



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Planning Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	July 7, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Parking Master Plan Review/Update (PED20051) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

The purpose of this Information Report is to provide an update on the Parking Master Plan that commenced in the Fall 2019, including a summary of parking utilization studies, on-going public and stakeholder engagement, and a high-level overview of the parking system.

COUNCIL DIRECTION

In July 2018, Council directed staff to undertake a Parking Master Plan (PMP) to identify the need for a strategic, comprehensive, City-wide plan to align parking operations with current planning and transportation policies, such as the updated Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan (TMP).

INFORMATION

Developed in consultation with the public, Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), and other vital stakeholder groups, the key objectives of the PMP are to:

- Strategically connect parking with land-use planning, Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Transit, and other 'City building' initiatives;
- Provide framework to update old policies using a 'best practices' approach with a focus on customer service;
- Develop strategies which support business and economic development;

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

- Provide options for transition from surface lots to structured parking; and,
- Review the current financial model to ensure sustainability.

The PMP commenced in September 2019 following the award of contract to the successful proponent, IBI Group. The PMP is comprised of three main phases of work:

- Data collection and initial consultation;
- Plan development, including Downtown and City-wide parking strategies, and creation of a financial model; and,
- Final Parking Master Plan.

The first phase of work has been completed and is the focus of this Information Report.

Summary of Parking Utilization Surveys

Parking utilization surveys were completed in November 2019 and covered the following areas:

- Municipal Car Parks (City-Wide);
- Private Car Parks in the Downtown; and,
- On-street parking spaces in BIAs and other selected corridors.

All data was collected prior to the COVID-19 Emergency declaration, and therefore, is reflective of normal conditions.

Appendix “A” attached to this Report, provides a summary of the parking supply and utilization for the Downtown study area. For this PMP, the Downtown was defined to be consistent with the previous 2013 Downtown Parking Review and is bounded by Queen Street to the west, Cannon Street to the north, Wellington Street to the east, and Hunter Street to the south. Within this area, there are 2,811 municipal car park spaces, 1,158 municipal on-street spaces, and 4,579 publicly accessible private parking spaces.

Based on the Fall 2019 surveys, the Downtown parking system peaked at noon during the weekday with a utilization of 80%. This represents an average of all spaces, including public and privately accessible lots, and it is noted that several sub areas experience a utilization peak at closer to 100%. In general, parking systems are considered “effectively full” at an occupancy of approximately 85-90%, depending on lot size and other characteristics. The 2019 data indicates a significant increase in utilization as compared to conditions in 2013 where utilization was 68%.

Outside of Downtown Hamilton, in most BIAs, parking is generally well utilized, with several areas at or above 85% peak utilization, including Concession Street, the Downtown Hamilton BIA (which differs slightly from the above-defined area),

International Village, King Street West, Locke Street, and Stoney Creek. A summary of parking utilization for each BIA is presented in Appendix “B” attached to this Report.

Public and Stakeholder Input to Date

To date, a number of tools have been used to gather input from the public and key stakeholders, including:

- A web-based survey and mapping tool;
- Direct e-mail stakeholder survey;
- Formal Public Information Centre (PIC);
- BIA meetings; and,
- On-going stakeholder interviews.

Launched in December 2019, the public information survey and a mapping tool was quite effective in terms of gathering feedback on the use of parking, issues experienced, and priorities for improvements. The map-based consultation tool allowed users to drop a pin to identify locations where they are experiencing parking issues.

A stakeholder survey was sent directly to a list of stakeholders, including BIAs, economic development, tourism representatives, neighbourhood associations, and chamber of commerce associations.

In total, 1,389 responses were gathered through the public survey, 40 responses were received on the stakeholder survey, and 94 respondents utilized the mapping tool. Some of the key findings from the general public surveys are summarized below. Note that these responses pertain to all parking, whether operated by Hamilton Municipal Parking System (HMPS) or not.

