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CITY OF TORONTO
PARKING STANDARDS REVIEW -PHASE TWO APARTMENT BUILDING/ MULTI-UNIT BLOCK DEVELOPMENTS COMPONENT
NEW ZONING BY-LAW PROJECT
Project No. C0342-February 2007

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By

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Cansult Limited was engaged by the City of Toronto in December 2005 to conduct a residential parking standards study for apartment building and condominium townhouse developments (multi-unit block developments), as part of the New Zoning By-Law Project.

1.1 Background and Purpose

The Zoning By-Law Project is to create a singlezoning by-law for the amalgamated City of Toronto, in place of the existing 41 zoning by-laws. Phase 1 of the Parking and Loading Standards Review was completed by the IBI Group in January, 2005. Phase 2 of this project has been split into two studies. This study is to recommend appropriate parking standards for apartment buildings (greater than 5 dwelling units) and condominium townhouse residential developments with six or more units (with shared on-site parking spaces) across the City of Toronto. A separate study is addressing standards for selected commercial land uses. According to the Terms of Reference, the recommended revisions to existing residential parking standards are to reflect:

•the parking needs of City residents (a function of car ownership and visitor parking demands) as determined by demand surveys/research and •pro-transit City policies that are included in the new Official Plan and related planning policies, programs and practices. The challenge was to determine how many spaces should be provided in different types/locations of residential buildings to satisfy the parking needs of residents and their visitors, while balancing the desire to reduce costs and minimize auto use, and the need to consider 'community concerns' related to parking. The relevant policies/practices to be considered under the Terms of Reference include options such as:

•reduced parking standards for specific types of targetted housing (seniors housing, social housing, student housing, and alternative housing); and •reduced parking for buildings that are close to frequent or higher order transit service, recognizing that many residents who rely on transit choose not to own a car.

Finally, this study is to address a number of issues including:

•paid visitor parking and the issues surrounding the use of this method to control the misuse of visitor parking;
•bike parking;
•live/work units; and
•accessible parking requirements.

The current parking standards, which are summarized in Table 1.1, reflect the by-laws and/or guidelines developed by the former Metro Toronto municipalities over the last 30 or more years, and the experience of City staff in the various offices. The experience in the private sector (by Builders, Planners and Building Managers) and by City staff in working with these by-laws were fully considered through workshops and meetings in making recommendations for changes to the existing standards.

Table 1.1: Existing Parking Standards for Toronto Apartment Buildings

Location/By Law Category	Parking Spaces per Unit for Residents	Visitor Parking Spaces	Total Parking Required
Former City of Toronto <25 units Outside downtown parking zone	1.0	0.25	1.25
Former City of Toronto >25 units	1.0 per 102 sq. m/ GFA	0.25	Varies with size
Apartments >6 units inside Downtown Parking Zone	0.3 for bachelor 0.5 for one- bedroom 0.75 for two bedroom 1.2 for 3 bedroom+	0.06	0.36 0.56 0.81 1.26
Condominium Apartments in Downtown Former City of Toronto Works and Emergency Services Department guidelines			0.7 for one bedroom 1.2 for two bedroom
North York By-Law 7625 – apartment building	1.25	0.25	1.5
North York Centre Policy	0,9 min within 500m of RT 1.1 max within 500 m of RT 1.3 beyond 500m of RT	0.10	1.0 min 1.2 max 1.4
Sheppard Corridor	1.0-1.15	0.25	1.25-1.4
Former City of Scarborough	1.0+.1 rental 1.0+.2 condo	0.20	1.3 1.4
Former City of York Apartments Rental **Apartments Rental within 500m of RT** **Apartments Condo** **Apartments Condo within 500 m of RT**	.85 bachelor/1 bedroom .95 two+ bedrooms .72 bachelor/1 bedroom .81 two bedrooms 1.0 bachelor/one bedroom 1.1 two+ bedrooms .85 bachelor/1 bedroom 1.0 two+ bedroom	0.25	1.10 1.20 0.97 1.06 1.25 1.45 1.10 1.25
Former City of Etobicoke	1.05 for one bedroom 1.20 for 2 bedroom 1.35 for 3 bedroom	0.20	1.25 1.40 1.55
Former Borough of East York	1.25	0	1.25

It should also be recognized that, in a related effort, the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation is currently developing a Central Waterfront Parking Strategy to be consistent with the pro-transit policies of the City's new Official Plan.

