Smart Parking Innovations

1. Smart parking sensors

The idea is simple:

    install sensors throughout the city that communicate with an app to help drivers find free parking spots.

2. Parking applications

    Free parking apps are a dream come true for all car owners. The major apps available offer:

Space availability
Space reservation
Reservation in advance
Flexible reservation times
Payment options – in advance
Top-up payment options
On-street, public, and private parking spaces
Times-up reminders
Zone in on the area you need to park and drive directly to the spot. Pay from your phone so no searching for loose change, and top up your meter to avoid fines.

These parking apps can be downloaded on IOs or android. They're a money- and time-saver for when meetings run over, dinners flow into drinks, and when you just want to relax and check out that new exhibition in the museum.

The realization, not so much: the ground needs to be dug up to install these sensors. Inner city construction is notorious for creating traffic backlogs. The project will also reduce the number of available parking spaces during construction.

It's a project where the visionaries need to think in the long run. Focus on the outcome rather than the process. The local council will need to create a campaign to notify the public about the projected plan and objective.

Major cities such as San Francisco, Singapore, and Berlin already employ this technology – the pioneers of smart parking innovations.

3. Stacked parking

    Double-decker parking solutions do just that–double your parking space. Their technology uses a simple elevation function. When you find your spot, you drive onto a ramp. When you exit your car you can flip a lever for the ramp to raise. This frees up a parking space underneath.

The downside to this is a higher level of organization. For employers, it's best to allocate parking spaces so those who leave later park first. This allows a smooth transition for car owners who leave earlier.

These options work best for:

Car dealerships
Mechanic workshops
Ferry crossings
Private residences
Robot valet parking (more on this below)
The conception is indeed smart, but the realization can be tricky. The onus is to first identify your need, evaluate the current parking timings, and proceed to choose the best solution.

5. Reduced fees for EVs

This innovation for smart parking promotes the use of electric vehicles. An objective for smart cities is to reduce carbon emissions. Therefore, it makes sense to offer lower parking rates for EVs. Smart move.

In conjunction with smart parking apps and designated EV charging stations, you can brave inner city parking with your EV.

If you don't need to charge your car each time you park it, you can apply for a residential parking permit at a reduced cost. There's no one price however, it fluctuates depending on local councils, but definitely worth looking into.