



PARKING SERVICES REVIEW

Public Meeting
June 2, 2025

City Hall – Council Chambers



WELCOME

Welcome to this public meeting for the St. Catharines Parking Services Review. This public meeting has been arranged to provide an opportunity for you to learn about the study, ask questions, and provide input to the project team.



**LEARN ABOUT THE
PROJECT**



ASK QUESTIONS



**PROVIDE
COMMENTS**

Please sign in and fill out the online survey following the meeting (<https://www.engageSTC.ca/ParkingReview>).

The survey will be open until **June 16, 2025**.

Land Acknowledgement

The land on which we gather on today is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Attiwonderonk, and Mississauga peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today.

This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many Indigenous peoples, made up of First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

The Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement should remind us of our responsibility to ensure the Dish, the territories on which we live and work, is never emptied, and that we take care of the land and its inhabitants in a way that ensures its future sustainability.

BACKGROUND

This parking study builds on a series of previous initiatives by the City that primarily assessed parking supply and usage patterns. Unlike those earlier studies, this review takes a service delivery approach — focusing on how the municipal parking system is managed and exploring opportunities to enhance the user experience, improve operational efficiency, and ensure long-term financial sustainability.

A review of parking services in St. Catharines was undertaken to ensure that the current delivery model continues to align with the City's broader objectives. These objectives include:

1. Providing parking within an acceptable and reasonable walking distance;
2. Ensuring parking is accessible, safe, and visually appealing;
3. Meeting current and future parking demand; and,
4. Maintaining a self-sustaining parking system that minimizes costs to users and does not rely on the general tax base.

Scope

Undertake a comprehensive review of parking services operations and make recommendations with respect to the overall model of delivery and/or operational elements. This will include a review of:

- Facilities and management
- Systems integration
- Enforcement operations

The review specifically considered opportunities for the City to provide all of the above operational elements focusing on the Downtown and Special Provision Areas.

