Town of Yarmouth

Parking Management Strategy

Draft Final Report

Revision 2

February 23, 2026

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Of the many services that a Municipality provides, public parking may be one of the more challenging ones. The ability for residents to conveniently and reliably access businesses, education, health care, and other services often requires a parking space. But while ample parking can be viewed as important economically, excessive parking can be expensive to create and maintain. It occupies space that can interrupt the dense nature and cohesiveness of a downtown. It can also undermine efforts to promote transit, active transportation, and ride-sharing as more sustainable trip choices in the overall management of transportation demand. Finding the right balance is the key to ensuring that parking is effective, but not intrusive.

The design and layout of on-street parking is a subset of the general issue of curbside management. Needs and desires like traffic flow, active transportation, commercial loading, accessibility, transit stops, emergency response, and streetscaping all have a stake in how curb space is allotted.

The Town of Yarmouth plays an active role in the supply and management of parking. The Town manages on-street parking throughout the town and operates and maintains four surface parking lots within the downtown area.

As growth continues in the town, additional demand for parking is generated. Requiring developers to provide new on-site parking can be expensive and disruptive, and alternatives such as using on-street parking and taking advantage of public shared parking lots are approaches several municipalities have implemented or are considering.

With this Parking Management Strategy, the Town hopes to understand the effectiveness of parking today and the issues that parking will face in the near future. The Town aims to improve the management of parking for the benefit of businesses and institutions that rely on it, and the residents and visitors who use it.

1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The goal of this project is to develop a Strategy that allows the Town to provide and manage parking in an effective and sustainable manner that serves the needs of the community as a whole. To achieve this goal, the following objectives have been established:

- Engage with stakeholders and the community to gather input and ensure a comprehensive understanding of local needs;
- Identify issues, challenges, and opportunities for improvement;
- Develop recommendations to optimize parking resources, determine if parking supply is meeting demand, enhance efficiency, increase safety, and promote sustainability;
- Ensure that parking regulations do not unreasonably hamper the development of residential, commercial and institutional projects;
- Assess the environmental impacts of existing parking practices and propose sustainable solutions; and
- Ensure that parking facilities and practices are accessible to all, including individuals with disabilities.

2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 PARKING MANAGEMENT

The Town of Yarmouth plays a significant role in the provision and management of parking.

In Downtown Yarmouth, the Town has maximized the use of street space for parking and implemented maximum duration controls to ensure good turnover of spaces. Virtually all of the street parking downtown has a two-hour parking time limit There are also some accessible parking spaces and loading zones. Streets surrounding the downtown do not have signed controls. Most downtown streets are signed to prohibit overnight parking to allow for street cleaning. The general layout of parking controls is shown in Figure 1.

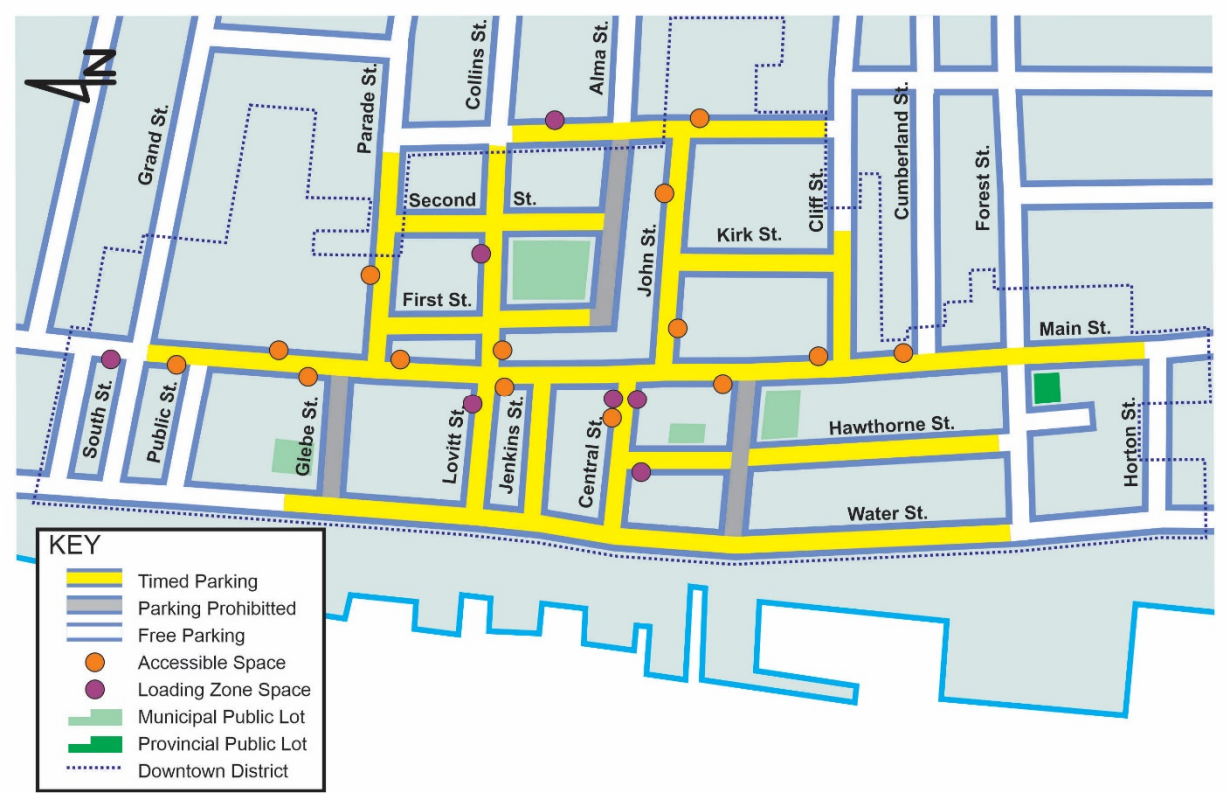


Figure 1: Designation of Downtown Parking

The public parking lots managed by the Town permit free parking for two hours. Beyond that, parking is still permitted with the purchase of an all-day permit for $2.00. A permit for monthly parking is also available for $20.00. Overnight parking is not permitted.

The various tasks associated with parking management are distributed through the municipal organization. Planning and regulation are led by Planning. The layout, maintenance and signage of both on-street and off-street public parking are the responsibility of Engineering. By-law enforcement handles the enforcement of parking regulations.

Time limits and other parking regulations are enforced by a single by-law officer. This by-law officer has duties other than parking enforcement, so only a portion of the time is spent on parking.

2.2 RELEVANT POLICES, PLANS & REGULATIONS

There are several current policies, plans, and regulations that are relevant to parking in Yarmouth. An overview of each is provided in the following sections.

2.2.1 MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY

The Town's current Municipal Planning Strategy was approved in 2016. A comprehensive review of the Town's Municipal Planning Strategy has been underway since March 2024 with the final document anticipated to be approved in 2026. This Study will help inform parking-related updates to the new Municipal Planning Strategy. Statements and policies from the current Municipal Planning Strategy that are relevant to parking include:

- New buildings undergoing site plan approval have the option of providing cash-in-lieu if they are unable to meet the minimum parking requirement. (Page 19)
- Development proposals in underutilized institutional facilities are supported, but to be permitted as-of-right they must not generate parking concerns. (Page 21) Similarly, institutional buildings may be re-purposed through a development agreement process, as long as parking [among other things] is considered. (Page 21)
- It shall be the intention of Council to include in the Land Use By-law on-site parking requirements [among other things] for all residential zones (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-M and R-H) as well as the Institutional (I-1) Zone. (Policy 4.13)
- Council may consider waiving Land Use Bylaw requirements within the residential designation through the Development Agreement Process, specifically related to parking [among other things]. (Policy 4.17)
- Other non-residential uses [in addition to those specified in Policy 4.20(a)] may be considered within the Heritage Conservation District, which support the [goal of], through Development Agreement: [among other things] utilize existing parking facilities within the Central Business District. (Policy 4.20(b))
- It shall be the intention of Council to include in the Land Use By-law provisions for the regulation of non-residential uses permitted within the residential designation with respect to on-site parking requirements [among other things. (Policy 4.24)
- The Central Business District merchants and property owners will be responsible for the continued provision of parking for existing development. The Land Use By-law will require on-site parking or a transfer to the Town of cash-in-lieu thereof, for major new commercial development in excess of 929.5m^2 (10,000 ft^2). Any cash-in-lieu of parking received by the Town will be directed towards development of new parking facilities as well as upgrading existing parking facilities within the downtown area. (Page 43)
- It shall be the intention of Council to include in the Land Use By-law a Downtown Commercial (C-1) Zone, which shall include the following types of uses permitted as-of-right: parking lots and parking structures [among other things]. (Policy 5.5)
- It shall be the intention of Council to consider Medium Density Residential (R-2) developments within the CBD designation by amendment to the Land Use By-law pursuant to Implementation Policy 10.6 and subject to that the minimum on-site parking requirements can be met or cash-in-lieu of parking has been paid [among other things]. (Policy 5.10)
- It shall be the intention of Council to enable the development of more than eight (8) residential units per lot in the Downtown Commercial (C-1) Zone by Development Agreement pursuant to Section 225 of the Municipal Government Act and subject to that the minimum on-site parking requirements can be met or cash-in-lieu of parking has been paid [among other things]. (Policy 5.11)
- It shall be the intention of Council with respect to the provision of parking facilities in the CBD to bear the responsibility of providing and maintaining adequate parking facilities for existing commercial uses. (Policy 5.16(1))

- It shall be the intention of Council to include in the Land Use By-law a provision that enables developers the option of providing cash in lieu of required residential parking where proposals are unable to meet the parking requirements on-site. Further, it shall be the intention of Council to utilize cash-in-lieu for the maintenance and expansion of parking facilities. (Policy 5.17)
- It shall be the intention of Council to include in the Land Use By-law a formula for the calculation of cash-in-lieu of parking contributions. (Policy 5.18)

2.2.2 LAND USE BY-LAW

The Lan Use By-Law was approved in 2016. A comprehensive review of the Town's Land Use By-Law is also underway concurrently with the Municipal Planning Strategy. This Study will help inform parking-related updates to the new Land Use By-law. The following sections of the current Land Use By-law, relevant to parking, are paraphrased below:

- One space is required for every residential unit, but this can be waived for development agreements (Section 5.25)
- One on-site covered secure bicycle parking unit may be placed in the yard for any new dwelling unit (Section 5.25)
- Standards are provided for parking areas including surface materials, drainage, access and lighting (Section 5.26)
- A formula is provided for the calculation of cash-in-lieu of parking for residential development (Section 5.27)
- The minimum number of parking spaces required to be constructed is provided for zones CI-4, WCI-5 & WDC (Section 24.4) and for zones MI-1 and M-2 (Section 28.4)

2.2.3 PARKING VIOLATIONS BY-LAW

Enacted in 2009 and last amended in 2024, this by-law describes regulations related to parking on streets and in parking lots under the control of the Town. Following are the key provisions related to parking management:

- Can not leave a vehicle parked on the street for longer than two hours between 8am and 5pm.
- Can not leave a vehicle parking in a parking lot for longer than two hours unless it is in a space posted "All Day" or a permit has been purchased
- The fee for a parking lot permit is $2.00 per day or $20.00 per month
- No street parking is allowed between 1am and 7am between December 1 and March 31.

2.2.4 HOUSING ACCELERATOR FUNDING PROGRAM

The Town of Yarmouth has received $2.3 million to implement its Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan. With this investment, the Town aims to achieve a Housing Supply Growth Target of 119 net new residential units over the next three years. One component of that plan is a Parking Management Strategy.

The Plan recognizes that an important aspect of housing creation is to incentivize different housing types such as accessary dwelling units, office conversions and affordable housing. Reduction or elimination of residential parking minimums, management of street parking through permitting, optimization of street parking and transportation demand management strategies can all contribute positively to creating more opportunities for residential growth.

The Plan also discusses compulsory transit passes for post-secondary students (U-Pass) and employer transit pass programs. These are programs that can reduce parking demand through encouragement of regular transit use.

2.3 PARKING INVENTORY

Parking space counts were undertaken for a study area roughly corresponding with the defined Downtown District. The study area was divided into zones to allow for a focus on supply and demand within specific geographic areas of downtown. The layout of zones is shown in Figure 2.

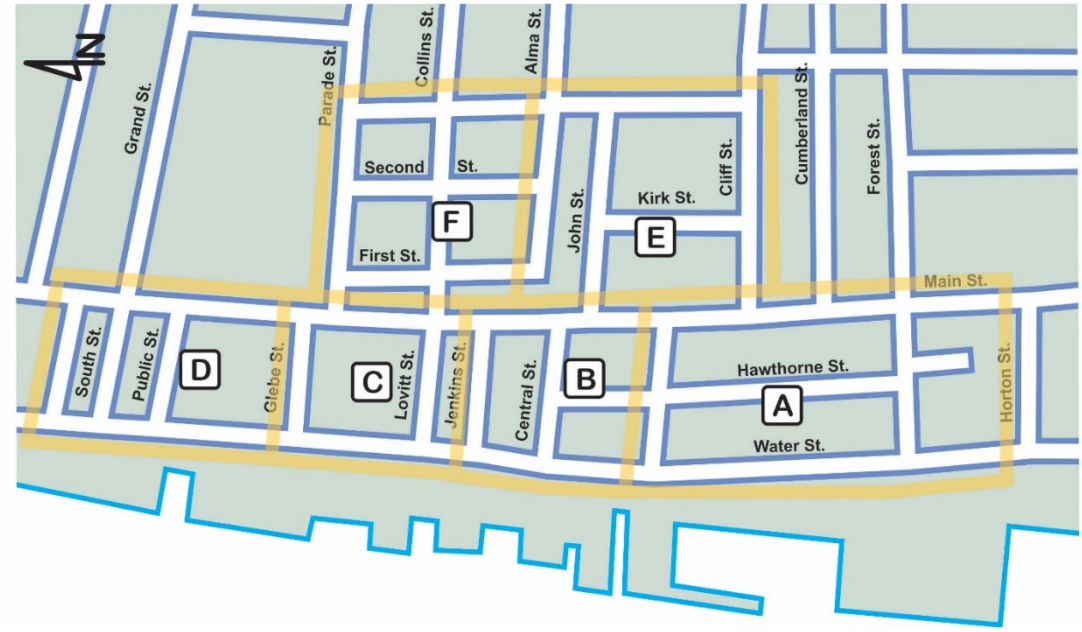


Figure 2: Downtown Parking Zones

Within each parking zone, parking spaces were counted manually during July, 2025 for both on-street and off-street locations. Parking supply is ever-evolving and subject to seasonal fluctuation, so a "snapshot" count like this one is always subject to change. The inventory did not include off-street parking clearly identified for residential purposes such as residential driveways and parking lots designated for resident parking only. Off-street parking is classified as public or reserved. Public parking includes spaces that are available to all, whether for hourly, daily, or monthly use or for rental. Reserved spaces are designated specifically for employees, tenants, or clients of a specific business. A summary of the inventory by zone is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Parking Space Inventory by Zone

ZONE	On-Street Parking					Off-Street Parking				
	Free 2h	Free 2h Accessible	Loading Free	Loading Zone	Total	Municipal Lot	Municipal Lot Accessible	Reserved Lot	Reserved Lot	Total
A	64	1	35		100	53		159	5	100
B	40	2		3	45	37		31		42
C	49	1		1	51			112	4	50
D	27	2	25	1	55	29	2	200	5	54
E	98	4	21		123			94	11	123
F	97	3	17	2	119	148	5	26		117
Total	375	13	98	7	**493**	267	7		25	**486**

2.4 PARKING UTILIZATION & COMPLIANCE

Parking utilization counts were taken through July, 2025 at various downtown locations. Time lapse cameras were installed to monitor occupancy of a group of representative parking spaces for a minimum of two weekdays between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm. An image of a time-lapse camera mounted on a utility pole in shown in Figure 3.

Figure 4 shows the peak utilization (85th highest percentile of the work day) measured. In addition to general parking spaces, spaces designated specifically for accessible parking and commercial loading were monitored.

