



# Transportation

Seminar Series

Winter 2007

Sponsored by the Center for Transportation Studies and  
Oregon Transportation Research & Education Consortium (OTREC)  
Visiting Scholar Program

## The High Cost of Free Parking

**Donald Shoup**

Professor, Urban Planning, UCLA

Where curb parking is free and overcrowded, many drivers cruise for a curb space rather than pay to park off-street. Research throughout the last century has shown that cruising for parking accounts for a substantial share of the traffic in city centers. Charging the fair market price for curb parking can eliminate this cruising and all its harmful side effects. Because city governments set the prices for curb parking, they play a large part in determining whether drivers cruise. Cruising for curb parking stems from faulty public prices.

Underpriced curb parking is a perverse subsidy because it encourages drivers to congest traffic, pollute the air, and waste fuel. Cities then spend more money trying to fix the congestion and pollution problems they have created. If cities want to reduce traffic congestion, reduce air pollution, reduce energy waste, reduce greenhouse emissions, improve neighborhoods, and do this all quickly, they should charge the fair market price for curb parking and spend the resulting revenue to improve local public services. Getting the price of curb parking right will do a world of good.

[Donald Shoup](#) has extensively studied the issue of parking as a key link between transportation and land use, with important consequences for cities, the economy, and the environment. His research on employer-paid parking led to the passage of California's parking cash-out law, and to changes in the Internal Revenue Code to encourage parking cash out. His research on municipal parking policies has led a growing number of cities to charge fair market prices for curb parking and to dedicate the meter revenue to finance added public services in the metered districts.

**Friday, February 2, 2007**

**Noon – 1:30 pm**

**Room 204 Urban Center (Distance Learning Center)**

**Further information or to suggest speakers:**

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