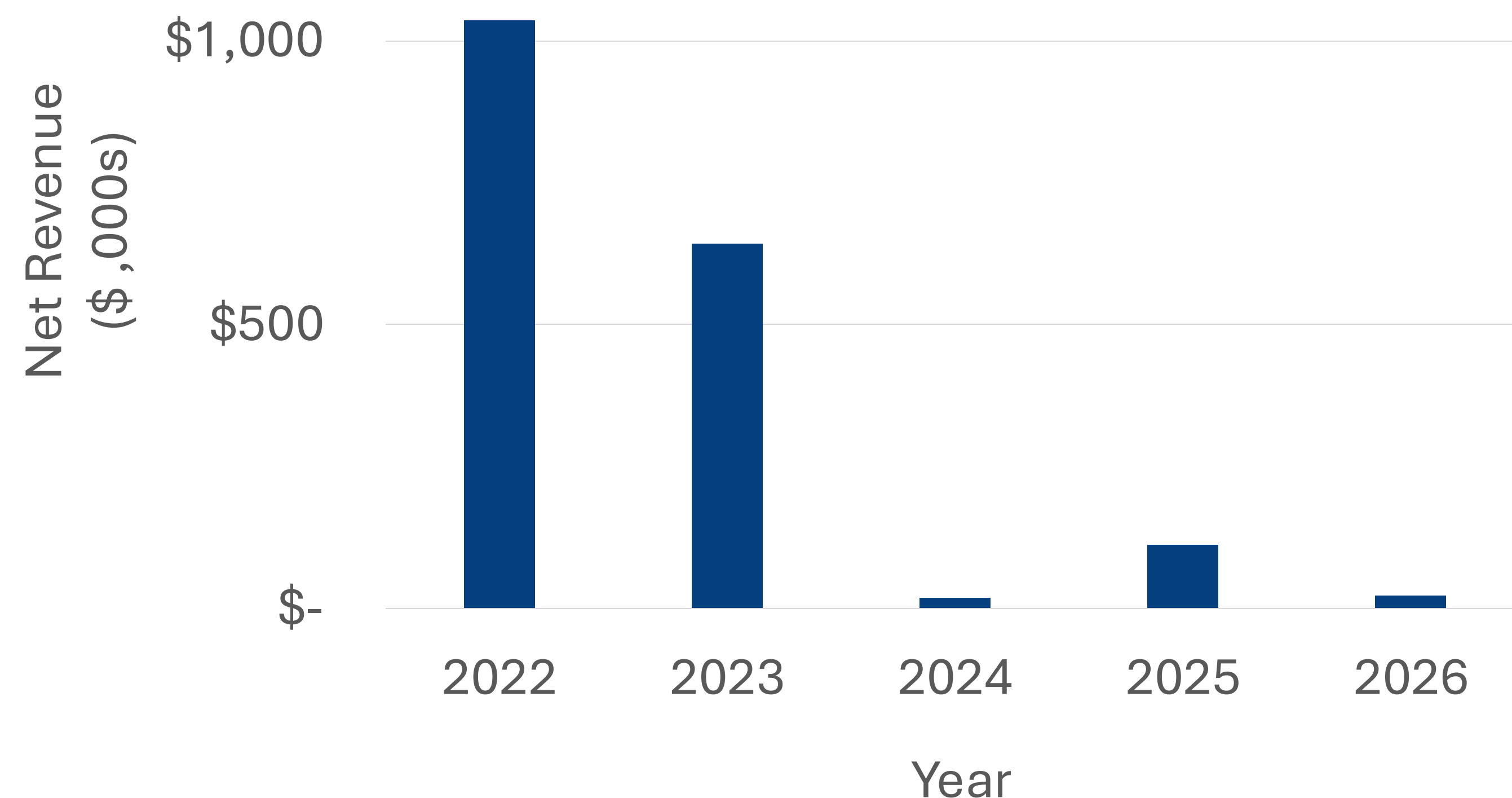
PROCESS



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Revenue

Since 2022, revenue to the City from user payments on parking has stayed relatively constant. At the same, the expenses have increased by approximately 16% per year over the last 4 years. Based on current operations, this trend is expected to continue in the future.



Payment / Permits

Multiple systems makes it appear very complicated for users to pay for parking. Fees currently being charged for parking are generally not reflective of current market or demands.

- Rates of \$2/hour, increasing only \$0.50/hour over the last 7 years.
