

# TORONTO STAFF REPORT

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May 12, 2005

To: Planning and Transportation Committee

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division

Subject: Report on Phase 1 Parking and Loading Zoning Standards Review

## Purpose:

This report presents the results of the Phase 1 review of the parking and loading zoning standards, and recommends the approach to be taken in Phase 2 of the review.

## Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

## Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

1. The Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning Division, in consultation with the General Manager of Transportation Services, undertake, as a first priority, a review of parking standards for the following uses and inclusion in the new Zoning By-law:
  - (a) apartment buildings (residential buildings with five or more units), including both tenant and visitor parking needs, and taking into account; the size of units (by number of bedrooms), type of tenure (rental or ownership), housing for targeted groups (seniors, social) and live/work units;
  - (b) office uses, distinguished by the categories of commercial office, government office and medical office; and
  - (c) retail uses, distinguished by various categories as identified through the review process.
  
2. The development of parking standards for the uses listed in Recommendation 1 include, where appropriate, consideration of the following features:
  - (a) application of minimum and maximum parking standards for non-residential uses;
  - (b) reduction of parking standards in areas close to rapid transit stations and in the designated growth areas with high transit accessibility – the Downtown, Centres Central Waterfront and Avenues;

- (c) allowing the required parking for non-residential uses to be legally secured off-site in certain locations;
  - (d) permitting shared parking in buildings containing a mix of uses with different peak parking characteristics;
  - (e) requiring bicycle parking facilities in developments that exceed a minimum floor area threshold size;
  - (f) requiring a proportion of all required parking spaces to be designated as disabled person parking spaces; and
  - (g) generally applying non-residential parking standards to a uniform measure of gross floor area (g.f.a.) and expressing the standards in terms of “x” spaces per 100 square metres of g.f.a., with a common rounding procedure.
3. The Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning Division report on recommended by-law amendments on the matter of uniform dimensions for parking spaces and aisle widths, after consulting with the public, and that the public be invited to review and comment on this matter at [www.toronto.ca/zoning](http://www.toronto.ca/zoning).
  4. The Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning Division prepare a report and necessary zoning by-law amendments identifying those zones within the former municipal zoning by-laws where there is a planning justification for introducing a zoning by-law amendment to prohibit the charging for visitor parking.
  5. The Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning Division report separately on any zoning by-law provisions related to front yard parking at the time the General Manager of Transportation Services reports on the consolidation of the current municipal by-law and code provisions.
  6. The Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning Division, in consultation with the General Manager of Transportation Services, undertake a review of loading standards and dimensions for commercial and industrial uses and apartment buildings in 2006.

#### Background:

The Zoning By-law Project will create a single zoning by-law for the entire City, replacing the existing 41 zoning by-laws. The work program has been broken down into manageable tasks, one of which is the review of the parking and loading standards, which is to be done in two phases. Phase 1 involves a comprehensive review of the parking and loading standards in the City’s various zoning by-laws combined with an assessment of the issues and approaches involved in their consolidation. The results of Phase 1 will define the magnitude and direction of the work to be undertaken in Phase 2 of the study, which will involve revising the actual standards and address the need for new or amended parking and loading standards. The Phase 1 work, the review of the existing parking and loading standards, was completed by the IBI Consultant Group. The purpose of this report is to summarize the findings of the IBI study and move forward on the next phase of the review.

## Comments:

### 1. Aim and Scope of the Consultant Work

The aim of the work undertaken by IBI was to review, compare and evaluate the parking and loading regulations contained in the City's various zoning by-laws. The study looks at the historical evolution of parking and loading standards in the City and its former municipalities, and reviews and contrasts the standards. Standards and practices in other municipalities in the Toronto area and other cities in Canada are also examined. Issues that may influence the way in which the new parking and loading standards are to be developed and implemented are identified. The study evaluates the need and approach for updating or consolidating the existing standards into a new zoning by-law, and suggests where new or amended standards may need to be developed. In completing their study, IBI consulted with staff in the former departments of Urban Development Services and Works and Emergency Services. A copy of the Executive Summary is attached to this report.

### 2. Study Findings

#### Parking

The study identifies that major differences exist between the by-laws in the following areas related to parking:

- number of defined uses and separate parking standards;
- significant variations among parking requirements for similar uses;
- measurements for floor space (e.g.; gross floor area, net floor area, total floor area, retail floor area);
- inclusion of maximum parking standards;
- provisions for shared parking;
- provisions for reduced parking near rapid transit;
- parking space location and treatment of front yard parking; and
- the inclusion (or lack) of bicycle parking standards.

The study also indicates that there is some consistency in the following areas:

- residential parking standards are generally based on dwelling units;
- non-residential parking standards are typically based on floor area;
- parking space dimensions vary within a relatively narrow range.

#### Loading

Compared to parking, there are fewer zoning regulations for loading. Some of the differences in the by-laws are number of uses for which loading standards are defined and loading space sizes.

Similarities between the by-laws with respect to loading are:

- loading to be provided on site; cannot be in a laneway, driveway, and generally restricted from front yards;
- the required number of loading spaces increases by size of development;
- buildings below a specified size threshold do not require a loading space.

### Matters for Further Review

The study examines the suitability of the existing standards and practices, and categorizes the need for reviewing each issue in terms of a High, Medium or Low rating. The following zoning matters are identified as having a High need for review in Phase 2 of the parking/loading review:

- Inventory of uses for which there is a parking requirement – due to the large number of defined uses and the lack of consistency.
- Use of defined floor area measurements in parking ratios for non-residential uses – due to differences in approaches for assigning standards (e.g. GFA, retail floor area, employees).
- Parking standards for multiple-unit residential buildings, including visitor parking – due to the wide differences in standards between downtown and other areas; differences in application of the standards, differences in standards by tenure; differences in standards related to proximity to transit; and issues surrounding the charge for visitor parking.
- Parking standards for offices – due to the wide variation in parking rates, and differences in approaches relating parking rates to proximity to transit.
- Parking standards for medical offices – due to the general lack of separate standards for these uses, and significant variations in standards where they exist.
- Parking standards for retail stores – due to the wide variation in standards.
- Performance standards for disabled persons parking spaces – due to the lack of standards in existing zoning by-laws.
- Loading regulations for multiple-unit residential buildings – due to the lack of standards and over-riding City-wide guidelines for garbage truck access.
- Loading regulations for industrial and commercial uses – due to inconsistency in specifying loading standards.
- Loading space access and dimension standards – due to the need to address garbage truck loading requirements, and general issues such as ramp slopes for all uses.

