

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PARKING REDUCTION POLICY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed policy amendment to the Parking Policy Framework for Calgary provides guidance on whether or not Administration should consider applications for multi-family residential buildings with zero parking or significant parking reductions. The proposed policy has been initiated by Administration in response to several applications for such parking reductions. The policy will provide a consistent process for reviewing similar development applications, and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to manage any potential parking impacts from developments with significant parking reductions.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the SPC on Transportation & Transit recommend that Council approve amending A Parking Policy Framework for Calgary (TP017) by replacing the empty Section 5.2.1 (Parking in Activity Centres, Corridors and other Transit-Oriented Development Areas) with the contents of Attachment 1.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT, DATED 2015 MARCH 18:

That the Administration Recommendation contained in Report TT2015-0223 be approved.

Oppositions to Recommendations:

Opposed: A. Chabot, S. Keating

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

The proposed policy amendments outlined in this report were initiated by Administration. They are consistent with several elements of existing Council and statutory policy. The Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP) and Municipal Development Plan (MDP) encourage increased use of affordable and sustainable modes of transportation such as walking, cycling and public transit, instead of travel by private automobile in well-served areas (e.g. Activity Centres). The MDP also encourages providing a wide range of housing choices to meet the needs of different citizen groups. Key policy areas include:

- MDP Section 2.3.1 – Housing
- MDP Section 2.5 – Connecting the city
- CTP Section 1.5 – Transportation goals
- CTP Section 3.1 – Transportation choice
- CTP Section 3.9 - Parking

The Parking Policy Framework for Calgary also provides high-level guidance on parking reductions in the downtown. Section 6.1.4 of the Parking Policy Framework states that “Currently in the downtown, restaurants, drinking establishments and theatres do not require parking (though they may choose to provide it). This should continue to be the case, and

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PARKING REDUCTION POLICY

consideration should be given to expanding this list of uses to include other land use types (with the exception of office uses) to provide flexibility. Since the downtown is the best-served multi-modal location in Calgary, it makes sense to give new non-office developments this level of flexibility.”

BACKGROUND

The proposed policy amendments outlined in this report are in response to several development applications that Administration has received for ‘zero parking’ multi-family residential buildings. Such buildings would not provide any on-site automobile parking for residents, and may involve reductions in visitor parking spaces. Since these types of developments are new in Calgary, Administration believes that the proposed policy will ensure consistent evaluation of development proposals for zero parking multi-family residential buildings, as well as multi-family residential buildings seeking significant on-site parking reductions. The policy will also help to mitigate possible impacts that may result from such parking reductions.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The proposed policy amendment to guide consideration of zero parking or significant parking reductions for multi-family residential buildings is contained in Attachment 1. The policy is intended only to determine whether Administration should consider an application. Final decisions on whether any individual application is recommended for approval to Planning Commission or Council will be made by the Corporate Planning Applications Group (CPAG) based on a detailed analysis of site-specific conditions as they relate to this policy. The policy applies to subdivision, development permit and land use amendment applications.

Subsequent to Council approval, the proposed policy and context contained in Attachment 1 will be added to Section 5.2.1 of the Parking Policy Framework for Calgary (TP017). This is currently a placeholder section that contains no content. The currently approved version of TP017, without the amended policies, is contained in Attachment 2.

The following sub-sections explain the rationale behind each policy statement. Administration will only consider an application when all of the policy statements are met.

Policy 1.a. Geographic Location

This policy statement requires that the proposed development be located in the Centre City, or a Major Activity Centre or Urban Corridor. Primary Transit levels of service (10 minute or better frequency, 15 hours a day, seven days a week) must also be provided within 300 metres (a five minute walk) of the building at the time of application.

The viability of significant parking reductions, or no on-site parking, is directly dependent on the location of the proposed development. In order for residents to go about their daily activities without owning a vehicle, they require direct access to multiple high-quality travel options. They must also be in close proximity to a wide range of jobs, amenities and services in order for travel options like walking and cycling to be realistic and convenient.

As discussed in Section 6.1.4 of the Parking Policy Framework for Calgary, the downtown, and more generally the Centre City, are the best-served multi-modal locations in the city,

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PARKING REDUCTION POLICY

and provide access to convenient walking, cycling, transit and carshare travel options. The Centre City also contains a strong mix of jobs, amenities and services. Major Activity Centres and Urban Corridors will provide similar quality of access to travel options, amenities and services as they intensify.

Policy 1.b. Alternate Parking Accessibility

This policy statement requires that the proposed development be located within 300 metres (a five minute walk) of publically accessible long-stay parking.

Administration's expectation is that residents of dwelling units without parking spaces, particularly in zero parking buildings, will be making a conscious decision to live in the building without owning their own car. However, to mitigate the potential risk that some residents will own a car, or purchase a car after moving into the building, requiring close proximity to off-site long-stay parking will provide a viable option for some residents to rent a parking space for a private vehicle. Policies 1.c and 2 also mitigate this potential risk through on-street parking management practices.

The City cannot ensure that any parking facility will continue to provide publically accessible parking for the entire lifespan of a new multi-family residential building with zero parking or significant parking reductions. As a result, Administration will need to evaluate this criteria based on parking accessibility at the time of construction, and the best available knowledge of the long-term plans for those parking facilities.

