

## Background

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with baseline information on the state of parking in the downtown and the potential effect of downtown parking and transportation initiatives in the short and long term. Armed with this information, staff is interested in engaging Council in a policy discussion about the preferred approach to downtown parking supply and demand issues.

There are a number of large initiatives being undertaken or considered for the downtown core of Sudbury in the near future. A number of these initiatives will have a direct impact on the supply of parking in the downtown core. The proposed Place des Arts and Phase 1 of the Elgin Greenway will cause reductions of 59 and 90 spaces respectively. As a result, downtown business owners have expressed concerns over the scarcity of parking in the downtown core and are inquiring as to how the City will manage the loss of additional spaces.

The potential loss of these lots, along with the urging of the downtown business community have lead staff to consider what actions if any, should be taken by the City of Greater Sudbury. The policy direction indicated by Council with respect to the loss of the 149 spaces would also be helpful in recommending potential transportation and parking solutions which would be required if new large projects were located in the downtown (e.g. a new Art Gallery / Library and / or the proposed Synergy Centre).

## Policy

The City of Greater Sudbury recognizes the need to ensure that downtown land uses remain supported by an effective transportation infrastructure network. The Downtown Master Plan anticipates that the planned intensification of the downtown will be supported through incremental investments in active transportation infrastructure and parking. These investments can be made by the private and public sectors.

The City of Greater Sudbury has a long-standing policy to waive most parking requirements for new development in downtown Sudbury. According to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, all development with the exception of a limited range of residential construction, are not required to provide parking. This policy was enacted to encourage downtown revitalization. It also recognizes that Downtown Sudbury is one of the most walkable neighbourhoods in Greater Sudbury that is also very well-served by public transit.

## Current State of Parking

For the purposes of this report parking in the downtown core is defined by Paris Street on the east, St. Annes Road to the north, Elgin Street and Lorne Street to the south and west. This area can be seen in Appendix "A".

Parking in the downtown core consists of both public and private sector parking alternatives. The City of Greater Sudbury owns and maintains 14 off-street municipal lots and 438 on-street meters for a total of 2,170 parking spaces. Private operator parking is estimated to be 2,244 (excluding Beech St. S lot) for a total of 4,414. Appendix "A" also depicts the public and private sector parking in the downtown core.

Currently, the publicly owned parking contributes to approximately 49% of the available parking in the downtown core.

Other municipalities have various shares of public and private parking ownership models. Exhibit 1 below provides examples of 5 municipalities and the relative share of public/private parking ownership.

<b>Exhibit 1 - Public/Private Parking Ownership</b>				
	<b>Public Parking Spaces</b>	<b>Private Parking Spaces</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Parking Publicly Owned</b>
<b>Peterborough</b>	2155	1452	3607	60%
<b>Thunder Bay</b>	1930	2100	4030	48%
<b>North Bay</b>	1800	50	1850	97%
<b>Kitchener</b>	3500	5000	8500	41%
<b>Sudbury</b>	2170	2244	4414	49%

## Municipal Parking Lots

All 14 municipal parking lots are paid parking Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. Parking is available for free on weekday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to midnight, and weekends except during special events at the Sudbury Arena. In addition, the Energy court lot offers free parking up to two hours. Of the 14 municipal parking lots, 1 is pay upon exit (TDS), 1 has an attendant (Centre for

life) and the remaining 12 use pay and display machines to administer parking fees.

Exhibit 2 below, shows the municipally owned parking lots, the respective monthly and daily fees, comparable private sector fees, the parking spaces available and the impact that some large downtown development initiatives will have on the supply at these lots. The lots are also depicted in Appendix "A"

EXHIBIT 2- Municipally Owned Parking Lots							
Lot	Monthly Pass Cost	Hourly Cost	Comp Private lot Monthly Cost	Comp Private lot Hourly Cost	Monthly Pass Holders as % of Spaces	Spaces	Potential Reduction in Spaces
Sudbury Arena	\$82	\$1.30	\$80	\$2.00	80%	81	
Sudbury Arena Annex	\$82	\$1.30	\$80	\$2.00	80%	165	
Beech Street	\$93	\$1.30	\$70-\$140	\$4.00	30%	79	
Shaughnessy East	\$82	\$1.30	\$80	\$2.00	80%	110	
Shaughnessy West	\$82	\$1.30	\$80	\$2.00	80%	56	
Shaughnessy "B"	\$82	N/A	\$80	N/A	100%	30	
Elgin- CP	\$51	N/A	\$50	N/A	100%	300	90
Larch Street	N/A	\$1.30	N/A	\$2.00	N/A	59	59
Lisgar Street	N/A	\$1.30	N/A	\$3.00	N/A	9	
Elgin and Larch	N/A	\$1.30	N/A	\$2.00	N/A	60	
Medina	N/A	\$1.30	N/A	\$2.00	N/A	20	
Energy Court	\$41	\$1.30	\$33	N/A	50%	218	
Elgin/YMCA (leased to YMCA)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	95	
Tom Davies	\$143	\$1.50	\$180	\$2.00	70%	295	
Centre For Life	N/A	\$1.40	N/A	\$2.00	N/A	155	
					<b>Total Spaces</b>	1732	149

As can be seen in exhibit 2, the monthly rates of municipal parking lots are variable based on geographic location. Monthly parking is more expensive in the lots where

demand for parking is greatest. Higher parking rates in the most convenient parking lots are used to encourage access to high demand parking for short stay patrons and encourage longer stay patrons to use peripheral parking.

