

# City of Mississauga Corporate Report



Date: May 7, 2021  To: Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee	Originator's files: BL.01-PAR
From: Andrew Whittemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building	Meeting date: May 31, 2021

## Subject

**PUBLIC MEETING INFORMATION REPORT (WARDS 1 TO 11) – Off-street Parking Regulations Updates**

## Recommendation

1. That the report titled *"Public Meeting Information Report (Wards 1 to 11) – Off-street Parking Regulations Updates,"* including the two appended reports by consultants that contain draft policy directions on off-street parking and bicycle parking regulations, be received for information.
2. That staff are authorized to further consult on the draft policy directions contained in this report, including stakeholder outreach and holding a virtual public meeting.
3. That following consultation, staff are authorized to prepare final recommendations and associated updates to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, for further consideration by the Planning and Development Committee.

## Executive Summary

- Off-street parking refers to the number of parking spaces required as part of new development and/or land-use change. The City's parking regulations and rates are largely set out in its Zoning By-law.
- Off-street parking rates are an important tool in city building, as they impact the provision of affordable housing, the economic viability of businesses and new developments, uptake in sustainable modes of travel and the quality of the public realm.
- City staff were directed to undertake a comprehensive review of the City's off-street parking regulations in *Mississauga Moves 2019*. Through this review, City staff are

also seeking to implement actions from several other Council approved studies  
Please see Appendix 1.

- This review has been broken down into two components. WSP Canada has been engaged to review vehicle parking rates and regulations; and, HDR, Inc. to review the bicycle parking rates regulations. Please see draft directions reports from both consultants in Appendix 2 and 3 respectively.
- As a next step, staff are seeking permission to consult with Council, stakeholders and the public on these proposed policy directions and rate changes. City staff aim to bring a final recommendations report and a draft amendment to the Zoning By-law to the Planning and Development Committee for further consideration in the fall.

## Background

In recent years, Council has approved several foundational transportation studies and have authorized investments that are transforming the way people move around Mississauga. This Parking Regulations Study builds on and implements many actions contained in this past work. Appendix 1 includes a summary of plans and actions to be implemented as part of this review.

More specifically:

- [Mississauga Moves, 2019](#) provides an overarching master plan for transportation and envisages that everyone in Mississauga has the freedom to move safely, easily, and efficiently. Action 7 calls for a comprehensive review of the City's parking regulations.
- The [Parking Master Plan and Implementation Strategy, 2019](#) (PMPIS) provided an overarching citywide policy, planning and implementation framework for parking in Mississauga. The PMPIS showed that the City's parking requirements were higher than most of its peer municipalities; it recommended the City undertake a comprehensive review of its regulations and create four parking precincts in its Zoning-Bylaw.
- The [TDM Strategy, 2018](#) and [Cycling Master Plan, 2018](#) outlined key strategies and actions to encourage sustainable transportation modes in Mississauga. In particular, the *TDM Strategy, 2018* calls for the incorporation of bicycle parking requirements in the City's Zoning By-law and recommends that minimum requirements be adopted for new developments.

This review deals specifically with off-street parking (e.g. the number of parking spaces required as part of new development and/or land-use change). However, the Municipal Parking Division in Transportation and Works is also initiating a review of on-street parking permits and lower boulevard parking.

These two studies will work together to ensure a holistic approach to manage all things parking in the city into the future. Yet given the off-street parking review is further advanced, all off its recommendations have been made independent of any significant changes to existing on-street parking provision. If significant changes are made to Mississauga's on-street parking provisions, then the City may wish to undertake a scoped review to adjust some of these off-street rates further downward, where appropriate.

## Comments

This review proposes several changes to the City's parking regulations and rates contained in its Zoning By-law, along with some of its parking policies contained in its Official Plan. The suite of policy and rate changes proposed are interconnected and are intended to work together to allow Mississauga to use parking as a strategic tool to help achieve important city building outcomes.

All of the draft policy directions and rate changes have carefully considered and balanced Mississauga's transportation, built from and sustainability objectives. They have also considered benchmarking and best practices adopted by peer municipalities, feedback from stakeholders, shifting demographics and consumer preferences and opportunities to streamline approvals processes.

The proposed changes are summarized below; staff have prepared a detailed examination of the draft policies and proposed changes to the regulations in Appendix 4.