- Respondents are generally willing to walk from a parking space to their destination was between 200 - 400 m (39%) and 400 - 800 m (28%); 64% would walk further if parking was less expensive;
- 60% find the existing parking wayfinding signage inadequate or confusing;
- 61% have difficulty finding a space in their desired location;
- 56% believe parking is too expensive;
- 53% support promoting alternative modes of transportation over vehicles;
- 27% use alternative modes of transportation to travel Downtown, 24% currently use vehicles but are willing to consider switching if alternative modes were improved;
- 46% of responders are unsatisfied with the overall parking experience, while only 27% satisfied;

- 50% do not support parking price increases to facilitate parking improvements compared to 31% who do;
- The most requested designated zones were additional bike storage (42% of responders) and passenger pick up and drop off zones (43% of responders);
- In terms of curbside use, short-term vehicle parking and mobility were identified as the two most prioritized uses; and,
- 50% are in favour of increasing enforcement to combat illegal parking, while 30% are against.

Themes from the stakeholder surveys were similar to the general public with additional emphasis on:

- Addressing shortfalls in parking supply;
- Improving the paid parking experience, such as a parking app with wayfinding and pay-by-phone capabilities, and upgraded pay parking machines (note that at the time of the survey these technologies were in early deployment); and,
- Keeping parking prices reasonable.

In addition to the above activities, City staff and the consulting team are conducting one-on-one interviews with various groups, including Chambers of Commerce, post-secondary institutions, hospitals, and other stakeholders with major interests in parking. These interviews have been delayed somewhat by COVID but are continuing via teleconference.

Overview of Hamilton Municipal Parking System

Hamilton Municipal Parking System (HMPS) was created in 1998 when the Parking Authority Board was dissolved, and paid parking operations were integrated with other City parking services. Responsibilities include enforcement, maintenance and operation of all paid on and off-street parking facilities (61 surface lots, two structures, and 2,700 parking meters), and the creation and maintenance of all Parking By-laws and relevant permit programs. HMPS is currently a self-funded business unit that relies on revenue from paid parking to fund the section, including a capital reserve fund.

In 2019, gross revenues for HMPS were approximately \$14.7 M which encompasses on-street meter and annual permit revenue, municipal car park transient and monthly permit revenue, administration fees, parking ticket revenue, and plate denial fees from the Ministry of Transportation (MTO). In comparison, expenses were approximately \$12.2 M comprised of employee costs, maintenance, vehicles, property taxes, and contractual costs. Historically, the net surplus is used to fund the parking reserve, as well as, off-set the general levy. On average, HMPS transfers between \$1.2 - \$2 M to the levy, in addition to amounts paid in property taxes.

One of the key components, of the City-wide PMP, is to review the current financial model to ensure future sustainability under a rapidly changing parking landscape. This includes a review of comparator municipalities and their parking business operations to provide a benchmark as to how Hamilton's revenues and expenditures compare to our peers. The financial analysis will consist of a review of current and future parking supply and pricing, mode shift assumptions, and financial impacts of economic development within the consideration of sustainability objectives. In the short term, the impacts of COVID on parking demand and revenues will also need to be taken into account.

Another major task, for the PMP, will be to forecast future parking needs considering changes in supply. In 2016, Council approved the declaration of certain downtown Municipal car parks to be considered surplus and directed Real Estate staff to seek alternative uses for these lots, including opportunities for affordable housing. Several of these Municipal car parks are now in various stages of redevelopment in accordance with planning policies. The impact of the loss of parking supply will be taken into consideration in developing the overall parking strategy, as well as, assessing the future financial sustainability of the parking system.

Next Steps

With data collection and initial consultation complete, the next phase of work for the PMP includes development of the financial model, and the overall City-wide policy framework. Public and stakeholder engagement will continue to be sought during this stage. A second PIC is planned for late summer to present the draft strategies prior to finalization of the PMP.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" - Downtown Hamilton Parking Supply and Demand

Appendix "B" - Parking Supply and Demand in Business Improvement Areas

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