

City Council
City of Toronto
100 Queen St W
Toronto, ON

February 27, 2024

Re: EX12.3 - Implementation of a Commercial Parking Levy

Dear City Council Members,

The Atmospheric Fund (TAF) is a regional climate agency based in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) supporting a net-zero future. TAF is pleased to see the City of Toronto proposing a commercial parking levy to support the City during this time of financial constraint. This levy is estimated to generate around \$100 to \$150 million in new revenues, which will support the City in making critical investments in transit services. The levy should also encourage modal shift towards transit and active transportation, thereby helping alleviate congestion, reduce carbon emissions, and improve air quality.

A commercial parking levy of this amount is “the equivalent of operating the entirety of the upcoming Eglinton and Finch West transit lines, and fund transit discounts through the Fair Pass program for all residents with low incomes. Every year.” [according to the Toronto Environmental Alliance](#). Transit improvements are crucial and urgent for Torontonians, and this funding tool should be implemented in order to support it.

However, TAF highly recommends including an exemption for parking spaces provided with electric vehicle (EV) charging equipment. Achieving the City of Toronto’s 2030 climate targets will require 30% of the vehicles on the road to be electric, an order of magnitude greater than today. Reaching this level of EV adoption will require a dramatic increase in the availability of public charging infrastructure. TAF has been supporting the City of Toronto in development of a Public EV Charging Plan, and the work done to date shows a need for thousands of additional public chargers, most of which will need to be located in privately owned parking facilities. The City has relatively few tools at its disposal to encourage installation of EV charging at existing private properties, and an exemption to this levy could be one of the most effective options.

TAF also recommends an exemption for parking spaces that host renewable energy equipment such as solar photovoltaic panels or geothermal bore fields. Toronto’s TransformTO climate plan includes a target of meeting 50% of community wide energy needs through renewable or low carbon sources such as solar and geothermal. Parking facilities are ideal sites for hosting large scale renewable energy equipment, either above the parking in solar canopies or below ground in geo-exchange bore fields. An exemption to the parking levy for parking facilities that host renewable energy systems could provide a significant incentive for private investment towards the City’s climate goals.

Overall, TAF is supportive of the City of Toronto's proposed commercial parking levy and **recommend that it also include exemptions or reductions for parking spaces served by electric vehicle chargers or renewable energy systems.**

Sincerely yours,



Bryan Purcell
VP Policy & Programs, The Atmospheric Fund

About The Atmospheric Fund

The Atmospheric Fund (TAF) is a regional climate agency that invests in low-carbon solutions for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) and helps scale them up for broad implementation. We are experienced leaders and collaborate with stakeholders in the private, public, and non-profit sectors who have ideas and opportunities for reducing carbon emissions. Supported by endowment funds, we advance the most promising concepts by investing, providing grants, influencing policies, and running programs. We're particularly interested in ideas that offer benefits in addition to carbon reduction such as improving people's health, creating local jobs, boosting urban resiliency, and contributing to a fair society.