



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Proposed Parking Standards for Selected Commercial and Residential Uses: Consultation and Next Steps.

<b>Date:</b>	March 5, 2007
<b>To:</b>	Planning and Growth Management Committee
<b>From:</b>	Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	PG070012

#### SUMMARY

---

This report summarizes the findings of two consultant studies that were commissioned as part of the Zoning By-law Project to develop new parking standards for selected land uses. The study conducted by the IBI Group looks at parking standards for office, restaurant and retail uses. The other study, undertaken by Cansult Limited, addresses the parking needs of condominium and rental apartments as well as townhouses with common parking areas. The IBI study draws on the results of parking utilization surveys of some 800 commercial parking lots and the Cansult study utilizes the survey returns from approximately 5,000 households living in apartments across the City. Both studies take into account the policy directions of the Official Plan and have regard for existing parking standards in Toronto and other comparable cities.

The proposed parking standards vary among different parts of the City as defined by the Official Plan's urban structure map. There are separate parking standards for each of the mixed use, transit-oriented, targeted growth areas (Downtown and Central Waterfront, Centres, and Avenues) and the rest of the City. A common aim of the consultant studies is to identify parking standards that require the minimum responsible amount of parking for a given land use. Maximum standards are also proposed in the targeted growth areas to guard against an over-supply of parking in these areas that are well served by transit. Both studies propose parking standards for bicycles and designated accessible parking spaces for the disabled. Overall, the proposed standards result in a modest reduction of some minimum parking requirements, with the greatest changes applying to commercial uses located in the targeted growth areas.

To this point, the proposed parking standards have been developed by the consultants with the advice and guidance of a staff steering committee and with input from a number of working sessions with larger groups of staff from across several City divisions. The consultant studies are now complete and this report seeks authorization for their release and public discussion. Once

this authority is given, detailed zoning maps will be prepared to show exactly the areas to which the proposed parking standards apply in order to facilitate the public consultation process recommended in this report. This report also notes a number of areas where, as part of the on-going Zoning By-law Project, further work on parking standards and related issues is required as a matter of priority. Notably, further study of parking standards is required for: various types of targeted housing; live/work units; large retail complexes and places of worship. There is also the need to develop a parking strategy for the Avenues.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

### **The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. The Planning and Growth Management Committee authorize the release of the consultant reports entitled “Parking Zoning Standards Review Phase 2: Office, Retail and Restaurant Use Component” (prepared by the IBI Group, January, 2007) and “Parking Standards Review – Phase 2 Apartment Building/Condominium Townhouse Component, Zoning By-law Review Project” (prepared by Cansult Limited, (February, 2007) and that these reports be made available on the City’s web site;
2. The Planning and Growth Management Committee direct that a public consultation process be undertaken to review the proposed parking standards contained in the IBI study and the Cansult study and that this process include:
  - public consultation meetings in each district;
  - meetings with relevant stakeholders and interest groups, and
  - providing an electronic feedback form on the Zoning By-law Project’s web site
3. Final recommendations for changes to the parking provisions of the Zoning By-law be brought forward at the conclusion of the public consultation process.

### **Financial Impact**

These recommendations and report will have no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year’s budget.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting of June 14, 15 and 16 2005, Council had before it Clause 7 of Report 5 of the Planning and Transportation Committee which dealt with the results of the “Phase 1 Parking and Loading Standards Review” study. The Phase 1 study is a part of the larger Zoning By-law Project that is directed at creating a single zoning by-law for the entire City to replace the 41 existing zoning by-laws.

The Phase 1 study was undertaken by the IBI Group and provides a comprehensive review of the parking and loading standards in the City’s current zoning by-laws combined with an assessment of the issues and approaches involved in their consolidation. The results of the Phase 1 study are summarized in a covering report of May 12, 2005 from the Chief Planner and Executive

Director, City Planning. The report also includes recommendations regarding the undertaking of Phase 2 and sets priorities for embarking on the actual revision of the parking standards.

In adopting, as amended, the recommendations of the Chief Planner's report, Council authorized, as a first priority for the Phase 2 study, the undertaking of a review of parking standards for the following selected land use categories:

- Apartment buildings (condominium and rental), including condominium townhouse developments with six or more units;
- Office uses distinguished by the categories of commercial office, government office and medical office, and
- Retail uses, distinguished by various categories to be identified through the review process, including regional bank facilities.

In conducting a review of parking standards for these land uses, Council authorized consideration of a number of related features for possible inclusion in the zoning by-law:

- applying maximum as well as minimum standards;
- applying lower standards in areas well served by transit;
- allowing required parking to be legally secured in off-site locations,
- allowing shared parking in buildings containing a mix of uses,
- requiring bicycle parking,
- requiring parking for disabled persons, and
- identifying where charging for residential visitor parking is permitted.

As a result of Council's directions, terms of reference were prepared for two Phase 2 studies of parking standards, one for apartment uses and the other for selected commercial uses (i.e. offices, retail stores and restaurants). Proposal calls for the two studies were issued in August, 2005 and, subsequently, the firm of Cansult Limited was retained to undertake the residential parking study and the IBI Group was retained to undertake the commercial study. The two studies are now completed and this covering report recommends their release for public discussion.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The Zoning Bylaw Project involves the creation of a single zoning by-law for the City replacing the current 43 by-laws. The approach taken by the Project is to compare similar provisions in each of the by-laws and create a single provision, in essence creating a "common language" of zoning. Numerical values, such as, setbacks, height, and density, will remain the same. One exception to this approach is the review of the parking regulations. The parking standards or rates in the zoning by-laws are reviewed, at least those standards that are particularly different across the City.

