Welcome to the Downtown St. Catharines Parking Study Public Information Centre #2

Purpose of the meeting:

• Present the Downtown Parking Study findings; and

• Give residents and other interest groups an opportunity to provide feedback.
Study Scope and Objectives

Objective: Development of parking policies and strategies that:
- Ensures adequate future parking supply;
- Addresses stakeholder concerns;
- Ensures parking operations are financially sustainable;
- Achieves the City’s reserve fund goals; and
- Addresses special event needs.

Vision Statement: The goal of St. Catharines’ downtown parking system is to achieve a self-sufficient and sustainable operation that meets the parking needs of a rapidly growing Downtown core, while promoting alternative modes of transportation.
Study Area and Parking Supply

The Downtown parking supply is composed of:
- 1,034 on-street parking spaces;
- 1,870 municipally owned off-street parking spaces; and
- 1,007 privately owned off-street parking spaces.

On-street parking spaces are:
- Premium parking spaces due to proximity to destinations.
- Intended as high turn-over spaces serving short term visitors (less than 2 hours).

Off-street parking spaces are intended to serve visitors staying longer than 2 hours.
The maximum occupancy occurred between 11:00 AM and 12:00 (noon) and was:

- On-street: 572 of 1,034 spaces occupied (55%);
- Off-street: 1,785 of 2,877 spaces occupied (62%); and
- System wide: 2,357 of 3,911 spaces occupied (60%).

The existing parking system is sufficient to accommodate the weekday parking demand during all times.

Several parking facilities operated near or at capacity at various times. However, sufficient parking was available nearby to accommodate the excess demand.
The maximum occupancy occurred between 8:00 PM and 9:00 PM and was:

- On-street: 628 of 1,034 spaces occupied (61%);
- Off-street: 635 of 2,877 spaces occupied (22%); and
- System wide: 1,263 of 3,911 spaces occupied (32%).

The existing parking system is sufficient to accommodate the weekend parking demand during all times.

Several parking facilities operated near or at capacity at various times. However, sufficient parking was available nearby to accommodate the excess demand.
Parking Garage Demand

Both garages operated with excess capacity during all times.

Weekday Peak
- Ontario Street garage: 350 of 486 spaces occupied (72%); and
- Carlisle Street garage: 394 of 522 spaces occupied (71%).

Weekend Peak
- Ontario Street garage: 49 of 486 spaces occupied (10%); and
- Carlisle Street garage: 89 of 522 spaces occupied (16%).
Future parking demand was determined using:
- Garden City Plan employment and residential growth projections;
- New approved developments; and
- Potential parking supply changes.

The existing parking supply is anticipated to be sufficient to accommodate the projected parking demand for 2036 since the parking system will not exceed the 85% occupancy threshold, based on our projection analysis.

Efforts should be targeted towards improving the efficiency of current operations rather than expanding the parking supply.

Effective Supply: The point at which finding an available parking space becomes challenging (approximately 85% occupancy).
### Improving Parking Operation Efficiency

The following strategies are recommended for improving the efficiency of current parking operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Rational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implement wayfinding strategy including dynamic wayfinding signs at major downtown entry points.</td>
<td>Improve the usage of underutilized parking facilities (Ontario Street and Carlisle Street garages) by guiding users to these locations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Decrease maximum on-street parking limit from 3 to 2 hours              | • Increase vehicle turnover  
• Increase availability of premium parking spaces  
• Encourage the usage of underutilized off-street facilities  
• Aids with the recommended Special Event Policy |
| Increase permit sales at underutilized off-street lots (up to 300 permits) | • Increase the usage of underutilized lots  
• Increase availability of permits |
| Convert underutilized on-street pay parking spaces to permit parking    | • Increase availability of permits  
• Increase usage of underutilized on-street parking spaces |
| Convert several loading zones to on-street parking spaces during weekday evenings and weekends | • Better allocate weekday evening and weekend curbside space given that loading zones are primarily used during business hours |
| Implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures              | • Promote alternative modes of transportation  
• TDM measures available for consideration include improvements to carpooling, carshare, cycling, and public and private transit |
| Upgrade on-street parking meters and Ontario Street garage system      | • Existing parking meters prone to breakdown  
• Improved customer experience by supporting alternative methods of payment  
• New technology required to facilitate the recommended price structure and Special Events Policy |
Parking Price Structure: Comparison with Similar Municipalities

To compare the appropriateness of St. Catharines’ parking price structure, the parking prices of comparator municipalities were examined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>City of St. Catharines</th>
<th>Comparator Municipalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Rate</td>
<td>$50.00 - $95.00</td>
<td>$22.60 - $45.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly Rate</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Rate</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


These results suggest there is an opportunity for a slight monthly permit and hourly parking rate price increase, but in general, the prices align with the average of comparator cities.