### 1. ESTABLISHING FOUR PARKING PRECINCTS

Parking precincts refer to policy areas with similar characteristics for parking management. Most of Mississauga's peer municipalities use a precinct based approach to ensure parking rates are tailored to the local context.

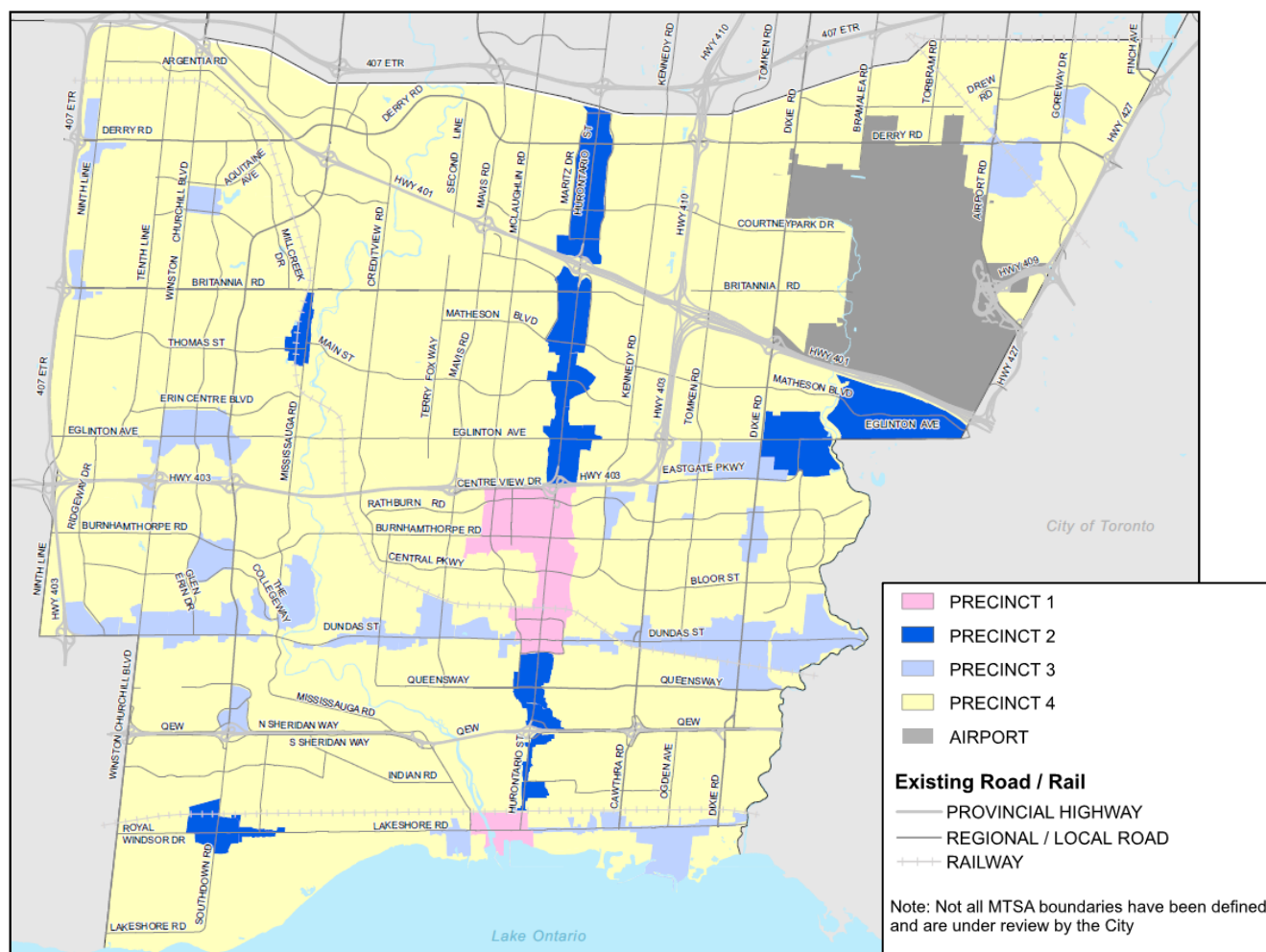
Through the PMPIS, Council approved the creation of four parking precincts in Mississauga. The concept involved the creation of a precinct with the lowest rates centered on the Downtown and Port Credit Community Node (Precinct 1); precincts with middling rates along rapid transit lines and key intensification areas (Precinct 2 and 3), and the remainder of the city having higher rates (Precinct 4).

