



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: October 8, 2024  
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: November 26, 2024  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Report Back on Parking Meter Fees in Chinatown and Amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law and the Parking Meter By-law

### Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, amendments to the Parking Meter By-law, generally in accordance with Appendix A, that will result in changes including:
  - i. on-street parking meter fees being averaged for each defined geographic sector based on the curbside occupancy rate in that sector, with the changes estimated to be revenue neutral;
  - ii. the lowest on-street parking meter fees being raised from \$1 per hour to \$1.50 per hour, with the estimated incremental annual revenue of \$5.75 million to be incorporated into 2026 revenue projections;
  - iii. on-street pay parking ending at 6 pm in areas with low parking occupancy, with the estimated annual revenue loss of \$250,000 managed within the City's 2026 operating budget; and
  - iv. vehicles using on-street electric vehicle charging stations being charged based on energy used rather than time.
- B. THAT Council approve, in principle, amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law as detailed in this report and generally in accordance with Appendix B.
- C. THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to prepare and bring forward for enactment amendments to the Parking Meter By-law and Street and Traffic By-law as generally outlined in Appendices A and B.

## **Purpose and Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with results of the pilot that set on-street parking meter fees in Chinatown to \$2 per hour and to recommend refinements to the City's parking meter policy to apply a similar approach city-wide.

On June 1, 2023, parking meter fees in Chinatown were set to \$2 per hour from 9 am to 10 pm to support revitalization efforts for the neighbourhood. Prior to this date, parking meter fees varied by block and ranged from \$1 to \$5 per hour, creating a perception that parking meter fees were high throughout Chinatown. Upon comparing parking transaction data from one year before June 1, 2023 to one year afterwards, there was a 12 percent increase in parking transactions and a 10 percent (5 minute) increase in parking duration. Feedback from businesses on this initiative were positive, with businesses noting that customers were more likely to shop at more than one store, and an increase in new customers and those who had been avoiding Chinatown.

Based on the success of having uniform parking meter fees throughout Chinatown, staff recommend averaging parking meter fees for other neighbourhoods and business improvement areas. As part of this work, staff recommend adjusting the lowest parking meter fee from \$1 per hour to \$1.50 per hour to account for inflation and increased processing fees, as well as making parking free after 6 pm in areas with very low parking occupancy. Staff also recommend minor amendments to the Parking Meter By-law and Street and Traffic By-law to simplify and improve clarity of various sections, including shifting to energy-based rather than time-based rates for electric vehicle (EV) charging fees. Collectively, these proposed changes aim to improve the customer experience by providing clear and consistent parking pricing for each neighbourhood.

## **Council Authority/Previous Decisions**

- Parking meter fees and the methodology for adjustments are prescribed in the Parking Meter By-law.
- The Street and Traffic By-law regulates traffic and the use of streets.
- On [April 26, 2023](#), Council directed staff to set on-street parking meter fees in Chinatown to \$2 per hour as a pilot until December 31, 2024.

## **City Manager's Comments**

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

## **Context and Background**

The City's current on-street parking meter policy was established in 2016, with the intention of helping customers and visitors find parking close to their destinations. The policy strives to have at least one to two parking spaces available on each block, to support business activity and minimize unnecessary searching for parking.

Currently, parking meter fees are adjusted annually on a block-by-block basis based on the parking occupancies observed during the year. When the average parking occupancy of a block is greater than 85 percent, the parking meter fee is raised by \$1 per hour. Conversely, when the occupancy of a block is less than 60 percent, the parking meter fee is reduced by \$1 per hour to no lower than \$1 per hour.

Based on these rules, prior to June 1, 2023, parking meter fees in Chinatown ranged from \$1 to \$5 per hour. To provide clear and consistent pricing to customers, all parking meter fees in Chinatown were set at \$2 per hour, as a pilot until the end of 2024. Other business improvement associations have since requested similar averaging of parking meter fees in their neighbourhoods.

In addition to reporting back on parking in Chinatown, this report recommends refining the City's on-street parking meter policy, updating fees related to electric vehicle charging and zero-emission carshare vehicles and making other minor by-law amendments to improve clarity.

## **Discussion**

### Chinatown Parking Analysis

Staff compared parking transactions in Chinatown from one year before to one year after June 1, 2023, when parking meter fees were set to \$2 per hour, and found the following:

- 12 percent increase in the number of parking transactions
- 10 percent increase in parking duration (5 minutes)
- 10.8 percent reduction in parking meter revenue (\$130,000)

Further analysis is included in Appendix C.