Policy 1.c. Parking Management Practices

Linked to Policy 1.b, this policy statement is designed to manage the risk that residents or visitors to a building without corresponding on-site parking would park on-street instead. The policy requires that multi-family residential buildings with zero parking or significant parking reductions be located within or adjacent to areas with the following parking management practices in place:

- Time restrictions
- Paid Parking (ParkPlus)
- Residential Parking Permit (RPP) or other permit-restricted parking

Zero parking or significant reductions may only be considered in other areas if a parking study demonstrates, to the satisfaction of Administration, that the proposed development does not risk unacceptable parking impacts to the adjacent commercial, residential or industrial area.

As per Section 5.1.2 of the Parking Policy Framework, in commercial or mixed-use areas such as the Centre City, Major Activity Centres or Urban Corridors, the primary purpose of on-street parking is to provide short-stay parking for shoppers and visitors to the area. The presence of one or more of The City's existing parking management practices will enable The City to effectively manage on-street parking demand and ensure it continues to be available for the intended users.

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PARKING REDUCTION POLICY

Policy 1.d. Developer Facilitation of Active Modes

Linked to Policy 1.a, this policy statement requires the developer of a multi-family building with zero parking or significant parking reductions to facilitate or enhance accessibility to one or more high-quality travel options (including, but not limited to, monthly or annual transit passes, additional onsite bicycle parking, onsite carshare spaces, carshare memberships, live-work units, etc.). Administration will determine the suitability of each proposed measure as part of the development review process, and may require modifications or additions to the proposed long term measures before recommending approval of the application.

Policy 1.e. Short Stay Parking Impacts

This policy statement requires a parking study to be completed by the applicant to determine any potential impacts on short-stay parking in Business Revitalization Zones (BRZs) or other commercial areas that would result from reductions in on-site visitor parking stalls.

Although Policy 1.c highlights the parking management practices that would be necessary to mitigate such impacts, this additional policy requirement helps to ensure that individual or cumulative impacts from parking reductions will not exceed the responsiveness of the parking management practices in commercial areas where short-stay parking is in high demand. Should Administration conclude that reductions in visitor parking supply are unacceptable and cannot be mitigated through other measures, visitor parking reductions would not be supported.

Policy 2. Residential Parking Permit Restrictions

Consistent with Policy 1.b, Administration's expectation is that residents of multi-family residential buildings with zero parking or significant parking reductions will be making a conscious decision to not own a private vehicle. This policy statement mitigates the risk of residents owning a vehicle and seeking to park it on-street by not permitting those residents to obtain Residential Parking Program (RPP) permits. For such buildings in or adjacent to an RPP zone, residents seeking long-stay parking would need to secure an off-street space in a nearby private or public parking facility, thereby preventing undesirable parking impacts in those residential neighbourhoods.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Internal stakeholders from CPAG, Transportation Planning and Local Area Planning and Implementation were engaged throughout the development of the proposed policy to ensure that the policy would enable a consistent decision-making approach for any new applications. Administration also discussed the proposed policy with a representative from the Federation of Calgary Communities. A webpage providing information about the proposed policy was also added to calgary.ca in conjunction with the release of the report on the March agenda for the SPC on Transportation and Transit.

Administration also conducted a brief review of zero parking residential projects in other cities, including those highlighted in the N3 East Village Zero Parking Feasibility Study completed by Bunt & Associates in 2014. Common factors in the approval of multi-family residential buildings

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PARKING REDUCTION POLICY

with zero parking or significant parking reductions in other jurisdictions include close proximity to transit and nearby public parking, walking access to local amenities and services, and provision of transportation demand management (TDM) measures.

Strategic Alignment

As outlined in the Previous Council Direction/Policy section of this report, the concept of multi-family residential buildings with zero parking, or significant reductions, is aligned with strategic direction from Council as outlined in the MDP, CTP and Parking Policy Framework for Calgary.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

In appropriate locations, the development of multi-family residential buildings with zero parking, or significant reductions, can help to achieve several social, environmental and economic goals. These buildings support The City's goal to reduce automobile use, which reduces peak hour congestion in the downtown, and mitigates quality of life impacts on inner city communities. They also encourage the use of walking, cycling and transit, which are generally more affordable and environmentally-friendly travel options. These buildings may or may not result in more affordable housing, depending on whether the sale value of individual units reflects the reduced construction costs for structured parking. The current typical value of a structured automobile parking space is approximately \$50,000, so the per-unit cost has the potential to be significantly reduced.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

The proposed policy has no impact on current or future operating budgets.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

The proposed policy has no impact on current or future capital budgets.

Risk Assessment

The policy is designed to mitigate the risk to undesirable long stay and short stay parking impacts on adjacent residents and businesses, as well as to The City. As discussed in the Investigation section of this report, each policy element ensures that any multi-family residential buildings with zero-parking, or significant parking reductions, will be located in areas where meaningful transportation options exist, including alternative off-site and off-street parking options. These are also areas with easy access to jobs, amenities and services, creating viable opportunities for local residents to go about their daily activities without a car.

The key risk that will need to be managed going forward is potential cumulative impacts on short-stay parking should multiple buildings with significant parking reductions be approved. The requirement for short-stay parking impact studies will be the primary tool used by CPAG staff to evaluate individual or cumulative impacts. Should it be determined that the short-stay impacts of a new application would be unacceptable, mitigation measures will be considered first, followed by recommendations for refusal of parking reductions if no adequate mitigation is possible.

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PARKING REDUCTION POLICY

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The proposed policy amendment to the Parking Policy Framework for Calgary will ensure that Administration takes a consistent approach to evaluating the appropriateness of applications for zero parking, or significant parking reductions, for multi-family residential buildings.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Amendment to 'A Parking Policy Framework for Calgary'
2. A Parking Policy Framework for Calgary (TP017)