

# **Residential Parking Standards Review**

## **Report Date: October 19, 2020**

### **Planning Services Division**

## **BACKGROUND**

On October 7, 2019, Staff was directed “to review residential parking standards in Zoning By-law 2010-100Z to ensure that they are consistent with City Council's vision of a sustainable transportation system and report back to the Planning Committee with any recommended changes to the City's land use planning framework no later than Q4 2020” (See Reference 1 – Member's Motion).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Current Municipal Regulations Regarding Residential Parking**

The City's General Residential Parking Provisions are mostly found in Section 5.4 of the City's Zoning By-law (See Reference 2). In general, a residential driveway must be within 3m and 6.3m in width. One space per unit must be provided for most dwelling types.

Parking is not permitted in any required front yard or required corner side yard. Parking is also not permitted within a sight triangle. Per section 4.15.2, a minimum of 50% of all required front and corner side yards shall be maintained landscaped open space in Low Density Residential One (R1) or Low Density Residential Two (R2) Zones (See Reference 3 for various illustrations prepared in support of the City's Zoning By-law standards).

Per Section 5.2.6, any required parking space shall be unobstructed and available for parking purposes and used exclusively for that purpose at all times, unless otherwise specified by the Zoning By-law. In other words, the City generally does not currently permit tandem parking. However, recent legislative changes brought by Bill 108 have required municipalities to introduce tandem parking requirements. On July 7, 2020, the City passed a new Section 5.2.9.1 to the City's By-law which states that “a parking space that is provided and maintained for the sole use of the occupant of a secondary dwelling unit may be a tandem parking space.”

Table 5.5 outlines the residential parking requirements per use. For example, a crisis residence requires one parking space per 4 beds. It is important to note that these requirements apply across all zones. In other words, a multiple dwelling has the same parking requirement across all zones, where permitted, and unless otherwise specified.

### **Municipal Scan**

The following section outlines a best practice review of residential parking standards across compactor municipalities across Ontario and Canada. It should be noted that all zoning by-laws are different from one another, and as a result, it is not possible to make a direct comparison in some cases. Attempts were made to make comparisons as clear as possible.

## **Form**

Attachment A outlines the requirements related to the form of residential parking. The scan has found that:

- Greater Sudbury's minimum parking space dimensions (2.75m x 6.0m) are consistent with other municipalities;
- Greater Sudbury prohibits parking in required front yard, while other cities in northern Ontario allow some form of parking in front yard (generally up to 50%);
- Most municipalities have a 50% landscaped open space requirement;
- Only Toronto requires a license to permit front yard parking in certain areas of the city; and,
- Tandem parking has been used to fulfill parking requirements for second units, or used when providing parking for the same dwelling;

## **Ratios**

Attachment B outlines the ratios associated with residential parking. For ease of comparison, scenarios have been included in some rows. The scan has found that:

- Greater Sudbury's residential parking ratios are generally consistent with comparator municipalities;
- Greater Sudbury has lesser parking requirements for most dwelling unit types than northern cities;
- Greater Sudbury appears to be in the middle of the pack regarding parking requirements for long term care facilities; and,
- All municipalities provide some type of parking requirement exceptions based on location and/or age of building (e.g. Greater Sudbury doesn't require parking for residential conversions in the Downtown C6 zone for buildings that are 5 years old or older).

## **Front Yard Parking Review**

As noted above, front yard parking is generally not permitted in the City of Greater Sudbury. Issues associated with front yard parking include safety for ingress and egress, sightlines, environmental impacts (e.g. stormwater runoff), snow storage, and neighbourhood character.

From 2010 to January 2020, the Committee of Adjustment of the City of Greater Sudbury has considered 44 requests for minor variances to allow for front yard parking.

These requests often emanate from driveway widenings, as a result of conversions of garages to living space, or as a result of more units being added to older housing stock in older neighbourhoods (e.g. the R2-3 zone). Since 2010, 82% (36 of 44) of these requests have been approved (see Attachment C – Map of Minor Variance Requests). It should be noted that the City successfully defended its front yard parking policies as recently as 2016 at the then Ontario Municipal Board (See Reference 4).

The built form varies considerably across the City, from older downtown and uptown neighbourhoods, to more suburban type developments since the 1950s and 60s. Subdivisions built today are substantially different in form than those built in the 50s. For example, older

subdivisions might only have enough space to park one car width, while others have parking accessed by the back lane.

## **Regulatory Options Regarding Residential Parking**

This report examines both the form of parking and ratios associated with residential parking. From our review, there are several options and opportunities that warrant further study.

### **The Form of Parking**

The City could examine front yard parking requirements. The City could allow front yard parking as of right in some areas of the City (e.g. the R2-3 zone, where there are lesser frontages) and still require a minor variance in other areas of the City (that, in general, have greater frontages). The City could require semi-permeable materials as part of front yard parking (e.g. no paving). While the City of Toronto has established a licensing framework, staff found no comparable example in northern Ontario (See reference 5).

The City could allow front yard parking for secondary or tertiary units only. There's an opportunity to regulate parking associated with these types of units through the process of obtaining a building permit, or the registering of secondary units. Through recent changes to the Planning Act, the Province has sought to remove barriers to the establishment of additional residential development, including allowing tandem parking to meet the parking requirements for secondary and tertiary units. As noted above, the City has now introduced tandem parking for secondary units.

While there are opportunities to either increase or decrease minimum driveway widths, introduce maximum driveway widths, and/or increase or decrease landscape open space requirements, our review has shown that Greater Sudbury is consistent with the comparator municipalities. No change is recommended at this time.

### **Ratios Associated with Residential Parking**

Our review has found that Greater Sudbury's residential parking ratios are generally consistent with comparator municipalities. There are opportunities to further examine exceptions based on locations similar to the City's current rules regarding residential conversions in Downtown Sudbury. The City could require lesser parking requirements for conversions of buildings built prior to 1945 (e.g. @ 0.5 space per unit), based on proximity to transit Main Line, reductions if included in commercial development, etc.

## **SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS**

Council directed staff to review the City's residential parking standards. Through its municipal best practice review, staff has found that there are opportunities that warrant further study, including front yard parking requirements, reductions in parking ratios in specific locations or specific age of building (e.g. R2-3 zone, or along transit Main Line).

Staff should now be directed to return with a proposed amendment to the City's zoning by-law that would include new residential parking standards regarding front yard parking, and reductions of residential parking ratios in certain instances no later than the end of Q1, 2021.

## REFERENCES

1. Member's Motion M-1, "Review of Residential Parking Standards", presented at the October 7, 2019 Planning Committee Meeting  
<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&lang=en&id=1384#agendaitem17680>
2. City of Greater Sudbury Zoning By-law  
<https://www.greatersudbury.ca/do-business/zoning/zoning-by-law-2010-100z/>
3. City of Greater Sudbury Zoning By-law Illustrations  
<https://www.greatersudbury.ca/do-business/zoning/zoning-by-law-accordion/zoning-by-law-pdfs/2010-100z-zoning-by-law-illustrations-all-sept-24-2010-pdf/>
4. "Rocca v Sudbury (City)" OMB Case No. PL160609  
<https://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/pl160609-dec-01-2016.pdf>
5. City of Toronto Front-Yard Parking Requirements  
<https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/applying-for-a-parking-permit/residential-front-yard-boulevard-parking/>

## ATTACHMENTS

- A. Form of Residential Parking
- B. Ratios of Residential Parking
- C. Front Yard Minor Variances from 2010 – January 2020