

Scan of Other Canadian Jurisdictions

Municipalities across North America are removing or reducing parking requirements. Information from six Canadian cities which have removed or reduced parking requirements, including an overview of the process these municipalities used and the outcomes and lessons learned, is provided in this appendix. These cities include:

- Edmonton, Alberta;
- London, Ontario;
- Kingston, Ontario;
- Toronto, Ontario;
- Calgary, Alberta; and
- Regina, Saskatchewan.

Common themes heard between the surveyed municipalities included:

- All municipalities maintained parking requirements for accessible parking and bicycle parking;
- All municipalities maintained parking standards, such as space dimensions and surfacing;
- Municipalities are tracking the impact of the changes to the parking requirements, including collecting data on the number of parking spaces being provided. Since removing or reducing parking requirements, municipalities have generally observed that the parking being provided is close to a similar rate to what was previously required. The change in parking supply is gradual and balanced;
- The municipalities have not observed a noted increase in the number of complaints about parking, neither on-street or off-street;
- Reducing or removing parking requirements has shifted the discussions during the development review process. Parking takes up a significant amount of time during the review process. This has streamlined the review process significantly.
- Removing parking requirements aligns with strategic goals including climate, affordability, and quality of life; and
- It is important to have a strong communication plan and change management plan for implementing the new processes, as removing parking requirements is a significant shift in how municipalities approach the review of development.

City of Edmonton: Open Option Parking (Remove Minimum Parking Requirements for all uses)

Timeframe and Process:

- Many requests came forward to review parking requirements starting in 2010;
- Comprehensive project on parking approved by Council in 2017. Consultant completed a study in two phases:
 - [Phase 1: Technical Study](#) – An analysis of parking supply and utilization; and
 - Phase 2: Public Engagement.
- Edmonton's City Council, at its Public Hearing Meeting on June 23, 2020, approved the Open Option Parking ([Report](#))

Budget: \$250,000 plus staff allocated to complete the project

Open Option Parking – Zoning Bylaw Requirements:

- Requirements for accessible parking, bicycle parking and drop off spaces for school and child care;
- Parking study may be required for discretionary uses/variances;
- Parking standards such as space dimensions, parking lot design, loading spaces, etc., were maintained; and
- Maximum parking requirements apply in some areas.

On-Street Parking Approach: Following approval of Open Option Parking, a [Curbside Management Strategy](#) was developed.

Outcomes / Results:

- Removes parking as a barrier to development/removes “red-tape”. Allows more flexibility for developments where parking could become a constraint such as change of use or affordable housing.
- Supports transportation mode shift and potential for reduced carbon emissions;
- Parking has a direct correlation with affordability/equity:
 - Supportive housing was required to provide parking which resulted in significant costs for parking that was not being utilized;
 - Priority is to provide housing, municipality can meet this goal through reducing barriers/costs to housing construction; and
 - No data to support a boundary where open option parking should apply and where minimums should be implemented.
- No drastic decreases in parking being provided following implementation:
 - Approximately 10,000 new parking spaces are being provided each year following implementation of Open Option Parking; and
 - No comparable data from prior to the implementation of Open Option Parking.
- Change has not resulted in a substantial change in the number of complaints.

Lessons Learned / Advice:

- There will be concerns about parking going forward, however, there were concerns before Open Option Parking;
- Having the data to understand the supply and utilization of parking is important;
- Decisions about vehicle ownership are based on several factors including availability of parking, income, commute and personal choice; and
- Decisions for whether businesses or residential developers provide parking are business decisions based on expected demand. If transportation options are provided in an area, parking demand will decrease, and business decisions will reflect that. The on-street parking supply is another variable in this equation.

City of London: Open Option (in specific areas) and Reduced Parking Requirements

Timeframe and Process:

- Parking Standards Review Background [Report](#) received by Council in November 2021;
- Information report received by Council in Spring 2022; and
- Revised Parking Standards [Report](#) approved by Council in 2022.

Note: The City of London did not complete a parking utilization study because the project was undertaken during the Covid pandemic and parking utilization during this period was not considered to be representative of actual parking utilization.

Budget: No specific budget allocated to this project. Completed by staff.