Utilization of parking lots was also undertaken during this time period using three separate "walk-through" counts undertaken between 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm on weekdays. The results of these counts are included in Figure 4



Figure 3: Time Lapse Camera

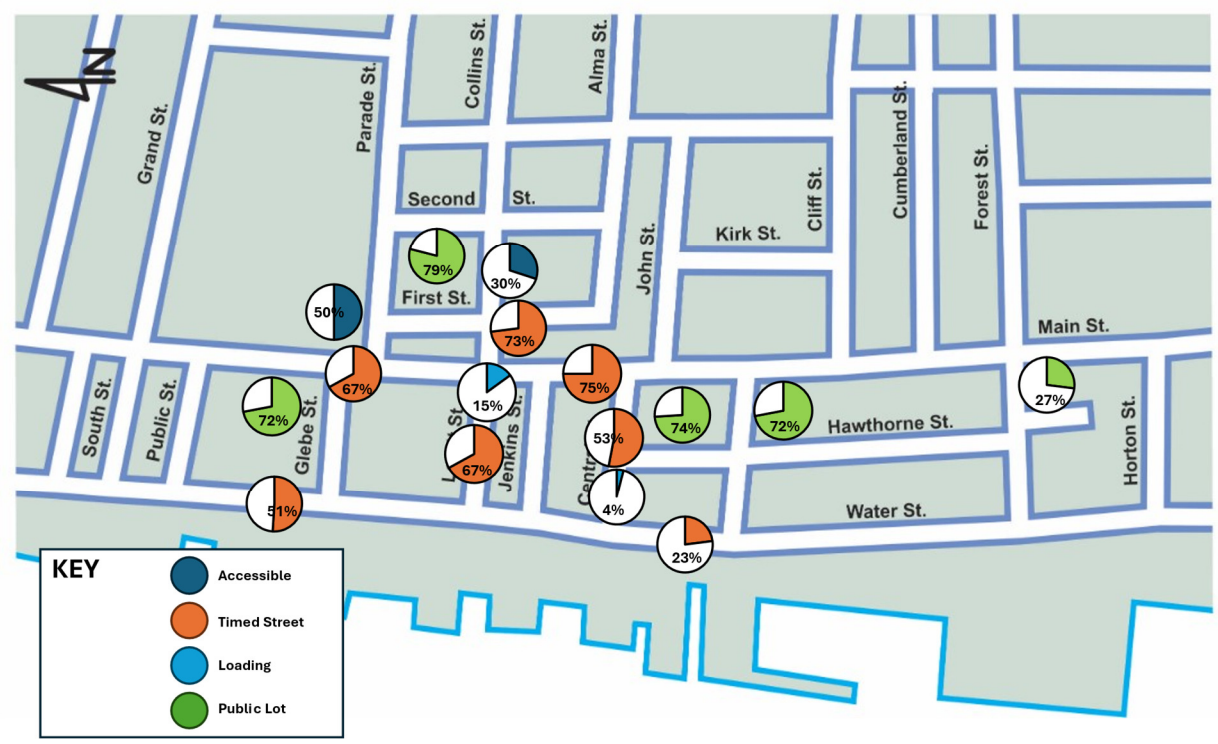


Figure 4: Measured Peak Utilization of Parking Spaces

On-street parking is designated for a maximum duration of two hours to ensure that space turns over and is not occupied by all-day parking. To determine whether there is good compliance with this regulation, the time-lapse camera data was used to measure parking duration for over 500 separate parking observations throughout the downtown. The results, shown in Figure 5, indicate that only about six percent of parking sessions exceed the two-hour limit and less than one percent exceed four hours in duration. More than four-fifths of the parking sessions are less than one hour in duration.

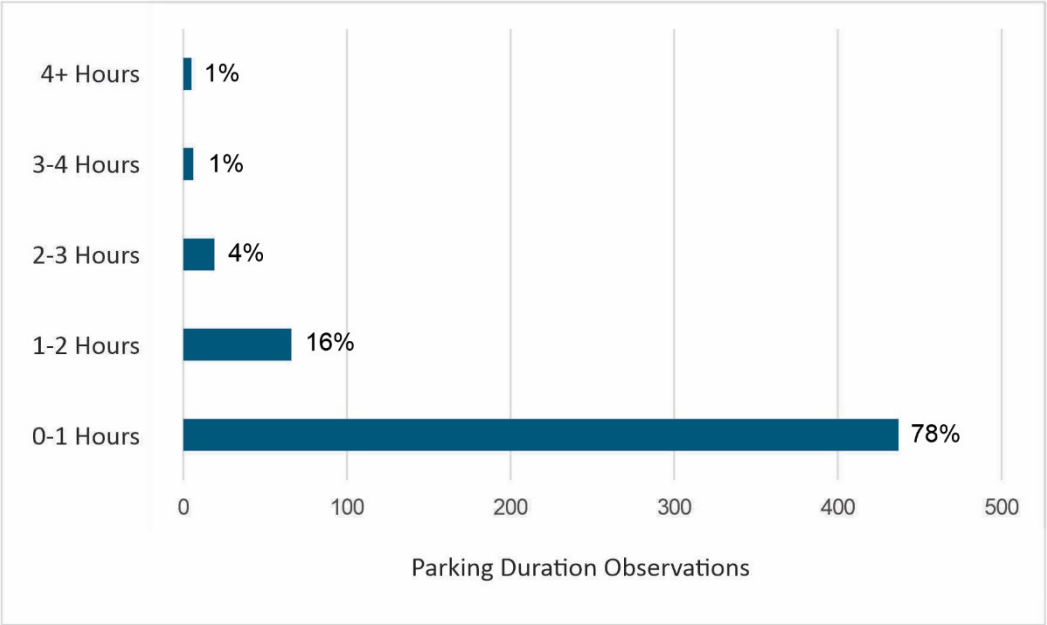


Figure 5: Parking Duration Observations for 2-Hour On-Street Parking

2.5 PARKING DEMAND

To determine whether parking supply is well located to meet the demands of businesses and institutions within the downtown parking focus area, a coarse analysis of parking demand was undertaken. To conduct this study, a full manual scan of buildings was undertaken with approximate square footage of space and general usage recorded. Residential uses were not included in this assessment, consistent with the exclusion of residential parking supply from the parking inventory. Expected parking generation rates by usage type were extracted from the Parking Generation Manual (Institute of Transportation Engineers; 6th Edition), a document that provides representative data from parking studies throughout North America. Rates specified in the manual were reduced slightly to be more in line with our experience in similar towns throughout Atlantic Canada. This technique was used to approximate the parking demand block-by-block, then compare it with the parking supply determined in the inventory. A summary table of the parking demand data is provided in Appendix A.

This parking demand can be compared to the parking supply inventory to determine where areas of surplus and deficiency exist. Figure 6 shows where parking supply is present based on our inventory. By subtracting demand from supply, parking surplus (positive) or parking deficiency (negative) can be determined. This data is shown in Figure 7.

This analysis should be applied cautiously. It is intended only to show geographically if supply is located where demand is highest. Of course, demand need not be serviced in the exact block that it occurs. For example, a block with a deficiency in parking is not necessarily problematic if surplus parking exists in adjacent blocks.

From this analysis, parking supply is close to meeting demand. Surplus supply appears to be present in the northern areas of downtown and east of Main Street. The greatest deficiencies are in the downtown core.

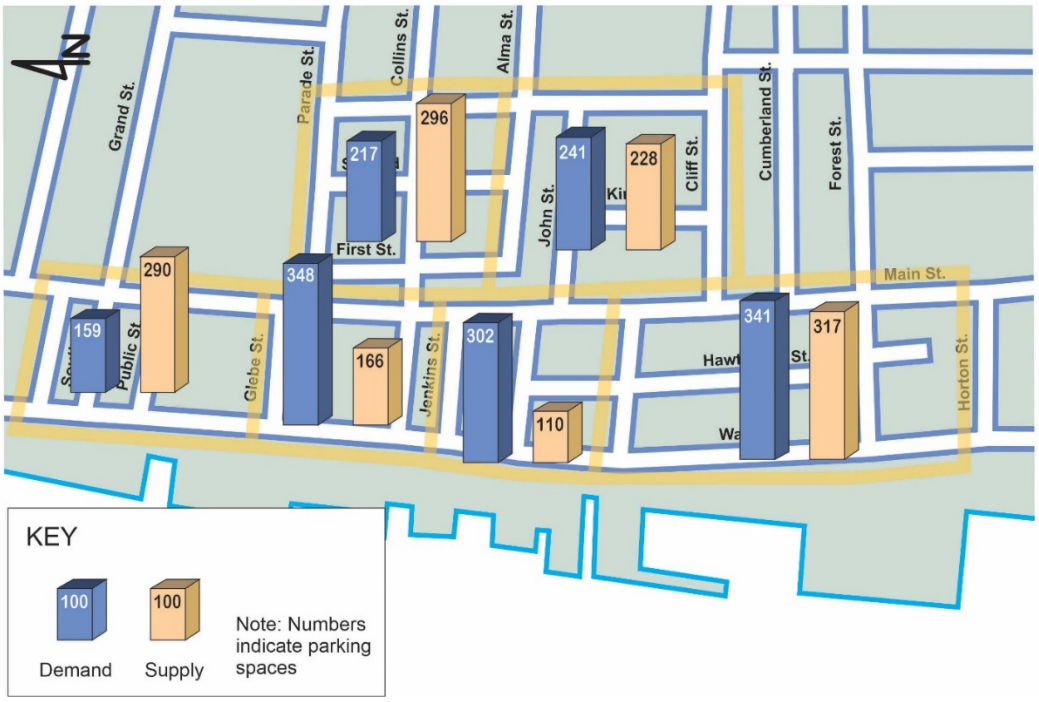


Figure 6: Parking Demand and Supply by Zone



Figure 7: Parking Surplus and Deficit by Zone

2.6 COMMUNITY PERCEPTION

To determine community perception of parking, several methods were used to solicit input. This included:

- One-on-one interviews with key organizations who have a significant reliance or impact on parking
- A workshop session with City staff
- A workshop session with downtown businesses
- An on-line public survey

The input received from these sessions has been summarized in a What We Heard Report provided in Appendix B. The feedback helped the project team to better understand where barriers to parking exist, the expectations for parking as a municipal service, and the ability of parking to meet the needs of businesses, institutions, resident and visitors.

The findings from the stakeholder and community engagement activities conducted have been summarized into a series of "Key Themes". The input collected through stakeholder interviews, a workshop, community survey, and an open house provide valuable insight into the barriers, opportunities, and aspirations to help inform the development of the Parking Management Strategy.

While the feedback received varies, several key themes were identified, which will be support the development of the Strategy. This section provides an overview of key themes heard throughout these engagement efforts, which have been categorized into three (3) "Key Themes" which are outlined below:

- Creating Safe and Accessible Streets
- Improving Affordability and User Experience
- Strengthen Parking Management and Supply

2.6.1 CREATING SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE STREETS

Based on feedback received throughout the engagement activities, it is clear there is a strong emphasis on the importance of safe and accessible streets, and parking options, for all residents and visitors of the Town. Based on the community survey, residents expressed a strong desire for improved sidewalks and connections as 20% of survey respondents indicated that improved sidewalks and walking connections would encourage them to visit downtown.

The Strategy should consider:

EXPANDING ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES:

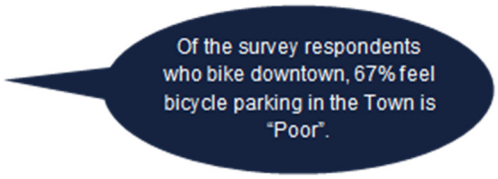
- Explore opportunities to increase and expand accessible parking spaces within the Town. Survey respondents indicated there is a desire for more designated accessible parking spaces in the downtown area, while business owners/operators indicated there is ample supply of accessible parking spaces.
- Invest in improving the safety of existing accessible parking spaces in the Town. Engagement efforts demonstrated that there is a desire for improved safety of accessible-friendly parking spaces.

BALANCING PARKING NEEDS WITH DRIVER, BIKER AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY:

- Prioritize transportation connections, with a goal to prioritize safe roads for drivers, bikers and pedestrians, as well as safe and reliable parking. Participants recognize the importance of a strong, connected transportation network, beyond just parking, particularly in the crucial "first and last mile" connections.
- Assess existing infrastructure and its impact on road users. Participants expressed concerns related to existing road bump outs creating sight obstructions for both drivers and pedestrians.

INVESTING IN PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE:

- Upgrade sidewalks and crosswalks in the downtown area to improve pedestrian safety. There is a desire for improved sidewalks and safer crosswalks, as survey participants highlighted, they experience challenges with safe sidewalks and crosswalks in the downtown area.



- Encourage the investment in additional and improved bike lanes in the Town. Survey respondents expressed desire for additional/improved bike lanes.

2.6.2 Affordability and User Experience

Cost and convenience of parking was a key comment that arose from participants, with many respondents indicating that they would strongly oppose the introduction of paid vehicle parking downtown. Many of the concerns expressed by respondents related to the rising cost of living and mentioned the unprotection of parking fees would discourage downtown visits.

Respondents expressed a need for affordable parking options, as well as the importance of improving and enhancing the overall user experience for parking within the Town. Participants indicated the desire for well-maintained parking facilities, clear wayfinding and signage as well as visible street markings. Based on the engagement activities conducted, the importance of ensuring parking is both affordable and well-designed and maintained, was highly emphasized by residents in the Town, to ensure investments in parking infrastructure deliver value to all.

The Strategy should consider:

EXPLORING PRICING MODELS:

- Investigate opportunities to implement a range of pricing models for parking in the downtown area. Suggestions from respondents included having the first hour of parking free, or tiered rates to provide a more affordable approach. Survey respondents expressed concerns around implementing paid parking and would contribute to the already high living costs; regardless of the amount proposed and expressed that paid parking would deter them from going downtown.
- Participants expressed that as downtown Yarmouth is an area with many businesses including professional services with clients, and an area that could attract tourists, implementing parking fees could lead to businesses losing regular customers or tourists having less interest in visiting the Town due to parking costs.

INVESTMENT IN STREET AND PARKING MAINTENANCE:

- Support increasing and leveraging year-round street and parking maintenance throughout the Town. Survey respondents highlighted that they face barriers with parking due to snow build-up in winter months, with 21.1% of survey respondents indicating they face parking barriers due to snow in winter months.
- On the contrary, interviewees noted that the overall snow clearing of parking spaces is generally good.

IMPROVING PARKING SIGNAGE:

- Explore opportunities to improve and expand parking signage to improve the user experience when parking throughout the Town.
- While the survey respondents indicated that many residents find existing parking signage clear and easy to understand, a large proportion still are sometimes unsure of where they can or cannot park, indicating that they would benefit form more signage or information on parking rules.

2.6.3 PARKING MANAGEMENT AND SUPPLY

The engagement efforts highlighted that, while generally residential streets have available parking, there can be limited availability within the downtown area. Residents have indicated that there can be unclear parking regulations, inconsistent enforcement and seasonal maintenance challenges which can impact the existing parking supply and overall create barriers with effective parking management. Engagement efforts revealed that the majority of residents travel downtown by driving and parking their personal vehicle, with the most common location of travel being to the downtown area. The community survey revealed that 29.8% of survey respondents frequently have difficulty finding vehicle parking in the downtown area. While some similar towns suffer from large institutions (schools, offices, and hospitals) or businesses producing more parking demand than they can handle on site resulting in spillover into residential neighbourhoods, we found no incidences of that identified in Yarmouth.

The Strategy should consider:

IMPROVE PARKING ENFORCEMENT:

- Explore opportunity to strengthen parking enforcement throughout the Town. Based on responses received from the community survey, some opportunities to improve parking enforcement could include establishing time limits for parking and providing stronger enforcement on illegal parking (e.g. ticketing).

STRENGTHEN PARKING REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- Assess the current minimum parking requirements and regulations established in the Town to identify areas and regulations that can be adapted to balance community needs with land use goals (e.g. parking requirements for residential dwellings, commercial uses, etc.). Participants noted that they would be concerned with reducing the current minimum number of parking spaces for new residential developments.
- Assess the overnight street parking ban enforced in the Town, over half (59.2%) of respondents indicated they do not feel that the parking ban is problematic, while only 12.3% felt that it was problematic. Of those who felt it was problematic indicated that. Business owners/operators indicated that the ban on overnight parking, especially with new recharging stations, is a concern for business owners.

INCREASE PARKING SUPPLY:

- Explore opportunities to increase the overall parking supply in the town for businesses and employees. The engagement efforts revealed that there are significant issues regarding a lack of parking for employees and business owners working within the downtown. Business survey respondents highlighted that often they cannot find parking at their place of work due to non-employees taking these spaces. Business owners/operators identified that there is a lack of off-street parking available for employees, leading to employees having to occupy designated 2-hour parking spots for extended periods.