Through this review, the team has worked to implement this concept and refine the boundaries of these four precincts. The proposed parking precincts are shown in Figure 1.

The delineation of the proposed precincts considered 11 criteria (e.g. access to transit, availability of public parking lots, etc.). These 11 criteria form a framework and process to help identify which areas should be in which precinct. Overtime, the City can make use of this

framework to adjust its precinct boundaries in response to growth, policy changes and infrastructure investments.

*Figure 1: Map of Proposed Parking Precincts, April 2021*



## 2. VEHICLE PARKING RATE REDUCTIONS AND HARMONIZATION

The City has never comprehensively reviewed its parking regulations and rates. This has resulted in Mississauga having parking rates that are much higher than its peer municipalities, are often out of step with the market and demographic trends, and are adding red tape to the planning process.

In developing the proposed rates, the consultant team has benchmarked Mississauga against other municipalities (i.e. Oakville, Kitchener, Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver, Victoria, and Edmonton) and found the City's parking requirements are generally higher, particularly within intensification areas. The draft rates seek to better align Mississauga with its peers.

The City's higher parking rates are also slowing down and complicating planning approvals. In the last six years the City has received over 500 requests for parking reductions. Most of these requests have resulted in some form of a parking reduction, but only after staff have worked to reach an appropriate parking solution on a site-by-site basis. The proposed changes are considering rates that the City is typically approving, as well as opportunities to streamline approvals processes.

## **2a. Proposed changes to high-density residential rates**

Benchmarking shows Mississauga's residential parking rates are higher than its peers. Feedback from residential developers echoes this finding, with reports that Mississauga's rates are not well aligned to market demand. An example frequently cited was that because the sale of units is generally unbundled from the sale of parking spaces, developers are unable to sell enough parking spaces to meet the City's minimum parking requirements. Feedback also indicates increased acceptance of buying condominium units without parking, particularly near rapid transit (e.g., Port Credit GO Station).

A further challenge cited by these stakeholders is that because the City's high density parking rates are tied to unit composition (e.g. current rates are tied to the number of bedrooms for each unit) it generally triggers multiple rounds of approvals, as applicants are not sure of the unit composition until all their units are sold.

The following changes to high-density residential rates are proposed:

- **Condominiums:** For condominium apartments, proposed changes would consolidate the parking requirements into a per unit rate for each precinct, as per Table 3 in Appendix 4. Proposed rates vary from 0.8 spaces per unit in Precinct 1, to 1.1 spaces per unit in Precinct 4. This proposal eliminates the unit-type distinction that currently varies parking provision for each unit based on the number of bedrooms in order to simplify approvals process and incentivize the provision of larger/ family-sized units.
- **Back-to-back/ staked townhouse:** It is proposed to consolidate the requirements for all units in back-to-back/ staked townhouse developments. The proposed unit rates vary from 1 spaces per unit in Precinct 1 to 1.3 spaces per unit in Precinct 4.
- **Visitor Parking:** No (in the case of the Downtown Core) or marginal changes are proposed for visitor parking rates. It is suggested a citywide requirement of 0.15 spaces per unit for both condominium and rental apartments be applied. For Back-to-back/ Stacked townhouses, the current requirement of 0.25 spaces per unit is proposed to be reduced to 0.15 in Precinct 1 and 0.2 in the rest of the Precincts.

## **2b. Proposed reductions to support housing mix and range**

Parking is costly and impacts housing affordability. Without including land acquisition, each structured parking space could cost around to \$40,000 when above ground, and close to \$70,000 for underground. This cost is then transferred to the end user, in the way of housing pricing or rent fees and/or construction costs for businesses. Many residential developers were looking for rates to be lowered for affordable units and/or rental units.

To support a range and mix of housing, the following changes are proposed:

- **Maintain and reduce the City's rental rate:** It is proposed that the rental apartment category be maintained and that the requirement be lowered/tied citywide to the condominium apartment requirement in Precinct 1 (i.e., 0.8 spaces per unit). The aim of this change is to encourage purpose-built rental developments and support reinvestment in older rental buildings that provide affordable housing.
- **Simplify second unit requirements:** The current parking requirements for second units require one space per second unit, in addition to the existing requirement for the principal dwelling. It is proposed that this requirement be varied to allow parking for second units within the standard 2-space required for the principal dwelling. This measure would allow the homeowner to allocate one of their two-parking spaces to the tenant when adding one-second unit.
- **Include minimal requirement for Transitional Housing:** It is proposed to include a lower parking requirement for assisted/alternative housing (or transitional housing) where generally most of the occupants do not have a car. The minimal parking requirement would be provided to accommodate employee parking.
- **Reduce parking requirements for affordable housing projects:** It is proposed to introduce a 30-50% reduction in parking requirements from the conventional requirements to incentivize the provision of affordable housing. This direction would need to be implemented as part of the Mississauga Official Plan Review and/or through the introduction of Inclusionary Zoning.

