

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



Date: March 20, 2024

To: Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee

From: Andrew Whittemore, M.U.R.P., Commissioner of Planning & Building

Originator's files:
BL.01-PAR

Meeting date:
April 8, 2024

Subject

PUBLIC MEETING / RECOMMENDATION REPORT (WARDS 4, 5, 7)

Zoning By-law Amendment to Reduce Residential Parking Requirements along the Hazel McCallion Line (north of the QEW)

Recommendation

1. That the proposal to amend Zoning By-law 0225-2007 to reduce minimum resident per unit parking requirements for apartments and dwelling units provided by a public authority and non-profit provider along the Hazel McCallion Line, north of the QEW, in accordance with the report dated March 20, 2024, titled "Zoning By-law Amendment to Reduce Residential Parking Requirements along the Hazel McCallion Line", from the Commissioner of Planning and Building, be approved.
2. That notwithstanding planning protocol, this report regarding the proposed Zoning By-law 0225-2007 be considered both the public meeting and a recommendation report.
3. That the implementing Zoning By-law be brought to a future City Council meeting.

Executive Summary

- Council Motion (Item 15.2) approved on June 28, 2023 directed staff to look at the feasibility of reducing parking requirements in parking precincts that will be served by the Hazel McCallion Line, including investigating an elimination of minimum parking requirements for resident land uses. This recommendation report is a response to the Motion and [Information Report](#) presented at the October 23, 2023 Planning and Development Committee (Appendix 1). Appendix 2 assesses the proposed changes to the Zoning By-law against the provincial policy framework and other applicable policies.

- Lands south of the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) have been excluded from the study area as a result of Recommendation (Item #PDC-0067-2023) approved by Planning and Development Committee on October 23, 2023.
- It is recommended that a reduction of the minimum resident parking requirements for apartments (condominium and rental) to 0.5 spaces per unit and visitor parking requirements to 0.15 spaces per unit, along the Hazel McCallion Line between the QEW and the Brampton border (proposed as Parking Precinct 1a) be approved. Corresponding per unit reductions are also recommended for public authority dwelling units and dwelling units provided by a non-profit housing provider.
- As Mississauga embraces sustainable modes of transportation and transforms communities along the Hazel McCallion Line that are walkable, inclusive, and vibrant, the city is seeking an evolutionary step towards reduced automobile reliance.
- Modernizing parking standards is a transformative process that cannot be done instantly. The approach taken to reduce minimum parking rates for Precinct 1a instead of eliminating parking immediately ensures there is not an undersupply of resident parking in the future while preventing excessive parking supply. Industry leaders with projects along the LRT Corridor have signaled that resident parking would still be needed even if parking minimums were eliminated.
- Should further reductions to minimum resident parking rates in Precinct 1a be requested, developers must demonstrate the reductions will have minimal impact on future residents of the proposed development by meeting a set of criteria included in the Parking Study Terms of Reference. The draft criteria included in Appendix 3 ensures alternative transportation options are available to residents and visitors.

Background

Ontario is facing significant housing challenges and increasing supply is becoming a strategic priority for all levels of government. In response, the City of Mississauga approved [Growing Mississauga: Action Plan for New Housing \(2023\)](#) (Growing Mississauga), a comprehensive action plan designed to increase the supply of housing, streamline development and building approvals, and improve affordability. Although reducing parking requirements is not a specific Action Item in this Action Plan, further modernizing parking standards can result in getting homes built faster and are affordable by reducing construction time.

According to Growing Mississauga, there is an estimated residential capacity of 81,300 new units in the Urban Growth Centre alone (based on existing Official Plan permissions). Reducing

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automobile dependency not only leverages the investments made along the LRT Corridor and the future Downtown Mississauga Terminal and Transitway Connection (DMTTC) but may also reduce vehicular traffic congestion in the Downtown Core, Fairview, Cooksville, Hospital and Uptown Node areas as population increases over the next several decades. The Hazel McCallion Line will provide a significant opportunity to support transit-oriented development and increase the use of transit.