- Explore options to expand parking for customers and the general public in the downtown area. Community survey respondents raised issues with the existing businesses in the downtown area taking away parking spaces from the general public for employees. Given this is an issue for employees as well, increasing the overall parking supply would support in alleviating this issue.
- On the contrary, interviewees indicated that there is ample supply of parking in the downtown area and did not raise concerns.

3 PARKING MANAGEMENT

3.1 GOVERNANCE APPROACHES

In broad terms, a municipal government can take one of three positions in its approach in consideration of downtown parking:

Hands-off – The philosophy here is that market forces within the business community will determine the need for parking supply and its pricing, and that the Town need not play any role in that process (other than providing on-street spaces). Although many cities and towns take this approach, it is risky, in that the onus is put on the private sector to the degree that new business development can be stifled. Also, the self-interest of individual businesses may hamper the ability to optimize the supply of parking for all. The value of shared parking is often not realized. This model can work very well in cities where the market value of parking is sufficient to make the creation and operation of parking spaces profitable. That environment, however, is typically found only in larger cities.

Municipality-influenced – In this approach, the Town is not a major owner of parking supply in the downtown, but plays an active role in ensuring parking supply is maintained. This can be achieved through such measures as tax incentives for parking spaces and establishment of parking minimums through by-law. While this approach can incentivize creation of space, there is no direct control of how much space is ultimately available.

Municipality-led – Here, the Town plays an active role in ensuring that parking demands of the downtowns are met including the ownership and operation of most, or all, of the off-street parking in the downtown. Within this approach, there are several delivery models that are described below.

Municipality-led models are most common in Atlantic Canada and would best describe the current situation in Yarmouth.

MUNICIPALITY-LED MODELS

The notion that the Town will continue to play an active role in ensuring parking needs are met can take the form of several models with varying degrees of separation from the organizational structure itself and the decision-making powers of Town Council.

Internal Municipal Function - With this model, the Town creates a Parking Department or, more likely given the size of the organization, adds the task of parking to an existing department. Additional staffing may be required, although some structural reorganization could improve efficiency by having some positions share both parking-related duties and existing (or future desired) duties. As an internal city function, the operation and management of parking would be fully accountable to Town Council. Ideally, a Parking Department would be set up as a "cost centre" whose budget includes all expenses (both operating and capital) and revenues related to parking and parking enforcement.

Parking Commission - The benefit of managing parking through a Commission is that all or some of the planning, management, maintenance and enforcement functions could be administered at "arms-length" from other municipal functions. A Commission would still allow for some level of accountability to Council. We understand that a commission was in place in Yarmouth in the past but was discontinued.

Parking Agency - A Parking Agency differs from a Parking Commission in that it would have more autonomy and would view parking more as a business than a public service. This does not mean to imply that the treatment of parking as a business would not provide good public service. A Parking Agency could be created specifically for the Municipality, but a more likely scenario would be to receive expressions of interest from agencies that already provide such a service. Impark and Indigo are two of the better-known agencies. Although general operating parameters could be established under which these agencies operate, it must be accepted that Council will cede many of the decision-making powers that they would otherwise have with a Town Department or a Commission. An agency agreement may result in surplus profits from parking being delivered to the Town or, conversely, an operating subsidy being provided by the Town. This depends on the market for parking and the extent of management tasks being assigned to the agency.

3.2 JURISDICTIONAL SCAN

WSP undertook a scan of jurisdictions in Atlantic Canada broadly similar in size to Yarmouth to gain an understanding of what approaches and practices are in place. A summary of this review is included in Table 2 and provides a sense of how other jurisdictions manage issues similar to those faced by Yarmouth and a comparison of parking inventory and controls.

		Yarmouth	CBRM*	Charlottetown	Miramichi	Fredericton	Moncton	Amherst	Corner Brook	St. John's
Urban Population in 2021 (in thousands)		7	94	39	18	63	79	10	20	111
Downtown parking spaces	Off-Street	921	3139	2500	2539	5841	8321	1860	500	2400
	On-Street	486	623	1500	264	1098	401	180	110	800
Percentage breakdown for off-street downtown parking	Private tenant/employee	65%	60%	30%		46%	40%	30%	10%	50%
	Private hourly/monthly paid	0%	25%	15%		20%	50%	0%	0%	16%
	Municipal hourly/monthly paid	0%	15%	50%		22%	10%	0%	0%	34%
	Municipal free	35%	0%	0%		0%	0%	70%	10%	0%
	Other	0%	0%	5%		12%	0%	0%	80%	0%
Percentage of downtown parking in structures		0%	0%	30%	0%	32%	3%	0%	10%	37%
Percentage breakdown for on-Street downtown parking	Free uncontrolled	20%	18%	10%		0%	0%	30%	10%	0%
	Free time-limited (i.e. one hour)	76%	4%	25%		45%	0%	70%	0%	0%
	Pay with single space meters	0%	65%	55%		50%	97%	0%	90%	0%
	Pay with multi-space meters	0%	9%	0%		1%	0%	0%	0%	25%
	Misc. (accessible, loading, etc)	4%	3%	2%		4%	3%	0%	10%	0%
	Other	0%	1%	8%		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
What is the cost (if any) of municipal downtown parking	Off-Street per hour	$0.00 **	None	$1.25	$0.00	$1.75	$4.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2.00
	Off-Street per month	$20	$65	$115	$0	$130	$165	$0	$0	$175
	On-Street per hour	$0.00	$1.00	$1.50	$0.00	$2.00	$2.50	$0.00	$2.00	$1.75
Municipal governments role in parking	Ownership of downtown lots	Significant	Moderate	Significant	Little/None	Moderate	Moderate	Significant	Moderate	Moderate
	Operation of downtown lots	Significant	Moderate	Little/None	Little/None	Moderate	Moderate	Significant	Little/None	Little/None
	Planning/management of parking	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Little/None	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Significant	Significant
Municipal regulations	Residential parking minimum downtown	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Commercial parking minimum downtown	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
	Cash-in lieu of parking	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Do you have a problem with all-day parking in residential neighbourhoods? If so, what action is taken?	Problem?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
	Use resident-only permits			●			●			●
	Time limits/restrictions with residents exempt									●
	Time limits/restrictions with no exemption		●			●	●			
How do you manage overnight winter on-street parking?	Ovenight ban through winter months	●		●	●	●	●		●	●
	Other							●		
How often are downtown parking lots used for snow storage?	Never/rarely	●		●		●	●			●
	A portion of every winter								●	
	Only during heavy snow years							●		
	What percentage of spaces are lost?							20%		
How often is snow hauled away by truck from downtown	Never/rarely	●								
	A portion of every winter			●		●	●			●
	Only during heavy snow years							●	●	

* Cape Breton Regional Municipality (NS)

** First two hours are free, $2.00 for remainder of the day after that

Table 3: Jurisdictional Parking Scan

4 TECHNOLOGY, DESIGN & ENVIRONMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 DIRECTIONAL SIGNS FOR PUBLIC PARKING LOTS

With the exception of the Brown Street Lot, public off-street parking within the downtown does not front onto either Main Street or Water Street. This is beneficial, as it preserves valuable street frontage for commercial storefronts. A consequence, however, is that public parking lots are not as visible from the main streets and visitors may have difficulty finding them.



Figure 8: Parking Directional Sign

Directional parking signs (see Figure 8) can help to make public parking lots more accessible. Adding such signs to Main Street, Water Street and the Ferry Terminal exit will help to guide visitors entering the downtown to the key public off-street parking lots. A suggested layout of signs is provided in Figure 9. While we have shown the standard directional sign for parking (Uniform Traffic Control Device for Canada, Transportation Association of Canada), the "branded" parking directional signs currently in limited use in downtown may continue to be used.

Directional parking signs may also play an important role in formalizing additional Town-owned lots as being available for public parking or for identifying any new lots that the Town may add to its inventory in the future.

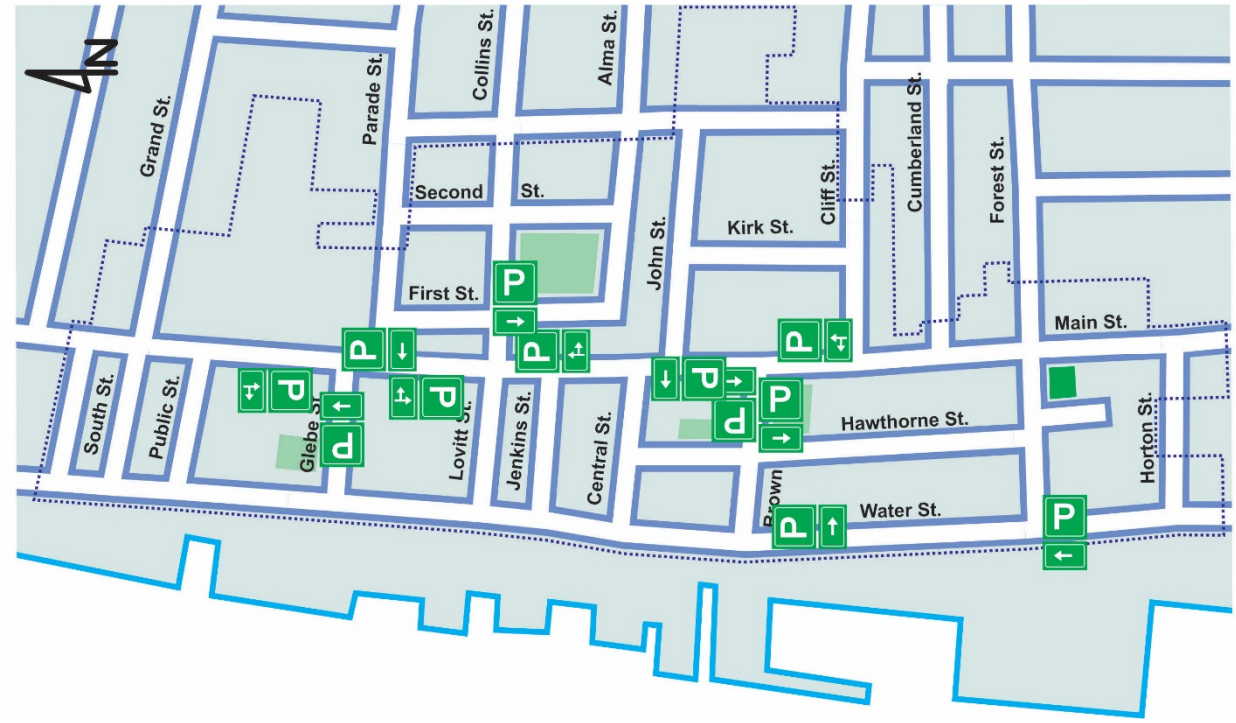


Figure 9: Suggested Layout of Parking Directional Signs in Downtown

4.2 PARKING DESIGN, DRAINAGE, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Parking infrastructure best practices emphasize the importance of sustainable design, with a focus on stormwater management and minimizing environmental impact. Residential roads and parking lots typically contribute increased storm flow volumes and pollutant loading to stormwater systems. Key strategies to achieving a more sustainable stormwater approach to road and parking lot designs include:

- Reducing parking footprints by designing for average demand rather than peak use, as parking ratios are often based on peak demand during high-traffic seasons. Consider using one-way aisles paired with angled parking layouts and reserving compact spaces for smaller vehicles. This can decrease the footprint needed and therefore lessen the amount of stormwater runoff. For more extensive solutions, parking structures or underground parking can be considered to significantly reduce surface parking areas.
- Shared parking arrangements, where businesses with differing peak hours (such as offices and theatres) share spaces, can optimize land use and reduce the number of parking spots needed.
- Implementation of infiltration-promoting bioretention and biofiltration areas, such as rain gardens, vegetative swales, and street runoff collection features (e.g., curb cuts to depressed traffic medians).
- Incorporating Low Impact Development (LID) design and/or systems, like permeable parking surface materials (porous asphalt, pavers, etc.) to further minimize impervious surfaces.

Effective stormwater management in parking lots is a key component for improved sustainability. Parking lots that drain directly to a concrete gutter and storm sewer system will have a much greater impact than parking lots graded to drain to vegetated pervious areas. Green infrastructure elements like bioretention areas, grassed swales, and landscaped areas integrated into parking lots can further help manage stormwater by promoting infiltration and filtration. The proper design and construction of curb cuts is essential, as common errors like elevated curb cuts or reverse slopes can lead to ineffective water diversion and increased runoff. Pretreatment strategies, such as vegetated strips and sediment-catching structures, help manage stormwater by slowing the flow, collecting sediment, and releasing water gradually. When these elements are properly integrated, stormwater control is more efficient, and the environmental impact of parking infrastructure can be reduced.

Permeable pavement systems, such as porous asphalt or permeable pavers, are a green infrastructure alternative to traditional impervious surfaces. They allow water to infiltrate, reducing runoff and preventing flooding. This reduces the peak flow and volume of runoff from a catchment area. These permeable systems are most appropriate in low to medium traffic areas where surface deterioration and reduced porosity are less likely. If the native soil has a very low permeability or the ground water table is considerably high, like it is in some areas of Nova Scotia, the water that infiltrates through the pavement can be removed through a perforated pipe underdrain and flow restrictor assembly. The flow restrictor will aid in achieving sufficient drawdown between rainfall events.

Pervious pavement surfaces should ideally be designed with a slope of 1-5% to facilitate effective drainage. Underground stone reservoir and/or French drains used to collect drainage should be located at least 1 meter above the water table and bedrock, where possible. To maintain the permeability of the surface, nearby landscaped areas should be graded to slope away from the pavement, reducing the risk of sediment accumulation on the surface. Sand should be avoided for de-icing on these surfaces, as it can clog the pavement. In environments prone to clogging due to nearby sediment sources, regular maintenance, such as vacuuming to remove trapped sediment from the pavement voids, may be necessary to preserve the surface's functionality.

Regular maintenance is essential for the success of pervious pavement, especially in cold climates where low maintenance is a common challenge for these Low Impact Development (LID) practices. In colder regions, sediment buildup from snowpacks, damage from plows and snow removal, and contamination from de-icing chemicals often lead to clogging and reduced effectiveness. However, permeable pavers, interlocking blocks designed for infiltration, tend to perform better in these environments. Their inherent flexibility allows them to withstand the freeze-thaw cycle, adapting to slight heaving as water freezes within the structure before fully infiltrating.

Documents outlining specifics related to proper LID construction are available from the Credit Valley Conservation[1,2] which include details on proper construction techniques, inspector tools, etc.

4.3 ACCESSIBLE PARKING

CSA standards[3] provide a guideline for how many on-street and off-street parking spaces should be designated as accessible. The guideline suggests that ten percent of on-street spaces, and at least one space per block be designated accessible. Although only about three percent of the on-street spaces within the downtown is currently designated as accessible, few urban areas within Atlantic Canada come close to meeting the CSA standard. Our usage monitoring of accessible parking spaces (see Figure 4) indicated that accessible parking is currently not highly utilized suggesting that setting a target of 4% of spaces designated for accessible parking should be more than sufficient to meet the needs of the community. For parking lots, the CSA standard provides a table for determining accessible parking which is shown in Table 4.

Accessible parking spaces in off-street lots should be clustered to make them more easily located. Adding an aisle between two accessible parking spaces (Figure 10) is important to better accommodate side-loading.

Table 4: Recommended Number of Accessible Spaces in Parking Lots

Number of designated parking spaces	Number of designated accessible parking spaces
2 to 50	1 to 3
51 to 100	2 to 4
101 to 200	4 to 8
201 to 300	5 to 10
301 to 500	6 to 12
Over 500	6 to 12, plus 1 to 3 for every 100 spaces over 500



Figure 10: Accessible Parking Space Layout With a Shared Aisle[4]

[1] CVC (Credit Valley Conservation), 2014. Contractor's & Inspector's Guide for Low Impact Development – Draft June 2014.
[2] CVC (Credit Valley Conservation), 2012. Low Impact Development Construction Guide.
[3] A Complete Guide to Accessible Parking Requirements in Canada; Accessibility Partners Canada; Jan 2025.

Accessible on-street parking spaces in Yarmouth are well-designed (Figure 11). In general, they are located on the north-south streets which have flatter street grades. Painted icons on the street surface are highly visible. The street signs are well-designed and located. Of particular benefit is the sign tab that reinforces the deterrence of a high fine for illegal parking in an accessible space.

