

Management of On-street Parking on Residential Streets

Fall 2007 - DRAFT

Recommendation:

1. That the General Stopping and Parking Regulations section of the Traffic By-Law be revised to reduce the distance vehicles can park next to a driveway from 2 metres to 1 metre; and,
2. That a Temporary On-Street Parking Permit Program for local streets be implemented Town wide; and,
3. That the On-street Parking Policy be revised to a Three Month On-street Parking Permit program for local streets on a one (1) year trial period basis; and,
4. That the General Stopping and Parking Regulations section of the Traffic By-Law be revised to (a) prohibit on-street parking between the hours of 2:00 and 5:00 am., (b) allow the on-street permitted vehicle(s) exemption from the 3 hour restriction and on-street parking between 2:00 and 5:00 am., and (c) revise the entranceway by-law signs to reflect the Traffic By-law change at an estimated cost of \$5,000.00; and,
5. That additional parking information signage be posted throughout the Town at strategic locations at an estimated cost of \$12,000.00.

Background:

The Public Works Department is receiving an increasing number of calls from residents who are experiencing on-street parking problems in residential areas. On-street parking issues are not new to the municipality as Council dealt with similar issues in the 1990's, however as the municipality matures there will continue to be on street parking pressures that need to be addressed.

Enforcement requests for on-street parking violations in 2005 increased by 25% from 2004. In 2006 there was a further 15% increase over that of 2005. The majority of enforcement requests relate to overnight parking, parking for more than three hours, parking over the sidewalk, vehicles parked too close to driveways, and commercial vehicles parked on residential streets.

In response to parking complaints, municipal enforcement has increased from both a reactive and operational perspective. The number of parking infraction tickets issued in 2005 increased by 65% over that of 2004. Parking infractions for 2006 increased by 10% over 2005 with a year end total of 13,739. Tickets are not area specific but rather issued across the municipality as warranted and are not limited to the new subdivisions. As expected, significant feedback has been received from residents who were ticketed.

Dealing with residents regarding enforcement requests or as a result of enforcement consumes a significant amount of staff time.

There are a number of reasons that drive the parking permission and/or enforcement requests. These include:

- a) number of vehicles per household exceeds the available parking space
- b) temporary displacement of existing parking spaces due to driveway maintenance and home renovations
- c) short term/overnight visitors requirement for temporary parking
- d) small business based commercial vehicles being taken home in the evening
- e) increased multi family/room rental in single family homes
- f) small garages unable to accommodate larger vehicles
- g) garages being utilized for storage purposes

This report outlines the major issues associated with parking in existing residential areas and makes a number of recommendations for parking management improvements. A separate parking study and report will be undertaken jointly by the Public Works and Planning Departments to address zoning issues that affect town-wide parking standards for existing and future residential, industrial, commercial and institutional development. The report will also address issues related to the parking of commercial and recreational motor vehicles. A comprehensive review of the current parking standards for all uses in the Town is needed to better address the parking issues associated with various types of development. The Parking Study is targeted to begin in Fall 2007.

Analysis

Residential developments within the GTA and Greater Golden Horseshoe now provide more built structures on less land than in the 70's and 80's. This intensification means that less space is available to park passenger vehicles as well as trailers and recreational vehicles on each property.

Under the Zoning By-law, the Town requires a minimum of two parking spaces per unit, one of which can be located within the garage. Unfortunately, experience demonstrates that in some areas vehicles are not being parked in garages due to the garage being used for storage space or that the garage size is inadequate to accommodate larger cars, trucks or vans.

The increased price of residential housing has had the effect of creating multi family homes through in-law suites, room rentals, adult children at home, and joint ownership. Where three or more vehicles are associated with a residence and only two parking spaces are available, on-street parking becomes an issue. This leads to vehicles parked on the street, over the sidewalk or boulevard, and often results in neighbourhood disputes and requests for enforcement.

Many residences utilize the public road system to satisfy their parking requirements. This is an acceptable practice provided that the Traffic By-law is adhered to. Often however, this is not the case and as a result the Department is obligated to enforce the By-law

and issue infraction notices accordingly. In addition to residents taking steps on their own property to resolve their parking issues, the Department has also examined opportunities to improve parking on the public road allowance.