1.2 Study Scope

The major components of the study include the following:

1. Review of Phase 1 Study and other recent studies to ensure that the issues are understood and that any lessons learned in past efforts are applied to the design of the surveys.

2. Empirical Survey of Auto Ownership and Parking Demands. This includes the following sub-tasks:

•sample design and selection using random sampling lists prepared by SM Research Inc.

•design of survey form to address key issues (**primarily auto ownership, parking and visitor parking issues**) for tenants and owner occupants.

•conduct of mail-back survey over 8 weeks including preparation of initial and follow-up mailings and ongoing monitoring of responses to minimize unnecessary mailings.

•data entry, data summary and analysis of the survey results to develop preliminary parking standards by building type/location.

3. Building management surveys for selected rental and condominium buildings to confirm residential survey findings and address visitor parking and other issues.

4. Attitude surveys to examine parking preferences of tenants/unit owners, building owners and builders/developers.

5. Analysis and synthesis of the result of the surveys, and additional research and analysis to address issues not fully addressed in the parking demand survey.

6. Review of visitor parking needs to establish reasonable visitor parking requirements for different building and/or unit types.

7. Review of targeted housing (social and senior housing) standards.

8. Review of bicycle standards.

9. Review of the need for, and experience with, designated accessible parking spaces. The approach, findings and recommendations of the study are presented herein.

3.2.7 Visitor Parking Demands

Visitor parking demands for both condo and rental apartments are lowest in the Downtown Core and highest in the outer suburbs (in areas with the least competitive transit services). The estimated number of visitors driving to apartment units (and requiring parking) varies by both location and apartment type, as shown in Table 3.5. It is noted that the estimated visitor parking demand in vehicle trips/week in Table 3.5 is only for the purpose of comparing locational class and building type visitor parking demands.

The number of visitors driving to condominium apartments is lowest in the Downtown Core and highest in outer suburban areas. Generally, visitor parking needs appear to increase as the level of transit access to the condominium apartments declines. For condos the estimated number of visitors per unit increases as one moves from the Downtown Core to the Rest of the City.

The same consistent relationship was not shown for the market rental and targeted rental units in the sample. However, the highest reported weekly visitors per unit (estimated based on the responses to Question 9 (of the survey questionnaire) - How often do you have visitors who drive to your home?) was for location 5 – Rest of City and the lowest visitors per week were observed in the Downtown Core, for all three unit types.

LOCATION	Visitor Parking Demand Frequency (visitors by car /week)*		
	Condo	Market Rental	Targeted
1. Downtown Core	0.81	0.64	0.64
2. Downtown and Central Waterfront	1.02	---	0.98
3. Centres & Avenues on the subway	1.09	1.12	0.71
4. Avenues well served by surface transit	1.17	0.98	---
5. Rest of City	1.29	1.18	1.27

Note:Sample includes only buildings with 20+ responses
* Visitors/week was estimated by translating the survey responses into average visits per week (less than once per month = 0, once or twice per month = .375, 3 times per month + .75 etc.)
The estimated visitor parking demand is for comparison purposes only

3.2.8 Visitors Parking Problems vs. Housing Type

Visitor parking problems are more prevalent with rental buildings. Reported visitor parking problems do not show similar patterns to those for the estimated visitor parking demand frequency, as shown in Table 3.6. Targetted apartments and rental apartments reported higher levels of visitor parking problems than condominium apartments with 52% and 42% of respondents reporting frequent visitor parking problems for the targetted and rental units while only 12% of respondents living in condominium apartments reporting frequent problems. These results are based on survey responses to Question 12 (of the survey questionnaire) - How often do your visitors experience parking problems? - which reported 'always' or 'frequently'.