Comments received from the Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Area Society, Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association, Chinese Benevolent Association of Vancouver and the National Congress of Chinese Canadians on this initiative were positive, as they indicated that customers were less hurried when they came to Chinatown and were more likely to shop at more than one store during their visit. This provides a mutually beneficial 'spill-over' effect, as customers destined for a particular shop, restaurant or service end up supporting other businesses as well. Businesses also noted that the affordable parking meter fees has helped attract more customers, particularly those who had previously avoided Chinatown due to perceived high costs or parking difficulties, as well as new visitors and tourists. Businesses were supportive of retaining this initiative in an effort to continue to help revitalize Chinatown.

### Refined Parking Meter Policy

Based on the success of uniform parking meter fees throughout Chinatown, staff recommend applying a similar approach for other neighbourhoods and business improvement areas. The proposed adjustments to the City's parking meter policy include the following:

- Grouping blocks with similar attributes in a neighbourhood into a sector and averaging the current parking meter fees for the blocks within each sector. This averaging would be done separately for daytime and evening parking meter fees to acknowledge the different parking demands during those periods as well as seasonally if applicable, and the resulting parking meter fee for the sector would be rounded to 50 cent increments.

- Refining the annual occupancy-based parking meter fee adjustments to be in 50 cent increments rather than \$1 increments, to help reduce the impact of the change each year. The occupancy thresholds for increases and decreases would remain unchanged, with meter fees on a block or sector increasing by 50 cents if the parking occupancy is over 85 percent and decreasing by 50 cents if the parking occupancy is less than 60 percent.
- As part of this work, adjusting the lowest parking meter fees from \$1 per hour to \$1.50 per hour to account for inflation and credit and debit card processing fees. The lowest parking meter fees have not been adjusted since 2012.
- For blocks where the parking occupancy is less than 20 percent after 6 pm and the parking meter fees are \$1 per hour, reducing the parking meter fee to \$0 after 6 pm.

The proposed sectors are set out in Appendix A.

Using this methodology, sector-based parking meter fees are expected to range from \$1.50 to \$6.50 per hour, with the majority being \$2.50 per hour or less, whereas existing parking meter fees range from \$1 to \$11 per hour. These adjustments are anticipated to help improve the customer experience by providing more certainty and less variability of parking meter fees in an area, while continuing to use a data-informed approach to adjust parking meter fees based on demand.

#### Other Amendments to the Parking Meter and Street and Traffic By-laws

In addition to the refined parking meter policy, staff recommend amendments to the Parking Meter By-law and the Street and Traffic By-law as set out below.

Updates to the Parking Meter By-law:

- Adding a definition for “Curbside Occupancy Rate”, rephrasing Section 5A to use simpler language and make it easier to understand, and removing definitions related to peak and maximum occupancy that are no longer relevant;
- Removing definitions and clauses related to interim occupancy, as staff now have access to more complete data sets to conduct more comprehensive analysis so these clauses are no longer relevant;
- Changing subsections in Section 5A that describe Charging Station energy prices to be based on electricity used rather than solely on time parked. This recognizes that some vehicles can draw a charge faster and thus currently would pay less, and conversely that the power output of a charger can be variable, which may cause a vehicle to need to stay longer to obtain a full charge. Energy-based rates are more equitable and align with a similar change by BC Hydro;
- Deleting Subsection 5B (1) as the \$2 per hour meter rates in Chinatown are captured by the proposed metered sector rates; and
- Deleting Subsection 5B (2) as staff no longer recommend collecting transaction fees for mobile parking payments.

Updates to the Street and Traffic By-law:

- Updating the names of the three West End residential parking permit zones to be West End Plateau, Davie-Beach and Denman West;
- Changing Sections 23.5 and 23.6(d) to extend waiving of zero emission car share vehicle residential parking permit fees until the end of 2030 and to retain discounted fees for reserved on-street zero emission car share vehicle spaces until the end of 2030, to continue to promote adoption of zero emission vehicles in the car share industry and align with climate emergency and Transportation 2040 goals. These incentives would otherwise expire at the end of 2024;
- Restructuring Sections 20.1 and 20.2 regarding parking of large vehicles to simplify the wording and clarify the intended meaning; and
- Updating the current definition of “emergency vehicle” to include a vehicle driven by a sheriff when transporting someone in their legal custody, to align with the definition in the Motor Vehicle Act.

**Financial Implications**

The refined parking meter policy is anticipated to generate \$5.75 million in incremental parking meter revenue on an annual basis, with the full amount expected to be realized in 2026. For 2025, the incremental parking meter revenue is estimated at \$3 million, as implementation of the policy at parking meters and pay stations is anticipated by July 1, 2025. This amount has been incorporated into the proposed 2025 operating budget.

These revenue estimates assume that the amount of parking activity remains similar to post-pandemic levels observed in 2023 and 2024. Revenue impacts from the change to energy-based fees for EV charging are expected to be neutral.

