occupying the stalls? Employees, visitors, residents?

- a. We don't know the specific split because gathering that data is very challenging. There is anecdotal data on users of the curb that we collect from interviews and observations.

22) How are businesses helped by charging their customers to park?

- a. In other communities, paid parking has improved the access to the curb, which results in restaurants doing more covers and visitors making reservations on time. Some communities show an increase in sales tax receipts after paid parking is installed because it makes those areas more desirable to visit. Extended paid parking in some areas had a positive influence on business revenues.

23) How will this affect curbside EV charging spaces?

- a. Two on-street spaces exist today in the study area. We have not yet identified what charging at these spots might look like. There are no plans to add more EV charging on the street at this time, although the CMP outlines strategies to expand curbside EV chargers in the long-term.

24) Why is the study not collaborating with the building group?

- a. The Development Services Department is working with the project team on this effort. This project has no bearing on how parking is created through development.

25) How will the city address parking for employees and residents who are used to parking for free?

- a. The study will look at strategies to provide parking for employees. Other communities have strategies such as a district parking permit arrangement or improved transit services. The project will look at some ideas in the implementation plan.

26) Will parking validation continue or become more prevalent?

- a. Some garages do validate today. However, validation can be confusing for users and expensive for businesses. If the patron doesn't know where they

parked or didn't read a sign, they may not be able to get validation from businesses, which can result in poor reviews to the business.

27) Why include the Spring District and Wilburton when these areas can't compare to Old Bellevue and Downtown?

- a. There is a severe parking crunch in the Spring District today, even though off-street parking does exist. The property manager is struggling to find tenants due to limited parking. The study area includes places where growth is planned to occur, and as such, curb demands will increase long-term, so we want to be prepared.

28) When are you planning to conduct the parking study? Who is the firm hired? What time of year will this occur?

- a. The data collection has already happened. Walker Consultants was the company hired to lead the collection. Details on data will be uploaded to the project webpage before the next Transportation Commission meeting in March.

29) Have we informed the Old Bellevue Merchants Association (OBMA) about this project?

- a. The project team has met with the OBMA board twice in recent weeks (February 6 and 13, 2025). We will also meet with them as requested through the project.

30) Is there data that showed parking working when there was summer curbside dining going on, when many parking spaces were closed?

- a. We don't have specific data on this. However, these parking closures and other full roadway closures that have happened on Main Street still resulted in many visitors to Old Bellevue.

31) Why weren't Parks and Community Services staff in the virtual open house on February 10?

- a. The project team is working closely with the Parks and Community Services Department throughout the process.

32) What if the cost of enforcement is more than the cost of implementing a paid parking system?

- a. It's not so much about the cost of enforcement, but more about the understanding of demand, which is currently exceeding capacity. Added revenues will augment enforcement, which will help reduce curb violations in parking areas and also travel lanes and bike lanes.
- 33) Do companies that run employer shuttles pay for the curb today?
- a. Yes, they currently pay for the curb through a permit system.