

### Veteran Parking Pilot Program

#### ISSUE

The Veteran Parking Program was established to provide recognition of the service local veterans provided to the country. Administration is finishing a pilot program, which is measuring impacts of a modification to the Veteran Parking Program. With the pilot program ending, should the modified program (Pilot Program) become permanent?

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommend to City Council that the program modification evaluated as part of the Veteran Parking Pilot Program be implemented as a permanent policy.

#### BACKGROUND

The Veteran Parking Program was established in 2005 as a pilot and subsequently approved in 2008 to continue as a permanent program. Between 2008 and 2022, Veteran Parking Program users were required to fill out an application form and submit it to the City of Saskatoon for review. Administration reviewed the application and determined user eligibility based on predetermined criteria. These criteria required users to:

- 1) Have a registered veteran licence plate through Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI);
- 2) Have served overseas as a member of the Canadian Forces, an allied force, the Merchant Navy or Ferry Command in WWI, WWII, the Korean War or with the United Nations Peacekeepers;
- 3) Reside within a 30-kilometre radius of the Saskatoon city limits; and
- 4) Are the owner and principal operator of the vehicle for which the permit is being sought.

The Standing Policy Committee on Transportation, at its [meeting](#) on September 7, 2021, resolved:

“That the Administration report back with potential changes to the Veterans Parking Program, that allows all veterans, whether they live in the city or not, to park for free either through applying for the program or through the use of veterans' plates including any cost implications.”

City Council, at its Regular Business [meeting](#) on April 25, 2022, resolved, in part:

“That a 15-month pilot program which permits any driver with a valid SGI Veteran licence plate to park in Saskatoon pay parking zones free-of-charge within the posted time restrictions, be approved”.

The Pilot Program commenced on November 1, 2022. Data on the proposed changes was evaluated based on a one-year testing period, with reporting to occur following the evaluation.

### **DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS**

The Pilot Program provided Administration opportunity to evaluate its impacts and validate findings in other jurisdictions, most notably Vancouver. Some of the impacts considered were impacts on parking revenue, parking supply, misuse and user feedback.

Utilizing licence plate recognition software, a daily count was gathered of veteran licence plates in Saskatoon's pay parking zones. During the Pilot Program, an average of four veteran licence plates were scanned per day in Saskatoon's pay parking zones, which had minimal impact on parking revenue and parking supply. Of note, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police began participating in SGI's veteran licence plate program in May 2022, which increased the number of veteran licence plates in Saskatchewan from 1,700, in February 2022, to 2,400 in August 2023. As of August 2023, 474 veteran plates are registered in Saskatoon, which is up from 338 in February 2022.

### **ENGAGEMENT**

Support, for continuing the program terms used during the Pilot Program, has been received from the Saskatchewan Command of the Royal Canadian Legion, Veterans Affairs Canada, the North Saskatchewan Regiment of the Canadian Armed Forces, HMCS Unicorn and Anavets.

The Downtown, Riversdale, Broadway and Sutherland Business Improvement Districts were consulted and did not identify concerns related to continuation of the Veteran Parking Program changes.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct cost implications. Based on the usage data gathered during the Pilot Program, foregone parking pay station revenue estimates are a maximum of \$3,500 per year which includes the expanded program eligibility.

During the Pilot Program, some of the scanned plates would have qualified for free parking privileges under the original Veteran Parking Program prior to the implementation of the Pilot Program.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

As Veteran Parking Program provisions were amended in [Bylaw No. 7200, the Traffic Bylaw, 1991](#), prior to the start of the Pilot Program and did not include date parameters, no additional bylaw amendments are required.

Administration will keep apprised of any changes to SGI's eligibility criteria for its veteran licence plate program.

There are no other privacy, environmental or social implications.

**NEXT STEPS**

If approved, participating stakeholders will be informed, and the City of Saskatoon website will be updated with program information.

**REPORT APPROVAL**

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Reviewed by: Wayne Sum, Parking Services Manager

Matt Grazier, Director of Community Standards

Approved by: Lynne Lacroix, General Manager of Community Services

SP/2023/CS/Transportation/Veteran Parking Pilot Program/cm