As with any amendments to the zoning by-law, compliance with the Official Plan policies is required. In this regard, the proposed parking standards reflect the growth strategy of the Plan, are considerate of the pro-transit policies and reflect the direction of the environmental policies and other green initiatives of the City. Reviewing the zoning by-law parking standards provides

an opportunity to not only bring a consistent approach to parking across the City but to help implement the City's latest policy directions, as they might relate to parking.

Apartments, offices, retail stores and restaurants were chosen for priority study based on the results of the Phase 1 report which indicated that these uses have the widest variations in parking standards among the existing zoning by-laws and because they are uses which commonly see a lot of development activity. To improve the "fit" of the parking standards, these uses were broken down into sub-groups. For example, office uses were divided into general office and medical office while retail uses were divided into general retail, bank and large grocery sub-groups. In the course of the consultant study restaurants were identified as a separate class.

A common aim of the studies was to identify parking standards that require the minimum responsible amount of parking for a given land use. In addition, both consultants have proposed maximum parking limits to prevent an over-supply of parking in transit-oriented locations identified in the Official Plan as growth areas (Downtown, Centres and Avenues). The studies derived the proposed parking standards through a blended approach that relies, to varying degrees, on surveys of observed parking supply and occupancy, review of existing standards, trip estimation formulae and the consideration of Council-approved policy directions. The residential parking study draws heavily from the survey returns of some 5,000 residents of apartments built from 1975 onwards and the commercial study utilizes the results of close to 800 surveys of the utilization of commercial parking lots. The commercial study also included a telephone survey of 500 households to gather insights on retail and restaurant parking habits.

There has been a concerted effort to relate the proposed parking standards to the transportation policies and other related city-building objectives of the Official Plan. The proposed standards adopt the geography of the Official Plan's "Map 2: Urban Structure" and distinguish between the various transit-oriented growth areas and the rest of the City. The growth areas comprise the Downtown and Central Waterfront, the Avenues and the Centres. The Official Plan aims to direct development to these mixed use growth areas where existing or planned levels of transit access are high.

The area labelled the "rest of the city" is seen as largely stable area, not targeted for major growth and generally having lower transit service levels than in the growth areas. The results of the parking surveys conducted by the consultants reveal little variation in the propensity to own a car in different parts of "the rest of the city" and the Official Plan anticipates transit services for this entire area being raised to a basic common level, factors that support the application of uniform parking standards throughout the area.

The two studies apply their proposed parking standards to different combinations of growth areas. Notably, the commercial standards are the same for Avenues served by rapid transit as they are for Avenues served by buses and streetcars, whereas the residential standards distinguish between these two types of Avenues. The residential parking standards for Avenues served by rapid transit are the same as those for Centres, while separate standards apply to Avenues on surface transit routes. A result of the policy-based choice to adopt the boundaries included in Map 2 of the Official Plan is that development lands around the seven subway stations and two

RT stations that are not within the growth areas are accorded the higher parking standards attributed to the rest of the city.

One key area where the studies of residential and commercial parking standards intersect is that of the Avenues. Although both studies recommend lower parking standards for the Avenues, there remains the difficulty of devising a strategy whereby these standards can be met on small sites that are commonly found along these arterials. City and Toronto Parking Authority staffs are currently exploring ways in which the required parking for Avenue developments might be provided in collective off-site parking facilities and the expectation is to bring forward, in a separate report, an Avenues' parking strategy for Council's consideration.

## COMMENTS

### 1. Proposed Commercial Parking Standards (IBI Study)

**1.1 General Comments:** a summary of the commercial parking standards proposed in the IBI study is presented in Exhibit 1. These standards were developed to respond to the following objectives:

- Ensuring sufficient off-street parking to meet essential needs.
- Supporting land- and cost-efficient forms of development
- Allowing for quick understanding and easy application.
- Encouraging transportation alternatives to the automobile

The proposed standards vary by land use type and location as defined by urban structure category. There are four locational categories:

- Downtown and the Central Waterfront;
- Centres;
- Avenues; and
- Rest of City.

Only office uses have proposed parking standards that vary by all four locational categories, while the standards for the other land use types (retail and restaurant) vary across a smaller number of different combination areas. Retail and restaurant standards further vary by size of floor space in certain instances. Maximum standards are proposed for the growth areas but not for the rest of the City where transit service levels are lower and auto use correspondingly higher.

Exhibit 2 compares the proposed "Rest of City" minimum parking standards with the existing minimum standards of the former municipalities and illustrates the simplicity and unifying quality of the geographical structure of the new, proposed standards. It is not possible to easily present a similar comparison for the standards proposed for the growth areas because the boundaries of the Centres and Avenues have little correspondence to the zoning area boundaries that define the existing parking standards of the former

municipalities. Generally, the proposed minimum parking standards are lower than the existing ones, particularly in areas outside of the former City of Toronto and in relation to those Avenues where transit service has yet to be enhanced.

**1.2 Office Uses:** parking supply and peak occupancy data were collected for 306 office sites across the City. The data indicate that general office and government office uses have similar parking characteristics and one standard can be applied to both uses. Outside of the Downtown, almost half the sites across the City use less than 70% of their parking supply during periods of peak demand. With the exception of the Downtown, the proposed standards generally represent a reduction in the minimum parking requirements for general office uses. The minimum and maximum standards in the downtown remain unchanged apart from the proposal to round the figures to one decimal place. The variation in land use and transportation characteristics among the Avenues is reflected in the proposed parking standards by establishing a wide range between the minimum and maximum requirements for this locational category.