An evolution to update the City's parking requirements commenced with a comprehensive amendment to Mississauga Zoning By-law 0225-2007 (Zoning By-law) in June 2022. Amongst others, amendments to the off-street parking regulations included:

- The introduction of four Parking Precincts; and,
- Modernizing city-wide parking requirements, including reduced parking rates for apartments (condo and rental) and dwellings units owned/operated by or on behalf of a public authority or a non-profit corporation using the Parking Precincts framework.

On June 28, 2023, City Council approved a motion directing staff to determine the feasibility of reducing minimum resident per unit parking requirements along the Hazel McCallion Line. Responding to the motion, a Corporate Report was brought forward to the October 23, 2023, Planning and Development Committee (Committee) recommending further reductions in the minimum resident parking requirements be along the Light Rapid Transit (LRT) corridor. The purpose of this Corporate Report is to present amendments to Mississauga's Zoning By-law. The implementing Zoning By-law will be brought to a forthcoming City Council meeting, should the Committee approves the recommendations in this Report.

Comments

As noted in the October 23, 2023 [Information Report](#), reducing parking standards can:

- Enable the City to leverage investments made to the LRT and accelerate the shift to non-vehicular modes;
- Help lower housing construction costs while reducing construction timelines;
- Advance the goals of the city's Climate Change Action Plan, Downtown Movement Plan, and the Transportation Master Plan amongst others; and,
- Improve overall site design by reducing the number of onsite parking supply.

In general, the more parking that is available the more likely it is to induce demand, i.e. result in higher car ownership rates and increased vehicle kilometres travelled.

1. LOWER PARKING RATES REDUCES CONSTRUCTION TIME AND COSTS

Reducing minimum parking requirements lowers construction costs and time as fewer underground parking levels need to be built. In the long run, there are fewer repairs and maintenance needed to the parking structure which saves residents money.

In more urbanized locations such as Downtown, developers noted that each underground parking space can cost in the order of \$80,000 to \$120,000, depending on how deep the underground parking is, the type of bedrock, and the presence of groundwater. As each underground parking level takes up to 4 months to complete (includes excavation and construction), a typical five level underground parking garage can take 18 months to build.

Developers have indicated that they are unable to recover the full cost of parking construction when spaces are sold. With recent data showing that Mississauga developers are selling each parking space between \$50,000 to \$80,000 per underground parking space, the unrecovered cost from unsold spaces are being transferred across all residents in the development. Therefore, constructing only the necessary number of parking spaces needed by the market minimizes unrecovered costs.

2. AN EVOLUTIONARY PATH TO FURTHER MODERNIZE RESIDENT PARKING STANDARDS ALONG THE LRT CORRIDOR

Maintaining a minimum parking requirement (albeit lower) will address the continued need to supply parking, as vehicle ownership will remain present for a segment of residents. In order for Mississauga to transition from a primarily car-centric city to one that embraces sustainable modes of transportation and is less reliant on the private vehicle, progressive solutions will be required to “move the marker” along the LRT Corridor such as elimination of parking minimums and considering innovative parking standards that embraces shared mobility such as car share spaces. These solutions are most effective in the Downtown due to a mix of land uses and densities, leveraging investments made to higher order transit and active transportation initiatives.

In progressive cities such as Vancouver, parking minimums were eliminated earlier this year in Vancouver’s West End and the Broadway Plan area as these communities are walkable and dense, and where daily needs can be accessed without a car. These communities are similar to Toronto where parking standards have also been eliminated.

3. PERMITTING LOWER RESIDENT PARKING REQUIREMENTS WILL BE EVALUATED AGAINST CRITERIA

Ontario planning legislation allows any landowner to apply for an amendment to the Zoning By-law and all municipalities are mandated to evaluate the merits of each application. Currently, developers wishing to reduce in-effect parking requirements, as part of a rezoning or a minor variance application, must demonstrate through a Parking Utilization Study that the lower parking supply does not impact future residents and the overall transportation network in the vicinity of the proposed development. Modifications to the parking rate should still give some residents options to own a vehicle.