**Legal Implications**

If the Recommendations in this report are approved, amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law and the Parking Meter By-law are required. The proposed amendments are authorized by the Vancouver Charter and the Motor Vehicle Act.

\* \* \* \* \*

**APPENDIX A**  
**DRAFT By-law to amend Parking Meter By-law No. 2952**

1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of the Parking Meter By-law.
2. Council strikes out the following definitions from section 2:

“Existing Metered Zone”, “New Metered Zone”, “Interim Maximum Daytime Charging Station Occupancy”, “Interim Maximum Evening Charging Station Occupancy”, “Interim Maximum Overnight Charging Station Occupancy”, “Interim Peak Daytime Curbside Occupancy Rate”, “Interim Peak Evening Curbside Occupancy Rate”, “Maximum Daytime Charging Station Occupancy”, “Maximum Evening Charging Station Occupancy”, “Maximum Overnight Charging Station Occupancy”, “Peak Daytime Curbside Occupancy Rate”, and “Peak Evening Curbside Occupancy Rate”.

3. Council adds the following new definitions to section 2 in correct alphabetical order:

““Curbside Occupancy Rate” is the ratio of the number of occupied spaces in a sector to the total number of spaces in a sector, expressed as a percentage that is calculated based on selected data collected by the City throughout the calendar year for specified time periods. For sectors that have seasonal fees, this calculation is done separately for each period rather than using data for the entire calendar year.” and

““Metered Sector” means any street or portion of a street in any area contained within bold black lines in any of the maps attached as Schedule A to this By-law.”.