The minimum standards for medical offices are similar to general offices in the Downtown and Centres but are significantly higher in the rest of the City and the Avenues. The proposed range between the minimum and maximum standards in the growth areas is much greater for medical offices to allow the accommodation of potentially higher parking demands. As shown in Exhibit 2, the proposed minimum parking standard for medical offices in the rest of the City represents an increase in the former cities of Toronto, York and East York and a decrease in Etobicoke and North York.

**1.3 Retail Uses:** survey data were gathered for 291 retail sites. These data indicate that general retail, large format retail and personal services have similar distributions in observed peak parking occupancy and, consequently, have parking requirements that can be met by a single, common parking standard. There are, nevertheless, variations in parking demand within this “general retail” category, particularly in personal services which have a wide range of activities from, for example, barber shops to animal boarding services. Large grocery stores stand out as a separate class with higher parking needs and banks have the highest parking requirements of all retail uses. Contrary to expectations, the data show no increase in the level of parking demands for banks as they increase in size from establishments providing local banking services to those serving regional needs.

The retail parking standards are primarily derived from a combination of empirical and policy-based approaches, with consideration to seasonal fluctuations in parking demand. An attitudinal survey of 500 city residents revealed that many people prefer to shop by car to save time and more conveniently transport their purchases. Interestingly, the survey found that people are more likely to be enticed to leave their car at home by the possibility of being able to walk to stores conveniently located nearby than by the opportunity to take transit. The survey of parking lots revealed that, in general, retail uses tend to over supply parking and approximately 60% of retail sites (other than banks) used less than half their parking spaces during normal peak-period times.

As shown in Exhibit 2, the proposed minimum standards for retail uses (excluding banks) in the rest of the City are lower than the current standards of the former municipalities, except for the case of Toronto outside the downtown where there are no existing standards for general retail. The proposed standards recommend that general retail and bank facilities with a gross floor area less than 150 square metres, where provided as an ancillary use on the ground floor of a mixed commercial/residential building in a mixed use area, should be exempted from providing parking. For banks in a comparable situation in the rest of the City, the proposed minimum parking standard is reduced from 4 to 2 spaces per 100 square metres of gross floor area.

There are mixed use areas outside the growth areas and the provision for an exemption or reduction of parking standards for general retail uses and banks “less than 150 square metres” slightly complicates the geography of the proposed retail parking standards. More importantly, the suggested exemption for “small retail” represents a new proposal in most parts of the City, including the Downtown and Central Waterfront and has difficult to predict implications.

During the course of the study the concern arose that the proposed minimum standard of 1.5 parking spaces per 100 square metres of gross floor area for general retail uses in the rest of the City may be too low. The concern focussed on large format retail and specialty retail malls which once they reach beyond a certain size may warrant a higher minimum standard. In some situations these larger facilities act as regional attractors that generate a greater number of shopping trips that are made from further away, predominantly by car.

The survey data confirm that, on average, larger retail sites create higher demands for parking. Consequently, it is proposed that the minimum standard for general retail uses in the rest of the City be increased to 3.0 parking spaces per 100 square metres of gross floor area for establishments whose floor areas exceed 10,000 square metres. This higher standard for large general retail uses is identical to the existing standards in the former municipalities of Scarborough and Etobicoke.

**1.4 Restaurant Uses:** the commercial parking survey included 190 restaurant sites. The survey data show a wide range of parking demands associated with various types of restaurants. Restaurants have the highest and most varied existing parking standards of all land uses. The existing standards for restaurants also typically vary by size categories although such gradations are not supported by the IBI survey results which reveal a weak relationship between restaurant size and peak parking ratios. The survey indicates an average city-wide peak parking occupancy rate of 4.8 spaces per 100 square metres of gross floor area, a number considerably lower, in most cases, than the existing minimum parking standards. This may partly explain the general tendency of restaurants to over-supply parking. Parking facilities at almost three-quarters of surveyed restaurants were less than 70% full at peak occupancy.

The proposed restaurant standards were developed with consideration to:

- existing standards;
- observed supply and peak occupancy;

- the results of parking models; and
- policy objectives.

As can be seen in Exhibit 1, the standards are distinguished by locational category. The growth areas (Downtown, Centres and Avenues) have only maximum standards with no minimum requirements while the reverse applies to the rest of the City. The highest parking demands for many restaurants occur in the evenings and at the weekends which suggests there is considerable potential to share parking facilities with other uses, such as offices, that have different peak-parking times. During weekdays at lunchtimes many restaurants serve local employees who, if they drove to work, are already parked in the area.

No parking minimums are specified for restaurants in the Downtown, Centres and Avenues partly as a reflection of the generally better level of transit services in these areas and also to prevent parking requirements discouraging restaurants from locating in these growth areas, particularly on small sites along the Avenues. The maximum restrictions are designed to promote transit use and pedestrian-orientated, compact development and will limit parking below current average supply rates. Consequently, it is anticipated that there will be a need for part of the parking demand associated with new restaurants in the growth areas to be met off-site in collective parking facilities, through shared parking with other uses and by using paid on-street parking.

In the rest of the City, only small restaurants having a gross floor area of less 150 square metres are not required to provide parking. Others have a proposed minimum parking requirement of 3 spaces per 100 square metres that increases to 5 spaces per 100 square metres once the gross floor area exceeds 500 square metres. The sample survey data show that only 15% of restaurants are larger than 500 square metres. The higher parking standard addresses the concern that large restaurants may have a greater propensity to attract patrons from a wide area and create a greater demand for parking. Overall, the proposed standards, with low minimums and no maximums, offer a high level of flexibility in the provision of parking for restaurants located in the rest of the City. A flexible approach is consistent with the Official Plan's policies of reducing auto dependency, encouraging intensification and reducing surplus parking throughout the City.