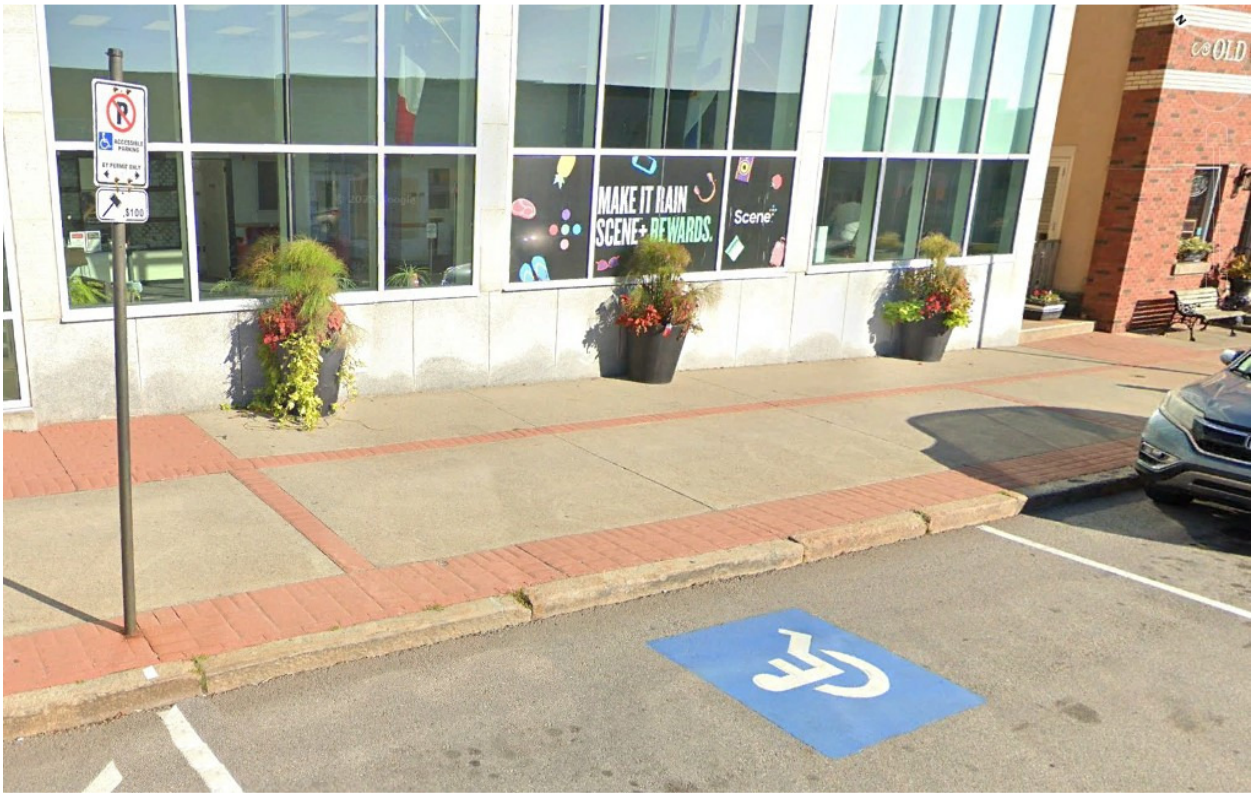


Figure 11: Accessible On-Street Parking Space on Main Street

4.4 MARKING OF PARKING SPACES

The Town routinely paints an outline of all on-street parking spaces in the downtown. This has the benefit of clearly distinguishing where parking is allowed and, by default, where it is prohibited. It also has the effect of preventing vehicles from crowding together too tightly. There is, of course, a cost to repainting these lines every year. Furthermore, since marked spaces need to be sized for the largest end of the vehicle length spectrum, it creates space inefficiencies when considering all lengths of vehicles. One of the reported benefits of removing markings is that different sized vehicles can make more efficient use of the curb space available. The City of Ottawa[5] reported a 15% increase in parking utilization when they switched from individually marked spaces and parking meters to unmarked spaces and multi-space pay stations.

Section 143(1) of the Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act stipulates that a vehicle cannot be parked within 5 metres of a crosswalk. The Act specifies that a crosswalk is any extension of a sidewalk across a street and need not be marked with white lines. The Town should ensure that spaces it marks for on-street parking respects this regulation. Conformity to the regulation is particularly important in some locations, while some level of tolerance can be

[5] Centretown Local Area Parking Study, City of Ottawa; 2016

acceptable in other locations. Priorities for compliance are illustrated in Figure 12 and any review of existing compliance of marked spaces should take this into consideration.

The Town's existing Parking Violations By-Law is unclear in two areas. For one, it is specific about how vehicles must park in "parking spaces", however, the definition of a parking space does not include marked on-street spaces. The by-law should include a definition of a "Street Parking Space" and appropriate sections of 5.2 should be amended to say "parking space or street parking space".

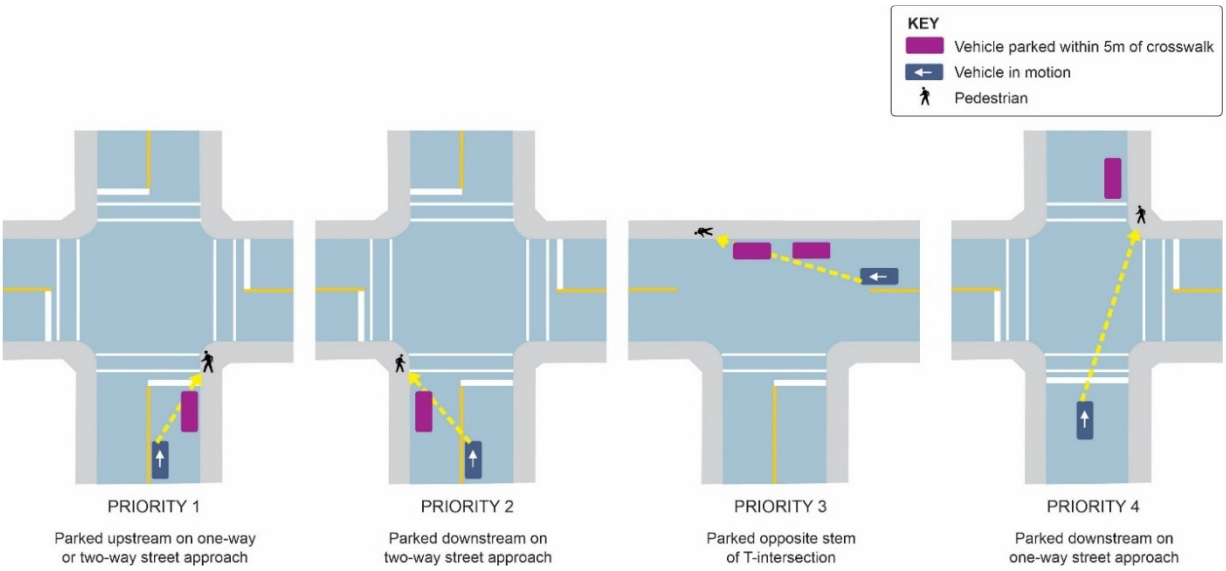


Figure 12: Correcting Issues Caused By Parking Near Intersections

Secondly, Section 5.1 states that timed parking restrictions apply to "… any street or highway or portion thereof in the Town of Yarmouth …" but it is not clear that this is limited to locations where "… a traffic sign …" has been installed as stated in Section 2.0(b) and Section 4.1. This could be made more clear by adding the phrase "where signs specified in Section 4.3 have been installed" to the end of the section 5.1(a).

4.5 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

The percentage of electric vehicles (EVs) within the general public fleet is increasing every year and the demand for public EV charging stations increases with it. The role that a Municipality plays in providing this infrastructure, however, varies. In Toronto, Toronto Hydro, the City of Toronto and the Toronto Parking Commission have partnered to install EV charging stations in both off-street and on-street locations. The City of Ottawa has also installed on-street EV chargers as well as chargers in parking lots of several civic buildings. Halifax Regional Municipality is in the process of implementing a phase one plan to install 352 EV charging stations throughout the Municipality in on-street locations and in parking lots of public facilities. In every case, the Municipality requires payment for EV charging competitive with local private sector vehicle charging rates.

Some, however, argue that providing this infrastructure is not the role of government. Josipa Petrunic, president and CEO of the non-profit Canadian Urban Transit Research & Innovation Consortium has stated:

> *Truthfully the taxpayer has built enough. This is 100 per cent an industry thing, and I really don't have a lot of patience for the argument — in particular from the auto sector these days — in the past couple of years about the government should do it. The auto sector should be leading the charge because it has all of the*

data on where charging ports are needed — and where they will be needed in the future. They're the ones that need to start innovating to basically sell a car with the service of charging, just like Tesla has done. [6]

The Town of Yarmouth is beginning to provide EV charging in its off-street lots through a third-party vendor.

[6] https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/canada-electric-vehicles-charging-ports-1.7058158

5 PARKING MANAGEMENT & REGULATION OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 PARKING GOVERNANCE

The Town currently plays an active role in the supply and management of parking in the downtown. We heard through our public and stakeholder engagement that there is continued support for this approach.

In the future, consideration may be given to receiving Expressions of Interest from a private sector parking services providers to manage both on-street and off-street parking on behalf of the Town. With these arrangements, the Provider will typically look after maintenance, fee collection, and enforcement of parking while the Town continues to own the land (or provide land through its current sharing arrangement) and set the fees and other regulations that control the parking. After recovering operating costs, the Provider would share any net revenue with the Town. Given the low fees currently being charged for parking, it is possible that an agreement with a Provider may involve an annual contribution by the Town to cover operating costs not recovered from revenues. Introducing fees for on-street parking (discussed later in this Chapter) and/or increasing monthly parking fees may need to be considered to make for a more attractive proposition.

We are aware of two companies, Indigo and Impark, who are active in parking management in Nova Scotia. A screenshot from a Provider website (Figure 13) shows how partnerships with Municipalities in a range of applications is an integral part of their business plan.



Figure 13: Screenshot from Parking Service Provider Website

The Town is satisfied with its ability to manage the tasks associated with parking within its existing organizational framework even though these tasks are divided amongst many individuals. In the future, consideration may be given to consolidating planning, operational, and management tasks within a portion of one position within the organization (i.e. a Parking Co-ordinator position).

Enforcement of parking regulations currently makes up approximately one-half of a full-time equivalent position (shared with enforcement of other by-laws). This allocation of time appears to be adequate to meet the current demands of enforcement.

5.2 PARKING SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

Supplying parking in downtowns is a careful balancing act. While parking availability is a service both customers and employees are expecting, vast areas of parking can harm the fabric of downtowns, create barriers, and dilute the density of development that make the area thrive. Overabundant parking is also counter-productive to efforts to promote more sustainable modes of commuting such as walking, biking, public transit, carpooling, and work-from-home. It is generally acknowledged that favouring high-turnover parking over all-day parking in downtowns is effective in managing transportation demand and meeting the needs of visitors to the region and local downtown business customers.

We are challenged coming to a conclusion on whether or not the existing parking supply downtown is adequately meeting the needs of the community. The community survey taken as part of our public engagement indicated that the majority of the respondents found that parking is frequently or sometimes difficult to find (Figure 14). Our workshop session with downtown business stakeholders, however, did not identify a shortage of parking to be a significant issue. While our projection of expected parking demand was higher than the current parking supply (see Figure 7), our field measurement of parking space utilization found ample availability (see Figure 4).

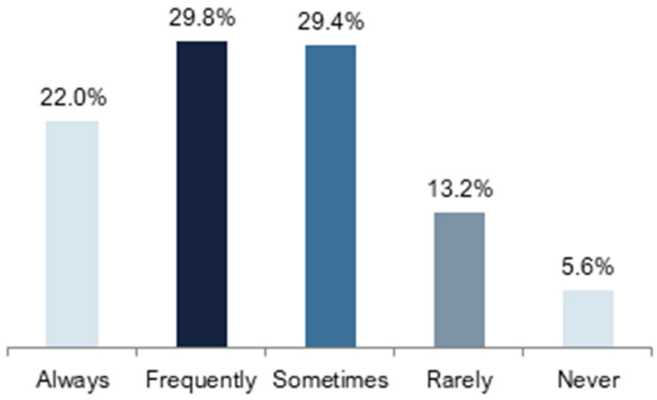


Figure 14: Public Survey Response to "Do You Have Difficulty Finding Vehicle Parking Downtown?"

The Town should, at a minimum, maintain its existing parking supply. This is not as simple as is sounds, as redevelopment projects and reallocation of curb space to non-parking uses (such as bike lanes, transit stops, curb extensions, temporary sidewalk patios, etc.) will deplete the existing parking supply. To compensate, the Town should strive to add a modest amount of additional off-street parking either through encouraging development projects to include public parking or expanding the municipally-managed stock. The Town has been successful in developing shared parking with private property owners with its current municipal parking lots and this model should be continued when opportunities arise. Opportunities may arise from optimization of existing parking lots, development of underutilized lands, or negotiation with those proposing developments. Our analysis of parking surplus and deficit (see Figure 7) shows that parking supply is most needed in the area bounded by Water, Lovitt, Main and Brown Streets.

One such opportunity that may be pursued is engagement with the Yarmouth Area Industrial Commission for shared use of the existing parking lot across from the Government Wharf. An agreement may result in more optimal use of the space that continues to meet the needs of the Commission while developing some new public parking supply.

The Collins Street Lot is well-located near the highest parking demands. The footprint of the lot is large enough to accommodate a future parkade, although demand does not currently warrant the capital and operating costs of such a facility. As suggested in the Yarmouth Downtown Blueprint (Ekistics Planning & Design; 2010), this block, extended to Main Street, creates a powerful opportunity for redevelopment that would include a redeveloped Main Street streetfront combined with structured or underground public parking.

The provincially-owned parking lot on Forest Street is not in an area of high parking demand. This lot may provide a good opportunity for redevelopment with minimal, or zero parking retained.

5.3 PAYMENT FOR PARKING

No payment is currently required for on-street parking in downtown Yarmouth. In municipal parking lots, the first two hours of parking are free, but subsequent hours, as well as monthly parking come with a fee. Charging a fee for parking can be more than just a municipal revenue source. It can provide improved regulation of parking time limits and can redirect parking demand to other, more strategically desired, locations.

Ensuring high turnover of on-street parking spaces downtown is essential. Even though our observations (see Figure 5) did not show significant non-compliance with the two hour parking limit, charging a minimal hourly fee for on-street parking would help to make enforcement more consistent. Retaining two hours of free parking in off-street lots would encourage more local parkers to use those lots making on-street space more available for visitors.

The use of on-street parking fees by similar-sized towns in Nova Scotia is not consistent (see Table 5) but some towns have found them to be of value. A one dollar per hour (or less) fee can achieve the goals described without being perceived as a cost burden to those parking.

In our survey and in-person workshop with downtown businesses, we heard opposition to introducing fees for on-street parking but also heard support for fees as a mechanism to encourage and enforce parking turnover.

If the Town were to consider introducing a modest hourly parking fee, there are new technologies emerging that making paid parking management more effective and secure than using traditional single-space parking meters. With multi-space pay stations, parkers enter the license plate of their vehicle along with a payment (by cash or credit/debit card) to start a parking session. Phone apps like HotSpot can also be used. The key benefits of pay stations over parking meters is that they reduce street clutter, provide more payment options, and are less susceptible to vandalism. Both Halifax and Cape Breton Regional Municipalities are currently using multi-space pay stations for on-street parking.

Table 5: Hourly Parking Rates (If Any) in Nova Scotia Towns

Town	On-Street Parking Fee ($/hour)
Antigonish	$0.50
New Glasgow	$1.00
Truro	free
Amherst	free
Kentville	free
Wolfville	free
Digby	free
Yarmouth	free
Liverpool	$1.00
Bridgewater	$1.00

Monthly and daily fees for parking in municipal lots are low compared to rates charged in other jurisdictions (see Table 3). Consideration should be given to a moderate increase in fees while retaining the current policy of the first two hours of parking being free. The free parking (particularly when combined with a fee for on-street parking) will ensure that parking demand is attracted to the off-street lots.

A fee of $1.00 per hour for street parking would be in line with other Nova Scotia jurisdictions who employ paid street parking. Some residents may consider alternative means to commute downtown that are more environmentally sustainable than vehicle trips, such as active transportation (walking and biking), public transit and carpooling at least on an occasional basis. Monthly parking fees that are low (particularly in relationship to daily fees) can deter these choices. Retaining the $2.00 per day charge for daily off-street parking, while raising the monthly permit fee may help to encourage more sustainable commuting choices.