The IBI study identifies a “preferred direction” for addressing these matters.

### 3. Parking Standards in Need of Review

Based on the findings of the IBI study, there is a high priority need to review the parking standards for the following uses:

- (a) Apartment buildings (residential buildings with 5 or more units), including both resident and visitor parking needs, and taking into account the size of units (by number of bedrooms) and type of tenure (rental or ownership).
- A 2003 study of tenant parking demand in rental apartment buildings concluded that residents of rental apartments generally have significantly lower auto ownership than residents of condominium apartments.
  - The IBI study indicates there is evidence showing that parking demand per unit increases with the number of bedrooms.

Accordingly, consideration should be given as to whether or not parking standards should distinguish by tenure and by bedroom count per unit.

- (b) Office uses, distinguished by the categories of commercial office, government office and medical office. The IBI study indicates that there are generally two types of offices: those that are only places of employment and those that have a business or customer component. It is appropriate to examine the feasibility of applying different parking rates for office uses that have significant parking needs for clients and patients such as government and medical offices.
- (c) Retail uses, distinguished by various categories as identified through the review process. There are different retail categories and store size categories such as retail store, large format retail and grocery store, department store, and retail warehouse. These different types of retail stores may have quite different parking requirements. There is a need to adopt a harmonized set of parking standards for retail uses that reflect the different patterns of parking demand.

Transportation Services staff have indicated that there is a high priority for the development of parking standards for live/work developments. Resident parking demand generated by live/work developments may be somewhat less than the parking demand generated by more “traditional” residential buildings because a significant proportion of the residents may not need to commute to work (and therefore, may not need to own an automobile). On the other hand, the combined visitor parking demand generated by both the “live” component and the “work” component might justify a higher visitor parking requirement than the current Zoning by-laws specify for the more “traditional” types of residential developments. In any event, little relevant data exist and, accordingly, there would seem to be a clear need and priority to survey the resident and visitor

parking demand generated by all types of live/work developments and to develop specific standards accordingly.

4. Features To Be Considered In The Application Of New Parking Standards For Office, Retail and Apartment Uses.

Apart from reviewing the variations in parking standards for similar classes of land uses, the IBI study also looked at the different “features” used in their application. The appropriateness and the extent to which these features should be carried over into the new zoning by-law were assessed and the following conclusions reached:

- (a) Application of minimum and maximum parking standard for non-residential uses: while all by-laws have minimum parking requirements, including a maximum parking rate would avoid an oversupply of parking and the promotion of auto use. Maximum parking standards could be made to apply in areas where transit and other alternative modes of travel are conveniently available.
- (b) Reduction of the parking standards in areas close to a rapid transit station and in the designated growth areas of high transit accessibility: this reinforces the Official Plan’s objective of promoting and supporting transit supportive development. Also, the standards reflect an average condition of parking demand and, in this context, it may be appropriate to reduce parking requirements in areas where there is a high level of transit use. The challenge will be clearly establishing what is considered “close” and how the reductions will be determined.
- (c) Allowing off-site parking for non-residential uses in appropriate locations and subject to legally securing the off-site parking: as the City continues to intensify in development, the pressure for off-site parking, particularly on small commercial lots, will also grow. Notably, the option to provide the required parking spaces off-site, possibly in centralized parking facilities, may be vital in some circumstances to achieving the City’s redevelopment objectives for the “Avenues”. Practically, off-site parking must be considered if only because it is currently a feature in the former City Zoning By-law and there is exists plenty of older buildings that were developed prior to the requirement for on-site parking.
- (d) Permitting shared parking in buildings containing a mix of uses with different peak-parking characteristics: shared parking involves the use of a parking facility by more than one land use activity, taking advantage of different peak parking demand times. In some cases, parking for a specific use is only required for a portion of the day. When a range of uses are mixed together, there are opportunities for different uses to share parking spaces under specified terms. This maximizes the efficiency of land use reducing the amount of under-used parking, and reduces the frequency of site specific exemptions.

- (e) Requiring bicycle parking facilities in developments that exceed a minimum threshold size: currently, only the former City of Toronto zoning by-law has bicycle parking requirements. As the Official Plan promotes cycling, walking, the use of public transit and a reduction in auto travel, it is appropriate to ensure that sufficient bicycle parking is provided in new large developments. Requiring bicycle parking facilities can reduce the demand for automobile parking.
- (f) Requiring a proportion of all required parking spaces to be designated as disabled persons' parking spaces: many of the existing zoning by-laws do not contain a parking standard for disabled person parking spaces. In 2004, the City of Toronto's "Accessibility Design Guidelines" document was published which includes directions on the number, size and location of handicapped parking spaces. Also, in June 2004, the City consolidated the existing parking standards for persons with disabilities in a new Chapter (#945) of the Municipal Code and adopted a harmonized, minimum parking stall width of 3.65 m for accessible parking spaces. The Zoning By-law Project provides an opportunity to incorporate new harmonized standards and parking space dimensions into the new Zoning By-law.
- (g) A number of targeted multi-unit housing groups, particularly in the former City as well as York, currently have specific parking standards attached to them. Included among these groups are seniors housing, social housing, student housing, rooming houses, and alternative housing. The Phase 2 review should include an assessment of the need for separate parking standards for these targeted housing groups and the extent to which they should apply across the city.
- (h) Applying non-residential parking standards to a uniform measure of gross floor area and expressing the rate in terms of "x" spaces per 100 square metres of g.f.a., with a common rounding procedure. GFA is easy to calculate and does not change over time. All by-laws provide directions for dealing with fractions of parking spaces. The most straightforward approach is to round up or down to the nearest whole number.

