

Downtown Parking

March 2019

Downtown Parking

- An open house was held on February 6, 2019 at the Best Western Hotel from 3:00pm-6:30pm to gather feedback from the business community on options to address downtown parking.
- Invitations were mailed to all property owners, hand-delivered to most downtown businesses, and sent via email by the Chamber of Commerce to its members. A total of 12 persons attended.
- The open house presented four options for moving forward, ranging from most prescriptive to least prescriptive and based on approaches used in other communities.

Option 1: Maintain the Status Quo

- Under this option, new or expanded businesses in the downtown would continue to be required to provide the same amount of on-site parking as businesses in other parts of the City
- Advantages:
 - Keeps parking requirements consistent for all businesses throughout the City, regardless of location
 - Reduces pressure on on-street parking to accommodate demand
- Disadvantages:
 - Businesses in the downtown typically do not have land available to provide additional parking
 - May make the downtown area less attractive for new businesses or business expansion

Option 2: Blanket Parking Reduction for Downtown Businesses

- Under this option, new or expanded businesses in the downtown would be required to provide a reduced amount of on-site parking as compared to businesses in other parts of the City. In other communities, such a reduction in parking requirements range between 30%-60%.
- Advantages:
 - Reduces the requirement to provide on-site parking which may make the downtown more attractive to new businesses
 - Reduces a potential barrier for existing businesses wishing to expand.
- Disadvantages:
 - May put increased pressure on on-street parking
 - Potential impact to other businesses that have on-site parking
 - May be perceived as an unfair advantage by businesses outside the downtown.

Option 3: Vary Parking Requirements Based on Business Scale

- Under this option, reduction of on-site parking requirements would be based on the size of the business so smaller businesses that have less impact on parking have a lower (or no) requirement, while larger businesses, that potentially have a bigger impact, would be required to provide more parking.
- Advantages:
 - Reduces the requirement to provide on-site parking which may make the downtown more attractive to new businesses
 - Reduces a potential barrier for existing businesses wishing to expand.
- Disadvantages:
 - May put increased pressure on on-street parking
 - Potential impact to other businesses that have on-site parking
 - May be perceived as an unfair advantage by businesses outside the downtown.

Option 4: Eliminate On-Site Parking Requirements for Downtown Businesses

- Under this option, new or expanded businesses in the downtown would not be required to provide any on-site parking
- Advantages:
 - Removes a barrier to locating new or expanded businesses in the downtown area
 - May make some developments viable in the downtown that would not be otherwise
 - Easy to administer
- Disadvantages:
 - On-street parking would need to accommodate all demand
 - Potential impact to other businesses that have on-site parking
 - May be perceived as an unfair advantage by businesses outside the downtown
 - Shifts the responsibility to provide parking from the business owner to the City

- Question 1: Please rank the options in order of preference with 1 being your most preferred option and 4 being your least preferred option:

	1 st Choice	2 nd Choice	3 rd Choice	4 th Choice
Option 1 Status Quo	1		2	2
Option 2 Blanket Parking Reduction	2		3	
Option 3 Vary Requirements By Scale		5		1
Option 4 Eliminate Parking Requirements	7	1		1

Question 2:

Do you think stricter enforcement of the existing two-hour parking time limit would help improve the parking situation in the downtown?

Yes: 9% No: 91%

Question 3:

Do you think developing the spaces behind downtown buildings to accommodate more parking for business owner and their employees would help improve the parking situation in the downtown?

Yes: 90% No: 10%

Question 4:

Should the City invest in additional off-street parking in the downtown?

Yes: 82% No: 18%

Additional Comments:

- Several attendees mentioned the former sewing store (5006 50 Ave) as a potential option for additional public parking
- Utilize the old Grand Centre Hotel property as paid parking for downtown staff
- Parking in back of buildings is a safety concern for business staff
- Have the City supply garbage pickup to eliminate dumpsters and increase staff parking behind businesses

Moving Forward

- Administration recognizes the challenges that new or expanded businesses in the downtown area face in meeting the current parking requirements of the Land Use Bylaw.
- Downtown areas are not designed or intended to accommodate large volumes of vehicle traffic or parking.
- Administration would recommend that the Land Use Bylaw be amended to eliminate on-site parking requirements for small-to-medium sized businesses, but that some requirements remain in place for larger businesses that would have a significant parking impact.