 - Special events parking being charged at a flat rate of \$5-10 per event for typical events and \$20 per event for significant events, does not cover its associated costs.
 - Monthly permits do not efficiently accommodate working-from-home, resulting in parking spaces being reserved for people who aren't using them
 - Beach parking (Lakeside and Sunset) with rates of \$3/hour to a daily maximum with a seasonal resident permit rate of \$15 (businesses are also eligible for two seasonal permits at Lakeside)
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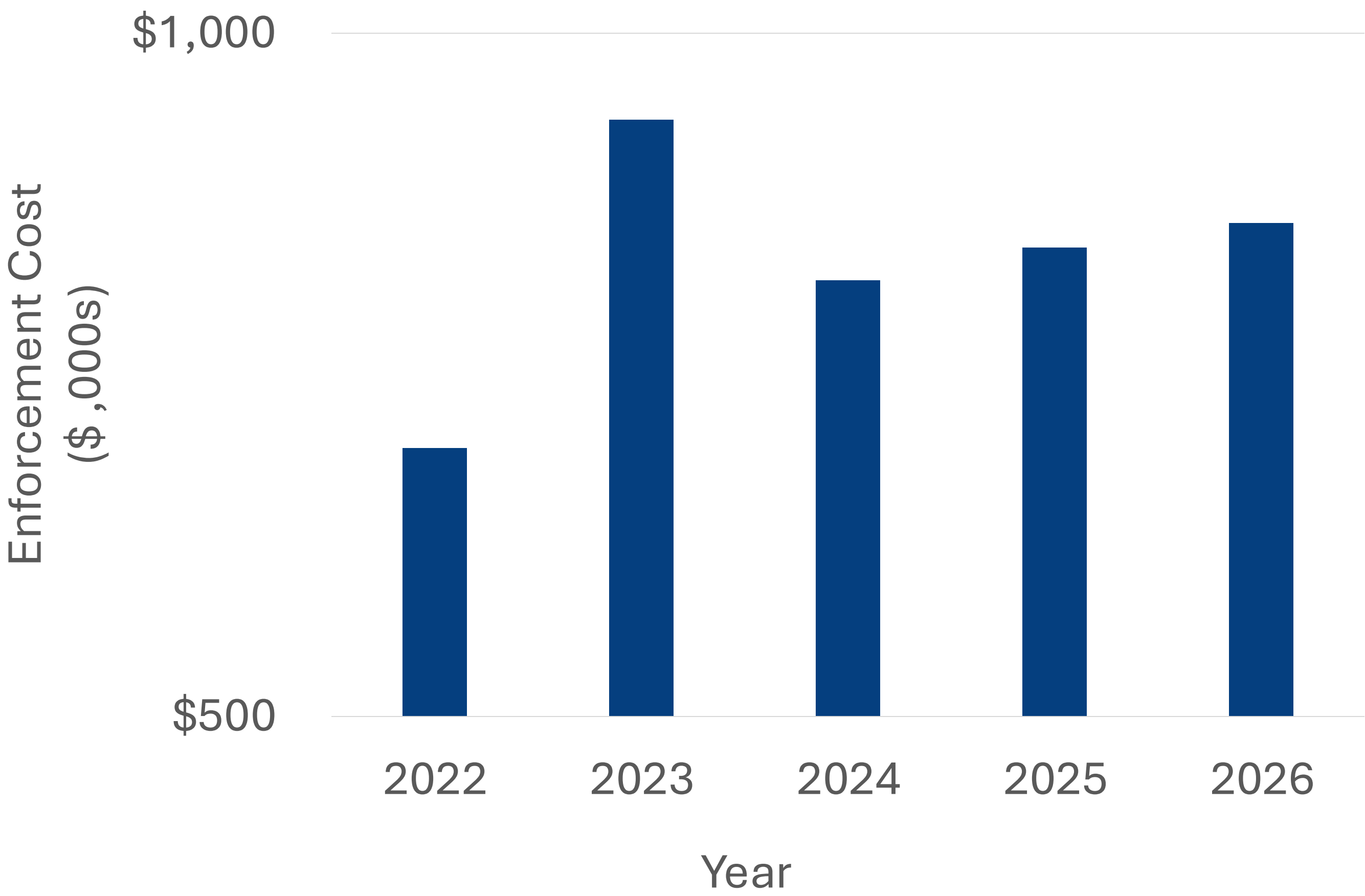
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Enforcement