There are benefits to charging a fee for on-street parking other than revenue generation. Paid street parking facilitates enforcement of time limits and helps manage demand by encouraging use of off-street parking or alternative travel modes. Nevertheless, in our parking utilization data collection (see Section 2.4), we have found that neither high on-street parking demand nor violation of time limits is an acute problem in Yarmouth. While free on-street parking should be retained for the near future, consideration for introducing fees should be made if demand or time violations become problematic.

5.4 FACILITATING RESIDENTIAL GROWTH

A shortage of housing throughout Nova Scotia has been evident over the past few years. In addition to increased investment, urban jurisdictions are contemplating how to remove barriers for residential development.

Municipal regulations normally require a minimum number of parking spaces to be provided (typically one parking space per residential unit) as part of the development approval process. Providing that amount of parking can add significant cost to a development and be especially challenging in downtown areas where land is less available and parking is better accommodated in larger shared parking lots. Parking minimums in downtown can be eliminated if the residential parking demand can be accommodated on-street or in municipal parking lots. Parking requirements for residential development outside of downtown should remain at a ratio of one space per residential unit as a baseline, but could be reduced through development agreement where appropriate. Rationale for reducing parking requirement could include lower income housing, proximity to public transit, shared and on-street parking opportunities, etc.

Currently, the Town doesn't call for on-site parking for residential units developed within existing buildings in the downtown zone. For newly constructed projects, builders must provide one parking space per residential unit or pay cash-in-lieu of parking. The one-space-one-unit requirement could be reduced, or possibly eliminated, if on-street and municipal parking lot spaces were able to be better utilized by downtown residents. The highest demand for resident parking will be during the evening and overnight hours when availability of parking is higher.

Some municipalities are removing parking minimums altogether for vehicles (excluding accessible and bicycle parking). This doesn't mean parking won't be provided, but it puts the onus on the developer to provide what makes sense based on their market analysis (e.g., if they don't think homes without parking will sell, they will likely still provide parking). In recent updates of their LUBs, the Town of Lunenburg and CBRM have removed mandatory minimums for parking for all zones.

Alternatively, if the Town would still like to maintain a minimum, but go with a reduced rate, the MPS/LUB could include language where considerations such as users, type of housing (e.g. affordable/seniors), access to alternative transportation options (transit/AT modes), income levels, etc. will be reviewed when considering the need for parking. As an example, this is language that the Town of Truro has in their MPS:

> "When establishing parking requirements, it shall be a policy of Council to take into consideration factors that may impact the need for parking such as: the development's proximity to services, amenities, and employment; access to active transportation; access to public transit; or access to a car sharing service. Council shall also take into consideration whether or not the development is intended for residents who are less likely to own an automobile due to factors such as age, employment status, income, or mobility."

A developer may seek a reduction in the amount of parking required if they feel they can make their units attractive to a market that doesn't require parking. Such a request should be accompanied by information on the following factors that dictate the impact on parking:

(1) Measurment of on-street parking utilization on adjacent streets to confirm availability of space

(2) Identification of partnership opportunities with nearby landowners for off-street parking during winter months

(3) Description of the walkability of the area and the proximity of the site to transit and active transportation

(4) Rationale for the lower-than-normal expectation for vehicle ownership for the market being catered to

Shared parking off-site can also provide a good solution. Rather than requiring off-site parking to be the same zone and contiguous, allow it for all zones or expand so the zones don't necessarily have to be the same and set a distance parameter instead. For example, churches vs restaurants usually have different operating hours and would make sense for shared parking but are often zoned differently.

A shared parking agreement between landowners could be required. It would definitely need to be documented whether through an agreement, easement, on title, etc. because once that land sells or uses are proposed to be changed that shared parking provision needs to be documented. As an example, in the Town of Kentville, off-street parking may pe provided in a different lot in any commercial/industrial zone for commercial purposes if it's located not more than 300 ft from the subject building and the landowners provide a parking agreement to the development officer

Permitting bicycle and loading spaces in the separate lot is not a common practice, based on usability perspective (e.g., not sure how much of a benefit a loading space would be for a building if it's located far from the access point) so if this is to be included (either or both), a maximum separation distance should be specified. As an example, Bridgewater requires that bicycle parking spaces shall be located within 12.5m (41ft) of a building's primary entrance(s) as measured along the most direct pedestrian access route

Parking on-street for downtown residents could be a convenient and appropriate solution, if it weren't for a prohibition of overnight parking due to street cleaning and snow and ice control. Currently, parking on downtown streets is prohibited overnight Monday through Friday to allow for street cleaning. Actual street cleaning, however, is undertaken periodically and could be scheduled for certain nights. The Town should explore, possibly through pilot projects, mechanisms to allow on-street parking overnight outside of the winter months on Main Street and possibly adjacent streets. One opportunity could be to set two nights per week for street cleaning on north-south streets and two different nights for cleaning of east-west streets. That would ensure that some streets throughout the downtown are always available for parking. The parking control signs shown in Figure 15 provide an example of the control that could be employed.

Winter parking creates additional challenges. Currently, overnight street parking is prohibited from December to March so that streets can be cleared during snowfall events. This type of parking control is very common thoughout Atlantic Canada, although some jurisdictions have moderated their control by permitting parking overnight unless a "snowfall event" has been declared. Even with this more moderate approach to a winter parking ban, the fact remains that for several nights every year street parking will be unavailable. To accommodate parking needs, we recommend allowing some overnight parking in municipal parking lots. Although parked cars are a hinderance when trying to clear parking lots of snow overnight, consolidating those parked cars to one specified area of the lot will allow for the majority of the lot to be fully cleared. The area where cars were parked could be semi-functional until it can be cleared at a later time. Samples of parking information and control signs that could be employed are shown in Figure 16.



Figure 15: Proposed Parking Control Signs for Street Cleaning

Permits for overnight parking, separate from the daily and monthly permits currently issued, should be introduced. A fee should be charged for overnight parking permits and should be adjusted up or down depending on demand. In addition to generating revenue, a monthly overnight permitting system allows the Town to limit the number of vehicles that are permitted to park in each lot and match it to the number of parking spaces allocated for overnight parking.

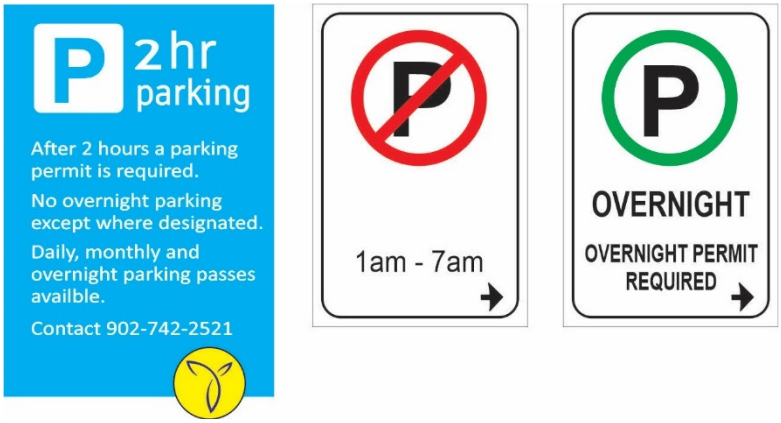


Figure 16: Parking Control Signs to Designate a Portion of Municipal Lots for Overnight Parking

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In general, parking in Yarmouth has many admirable features. In the downtown, data indicates that ample parking is normally available both for casual and monthly parking. The municipal parking lots are well-designed and maintained. They are mostly set back from Main Street and do not occupy valuable street-frontage. Outside of the downtown, off-street parking is sufficient to meet demand, and few issues were identified with residential streets being saturated with parking.

Parking control signs were found to be appropriate and well-located. On-street markings to indicate accessible parking and areas where parking is prohibited (transit stops, for example) are effective. There were also no locations identified where the restriction of parking on one or both sides of the street was unwarranted or where accommodation of street parking was more that the width of the street safely allowed.

In this study, the existing layout and management of parking was reviewed, and the public and key stakeholders were engaged to determine what is working and what can be improved. These issues were discussed throughout this document and recommendations and suggestions on measures to improve the overall delivery of parking as a municipal service were provided. Our recommendations are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of Recommendations

	Topic	Recommendation	Reference in Report
1	Wayfinding	Install at least twelve directional parking street signs to give better guidance to three of the municipal parking lots. Explore the possibility of formalizing other existing Town-owned parking lots through new signage.	4.1
2	Environment	As capital upgrade or rehabilitation projects are undertaken in municipal parking lots, measures to reduce environmental impact and enhance aesthetics should be implemented	4.2
3	Accessible Parking	A target of 4% of parking spaces designated for accessible parking should be set for on-street spaces downtown and in municipal parking lots.	4.3
4	Marked Parking Spaces	Continue the practice of marking individual spaces downtown. Review existing marked spaces to ensure they do not compromise sight distance to crosswalks.	4.4
5	Parking Violations By-law	Clarify the Parking Violations By-law as recommended in Section 4.4	4.4
6	Electric Vehicle Parking	Continue to install electric vehicle charging stations within municipal parking lots as demand dictates. Ensure that the spaces are well-signed to indicate a two-hour maximum parking duration.	4.5
7	Parking Supply Management	Pursue opportunities to develop additional off-street public parking supply with owners of existing parking lots, under-utilized properties, or development	5.2

		proposals. One such initiative involving the Yarmouth Area Industrial Commission is described in Section 5.2.	
8	Parking Fee Increases	Raise the fee for monthly permits in municipal lots to encourage daily use over monthly use. Retain the price for daily parking in municipal lots and free parking on-street.	5.3
9	Residential Parking Minimums	Reduce or waive minimum parking requirements for residential developments downtown. Retain a requirement of one parking space per residential unit outside of the downtown but permit reductions through development agreement where justified. Section 5.4 provides advice on how this justification can be produced. Retain a cash-in-lieu policy as an alternative to any parking requirements. Recognize that this recommendation is dependent on successful implementation of Recommendations 10 and 11 below.	5.4
10	Overnight Street Parking Prohibition	Explore and pilot opportunities to permit overnight parking on downtown streets outside of the winter months. One such opportunity is described in Section 5.4	5.4
11	Overnight Parking in Municipal Lots	Designate one aisle of parking spaces per parking lot for overnight parking. Require those who park overnight to possess a Town-issued monthly overnight parking permit.	5.4

APPENDIX

A PARKING DEMAND CALCULATION

PARKING DEMAND CALCULATION

Parking demand was calculated on a zone-by-zone basis using building footprint sizes multiplied by typical per-square-foot parking generation rates. These parking rates were taken from the Parking Generation Manual (Institute of Transportation Engineers) and modified to fit observations from elsewhere in Nova Scotia.

		Square Footage of Building Space by Zone and Land Use									TOTAL PARKING DEMAND	TOTAL PARKING SUPPLY
Land Use		Office (O)	Service (S)	Gen.Retail (G)	Restaurant (R)	Residential (H)	Medical (M)	Hotel (Ho)	Bank (B)	Other (X)		
Parking Demand per SqFt		2.28	3.29	1.86	8.75	0.50	2.89	0.22	3.40	1.50		
Zone	A	34442	3848	16893	21610	87149	6375	5200		5000	**382**	**317**
	B	36936	12520	44077	7188	61993			2886	11275	**328**	**110**
	C	57230	17970	48488	8640	6900			7503		**385**	**166**
	D	24146		7727	5148			70480	5032	18900	**176**	**290**
	E	11637	9266	15437	8714	6660	6642		2625	45515	**262**	**228**
	F	24952	11606	10157	6980	14305	4372	13200	10732	4264	**241**	**296**
Total Demand		432	182	266	510	89	50	20	98	127	1774	1407

APPENDIX

B WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

Town of Yarmouth

Parking Management Strategy

What We Heard Report

September 24, 2025

Yarmouth
ON THE EDGE OF EVERYWHERE
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Appendix A – Public Open House Comments

Appendix B – Public Survey Results

1 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Yarmouth, in collaboration with WSP Canada Inc., is developing a Parking Management Strategy (the Strategy), as a result of the Town's Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan. This Strategy will seek to improve how parking works for residents, visitors, and businesses.

As the Town of Yarmouth continues to grow as a regional hub for housing and services, the objective of this Strategy will be to ensure that the Town's parking system is efficient, accessible, and sustainable to support the current and future needs of Yarmouth's community.

As part of the development of the Strategy, stakeholder and community engagement events took place throughout the summer of 2025 to gain input that will be used to inform the forthcoming Parking Management Strategy. The community engagement events were conducted to identify issues, opportunities and aspirations of parking as a service within the Town, which will be addressed through the Strategy. The engagement activities conducted included:

- Four (4) Stakeholder Interviews;
- One (1) Downtown Business Workshop; and
- One (1) Online Community Survey.

This report provides an overview of the engagement events conducted as part of this Strategy to provide an understanding of the key barriers, challenges and priorities expressed by the Yarmouth community.

2 PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This section provides an overview of the stakeholder and community engagement activities conducted to inform the development of the Strategy.

2.1 STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Businesses and institutions that hold an important stake in the management of parking and generation of parking demand were identified and interviewed. The interviews were conducted in-person and through e-mail exchange between the week of July 21. A total of **four (4)** interviews were conducted with the following stakeholders:

1. Yarmouth and Area Chamber of Commerce
2. Tri-County Regional Centre for Education
3. Yarmouth Regional Hospital
4. Bay Ferries

An overview of the **key insights** from the interviews conducted include:

- With the increasing density within the Town, it is resulting in more traffic and more ‘bottlenecks’.
- Consumer complaints are being received regarding employees parking on streets and the lack of downtown parking. The lack of parking is typically only during large events.
- The overall snow clearing of parking spaces is generally good.
- Prohibiting of street parking overnight is not recognized as a significant issue.
- Issues identified around the Yarmouth Elementary School with morning drop-offs and afternoon pick-ups, which result in streets being blocked due to lack of loading areas.
- Issues identified with parking at the Yarmouth High School, noting that some of the existing off-site parking is too far from the school.
- The former site of Yarmouth Central School is being explored for development.
- There is currently ongoing construction of a new Emergency Department at the Regional Hospital, resulting in a lack of parking supply to meet the demand.
- Hospital employees are occasionally required to park on residential streets adjacent to the site.
- Expressed that there is ample processing capacity in entry booths to ferry marshalling yard, and ensure entries are opened well in advance of ferry departures to ensure vehicle queuing on outside streets is avoided.
- Some ferry users park their personal vehicles and walk onto the ferry. Those who do, typically park on streets of the south of the site where there are no time restrictions.

2.2 DOWNTOWN BUSINESS WORKSHOP

On July 22, 2025, the project team held an in-person workshop with downtown business owners/operators at the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Library. The purpose of the workshop was to gather a greater understanding of current issues and opportunities of parking in downtown Yarmouth. Downtown business owners/operators were invited to the session by the Yarmouth Area Chamber of Commerce. A total of five (5) downtown business owners/operators attended the session.

Feedback received from the in-person workshop has been summarized and categorized by related topics in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Feedback received from the Downtown Business Workshop

Topic	Feedback Received
Parking Availability and Management	• **Employee Parking**: Participants identified that there is a lack of off-street parking available for employees. This results in employees needing to occupy designated 2-hour parking spots for extended periods. • **Customer Parking**: Participants expressed that customer-only parking is not well marked, and the 2-hour limit is not a significant issue for customers. However, the extra time pass for certain businesses is not well advertised. • **Overnight Parking**: The ban on overnight parking in downtown lots, especially with the new recharging stations, is a concern for business owners.
Parking Enforcement and Regulation	• **Bylaw Officer Presence**: There was a period without a bylaw officer, but their presence is now noted, particularly on Main Street. • **Charging for Parking**: Opinions are divided on charging for parking. Some participants believe it promotes better turnover and is easier to enforce, while others think it might not deter visitors. • **Parking Meters**: The idea of reintroducing parking meters is considered, with the belief that it would not deter visitors and could aid enforcement.
Loading Zones and Accessibility	• **Loading Zones**: Participants expressed that there are not enough loading zones, and deciding which businesses get them is challenging. Temporary loading zones from 9AM-11AM are suggested. • **Accessible Parking**: Participants expressed that there is more than enough accessible parking, but specific spots for mothers are not needed downtown.