## 5. Harmonizing Parking Space and Driveway Aisle Dimensions

The IBI study indicates that one immediately beneficial step which the City could pursue, without a great deal of additional research, is the harmonization of the specified dimensions for parking spaces and driveway aisles. Currently, there are different definitions of parking spaces (perpendicular, parallel and angle) and aisles (one and two-way) to which varying dimensions apply. These circumstances lead to inconsistencies, inequities and possible confusion that can prompt applications for variances or amendments to the current zoning provisions. Consequently, staff have developed a consolidated set of uniform parking space and driveway aisle dimensions for application throughout the City. The proposed dimensions are set out in the table below. The driveway dimensions for single residential uses (such as detached, semi-detached and duplex dwellings) require further examination and will be reported on at a later date.

Type of Parking Space	Two-Way Driveway Aisle Width (min.)	One-Way Driveway Aisle Width (min.)	Parking Space Length (min.)	Parking Space Width (min.)
90 degree angle (perpendicular)	5.5 m to <6.0 m		5.7 m	3.0m
	6.0 m		5.7 m	2.7 m
70 degree to < 90 degree angle		6 m	5.7 m	2.7 m
50 degree to < 70 degree angle		5 m	5.7 m	2.7 m
< 50 degree angle		4 m	5.7 m	2.7 m
Parallel	5.5 m	3.5 m	6.7 m	2.7 m

The existing by-laws have a parking stall width ranging from 2.5 m (in the former City of York) to 2.7 m (in the former cities of Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough). Parking lengths range from 5.5 m to 6.0 m for perpendicular spaces and most parallel spaces have a minimum length requirement of 6.7 m.

Stall width is related to aisle width. A narrower aisle width requires a greater stall width to accommodate a tighter turning movement. Following from this train of thought, it is proposed that where a minimum two-way aisle width required to access perpendicular parking spaces is set at 5.5 m, an associated minimum stall width of 3.0 m be provided. For aisle widths equal to or greater than 6.0 m it is proposed that the minimum stall width be 2.7 m. Currently, 5.5 m two-way aisle widths are only permitted in the former City of Toronto where the associated minimum stall width is specified at 2.6 m. The application of the proposed dimensions would, in this case, result in a 0.4 m increase in the stall width requirement (to the recommended 3.0 m width).

To address the problem of not being able to open vehicle doors where the parking space is next to a wall or other fixed obstruction, it is proposed that the minimum parking space width be increased by 0.3 m (or 0.6 m if both sides are obstructed) to a maximum width of 3.3 metres. This would ensure, among other things, that garages attached to grade-related residential dwellings are of sufficient size to make them functional.

Parking spaces should also have a minimum vertical clearance of 2.0 m for the entire dimension of the parking space, which is similar to the requirement specified in the Ontario Building Code. The lay-out of parking spaces, whether in surface lots or garages, along with such related issues as ramp gradients, would be addressed through the site plan approval process.

It is recommended that staff consult with the public, including representatives from the development industry, before finalizing the proposed dimensions described above and bringing back recommended by-law amendments.

## 6. Other Issues Requiring Further Review

### (a) Prohibiting the Charge for Visitor Parking

Identify areas of the City where charging for visitor parking spaces associated with multiple-unit residential buildings should be prohibited.

North York is the only former municipality which has a zoning regulation prohibiting charging for the use of visitor parking spaces for apartment buildings and townhouses. The regulation was challenged in court with an application to quash the by-law as being beyond the jurisdiction of the municipality. In 2003, the Superior Court dismissed the application and the zoning regulation was upheld. Leave to appeal was also denied. Following the court decision, City Council requested that the prohibition on charging for multiple-unit residential visitor parking spaces be applied City-wide.

While the court decision clarifies the City's authority, the implementing by-law will be passed under the provisions of the Planning Act and could be subject to appeal at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). At the OMB, the by-law must stand the test of good planning. For this reason the consultant was asked to consider the appropriateness of prohibiting charging for visitor parking and to provide the land use planning rationale for the exercise of this authority.

The IBI study indicates that a zoning regulation prohibiting a charge for required visitor parking for multiple-unit residential buildings is a reasonable and appropriate having considered the following:

- the level and nearness of transit service
- on-street parking permissions
- the availability of public parking in nearby parking lots
- whether visitor parking is shared with another use as part of a mixed use building

The study notes that these situations normally occur outside the Downtown and Centres.

This report recommends that the Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning Division prepare a report identifying those zones within the former municipal zoning by-laws where there is a planning justification for introducing a zoning by-law amendment to prohibit the charging for visitor parking. The report will have attached to it the appropriate draft by-law amendments.

(b) Front Yard Parking

With respect to residential parking, the area municipal zoning by-laws regulate the location of required parking spaces and also regulate the activity of casual parking on a driveway in the front yard for ground-related residential buildings. Generally, the area municipalities require that the required parking space for a dwelling must be located behind the front wall of the house or, if in a building, beyond the front yard setback. There are two exceptions. In North York the required parking spaces may be located in a driveway in front of the house. In York, if a garage or side driveway cannot be provided, the required parking space may be located on the driveway in front of the dwelling. For second suites, all the zoning by-laws permit the parking space for the second suite to be located on a driveway in front of the main front wall of the dwelling.