## **2c. Proposed changes to commercial rates**

Feedback from local businesses indicates that parking can be a barrier to their evolution. A challenge frequently highlighted was when a new tenant is taking over a commercial space, but changing the use (e.g., changing the use from a retail store to a financial institution or a take-out restaurant) they are currently required to undertake a minor variance process, if parking cannot be accommodated on site. Business owners were seeking more flexibility to grow and change overtime.

To support business, particularly small business, the following changes are proposed:

- **Reducing commercial rates:** It is proposed to reduce parking minimums for key non-residential uses by precinct, as per Table 4 in Appendix 4. This includes creating one consolidated rate for those uses that often locate in mixed-use buildings, retail plazas and along main streets.
  - For example, the current requirement for a retail store is 5.4 spaces/100 m<sup>2</sup> non-residential GFA, while take-out restaurants and financial institutions requirement is 6.0 and 5.5 spaces/100 m<sup>2</sup> non-residential GFA, respectively. It is proposed to consolidate the parking requirement for land uses that commonly co-locate to 3.0 spaces/100 m<sup>2</sup> non-residential GFA in Precincts 1 and 2; and to 4.0 and 5.0 spaces/100 m<sup>2</sup> non-residential GFA in Precinct 3 and Precinct 4, respectively.
  - Additional parking regulations reductions are also proposed for Retail Centres, Restaurants, Offices, and Medical Offices.
- **Harmonizing commercial rates:** The parking regulation Table 3.1.2.2 in the City's Zoning By-law has 52 non-residential type of uses. As highlighted above, there are opportunities to further group and/or consolidate land uses and apply parking requirements reductions when appropriate (please refer to Table 5 in Appendix 4) to allow businesses to alternate between uses and/or expand their operations.
- **Parking exemptions for small businesses:** Benchmarking revealed many peer municipalities have exempted parking for small businesses located in intensification areas (e.g., within major transit station areas and in downtowns) and along main streets. It is proposed that Mississauga consider exempting small businesses within the consolidated retail/commercial category discussed above (e.g., under 220 m<sup>2</sup> non-residential GFA) from parking requirements, when located partly or entirely on the ground floors of buildings in Precincts 1, 2 and 3. This measure could represent an important support to the City's COVID-19 recovery efforts and could help small businesses to adapt to newer trends in mobility.
- **Provide parking exemptions to support revitalization of heritage buildings:** Parking was raised as a concern in the redevelopment of some heritage properties in commercial areas. The team is seeking feedback on a parking exemptions for designated heritage properties under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The exemption could be limited to uses that fall within the above-mentioned consolidated retail/commercial parking requirement (e.g., retail store) or below (e.g., office) and it could be limited to the existing gross floor area (GFA).
- **Formalizing shared visitor and non-residential parking:** The Downtown Core allows shared arrangements between residential visitor parking and non-residential uses in apartment buildings. It is proposed this measure be expanded citywide.

### 3. BICYCLE PARKING RATES

The City's [TDM Strategy, 2018](#) and [Cycling Master Plan, 2018](#) call for the incorporation of bicycle parking requirements into the City's Zoning By-law. In response, HDR Inc. has prepared draft directions report that is included in Appendix 3.

The following changes to bicycle parking rates are proposed:

- **Adopt two precincts:** It is proposed the City establish two bicycle parking requirements, one for City Centre (e.g., Precinct 1) and one for the rest of the city (e.g., Precinct 2, 3 and 4).
- **Establish bicycle parking rates:** The proposed rates for bicycle parking for residents apartments are 0.8 spaces/unit in the City Centre and 0.6 spaces/unit in the rest of the city. See Table 6 in Appendix 4 for additional land uses.
- **Introduce rates into Zoning By-law:** The provision of bicycle parking is currently voluntary. The introduction of these rates into the Zoning By-law will ensure the provision of bicycle parking is a requirement for all new developments.