Within Traffic By-Law 1862-85 there are a number of provisions which control on-street parking. In its current form, the Traffic By-law needs to be updated to better reflect the street and frontage dimensions in the newer development areas. There are also some potential solutions which the Public Works Department believes would increase off-street parking. Based on this, a number of recommendations and strategies are proposed to improve and increase parking for Whitby residents in a controlled and planned manner.

Recommendation #1: That the General Stopping and Parking Regulations section of the Traffic By-Law be revised to reduce the distance vehicles can park next to a driveway from 2 metres to 1 metre.

The current by-law restricts parking within two metres of a driveway. This provision is functional in the older areas of Town where the homes have wider frontages. In the new subdivisions where single home frontages can be as narrow as 26 feet, this provision restricts the ability to park on-street. In surveying other municipalities (i.e. Ajax, Clarington, Brampton and Pickering), this provision in their By-law has been reduced to one metre.

Therefore the Department is recommending that By-law 1862-85 should be revised as follows:

4. (6) No person shall on any highway park any vehicle,
 - (a) in front of or within 1 metre of a driveway or laneway of a freehold residential unit or so as to obstruct vehicles in the use of the driveway or laneway;

Recommendation #2: That a Temporary On-Street Parking Permit Program for local streets be implemented Town wide.

As mentioned previously, many residences do not have sufficient parking space to accommodate visitors or may have a temporary reduction of parking space on their property. For reasons such as overnight guests, driveway repairs and home renovations, residents request temporary short term relief from the Traffic By-law, specific to the 3 hour limit, to park on the street. To accommodate these requests and provide temporary exemption from the Traffic By-law, a permit system would be required. The program will be developed based on the following principles:

- Request must be submitted in writing for each address and entered into the system. The licence plate number of the resident's vehicle to be parked on the street will be recorded.

- Requests will be accepted for residents seeking temporary relief from the 3 hour parking restriction of their own vehicles. This would allow their visitor to park in the owner's driveway.
- Applicants are limited to a maximum of 5 requests per year, registered to the specific address.
- Each request would be restricted to a maximum of 7 days and a minimum of 3 days.
- Commercial vehicles (Traffic By-law definition is a motor vehicle which exceeds 2.6 m. in width or 7 m. in length or having a vehicle weight in excess of 5,000 kg. engaged in carrying goods, wares, merchandise or other commodities in the ordinary course of a business undertaking) are exempt from temporary parking permits due to sightline and driveway access concerns for residents along the street.
- Arterial roads are exempt from the Temporary On-street Parking Permit program and Collector roads will be reviewed on an individual basis.
- The Temporary On-Street Parking Permit would be exempt from the 3 hour parking restriction. All other clauses in the Traffic By-law would still apply.
- Applicant would be responsible for picking up the permit from the Town and displaying the permit in their vehicle.
- In order to permit this under the By-law, the General Stopping and Parking Regulations section of the Traffic By-Law Item (4) (6) (j) must be revised as follows:
 4. (6) No person shall on any highway park any vehicle,
 - (j) for a period longer than three (3) hours except where designated in Column 6 of Schedule "F" to this by-law unless permitted or posted otherwise;

Recommendation #3: That the On-street Parking Policy be revised to a Three Month On-street Parking Permit program for local streets on a one (1) year trial period basis.

The Department is recommending an On-street Parking Policy that would be applicable to the majority of subdivision types and therefore would include the following:

- Staff will undertake an initial review of the street where a request has been received to ensure on-street parking can be accommodated safely and will meet other requirements outlined.
- An informal survey, undertaken by the residents which demonstrates more than 51% of their neighbours support for on-street parking to be based solely on one

signature only per address on the street block requested. Only the signature of the registered owner(s) of the property will be permitted. This percentage has increased from the 25% in order to ensure the majority of residents potentially affected are in support.