All the area municipal zoning by-laws permit the “casual” parking of a vehicle in the front yard on a driveway provided the driveway leads to a parking space behind the main wall of the house. In the case of North York and York, the required parking space can also be provided on the driveway in the front yard. All the former municipalities also restrict the use of the public road allowance or boulevard for vehicle parking purposes.

However, there continue to be applications to permit the required parking spaces in the front yard, mostly in the older residential areas of the City (in the former City of Toronto, York and East York and parts of Etobicoke). These areas largely developed without the provision of off-street garages or parking spaces during the time before the use and ownership of the car became widespread. The manner in which these applications are dealt with varies according to where the parking space is located. If the space is located in the front yard but entirely on the lot, it is a matter dealt with under the Planning Act as a rezoning or minor variance. If the proposed parking space is located partially or wholly on the public road allowance or boulevard (i.e. City-owned land), City Council approval is required in addition to any Planning Act approvals.

A key distinction is that in the former City of Toronto special provincial legislation, enacted in 1981, enables the former City to pass by-laws to issue permits allowing for the required parking space to be in the front yard (on the private property as well as on the abutting public boulevard). The Planning Act does not apply to such by-laws. The purpose of this legislation was to eliminate front yard parking appeals from the caseload of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). Elsewhere, in the other former municipalities, front yard parking applications continue to be dealt with through the Committee of Adjustment and, upon appeal, by the OMB. Requests for front yard parking entirely on the public road allowance or boulevard are dealt with today by the Community Councils as encroachment applications.

A detailed review of front yard parking regulations can be found in the September 23, 2004 report of the Acting Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services entitled “Policy Review of Residential Front Yard Parking and Driveway Widening”. This report includes a description of the various criteria that have evolved to regulate front yard parking and which

typically address matters related to environmental impacts, pedestrian and resident safety, and other neighbourhood concerns. Of particular interest are the former Toronto criteria as these are the only ones that form the basis of appeals that Community Councils and City Council are called on to deal with directly. A number of these criteria apply universally while others are tailored to local Ward concerns such as the impacts on on-street permit parking spaces. Five of the Wards (18, 19 20, 27, 28, 30 and parts of 14) prohibit front yard parking without any means of appeal and polling is required as a part of the approval process in the remaining Wards.

The September 23, 2004 report includes the recommendation that the Acting Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services initiate the consolidation of the current municipal by-law/code provisions for front yard parking into a Chapter of the City of Toronto Municipal Code with a target completion date of Fall, 2005. The report also notes that there is a need to harmonize the front yard parking provisions of the zoning by-laws of the former municipalities and define the underlying legislative authority for front yard parking before it is practical to attempt to define a standard set of criteria or uniform regulations for front yard parking.

On this basis, it is being recommended that the provisions related to front yard parking in the zoning by-laws be handled separately from the work of the Zoning By-law Project and that any further reports be brought forward at the time the General Manager of Transportation Services reports on the consolidation of current municipal by-law/code provisions.

(c) Loading Standards in Need of Review

The IBI study identifies, as a high priority, the need to review loading standards for commercial, industrial and multiple-unit residential uses and to adopt new harmonized standards across the City. The current staff work program anticipates that a consultant study of loading standards be undertaken in 2006. The study would determine what types of uses should provide loading facilities, establish appropriate loading standards, and include loading space access and dimension standards, which take into account access requirements for garbage trucks.

Conclusions:

The IBI Group has completed the Phase 1 review of the parking and loading regulations for the City's new zoning by-law. The study identifies differences and similarities between the existing zoning by-laws with respect to parking and loading standards, and identifies priority issues for review in Phase 2 of the parking/loading review. A number of features are proposed to be considered in the development and application of new parking standards.

This report recommends public consultation be undertaken on proposed changes to harmonize parking space and driveway aisle dimensions. In addition, as a first priority, a review of parking standards for the following uses is proposed: apartment buildings, office uses and retail uses. Further, it is recommended that a review identifying those areas of the City that should be subject to the prohibition on charging for the use of visitor parking spaces associated with multi-unit residential buildings be undertaken. The report also recommends that a comprehensive review of loading standards for all uses be undertaken in 2006.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**Executive Summary of IBI Group’s**  
**“Phase I: Parking and Loading Zoning Standards Review”**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The New Zoning By-law Project intends to consolidate the various by-laws of the former municipalities that were amalgamated to form the new City of Toronto. The zoning by-law is a core business activity of the City and a significant undertaking affecting more than half a million business and property owners. The new zoning by-law will be a single, simplified, comprehensive by-law that applies to the whole City. It will be a blend of the standards and regulations of existing zoning with new regulations that implement the Official Plan. “New regulations” should in the first instance come from the new Official Plan. They will be based on the principles of: protection of the community and property values, promotion of reinvestment, creation of certainty, comprehensibility, and respect for quality of life.

The work program for the New Zoning Project has been broken into manageable tasks, of which the parking and loading standards analysis is one. The objective in all of the “Subject Related Tasks” is to understand the similarities and discrepancies of the 41 zoning by-laws administered by the City in a way that can focus and reduce the number of key elements for the new zoning by-law. The overall zoning approach, the use of the general provisions, the specific lands use provisions, the redundancies and the exceptions will all be reviewed. The Phase One Parking and Loading Study, the subject of this report, will narrow the range of issues associated with parking and loading standards and focus on key areas of similarity as well as discrepancy. A strategy will be outlined for Phase Two of the new Zoning project, which is to develop the actual new or amended parking and loading standards.

The work program for the New Zoning Project is built around three actions: **review, compare and evaluate**. This is an Amalgamation Transition exercise in the harmonization of existing zoning built on the new Official Plan. It is also a zoning update that is accountable for the implementation of the new ideas in the Official Plan and the strategic objectives of the City for its regulation of land use and development.

This Phase One report has been structured into three Parts, which follow the research approach for the study:

Part 1 of this report reviews and contrasts the standards within each of the existing by-laws, corresponding to former municipalities and sub-areas thereof;

Part 2 compares standards and practices in other jurisdictions to those in Toronto;

Part 3 draws the preceding Parts together to evaluate the need, justification and approach for updating or consolidating existing parking and loading standards into a new zoning by-law.