## **2. Proposed Residential Parking Standards (Cansult Study)**

**2.1 General Comments:** Cansult's proposals for residential parking standards are summarized in Exhibits 3 and 4 for condominium and rental apartments respectively. The lower average car ownership rates observed for rental apartments results in the minimum standards in Exhibit 4 being approximately 75% of the proposed condominium minimum standards shown in Exhibit 3, except for the rest of the City where the standards are the same.

The proposed standards vary across five urban structure categories:

- Downtown Core;
- Downtown and Central Waterfront;
- Centres and Avenues on the subway;
- Avenues on surface transit routes; and
- the rest of the City.

These categories do not exactly match those of the commercial parking study. Notably, the residential standards recognize two categories of Avenues and distinguish the Downtown Core from the rest of the Downtown and Central Waterfront area. Avenues on the subway are in the same category as Centres and are separate from Avenues served by bus and streetcar routes. The proposed residential standards vary by size of the apartment unit, increasing with the number of bedrooms. As in the commercial parking study, the residential study proposes maximum standards in the growth areas but not the rest of the City.

Exhibit 5 compares the proposed minimum parking standards for condominium apartments with the existing standards of the former municipalities. For comparison purposes the existing standards for Centres and Avenues on the subway are taken to be those found in the North York Centre by-law, while for the rest of the City the existing standards are expressed as a range and for the Avenues on surface transit routes there really are no comparable existing standards. Generally, the existing by-laws do not have separate standards for condominium and rental apartments.

The proposed minimum residential standards, as can be seen in Exhibits 3 and 4, are lowest in the Downtown Core and highest in the rest of the City, with incremental increases across the intervening categories in keeping with general changes in the level of transit accessibility. Overall, as shown in Exhibit 5, the proposed condominium minimum standards are generally close to or in the range of those found in the existing by-laws. The most notable exception is the lower proposed minimum standard for 3-bedroom condominium units in the Downtown Core.

Other elements of the Cansult study include a survey of selected townhouses with common parking areas and an analysis of visitor parking in apartments and townhouses. The same resident questionnaire was used in the townhouse survey but the sample design and distribution methods were different to those employed for the apartment survey. Townhouses with common parking areas, like apartments, provide the opportunity for pooled tenant and visitor parking.

The survey questionnaire included visitor parking questions related to how often visitors arrive by car, where they park and the types of problem, if any, they encounter. For selected apartments the questionnaire was followed up by on-site surveys of visitor parking lots and interviews with apartment managers and related parties.

**2.2 Standards for Apartment Residents:** there were significantly different survey response rates between the occupants of condominium buildings (60%) and those of rental buildings (34%). The total response of 4,968 completed questionnaires was divided into 3,502 from households in condominium units and 1,196 from households in rental units. The proposed parking standards were primarily based on considerations of parking need as reflected in observed car ownership rates moderated by the policies of the Official Plan to reduce auto dependency and encourage alternative (transit, walk and cycle) modes of travel.

The average rates of car ownership are summarized in Exhibit 6 for condominium and rental buildings with a survey response of 15 or more completed questionnaires. The figures in

italics relate to sample categories where the average car ownership estimate should be regarded cautiously because of low survey numbers. Restricting the survey to apartments built since 1975 in order to be more representative of today's conditions limited the population sample for rental buildings. Exhibit 6 shows how the car ownership rates of households living in apartments generally increase with distance from the Downtown Core, a broad reflection of the lower levels of transit service found outside this area

The average car ownership rate is considered too high a level of parking need to represent the appropriate standard for the minimum parking requirement. The Cansult study recommends that the minimum parking requirement should be set at a level somewhat below the average rate of car ownership with the reduction being greatest in the Central Core and least in the rest of the City. As noted above (see Exhibit 5) this approach results in proposed minimum parking standards that are, on average, somewhat lower than those in the current City zoning by-laws, with this outcome being more accentuated for rental apartments.

The introduction of maximum parking standards for apartments in the growth areas is a largely new feature. As is the case for the commercial parking study, maximum standards are proposed to prevent an over-supply of parking in mixed use areas well served by transit. The maximum standards become relatively higher as they progress from the Downtown Core to the rest of the City to allow for the accommodation of higher levels of car ownership in areas of poorer transit service. The maximum standards are set 50% higher than the minimum standards. For the typical case where two levels of underground parking are required to meet the minimum parking standard, the maximum standard allows advantage to be taken of adding a whole third floor.

**2.3 Standards for Townhouses with Common Parking Areas:** a survey of six townhouse developments resulted in 182 completed questionnaires being returned for a response rate of 23%. The data reveal an average car ownership rate per unit that ranges from 1.39 to 1.48. The existing parking standards generally require 2.0 parking spaces per unit, one of which has to be provided in the garage while the other can be located on the driveway. Where the condominium development plans to provide parking in a consolidated location, there is the opportunity to tailor the minimum standards closer the observed level of demand. In these circumstances, the Cansult study recommends applying a reduced minimum standard 1.5 parking spaces per unit, including visitor parking

**2.4 Visitor Parking Standards:** the survey data reveal that visitor parking demands for condominium units are lowest in the Downtown Core and highest in the rest of the City and this pattern is generally consistent for rental units. Complaints about visitor parking are more frequent in rental buildings than in condominium buildings. A common complaint is that visitor parking is occupied by residents or other so-called "walk aways". Visitor parking is generally more closely monitored in condominium developments and it is rental buildings that more often have to resort to more extreme parking control measures such as ticketing and towing.

