



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Planning Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	December 11, 2018
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Through Streets (PED18128) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

At its meeting of February 20, 2018, the Planning Committee directed:

“That staff be directed to review the rationale for overnight parking restrictions on ‘through streets’ and that this review include a review/summary of overnight parking regulations in other large Ontario municipalities and how they inform motorists of such regulations, and report back to the Planning Committee with recommendations to optimize the effectiveness of the through street system.”

Information:

The City of Hamilton designates ‘through highways’ or ‘through streets’ under a by-law to indicate which roadways require stop signs and/or yield signs as per the *Highway Traffic Act*. Without this designation, each intersection with stop or yield signs, would need to be designated by separate by-laws. In the past, many of these streets aligned with overnight parking restrictions so the two designations were merged as one by-law.

Presently, the overnight parking restrictions on ‘through streets’ are signed at City entrances – i.e., ‘no overnight parking on through streets’. There is confusion surrounding this regulation as:

- The term ‘through street’ is not unanimously understood by motorists;

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- Some 'through streets' do not have an overnight parking restriction under the by-law;
- Many of the 'through streets' also have 'no stopping' or 'no parking' signs which may suggest to motorists that those streets without signs would allow parking overnight;
- In some cases, there are bump-outs or meters on a designated 'through street' which would otherwise suggest to motorists that parking is permitted overnight as they are not blocking a live lane of traffic; and,
- Enforcement of 'through street' parking has been limited in some areas for many years, further confusing motorists as to when and where they can park overnight.

The traditional rationale for overnight parking restrictions is to increase the ease and efficiency of overnight road maintenance activities, such as, snow removal, pot-hole repair, and line painting. Staff conducted a comprehensive review of this rationale consulting with Public Works, Hamilton Street Railway (HSR), Emergency Measures System (EMS), and Fire, noting the following key findings:

- The greatest need for overnight parking restrictions from a maintenance perspective is on arterials in the downtown core commercial areas;
- The biggest driver of the need for restrictions is for snow removal operations;
- Where snow removal is hindered, other Public Works essential services are compromised including, waste pick up, EMS/FIRE response time, HSR service delivery, etc.;
- The overnight parking restrictions include some streets which are not necessary; and,
- The overnight parking restrictions do not capture some critical streets during snow events, such as, subdivisions where parking is permitted on both sides of the street.

Staff compared Hamilton's approach with Barrie, Guelph, Mississauga, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Windsor, Brantford, London, Kitchener, Cambridge, and Ottawa. Most municipalities use City gateway/entrance signs to notify motorists of the overnight parking restrictions, or maximum time limits, with many targeting these restrictions to winter months only. Hamilton appears unique in the approach of using the City entrance signs to post overnight parking restrictions, which do not apply to all streets. When this signing approach is used in other municipalities, it applies to all streets, unless otherwise posted, leaving no room for interpretation by the motorists.

Based on this review, staff is working on the following:

1. Separating the 'through street' from the 'overnight parking ban' designation by creating a 'no overnight parking' schedule in the Parking By-law;

2. Investigating the possibility of signing streets which have overnight parking bans. As many of the streets already have signs, it is possible that the costs can be absorbed in the current operating budget for signage. A preliminary review of the downtown indicates signing areas requested by Public Works would be approximately \$15,000, which can be absorbed in the Current HMPS Budget; and,
3. Clarifying, with Public Works, which roadways are in critical need of an overnight parking ban year-round vs only for winter months, and developing a potential plan for creating a parking ban during winter months similar to other municipalities.

CONCLUSION

Staff will continue on the above-noted work plan, consulting appropriately with the public and Ward Councillors, and report back to Council for approval as required. It is understood that certain streets currently have 'through street' designations that have been identified as unnecessary. Operations staff will continue to work with By-law Enforcement to ensure they focus on required streets while the by-law is being updated.

KD:PL:cr