

Information Report



Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services
Date	Friday, October 15, 2021
Subject	Downtown Parking Master Plan Update

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

This report responds to outstanding Council motions, provides background on the City's progress in achieving the goals of the 2015 Downtown Parking Master Plan (DPMP) and provides an update to the DPMP planned to commence in 2022 and be presented to Council in 2023.

Key Findings

The DPMP, approved in 2015, has guided the strategic and operational priorities of the department since its approval. In 2022, The City will undertake a study to provide recommendations for the next version of the master plan, reflecting the changed circumstances of downtown Guelph and the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic, technological change, continued work-from-home arrangements, development activity and future growth. Key notes for the DPMP include:

- Significant progress was made in implementing the objectives of the Downtown Parking Master Plan, 2015 (updated 2018).
- The 2022-2023 study is an opportunity to position the parking operation to be Future Ready and reset the financial model.
- The DPMP will reflect the objectives and strategic goals of the Transportation Master Plan and the City of Guelph's Strategic Plan.
- Staff will issue a Request for Proposals for consulting services in early 2022.
- Public engagement will be a key component of the study period.
- Staff expect to deliver a new DPMP to Council in 2023.

The update to the DPMP will provide a strategic and operational roadmap for the continued success of the parking operation.

Financial Implications

The cost to update the DPMP is estimated at \$400,000 and is incorporated in the 2022 capital budget forecast.

The updated DPMP will provide Council with an updated funding model to support the goal of a sustainable user-pay funded parking service within the downtown. There will be pressure on both parking rates and tax funding due to changes in Development Charge (DC) legislation and the Covid-19 pandemic. The outcome of the study will provide Council with the options to address these pressures.

Report

Details

The City provides parking services in downtown Guelph through a mixture of on-street and off-street facilities in surface locations as well as built parkades. The City provides several parking options including monthly permit parking, hourly parking, event parking and reserved space rentals to support construction, economic and cultural activities within the downtown.

Following extensive community engagement, Council approved the 2015 Downtown Parking Master Plan (DPMP; 2016 to 2035) at its meeting of November 18, 2015. Report [IDE-BDE-1550](#) contains the full plan and approved recommendations.

Staff provided an update to the DPMP on May 28, 2018 in Report [IDE-2018.69](#) at which time Council removed on street paid parking from the 2015 DPMP. Council then adopted a new mix of revenues to support the downtown parking operations with revenues from permits fee increases, periphery parking revenues and increased property taxes.

A summary of actions and achievements completed since the 2015 DPMP is included in Attachment 1. Significant highlights include:

- Construction of the Market Parkade
- Automation of all parking access and revenue control equipment
- Launch of permitting, enforcement, court appearance scheduling and ticket payment software

Since the 2018 update, Council passed two motions directing staff to take additional action related to the parking operation:

- From the [2021 budget deliberations](#): "That staff be directed to examine further opportunities to reduce the tax support to the parking operation and report to Council recommendations in advance of the 2022 budget deliberations."
- From the [July 2021 Baker District special Council Meeting](#): "That staff be directed during the upcoming Parking Master Plan to review the required demand for public parking in the downtown, update the projected needs and identify solutions to fit those needs for Council's review."

Reducing Tax Support to Parking Operations

In response to Council's direction, staff have conducted a cursory review of methods to increase revenue within the parking operation. At a high level, these options include, but are not limited to:

1. Implement on street paid parking
2. Increase monthly permit fees beyond 5% annually
3. Increase hourly fees
4. Increase flat fees
5. Increase event parking fees
6. Extend hours of paid parking in off-street facilities
7. Consider paid parking on Sundays
8. Reduce service or sell underperforming assets

Adding to the complexity of assessing the tax support required of parking services is the change in DC legislation, which eliminates ability to collect DCs for parking effective September 2022 to fund capital investment, including the Market Parkade and any future growth. Without a replacement source for this funding, there will be increased requirements for revenue from parking sources or the property tax contribution may increase to absorb the obligations for the Market Parkade, as well as the planned Baker District Parkade. Staff are assessing the viability of a Community Benefit Charge consecutively with the DPMP update to inform the financial modeling.

Given the complexity of the above listed considerations and options, prior to making implementation recommendations to Council, City staff intend to conduct a more thorough analysis in the DPMP, which will include community engagement, municipal scans, and a review of current technology and best practices.

2023-2051 Downtown Parking Master Plan Update

The DPMP will focus on the parking service the City provides within the limits of downtown Guelph. An assessment of city-wide parking is not included in the scope of the DPMP. Review of city-wide parking topics will likely be a recommendation of the Transportation Master Plan.

The DPMP update will have two primary objectives. First, the recommendations will focus on positioning the parking service for the future; one enabled by technology, focused on exceptional customer service and financially supported by user-fees.

Second, the future state of the parking service should strengthen the recommendations from the updated Transportation Master Plan, which sets out the City of Guelph's vision of the future of transportation in the city.

The update of the DPMP offers the chance to reset the financial model of the parking operation. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the start of the Baker District redevelopment and the delivery of the new Transportation Master Plan, this new DPMP will develop a strategy to guide the parking operation.