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As proposed onsite resident parking rates in Precinct 1a will already be the lowest in Mississauga, should further reductions to the parking requirements be requested, developers shall demonstrate how lower parking rates will not impact future residents' ability to:

- Have access to safe and inclusive alternative transportation options such as bicycle infrastructure that are suitable for all abilities (multi-use trails but not bike lanes located on a live traffic lane) in addition to access to a robust higher order transit network;
- Continue to meet the daily needs within walking distance in particular for older adults, children, and individuals with mobility challenges;
- Allow residents to better utilize rideshare and other shared mobility options, and utilizing online delivery services; and,
- Continue to own a vehicle but are made aware at the time of purchase or rent that overflow parking (parking on the surrounding streets) is not permitted and may be subject to enforcement.

To achieve these objectives, proposed updates to the [Parking Utilization Studies Terms of Reference](#) require the developer to submit additional information and data as part of the Parking Utilization Study. This set of criteria would be in addition to the parking surveys developers are currently required to submit to ensure parking utilization rates remain within acceptable levels even with a reduced parking supply.

The set of criteria is useful in determining whether reducing parking rate impacts residents of the proposed development. Each criterion is equally weighed, and a passing score is required before a final recommendation is made by staff. The set of criteria can be found in Appendix 3. The Parking Utilization Studies Terms of Reference may be refined over time as criteria is tested for each Minor Variance or Zoning By-law Amendment application that is reviewed.

4. PROPOSED ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

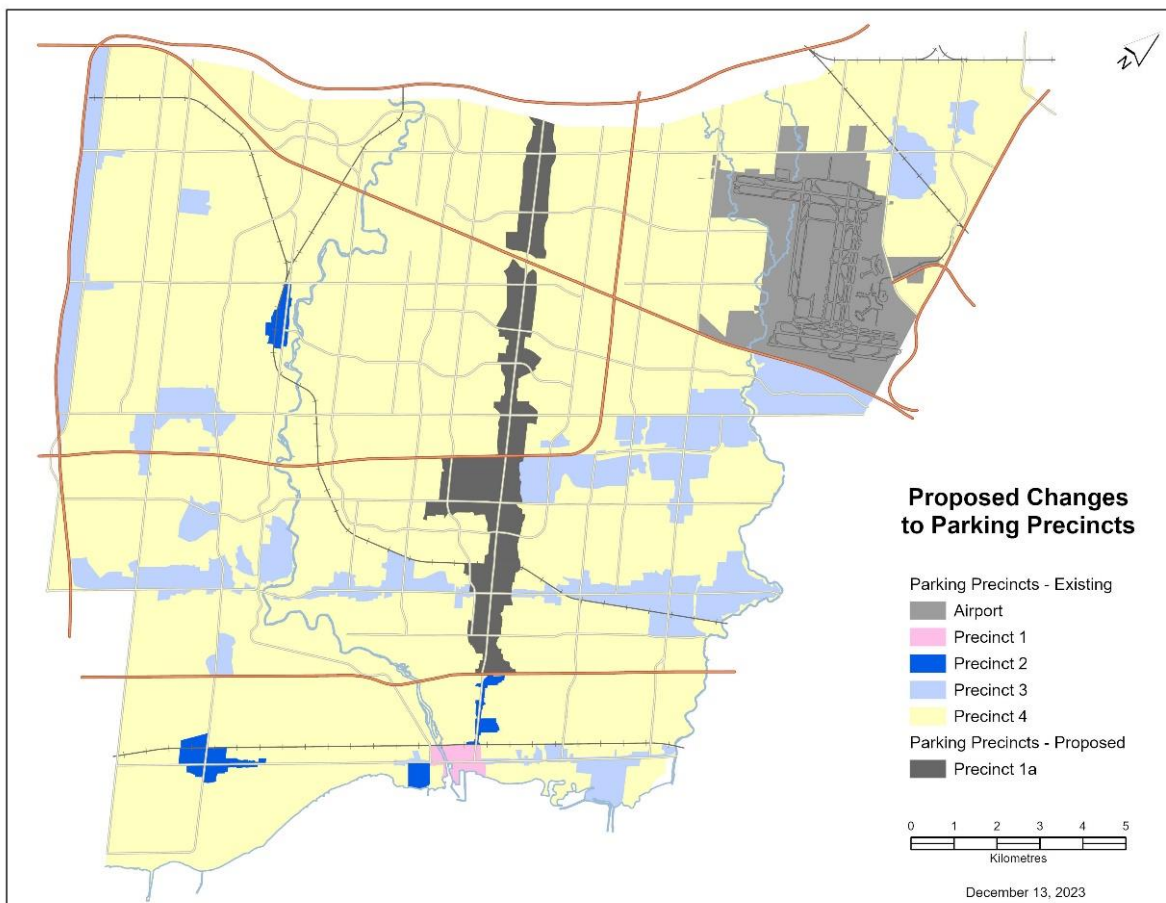
The following discussion provides an overview of the recommendations and rationale of the proposed amendments.