Reported visitor parking problems are particularly high for market rental and targeted rental in the downtown areas, where the visitor parking standard is 6 spaces per 100 units. High visitor parking problems were also reported for targeted rental units in location 3 (Centres & Avenues on the subway).

3.3 Visitor Parking Issues
3.3.1 Abuse of Visitor Parking

Building managers (for rental and condo developments) reported frequent examples of visitor parking being used by residents and others (so called "walk aways"), necessitating control measures including writing letters to residents, ticketing and, the ultimate sanction, towing the offending vehicle. Where residential buildings are located near other traffic generators, such as post-secondary schools, theatres or shops, visitor parking is often used by persons who are not visiting the building.

In condominium buildings which generally have concierge staff available 24 hours per day, parking use is monitored and staff deal with the abuse by notifying residents and arranging for others to be tagged or towed. In rental buildings with visitor parking problems, building superintendents are generally not available 24 hours a day to issue manual parking permits for visitor parking or monitor the use of the visitor parking lot. Where ongoing abuse of visitor parking occurs, building superintendents will call the police to ticket offenders, however, often the Police are unavailable due to other municipal parking priorities (i.e. ticketing and towing vehicles from arterial roads during rush hours). In such situations where problems are recurring, police will suggest that private firms which employ "municipal law enforcement officers" (M.L.E.O.s) who are trained and approved by the Toronto Police Service, be engaged to provide parking control services. In these situations the full cost of these services is paid for by the building management and the by-law enforcement officers issue municipal tickets to cars found to be in contravention of the applicable by-laws (abuse of visitor parking, parking in loading zones or driveways or in designated accessible parking spaces). The entire ticket revenue goes to the municipality.

Other private firms, such as ParkSmart offer solutions for parking control involving the use of pay-and-display machines (paid visitor parking). This option provides a convenient method for residents who can issue permits themselves at any time of the day or night without the anxiety of finding a superintendent or visiting the management office.

Technology is also available using smart cards thatallows residents to issue a "free" permit or token (contained in a microchip on the card) from the pay & display machine for their visitors to legally park in the visitor parking lot without any on-site staff intervention. The user inserts their smart card into the pay & display machine, which dispenses a permit that is displayed on the dashboard of the vehicle. In either case, security firms that are authorized to issue municipal tickets are responsible for monitoring and enforcement, including ticketing and towing.

3.3.2 Existing Utilization of Visitor Parking

Two data collection efforts were carried out to determine the actual demand for visitor parking including:

•surveys of visitor lots in areas where visitor spaces would most likely be used by visitors to the building or residents (because there were no major traffic generators in the area or such generators had ample parking); and
•the tabulation of the occupancy of visitor parking lots that are monitored by Epic Parking Control and reported tagging activities.

The surveys of 13 visitor parking lots outside the Downtown area during the peak visitor periods (one Friday and two Saturday nights between 10:00 and 12:00 PM in May 2006) revealed that the average occupancy of the available free visitor parking was 49% on Friday and between 61% and 67% on Saturday.

The occupancy of visitor parking lots at individual buildings ranged from 21% to 72% on the Friday (11 buildings) and 37% and 72% on the highest Saturday (67% average for 10 buildings). The occupancy range on the Saturday was 28% to 100% with an overall average of 61% for all 13 buildings.

Epic Parking Control provided data for visitor parking lots at 15 locations where they monitor pay-and-display lots for market rental buildings for four periods: June-August 2005, Sept – November 2005, December 2005-Feb 2006 and March-May 2006. These buildings would have all had visitor parking abuse problems. Based on the data collected during visits by Epic to these sites at various times during each period (12 to 28 visits per site per period) the average occupancy of visitor parking was 56% to 57%, surprisingly stable. The occupancy for individual buildings ranged from 24% to 100% and the values for individual buildings were also quite stable. The one factor that changed over the 12 month period was compliance in that the number of tags issued declined from 37% of parked vehicles to 24%, indicating that more spaces would have been available to persons who were visiting residents (but the actual level of use (occupancy of visitor spaces) did not change).