

Zoning Bylaw Amendment to Remove Minimum Parking Requirements

APPLICATION SUMMARY

This report describes proposed amendments to [Bylaw No. 8770, Zoning Bylaw, 2009](#) (Zoning Bylaw) to remove minimum parking requirements citywide. City Council, at its Regular Business [meeting](#) on December 20, 2023, provided direction for Administration to review and make recommendations for the removal of minimum parking requirements from the Zoning Bylaw. This report supports the City's commitments under the Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan (Action Plan), approved by City Council, at its Regular Business [meeting](#) on May 31, 2023.

RECOMMENDATION

That a copy of the report be submitted to City Council recommending that, at the time of the Public Hearing, City Council consider Administration's recommendation that the proposed amendments to Bylaw No. 8770, Zoning Bylaw, 2009, to remove minimum parking requirements, as outlined in this report, be approved.

BACKGROUND

Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)

The HAF is an incentive program provided by the Government of Canada that supports local governments in boosting housing supply by requiring them to undertake transformational initiatives.

City Council, at its Regular Business meeting on May 31, 2023, approved the Action Plan for the City's application to HAF, including an initiative focused on reductions in parking requirements for affordable housing projects and a broader review of overall parking requirements. Subsequent amendments to the Action Plan were approved at City Council's Regular Business [meeting](#) on November 22, 2023, including a motion:

“That Administration be directed to propose a zoning bylaw amendment that removes parking requirements from areas that are within the defined Corridor Areas and report back to a Public Hearing in Q1 2024.”

Review of Minimum Parking Regulations

City Council, at its Regular Business meeting on December 20, 2023, considered a report with options for the review of minimum parking requirements in the Zoning Bylaw. Options ranged from an approach focused on reducing minimum parking requirements for affordable housing to address the City's HAF commitment to removal of minimum parking requirements altogether. City Council directed Administration to undertake the work to pursue Option 3 – Remove Minimum Parking Requirements. This direction goes beyond the City's HAF commitment.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The following Zoning Bylaw amendments are proposed to remove minimum parking requirements citywide. Descriptions of the amendments proposed in each Zoning Bylaw section are provided in Appendix 1.

1. Minimum parking requirements will be removed for the following:
 - a. All uses in all zoning districts. This includes residential, commercial, mixed use and industrial districts, as well as for the construction or expansion of any building and the establishment, change or increase in intensity of any use; and
 - b. For specific uses within the General Provisions (Section 5) of the Zoning Bylaw including home based businesses, day cares and preschools, custodial care facilities and residential care homes, and live/work units; and
 - c. All Direct Control Districts.
2. Parking facility standards will continue to be required, such as parking space size, drive aisle width, surface treatment, curbing, ingress/egress and location of parking space on a site. Any parking provided with a development will be required to meet these standards.

Currently, most regulations that identify standards for parking spaces and circulation apply only to parking spaces that are required under the Zoning Bylaw. Any parking spaces that exceed the minimum requirements are not regulated. As a result of the proposed amendments, Administration is proposing to establish standards for all provided parking. In most cases and where possible, these standards will align with current standards. This will ensure consistent development despite no longer requiring a minimum number of spaces.

3. Parking requirements will remain for the following:
 - a. Accessible Parking Spaces

Accessible parking spaces will be required for all uses that currently require accessible parking. There will be no change in accessible parking space standards, such as dimensions of the space or the proportion required to be accessible.

The number of accessible parking spaces required will be determined based on a “deemed parking space” requirement. This is a typical practice found in municipalities that have removed minimum parking requirements to ensure accessible parking spaces are provided at similar rates to present. The number of accessible parking spaces required is based on a ratio to the number of deemed parking spaces identified. Deemed parking rates are calculated based on similar measures, as are currently used to calculate minimum parking requirements for a use. For example, if a use were to calculate a deemed parking rate of five spaces, at a similar rate to how the current minimum parking space requirements are calculated, one accessible parking space would be required as part of the development proposal. Deemed parking spaces are not required

parking but are solely used as the basis for calculating the accessible parking requirement.

The number of accessible parking spaces required will be standardized and simplified across uses and districts. As a result of this standardization, the calculated rate of “deemed parking” for some uses and districts will result in modest reductions in the amount of required accessible parking spaces compared to what is currently required. However, the number of required accessible parking spaces will generally be consistent with the current state. The rates have been reviewed in comparison to other Canadian municipalities to ensure Saskatoon will still maintain a leading standard of accessible parking spaces for developments.

b. Loading Spaces

Loading spaces will be required for all uses which currently require loading space. In addition, loading spaces will be required for large residential buildings of over 50 units to provide a location for loading, service and delivery vehicles. No changes are proposed to the loading space standards such as surfacing requirements and space dimensions.

c. Visitor Parking Spaces

Visitor parking spaces are required for multiple unit dwellings, dwelling groups and special needs housing. Visitor parking spaces will be required at a consistent rate across zoning districts which will require slight adjustments to the rate required in some districts.

d. Passenger Drop Off Space

Passenger drop off spaces are required for schools. No changes are proposed.

e. Bicycle Parking

No changes are proposed for bicycle parking.

