

December 16, 2014

Member Councillors
Standing Policy Committee on Transportation & Transit (“SPC”)
City of Calgary
Municipal Building 4-B11-6, 800 Macleod Trail S.E.
PO Box 2100, Station M
Calgary, Alberta Canada T2P 2M5

Dear Councillors:

Re: Downtime Parking Strategy Review

We are writing this letter on behalf of NAIOP Calgary (“NAIOP”), the organization that represents the interests of the commercial development industry in Calgary. We have been working cooperatively over the summer and fall with The City’s Transportation group (Chris Blaschuk and Eric McNaughton) to assist in development of a Downtown Parking Strategy Review work program. We are writing today to communicate our support for the plan as will be presented to the SPC on December 17th. We support this plan as the research will address the important issues that underpin the requirements for an updated Downtown Parking Policy and that will make the policy more relevant to the present and anticipated requirements of a modern vibrant downtown. These issues include:

- Existing ratios for parking have been in place for 42 years and provide one parking stall per 140 square metres (1506 square feet) of office space. Changes to downtown office occupancy density, transit infrastructure and usage have occurred (transit modal split objectives have been met), Car2Go has been implemented and cycle tracks are planned - all of which drive the need for an update.
- The average number of employees in office buildings per leasable square foot has increased significantly since the 1970s/80s so with the increased number of employees/1,000 sf of project, the ratio of parking stalls/1,000 sf of project should in turn be revised.
- Parking removed from office buildings through application of the existing cash-in-lieu policy continues to be demanded by tenants

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in downtown buildings and lack thereof has driven downtown parking rates to the second highest in North America (Colliers 2012, Cushman Wakefield 2014). This is an impediment to the long-term health of the downtown.

- City parking facilities that have been built above-grade (eg: Centennial Parkade) are not in keeping with the Centre City Plan – they detract from urban street life and the “active streets” concept.
- The two City parking facilities have been built (Centennial Parkade and James Short Parkade) are also in contravention of the Downtown Parking Strategy because the cash-in-lieu funds have not been used to support transit modal-split objectives (by constructing parking at transit nodes). No meaningful reduction in traffic using the roads and bridges in the core has resulted from these two parkades being built.
- The cash-in-lieu policy unfairly advantages existing developments with 100% on-site parking over those that lose the benefit of this portion of the parking (and associated revenue) and still pay the cash-in-lieu for the cost.

In summary, NAIOP’s position is that a reduced cash-in-lieu requirement would assist in restoring parking supply to where it needs to be (in the office projects). In addition, directing cash-in-lieu funds collected to construct lower cost parking at transit nodes will assist in driving additional transit use and will also reduce traffic in the core.


For the foregoing reasons, we strongly recommend SPC adopt the work plan as presented and we thank SPC and City staff for the opportunity to provide our input on this very important initiative.

Yours very truly,

On behalf of NAIOP Calgary



Robert Homersham,
Government Affairs Committee



Richard Morden,
Government Affairs Committee

Cc: Chris Blaschuk, City of Calgary
Eric MacNaughton, City of Calgary