## 2. THE NEED FOR PARKING STANDARDS

The precise timing of the origin of parking standards in Canada is not known but likely dates back to the 1920's when the automobile started to become more affordable and more widely used. It is reported that the initial intent of off-street parking was to protect personal vehicles from the weather; however, businesses soon saw the economic benefits of supplying off-street parking increasing customer access. Off-street parking was also seen as a solution to congestion in that cars would not be taking up valuable space on the street<sup>1</sup>.

In the United States, "Columbus, OH was the first municipality to establish off-street parking requirements in its zoning codes (1923), followed by Fresno, CA (1939). While others were slower to implement similar zoning codes (New York City did not have off-street parking requirements until 1950, for example), by the late 1940s and early 1950s, requirements for adequate off-street parking had become a regular feature of municipal planning and zoning in a number of cities<sup>2</sup>." While the evolution of parking by-laws in Toronto varies by former municipality, it is expected that off-street parking by-laws were in place in the former City of Toronto in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Information on the history of loading standards is not well documented, however, a review of the 1977 Central Area Parking and Loading Study for Toronto suggests that loading standards were not well established before that time.

It is argued by some that cities in North America have gone too far in establishing minimum standards for off-street parking, which has in turn fostered auto-oriented development with a wide range of associated external costs<sup>3</sup>. The case has been made that there may be as many as seven parking spaces for each vehicle in a typical North American city, when you add up spaces at the home, office, shopping centre, places of worship, places of entertainment, etc. The counter argument, and the one used as the basis for supporting minimum parking standards, is that parking must be regulated to some extent to ensure access to businesses, provide parking for essential vehicle trips and to avoid problems such as spill over from offices and businesses into residential areas. For better or worse, vehicles are an integral part of our society and need to be accommodated to some extent with parking.

This Phase One approach does not address the philosophical advantages and disadvantages of parking by-laws, which are accepted as necessary for the foreseeable future. The report does, however, consider different approaches for specifying parking standards with a view to promoting more sustainable transportation choices and facilitating more efficient parking supply, which is consistent with the policies of the Official Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Cerreno, A., Dynamics of On-Street Parking in Large Central Cities, Rudin Center for Transportation Policy & Management, December 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Shoup, D., The Trouble With Minimum Parking Requirements, Transportation Research Part A, Volume 33, 1999.

### 3. REVIEW OF EXISTING STANDARDS

The main focus of this first part of the Phase One project was to compare and contrast the existing Zoning By-laws with respect to parking and loading standards and associated regulations. The main findings of the report are discussed below.

#### CONCLUSIONS ON PARKING

Existing zoning by-laws were compared on a number of parking-related elements including approaches to parking standards, measurement, parking space location, access, shared parking provisions, parking maximums, proximity to transit and bicycle parking.

Major differences exist between the by-laws in the following areas:

- Number of defined uses and separate parking standards;
- Measurements for floor space (e.g. GFA, NFA, Total Floor Area, Retail Floor Area, etc.);
- Inclusion of parking maximums;
- Provisions for shared parking;
- Provisions for reduced parking near rapid transit;
- Parking space location and treatment of front yard parking;
- Specification of bicycle parking standards, or lack thereof.

However, there is some consistency on the following issues:

- Basis for standards; residential on the basis of units and non-residential on the basis of floor area;
- Residential parking standards (relatively speaking);
- Specification of parking space dimensions;
- Reference to parking access (e.g. driveways, aisles, slopes, etc.), though regulations vary.

#### CONCLUSIONS ON LOADING

Compared to parking, there are significantly fewer zoning regulations for loading. In fact, there are no regulations for loading in former Scarborough and limited regulations in former

Etobicoke, East York and North York. Conversely, loading standards are extremely complex and detailed in the former City of Toronto.

Some of the differences in the existing by-laws are as follows:

- Number of uses for which loading standards are defined;
- Specifications of loading space sizes (former City of Toronto Downtown Zone specifies loading spaces by truck size as does former York – height only) while other by-laws refer to a single loading space size.

Some of the similarities between by-laws with respect to loading include:

- Loading is to be provided on site, cannot be in laneway, driveway or public highway and is generally restricted from front yards;
- Loading space requirements increase by size of development, but not linearly;
- Buildings that fall below a specified size threshold do not require on-site loading.

#### **4. REVIEW OF PRACTICES IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS**

As part of the Phase One review process, a review of practices with respect to parking and loading in other jurisdictions was undertaken. The primary intent of this review was to highlight where the parking and loading by-laws from the former municipalities in Toronto are similar and where they are different from other jurisdictions, as background to moving forward with a framework to develop new zoning standards.

In general, the zoning by-laws in Toronto are similar to other cities. With the exception of perhaps Vancouver, the City of Toronto's by-laws are fairly progressive in that they have considered non-typical parking strategies such as parking maximums, shared parking and reductions for proximity to transit.

In terms of the parking standards by use, the ranges of standards encompassed in the Toronto by-laws are similar to the ranges in other jurisdictions. One exception is the Downtown Parking By-law of the former City of Toronto, which generally has lower parking standards.

#### **5. A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING NEW STANDARDS**

##### **5.1 APPROACH TO FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT**

Moving forward with a new parking and loading by-law for the City is a major and complex undertaking. In order to help focus the discussion of potential approaches, issues were grouped into five categories as follows:

- Basis for standards and standardization of definitions;
- Parking Standards by use;
- Loading Standards by Use;
- Performance Standards.
- Other Issues.

For each of these major topic issues, the suitability of the existing standards are reviewed using several criteria including:

- Comprehensive city-wide matters;
- Consistency among existing by-laws;
- Consistency with other jurisdictions and best practices;
- Pressure for variance from zoning by-laws.