	• **Traffic and Transit Interference**: Bump-outs impede views but help slow down traffic. Desire to enforce a 30km/h speed limit, which could resolve some traffic issues.
Additional Feedback	• Participants identified there is no significant bicycle activity downtown. • The winter maintenance (e.g. snow clearing) was identified as being generally good.

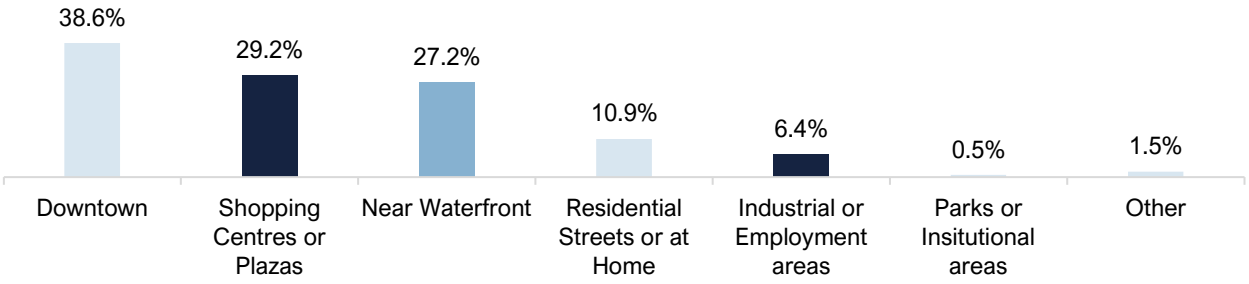
2.3 COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

A Community Survey was launched on SurveyMonkey from July 13, 2025, to August 24, 2025. The survey included multiple choice, ranking questions, open-ended questions, as well as a general comments section, to gather information and feedback on barriers, issues and priorities for parking within the Town of Yarmouth. The information received will be used to inform the development of the Strategy.

The survey was promoted on the Town's webpage (https://townofyarmouth.ca/town-developing-parking-management-strategy.html). A total of 588 responses to the Survey were received. The following section presents an overview of responses received.

2.3.1 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

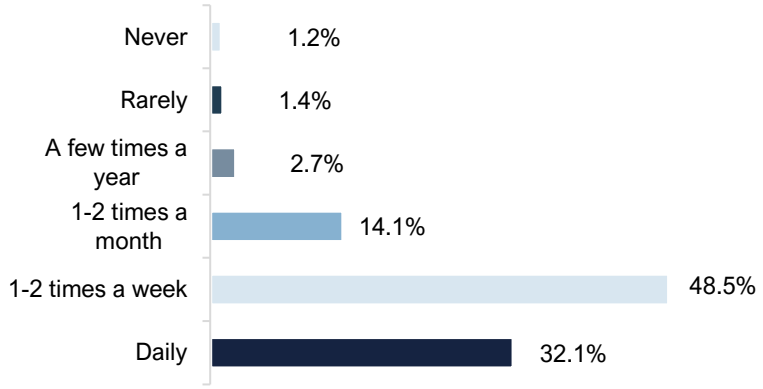
Question: In which area(s) of the Town do you most often park your vehicle? Select all that apply.



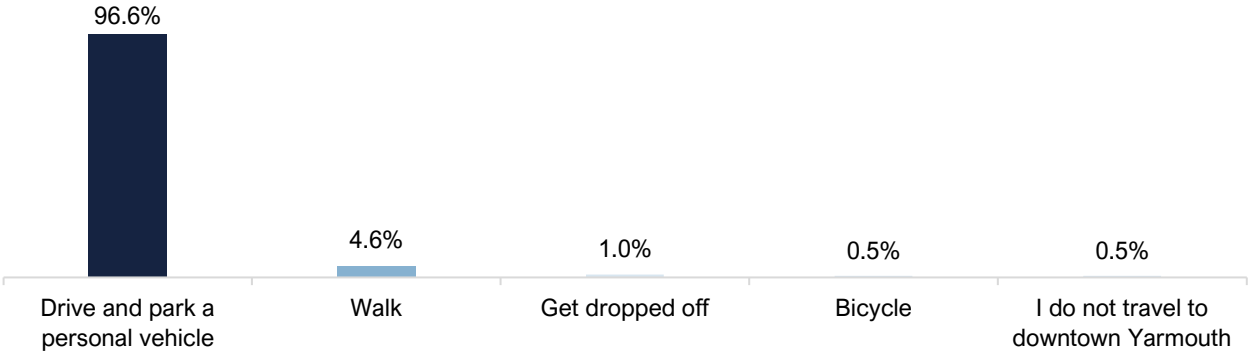
Survey respondents were asked to identify the areas within the Town where they most often park their vehicle. Based on the responses provided, the most common location where respondents park their vehicles is Downtown (38.9%), in Shopping Centres or Plazas (29.2%), and near the Waterfront (27.2%). 10.9% of respondents indicated they often park their vehicles on residential streets or at home, and 6.4% park within industrial of employment areas. Only 0.5% of survey respondents indicated that they park in parks or institutional areas within Yarmouth. Other comments from respondents indicated they avoid going Downtown.

Question: How often do you personally park a vehicle (personal car, truck, SUV or motorcycle – not bicycle or walking) in downtown Yarmouth?

Respondents were asked to indicate how often they park a vehicle in downtown Yarmouth. Nearly half of the respondents (48.5%) park a vehicle at least 1 to 2 times a week. Just over a third of survey respondents park downtown daily (32.1%), and less than a quarter (14.1%) park downtown only 1 to 2 times a month.

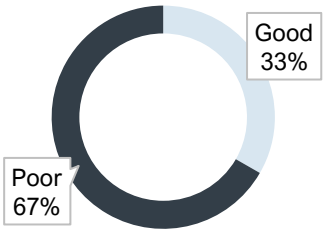


Question: How do you most often travel to downtown Yarmouth?



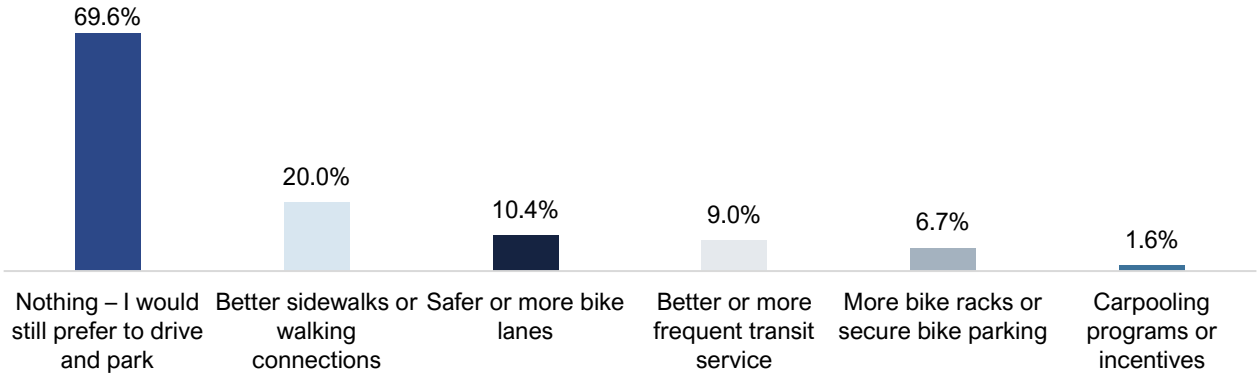
Survey respondents were asked to identify how they most often travel to downtown Yarmouth. The majority of respondents (96.6%) indicated they travel downtown by driving and parking their personal vehicle. Only 4.6% of respondents travel downtown by walking and approximately 3% travel using public transit, taxi, or scooters/electric scooters.

Question: If you bike to downtown, how would you rate the availability and convenience of bike parking?



Of the respondents who identified that they travel downtown by bicycle, they were asked to rate the availability and convenience of bike parking on a scale of not sure, poor, fair, good, or excellent. Approximately one-third (33%) of respondents thought that bike parking was good, whilst two-thirds (67%) of respondents thought that bike parking was poor.

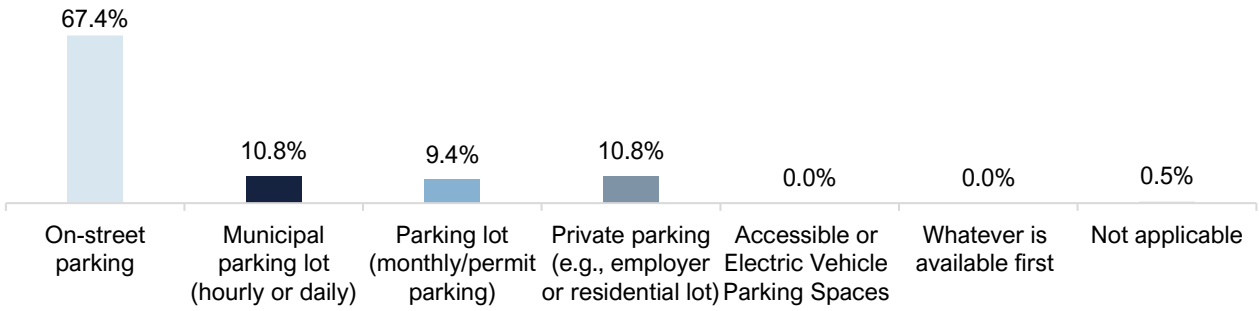
Question: What might encourage you to visit downtown without driving and parking a personal vehicle? Select all that apply.



Respondents were asked to specify what choices might encourage them to visit downtown Yarmouth without driving and parking a personal vehicle. Based on the provided responses, the majority of respondents (69.6%) would still prefer to drive and park a personal vehicle, regardless of what could be provided by the Town. 20% of survey respondents indicated that improved sidewalks and walking connections would encourage them to visit downtown without a personal vehicle, and 10.4% expressed desire for additional/improved bike lanes, or improved transit service (9%). Approximately 12.4% of survey respondents provided other options that would encourage them to travel downtown without a vehicle, some key responses included:

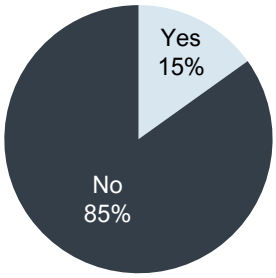
- Desire for improved safety of accessible-friendly parking spaces, and an overall increase in these spaces;
- Improved pedestrian areas in the downtown area (e.g. sidewalks, crosswalks, connections, improved walkability); and
- Expressed desire for improved visibility in the downtown area, identified existing sight obstructions for pedestrians/drivers (e.g. bump-outs, lack of signage, illegally parked cars).

Question: When parking downtown, what type of vehicle parking do you normally use?



Survey respondents were asked to share the type of vehicle parking they normally use when parking downtown. Based on responses received, the majority of respondents use on-street parking (67.4%) as a primary parking option. Respondents also indicated they use municipal parking lots hourly or daily

(10.8%), private parking (e.g. employer or residential lot) (10.8%), and monthly/permit parking lots (9.4%). No survey respondents identified using accessible or electric vehicle parking spaces.

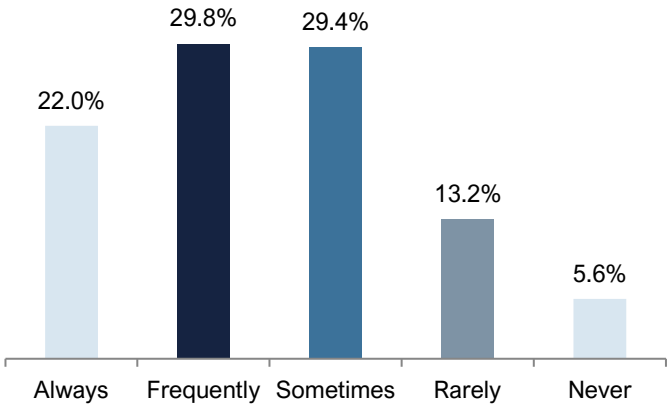


Question: Do you require accessible vehicle parking?

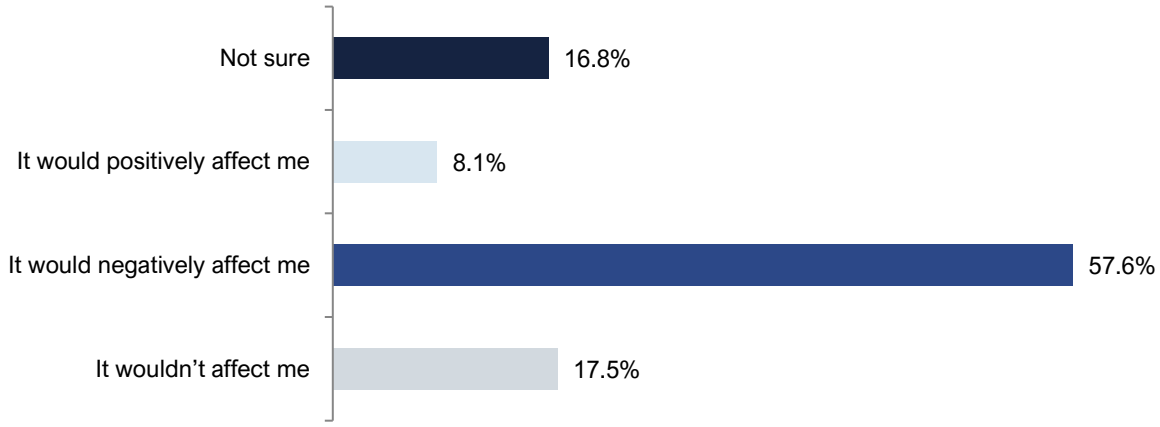
Respondents were asked whether they require accessible vehicle parking. 85% of respondents indicated they do not require accessible parking, whereas 15% do.

Question: Do you have difficulty finding vehicle parking downtown?

Survey respondents were asked to rank how difficult it is to find vehicle parking in downtown Yarmouth from always difficult, frequently, sometimes, rarely, or never. 29.8% of respondents indicated they frequently have difficulty finding vehicle parking and 29.4% sometimes have difficulty finding vehicle parking. Nearly a quarter of respondents (22%) indicated they always face difficulty in finding parking downtown, whereas 13.2% rarely, and 5.6% never find it difficult to park downtown.



Question: If the Town were to consider introducing paid vehicle parking downtown of one ($1.00) dollar per hour (note: no decision has been made), how would this impact you?



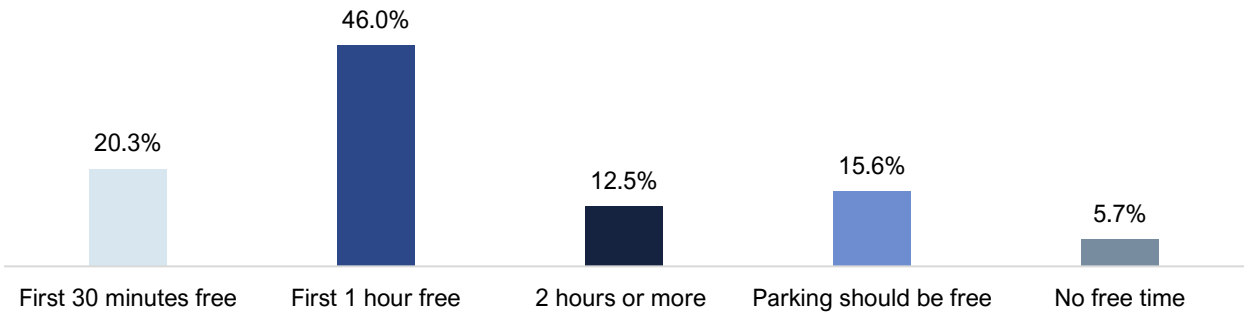
Survey respondents were asked how implementing paid parking downtown would impact them. Based on the survey responses, more than half (57.6%) of respondents felt that if the Town were to introduce paid vehicle parking, it would negatively impact them. 17.5% of survey respondents stated that they wouldn't be affected by paid vehicle parking downtown, and 16.8% were unsure. Only 8.1% of survey respondents shared that paid vehicle parking would positively impact them.

Question: Please explain why paid parking would affect you?

Following up on potentially implementing paid parking by the Town, participants were given the opportunity to leave an "open-ended" response containing any additional comments they wished to share with the project team. 349 participants chose to respond to this question. Their input has been summarized into key themes below.