The peak periods for visitor parking are Friday evening and during Saturday. However, a sample survey of visitor lots found that, even during these peak times, many have spare capacity. The Cansult study recommends that, in the growth areas, condominium and apartment buildings should have the same visitor parking requirement of 0.10 parking spaces per unit in the Downtown, Centres and Avenues on a subway, and 0.15 parking spaces along the Avenues served by bus and streetcar routes. In the rest of the City a common visitor parking standard of 0.2 spaces per unit is recommended. The 0.10 standard for the Downtown is an increase over the existing standard of 0.06 parking spaces per unit whereas elsewhere the proposed visitor parking standards are generally lower than the existing standards.

The question of prohibiting charging for visitor parking was raised as an issue in the Phase 1 parking review and, consequently, discussed during the course of the Cansult study. The conclusion was reached that it is desirable to prohibit charging for visitor parking in residential areas but not in mixed use areas. In mixed commercial/residential areas there is generally a higher level of competition for parking spaces and a charge for visitor parking at apartment buildings would better ration its use by deterring “walk aways” from occupying spaces needed for legitimate visitors. Also, in mixed use areas there tends to be higher levels of transit service and a greater supply of both on-street and off-street parking, factors which combine to provide a wider range of alternatives for those drivers negatively impacted by residential visitor parking charges. On the other hand, in the residential areas, charging for visitor parking at apartment building sites might unreasonably deter visitors from parking in the off-street facilities provided and lead to increased parking pressures on surrounding local residential streets

### **3. Common Features**

- 3.1 Bicycle Parking:** in keeping with the Official Plan policies to promote bicycle use, both the residential and commercial studies develop proposed bicycle parking standards. The proposed standards are based largely on a review of “best practices” in other Canadian cities and related published sources.

The IBI Group study proposes separate bicycle parking standards for three types of commercial uses: general office, medical office and retail/restaurant. The standards distinguish between two types of bicycle parking: long-term secure parking that is provided in the building for employees, and short-term parking provided in racks located in sheltered locations for customers, clients and couriers. Higher standards are applied in the growth areas reflecting the greater use of the bicycle to reach commercial destinations in these areas and to support the objective to reduce auto-dependency. Standards for shower and change facilities are also proposed and are specified as a function of the total number of long-term bicycle parking spaces required.

The Cansult study proposes standards for two types of bicycle parking in multi-unit residential buildings: secure long-term parking for residents, and short-term parking for visitors. It is proposed that 80% of the bicycle parking be allocated to the use of residents

and 20% for visitors. The proposed standard is 1.0 bicycle parking space per unit in the Downtown Core and Downtown and Central Waterfront, and 0.75 everywhere else.

There are few existing bicycle parking standards in the City against which to compare the new, proposed standards. In the former City of Toronto, the existing standard for general offices calculates out to about 1 space for every 40 employees and the comparable proposed standard for the growth areas is about 1 space for every 15 employees. The proposed bicycle parking standards for multi-unit residential buildings are a new requirement in most areas outside the former City of Toronto. The proposed standard of 1 space per residential unit in the Downtown areas is higher than the current requirement of 0.75 spaces per unit the former City of Toronto. The IBI study recommends that separate guidelines be developed for the design and location of bicycle parking facilities on commercial sites, while the Cansult study recommends adopting the bicycle parking dimensions contained in the former City of Toronto by-law.

**3.2 Accessible Parking:** both the IBI study and the Cansult study recommend designating a portion of the required parking spaces for the exclusive use of the disabled. Accessible parking, as these types of designated spaces are known, refers to on-site parking for disabled persons who drive or are passengers in a private vehicle. The standards are based on reviews of existing requirements, including those found in the City of Toronto’s “Accessibility Design Guidelines” (2004) and other published standards and guidelines such as the “Americans with Disabilities Act” (ADA). It is recognized that with an aging population the relevance of and need for accessible parking standards becomes increasingly pressing.

The proposed accessible parking standards for general office uses, retail and restaurants conform to the City’s “Accessibility Design Guidelines” and recommend 1 designated space for each 25 parking spaces up to the first 100 spaces, plus 1 space per additional 50 spaces above 100. The Cansult study recommends the same accessible parking rates for multi-unit residential buildings. In situations where there are less than 25 spaces, at least 1 space should satisfy the dimensions for accessible parking and be marked as such but, for buildings with less than five parking spaces, not necessarily designated. For medical offices, the IBI study recommends the adoption of the ADA guideline of 10% of all spaces being designed to accessible standards.

The IBI and Cansult studies specify common minimum width and length dimensions for accessible parking spaces of 3.9 metres and 5.6 metres respectively. The 3.9 metres width includes a 1.5 metres aisle that can be shared with adjacent parking spaces. These dimensions are consistent with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) recommendations.

**3.3 Shared Parking, Off-site Parking and Payment-in-lieu:** in situations where different uses, such as office and retail, have different periods of peak demand it may be possible to share the parking either within a building or between adjacent ones. Shared parking spaces operate as a pooled resource and obviously such spaces cannot be reserved for a particular use or occupant. Overall, by taking advantage of the opportunities to share parking, the required level of parking can be reduced by an estimated 10 – 30% and the risks of over-supply

minimized. The IBI report recommends that the existing shared parking provisions for the Downtown be extended to the entire City.

Currently, the by-laws for the former cities of Toronto, North York, East York and York include some provision for off-site parking for non-residential uses and specify maximum distances between the site that is generating the required parking and the site(s) where it is being accommodated. Where off-site parking is permitted, the IBI study suggests that the site generating the parking need should be required to register on title a commitment to secure off-site parking within a defined maximum distance (e.g. 300 metres) but does not need to specify where the parking is or to register it on the title of the donor site. This approach provides security but does not encumber a third party.