The current approach to enforcement is limited in its capacity and ability to respond to changing needs. Key challenges include:

- Requires officers to walk all parking areas
- Relies on an external agency to provide staffing
- Requires manual review of multiple permit databases
- Prone to inaccurate issuing of tickets
- Contributes to increased rates of complaints and cancellation requests

Cost of enforcing municipal parking is increasing. Over the last 4 years, the cost to enforce parking has increased by about 20%. During this time, no changes were made to the amount of parking being enforced and the number of tickets issued remained approximately constant.



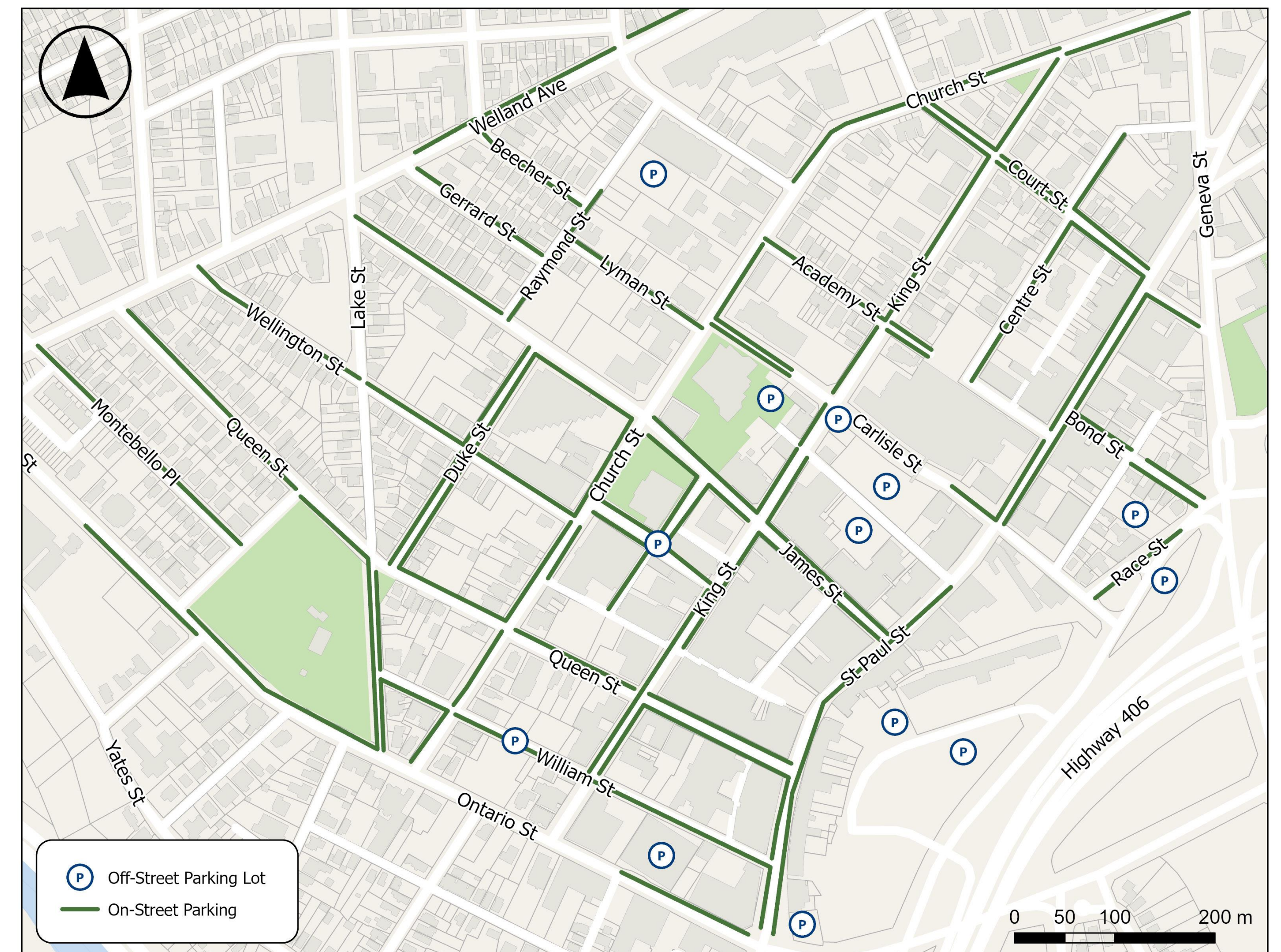
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Parking Supply and Demand