4. Council strikes all of section 5A and section 5B and replaces them as follows:

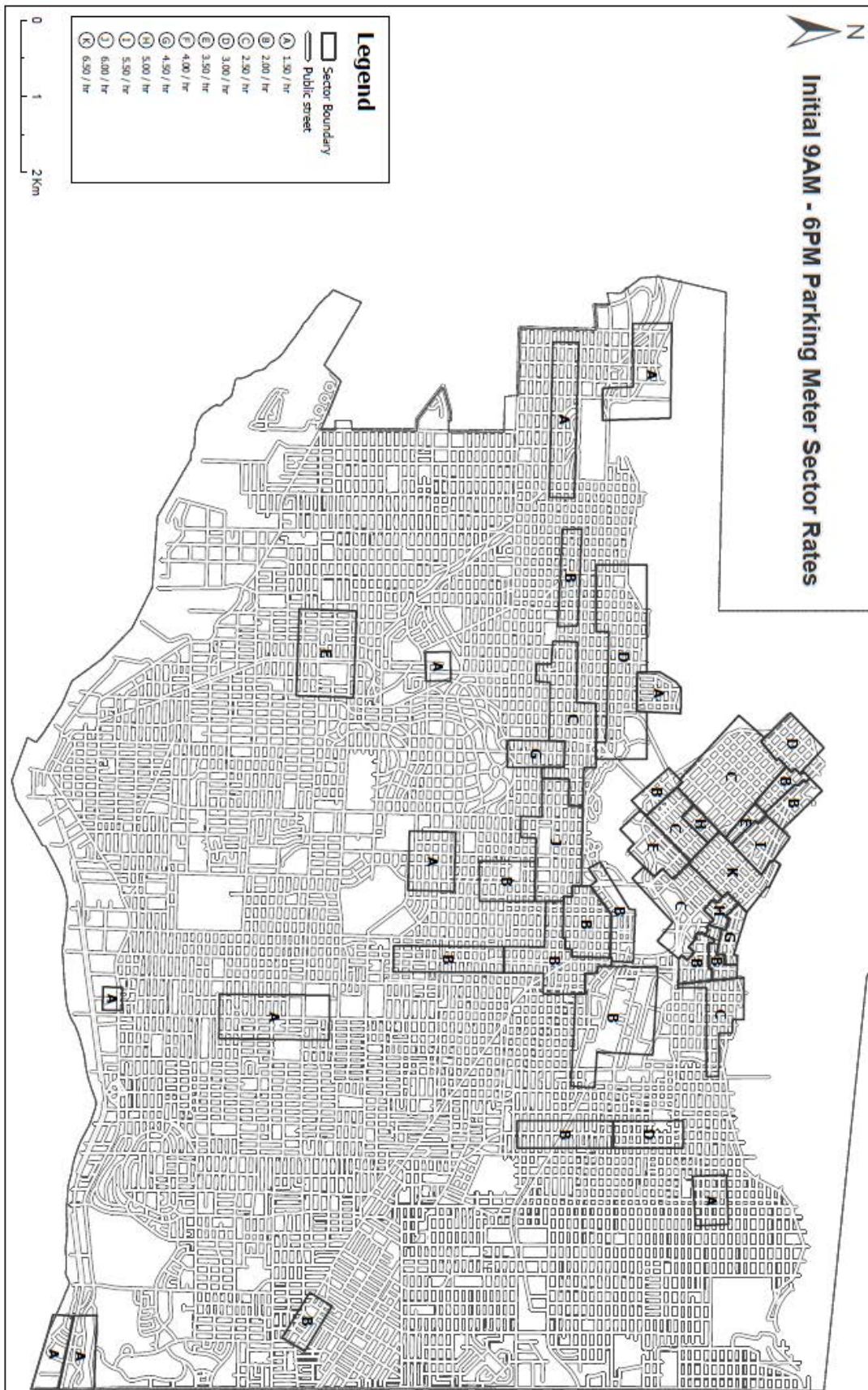
**“5A: METER RATE SECTORS**

- (1) For the purpose of metered parking fees, metered sectors are shown in Schedule A.
- (2) Within these metered sectors:
  - (a) fees are set at the same value for the whole metered sector, and
  - (b) seasonal fees can be set for different periods of the year.

**5B. METER RATES:**

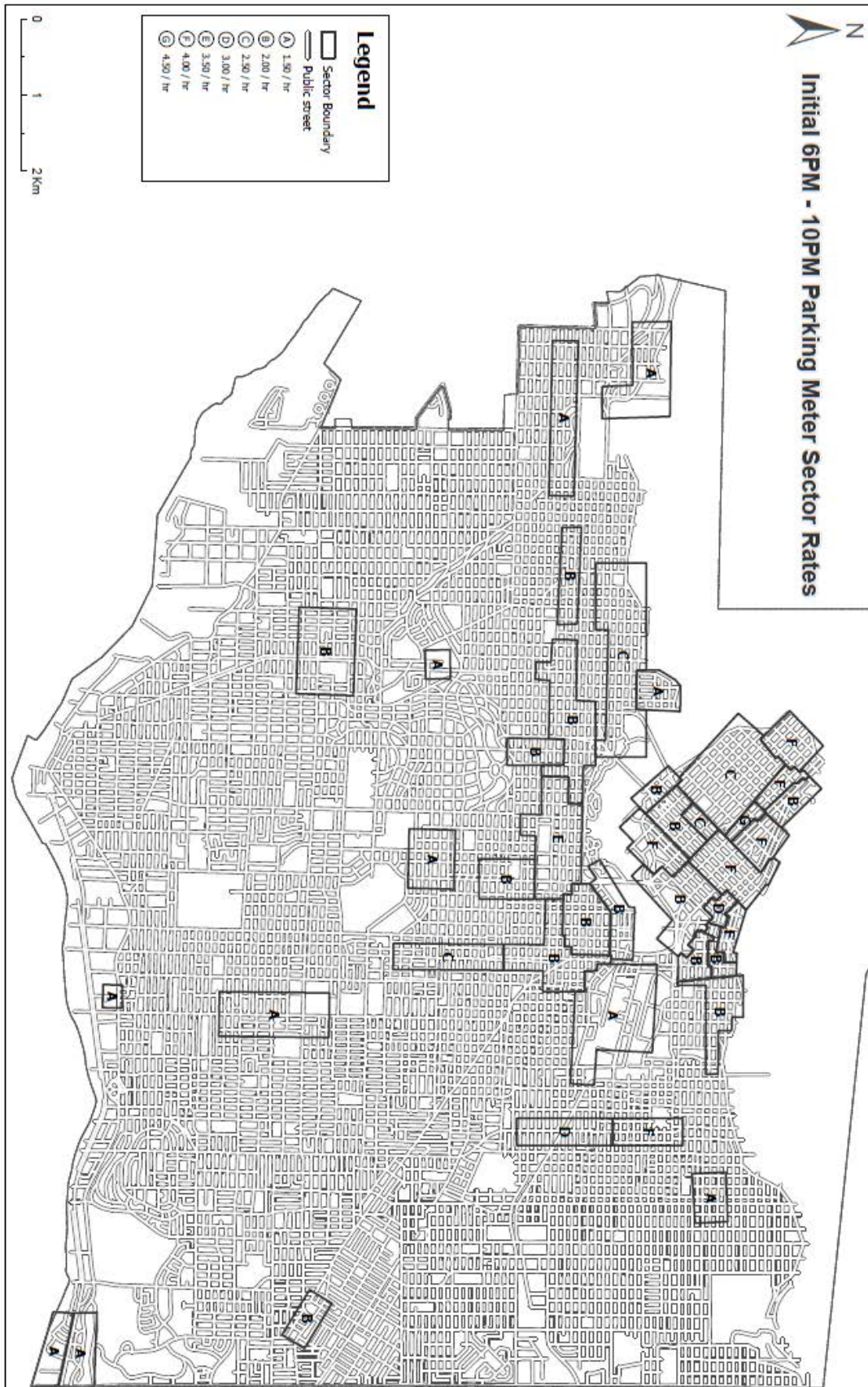
- (1) The metered rates in effect at the time of enactment of this section shall remain in place until the meters can be altered to reflect Schedule A. After alteration, the initial metered rates for all parking spaces in a metered sector shall be the rate shown for that sector in Schedule A. All meters shall be altered to reflect the new initial metered rates in Schedule A no later than July 1, 2025.
- (2) Every new meter installed in a metered sector pursuant to this By-law shall, when first installed, be subject to the same rate at the time of installment as the present rate imposed under this By-law for the rest of the sector, unless the closest metered sector is more than 2 full city blocks away from the new meters, in which case the new meters shall have a rate at the time of installment of \$1.50 per hour.