Parking rates for private sector lots are comparable for monthly stays. However, private sector parking is approximately 50% higher than public lots on an hourly basis.

The elimination of 59 spaces at the Larch street lot is attributable to the development of the Place des arts. The Place des Arts will be built upon the Larch street lot and will result in the elimination of this parking lot. Similarly, if approved the first phase of the Elgin Greenway will encroach on the CP lot and will result in an elimination of 90 spaces at this lot. The loss of these spaces will represent approximately 9% of the total municipally owned parking supply.

## **On-Street**

The City has 438 single space meters in the downtown core. The on-street meters are intended to service short stay hourly customers. The cost of hourly parking is \$1.30 per hour, 2-hour maximum with the exception of Elm Street at \$2.00 per hour with a 1-hour maximum. While it is difficult to monitor and obtain accurate data, there are concerns that the time allotted maximums are being exceeded and some on street parking is being used for all day parking. All day parking is more suited to a monthly pass in an off-street lot and on-street parking left available for short stay customers. Appendix "A" exhibits the streets where metered parking is available in the downtown core.

## **Financial Position**

A five year financial history of the parking section can be seen in exhibit 3 below. Exhibit 3 details the history of revenues, contributions to reserve (net income derived from parking operations), as well as the reserve fund balances in each respective year. On a positive note parking revenues have increased by approximately 15% over the 5 year period as a result of increased rates and utilization.

As per By-law 2015-9, net proceeds from all parking operations in excess of the net operating budget are credited to the Parking Improvements Reserve Fund. As at December 31, 2016 the Parking Improvements Reserve Fund has a balance of \$0. This is a result of the contribution to fund the TDS Courtyard waterproofing project. Additionally, \$330,000 is to be funded annually from the Parking Improvements Reserve Fund for the courtyard project until 2023. This will limit funds available for capital improvements or expansion in the parking section. Further, the loss of spaces as a result

of downtown development will result in an annual reduction in parking revenues of approximately \$100,000 at the Larch Street lot and approximately \$50,000 at the CP lot.

<b>Exhibit 3 - Parking Financial History</b>						
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017 *</b>
<b>Revenues</b>	1,726,400	1,788,001	1,810,899	1,861,564	1,982,950	1,990,000
<b>Contribution to Reserve</b>	476,025	608,586	582,809	738,041	673,936	630,000
<b>Reserve Fund Balance</b>	1,525,142	1,954,672	2,593,541	1,207,922	0	300,000

\*2017 is the forecasted result

## Utilization

The most recent parking utilization survey was completed in November 2014. This survey looked exclusively at utilization in municipally owned parking facilities. That survey indicated an average utilization of 70%. This average utilization represents a combination of both on-street and off-street parking.

Indications from both the general public and the downtown business sector, is that utilization of municipal lots has increased to approximately 90%. At current levels the City still has the supply to meet the current demand. However, there are areas in downtown where the demand exceeds the supply and customers are forced to park at further distances from their place of business.

Utilization in the near future will be higher due to the reduction in parking supply and increased parking demand as a result of the School of Architecture, the Place des Arts, and the Elgin Greenway development. Additionally, there is potential that a new art gallery, library and/or a synergy convention centre is located downtown which would spur further parking demand and potentially decrease supply further.

## Solutions

Solutions to the impending issue of demand exceeding parking capacity can largely be broken down into supply or demand side solutions. These proposed solutions are largely related to publicly owned parking and would need to be further researched and detailed in order to be implemented. There are also solutions that could come from the private sector that would have similar positive impacts. Several of the supply side solutions could be fertile areas for public-private partnership wherein the City exchanged land for the rights to build and maintain private parking spaces.

## Supply Side Solutions

Supply side solutions are predicated on increasing the amount of parking spaces available to patrons. They will help alleviate the constraints in parking and have an immediate impact once constructed. Conversely, some options do entail considerable capital funding and as can be seen in exhibit 3, parking have minimal capital funds available. The following options to increase the supply of publicly owned parking spaces are for consideration.

- 1) Energy Court: The City owns lands adjacent to the current Energy Court parking lot that could be used for expansion. Expansion into these areas could generate approximately 180 additional parking spaces. The cost to expand Energy Court would be in the range of \$350,000 to \$750,000 depending on the type of treatment (gravel or asphalt) used for the lot. If expansion of this lot was to proceed, the City would need to enter into an agreement with the adjacent landowner for pedestrian access to the property via Elm Street west of the railway tracks or find alternative access to the lands. Data gathered by the City indicates that utilization of this lot and any further expansion is greatly inhibited by the perception of the distance needed to walk around the lots to the existing street level crossing on Elm Street. There has been private sector interest expressed in partnering with the City on these lands to enhance the service with a pedestrian crossing or covered bridge leading directly to Elgin Street, thereby providing a more direct route to the downtown core and increasing the marketability of the lot. Canadian Pacific Railway has indicated that a level crossing is not feasible due to a variety of risk factors. In developing a solution such as a pedestrian bridge, staff could explore a partnership model with private sector interests and upper levels of government. Costs for such a structure would need to be developed in conjunction with design. Design elements such as a covered bridge, elevators, length, width and aesthetics can change the price dramatically. Exhibit 4 below provides details of recently constructed pedestrian bridges including size and cost.