a) New Parking Precinct 1a

The in-effect off-street parking regulations contained in Part 3 of the Zoning By-law includes four Parking Precincts, with Precinct 1 along the Hurontario Intensification Corridor having the lowest parking rates, whereas Precinct 4 have the highest parking rates. The proposed Parking Precinct 1a will stretch from the QEW to the Brampton border, including the entire Urban Growth Centre (i.e., Downtown Core, Fairview, Cooksville, and Hospital) and Uptown Node.

Gateway Corporate Centre is also included in the proposed Precinct 1a, however residential uses are not permitted in this area. Staff are "future proofing" the Zoning By-law should non-residential uses warrant parking regulations reductions once the Hazel McCallion Line becomes fully operational.

Figure 1: Conceptual Map of Proposed Parking Precinct 1a



Proposed Parking Precinct 1a is shown in Figure 1 in dark grey. There currently are no plans to expand Precinct 1a into other Parking Precincts or amend Parking Precinct boundaries elsewhere in the city. This could be considered in the future based on the success of the reduction along the LRT.

b) Reduction of Minimum Resident per unit Parking Requirements for Apartment and Dwelling units provided by a Public Authority and Non-Profit Provider

The in-effect minimum resident parking rates is 0.8 spaces per unit for Apartments (condominium and rental) in Precinct 1, including the Downtown Core. Public authority dwelling units and dwelling units provided by a non-profit housing provider requires half the parking rate at 0.4 spaces per unit.

The proposed new requirement in Precinct 1a for minimum resident parking rates is 0.5 spaces per unit and applies to Apartments (condominium and rental). Further, the minimum parking rate for Public Authority dwelling units and dwelling units provided by a non-profit housing provider is proposed to be reduced to 0.25 spaces per unit to be consistent with the existing approach of

halving the parking rate of the apartment use. Previous research showed that residents living in a public authority dwelling or dwelling units provided by a non-profit housing provider has less reliance on the automobile as a primary source of transportation.

Amendments are also proposed for Part 7 of the Zoning By-law, Table 7.1.9 – Downtown Core Parking Exemption Area with a simplified and lower minimum parking rate of 0.5 spaces per unit as opposed to resident parking requirements by the number of bedrooms per unit.

As part of continued efforts of data collection to understanding trends and planning for future amendments, staff will continue to monitor parking supply and demand through development applications and literature review. Should issues emerge or as parking trends keep changing, staff would recommend necessary amendments to the Zoning By-law. Furthermore, discussions with staff will continue to ensure street parking management and enforcement are conducted, especially in surrounding residential neighbourhoods in close proximity to the LRT Corridor.

c) Establish a Standard of Minimum Visitor Parking Requirements for Apartment and Dwelling units provided by a Public Authority and Non-Profit Provider

The in-effect minimum visitor parking rates for apartments and public authority dwelling units and dwelling units provided by a non-profit housing provider is 0.15 spaces per unit in the Downtown Core Zones and 0.2 spaces per unit in the remainder of Precinct 1. Current (0.15 spaces per unit) visitor parking requirements has been effective in the Downtown Core due to the presence of the transit terminal, mix of uses, and on-street parking.

To further parking requirement reductions and meeting the City's housing and transportation targets along Precinct 1a, staff are also recommending having a standard visitor parking rates for apartments to 0.15 spaces per unit in the entire Precinct 1a, thus having a consistent requirement with the Downtown Core. Consistent with the Downtown Core, visitors to Downtown Fairview, Cooksville, Hospital and Uptown Node will benefit from the Hazel McCallion Line as a greater range of transportation options are available. Similar to resident parking, developers can provide more visitor parking if necessary to meet the needs of residents.