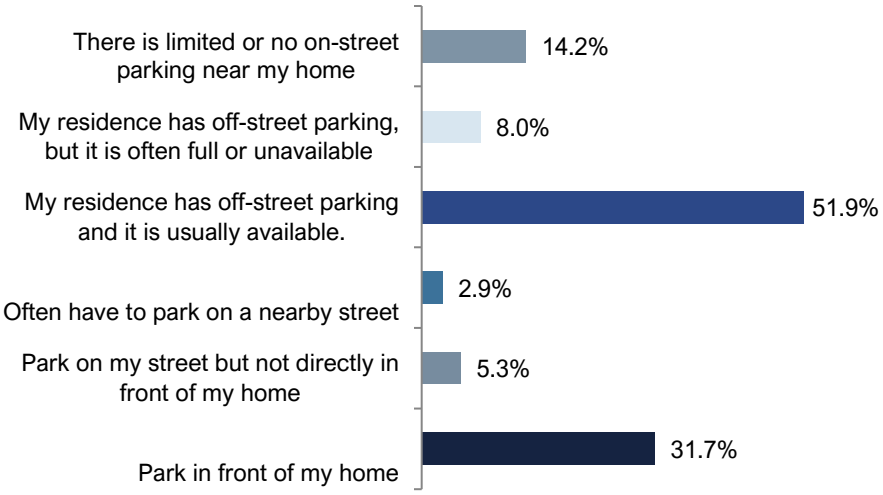
- Survey respondents expressed concerns around implementing paid parking and would contribute to the already expensive living costs; regardless of the amount proposed.
- Many respondents indicated that they frequently travel to downtown Yarmouth to run errands (e.g. travelling to banks or pharmacies). Respondents indicated that they felt it would not be worth charging for paid parking, for instance, to do a quick stop to complete their errands, such as picking up a prescription at the pharmacy.
- Survey respondents expressed that paid parking would deter them from going downtown. As downtown Yarmouth is an area with many businesses including professional services with clients, and an area that could attract tourists, this could lead to businesses loosing regular customers or tourists having less interest in visiting the Town due to parking costs.
- Survey respondents provided feedback that they were completely against paid parking and would find alternative areas to avoid paying for parking.
- Some survey respondents expressed that there is currently a lack of sufficient and well-maintained parking infrastructure to begin charging for paid parking.
- Some respondents were supportive of paid parking as it could potentially contribute to the Town's revenue for future parking infrastructure improvement.

Question: If parking is paid, how much free time do you think is appropriate before charging?



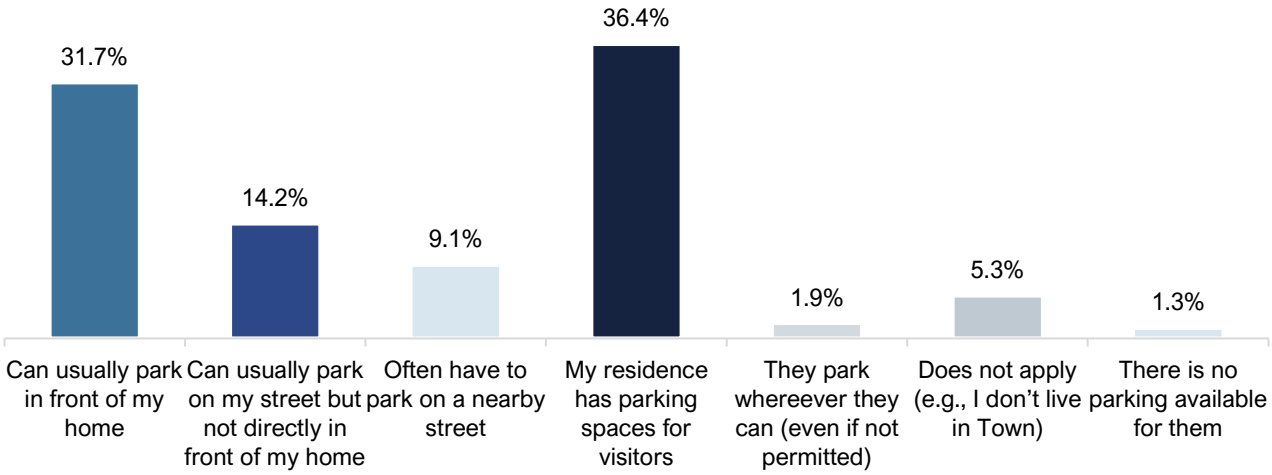
Participants were asked how much free parking should be available before paid parking is enforced. Majority of respondents (about 46%) felt that the first 1 hour should be free before paid parking is enforced. Approximately 20.3% of respondents indicated that the first 30 minutes should be free, just over 12.5% felt parking should be free for 2 hours or more, around 15.6% felt that parking should be completely free, and over 5% indicated that there should be no free parking at all.

Question: Which of the following best describes your experience with parking on residential streets (i.e., where you live)? Select all that apply.



Respondents were asked about their general experience with parking on residential streets. More than half (51.9%) of survey respondents indicated they had access to off-street parking through their driveway or private lot that is usually available. Nearly one third (31.7%) of survey respondents shared that they typically park in front of their home and 14.2% expressed that there is limited or there is no on-street parking near their home. The remaining respondents indicated that their residence has off-street parking either as a driveway or private lot, but it is often unavailable (8%), 5.3% or respondents typically park on their street, but not directly in front of their house, and 2.9% of respondents often need to park on a nearby street.

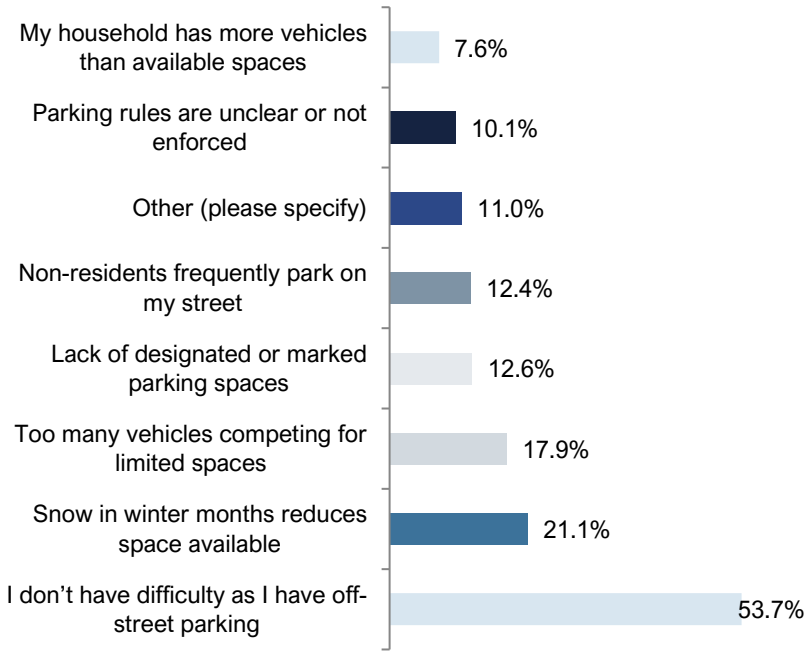
Question: Which of the following best describes experiences of visitors to your home with parking on residential streets (i.e., where you live)? Select all that apply.



Respondents were asked to identify what approaches they take when visitors to their home require parking. More than one third (36.4%) of survey respondents indicated that have space to accommodate visitor parking, and nearly another third of respondents (31.7%) shared that that have access to parking in front of their house. Of the remaining responses, 14.2% expressed that visitors have to park on the street, but not directly in front of their home, whereas other expressed visitors have to find parking where they can, even if it is not permitted (5.3%), and some experience that no parking is available at all (1.3%). The remaining respondents (5.3%) mentioned it does not apply to them as they do not live in Town.

Question: If you find it difficult to park near your home, what do you think are the main reasons? Select all that apply.

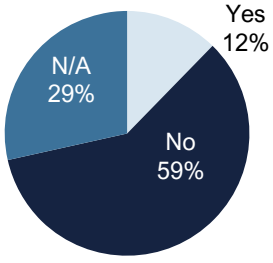
Respondents were asked to indicate the main reasons they feel makes it most difficult to find parking near their homes. Based on the survey responses, over half (53.7%) of respondents do not have difficulty parking near their home as they have off-street parking, 21.1% face parking barriers due to snow in winter months, and 17.9% find it difficult to park due to the number of vehicles competing for limited space. Of the other responses received, 12.6% indicated a lack of marked parking spaces, and 12.4% frequently have non-residents parking on their streets. Over 10% of respondents felt parking rules in the town are unclear or not enforced and 7.6% have more vehicles than provided parking spaces.



11% of survey respondents shared other potential reasons which are summarized into the following points:

- Streets can be too narrow, limiting parking ability;
- Issues regarding existing driveways or driveway/parking access;
- Nearby employees / institutions taking parking spaces; and
- Bump outs or bike lanes reducing parking options;

Question: Is the year-round overnight parking ban downtown and along Main Street problematic for you?



Respondents were asked if they feel the year-round overnight parking ban downtown and along Main Street is problematic. Over half (59.2%) of respondents indicated they do not feel that the parking ban is problematic, while only 12.3% felt that it was problematic.

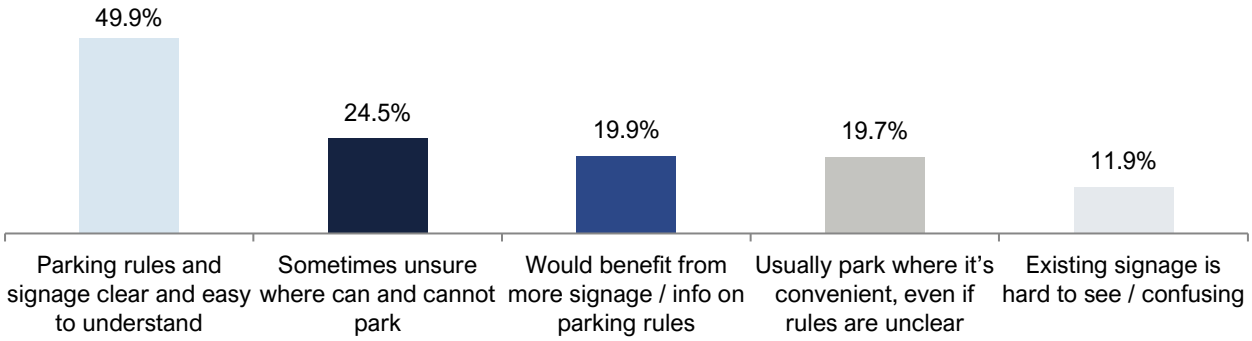
Question: Please explain why it is problematic?

Based on the questions regarding the year-round overnight parking ban downtown and along Main Street, the respondents who answered "yes" to this being problematic, were asked to explain why. 56 survey

respondents provided “open-ended” responses, which have been categorized into the following key themes:

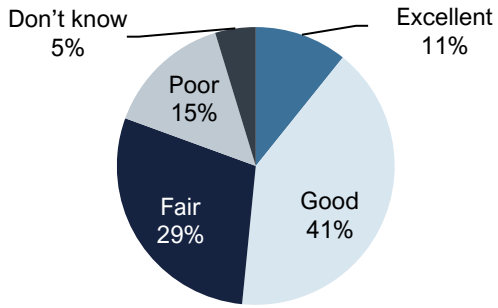
- Do not have enough parking spaces at their residences and would benefit from overnight parking;
- Expressed that they should have the ability to park if they wish;
- Need overnight parking for work vehicles;
- Occasionally require overnight parking for guests;
- The option to park should be available for safety reasons to prevent impaired driving;
- Overnight parking can be an option for when there are snowstorms and unsafe driving conditions;
- Downtown should be easily accessible; and
- The parking ban seems unfair due to cost and permit reasons.

Question: Which of the following best describes your experience with parking rules and signage? Select all that apply.



Respondents were asked to share what best describes their experience with parking rules and signage. Nearly half (49.9%) of respondents find parking rules and signage clear and easy to understand, whereas 24.5% are sometimes unsure of where they can or cannot park. Of the remaining responses, 19.9% indicated they would benefit form more signage or information on parking rules, and 19.7% expressed that they typically park where it’s convenient, even if rules are unclear, and 11.9% find the existing signage confusing or hard to see.

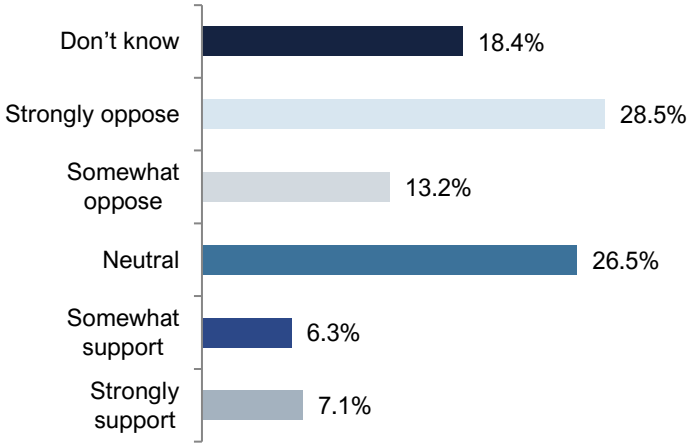
Question: Do you feel that the Town provides adequate maintenance of parking spaces throughout the year (e.g., snow clearing, street sweeping, etc.)?



Respondents were asked if they feel that the Town provides adequate maintenance of parking spaces throughout the year. Based on the survey responses, most respondents felt the maintenance of parking spaces throughout the year is “good” (40.8%). Other responses indicated that respondents felt the maintenance of parking spaces in the Town was “fair” (29%), “poor” (14.7%), or “excellent” (10.8%).

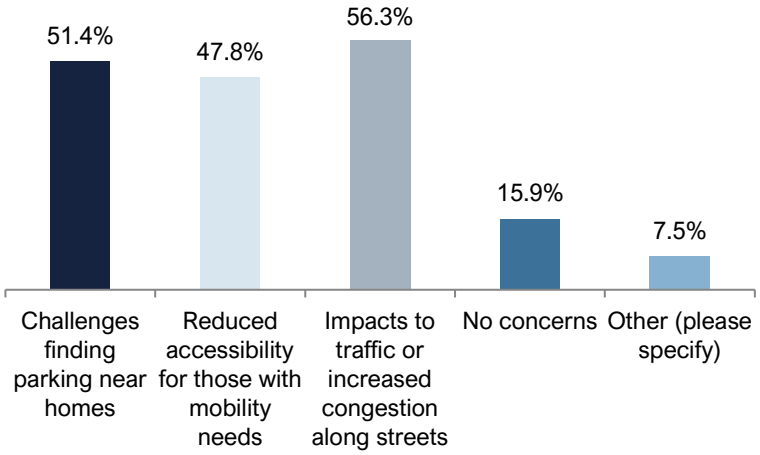
Question: Should the Town consider reducing the minimum number of vehicle parking spaces required for new residential developments (e.g., apartment buildings)?

Respondents were asked if they feel that the Town should consider reducing the minimum number of vehicle parking spaces required for new residential developments. Based on the survey responses, most respondents strongly oppose (28.5%), feel neutral (26.5%) or are unsure (18.4%) about reducing the minimum number of parking spaces for new residential developments. Other responses indicated that participants somewhat oppose (13.2%) this reduction to minimum parking spaces, and few participants support this reduction (6.3% somewhat support, 7.1% strong support).

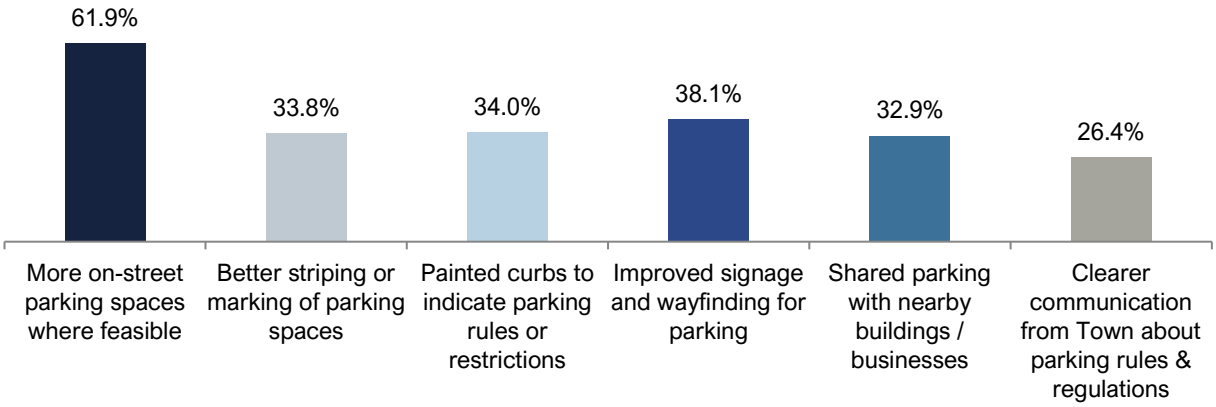


Question: What concerns would you have if fewer parking spaces were required for new residential developments? Select all that apply.

