

## **BACKGROUND**

Previous reports on downtown parking were presented to Council on December 12th, 2017 and to members of the Finance and Administration Committee on July 10th, 2018. The purpose for these reports were to address concerns that projects in the downtown, in particular, Place des Arts and the Elgin Greenway, will result in the loss of municipal parking spaces. On February 19th, 2019, Council directed staff to examine alternate locations for large projects in the downtown. Changing locations will affect the supply of parking spaces. Parking recommendations will be incorporated into the Large Projects Update report being presented at the May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019 City Council meeting.

The purpose of this report is to inform City Council on work progressing in 2019 and to recap the options available to create customer efficiency and add parking supply in the future. This report also reviews parking demand and acknowledges that there is a balance to be struck between our sustainable mobility aspirations and the acute, near term impacts of projects and changes in the downtown.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Parking Lot Utilization**

In 2011, IBI Group completed a Strategic Parking Plan for the City of Greater Sudbury. Where the parking plan identified that the existing parking system at the time may not have been sufficient to accommodate the projected 2026 parking demand, it did conclude at that time “that Sudbury’s Downtown parking system was sufficient to meet the demand”. Taking into account parking supply and demand changes since 2011, in late 2018, IBI Group completed another downtown parking study for the City of Greater Sudbury.

The purpose of the study was to estimate current and post-construction parking operations in Downtown Sudbury, in order to determine whether a parking supply expansion was required to support redevelopment projects and associated parking lot closures. The study aimed to estimate the number of additional spaces required to meet future demand.

The IBI Group study reported that “parking systems are effectively full at an occupancy rate of approximately 85-90%”. Using this threshold, IBI Group confirmed that the “overall Downtown Sudbury parking system is considered sufficient to accommodate the existing demand”. The report found that seven of fourteen municipal off-street lots (near the central core) were operating above the 85% threshold and that on-street parking was generally operating below effective capacity (with the exception of Cedar Street, Larch Street and Lisgar Street). The report continued to cite that, while off-street lots in the downtown core were near capacity, “sufficient parking opportunities were available within close proximity of all parking facilities operating near or at capacity”.

Written prior to the loss of 59 parking spaces at the Larch Street Lot (Place des Arts) and forecasting further losses associated with large projects such as the Junction, the report confirms that *“a significant parking supply expansion, or tactics to deal with the excess parking demand are considered necessary to meet the Downtown parking needs once the Places Des Arts and The Junction are constructed”*. To achieve an off-street utilization of 90% and assuming current council approved projects will contribute toward a loss of municipal parking

that could range between 170-305 spaces, the report forecasts that all municipal off-street lots would be operating near or at capacity. Listed strategies to address this concern include construction of a centrally located parking facility within the downtown core. Further, where the City of Greater Sudbury is working diligently at a number of transportation demand initiatives, the report suggests continued work toward improved transit service, cycling infrastructure (bike lanes and parking) and investigation into shared parking agreements with private entities.

### **Review of On-Street Spaces**

A formal review of current on-street parking spaces will be completed while looking for any opportunity to expand the number of spaces. These would include only those minor adjustments that could be made to maximize additional spaces without significant capital work. (e.g. areas in the downtown with no on-street parking spaces that could be easily added by By-law and booked via pay by plate machine).

On-street parking machines will allow a more streamlined approach to any addition to the supply of on-street spaces, where there would no longer be a requirement to install a coin operated meter head. With on-street pay by plate machines planned for 2019, it is anticipated that the additional spaces would require on-street painting while adding signage to educate the parker of what zone they are in for payment on the pay by plate app or machine.

### **Parking Management at Centre for Life**

The City, YMCA and adjacent business owners are reviewing potential steps that would support vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow into and out of the garage while maximizing available space at both the YMCA lot on Elgin and in the garage / parking lot adjacent to the YMCA and Center for Life. Whether there is a need for an automated gate system or a simply a pay by plate machine, it is anticipated costs for construction and system improvements will be supported through the Parking Reserve Fund.