Pay parking operations during the Saturday daytime period is a growing trend across Canadian municipalities including:

- City of Kingston;
- City of Windsor;
- City of Stratford;
- City of Victoria;
- Town of Oakville;
- City of Winnipeg;
- City of Saskatoon;
- City of Edmonton (reduced Saturday rates); and
- City of Guelph (first two hours free).
Parking Price Structure

Changes to the current pricing policy are desirable to fund the recommendations of this study, achieve the City’s reserve fund goal, and maintain sustainable parking operations.

The following parking price changes are recommended every 5 years starting in 2018:

• Hourly fees increased by $0.25;
• Daily flat rates increased by $2.00; and
• Monthly permit rates increase by 10%.

Considering that St. Catharines’ price structure is generally in line with comparator municipalities, these recommended parking price increases essentially account for inflation.

Research has concluded that:

• Canadian Parking Authority: Free parking is usually detrimental to retail since it leads to a decrease in parking opportunities for customers (users are incentivized to park for as long as possible).
• Ottawa’s ByWard Market (2011): Parking turnover was twice as high during pay parking operations when compared to free parking.
• Seattle (2011): Gross restaurant revenue increased up to 9% once pay parking operations were implemented due to increase parking opportunities for customers.
Pay Parking Operations

Weekday evening parking demand was observed to be comparable to the daytime peak. Additionally, weekend on-street parking demand within the commercial core was higher than the weekday peak period.

Considering these parking patterns, St. Catharines is recommended to extend weekday pay parking operations to potentially implement pay parking operations on Saturdays.

The following alternatives are recommended for consideration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative 1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Extend weekday pay parking operations to 9:00 PM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement Saturday pay parking operations between 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This is the preferred alternative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Extend weekday pay parking operations to 9:00 PM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement Saturday pay parking operations between 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maintain free parking within the Ontario Street and Carlisle Street garages after 6:00 PM on weekdays and on Saturdays.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative 3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Extend weekday pay parking operations to 9:00 PM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maintain free parking on weekends.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative 4</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Extend weekday pay parking operations to 9:00 PM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maintain free parking operations within the Ontario Street and Carlisle Street garages after 6:00 PM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maintain free parking on weekends.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Special Event Parking Policy

- Designate a special events zone bound by Ontario Street, King Street, Court Street, and Highway 406;
- Charge $2.50 an hour on-street and a flat $5.00 fee off-street within the special event zone; and
- Maintain regular pay parking prices outside of the special event zone ($1.50 an hour both on- and off-street).

The recommended parking price structure assumes pay parking operations has been extended to 9:00 PM and the maximum on-street parking limit has been reduced to 2 hours.

Pros

- Non-event goers may park outside of the Special Event Zone at regular prices ($1.50 an hour)
- Free parking available outside of commercial core
- Two hour on-street parking incentivizes event goers to park off-street which frees up on-street supply
- More on-street parking opportunities for non-event goers since event goers are now encouraged to park off-street
- Businesses benefit since event goers are not occupying the premium parking spaces adjacent to their establishments

Cons

- Additional enforcement requirements
- Dynamic pay parking technology required
- Complex special event price structure may lead to confusion among parking users
Special Event Policy – Enforcement and Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Increased enforcement is recommended during special event periods.

Special event TDM measures can be adopted to help manage special event parking demand:
- Multimodal traveller information for downtown access (quick win);
- Event day deals (quick win);
- Ride matching tools (quick win);
- Signed pedestrian routes;
- Transit ticket integration;
- Enhanced cycling support;
- Enhanced transit service for large events; and
- Park and ride shuttles.
Conclusions and Recommendations

The Downtown Parking Study findings support the following conclusions and recommendations:

- Existing parking supply is sufficient to accommodate current and future parking demands. Efforts should be targeted to improving the efficiency of current operations.

- Upgrade on-street parking meters and the Ontario Street garage system to a system that supports dynamic pricing and is compatible with pay by phone.

- Consider Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to help manage future parking demand.

- Implement a wayfinding strategy to promote underutilized parking options.

- Expand upon current area supporting pay by phone (assuming a successful pilot).

- Convert select loading zones to on-street parking spaces during weekday evenings and weekends.

Downtown Parking Study

December 13, 2016
Conclusions and Recommendations

- Increase hourly fees by $0.25, daily flat rate by $2.00, and monthly permit prices by 10% every 5 years starting in 2018.
- Reduce the maximum on-street parking limit to 2 hours.
- Extend weekday pay parking operations to 9:00 PM and implement pay parking operations on Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
- Increase evening and Saturday enforcement levels.
- Increase permit sales at underutilized permit lots.
- Maintain current overnight parking restrictions.
- Convert select underutilized on-street pay parking spaces to permit spaces.
- Implement a Special Events Policy including:
  - Special event parking price structure;
  - Special event TDM measures; and
  - Increased enforcement during special event periods.