In other communities that have reduced or eliminated parking requirements in their downtown Administration has observed some limitations:

- Many downtowns, including Cold Lake, have provisions allowing for mixed commercial/residential developments. In these cases parking is still required for the residential component of the development.
- Some communities list specific uses for which parking is still required, typically those that will have a particularly high parking demand.

Limitations (continued):

- In some cases, the elimination of parking is tied to the size or capacity of the business, either floor area or seating capacity.
- Administration has observed a cut off in the 930m²-1,850m² (10,000ft²-20,000 ft²) range.
- The intent is to ensure that larger developments which will have a significant impact on parking continue to meet a minimum standard while small-to-medium-sized businesses that have a lesser impact are not required to provide parking.

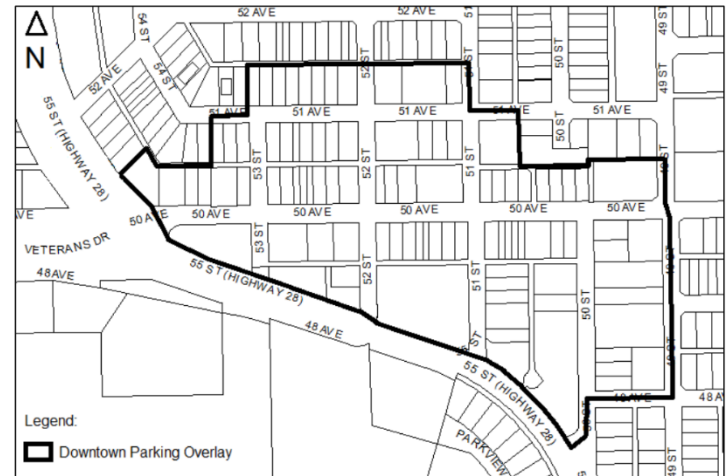
Parking Overlay

- An overlay is a tool used to modify the standard Land Use Bylaw requirements within a defined area.
- Administration has prepared a draft parking overlay for the Downtown and Lakeshore Commercial areas to facilitate discussion.

10.9 PARKING OVERLAYS

- (1) Downtown Parking Overlay
- The parking requirements of this section shall not apply within the boundaries of the Downtown Parking Overlay as shown on Figure 10.9-1:
 - Notwithstanding the provisions of 1(a) above, residential uses shall provide the number of parking spaces as set out in Table 10.5-6.
 - Notwithstanding the provisions of 1(a) above, the following uses shall provide the minimum number of parking spaces as required by this section:
 - Amusement Establishments, Indoor;
 - Amusement Establishments, Outdoor;
 - Eating and Drinking Establishments with a seating capacity exceeding 150 persons;
 - Hotels;
 - Motels;
 - Participant Recreation, Indoor
 - Religious Assembly;
 - Retail Store with a floor area exceeding 1390m²;
 - Shopping Centre;
 - Spectator Entertainment with a floor area exceeding 465m²

Figure 10.4-1: Downtown Parking Overlay



- (2) Lakeshore Parking Overlay
- The parking requirements of this section shall not apply within the boundaries of the Lakeshore Parking Overlay as shown on Figure 10.9-2:
 - Notwithstanding the provisions of 1(a) above, residential uses shall provide the number of parking spaces as set out in Table 10.5-6.
 - Notwithstanding the provisions of 2(a) above, the following uses shall provide the minimum number of parking spaces as required by this section:
 - Amusement Establishments, Indoor;
 - Amusement Establishments, Outdoor;
 - Eating and Drinking Establishments with a seating capacity exceeding 150 persons;
 - Hotels;
 - Motels;
 - Participant Recreation, Indoor
 - Religious Assembly;
 - Retail Store with a floor area exceeding 1390m²;

Questions?

Downtown Parking Survey (2016)

Map 4: Average Observed Parking Utilization per Block