The City recently adopted a harmonized fee schedule for the payment-in-lieu of parking. Payment of these fees relieves the owners or occupants of commercial buildings from having to provide on-site the parking required by the applicable zoning by-law. It allows parking requirements to be satisfied in cases where it is not physically feasible or desirable to provide parking on-site and where there are no opportunities to secure off-site parking within a reasonable distance. The funds are required to be spent on parking facilities but not necessarily in the same area from which they were collected. The IBI report recommends maintaining the payment-in-lieu option.

Typically, the options for shared parking, off-site parking and payment-in-lieu are not extended to residential developments. However, as mentioned earlier, there is a need to develop a parking strategy for the Avenues where the provision of parking on small sites can prove particularly difficult. In this context, the options mentioned above may also be applicable to the residential component of developments along the Avenues under certain limited circumstances.

#### **4. Areas of Further Study**

During IBI's study of parking standards for selected, priority commercial uses, a number of related issues of current concern were raised. Two in particular warrant further investigation at this time:

- Major Shopping Centres – concern has been expressed that large retail centres with over 25,000 square metres of gross floor area, particularly those of a “specialty” nature, require a separate higher parking standard to reflect the high levels of auto use that these major regional attractors generate. IBI's sample survey of retail sites was not designed to cover these large, singular retail complexes and further study is needed to determine if a separate parking standard is justifiable and can be usefully applied to this distinct class of retail activity.
- Places of Assembly – although not included in the terms of reference for the IBI Phase 2 study, the need for revised parking standards for places of assembly was identified as a priority issue. Concern focussed particularly on “places of worship” which can have major parking impacts and are likely to increase in numbers as the City continues to

grow. This report recommends that a separate study of parking standards for places of worship be undertaken immediately.

Due to data limitations and lack of uniform definitions the Cansult study could not fully address two important types of multi-unit housing and further analysis is required to develop parking standards for:

- Targeted Housing – Cansult’s sample survey of households in condominium and rental apartment units generated an insufficient number of responses in certain categories to develop detailed parking standards for targeted housing such as seniors housing, social housing, student housing, rooming houses and alternative housing. The limited survey responses from seniors units, co-op units and rent geared to income units revealed car ownership rates much lower than those of condominium and market rental units. The average car ownership rate for targeted units was observed to be 0.31 spaces per unit. A general standard of 0.3 spaces per unit could be adopted across the City as interim measure pending the completion of further more detailed study.
- Live/Work Units – there are many forms of live/work housing ranging from Downtown lofts to special purpose townhouses that support commercial enterprises at the ground level. These variations in form are matched by a variety of different types of occupants and associated work activities. Some work activities may be of a relatively solitary nature and generate little demand for commercial parking while others, such as those providing goods or services, might attract a significant number of visitors who may require parking. This diversity of form and complexity of function poses definitional problems that have to be addressed before sampling designs for parking surveys can be formulated and standards developed.

## CONTACTS

Barbara Leonhardt  
Director, Policy and Research  
City Planning Division  
Tel: 416-392-7617, Fax: 416-392-3821  
Email: [bleonha@toronto.ca](mailto:bleonha@toronto.ca)

Rod McPhail  
Director, Transportation  
City Planning Division  
Tel: 416-392-8100, Fax 416-392-3821  
Email: [rmcphail@toronto.ca](mailto:rmcphail@toronto.ca)

## SIGNATURE

---

Ted Tyndorf  
Chief Planner and Executive Director  
City Planning Division

## ATTACHMENTS

Exhibit 1: Summary of Proposed Off-Street Office, Retail, and Restaurant Parking Standards

- Exhibit 2: Comparison of Existing and Proposed Minimum Parking Standards
- Exhibit 3: Recommended Minimum and Maximum Parking Standards – Condominium Apartments
- Exhibit 4: Recommended Minimum and Maximum Parking Standards - Rental Apartments
- Exhibit 5: Recommended Minimum Standards for Condominium Apartments vs Existing Parking Standards.
- Exhibit 6: 2006 Toronto Residential Parking Survey Results: Average Vehicles/Unit by Location and Type/Size.
- Exhibit 7: Proposed Minimum Number of Required Off-Street Bicycle Spaces for Selected Commercial Uses
- Exhibit 8: Minimum Number of Shower Facilities Required for each Gender
- Map 1: Zoning Districts for Proposed Parking Standards

## EXHIBIT 1

### Summary of Proposed Off-Street Office, Retail, and Restaurant Parking Standards

Category	Description	Jurisdiction	Proposed Parking Standard (spaces/100 m <sup>2</sup> GFA)	
			Minimum	Maximum
General Office	Also include Government Office use	Downtown Toronto & Central Waterfront	0.4	0.8
		Centres <sup>(1)</sup>	1	1.4
		Avenues	1	2
		Rest of City	1.5	-
Medical Office		Downtown Toronto & Central Waterfront	0.3	3
		Centres	1	3.5
		Avenues	1.5	6
		Rest of City	3	-
General Retail	also includes Large Format Retail and Personal Services	Downtown Toronto & Central Waterfront	1 <sup>(2)</sup>	3.5
		Centres and Avenues	1 <sup>(2)</sup>	4
		Rest of City, GFA<10,000m <sup>2</sup>	1.5 <sup>(2)</sup>	-
		Rest of City, GFA>10,000m <sup>2</sup>	3	-
Bank		Downtown Toronto & Central Waterfront	2 <sup>(2)</sup>	3.5
		Centres and Avenues	2 <sup>(2)</sup>	4.5
		Rest of City	4 <sup>(3)</sup>	-
Large Grocery		Downtown Toronto & Central Waterfront, Centres, and Avenues	1	4.5
		Rest of City	2.5	-
Restaurant	all types	Downtown Toronto & Central Waterfront	0	3.5
		Centres	0	4
		Avenues	0	5
		Rest of City, GFA<150m <sup>2</sup>	0	-
		Rest of City, 150m <sup>2</sup> <GFA<500m <sup>2</sup>	3	-
		Rest of City, GFA>500m <sup>2</sup>	5	-