- (3) If the Curbside Occupancy Rate in a metered sector is more than 85% in a calendar year, then the fee the subsequent calendar year shall be increased by \$0.50 per hour no later than April 1 of that year. Curbside Occupancy Rate is calculated and meter rates are adjusted separately for the following time periods:
    - (a) Between 9 am and 6 pm, and
    - (b) Between 6 pm and 10 pm.
  - (4) If the Curbside Occupancy Rate in a metered sector is less than 60% in a calendar year, then the fee the subsequent calendar year shall be decreased by \$0.50 per hour no later than April 1 of that year. Curbside Occupancy Rate is calculated and meter rates are adjusted separately for the following time periods:
    - (a) Between 9 am and 6 pm, and
    - (b) Between 6 pm and 10 pm.
  - (5) If the metered sector contains electric vehicle charging stations, then a 10 pm to 9 am parking rate shall be calculated for the metered sector in accordance with subsections (3) and (4).
  - (6) Sub-section 5A(4) and (5) cannot cause a meter to be subject to a fee less than \$1.50 per hour.
  - (7) If the Curbside Occupancy Rate between 6 pm and 10 pm in a metered sector is 20% or less in a calendar year and the current hourly rate is \$1.50 then the fee the subsequent calendar year shall be decreased to zero no later than April 1 of that year.
  - (8) The metered rates for all Level 2 Charging Stations in an existing metered sector shall be the price in the metered sector plus an additional \$0.2865 per kWh.
  - (9) The metered rates for all Level 2 Charging Stations not in an existing metered sector shall be \$0.2865 per kWh.
  - (10) The metered rates for all Direct Current Fast Charging Stations with a nominal power output of 25kW or higher in an existing metered sector shall be the price in the metered sector plus an additional \$0.3479 per kWh and an idle fee of \$0.40 per min after a five minute grace period following a full charge.
  - (11) The metered rates for all Direct Current Fast Charging Stations with a nominal power output of 25kW or higher not in an existing metered sector shall be \$0.3479 per kWh plus an idle fee of \$0.40 per min after a five minute grace period following a full charge.”.
5. Council strikes out Schedule A and replaces it as follows:

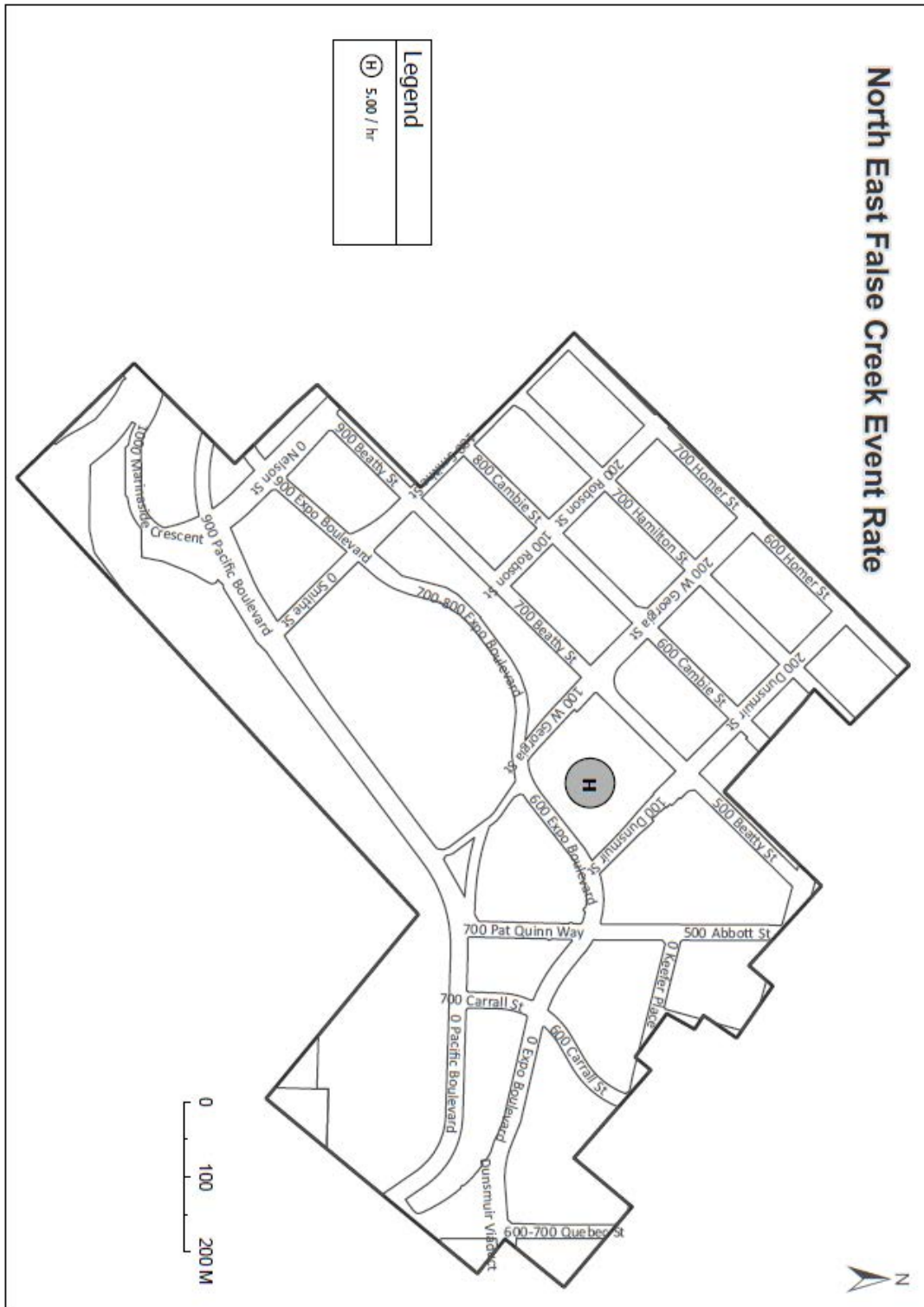














**APPENDIX B**  
**DRAFT By-law to amend Street and Traffic By-law No. 2849**

1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of the Street and Traffic By-law No. 2849.

2. In section 3, Council strikes the definitions of “Emergency Vehicle”, “Existing West End Permit Holder”, “Long-Term West End Resident Permit Holder”, “Low Income Permit Holder” and “New Permit Holder” and replaces them, respectively, as follows:

““Emergency Vehicle” means any vehicle of a fire department, a police department, an ambulance service or a vehicle driven by a sheriff in the discharge of a sheriff’s duties under the Sheriff Act, and includes any other vehicle designated as such by the Chief Constable.”,

““Existing West End Permit Holder” means a residential parking permit holder in the Denman West, West End Plateau or Davie-Beach areas who held a residential parking permit valid in any of those areas before August 31, 2017, and has not allowed it to lapse for more than 90 consecutive days since that date.”,

““Long-Term West End Resident Permit Holder” means a residential parking permit holder who has continuously lived in the Denman West, West End Plateau or Davie-Beach areas since August 31, 2017, has not allowed the permit to lapse for more than 90 consecutive days since it was obtained, and has not been an existing West End permit holder.”,

““Low Income Permit Holder” means a residential parking permit holder in the Denman West, West End Plateau or Davie-Beach areas who is qualified to enrol in the Vancouver Park Board’s Leisure Access Program, or a substantially similar program.”, and

““New Permit Holder” means a residential parking permit holder in the Denman West, West End Plateau or Davie-Beach areas who was not a permit holder on August 31, 2017 and obtains a permit after that date.”.

3. Council strikes all of sections 20.1 and 20.2 and replaces them with the following:

“20.1 An owner, registered owner, lessee or operator of a vehicle which:

- (i) has a height that exceeds 2.2 metres, or
- (ii) has an overall length that exceeds 6.4 metres, or
- (iii) that is designed primarily for the conveyance of passengers and has a seating capacity of more than 9 people

must not cause, allow or permit that vehicle to park on a street:

- (a) abutting premises used for business purposes for longer than 3 hours unless the owner, registered owner, lessee or operator of the vehicle owns or leases the premises or is the employee of the owner or lessee of the premises, or
- (b) between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. of the following day.

20.2 An owner, registered owner, lessee or operator of a vehicle which:

- (i) has a height that exceeds 2.2 metres, or
- (ii) has an overall length that exceeds 6.4 metres, or
- (iii) that is designed primarily for the conveyance of passengers and has a seating capacity of more than 9 people, or
- (iv) has a licensed gross vehicle weight exceeding 5 500 kg

must not cause, allow or permit that vehicle to park on a street abutting property used for a public park, school, church or residential purpose for longer than 3 hours between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., unless the vehicle is needed for a service call or the property is a construction site.”.