4. Zoning By Agreement and Discretionary Use

While no minimum parking requirements will be in place for as-of-right development, parking requirements may be applied to Zoning by Agreement and Discretionary Use applications. If applied, parking requirements would be based on the specifics of the development application. For those unique circumstances, the parking and loading needs will be assessed for the particular development. A minimum number of spaces could be prescribed based on a provided parking demand study, comparison with other developments with similar characteristics, locational considerations, as well as relevant information such as number of employees or expected visitors.

5. B5A District – Remote Parking

In the B5A District (Sutherland), Section 14.3.2 (1) (e) requires that for remote parking lots, an interest be registered on title to ensure the land remains a parking lot. This clause in the Zoning Bylaw will be repealed and as such, the City will facilitate removal of any interests registered on title as needed.

RATIONALE

The proposed amendments align with the City's goals of sustainable growth and an urban form and land use pattern which promotes transportation options, environmental leadership, and supports economic development and business growth.

Removing minimum parking requirements does not mean parking will no longer be provided with any future developments. This change provides property-owners, businesses and developers with the agency to best determine the needs of the market they are trying to serve in relation to the amount of parking they plan to provide. For example, businesses and developers make the same kinds of choices, independent of City regulations, when they decide on their business square footage needs, the number of tables in their restaurant, or the number of bedrooms in residential units. The proposed amendments will allow flexibility to provide the appropriate amount of parking for each particular context, while regulations will ensure consideration for accessible parking, bicycle parking and general parking standards are being maintained.

Further rationale, including a scan of other Canadian Jurisdictions and an overview of benefits and barriers to implementation can be found in the December 20, 2023, [Options for the Review of Minimum Parking Regulations report](#).

IMPLICATIONS

Zero-Emissions (Electric) Vehicle Parking

There are currently no electric vehicle parking requirements in the Zoning Bylaw. An Electric Vehicle Adoption Strategy is currently in development. Pending the results of this strategy, electric vehicle parking requirements may be considered at a later date.

On-Street Parking and the Residential Parking Program

This report does not make recommendations related to on-street parking management. While broad impacts to on-street parking are difficult to forecast, removal of off-street minimum parking requirements may result in increased demand for on-street parking regulation and enforcement and increased parking enforcement costs could be anticipated. Depending on the land use pattern of a given area and the respective roadway profiles, certain areas may be better poised to accommodate increases in on-street parking demand.

There may also be an increase in complaints related to parking congestion; however, the surveyed municipalities stated they have not seen a large increase in complaints due to the removal or reduction of parking requirements.

Presently, there are Residential Parking Programs (RPP) or Limited RPP zones in Caswell Hill, City Park, Pleasant Hill, Riversdale, Silverwood Heights and Varsity View neighbourhoods. These RPP and Limited RPP zones provide permits for low-density dwelling units, including one-unit dwellings, two-unit dwellings and semi-detached dwellings, which do not have minimum parking requirements, as well as multiple-unit dwellings if parking provided on-site was historically non-conforming. On-street parking management will be reviewed and monitored to assess the impact of the removal of parking minimums over time, as potential impacts to on-street parking demand are anticipated to be incremental. If the changes to minimum parking requirements impacts

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on-street parking congestion, potential RPP policy changes will be evaluated and brought forward to Council for consideration at the appropriate time.

Monitoring

Administration will monitor the number of parking spaces being provided on a site through the development review process to assess the impact of removing minimum parking requirements on an annual basis.

Approval

If City Council chooses not to approve the proposed amendments, Administration will bring forward a report to consider amendments to the Zoning Bylaw in line with the commitments made under the HAF Action Plan which consist of reductions for affordable housing and along defined Corridor Areas, as well as a broader review of general requirements.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Information about the proposed amendments is available to the public on the City's [Minimum Parking Requirements Engage Page](#), including a short video. A link to the Engage Page specific to the removal of parking minimums is also found on the [HAF Engage Page](#).

Residents have been informed about HAF through a variety of communications methods in 2024, including:

- A citywide unaddressed mailout the week of February 26;
- Social media promotions and information sharing with Community Associations;
- Posts on Nextdoor platform;
- Targeted e-newsletters to over 2,300 subscribers;
- Bus advertisements starting May 27, 2024; and
- Public Open Houses on June 4 and June 6, 2024.

A summary of community feedback is provided on the Engage Page.

Should these amendments be approved, communications will be developed to share information about the changes.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is required for consideration of this matter, pursuant to Section 11(a) of Council Policy C01-021, Public Notice Policy.

Once this application has been considered by the Municipal Planning Commission, it will be advertised in accordance with Council Policy C01-021, Public Notice Policy and a date for a Public Hearing will be set. A notice will be placed in [The StarPhoenix](#) two weeks prior to the Public Hearing.

APPENDIX

1. Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments

REPORT APPROVAL

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