



Cycle Hamilton Inc.
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Cycle Hamilton represents people of all ages and abilities who ride bicycles for various reasons such as commuting to work, travelling to family or friends, going to support our local businesses, and sometimes just for fun or exercise.

We are writing to speak to item (11.3) related to Parking Penalties. We are particularly interested in penalties against individuals who participate in behaviour that endangers others. Many administrative fines on this list are necessary for the operation of a city or to ensure access to basic services. Some others exist for the purpose of public safety. We feel the City should review the penalties for various safety related misconduct, but we are here to speak to a particular item on the schedule; Item 41: Park obstructing bicycle lane, which is currently at \$33, and is being raised to \$60, which is 65% less than other major cities

While we believe the road design is essential to the safety of those on bicycles, there are times where a penalty is required for obstructing bicycle lanes and we are happy to see this fine being increased as it is far too low at the current rate. Despite this, we want to recommend and request the Planning Committee vote for a higher penalty for a few reasons.

Stopping or parking in the bicycle lane comes with significant dangers. Those on bicycles often travel 15km/h or less, and a blocked bicycle lane often pushes them into automobile lanes where vehicles are regularly travelling 50km/h or more. This significant speed difference is incredibly dangerous, especially for new cyclists or those cycling with children. When you learn to drive you are advised to travel with the flow of traffic specifically because differences in speed is one of the largest dangers when on the road.

Hamilton also contains a multitude of bi-directional bicycle tracks where blocked bicycle lanes force cyclists to either travel opposite from automobiles where the danger I don't think has to be explained, or it forces them onto the sidewalk. For slower cyclists, riding on the sidewalk is possible but uncomfortable and unsafe for both them and pedestrians. For faster cyclists, it's even more dangerous. Sidewalks are designed for the speed of pedestrians, so cyclists are at risk, particularly at driveways, where sightlines aren't made for faster-moving bikes. Neither option is ideal for safety..



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When the bike lane is consistently blocked, it sends a clear message that the space is not truly for cyclists, but rather a shared lane for cars to stop in. This creates a dangerous environment for cyclists and discourages people from using the infrastructure the city has invested in. It undermines safety and prevents cyclists from feeling that the lane is a reliable or protected space for them.

Finally, a major problem with the fine is that getting a permit to block the bike lane, which includes providing detour options, is often more expensive or difficult than simply blocking the lane and paying the fine. This makes the penalty ineffective.

Cycle Hamilton recommends:

- 1) Planning Committee propose a higher penalty in line with other municipalities. A few examples being;
 - a) Toronto: \$200
 - b) Vancouver: \$200
 - c) Montreal: \$170
 - d) Halifax: 1st offence \$138.96, 2nd offence \$167.71, 3rd offence \$225.21
 - e) Edmonton: No stopping area: \$100
 - f) Ottawa \$125
 - g) Brampton: \$150
 - h) Boston: \$100
 - i) New York: \$115
- 2) Planning Committee propose a fine structure that increases with multiple offences
- 3) Planning Committee propose a higher fine for commercial vehicles.
- 4) Planning Committee set the fine at a minimum of blocking a live lane of travel meant for automobiles in line with the Highway Traffic Act.

The point of parking fines is to deter the behaviours listed in the schedule. The current fine does nothing to deter this behaviour, the increased fine continues to be too low to have a significant impact. A higher fine will cause drivers to think twice about their actions that risk the safety of others.



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Finally, parking penalties do nothing if they are never enforced. Planning Committee should review ways to increase proactive enforcement such as:

- 1) Increasing the number of by-law officers
- 2) Dedicating an officer to enforcement on a bicycle, allowing them to enforce bicycle lane violations but also see other violations on the schedule more easily than they would from an automobile.
- 3) First offence penalties without a warning.
- 4) Accept photographic evidence of infraction.

Thank you for your continued support of people riding bicycles and their safety.

Cycle Hamilton Board of Directors