<sup>(1)</sup>Centres includes North York Centre, Etobicoke Centre, Scarborough Centre, and Yonge-Eglinton Centre

<sup>(2)</sup> Parking minimum exempted for ancillary use in building, which must meet three criteria:

1. In mixed commercial/residential building in Mixed Use Area (Official Plan land use designation (Map 13-21))
2. GFA<150m<sup>2</sup>
3. Located at ground floor (e.g. ground floor store or bank in residential building)

<sup>(3)</sup> Bank parking minimum is reduced to 2 spaces per 100 m<sup>2</sup> for ancillary use in mixed use building (see footnote 2 above)

**(Source: Exhibit 12-1, “Parking Zoning Standards Review Phase 2: Office, Retail and Restaurant Use Component” (IBI Group, January 2007))**

## EXHIBIT 2

### Comparison of Existing and Proposed Minimum Parking Standards

Use Category	Existing Minimum Parking Standards (spaces/100 m <sup>2</sup> )						Proposed "Rest of City" Minimum Parking Standards (spaces/100 m <sup>2</sup> ) <sup>(1)</sup>
	City of Toronto	East York	Etobicoke	North York	Scarborough	York	
General Office	0.97	1.08 - 2.13 <sup>(2)</sup>	3.23	2.08	1.0 - 3.0 <sup>(3)</sup>	2.13	1.5
Medical Office	0.97	1.08 - 2.13 <sup>(2)</sup>	5.91	4.17	1.0 - 3.0 <sup>(3)</sup>	2.13	3
General Retail	0	4.74	3.0	3.57	1.0 - 3.0 <sup>(3)</sup>	2.13	1.5 <sup>(4)</sup>
Large Retail	0	4.74	3.0	6.67 <sup>(5)</sup>	1.0 - 3.0 <sup>(3)</sup>	2.13	3 <sup>(6)</sup>
Groceries/Supermarket	3.57	4.74	3.0	3.57-6.67 <sup>(5)</sup>	1.0 - 3.0 <sup>(3)</sup>	3.57	2.5
Bank/Financial Institution	0	4.74	3.0	3.57	3.00	2.12	4 <sup>(7)</sup>
Restaurant	0	2.13 - 20.83 <sup>(8)</sup>	2.9 - 14.52 <sup>(2)</sup>	10.2 - 16.95 <sup>(2)</sup>	1.0 - 10.7 <sup>(2)</sup>	3.57 - 10.53 <sup>(2)</sup>	3 <sup>(9)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> Separate standards are proposed for Downtown and Central Waterfront, Centres, and Avenues

<sup>(2)</sup> Varies by size of Gross Floor Area

<sup>(3)</sup> Varies by location in Scarborough

<sup>(4)</sup> Parking minimum exempted for ancillary use in building, which must meet three criteria:

1. In mixed commercial/residential building in Mixed Use Area (Official Plan land use designation (Map 13-21))

2. GFA < 150 m<sup>2</sup>

3. Located at ground floor (e.g. ground floor store or bank in residential building)

<sup>(5)</sup> Higher standard applies to sites with GFA > 3000 m<sup>2</sup>

<sup>(6)</sup> Larger retail standard applies to sites with GFA > 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>

<sup>(7)</sup> Proposed parking minimum is reduced to 2 spaces per 100 m<sup>2</sup> for ancillary use in mixed use building (See footnote 4 above)

<sup>(8)</sup> Varies depending on Zone (i.e., Commercial - General C1/C2 zones, Other zones etc)

<sup>(9)</sup> Parking minimum exempted for sites with GFA < 150 m<sup>2</sup>

**(Source: Exhibit 12-2, "Parking Zoning Standards Review Phase 2: Office, Retail and Restaurant Use Component" (IBI Group, January 2007))**

### EXHIBIT 3

#### Recommended Minimum and Maximum Parking Standards –Condominium Apartments

Location	Resident Standard (to accommodate personal vehicles)								Visitor Parking (Minimum& maximum)
	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedrooms		3+Bedrooms		
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	
Downtown Core	0.30	0.45	0.50	0.75	0.70	1.05	0.90	1.35	0.10
Downtown and Central Waterfront	0.30	0.45	0.50	0.75	0.80	1.20	1.00	1.50	0.10
Centres and Avenues on Subway	0.60	0.90	0.70	1.05	0.90	1.35	1.00	1.50	0.10
Other Avenues (well served by Surface Transit)	0.70	1.05	0.80	1.20	0.90	1.35	1.10	1.65	0.15
Rest of City	0.80	-	0.90	-	1.00	-	1.20	-	0.20

Note: Maximum standards are 50% higher than the minimum standards except the Rest of the City where there are no maximum standards.

**(Source: Table 4-1, “Parking Standards Review – Phase 2 Apartment Building/Condominium, Townhouse Component, Zoning By-law Review Project” (Cansult Limited, February 2007))**

**EXHIBIT 4**

**Recommended Minimum and Maximum Parking Standards –Rental Apartments**

Location	Resident Standard (to accommodate personal vehicles)								Visitor Parking (Minimum& maximum)
	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedrooms		3+Bedrooms		
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	
Downtown Core	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.60	0.50	0.75	0.70	1.05	0.10
Downtown and Central Waterfront	0.20	0.30	0.40	0.60	0.60	0.90	0.80	1.20	0.10
Centres and Avenues on Subway	0.40	0.60	0.50	0.75	0.70	1.05	0.80	1.20	0.10
Other Avenues (well served by Surface Transit)	0.50	0.75	0.60	0.90	0.70	1.05	0.90	1.35	0.15
Rest of City	0.80	-	0.90	-	1.00	-	1.20	-	0.20

\*Rental Apartment minimum standards are generally about 75% of the recommended condo minimum standards except for the Rest of the City where the standards are the same (as evident from the empirical data).