- Once the informal consensus of 51% has been received, a formal survey will be submitted to each resident on the street by the Department asking for their confidential decision.
- Once the Department has confirmed that 51% of the street block is in support of permitted on-street parking a report will be prepared for the Operations Committee's consideration.
- The street block is defined as both sides of the street to the nearest intersection or cross street in both directions.
- Establishment of a permit system to ensure that those residents who need on-street parking can take advantage of the service as compared to residents who may elect to park on the street to block others from using the space in front of their house.
- Designate the number of parking spaces available on the side of the street with the greatest number of parking spaces. In the event there are engineering or operational issues with the side of the street identified, the other side of the street will then be reviewed. The side of the street not identified for permit parking will be designated as a No Parking zone to ensure traffic movement, and emergency and operational vehicle access.
- Limit the number of permits to 50% of the available parking spaces within the designated block to ensure that parking is available for other residents on an ad hoc basis. Having a parking permit does not guarantee that a parking space will be available based on ad hoc parking requirements.
- Parking permits will be issued on a "first-come" basis. Each permit would be provided on a three month basis and is eligible for renewal.
- If there is a waiting list for a particular block when the permits are up for renewal they will be rotated to the next person on the waiting list.
- On-street Parking Permits will be limited to 1 per household unless there are no other residents on the waiting list.
- On-street parking permits are only valid for a specific location and where specified.
- The parking permits would be designed to not allow a transfer to another vehicle.

- A parking permit space will be issued to a specific vehicle licence plate which must be registered to the owner or occupant of a home within the approved street block.
- Each applicant would receive detailed information about the program and list all restrictions.
- On-street parking permits are for passenger vehicles only and will prohibit recreational vehicles and commercial vehicles from obtaining parking permits due to sightline and driveway access concerns for residents along the street.
- On-street parking permits will not be permitted on arterial roads and collector roads will be reviewed on an individual basis.
- It is understood that during the winter months, sections of the street may not be cleared due to the number of vehicles on the on-street parking side that have been parked on the street during a snow storm.
- The Town will reserve the right to cancel the permit system.

The Department is recommending that the three month on-street parking permit program be conducted as a one year pilot program to monitor it's potential. A report will be provided to Council outlining the findings and recommendations at the end of the pilot program. Should the pilot program not be successful, any outstanding permits will not be renewed when they have expired.

Recommendation #4: That the General Stopping and Parking Regulations section of the Traffic By-Law be revised to prohibit on-street parking between the hours of 2:00 and 5:00 am., allow the on-street permitted vehicle(s) exemption from the 3 hour restriction and on-street parking between 2:00 and 5:00 am., and that the entranceway by-law signs be revised to reflect the Traffic By-law change.

A number of the municipalities surveyed restrict on-street parking year-round at specific times during the early morning hours. These restrictions are in place to control on-street parking for winter and other maintenance operations and to expedite the infraction writing process. The most common time for an overnight on-street parking restriction is from 2:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m., with the most extensive being from 1:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. With the introduction of the permit parking system, enforcement will be required on a more frequent basis. By adopting no parking between the hours of 2:00 – 5:00 pm enforcement would be done without having to wait for the mandatory three hour time limit. In order to better manage the permit program and parking enforcement, the following By-law revision is recommended as follows:

4. (6) No person shall on any highway park any vehicle,
 - (j) for a period longer than three (3) hours except where designated in Column 6 of Schedule "F" to this by-law unless permitted or posted otherwise;

- (m) between the hours of 2:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. unless permitted or posted otherwise.

Adoption of the on-street parking restriction will require modification of the existing entrance way signs to ensure residents and visitors are informed. Local municipalities that have similar restrictions in place are Ajax, Clarington, Oshawa and Toronto.

Recommendation #5: That additional parking information signage be posted throughout the Town at strategic locations.

Standard parking bylaw signs are posted at the entrance to Whitby on all major arterial and collector roadways in conjunction with the population signs. The bylaw signs include the 3 hour limit, no commercial vehicles on residential streets and maximum 50 km/hr unless otherwise posted. This means of advising residents of the major on-street parking restrictions is standard for all Ontario municipalities.

A common complaint from those receiving tickets is that they are not familiar with the Traffic By-law and have not seen any signs posted. In order to increase awareness, additional signage would be required at various locations throughout the Town.

Summary

Although a number of recommendations have been identified to alleviate the on-street parking problems in residential areas, it must be recognized that there will be locations and times where parking problems will persist. Staff have recommended a permitting program and revisions to the by-law to assist in the management of on-street parking.