



The Corporation of the City of Courtenay

Staff Report

To: Council

File No.: 5335-20

From: Director of Operational Services

Date: April 2, 2025

Subject: 6th Street Parking Review – Parking Enhancement Option

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the results of a detailed analysis of both the current state and future opportunities for enhanced on-street parking throughout the 6th Street corridor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

With future 6th Street active transportation projects contemplated within the corridor, from the Courtenay River to Harmston Avenue, and a new downtown Transit exchange, along England Ave between 6th Street and 8th Street, a detailed parking review was completed. The results indicate that the impacts of these active transportation and transit initiatives on available parking can be reduced through strategic corridor enhancements and the implementation of an effective parking management program.

BACKGROUND:

In June 2024, Council was presented with a staff report that collected parking data for the downtown core area that would allow for future analysis and provide insight into parking behaviours and/or future needs. Results indicated times of peak parking and the duration of occupancy in each area throughout the day for weekdays and weekends. The report revealed that timed parking zones, including both on-street and off-street parking, are not achieving the intended availability of spaces due to a lack of enforcement.

On June 12, 2024, Council resolved:

“THAT Council receive the “Downtown Courtenay Parking Study” for information and that the study be used as a baseline data set to support future active transportation design standards, regulatory standards, parking enforcement standards, and the implementation of the Official Community Plan.”

DISCUSSION:

The 6th Street corridor is a vibrant and popular destination within the downtown core. The active transportation projects that are proposed along 6th Street will further enhance this destination feature and complement the current amenities. In anticipation of these improvements, staff selected a consultant to facilitate a review of the currently available parking and its functional use along 6th Street from Fitzgerald Avenue to the Courtenay River. Of the total 97 available parking spaces along 6th Street, occupancy ranges between 70-85% on a typical weekday (9:30 AM – 4 PM). This translates to an actual demand of 68 to 82 spaces. Furthermore, under the current conditions, 50-60 % of these spaces are occupied by overstay vehicles beyond the 2-hour threshold, resulting in a current daily demand of 38 to 49 spaces of the 97 available.

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The 6th Street active transportation corridor enhancements will prompt migration and inclusion of the Fitzgerald Avenue to Harmston Avenue corridor to the overall downtown environment. To support this, parking improvements are being proposed (as defined in Appendix I) to increase parking capacity from the current 12 parallel parking spaces to approximately 29 angle parking spaces, a gain of 17 spaces.

The contemplated active transportation improvements along the 6th Street corridor would result in the total loss of 49 spaces along the south side only, from the Courtenay River to Harmston Ave. With the addition of the 17 spaces and by unlocking up to 24 spaces through parking restriction enforcement, the net loss of parking could be as low as 8 parking spaces.

With the relocation of the downtown transit exchange from its current location on Cliffe Avenue at 4th Street to the proposed new location on England Avenue, between 6th Street and 8th Street (west side only), a parking offset is expected to result. Preliminary route planning indicates that transit bus staging will no longer be required on Cliffe Avenue, resulting in a regain of up to 8 parallel parking spaces along this corridor. The offsetting amount of angle parking space loss on England Avenue is estimated at 14, resulting in an overall net loss of 6 parking spaces.

These impending projects coupled with the recommended improvements, combine for a total projected loss of approximately 14 parking spaces within the downtown core; actual loss equates to 38 spaces without parking enforcement. Upon further investigation, the corridors adjacent to 6th Street between Fitzgerald Avenue and the Courtenay River do appear to have some capacity to absorb a nominal increase in parking and this capacity could be further increased through the use of effective parking enforcement tools.

Downtown Parking Management

The City prioritizes enforcing bylaws related to safety and environmental issues, as outlined in the City's Bylaw Compliance Strategy. Increasing demands on bylaw services—due to new regulations (e.g., smoking, air quality, short-term rentals etc.) and anticipated growth from provincial land-use changes—necessitate a Downtown Parking Management Program. A comprehensive program, with clearly stated objectives aligned with community and council priorities, can effectively address these increasing demands. Without this program, increased parking enforcement will strain limited resources and divert them from other essential bylaw services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The interim parking enhancements option for 6th Street between Fitzgerald Avenue and Harmston Avenue could be implemented in a paint-only format and could be completed through the use of the City's 2025 operational maintenance budget at an estimated cost of ~\$5,000. A more fulsome enhancement option, including curb extensions and new sidewalks, would be subject to future capital works and budget approval.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

Under the Council Strategic Priorities 2023-2026, Streets and Transportation (Page 7);
This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

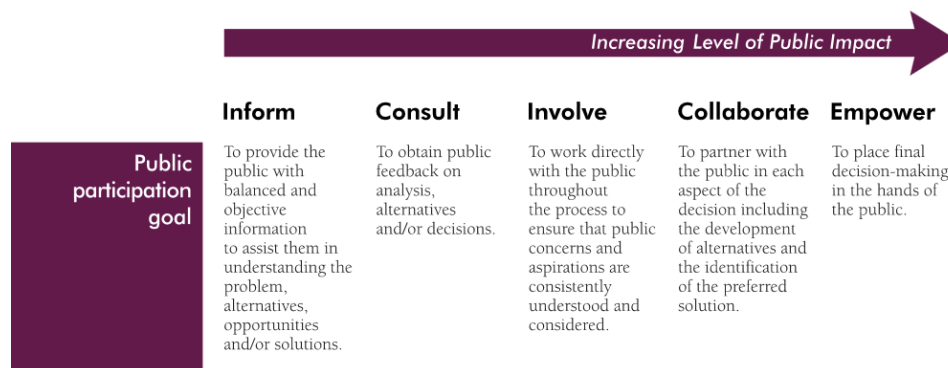
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- Streets and Transportation - Review City's approach to parking standards downtown: Parking restrictions and ticketing

