



Committee of the Whole Report

Report Number: ML2024-003

Meeting Date: April 9, 2024

Title: Downtown Parking Strategy

Author and Title: Aaron Sloan, Manager, Municipal Law Enforcement and Licensing

Recommendation(s):

That Report ML2024-003, **Downtown Parking Strategy report**, be received;

That a project to refresh and update the Downtown Parking Strategy be included for consideration in the 2025 budget process; and,

That this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

At the Council Meeting of October 24, 2023, Council adopted the following resolution:

CR2023-485

That the deputation of Wesley Found, of the Lindsay Downtown Business Improvement Association, **regarding the Downtown Parking Strategy for Lindsay**, be received and referred to Staff for review and report back in Q1, 2024 with an update on the Downtown Parking Strategy.

This report addresses that direction.

History:

With over 5400 lane kilometres of roads that permit or restrict parking, parking occurs in all our communities and is a city-wide municipal asset. Parking activities occur on-street, on the road shoulder, in parking stalls and in municipal parking lots throughout the municipality.

Parking regulations¹ may be found on the municipal website and are contained in the Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes By-Law 2012-173 being a By-Law to Regulate Parking (to be repealed early 2024) and The Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes By-Law 2023-179 being a By-Law to Regulate Parking in the City of Kawartha Lakes. Private parking regulations, for private properties are also found in municipal zoning by-laws.

Formerly, parking in the downtown areas of Lindsay, Bobcaygeon and Fenelon Falls has seen a mix of timed free parking and paid parking meters. The current system has had the parking meters removed from all communities² resulting in a parking system that is a mix of daily permits in parking lots, and on-street free timed parking.

In 2018, the IBI Group was retained to study and prepare a report detailing the Downtown Parking Strategy for the downtown areas of Bobcaygeon, Fenelon Falls and Lindsay, a need identified in the City's Transportation Master Plan. Council approved the Downtown Parking Strategy on June 21, 2021, and is attached as Appendix B to this report.

¹ Parking by-laws are attached in Appendix A to this report.

² Meter removals, Fenelon Falls – Late 1990's, Lindsay - 2015, Bobcaygeon - 2019

Additional information regarding the Downtown Parking Strategy can be found on the municipal website at <https://www.kawarthalakes.ca/en/municipal-services/downtown-parking-strategy.aspx>

Rationale:

The IBI Group Downtown Parking Report was researched, drafted and written beginning in 2018, until 2019. The final report was adopted by Council in 2021 but was done so after the budget for 2022 had been drafted, so that capital projects identified in the report would not have funding until identified in subsequent year budgets, unless preplanned such as the downtown reconstruction in Lindsay and Fenelon Falls, and upgrade to Canal St. in Bobcaygeon. The recommendations IBI Group Downtown Parking Strategy, are mainly:

- Increase the availability of parking spaces
- Improve parking and wayfinding signage
- Review of the cash in lieu of parking policy

It should be noted that the parking utilization surveys informing the Downtown Parking Strategy were conducted in 2018 and 2019, prior to the pandemic (COVID-19). The pandemic in 2020, impacted businesses and parking utilization across the municipality as people pivoted to work-from-home and the need for supporting deliveries increased. Parking utilization, data collection, and proactive and reactive complaint response was suspended for a period of time.

The recommendations contained in the report are considered in connection to other City programs and operations such as five-year Roads Plan, the Long Term Financial Plan and capital projects detail designs. The report impacts multiple departments and external organizations.

In the IBI Group Downtown Parking Report, Future Parking Assessment, provides details regarding parking demand, growth, utilization and recommendations for the downtown core areas found in Lindsay, Fenelon Falls and Bobcaygeon. The study forecasts out to 2041.

Both public and private parking are vital for downtown commercial areas and support a range of business but also the residential component, such as second floor residential units. Parking policies and practices influence land uses, traffic conditions, travel behaviour, transit use, public safety, economic development, and municipal revenues.

When people plan where, when, and how they travel, they often consider the anticipated quality, availability and cost of parking near their destination. If parking in a particular downtown district is perceived as insufficient, inconvenient, expensive, or difficult to find, prospective patrons of that area will plan accordingly. On the other hand, should there be too much land dedicated to parking, downtowns may begin to feel empty, lifeless and unattractive to people and business. The location, availability, and cost of parking can also affect development and other property investment patterns in the downtown area. Therefore it is important that the amount and location of parking supply be carefully considered.

Based on the recommendations in the Downtown Parking Strategy report, there is need to refresh and update the current plan to recognize current growth in and surrounding downtowns. As well, there is a need to update the action plan to implement recommendations to 2041 and inform our asset management plans.

Growth – the Growth Management Strategy has a view out to 2051 and it will provide an assessment of future growth and urban land needs within our City. Parking demand will increase due to population growth, visitor growth and downtown development. Growth is also part of any discussion related to future capital projects that may impact the downtown areas.

The demand for parking in the City's downtown areas is expected to increase through the following growth-related channels:

- Anticipated growth in the City's permanent and seasonal populations;
- Anticipated growth in the City's volume of visitors;
- Anticipated growth in downtown economic activity (e.g. employment); and
- Anticipated growth in the number of residential units through development and redevelopment of land on properties within and on the periphery of the Core Areas.

Build Partnerships

The Downtown Parking Strategy Report in spirit, encouraged Municipal Law Enforcement to review services within all our communities, but also encouraged a focus to create a Community Liaison Officer, to provide service within the Lindsay Downtown Business Improvement Association area. This partnership with the LDBIA has allowed for unprecedented connection to businesses, education resource, and provides enforcement support services such as parking utilization counts, time limit studies and the issuance of parking tickets. The program is funded by the Parking Services budget and has been in place with great success since 2018.

Conclusion and Option

The parking growth rate is expected to grow in comparison to the City's population but considering that the population growth rate has accelerated beyond what was predicted by the IBI Group Downtown Parking Strategy Report, staff is recommending that the study be updated and or that another parking study is completed with a view out to 2031 and a secondary view to 2041.

Other Alternatives Considered:

No other alternative is considered in this report.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

Considering the recommendations and future planning aligns with the principles of **Good Government.**

Financial/Operation Impacts:

No associated costs currently. A future study if supported by Council would proceed through an official quotation process, therefore costs are unknown at this time.

Consultations:

Director, Development Services

Manager, Corporate Assets

Manager, Technical Services

Attachments:

Appendix A – Parking By-laws



2023-179

Consolidated By-Law



2012-173

Consolidated By-law -

Appendix B – Downtown Parking Strategy



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