



March 28, 2022

10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Matthew Green

RE: IE28.8 Developing a Parking Strategy for Toronto (Ward All)

The Federation of North Toronto Residents Association (FoNTRA) is strongly supportive of the development of a Parking Strategy for Toronto, to be presented to City Council in Q4 of 2023.

We agree that “Managing parking effectively is an essential element to succeed in executing major city building objectives including achieving our climate change, housing affordability and traffic congestion management goals”. We also agree that “The advent of widespread curb lane cafés through the CaféTO program, the sudden and sustained growth of deliveries and curbside pick-ups of online orders, and new requirements for the safe and efficient pick-up and drop-off of people and goods have all increased the pressure on available curb space”.

However we think that the Parking issue is part of a bigger problem of Mobility and Public Realm: right now too much of our public (and private) realm is devoted to parking for stationary vehicles rather than movement. How do we make traffic circulation, deliveries, and pickups work better, especially in an environment where it is essential that we reduce our dependence on hydrocarbon-based traffic? While the need for short-term parking (deliveries) is increasing, how do we reduce our reliance on long-term parking? How and where do we enable electric vehicles to charge? How do we prevent our arterial (and neighbourhood) roads being used for parking rather than movement? How do we keep retail strips viable, in spite of increasing congestion on our streets?

Public realm is precious and we need to ensure it is shared equitably, and we need to be diligent to ensure this. Here are a couple of specific suggestions:

- The City has recently made a major move to eliminate parking minimum requirements in developments. Developers should be required to consider the parking needs for the existing retail in the area of the development and provide off-street public parking where required.
- Much of the rental bike parking is on the public realm - parks and sidewalks. Can this be moved into road parking spaces?

The Strategy needs to take a “public realm approach” and be willing to question established wisdom.

In order to do that it will need to involve the public - not just stakeholders. The Report correctly notes that “Parking has always been, and will continue to be, a principal concern for many residents and business owner/operators in Toronto. Parking can be viewed as an essential requirement for quality of life in the city, but it can also be the source of significant friction between neighbours, communities, businesses and others with opinions on the value parking brings to our transportation network as a whole”. We note that a recent article by John Stapleton and Yvonne Yuan, “Scarborough's ban on overnight parking is driving families out of Milliken”¹ illustrates the importance (and complexity) of parking in the lives of residents across the City.

Despite its importance, we are concerned that Stakeholder Engagement and Public Consultation arrangements will prove to be insufficient and inadequate, and consideration should be given to having resident representation (reflecting the various parts of the City) on the Parking Advisory Committee.

In addition, we have the following specific comments and suggestions for consideration:

- It should be made explicit throughout that “parking” includes parking for more than just cars, whether gasoline or electric vehicles;
- The list of Council approved policies (page 4) should include the Toronto Walking Strategy (2009);
- Principles (page 6) include “Fiscal Prudence and Transparency - Identify full cost and revenue opportunities of existing and future parking investments, including operating, capital and land value”. The principle of “user-pay” should be added here.

Your truly,

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Cc: City Council
Barbara Gray, General Manager, Transportation Services
Gregg Lintern, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
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The Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations (FoNTRA) is a non-profit, volunteer organization comprised of over 30 member organizations. Its members, all residents' associations, include at least 170,000 Toronto residents within their boundaries. The residents' associations that make up FoNTRA believe that Ontario and Toronto can and should achieve better development. Its central issue is not *whether* Toronto will grow, but *how*. FoNTRA believes that sustainable urban regions are characterized by environmental balance, fiscal viability, infrastructure investment and social renewal.

¹ Scarborough Mirror, March 11, 2022

https://www.toronto.com/opinion/scarboroughs-ban-on-overnight-parking-is-driving-families-out-of-milliken/article_b428a3b5-dc52-5d22-84cc-8f29fc872df8.html