**Source: Table 4-2, “Parking Standards Review – Phase 2 Apartment Building/Condominium, Townhouse Component, Zoning By-law Review Project” (Cansult Limited, February 2007))**

## EXHIBIT 5

### Recommended Minimum Standards for Condos vs Existing Parking Standards

Location	Resident Standard (to accommodate personal vehicles)								Visitor Parking	
	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedrooms*		3+Bedrooms		Recommended	Existing
	Recommended	Existing	Recommended	Existing	Recommended	Existing	Recommended	Existing		
Downtown Core	0.30	0.30	0.50	0.50	0.70	0.75	0.90	1.20	0.10	0.06
Downtown and Central Waterfront	0.30	0.30	0.50	0.50	0.80	0.95	1.00	1.20	0.10	0.06
Centres and Avenues on Subway <sup>1</sup>	0.60	0.85-1.1	0.70	0.85-1.1	0.90	1.0-1.1	1.00	1.0-1.1	0.10	0.1-0.25
Other Avenues (well served by Surface Transit)	0.70	n/a	0.80	n/a	0.90	n/a	1.10	n/a	0.15	n/a
Rest of City <sup>2</sup>	0.80	0.39-1.25	0.90	0.74-1.25	1.00	0.95-1.25	1.20	0.95-1.35	0.20	0.2-0.25

Notes:

1. York -NYC condo standards (within 500m of rapid transit)
2. Range of standards for various locations

Legend

Significant difference

**(Source: Presentation to City of Toronto staff “Workshop on Residential Parking Standards” by Cansult Limited, January 25, 2007)**

## EXHIBIT 6

2006 Toronto Residential Parking Survey Results: Average Vehicles/Unit by Location and Type/Size  
(Based on sample buildings with survey response rate of 15+ per Building)

Type/Unit Size (# of Bedrooms)		Average Vehicles/Unit							
		Condominium Apartments (post 1975)				Market Rental Apartments (post 1975)			
		Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3+ Bedrooms	Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3+ Bedrooms
Location									
1. Downtown Core	<i>0.20</i>	0.79	1.05	1.75	<i>0.57</i>	0.30	<i>0.80</i>		
2. Downtown and Central Waterfront	<i>0.75</i>	0.73	1.11	1.32	0.13	<i>0.43</i>			
3. Centres & Avenues near rapid transit stations		0.90	1.17	1.35	<i>0.25</i>	0.51	0.79	<i>0.93</i>	
4. Avenues well served by surface transit	<i>0.50</i>	0.92	1.14	1.10		<i>0.57</i>	<i>1.06</i>	1.00	
5. Rest of the City		1.17	1.05	1.12		<i>1.25</i>	0.85	1.30	

Notes: 1. Italicized and shaded cell values are based on fewer than 20 responses in the cell.

2. For blank cells less than 15 responses per building were received

**(Source: Table 3-1, “Parking Standards Review – Phase 2 Apartment Building/Condominium, Townhouse Component, Zoning By-law Review Project” (Cansult Limited, February 2007))**

**EXHIBIT 7**

**Proposed Minimum Number of Required Off-Street Bicycle Spaces**

Type	Downtown and Central Waterfront / City Centres		Rest of City	
	Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2
<b>General Office/ Government Office</b>	0.2 spaces/ 100 m <sup>2</sup>	Greater of: 0.2 spaces/100 m <sup>2</sup> or 6 spaces for sites with non-residential GFA>1000 m <sup>2</sup>	0.13 spaces/ 100 m <sup>2</sup>	Greater of: 0.15 spaces/100 m <sup>2</sup> or 6 spaces for sites with non-residential GFA>1000 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Medical Office</b>	0.15 spaces/ 100 m <sup>2</sup>	Greater of: 0.15 spaces/100 m <sup>2</sup> or 6 spaces for sites with non-residential GFA>1000 m <sup>2</sup>	0.1 spaces/ 100 m <sup>2</sup>	Greater of: 0.1 spaces/100 m <sup>2</sup> or 6 spaces for sites with non-residential GFA>1000 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Retail/ Restaurant</b>	0.2 spaces/ 100 m <sup>2</sup>	Greater of: 0.3 spaces/100 m <sup>2</sup> or 6 spaces for sites with non-residential GFA>1000 m <sup>2</sup>	0.13 spaces/ 100 m <sup>2</sup>	Greater of: 0.25 spaces/100 m <sup>2</sup> or 6 spaces for sites with non-residential GFA>1000 m <sup>2</sup>

Type 1 = Long-term (secure) parking

Type 2 = Short-term parking

**(Source: Exhibit 10-2, “Parking Zoning Standards Review Phase 2: Office, Retail and Restaurant Use Component” (IBI Group, January 2007))**

**EXHIBIT 8**

**Minimum Number of Shower Facilities Required for each Gender**

<b>Required Number of Type 1 Bicycle Spaces</b>	<b>Number of Showers Stalls</b>
0-4	0
5-29	1
30-59	2
60-89	3
90-119	4
120-149	5
150-179	6
Over 179	7 plus 1 for each additional 30 bicycle spaces

**(Source: Exhibit 10-3, “Parking Zoning Standards Review Phase 2: Office, Retail and Restaurant Use Component” (IBI Group, January 2007))**

Map 1

