



LAWSON

Ottawa deserves better.

ALEX LAWSON FOR MAYOR

Stop feeding the meter.

The Lawson plan for parking: every on-street meter comes out.

01 / OVERVIEW

Parking got more expensive on purpose.

If you've felt like parking in this city keeps getting more expensive, you weren't imagining it. In the busiest parts of town, paid parking used to end at 5:30. Now it runs to 7:30, six days a week. In September 2025, paid parking went in along Richmond Road and Wellington Street West, on streets that never had a meter on them before. In the two months that followed, bylaw officers wrote nearly 3,000 tickets in Westboro, Wellington West and Hintonburg.

And the tickets are citywide. In 2023, bylaw officers wrote 298,918 parking tickets. In 2025 they wrote 476,000. That's about 1,300 a day.

Here's what all of that buys the city. Paid parking brought in \$19.62 million in 2025. Running the operation cost \$17.13 million. After everything was paid for, the parking reserve fund got \$1.3 million. **About seven cents on the dollar.** The squeeze on main streets is real, and the return is a rounding error.

There's a music store on Wellington West called Lauzon Music. Same family since 1945, three generations, one of the oldest businesses on the street. In September 2025, for the first time in 80 years, the city put paid parking on their block. You don't buy an instrument in five minutes. You sit down with it. You get to know it. Then you decide. And now the customer is watching the meter instead.

A parking meter is a toll on shopping local. The big box store doesn't charge you to park. The strip plaza with the giant lot doesn't charge you to park. Pull over on an Ottawa main street to grab a coffee or pick up a prescription, and the city has its hand out before the shop does.

Nobody has ever chosen a main street because it had a nicer pay station.

02 / THE PLAN

Every meter comes out.

City Hall says the meters are about turnover, keeping spots open so customers can find one. A sign that says two hours does that job too. We've had those for a hundred years. They don't need an app, they don't need a machine on the corner, and they don't send anybody a ticket for coming back four minutes late.

MOVE 01

Every on-street parking meter comes out.

Ottawa has 4,337 paid on-street parking spaces. Every one of them goes back to free parking. The pay stations come off the sidewalk, the app goes away, and on-street parking becomes what it already is on most streets in this city. Free.



MOVE 02

No posted time limit shorter than two hours.

Where turnover matters, on main streets and in front of shops, the tool is a posted time limit, and no posted limit anywhere in the city will be shorter than two hours. There are streets today where one hour is all you get. That isn't enough time to visit your mother, and it isn't enough time for her to visit you. Two hours becomes the citywide floor.

MOVE 03

The 2025 expansion goes first.

Pulling 4,337 meters takes a schedule. Switching them off takes a decision. On day one, paid parking stops and everywhere goes back to being free. The meters that went in along Richmond Road and Wellington Street West in September 2025 are the first to be removed.

MOVE 04

The safety rules don't move.

This is about meters, not safety. No-stopping zones, fire routes, rush-hour clearances, school zones, loading zones and accessible parking spaces all stay exactly as they are. Winter overnight parking bans stay, because the plows have to get through. The city's parking garages and surface lots keep operating and keep charging.

MOVE 05

Enforcement goes where it belongs, and the math gets published.

Bylaw officers stop walking the meters and spend that time on the rules that protect people. Blocked hydrants, fire routes, accessible spaces, school zones. And every year, in public, the city reports what the meters cost to take out, what it stopped collecting, and what it stopped spending, so nobody has to take Alex's word for the numbers.

03 / WHAT IT COSTS

Straight talk on the money.

Parking revenue in Ottawa doesn't pay for your rec centre or your road. Under the city's own policy, the parking program has to pay for itself, and whatever is left after the meters, the garages, the studies and the administration are paid for goes to a reserve fund for future parking projects. So this plan is costed against the parking program itself, not against property taxes.

PARKING REVENUE

\$19.62 million

All paid parking, 2025

Parking Services 2025 Annual Report, June 2026.

COST TO RUN IT

\$17.13 million

87 cents of every dollar collected

Parking Services 2025 Annual Report, June 2026.