Exhibit 4 - Recently Constructed Pedestrian Bridges							
City	Bridge	Cost	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Covered	Overhead Lights	Opened
Calgary	Bow Trail	\$6M	50	3	No	No	2011
Calgary	Peace	\$24.5M	126	6	Yes	Yes	2012
Calgary	St. Patrick's Island	\$25M	182	7.3-10.7	No	No	2014
Cambridge	Galt	\$2M	102	N/A	No	No	Construction
Milton	CPR	\$3M	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	2013

It should be noted that the Downtown Master Plan's vision for these lands in the long-term, calls for them to be transformed into a new office park known as Inno-Tech Park.

- 2) Dufferin/Pine Street: The City owns a parcel of property at Dufferin and Pine Streets that could be opened up and used to create an additional 40 spaces. The cost to open this lot would be approximately \$40,000 which would be required to grade, provide drainage, fencing and for a pay and display machine.
- 3) Parking Structure: The construction of a multi-level parking structure can be investigated. This is the most expensive option and one that takes the most time to complete. The Canadian Parking Association estimates that a stand-alone parking structure will cost approximately \$35,000 per parking space. If a 250 space parking structure was built, it would cost approximately \$9 million.
- 4) Lourdes Street: The vacant storage building on Lourdes Street could be demolished and replaced with parking. This would require a significant capital outlay, but could create approximately 60 parking spaces. A lower rate could be offered to encourage monthly pass holders to move farther from the core. Currently, there are approximately 15 parking spaces that exist on this lot.
- 5) On Street Parking: The City could provide parking on streets for an 8 hour limit on the fringe of the downtown core. This may encourage some monthly pass holders to relinquish their parking spots and park for free within a reasonable walking distance. This would have some impacts on the neighbourhoods along the outer crust of the downtown core.

## **Demand Side Solutions**

Demand side solutions are directed at relocating demand to the most suitable areas within a suite of available options. The highest demand areas are in the middle of the downtown core. The following solutions would attempt to move some of the demand (particularly long term parking) to the fringe of the core so that short term stays have available spaces.

- 1) Technology: The replacement of on-street meters with pay by plate technology would provide a reliable and efficient means of enforcing the 2 hour parking maximum as there is a record for each vehicles start and end time. The current system requires manual intervention to determine a start time that is not very efficient or effective. Downtown business owners have

expressed concerns regarding the practice of patrons feeding the metres and staying in excess of the 2 hour parking maximum, particularly along Cedar, Larch, Durham and Lisgar streets. It would also provide an increased level of convenience for those that do not regularly carry coin. The cost to replace all 438 metres with pay by plate would be approximately \$250,000. Costs for the removal of the current metres would be in addition to this. Conversely, the current meters provide a marker for the parking spots which are of value during winter months where street lines are not visible.

- 2) Advertise: Advertising the lots that are available for longer term stays and/or the benefits of these lots (ex. 2-hour free parking at Energy Court). Additionally, clearly marked way finding and improved signage at municipal parking lots, would assist patrons in understanding which areas are for public parking and may provide for a more simple and seamless experience.
- 3) Incent: Provide incentives for patrons to park at lots where demand is least, to take the transit system or to car pool. Programs such as discounted transit passes for large employers in the downtown core could encourage employees of these organizations to use the transit system. Similarly, park and ride programs that have express transit routes from a designated parking lot on the periphery of the City may free up spaces normally occupied by monthly pass holders. Further promotion of the City's current car pool initiative may also alleviate parking demand in the downtown core.
- 4) Adjust Parking Rates: Currently, municipal hourly rates are approximately 65% of the comparable private sector hourly rates. Hourly parking rates could be increased in the highest demand areas (such as on-street parking locations) in order to dampen demand in the area. This could create supply for short term stays and would encourage monthly parking on the peripheral. Pricing parity may also spread the demand across public and private sector lots.

## Conclusion

Demand for parking in the downtown core has been increasing over the last decade. There are also a number of proposed large projects that will spur more demand and reduce the supply of parking in the near future. Downtown intensification such as that caused by large development projects need to be supported by transportation infrastructure including parking. These investments can be made by the public or private sector. There are various solutions that can affect the supply or demand for parking. City staff would be pleased to add additional information to any of the options raised in subsequent reports, or upon Council's direction as budget options for



the 2018 budget deliberations. Further, staff will consider Council's input and policy discussion surrounding this report to raise options for further exploration in the 2018 budget process or in subsequent budget deliberations.