Options for developing new standards are developed and discussed extensively in Part 3 of this report. The impacts of these options are also discussed where appropriate.

## 5.2 ASSESSING THE NEED AND DIRECTION FOR REVIEW

The need for reviewing each issue has also been assessed in general terms, assigning a **HIGH**, **MEDIUM** or **LOW** rating to each issue.

Common indicators are used in identifying a High, Medium or Low need to carry out Phase Two detailed zoning by-law review analysis. In all cases, there is also an attempt to identify a 'Preferred Direction' for the Phase Two analysis, and a broad indication of the resources that will be required to do the work. The complete list of Preferred Directions, Need for Review and Resource Requirements is set out in Exhibit 14.1 in Part 3 of this report.

The following provides a summary of the issues and preferred directions, categorized by high, medium and low need for review.

### HIGH NEED FOR REVIEW

#### High Need Criteria

There is a **HIGH NEED** for the Phase Two Analysis to review existing zoning standards under the following conditions:

- *When there is a high level of inconsistency among the existing by-laws as to the level of regulation, the performance standards for regulation or a lack of regulation suggesting contradictory citywide standards;*
- *When a matter is addressed in all of the by-laws indicating a need for comprehensiveness and consistency to ensure a strategic approach or a harmonized standard;*
- *When a harmonized standard should be a City priority as in the case of regulating transit supportive development, facilitating affordable housing and supporting core employment areas;*
- *When there are indications that the matter is repeatedly subject to pressure for change through minor variance or zoning amendments and is in need to be updated to meet current market requirements; and*
- *When there are varying levels of comparison with other jurisdictions and current best practices that suggest improvements can be introduced citywide.*

#### **High Need Zoning – Key Categories**

Based upon the above general criteria, the following zoning matters have a **HIGH NEED** for Review in Phase Two.

- Use of Defined Floor Area Measurements in parking ratios for non-residential development – due to differences in approaches for assigning standards (e.g. GFA, Retail Floor Area, employees, etc).
- Parking Standards for Multi-Unit Residential Dwelling, including Visitor Parking – due to the wide differences in standards between the downtown and other areas, differences in the approaches in applying the standards, differences in approaches / standards by tenure, differences in approaches for relating standards to transit availability and issues surrounding the charge for visitor parking.
- Parking Standards for Offices – due to the wide variation in standards and differences in approaches for relating standards to transit.
- Parking Standards for Medical Offices – due to the lack of separate standards for these uses and significant variations in standards where they exist.
- Parking Standards for Retail Stores – due to the wide variation in standards.
- Loading Regulations for Multi-Unit Residential – due to the lack of standards and overriding City-wide guidelines for garbage truck access.

- Loading Regulations for Commercial – due to the inconsistency in approaches to specifying loading standards.
- Loading Standards for Industrial Uses – due to differences in the degree to which standards are specified.
- Loading Space Access and Dimension Standards – due to the need to address not only garbage truck loading requirements, but also general issues such as ramp slopes, etc. for all uses.
- Performance Standards for Barrier Free Accessible Handicapped Parking Spaces – due to the lack of standards contained in former by-laws and need for harmonization of standards.

Approaches for addressing each of these matters is discussed respectively below.

### **Preferred Direction for Review**

For these matters, the Preferred Directions or Options for Review are:

- 1 The Preferred Direction for reviewing the Basic Assumptions and use of Defined Floor Area measurements in parking ratios and loading requirements for Non-Residential (Commercial) development is to use a defined Gross Floor Area calculation rather than variations of Net Floor Area, Gross Leaseable Floor Area, or other variations for calculating floor area ratios.
- 2 A number of separate Preferred Directions are available for reviewing the parking standards for multi-unit apartments:
  - a. Generally parking maximums for residential buildings are self-enforcing and do not require a regulation in the zoning;
  - b. There is a desire to accommodate different parking standards by tenure, specifically condominium apartments distinct from market rental apartments. This may be established by adopting a separate standard, or by accommodating the differing requirements within a minimum and maximum range of parking set out in the zoning by-law and using widely published Guidelines to determine and secure the higher level parking within the established range as a condition of condominium approval;
  - c. Adopt a harmonized single parking ratio for multi-unit apartment buildings rather than differentiating parking rates based on size of building and/or the number of residential dwelling units;

- d. Within multi-unit apartment buildings establish separate parking standards by bedroom count per residential dwelling units;
  - e. Reduce the parking requirements for multi-unit apartment buildings based on proximity to transit, either within 500 metres of a rapid transit station entrance (other than GO Transit) or within defined planning areas such as the Downtown, the Centres, the Central Waterfront and the Avenues; of these two alternatives the preferred approach is to deal with defined planning areas that include transit components.
- 3 Preferred Direction for reviewing the Parking Standards for Residential Visitor Parking is to adopt a separate Visitor Parking ratio harmonized for each of the Downtown, the Centres, the Central Waterfront and the Avenues. In other areas of the City, a harmonized standard for visitor parking in other areas of the City can be considered.
- 4 A number of Preferred Directions are available for reviewing the parking standards for Office Uses:
- a. Adopt a harmonized single parking ratio for all office uses – save and except a separate standard for medical and government office uses;
  - b. Reduce the parking requirements for office buildings within 500 metres of a rapid transit station entrance (other than GO Transit) and / or reduce the supply of required parking within a defined planning areas such as the Downtown, the Centres, the Central Waterfront and the Avenues; of these two alternatives, the preferred approach is to deal with defined planning areas that include a transit component;
  - c. Adopt a maximum parking supply ratio for office buildings within defined planning areas such as the Downtown, the Centres, the Central Waterfront and the Avenues (preferred) or manage the maximum supply parking through adopted Guideline Standards introduced at the time of Site Plan Approval;
  - d. Adopt City guidelines to encourage and support on-site Travel Demand Management (TDM) programs that support the parking requirements of the zoning by-law.
- 5 The preferred Direction for Medical Offices is to adopt a recommended parking ratio for medical offices and medical clinics developed by the former City of Toronto.
- 6 A number of Preferred Directions are available for reviewing the parking standards for Retail Stores:

- a. Provide distinct parking standards (where warranted based on empirical data) for the following retail uses:
  - I. Retail Store
  - II. Large Format Grocery Store
  - III. Large Format Retail Store
  - IV. Department Store
  - V. Retail Warehouse
- b. Do not require parking where the Retail Store is ancillary to a residential or office use, but include ancillary uses in the calculation of GFA where the main use and ancillary use are both retail uses;
- c. Do not require parking where the Retail Store is less than a specified maximum floor area size;
- d. Adopt a separate parking standard for retail commercial uses within defined planning areas such as the Downtown, the Centres, the Central Waterfront and the Avenues.

7 The Preferred Direction for the Loading regulations for Multi-Unit Residential is:

To establish a minimum loading requirement for selected commercial uses only – loading for other uses can be administered through site plan; or to base the loading standards for the Centres on the Downtown standards – develop less complex standards for other areas of the City.

8 The Preferred Direction for the Loading regulations for Commercial uses is:

To establish minimum loading requirements for selected uses – loading for other uses can be administered through site plan; or, develop a set of comprehensive loading standards for all industrial uses defined in the new by-law, grouping like uses as appropriate;

9 The Preferred Direction for Loading Standards for Industrial Uses is:

To establish minimum loading requirements for selected uses – loading for other uses can be administered through site plan; or, develop a set of comprehensive loading standards for all industrial uses defined in the new by-law, grouping like uses is appropriate;

10 The Preferred Direction for Loading Space Access, and Dimension Standards is:

- a. To harmonize and include within the zoning by-law the regulations relating to access requirements for garbage trucks to be consistent with the “City of

Toronto Requirements for Garbage and Recycling Collection from New Development and Redevelopments”.

- b. To regulate essentials in the zoning by-law and compensate through site plan guidelines for flexibility based on user needs.
- 11 The Preferred Direction for the review of Barrier Free Accessible Handicapped Parking Spaces is to use the new zoning by-law to harmonize and consolidate standards across the City using the recently approved City of Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines as the basis for this.

#### Medium Need for Review

#### Medium Need Criteria

There is a **MEDIUM NEED** for the Phase Two Analysis to review existing zoning standards under the following conditions:

- *When there is some marked level of inconsistency among the existing by-laws as to the level of regulation, the performance standards for regulation or a lack of regulation that is not explained on the basis of location needs and that should be addressed to avoid contradictory citywide standards;*
- *When a provision is found in most, if not all of the by-laws, indicating a need for comprehensiveness and consistency to ensure a harmonized standard or strategic approach that overcomes historical differences of the various zoning by-laws;*
- *When the overall administration of the zoning could be improved and standardized with further review; and,*
- *When there are varying levels of comparison with current best practices in other jurisdictions that suggest the by-law could be strengthened through further review.*

#### Medium Need Zoning – Key Categories

Based upon the above general criteria, the following zoning matters have a **MEDIUM NEED** for Review:

- Basic Assumptions and Determination of parking ratios when there is a Mix of Uses – due to inconsistencies in approaches and recognition of the desire to promote more efficient parking and reduce unnecessary supply.
- Parking Standards for Restaurants – due to the high variation in standards.

- Parking Standards for Other Commercial – due to the number of defined uses and need to consolidate these uses and the associated standards.
- Parking Standards for Industrial Uses – due to variations in standards, but recognizing a higher degree of variation is understandable for industrial uses.
- Parking Standards for Recreational Uses - due to the number of defined uses and need to consolidate these uses and the associated standards.
- Parking Standards for other Non-Residential Uses - - due to the number of defined uses and need to consolidate these uses and the associated standards.
- Location of parking for single residential uses – due to the need to deal with the issue of front yard parking.
- Location of Off-site Parking for Non-Residential Uses – due to the need to consistently deal with the issue of off-parking.
- Standards for bicycle parking – due to a lack of standards outside of the former City of Toronto.

#### **Preferred Direction for Review**

For these matters the Preferred Direction or Options for Review are:

- 1 The Preferred Direction for reviewing the Basic Assumptions and Determination of Parking ratios when there is a Mix of Uses is to assign occupancy rates by time of day and by use, or to allow shared parking for combinations of uses subject to specific requirements set out in the by-law. Where parking is dedicated for solely residential use, shared parking would not be considered;
- 2 The Preferred Direction for reviewing the parking standards for Restaurants is to define all commercial parking ratio requirements on the basis of a prescribed gross floor area;
- 3 The Preferred Directions for the review of Other Commercial Parking standards is to consolidate existing standards and when these are within 25% of each other, apply the lower common standards, except where low end standards have been shown to be inadequate; where there are significant variations for uses among the existing by-laws, review the standards on a use basis comparing with other jurisdictions;
- 4 The Preferred Direction for reviewing the parking standards for Industrial Uses is to develop separate parking ratios for manufacturing and warehouse uses, and group all defined industrial uses into one of these two categories;

- 5 The Preferred Direction for reviewing the parking standards for Recreational Uses is to define a minimum parking ratio for one or more recreational uses, or adopt a separate parking ratio for each major recreational use based on typical demand characteristics;
- 6 The Preferred Direction for reviewing the parking standards of Other Non-Residential Uses is to define all non-residential parking ratio requirements on the basis of a prescribed gross floor area;
- 7 The Preferred Direction for reviewing the Location of Parking for Residential uses is to maintain the current requirements for parking on-site, but harmonize the regulations relating to front yard parking that are not consistent across the City.
- 8 The Preferred Direction for reviewing the Location of Parking for Non-Residential and Other Commercial uses is to allow off-site parking within designated corridors/avenues or centres; the approach needs to be supported by an effective cash-in-lieu strategy;
- 9 The Preferred Direction for bicycle parking standards is to require bicycle parking facilities in developments that exceed a minimum floor area threshold size.