The City operates 1,590 parking spaces across the downtown. This includes 218 on-street spaces, 525 spaces in surface lots, and 1065 spaces in parking garages.

The supply of municipal parking provides very good coverage of the downtown – covering the commercial/office core as well as entertainment destinations.

Both on-street and off-street parking have been shown to generally operate below 85% of the overall capacity, despite there being some concentration of activity. This indicates that people are able to find municipal parking in the Downtown area even during peak periods, but that sometimes the available parking is not the closest parking to the destination.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Planning Policies

St. Catharines is demonstrating leadership through progressive planning policies that thoughtfully integrate land use and transportation. Reducing minimum parking requirements within the downtown encourages more compact, walkable, and transit-oriented development, supporting a vibrant and accessible urban core.

These policies also leverage the municipal parking supply in a mutually beneficial way—reducing development costs while meeting demand beyond traditional business hours.

This approach promotes flexibility for development, supports intensification goals, and aligns with broader City objectives related to sustainability, affordability, and economic resilience.

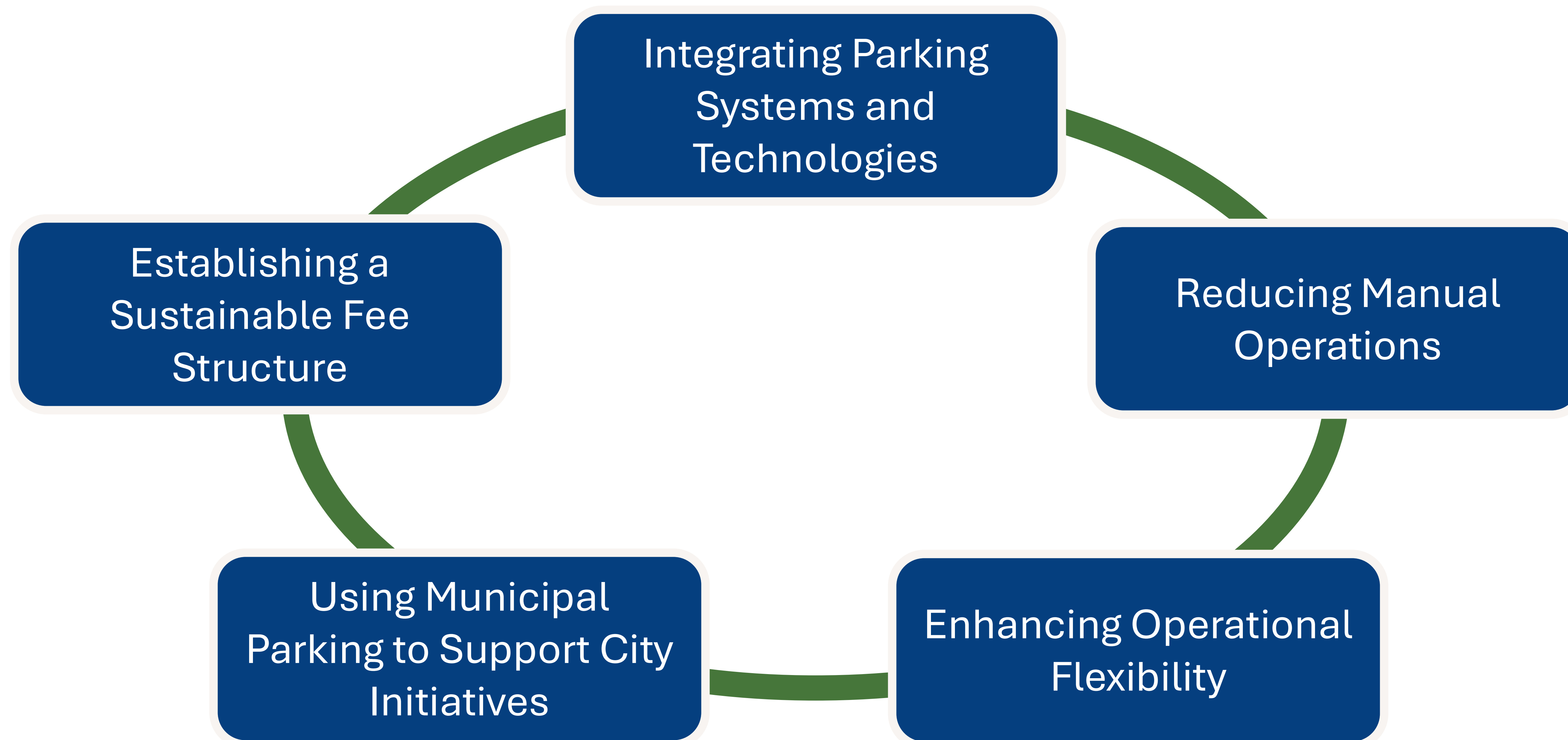
Community Support

St. Catharines has demonstrated an ongoing effort to use the municipal parking asset to support the broader community. Specifically:

- Supporting local events and festivals by offering free or discounted parking to improve accessibility and encourage participation.
 - Activating parking lots for temporary community uses such as markets, pop-ups, and cultural programming.
 - Removing parking barriers during special events, helping local businesses attract more visitors and enhancing the vibrancy of the downtown.
 - Demonstrating flexibility in parking management to prioritize people and placemaking.
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STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

To respond to the presented challenges and opportunities, the parking services review has recommended a strategic focus on **5 key directions**.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Category	Initiative	Impact	Financial Implications	Timeline
Parking Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consolidation of back-end service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved user experienceReduced complications due to multiple providersReduced operational errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No additional costs due to many contracts already requiring renewal	Immediate Benefit (within 1 st year)
Technology and Facility Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implementation of License Plate Reader technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduced errors in enforcementReduced operating cost of enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">~\$60,000 per automatic license plate readerCapital cost that can be recouped in the short-term	Near-Term Benefit (within 5 years)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement gate controls at both garages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved compliance and reduced operating cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Yearly savings of \$50,000 annually due to the reduced contract staff	Immediate Benefit (within 1 year)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Category	Initiative	Impact	Financial Implications	Timeline
Operational Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replace contract enforcement officers with in-house staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved performance management and control of deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to reduce number of staff required due use of improved technology	Immediate Benefit (within 1 st year)
Sustainable Fee Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update Special Event parking pricing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Event rate reflective of demands and costs incurred	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in user fee and reflective reduction in operating costs	Immediate Benefit (within 1 st year)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review permit program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capitalize on opportunities to offer additional permits• Investigate implementing new permit types	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase revenue for parking garages	Immediate Benefit (within 1 st year)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review hourly and daily rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement dynamic pricing to better manage demand and turnover	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential increase in revenue to reduce cost to tax base	Near-Term Benefit (within 5 years)

CONTACT US

Please fill out the online survey following the meeting: <https://www.engageSTC.ca/ParkingReview>
The survey will be open until **June 16, 2025**.

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On behalf of all the project team members, we thank you for your time.
