

## FAQ

# Cairns CBD Parking Changes

Effective from 1 July 2026



## What's Changing?

From 1 July 2026, some parking fees and time limits in the Cairns CBD will be updated.

These changes are part of Council's ongoing management of parking across the city and are designed to help improve parking availability, support local businesses, and ensure parking remains accessible for residents, workers and visitors.

## Key Changes

- On-street parking fees will increase to \$2.40 per hour.
- Daily parking caps will change at some Council car parks.
- Free centre parking will remain available, with three-hour limits changing to two hours.
- Approximately 50 new free parking spaces have been formalised to help offset the closure of the Bunda Street Car Park.

## Why are parking fees changing?

- Parking fees are reviewed regularly to help Council maintain and manage parking facilities across the city.
- This includes parking infrastructure, lighting, signage, technology, maintenance and other services that support the parking network.
- The updated fees also help keep pricing in line with similar councils and parking providers.

## Is Council increasing parking fees to raise revenue??

No.

- The changes are intended to help manage parking demand, improve parking availability in busy areas, and encourage the use of all-day parking facilities where available.
- Revenue collected from parking is reinvested into maintaining and improving Council's parking network and related infrastructure.

## Have parking fees increased because of the new Pay-by-Plate system?

No.

- The introduction of Pay-by-Plate parking meters and the parking fee review are separate initiatives.
- Pay-by-Plate provides a simpler and more convenient payment experience, while the fee changes relate to the ongoing management and maintenance of Council's parking network.

## When do the changes start?

The updated parking fees and time limits take effect from 1 July 2026.

## Why are some parking time limits changing?

- The changes are designed to improve parking turnover in busy areas and make it easier for shoppers, visitors and customers to find a parking space.
- Centre parking will remain free, however the current three-hour limit will be reduced to two hours to help ensure spaces remain available throughout the day

## Which parking areas are affected?

Changes apply to:

- On-street paid parking
- Council car parks
- Some free time-limited parking areas

Updated parking information is available on Council's website, at parking meters and on local signage.

## What are the new parking fees?

### On-Street Parking

- Current rate: \$2.20 per hour
- **New rate: \$2.40 per hour**

Drivers can pay at Pay-by-Plate meters or through the EasyPark app and only pay for the time they use.

### Council Off-Street Car Parks

Car park	Current hourly rate	New Hourly Rate	Current Daily Cap	New Daily Cap
CPAC	\$2.20	<b>\$2.40</b>	\$4.30	<b>\$6.00</b>
Grafton Street	\$2.20	<b>\$2.40</b>	\$6.00	<b>\$6.50</b>
Hartley Street	\$2.20	<b>\$2.40</b>	\$4.30	<b>\$6.00</b>
Lake Street	\$1.50	<b>\$1.50</b>	\$10.00	<b>\$10.00</b>
Southern Esplanade (Lagoon)	\$2.20	<b>\$2.40</b>	N/A	<b>N/A</b>

## Why have some daily caps changed?

The updated caps better reflect current parking demand and help align Council parking fees with similar councils and parking providers.

## How can I pay for parking?

You can pay using:

- Pay-by-Plate parking meters with coins and card
- EasyPark mobile app

## Is free parking still available?

Yes.

- Free parking remains available in a number of locations throughout the CBD.
- Centre parking will continue to be free, however the three-hour limit will change to a two-hour limit. Other parking limits remain unchanged.

## Has Council removed any parking spaces?

- The Bunda Street Car Park will close after 30 June 2026 following the landowner's decision not to renew Council's lease.
- To help offset this change, Council has formalised approximately 50 additional free parking spaces. Alternative parking also remains available in nearby streets and along Hartley Street.

## Will parking signs be updated?

Yes.

Updated signs and parking information will be installed before the changes take effect.

## Where can I find more information?

You can find updated parking information:

- On Council's website [cairns.qld.gov.au/water-waste-roads/parking](https://cairns.qld.gov.au/water-waste-roads/parking)
  - new PDF - ON-STREET PARKING map
  - new PDF - OFF-STREET CAR PARKS map
- At parking meters
- On parking signage throughout the CBD

## What if I don't agree with the changes?

Council understands that changes to parking fees can impact residents, workers and visitors.

The updates are intended to improve parking availability in busy areas, encourage the use of all-day parking facilities, and ensure parking fees remain consistent with similar councils and parking providers.

Revenue collected from parking is reinvested into maintaining and improving Council's parking network and related infrastructure.

## How can I provide feedback?

Please call 1300 69 22 47 or email [council@cairns.qld.gov.au](mailto:council@cairns.qld.gov.au)