#### Low Need for Review

#### Low Need Criteria

There is a **LOW NEED** for the Phase Two Analysis to review the existing zoning standards under the following conditions:

- *When there already is a general consistency among the existing zoning by-laws as to level of regulation and standards;*
- *When the matters are adequately and appropriately addressed in most, if not all of the by-laws, resulting in relatively close comprehensiveness and consistency;*
- *When there are merely natural variations of zoning regulations based on the character and history of areas, all of which may be strategically appropriate;*
- *When there is no pressing need for city-wide harmonization of the matter; and*
- *When the variations in zoning present no offence to current best practices suggesting a pressing need to reform.*

#### Low Need Zoning – Key Categories

Based on the above general criteria, the following zoning matters have a **LOW NEED** for Review:

- Basic Assumptions for Single Unit Residential parking ratios – due to the fact most standards are expressed on a per unit basis, with some minor variation reflecting number of bedrooms per unit.
- Administrative practices such as rounding of parking ratios – due to the fact that all by-laws specify an approach, and it is simply a matter of selecting a single consistent approach.
- Parking Standards for single detached and low density Residential dwellings – due to the fact that existing standards are generally consistent.
- Performance Standards for parking space size, access and dimensions – due to the fact that existing standards are similar and it is reasonable that a consistent standard could be adopted.
- Convention for parking ratios (e.g. spaces per unit or spaces per 100 square metres g.f.a.) due to a need to harmonize the presentation standards.

#### **Preferred Direction for Review**

For these matters the Preferred Direction or Options for review are:

1. The Preferred Direction for reviewing the Basic Assumptions for Residential parking ratios is to base all residential parking standards on “dwelling unit”. Parking Standards can distinguish among bachelor, one bedroom and two or more bedrooms within multi-unit apartments buildings;
2. The Preferred Direction for reviewing the administrative practices such as rounding of parking ratios is to establish ease of interpretation and implementation by the public and the City Departments administering the by-law on a daily basis;
3. The Preferred Direction for reviewing the parking standards for single detached and low density Residential dwelling units is to adopt a harmonized parking ratio of one space per dwelling unit;
4. The Preferred Direction for parking space size, access and dimensions is
  - a. To harmonize the common standards relating to the regulating of parking space size and dimension and accommodate the space requirements of enclosed parking spaces in garages; (Proposed Recommended Dimensions are provided in Section 12.2.3)
  - b. To harmonize the citywide inconsistencies relating to the regulation of integral basement garages in low density residential areas; and

- c. To regulate basic requirements for access to parking spaces including minimum driveway widths and maximum slopes, but defer other items related to urban design or access management to site plan guidelines.
5. The preferred direction for expressing parking standards is to use spaces per unit (for residential uses) and spaces per 100 m<sup>2</sup> for commercial uses.

### 5.3 ASSESSING Resource Requirements for Review

Preliminary estimates of the extent of resources required to review various aspects of the parking and loading standards have been developed. Some uses have a high need for review, but the review can be carried out with minimal resources. Others will require more extensive analysis. Exhibit ES.1 provides a summary of the study team's assessment of resource requirements by high, medium and low need categories.

Preliminary analysis suggests there will be high or moderate to high resource requirements to review the following issues:

- Combination of multiple uses (i.e. shared parking for mixed use developments);
- Development of Office Parking Standards;
- Development of Retail Parking Standards; and
- Development of Recreational Parking Standards.

**Exhibit 1: Summary of Resource Requirements by Review Issue**

Issue	Need to Review	Resource Requirements
<b>BASIS FOR PARKING STANDARDS AND COMMON DEFINITIONS</b>		
Definition of Floor Area	HIGH	LOW
Basis for residential parking standards	LOW	LOW
Basis for commercial parking and loading standards	HIGH	LOW
Combination of Multiple Uses (shared parking)	MEDIUM	HIGH
Rounding of Standards	LOW	NIL
<b>USE SPECIFIC PARKING STANDARDS</b>		
Development of Parking Standards for Single Unit Residential	LOW	NIL
Development of Parking Standards for Multi-Unit Residential	HIGH	MODERATE
Development of Visitor Parking Standards	HIGH	MODERATE
Development of Office Parking Standards	HIGH	HIGH
Development of Medical Office Standards	HIGH	LOW

Development of Retail Parking Standards	HIGH	HIGH
Development of Restaurant Parking Standards	MEDIUM	MODERATE
Development of Other Commercial Parking Standards	MEDIUM	MODERATE
Development of Industrial Parking Standards	MEDIUM	MODERATE
Development of Recreational Parking Standards	MEDIUM	MODERATE TO HIGH
Development of Other Parking Standards	MEDIUM	MODERATE
Barrier Free Handicapped Parking	HIGH	LOW

**Exhibit 1: Summary of Resource Requirements by Review Issue continued...**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Need to Review</b>	<b>Resource Requirements</b>
<b>USE SPECIFIC LOADING STANDARDS</b>		
Development of Loading Standards for Multi-Unit Residential	HIGH	LOW
Development of Loading Standards for Commercial Uses	HIGH	MODERATE
Development of Loading Standards for Industrial/Manufacturing Uses	HIGH	MODERATE
<b>PERFORMANCE STANDARDS</b>		
Location of Single-residential (Front-yard) parking	MEDIUM	MEDIUM/HIGH
Off-site of Parking for Non-residential uses	MEDIUM	LOW
Parking Spaces Access and Dimensions	LOW	LOW
Loading Space Access and Dimensions	HIGH	MODERATE
<b>OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b>		
Bicycle Parking	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Convention for Parking Ratios	LOW	NIL