Survey respondents were asked to share potential concerns around fewer parking spaces being required for new residential developments. Based on feedback received, responses indicate that the largest concern with requiring fewer parking spaces for residential developments would be impacts to traffic or increased congestion along streets (32%), challenges with finding parking near homes (30%), and reduced accessibility for those with mobility needs (27%). 10% of respondents expressed that they had no concerns with this reduction.



Question: Which of the following improvements related to parking would you like to see? Select all that apply.



Respondents were asked to identify what improvements related to parking they would like to see. Based on survey responses, the most significant area for improvement regarding parking in the Town is to provide more on-street parking spaces where feasible (61.9%). Remaining responses were fairly evenly distributed, with respondents indicating they would like to see improvements related to improved signage and wayfinding for parking (38.1%), painted curbs indicating parking rules or restrictions (34%), striping or marking of parking spaces (33.8%), an increase in shared parking with nearby buildings / businesses (32.9%), and clearer communication around parking rules and regulations (26.4%). Of the respondents who indicated 'other' the most common responses included:

- Provide larger parking spaces for large vehicles;
- Encourage more thought into street design;
- Provide free parking when/where available;
- Desire to keep parking as is;
- Desire to reduce the existing bump outs or other hazards identified in the Town;
- Provide more accessible parking options and spaces;
- Establish clear parking rules and time limits; and
- Ensure there is enough parking for business or residential use.

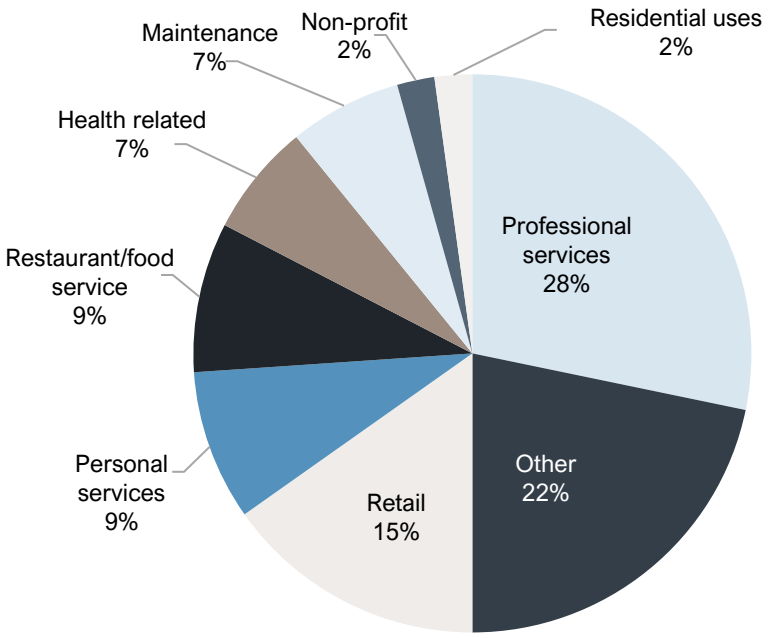
2.3.2 BUSINESS OWNER SURVEY RESULTS

An additional section of the Community Survey included questions directed to business owners in Yarmouth. The intention of this section was to gather information and feedback related to parking specifically targeted at business owners in the Town. Survey respondents were asked to identify if they were a business owner, 42 (9%) indicated that they own a business in Yarmouth. The following responses were received from respondents who identified as business owners within the Town.

Question: What type of business do you operate? (retail, restaurant/food service, professional services, personal services, other).

Business owner respondents were asked to share what type of business they operate. Based on responses, most respondents operate professional service business (28%). Other businesses identified included:

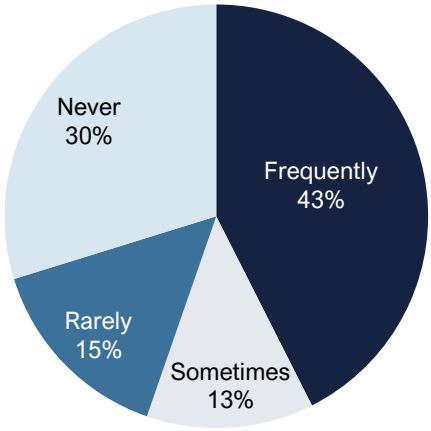
- Non-profit services;
- Maintenance-related work (e.g. landscaping, contracted work);
- Health-related services;
- Restaurant or other food service;
- Personal services;
- Retail services; and
- Residential related services (e.g. real estate, hotel).



Question: What kind of off-street/on-site parking do you provide? Select all that apply.



Business owner survey respondents were asked to share what kind of parking they provide. Based on responses received, the majority of business owners on the Town provide employee parking (40.4%), and/or customer parking (38.3%). Over two-thirds (38.3%) of respondents no not provide any off-street or on-site parking. 17% of business owner respondents offer accessible parking spaces and 8.5% include bike parking.



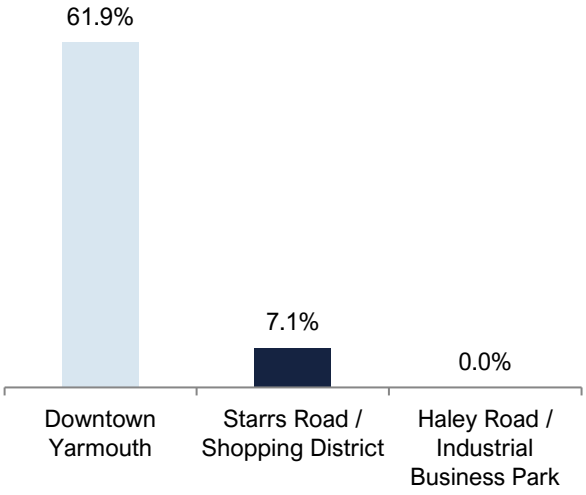
Question: How often do you hear from customers and/or employees about a lack of parking at your location?

Business owner survey respondents were asked to provide how often they hear from customers and/or employees about a lack of parking at their business. Based on responses, the majority of business owners (43%) frequently hear complaints regarding a lack of available parking. Approximately one-third (30%) of respondents never hear anything regarding a lack of parking with the remining 15% of respondents rarely, and 13% sometimes hearing things about a lack of parking.

Question: Where is your business located?

Participants with business in the Town were asked to share where their business was located. Based on responses, the majority of businesses (61.9%) are located in downtown Yarmouth, with approximately 7% being located on Starrs Road / Shopping district. Approximately 30% of business owner respondents provided other business locations, which included:

- Prescott Street;
- Water Street;
- Milton Street; and
- Vancouver Street.



2.3.3 ADDITIONAL SURVEY COMMENTS

Question: Are there any additional comments you would like to share with the Town of Yarmouth Parking Management Strategy project team about your experience with parking in Yarmouth?

All participants were given the opportunity to provide additional comments about their experience with parking in the Town of Yarmouth. 200 survey respondents chose to add their own input. The comments provided have been summarized into key themes in **Table 2** below:

Table 2: Summary of Additional Survey Feedback

Topic	Feedback Received
Street Design and Safety	• **Signage:** Respondents indicated that there is a lack of adequate signage on roads throughout the Town. • **Existing Street Obstructions:** Survey respondents expressed concerns around the current curb buildouts in the Town, indicating that these can create blind spots for drivers. Respondents also mentioned concerns with art installations in the downtown area creating view obstructions around crosswalks. • **Accessible Parking:** Respondents have a desire for more designated accessible parking spaces. Survey respondents indicated there is a large number of residents who require accessible parking spaces, and there are currently limited amounts of these designated spaces.
Parking Fees and Regulations	• **Increasing Parking Fees:** Respondents expressed concerns with increasing parking fees, indicating that this would deter them from going into the downtown area. • **Parking Zone Fees:** Some respondents are supportive of implementing parking fees. The introduction of various parking zones with different pay structures was a suggested approach. • **Parking Congestion:** Survey respondents indicated that there is currently a high amount of parking congestion throughout the downtown area. • **Regulation Enforcement:** Respondents expressed concerns around vehicles not complying with parking regulations and the desire for more parking regulation enforcement.
Road Infrastructure	• **Road Quality:** Respondents mentioned poor road quality creating hazards for vehicles (e.g. line marking, pavement, potholes, etc.). • **Winter Maintenance:** Respondents expressed the desire for more road maintenance, including snow clearing in winter months.
Limited Parking Availability	• **Parking Supply:** Respondents expressed the desire for improved/increased parking areas to attract people into the downtown. • **Employee Parking:** Survey respondents who work in the downtown area expressed concerns around limited parking at their place of work.
Active Transportation and Public Transit	• **Active Transportation Options:** Survey respondents indicated they would encourage the prioritization of more active transportation options and amenities, including bike lanes, and public lockers for bikes or strollers. Respondents also expressed the desire for more multi purpose trails. • **Transit:** Respondents indicated there is a need for improved transit systems.

3 WHAT WE HEARD

The findings from the stakeholder and community engagement activities conducted have been summarized into a series of “Key Themes”. The input collected through stakeholder interviews, a workshop, community survey, and an open house provide valuable insight into the barriers, opportunities, and aspirations to help inform the development of the Parking Management Strategy.

While the feedback received varies, several key themes were identified, which will be support the development of the Strategy. This section provides an overview of key themes heard throughout these engagement efforts, which have been categorized into three (3) “Key Themes” which are outlined below:

1. Creating Safe and Accessible Streets
2. Improving Affordability and User Experience
3. Strengthen Parking Management and Supply

3.1 KEY THEMES

1 CREATING SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE STREETS

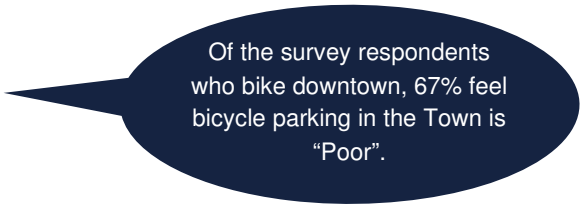
Based on feedback received throughout the engagement activities, it is clear there is a strong emphasis on the importance of safe and accessible streets, and parking options, for all residents and visitors of the Town. Based on the community survey, residents expressed a strong desire for improved sidewalks and connections as 20% of survey respondents indicated that improved sidewalks and walking connections would encourage them to visit downtown.

The Strategy should consider:

1. **Expanding Accessible Parking Spaces:**
   - Explore opportunities to increase and expand accessible parking spaces within the Town. Survey respondents indicated there is a desire for more designated accessible parking spaces in the downtown area, while business owners/operators indicated there is ample supply of accessible parking spaces.
   - Invest in improving the safety of existing accessible parking spaces in the Town. Engagement efforts demonstrated that there is a desire for improved safety of accessible-friendly parking spaces.
2. **Balancing Parking Needs with Driver, Biker and Pedestrian Safety:**
   - Prioritize transportation connections, with a goal to prioritize safe roads for drivers, bikers and pedestrians, as well as safe and reliable parking. Participants recognize the importance of a strong, connected transportation network, beyond just parking, particularly in the crucial “first and last mile” connections.
   - Assess existing infrastructure and its impact on road users. Participants expressed concerns related to existing road bump outs creating sight obstructions for both drivers and pedestrians.

3 **Investing in Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure:**

- Upgrade sidewalks and crosswalks in the downtown area to improve pedestrian safety. There is a desire for improved sidewalks and safer crosswalks, as survey participants highlighted, they experience challenges with safe sidewalks and crosswalks in the downtown area.



- Encourage the investment in additional and improved bike lanes in the Town. Survey respondents expressed desire for additional/improved bike lanes.

2 IMPROVING AFFORDABILITY AND USER EXPERIENCE

Cost and convenience of parking was a key comment that arose from participants, with many respondents indicating that they would strongly oppose the introduction of paid vehicle parking downtown. Many of the concerns expressed by respondents related to the rising cost of living and mentioned the unprotection of parking fees would discourage downtown visits.

Respondents expressed a need for affordable parking options, as well as the importance of improving and enhancing the overall user experience for parking within the Town. Participants indicated the desire for well-maintained parking facilities, clear wayfinding and signage as well as visible street markings. Based on the engagement activities conducted, the importance of ensuring parking is both affordable and well-designed and maintained, was highly emphasized by residents in the Town, to ensure investments in parking infrastructure deliver value to all.

The Strategy should consider:

1 **Exploring Pricing Models:**

- Investigate opportunities to implement a range of pricing models for parking in the downtown area. Suggestions from respondents included having the first hour of parking free, or tiered rates to provide a more affordable approach. Survey respondents expressed concerns around implementing paid parking and would contribute to the already high living costs; regardless of the amount proposed and expressed that paid parking would deter them from going downtown.
- Participants expressed that as downtown Yarmouth is an area with many businesses including professional services with clients, and an area that could attract tourists, implementing parking fees could lead to businesses loosing regular customers or tourists having less interest in visiting the Town due to parking costs.

2 **Investment in Street and Parking Maintenance:**

- Support increasing and leveraging year-round street and parking maintenance throughout the Town. Survey respondents highlighted that they face barriers with parking due to snow build-up in winter months, with 21.1% of survey respondents indicating they face parking barriers due to snow in winter months.
- On the contrary, interviewees noted that the overall snow clearing of parking spaces is generally good.

3 **Improving Parking Signage:**

- Explore opportunities to improve and expand parking signage to improve the user experience when parking throughout the Town.
- While the survey respondents indicated that many residents find existing parking signage clear and easy to understand, a large proportion still are sometimes unsure of where they can or cannot park, indicating that they would benefit form more signage or information on parking rules.

3 STRENGTHEN PARKING MANAGEMENT AND SUPPLY

The engagement efforts highlighted that while generally residential streets have available parking, there can be limited availability within the downtown area. Residents have indicated that there can be unclear parking regulations, inconsistent enforcement and seasonal maintenance challenges which can impact the existing parking supply and overall create barriers with effective parking management. Engagement efforts revealed that the majority of residents travel downtown by driving and parking their personal vehicle, with the most common location of travel being to the downtown area. The community survey revealed that 29.8% of survey respondents frequently have difficulty finding vehicle parking in the downtown area. While some similar towns suffer from large institutions (schools, offices, and hospitals) or businesses producing more parking demand than they can handle on site resulting in spillover into residential neighbourhoods, we found no incidences of that identified in Yarmouth.

The Strategy should consider:

1 Improve Parking Enforcement:

- Explore opportunity to strengthen parking enforcement throughout the Town. Based on responses received from the community survey, some opportunities to improve parking enforcement could include establishing time limits for parking and providing stronger enforcement on illegal parking (e.g. ticketing).

2 Strengthen Parking Regulations and Requirements:

- Assess the current minimum parking requirements and regulations established in the Town to identify areas and regulations that can be adapted to balance community needs with land use goals (e.g. parking requirements for residential dwellings, commercial uses, etc.). Participants noted that they would be concerned with reducing the current minimum number of parking spaces for new residential developments.
- Assess the overnight street parking ban enforced in the Town, over half (59.2%) of respondents indicated they do not feel that the parking ban is problematic, while only 12.3% felt that it was problematic. Of those who felt it was problematic indicated that. Business owners/operators indicated that the ban on overnight parking, especially with new recharging stations, is a concern for business owners.

3 Increase Parking Supply:

- Explore opportunities to increase the overall parking supply in the town for businesses and employees. The engagement efforts revealed that there are significant issues regarding a lack of parking for employees and business owners working within the downtown. Business survey respondents highlighted that often they cannot find parking at their place of work due to non-employees taking these spaces. Business owners/operators identified that there is a lack of off-street parking available for

67.4% of Survey respondents use on-street parking.

employees, leading to employees having to occupy designated 2-hour parking spots for extended periods.

- Explore options to expand parking for customers and the general public in the downtown area. Community survey respondents raised issues with the existing businesses in the downtown area taking away parking spaces from the general public for employees. Given this is an issue for employees as well, increasing the overall parking supply would support in alleviating this issue.
- On the contrary, interviewees indicated that there is ample supply of parking in the downtown area and did not raise concerns.