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Staff would inform the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:

http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/IAP2%20Spectrum_vertical.pdf



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OPTIONS:

1. THAT Council endorse parking enhancements along 6th Street corridor between Fitzgerald Avenue and Harmston Avenue and direct staff to implement angle parking on the north side of the corridor; and

THAT Council direct staff to report back on approaches for developing a Downtown Parking Management Program including enforcement options.

2. THAT Council endorse parking enhancements along 6th Street corridor between Fitzgerald Avenue and Harmston Avenue and direct staff to implement angle parking on the north side of the corridor; and

THAT Council endorse parking enforcement standards along 6th Street corridor from the Courtenay River to Harmston Avenue seeking to optimize parking utilization.

3. THAT Council provide alternate direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Appendix 1 - Parking Enhancements Map

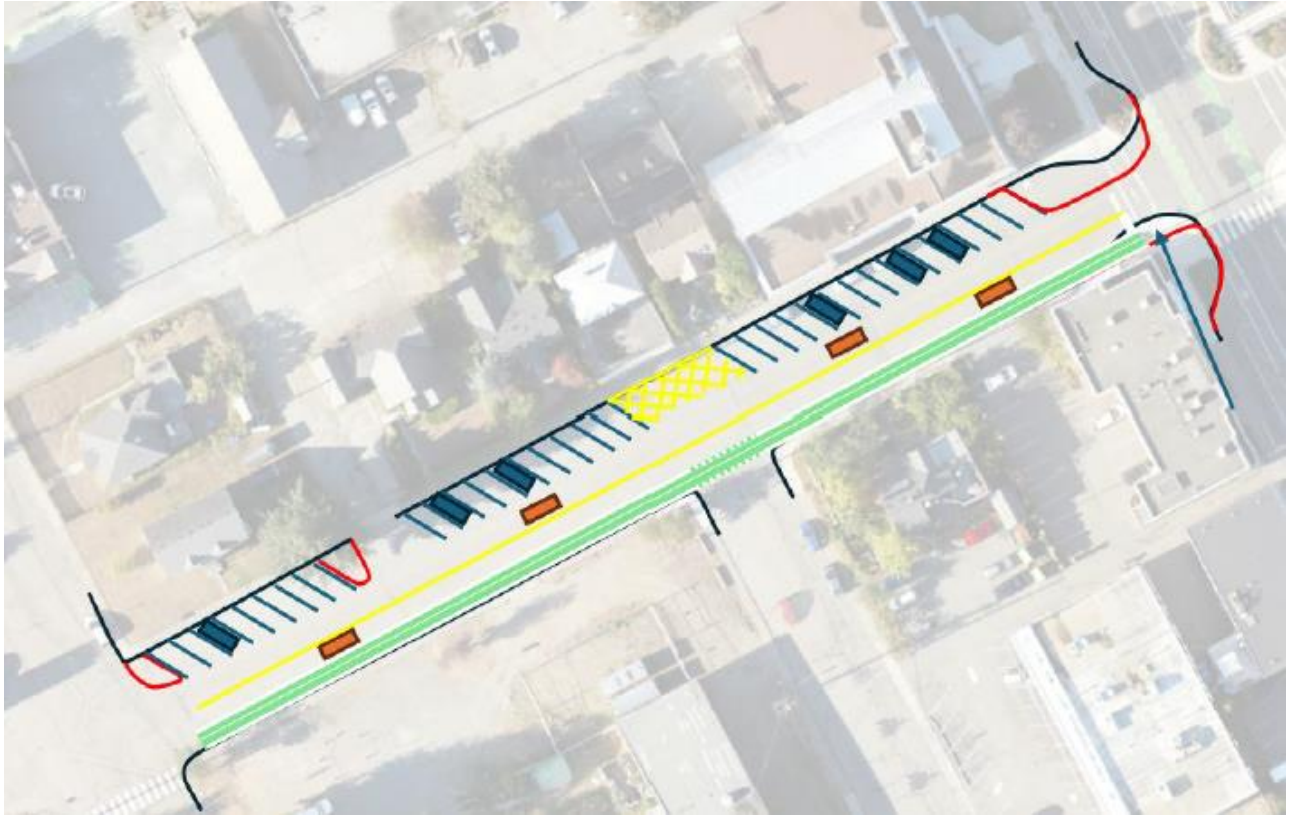
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Concurrence: Kyle Shaw, Director of Operational Services – Acting City Manager (CAO)

APPENDIX I – Parking Enhancements – 6th Street from Harmston Avenue to Fitzgerald Avenue

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**Image not to scale – number of actual parking spaces are subject to layout and industry design standards.*