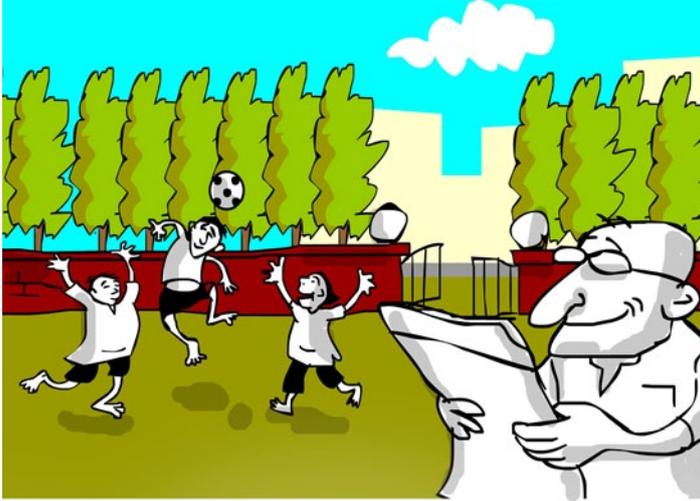




Park it right!

How smart management can help us solve our parking woes





Paradise paved?

Every year, more and more of our cherished parks, plazas, streets, and common spaces are being paved over for parking. Vehicles are voracious consumers of space because they require a parking spot at each leg of a journey—at home, at the market, and at the office. Streets are crowded with parked vehicles that block traffic and turn walkways into obstacle courses for pedestrians.

Is there a better way to manage parking so that it doesn't come at the expense of our public spaces?

First of all, parking is a commodity, not a right. It comes with a price.

I bought a car but the government hasn't given me a free place to park!



I bought an air conditioner but the government hasn't given me a free house in which to install it!





Prioritise pedestrians.

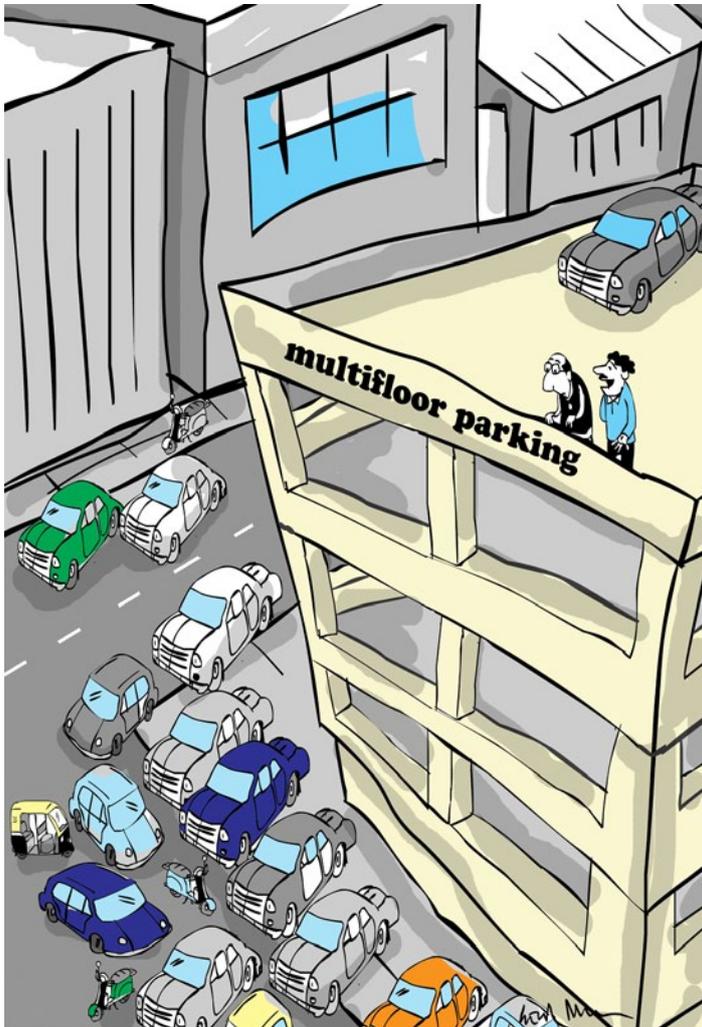
Before worrying about parking, make sure that people have a place to walk. Environments that prioritise people over vehicles attract more customers than vast parking lots.