The planned Terms of Reference for the DPMP update include:

- Task 1 – Background review and alignment with city policies and plans
- Task 2 – Analysis of COVID impact on future parking supply and demand
- Task 3 – Impact of downtown renewal on parking operations
- Task 4 – Evaluation of future technology and data applications
- Task 5 – Evaluation of financial model and revenue alternatives
- Task 6 – Update financial model
- Task 7 – Alternate service model review
- Task 8 – Community engagement
- Task 9 – Recommendations

Subject to 2022 budget approvals, a Request for Proposal for consulting services to support the DPMP will be issued in 2022, following the Council adoption of the Transportation Master Plan.

A community engagement plan will be a requirement of this work where staff and consultants will solicit feedback on the current operation, emerging issues and concerns and will provide a forum to validate, tune and test the recommendations to modify the funding model.

As the City's parking operation continues to modernize, an update to this DPMP is envisioned every five years.

Anticipated Deliverables from Study

The following outcomes will be delivered following the study period.

Managing parking demand

The City and consultant will:

- Evaluate the projected parking demand based upon current and future planned land use, on anticipated growth, and to support economic activity in the downtown business area versus the adequacy of the existing parking supply to meet that demand in five year increments from 2023 to 2051.
- Using the data from the Transportation Master Plan and other sources, review, analyze and project the number of personal vehicles expected in circulation for each timeframe and project usage volume for different modes of transportation by season.
- Develop strategies for defined visitor, employee and residential parking options including an evaluation and preferred solution to meet parking demand from new parking facilities to possible demand reduction. Delivery of anticipated capital and life-cycle costing.
- Evaluate and forecast the impact of all-day, two-way GO train service on the existing parking inventory downtown and model future requirements to support, if at all, the introduction of increased daily commuter use from downtown Guelph.
- Evaluate the anticipated activation of the space at the Guelph Farmer's Market from primarily weekend use to everyday use, all week and its impact on parking demand and parking supply.
- Address the appropriate supply and mix of private and municipal (public) parking, consider financial implications, and recommend a target percentage or an approach regarding the number of parking spaces (both surface and structured) that should be publicly and/or privately provided in the downtown.
- Recommend best-in-industry strategies to incorporate and promote bicycle parking and EV charging parking locations within the broader parking ecosystem.
- Review emerging parking technologies.

Calibrating the financial and organizational model

The City and consultant will:

- Review options and develop a financial funding model that reduces property tax support to the parking operation to zero and creates a self-funding, fee-based financial model for the parking service.
- Examine parking pricing and develop, as part of the management plan, both parking pricing and parking supply strategies for the downtown area. This review will include all municipal off-street parking facilities and on-street 2 hour free and permitted areas and will incorporate findings from a municipal comparator analysis.
- Examine the cost of complimentary on-street parking, its associated benefits and detriments to local businesses, and its impact on turnover and utilization.

- Analyze price elasticity in monthly permit rates, hourly transient rate, and event parking rate to guide future pricing recommendations to Council.
- Identify, assess, evaluate, and recommend new, additional, or adjacent revenue opportunities for growth in the parking operation, including but not limited to dynamic pricing, tiered / preferred parking options, parking cash-in-lieu, advertising, parking revenues from areas not bound by downtown Guelph, both on- and off-street, etc.
- Undertake a best practices review of alternate financing strategies and service delivery models assessing their ability to provide the necessary parking capacity to meet future requirements to the horizon year 2051.
- Research organizational models and develop recommendations that streamline the services offered from parking, enforcement, ticketing and trials to optimize efficiencies within the service area and deliver best-in-class services to the public.

In summary, the update to the DPMP will respond more fully to the outstanding motions through a robust and comprehensive study to position the parking operation to be Future Ready for years to come.

Financial Implications

The cost associated with the study effort to inform the updated Downtown Parking Master Plan is in the 2022 capital budget forecast. The amount budgeted for this study is \$400,000 in 2022.

The Downtown Parking Master Plan update has significant financial implications in terms of resetting the financial model for the future of parking services.

Consultations

Finance

Economic Development

Transportation Planning

Transportation Engineering

Facilities and Energy Management

Courts

Service Guelph

Bylaw

Transit

Strategic Plan Alignment

Priority

Sustaining our Future

Direction

Plan and Design an increasingly sustainable city as Guelph grows.

Alignment

The Downtown Parking Master Plan will strive to manage parking demand while prioritizing the recommendations of the Transportation Master Plan to shift transportation modal share and promote electric vehicle use.

Priority

Navigating our Future

Directions

- Provide attractive, affordable and reasonable transportation options for everyone.
- Improve local transportation and regional transit connectivity.

Alignment

The Downtown Parking Master Plan will consider transportation connectivity, safety and improving parking solutions in our existing community, our future community, and for visitors from surrounding communities for all modes of transportation.

Priority

Working Together for our Future

Direction

Improve how the City communicates with residents and delivers services.

Alignment

The public engagement process in the proposed outcomes of the parking study for the Downtown Parking Master Plan provides an additional opportunity for City Council, residents and community groups to learn more, ask questions and provide comments on the proposed master plan.

Priority

Building our Future

Directions

- Maintain existing community assets and secure new ones
- Continue to build strong, vibrant, safe and healthy communities that foster resilience in the people who live here
- Help increase the availability of housing that meets community needs.

Alignment

The vision for the Downtown Parking Master Plan is to create a publicly focused parking ecosystem that is integrated with and has strong connections to all modes of transportation including vehicles, rail, transit, and cycling. Further, it will support the implementation of low-carbon and electric vehicle solutions to meet the City of Guelph's climate change priorities.

Attachments

Attachment-1: Downtown Parking Master Plan Accomplishments 2015-2021

Departmental Approval

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