WHAT THE CITY KEPT

7 cents

Per dollar: \$1.3 million to the parking reserve

Parking Services 2025 Annual Report, June 2026.

PARKING TICKETS

476,000

In 2025, up from 298,918 in 2023

City of Ottawa Bylaw Services data, via CTV News.

What the city gives up. Every on-street dollar. Alex won't pretend otherwise. But every one of those dollars came with a bill attached. In 2025 the city spent \$7.42 million running on-street parking and another \$710,000 studying it. Take out the meters and most of that spending goes with them: the pay stations, the collection contracts, the enforcement runs, the consultants.

What that leaves. In 2025, on-street parking brought in \$9.78 million and cost \$7.42 million to run. About \$2.4 million clear, before the studies and the administration the meters share with the garages. The garages and lots did about the same, \$9.84 million in against \$7.43 million out, and they stay. On the city's own 2025 numbers, the garages and lots cover the administration and the studies without the meters. What disappears is the contribution to the reserve fund.

Ninety-five dollars a space. The city also measures what each metered space earns and costs. By its own 2025 report, the average on-street space took in \$1,986 and cost \$1,891 to run. That's \$95 a year, per space, to put a pay station on the corner and a ticket on the windshield. Nobody would run a business on that margin. The city runs a program on it.

The reserve fund. The parking reserve fund exists to build and maintain more paid parking. It opened 2026 at \$22.1 million, above the \$20 million ceiling the city set for it in 2019, and another \$2.5 million is going back into it this year from payment equipment the city decided to rent instead of buy. It is full. A smaller contribution to a full fund is the cost of this plan, and Alex will take that trade every day of the week.

The tickets. Parking fines are general revenue, not parking revenue, and fewer tickets means less of it. Alex won't budget a city on gotcha revenue. A fine should change behaviour, not fund a department. The tickets that matter, the ones for blocking a hydrant or parking in an accessible space, keep getting written.

The bottom line. No property tax dollars fund on-street parking today, and none will be asked to. The garages and lots stay and keep charging. What changes is that Ottawa's main streets stop paying a toll the big box lot never paid.

Builder, not politician.

Alex Lawson has spent 20 years running job sites, where you find out fast whether something is helping or hurting, because somebody tells you to your face. He has heard it from the people behind the counter on Wellington West, on Bank Street, on Montreal Road. The meters are costing them customers, and the city is keeping seven cents on the dollar for the privilege.

Mark Sutcliffe's city hall extended meter hours, added new paid zones, and wrote 177,000 more tickets in 2025 than it did two years before. **That's not a revenue strategy. That's a customer-repellent program that breaks even.**

Let's get the basics right.

Every figure here is sourced.

PARKING PROGRAM FINANCIALS, 2025

Revenue \$19.62 million (up 8.8 percent from 2024), operating costs \$17.13 million (administration \$1.57 million, studies \$710,000, off-street \$7.43 million, on-street \$7.42 million), surplus approximately \$2.5 million, with \$1.3 million contributed to the parking reserve fund. The "seven cents on the dollar" figure follows from \$1.3 million kept on \$19.62 million collected; "87 cents of cost per dollar" follows from \$17.13 million on \$19.62 million. Parking Services 2025 Annual Report, received by the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee June 25, 2026. Document 1, pages 21 to 23; also reported in the Ottawa Citizen, July 3, 2026.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/city-news/newsroom/committee-receives-2025-parking-services-annual-report>

ON-STREET VERSUS OFF-STREET, 2025

On-street revenue \$9.78 million (2024: \$8.86 million) against on-street operating expenses \$7.42 million; off-street revenue \$9.84 million against \$7.43 million in expenses. Parking Reserve Fund opening balance for 2026 of \$22.097 million, with \$2.5 million in capital funds returned to the fund in 2026 because payment equipment will be rented rather than purchased. The fund's maximum of \$20 million and minimum of \$8 million were set when the Municipal Parking Management Strategy was updated in 2019. Document 1, Parking Services 2025 Annual Report (pages 21 to 23 and 46 to 47), Public Works and Infrastructure Committee, June 25, 2026.