Many thriving commercial centres have very little parking and most shoppers arrive in rickshaws or public transport. People can reach shops more easily if footpaths are free of parked vehicles.

Use parking fees to manage demand.

Free parking is often overused, and it takes forever to find an empty space. One of the best ways to open up a few parking spaces is to charge an appropriate fee. Parking fees are good for business because they increase turnover and make it easier for customers to find spaces close to where they want to go.





Tackle on-street parking first.

Multilevel parking may seem like a solution when on-street parking is full. But even if multilevel parking is constructed, drivers will continue to park outside if the street remains the cheaper option or if enforcement is poor.

Parking fees in multistory structures are rarely high enough to recoup the cost of construction. If funds are available, improvements in public transport are a more promising investment.

Charge according to size.





Use parking fees to pay for better streets.

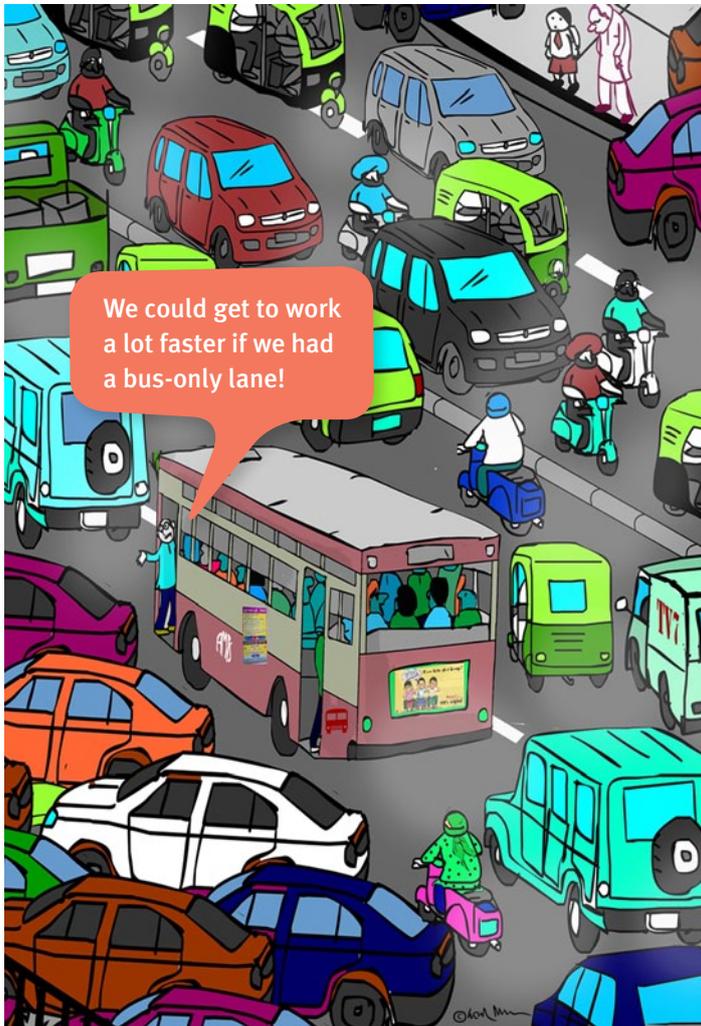
Revenue from parking fees can help fund street improvements such as footpath maintenance, tree planting, benches, and trash collection. The fee revenue can also be used to build cycle tracks or provide better public transport service. Visible improvements provide assurance that parking fee revenue is being put to good use.

Build compact cities.

Good city design makes it easy for people to walk or use public transport. Compact layouts bring homes, offices, shops, and other destinations within easy reach. Small block sizes also help by ensuring that there's a direct walking route to a store or a friend's house on the next block. Finally, active street edges—with storefronts or residential entrances instead of compound walls—make walking safe and enjoyable.



- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. SCHOOL | 5. GARDEN |
| 2. SHOPPING PLAZA | 6. HEALTH CENTRE |
| 3. LAKE | 7. MULTIPLEX |
| 4. FIRE STATION | |



Free up street space for public transport.

A high-capacity bus rapid transit (BRT) system requires just 3.5 m of dedicated street width per direction to carry up to 9,000 passengers per hour. Parked vehicles easily occupy this much space on many streets. BRT lanes are a much better use of scarce street space than parking!



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