Zoning Bylaw Requirements:

- Open option parking in areas where there is good access to transit/most walkable areas:
 - Requirements for accessible parking, bicycle parking; and
 - Parking standards, such as space dimensions, parking lot design, etc.
- Other areas of their city have significantly reduced parking requirements.

On-Street Parking Approach: On-street parking was not reviewed as part of this project.

Outcomes / Results:

- Removes parking as a barrier to development and allows more flexibility for developments where parking could become a constraint, such as change of use or affordable housing;
- More efficient use of land - Land is being developed with housing/commercial development instead of parking;
- Parking requirement reductions are supported through policies of the Official Plan and were in response to the Climate Emergency and the housing affordability crisis;
- No drastic decreases in parking being provided after implementation:
 - Developers are providing parking to meet demands of the market. Staff encourage applicants to reconsider amount of parking being provided where there is excessive parking being shown on a proposed site plan; and
 - In open option areas, applications are generally seeing about a 10% reduction in parking.
- Change has not resulted in a substantial change in the number of complaints.

Lessons Learned/Advice:

- Ensure electric vehicle parking is considered when reviewing parking requirements; and
- Having options of approaches was beneficial. Options provided were: (1) Reducing minimum parking requirements; (2) Open option parking; (3) Maximum parking standards. Maximum parking standards were not explored in depth as there was no parking utilization study to determine appropriate maximum parking standards.

City of Kingston: No Parking Requirements for Non-Residential Uses, Affordable Housing and Heritage Buildings; Parking Minimums and Maximums for Residential Uses

Timeframe and Process:

- Began as part of the city-wide zoning bylaw review project, but determined a more fulsome review was required for parking;
- [The Power of Parking](#) discussion paper completed in June 2021; and
- Changes to parking requirements approved as part of a new zoning bylaw in a [report](#) in April 2022.

Budget: No specific budget identified – part of larger zoning bylaw review project, where some work was led by a consultant and some by staff.

Zoning Bylaw Requirements:

- Requirements for residential development:
 - Lowered parking minimums, implemented parking maximums, included options such as cash-in-lieu of parking;
 - Required dedicated car-share spaces;
 - Affordable housing have no parking requirements except for accessible parking/visitor parking;
 - Heritage buildings have no parking requirements; and
 - Reduced parking requirements within 600m of transit corridors.
- Removed parking requirements for non-residential uses. Benefit is a simpler and more straightforward public objective of seeing less parking built.
- Requirements for accessible parking, bicycle parking; and
- Parking standards such as space dimensions, parking lot design, etc.

On-Street Parking Approach: Expectation of parking on private properties and on-street parking is not intended to off-set deficiencies. No specific change was made for on-street parking.

Outcomes / Results:

- There has been a positive shift in conversations about parking and how to build parking in Kingston;
- Parking used to make up a large component of the development review conversations, and it no longer does;
- Status quo on complaints; and
- Changes to parking requirements align with many strategic priorities including affordability, climate action and public realm improvements.

Lessons Learned / Advice:

- Engagement is important to get in front of potential issues and proactively get buy-in from key stakeholders;
- Where there are viable alternatives to a car, people will be more likely to use them. In cities with well-established alternatives, no minimums with support for bike infrastructure is a best practice. Where alternatives are not well-established city-wide, create a system to help support alternatives; and
- Don't forget about maximums, they're just as important to prevent over-parking.

City of Toronto: Parking Maximums

Timeframe and Process:

- Council requested a review of parking requirements to better align them with the objectives of the Official Plan on January 19, 2021;
- Policy assessment, including third party [economic impacts of removal of minimum parking standards](#) study for high-density residential uses completed in December 2021;
- New automobile parking regulations came into force on February 3, 2022 ([report](#));
- New bicycle parking regulations came into force on July 22, 2022; and
- Further work on bicycle parking and accessible parking is anticipated in 2023 and 2024.

Budget: Majority was completed by staff. There was \$30,000 allocated for public consultation support and \$3,000 for economic impact report.

Zoning Bylaw Requirements:

- Eliminated most minimum standards and introduced parking maximums, where they did not exist. The Project was guided on the principle that parking standards should allow only the maximum amount of automobile parking, as reasonably required for a given use, and minimums should be avoided except where necessary to ensure equitable access. New developments will still provide adequate parking onsite, and not assume residents will be able to park on street; and
- Maintained requirements for accessible parking and lowered requirements for visitor parking.