<https://pub-ottawa.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=1cd35210-2777-464b-bd68-a8d746beb32f&Agenda=Agenda&lang=English&Item=29&Tab=attachments>

REVENUE AND EXPENSE PER ON-STREET SPACE, 2025

Average revenue per on-street space \$1,986 (down 3.6 percent from \$2,060 in 2024); average expense per on-street space \$1,891 (down 13.6 percent from \$2,188 in 2024). The \$95 figure is the difference. The city notes the per-space expense measure covers the cost of operating the on-street and off-street paid parking network and excludes Park and Ride spaces and costs. Document 1, Parking Services 2025 Annual Report, key business indicators 9 and 10, pages 24 to 25.

<https://pub-ottawa.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?id=1cd35210-2777-464b-bd68-a8d746beb32f&Agenda=Agenda&lang=English&Item=29&Tab=attachments>

PAID ON-STREET INVENTORY AND 2025 GROWTH

4,337 paid on-street parking spaces and 2,747 off-street spaces citywide. On-street revenue rose \$920,000 and off-street \$660,000 in 2025, the year the evening and Saturday hours and the Westboro and Wellington West zones took effect. Parking Services 2025 Annual Report, City of Ottawa newsroom.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/city-news/newsroom/committee-receives-2025-parking-services-annual-report>

PARKING TICKETS, 2025

476,000 tickets issued in 2025, an average of about 1,300 a day. City of Ottawa Bylaw Services data as reported by CTV News Ottawa.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/ottawa/article/bylaw-officers-issued-476000-parking-tickets-in-2025-these-were-the-top-infractions/>

PARKING TICKETS, 2023 AND 2024

452,202 tickets in 2024, up from 298,918 in 2023, per the Ottawa Bylaw and Regulatory Services 2024 annual report as reported by CTV News Ottawa. The "177,000 more tickets" figure follows from 476,000 in 2025 less 298,918 in 2023.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/ottawa/article/bylaw-services-officers-issued-452202-parking-tickets-in-2024-these-were-the-top-parking-infractions/>

WESTBORO AND WELLINGTON WEST PAID PARKING

Paid on-street parking took effect in September 2025 on about 700 spots along Richmond Road and Wellington Street West at \$3 per hour, the first meters on those blocks. In the two months that followed, close to 3,000 drivers were ticketed across Westboro, Wellington West and Hintonburg.

<https://kitchissippi.com/nearly-3000-parking-tickets-issues-in-westboro-and-wellington-west-over-last-two-months/>

EVENING AND SATURDAY EXPANSION, 2025

Committee approved paid parking in high-demand areas on weeknight evenings and Saturdays, in effect from September 2025. In the ByWard Market, Little Italy South and Glebe South, weekday paid parking that ended at 5:30 pm now runs to 7:30 pm, and Saturday paid parking runs 10 am to 7:30 pm. Hours by district per the ByWard Market District Authority. Downtown north of Nepean Street stays at 5:30 pm.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/city-news/newsroom/committee-approves-paid-parking-high-demand-areas-weeknights-and-saturday>

DISTRICT-BY-DISTRICT HOURS

Before-and-after paid parking hours for the ByWard Market, Little Italy South, Glebe South and Downtown, as published by the ByWard Market District Authority.

<https://www.byward-market.com/bmda-blog/updated-city-parking-rates-aan-initiative-to-meet-high-demand>

PARKING PROGRAM POLICY

The Municipal Parking Management Strategy (2025) requires the program to be "financially self-sustaining as a whole," directs surplus revenue to the Parking Reserve Fund for parking-related programs, and sets demand-based rate increases when occupancy reaches 85 percent. This is the basis for costing the plan against the parking program rather than property taxes.

https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/MPMS%20-%20Municipal%20Parking%20Management%20Strategy_2025_EN_0.pdf

LAUZON MUSIC

Founded in 1945 by Larry and Dorothy Lauzon, family-run across three generations, located at 1345 Wellington Street West. The customer-experience account is from the owner directly to the campaign.

<https://lauzonmusic.com/about/>



Authorized by the official agent of the Alex Lawson campaign.