### 4. OTHER PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES

Parking is a complex subject that touches many other policy areas in the City. The project team is also seeking feedback on some other related policy proposals.

The following changes are proposed:

- **Planning for electric vehicles (EV):** *Mississauga Moves* directs the City to investigate requirements for EV parking stations. Research undertaken has revealed some municipalities are aiming to have between 20-100% of new parking spaces in multi-residential projects with the rough-in infrastructure needed to support EV parking. The project team is seeking feedback on the inclusion of EV-ready requirements in the Zoning By-law and/or in the City's Green Development Standards.
- **Formalize process to permit certain off-site sharing parking agreements:** Mississauga Official Plan policy 7.3.8 encourages sharing of parking spaces for community infrastructure (e.g., parks, libraries, schools). To streamline implementation of these policies, the City could develop a standardized process and a memorandum of understanding to formalize these off-site shared parking arrangements, when appropriate.



## Strategic Plan

The proposed updates to the City's vehicular and bicycle parking regulations in the Zoning By-law are consistent with the Move, Connect and Green pillars of the Strategic Plan. The proposed changes will provide residents and businesses with an updated approach for off-street parking in Mississauga while providing the opportunity to access active transportation infrastructure and reducing single occupancy trips in an environmentally friendly way.

## Engagement and Consultation

Engagement efforts have built on the strong relationships developed through the PMPIS, the *Cycling Master Plan, 2018* and the *TDM Strategy, 2018*.

Given COVID-19 restrictions, the efforts shifted to virtual stakeholder engagement and informing the public of the initiation and undertaking of the parking regulations through the City's "Have your Say" page. The following activities were completed during the first phase of the Parking Regulations Study (Part A: Setting the Stage):

- **Stakeholder Survey:** a survey was distributed to parking providers (e.g., developers, property managers, business improvement areas and consultants) for their insights regarding the current managed parking practises current parking regulations.
- **Focused Interviews:** To gather additional input, select follow-up telephone interviews were scheduled in October 2020.
- **"Have Your Say" webpage:** A dedicated web page was launched in Summer 2020 containing project information, background documents, and a frequently asked questions section (please visit <https://yoursay.mississauga.ca/parking-regulations-study>).

### Feedback Received to Date

A summary of key themes from the surveys and interviews is provided below:

- **Parking precincts are appropriate for Mississauga:** Interviewees generally were supportive of the precinct approach where the Downtown and planned intensification areas should have lower requirements and lower density neighbourhoods and employment areas should have higher requirements.
- **Parking usage and demand is shifting, even pre-pandemic:** For commercial buildings, post-COVID it is anticipated that the usage and demand of parking will change as the consumer pattern will continue to be altered with on-line shopping and retail plazas might change their main purpose.

- **LRT implementation will accelerate the shift to non-vehicular modes:** Survey respondents anticipate that LRT implementation would attract more people living and/or working along or in close proximity to the LRT corridor they would drive less and take transit more often.

### Engagement Next Steps

The engagement program will seek input and comments on the proposed policy directions and will reflect public health directions. Events will include a virtual stakeholder meeting, an on-demand open house, and information sharing through the City's website, social media and other communications channels.

## Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts resulting from the Recommendations in this report.

## Conclusion

The proposed updates to off-street vehicle parking regulations and the addition of bicycle parking requirements to the Zoning By-law are intended to help ensure all new development in Mississauga meets the City's goals of shifting mode share; optimizing transit infrastructure; supporting housing affordability; addressing climate change; and, creating connected and complete neighbourhoods.

Staff are requesting that Planning and Development Committee receive the proposed updates to the vehicle and bicycle parking regulations outlined in the report *Public Meeting Information Report (Wards 1 to 11) – Off-Street Parking Regulations Updates* for information.

As a next step, staff would like to consult Council, stakeholders and the public of these proposed policy changes and revised parking requirements. Staff would then aim to update the City's Zoning By-law and Official Plan in response to feedback received, for further consideration by the Planning and Development Committee.

## Attachments

Appendix 1: Relevant Actions from City's Master Plans

Appendix 2: Parking Regulations Draft Policy Directions Report, May 14, 2021

Appendix 3: Bicycle Parking Zoning By-law Directions Report, April 19, 2021

Appendix 4: Summary of Draft Policy Directions



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