### **Dufferin Street Road Allowance**

The City owns a parcel of property described as the Dufferin Street road allowance, at the east end of Pine Street that could be opened up to create an additional 40 spaces. The location of the lot is slightly outside of the downtown core; however it is certainly within walking distance (particularly to the School of Architecture) and would not present any traffic issues and would increase parking capacity for long-term stays.

The cost to open this lot would be approximately \$40,000 which would be required to grade, provide drainage, fencing, signage and a pay by plate machine. It is currently a gravel lot and the intention would be to keep it in this condition. This is a viable option to add increased parking supply in the downtown core and would be relatively quick to implement.

### **Louis Street/Vincent Street**

The City of Greater Sudbury owns an area of land, designated as parkland, that is part of the linear park known as the Junction Creek Waterway Park, connecting users through to Hnatyshyn Park. This is a gravel lot intended to be used by patrons of the park. Enforcement staff report that the lot attracts unauthorized daily users who work in the downtown core. This lot is a 375 metre walk from the South East corner of Paris and Elm Street.

A further review of revenues and costs associated with lighting, grading, drainage and installation of a pay by plate parking machine, is required. Specific consultation will be completed to consider any environmental risks for the use of this area by vehicles when considering the proximity to Junction Creek.

## **CUSTOMER EFFICIENCIES**

### **Lighting and Wayfinding Improvements**

In order to address areas where there was limited or outdated systems in place, improvements to lighting were completed in the Fall of 2018 to three (3) municipal parking lots on Shaughnessy and Minto Street. Existing high pressure sodium (HPS) lights were replaced with more efficient LED lights to provide for safer and more accessible parking at night.

Further, for a majority of municipal lots, wayfinding signage improvements were completed in the Fall of 2018, replacing outdated plywood signs with 12' high aluminum signs. Signs are better positioned, perpendicular to the roadway, to allow drivers and pedestrians the ability to read the sign as they pass. Signs are highly visible and include a wayfinding map for all municipal parking lots in the downtown core.

**Figure 1- Shaughnessy Street West Lot Sign**



### **Pay by Plate Parking App**

The City has established a relationship with HotSpot Parking Inc (<https://htsp.ca/>) to provide mobile parking technology for (at least initially) on-street parking spaces in the downtown. With an implementation and communication date of June 1st, 2019, this system will allow customers to pay for on-street or off-street parking for a specified period with a single action (payments must be available through multiple options ie; app, website, SMS/text, etc). With a variety of payment options available to users (Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Debit) this system will allow customers to pay for additional parking time (while adhering to maximum parking time regulations).

This application will allow businesses to validate paid parking (on and off-street) and support other ways to enhance the overall customer experience for downtown visitors.

Where current meter heads do not allow for utilization reports, the implementation of this system will allow staff multiple options for back end reporting to better monitor utilization / trending / revenue of municipal parking.

The implementation of this system will support expansion for overall parking management solutions including management of monthly passes and lots with further opportunities to pair the system with transit services.

### **Pay by Plate Machines**

The City of Greater Sudbury released RFP CPS19-44 on March 14th, 2019, which closed on April 16th, 2019 with a total of four (4) proponent submissions. Through this procurement process, the City of Greater Sudbury is seeking qualified proponents to supply, deliver, install and commission twenty-five (25) on-street pay by plate parking machines. Without jeopardizing accessibility, efficiency and utilization of the machines, with a goal of replacing as many as possible of the current meter heads, the specific placement of on-street machines will be focused within the core business area of Downtown Sudbury. The machines will be fully operational no later than October 31st, 2019.

### **Downtown Parking between 5pm and 6pm**

Through the Downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) Association, the City of Greater Sudbury has received a request to consider adjusting the current Traffic and Parking By-law restrictions that provide free on-street parking at meters after 6 p.m.

Parking revenue for on street parking during the period between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. is estimated to be approximately \$54,312 per year. Revenue for parking in a Municipal lot during this hour of the day is approximately \$11,000.