On Street Parking Approach: Use of city streets is regulated in the City of Toronto's Municipal Code. Overnight on-street parking is prohibited in most parts of Toronto. In most areas, where it is allowed, the vehicle must have a permit. Permits allow vehicles to be parked anywhere, where parking is permitted, within a defined area.

Outcomes / Results:

- Too early to tell if it will result in significant changes to parking being provided; and
- Development community generally in support for changes, there was one appeal on the proposed changes.

Lessons Learned / Advice:

- Requirements for accessible parking that are not tied to parking minimum requirements can be challenging. The City of Toronto is continuing its review regarding accessible parking requirements; and
- Toronto could not identify reasons to keep parking minimums, which allow developers/businesses to build as much parking as they want. Support of other City of Toronto priorities, such as climate and transportation congestion goals, led to the implementation of parking maximums.

City of Calgary: No Parking Requirements for Non-Residential Uses

Timeframe and Process:

- Informal request to pursue removal of parking standards;
- Completed in six months, based on previous research and information from Edmonton and other municipalities; and
- [Report to Council](#) with amendments to remove parking requirements for non-residential uses became effective July 27, 2020.

Budget: No specific budget. Three staff working full time on the project for the six-month duration.

Zoning Bylaw Requirements:

- Requirements for residential development:
 - Lowered parking minimums for missing middle/multi-unit forms of development through separate project, completed in January 2023. The 'Calgary Bylaw Parking Review' was completed by Bunt & Associates in January 2022 to support changes for multi-unit developments;
 - Parking relaxations may be considered if certain requirements are met, as indicated in their [Land Use Bylaw](#); and
 - Reduced parking requirements near transit corridors.
- Removed parking requirements for non-residential uses:
 - Requirements for accessible parking, bicycle parking; and
 - Parking standards such as space dimensions, parking lot design, etc.
- Parking study / justification may be required for discretionary uses / variances.

On-Street Parking Approach: On-street parking is being reviewed as a separate project.

Outcomes / Results:

- Most applications are still providing a suitable amount of parking;
- Staff can request additional parking if it is supported by a parking study or if staff are of the opinion that additional parking is required; and
- Focused on eliminating parking requirements for non-residential uses to ensure a speedy approach for businesses. Calgary will be reviewing residential parking requirements through the review of the Land Use Bylaw and due to recommendations from the Housing and Affordability Task Force.

Lessons Learned / Advice:

- Understand the context of your city. Reductions in parking, without going all the way to no parking requirements, can still be supportive of your strategic goals.
- Understand the trade-offs. If parking requirements are not lowered/removed, what is the trade-off you are willing to accept?
- Removing or reducing parking requirements is not a 'war on cars' or parking. Calgary is simply getting out of the business of off-street parking; and
- Ensure there are adequate resources to support this project.

City of Regina

Note: As the City of Regina did not pursue removing/reducing parking requirements, similar to other surveyed municipalities, the brief provided below has been abridged.

Timeframe and Process:

- Parking requirements were reviewed as part of the zoning bylaw review project:
 - General reductions were made to minimum parking requirements; and
 - Parking requirements in greenfield (suburban) development areas for multi-unit, apartment type buildings were decreased from 1.5 to 1 stall per dwelling unit.
- A report outlining the implications for removing parking minimum requirements was provided at the request of Council (2022); and
 - No Council direction was provided for Administration to further pursue removing or reducing minimum parking requirements; and
 - A supplemental report was requested for Administration to review minimum parking requirements in the suburban greenfield development areas including the potential to increase minimum parking requirements for multi-unit and apartment type buildings. No changes to the required parking were approved, as a result of this report.
- Reducing parking requirements for residential will be reviewed as part of the Housing Accelerator Fund workplan.

Budget: No specific budget.

Lessons Learned / Advice:

- Reductions in parking, without going all the way to no parking requirement, can still be supportive of your strategic goals.
- Different approaches in different areas of Regina, such as suburban vs city centre, are important considerations; and
- Research shows that parking requirements can be tied to housing affordability. Through the Housing Accelerator Fund, Regina will consider reductions/ removing parking requirements to support housing affordability and supportive housing.