4. Council strikes section 23.4 and replaces it as follows:

“23.4 The annual fee for a permit authorizing parking under section 23.1(a)(i) or (ii) is:

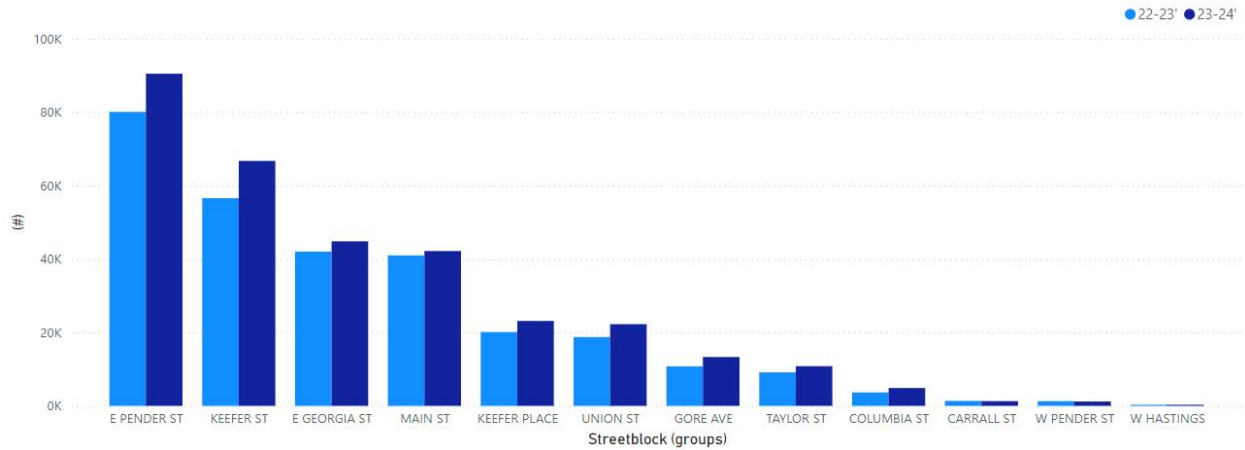
- (a) for parking of each vehicle belonging to an existing West End permit holder or to a long-term West End resident permit holder on streets located in the Denman West, West End Plateau or Davie-Beach areas, as defined in Schedule D to this By-law, up to a maximum of the number of vehicles for which permits were obtained at the time the permit holder became an existing West End permit holder or a long-term West End resident permit holder  
.....\$125.74;
- (b) for parking of each vehicle belonging to a new permit holder on streets located in the Denman West, West End Plateau or Davie-Beach areas, as defined in Schedule D to this By-law  
.....\$427.94;
- (c) for parking of each vehicle belonging to a resident on streets located in the Robson North area, as defined in Schedule D to this By-law  
.....\$125.74;
- (d) for parking of each vehicle belonging to a resident on streets located in the area of the city bounded on the north by 6th Avenue, on the east by Cambie Street, on the south by 19th Avenue from Cambie Street to Oak Street, and by Douglas Crescent, Wolfe Avenue and Marpole Avenue from Oak Street to Granville Street, and on the west by Granville Street, except for the 500 and 600 blocks of West 18th Avenue and West 19th Avenue  
.....\$92.81;
- (e) for parking of each vehicle belonging to a resident on streets located in all other areas of the city  
.....\$62.86; and
- (f) for parking of each vehicle belonging to a low income permit holder on streets located in the Denman West, West End Plateau or Davie-Beach areas, as defined in