The annual average number of tickets issued specifically in the downtown core between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. in the in last three years is 404. The approximate available annual fine revenue for parking infractions issued in that time period is \$8,645.

Date Period	Total Tickets Issued- 5pm to 6pm	Potential Fine Revenue
April 01, 2016- April 01, 2017	261	\$5,760
April 01, 2017- April 01, 2018	615	\$13,035
April 01, 2018- April 01, 2019	336	\$7,140

Parking enforcement in the downtown core is completed by a contract service provider. The current hourly rate for enforcement is \$21.34/hr. Reducing for Stat Holidays where there is no service provision, enforcement after 5 p.m. accounts for approximately 248 hours annually. The annual cost for this enforcement activity is \$5,292.32.

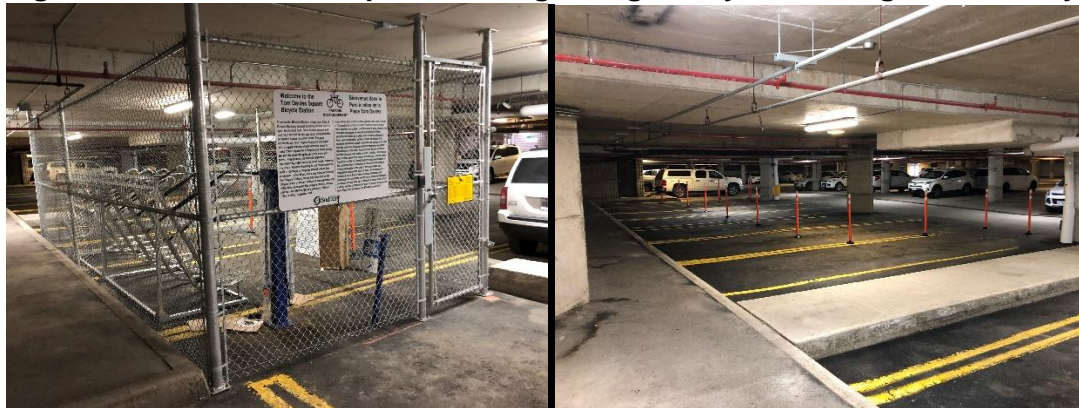
Considering loss of revenue for meter use (\$65,312), loss of fine revenue (\$8,645) and recoup of enforcement costs (\$5,292), the estimated annual cost of this change is approximately \$68,665. As a Staff initiative, a business case will be submitted as an option for the 2020 budget.

## **Bike and Motorcycle Parking - Tom Davies Square**

Encouraging active transportation, a secure bicycle parking area is available in the parking garage at Tom Davies Square. The area is located on the 199 Larch side of the underground parking garage. This secured area is accessible with a CGS issued building access card and features bicycle racks and a repair station for bicycle users. The area has been updated with improved lighting and video surveillance.

Adjacent to this area is a dedicated motorcycle parking area for up to eleven motorcycles. The area was created by reducing the length of six (6) parking spaces that were larger than a standard space, marked off with highly visible impact recovery posts. Line painting to properly denote the area is the last step in the completion of this work (higher temperatures are required for painting). Staff will be working toward developing a dedicated fee structure for motorcycle parking and for inclusion within the User Fee By-law.

**Figure 1.2- Tom Davies Square Parking Garage- Bicycle Parking and Motorcycle Parking**



## **CONCLUSION**

Downtown development with Place des Arts and the Junction project present significant opportunities, while also placing strain on existing municipal parking supply. While the IBI report has confirmed that the current system met parking demand requirements prior to the closure of the Elgin Street lot (when construction of the Place des Arts commenced) any elimination of existing supply will increase utilization beyond a sustainable capacity level. Keeping this in mind, work will continue toward the completion of a variety of customer efficiencies that may support a more accessible parking system. The direction for staff to consider an alternate location for the Junction project in the South District may lead to significant additional pressure on existing parking supply. Consideration for this requirement as well as construction phase parking supply will form a part of the Library/Art Gallery site alternatives report anticipated at the May 28th meeting of City Council.