Several benchmarked cities, such as in Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) and along Kitchener and Waterloo's Ion LRT Line, have reduced visitor parking requirements in areas that are supported by higher order transit. Further, recent appeals to the Ontario Lands Tribunal (OLT) of rezoning applications also support lower visitor parking standards due to upcoming higher order transit and active transportation infrastructure.

2. PLANNING ANALYSIS SUMMARY

The proposed City-initiated amendment to the Zoning By-law is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conforms to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Region of Peel Official Plan and Mississauga Official Plan. See Appendix 2 for a detailed Planning Analysis and Summary of Applicable Policies.

Strategic Plan

The proposed updates to the City's vehicular regulations in the Zoning By-law are consistent with the Move, Connect and Green pillars of the Strategic Plan. In addition, the proposed amendment aligns with other key City strategies:

- Parking Master Plan and Implementation Strategy (PMPIS), 2019
- Transportation Master Plan (TMP), 2019
- Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP), 2019
- Transportation Demand Management Strategy (TDM) Strategy, 2018
- Downtown Movement Plan (DMP), ongoing
- Growing Mississauga: Action Plan for New Housing, 2023

Engagement and Consultation

Consultation with stakeholders was performed as part of the study to support this report's recommendation such as through the Housing Panel and meetings with staff from benchmarked municipalities and developers. Reducing resident parking requirements along the Hazel McCallion Line was supported by those consulted with for the following reasons:

- Despite the modernization of the off-street parking regulations in the Zoning By-law in recent years, developers indicate that the in-effect parking requirement remains higher than the current demand, resulting in an oversupply of parking spaces. It has been reported that at least one home builder incentivized prospective homebuyers to purchase a parking space.
- Developers who do not want to oversupply parking have sought approval of reduced resident per unit parking through Minor Variance or rezoning applications, which increases application time and staff resources.
- Home builders will continue to provide per unit resident parking spaces based on what the market demands. Researching benchmarked cities have found that developers will continue to provide parking even if parking rates have been eliminated. Further, additional parking spaces are often constructed as a buffer to satisfy future increases in parking demand.
- The cost of constructing each parking space is expensive and time consuming. Further, it takes on average four months to build each underground parking level (due to the removal and shoring of bedrock, constructing and waterproofing each parking level).

- Rents may be higher in order to recover the cost of oversupplying parking spaces in a purpose-built rental development. Furthermore, there is a general trend that tenants may have a lower tendency to own a vehicle, further supporting reduced minimum per unit parking requirements.

Financial Impact

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

Conclusion

A City Council motion approved on June 28, 2023, and subsequent Corporate Report directed staff to investigate the feasibility of reducing parking standards along the Hazel McCallion Line from the QEW to the Brampton border. The proposed changes to the Zoning By-law leverage higher order transit investments encouraging more transit use; reduce the reliance of the automobile while increasing the use of active transportation; address climate change; reduce construction costs and time; reduce rents and maintenance fees over the long run; improve public health; and, support connected and complete neighbourhoods. These changes also support the City's goals to improve housing affordability and facilitate more housing production (both market and affordable). The implementing Zoning By-law amendment would be part of a forthcoming Council meeting.


Modernizing parking standards is a transformative process that cannot be done instantly. The approach taken to reduce minimum parking rates for Precinct 1a, while also updating the Parking Utilization Study Terms of Reference guiding further reductions, is designed to balance the need to reduce car dependence while inhibiting an undersupply of spaces. Staff will report back to Council on the success of the updated by-law following the occupancy of a sampling of buildings that utilize the lower rates and the LRT is in operation. Eliminating resident rates along the LRT corridor and/or lowering rates in other areas may be considered as part of that review.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Information Report

Appendix 2: Planning Analysis and Summary of Applicable Policies

Appendix 3: Parking Study Terms of Reference: Resident Parking Requirement along LRT Corridor (Precinct 1a Only) Criteria for Analysing Reductions



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