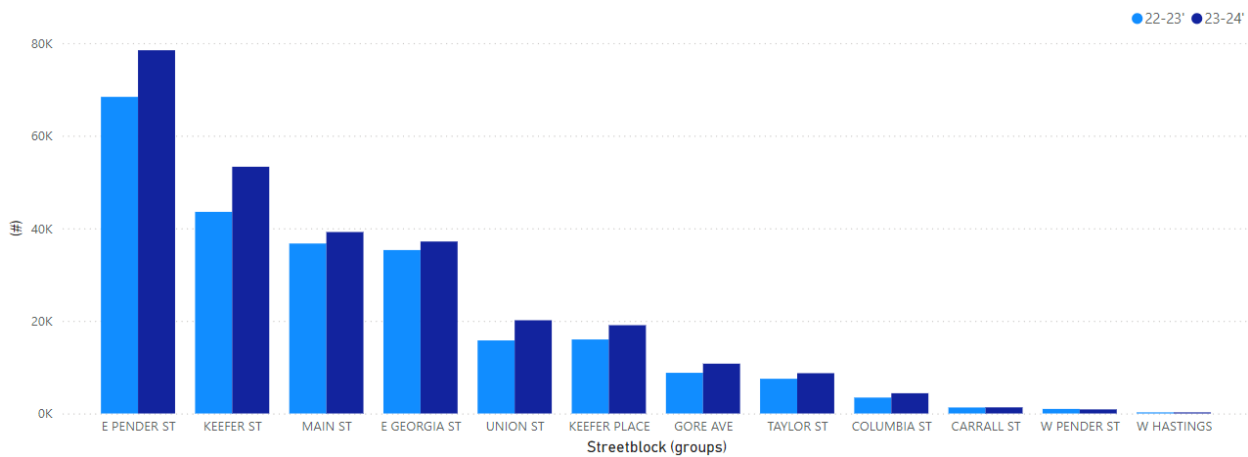


## APPENDIX C Chinatown Parking Analysis

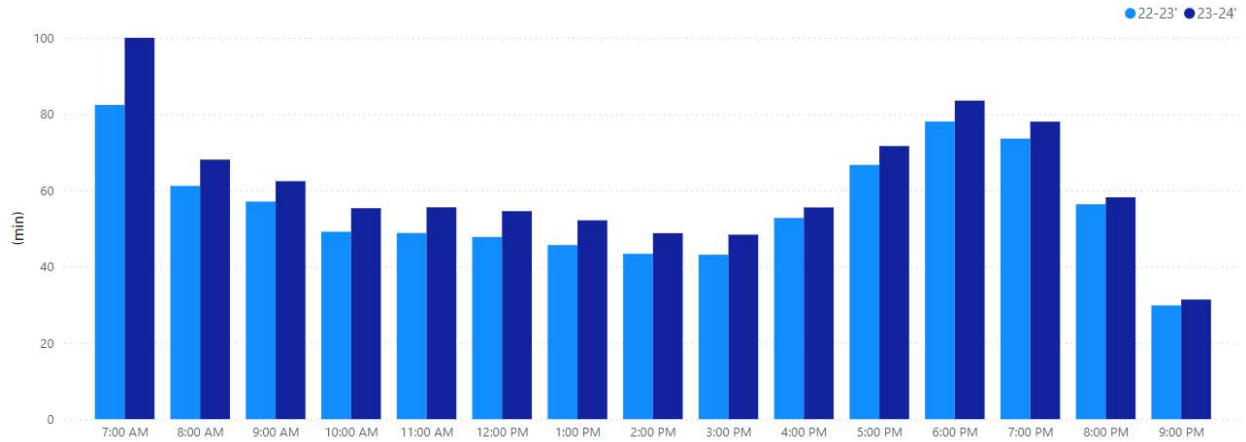
**Figure C.1 Annual Number of Weekday Parking Transactions by Street**



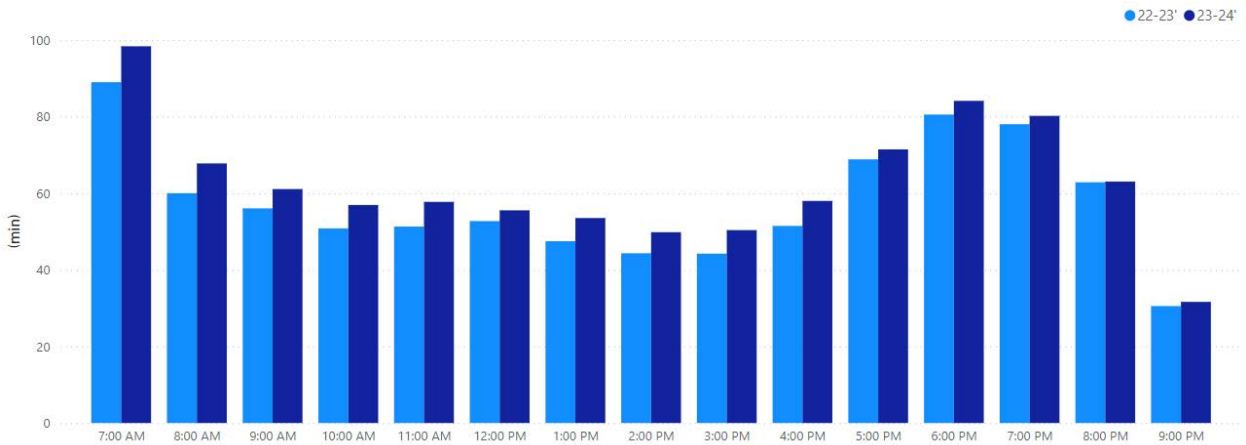
**Figure C.2 Annual Number of Weekend Parking Transactions by Street**



**Figure C.3 Average Weekday Parking Duration by Hour**



**Figure C.4 Average Weekend Parking Duration by Hour**



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