
Residential Parking Permit Program Update

Recommendation

That the report of the General Manager, Community Services Department, dated August 14, 2017, be forwarded to City Council for information.

Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Residential Parking Permit Program.

Report Highlights

1. Competition for the existing parking space supply has a significant effect on the City of Saskatoon (City) and the neighbourhoods where people live and work.
2. Upon review of Residential Parking Program, 1999, Bylaw No. 7862 (Bylaw), it was discovered that a number of properties not eligible to receive parking permits have been issued permits.
3. Excluding parking ticket revenue, Residential Parking Permit fees do not cover the cost of administering and enforcing the Residential Parking Permit Program.
4. The current process for the Residential Parking Permit Program does not address parking displacement when zones are expanded, nor does it anticipate parking issues from growth and infill development.

Strategic Goal

This report supports the City's Strategic Goal of Asset and Financial Sustainability by ensuring roadways are well-managed and meeting the needs of citizens.

Background

The Residential Parking Permit Program is intended to be a cost/revenue neutral program that increases on-street parking opportunities for residents in areas with high on-street parking demand. Residential Parking Permit zones are enacted by the Bylaw, and guided by Residential Parking Permit Program Policy No. C07-014 and Administration of Residential Parking Permits Policy No. A07-014 (Policies).

Residential Parking Permit zones give parking priority to eligible residents of the zone and are patrolled daily to ensure compliance with the parking restrictions.

Report

Parking Effects on Quality of Life

Parking has a significant effect on the City and the neighbourhoods where people live and work. Transient parking reduces the opportunity for residents to park near their homes. A well-managed parking strategy, using restrictions and fees, encourages decisions that increase transit use, carpooling, and active transportation. As a result,

public and private parking resources are optimized and revenue is generated to fund City initiatives.

In established areas undergoing strategic infill, parking management must respond to the unique characteristics of the neighbourhood. Prioritizing parking opportunities for residents is important in maintaining the neighbourhood's appeal.

The Parking Section continues to receive concerns about transient parking, most notably in the Varsity View Residential Parking Permit zone. Recently, residents on the edges of Residential Parking Permit zones have petitioned to expand the zones by 40 block faces. These residents feel they have reduced opportunity to park near their homes. Due to a limited number of available parking spots, residents also feel that vehicles park inappropriately, blocking driveways. Implementing the Residential Parking Permit zone on these block faces would give residents priority to park near their homes and provide daily parking enforcement to reduce inappropriate parking.

Permits Issued to Ineligible Properties

In response to numerous concerns, the Parking Section has carefully reviewed the Bylaw and discovered that there are permits issued that do not conform to the Bylaw. The ineligible properties include commercial, institutional, and some multi-unit dwellings. For example, the Parking Section received a request from a school to renew its Varsity View visitor permits for the 2017/2018 school year. While the school has been receiving visitor permits for a number of years, it does not qualify for permits under the Bylaw. The presence of a school in a neighbourhood is a common catalyst to create a residential parking zone. The Varsity View neighbourhood also has numerous traffic generators within and nearby that stress parking supply.

Of the 18 multi-unit dwellings, commercial properties, and institutional properties investigated thus far in the three existing Residential Parking Permit zones, permits were issued to:

- 5 ineligible properties in the City Park neighbourhood; and
- 7 ineligible properties in the Varsity View neighbourhood.

The Administration cannot issue permits that are inconsistent with the Bylaw and will no longer issue permits to properties discovered to be ineligible. The full eligibility analysis is complex and takes time to complete, given current resources. The ongoing review may uncover more permits that will no longer be issued.

Program Costs Versus Permit Revenue

The Policies state that the purpose of the Bylaw is to provide a cost/revenue neutral Residential Parking Permit Program. Excluding revenue from parking tickets, revenue from permit sales is \$50,000 annually. The cost of administering the program and providing parking enforcement in the current Residential Parking Permit zones is \$375,000.

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Ticket revenue is separated from the Parking Section to prevent perceptions of aggressive ticketing and to keep the Parking Section focused on parking management and providing customer service. Ticketing is a parking management tool, not a source to fund Residential Parking Permit enforcement. All ticketing revenue goes into general revenue and is not accounted for in the parking program budgets.

Currently, Residential Parking Permits are \$25 per year. Because parking ticket revenue does not fund the administration and enforcement of Residential Parking Permit zones, a rate increase of \$250 to \$300 per permit is estimated to bring the existing program to a cost neutral status.

In some areas, residents have noted that transient parking occurs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, not just during current Residential Parking Permit restriction hours. If parking restriction hours and days are extended, the permit fees will need to be increased to \$500 per permit to fully recover costs in the affected zone.

Program Adaptability

The Residential Parking Permit Program is structured to be a community-led initiative whereby residents petition the City to create or expand a Residential Parking Permit zone. However, this can lead to displacement issues where people seeking to park in an area move to the next unrestricted block adjacent to the Residential Parking Permit zone. This process also does not anticipate parking issues that will occur with new developments and infrastructure, such as the opening of the new Traffic Bridge in 2018. This opening may increase transient parking in the vicinity. To discourage all-day transient parking in residential areas and associated “driving-around-looking-for-parking” concerns, consultations with key stakeholders will be undertaken over the next year.

As the City grows and existing neighbourhoods redevelop, the demand on the public parking supply increases. The Residential Parking Permit Program was enacted before the current period of rapid growth and strategic change in the City, and may not be as effective as during its initial stages. Three contributing factors may reduce the effectiveness of the Residential Parking Permit Program:

- rapid growth and infill development;
- effects from major construction projects in the area; and
- permitting that does not adhere to the Bylaw and Policies, thus reducing available parking supply by increasing the number of permitted vehicles in the zones.

The current reactive, petition-based approach requires residents to take action as parking issues have exceeded their tolerances. An approach that proactively considers stressors due to growth may be more effective and provide a better customer experience. However, this would be a major project to undertake, requiring committed resources.

Communication Plan

Parking solutions will be discussed with Saskatoon Transit; community associations; residents; and large establishments, such as hospitals, schools, and the University of Saskatchewan, to identify impact generators, responsibilities, collaborations, and improvements.

Other Considerations/Implications

There are no options, public and/or stakeholder involvement, policy, financial, environmental, privacy, or CPTED considerations or implications at this time.

Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion

Further reporting on the Residential Parking Permit Program will occur in 2018.

Public Notice

Public notice, pursuant to Section 3 of Public Notice Policy No. C01-021, is not required.

Report Approval

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