



**MORE NEIGHBOURS
TORONTO**

Dear City Council

RE: EX12.3 Implementation of a Commercial Parking Levy

About More Neighbours Toronto

[More Neighbours Toronto](#) (MNTO) is a volunteer-only organization of housing advocates that believe in building more multi-family homes of all kinds for those who dream of building their lives in Toronto. We advocate for reforms to increase our city's ability to build more homes in every neighbourhood. We are a big-tent organization with members across the political spectrum who are committed to counterbalancing the anti-housing agenda that has dominated Toronto's politics, created an affordability crisis, and cost burdened a new generation of aspiring residents. We are firmly committed to the principle that housing is a human right and believe Toronto should be inclusive and welcoming to all.

Position

We support the commercial parking lot levy currently under review by Toronto City Council. A parking levy would begin to equitably distribute the costs of city services, as nearly 85% of parking in Toronto is currently free, covering an area of over 25 million square kilometres^[1]. Implementing a commercial parking levy would ensure that the substantial costs associated with large parking lots in Toronto are fairly accounted for. The prevalence of free parking in Toronto contradicts the goals of the city council and administration, which include reducing emissions, alleviating congestion, exercising fiscal responsibility, and addressing the pressing housing crisis.

Despite the city not mandating parking minimums on new dense downtown developments since 2022, land continues to be allocated for parking to meet the perceived demand for parking services from businesses and developers. Focusing on accommodating car commuting in a city where, even eight years ago, 50% of commuters^[2] utilized public or active transportation, prior to ongoing substantial investments in public transit, bike infrastructure, and large mixed-use walkable developments, is a significant misstep that can be avoided.

Parking lots in Toronto impose a social cost on everyone by sacrificing density for the benefit of car commuters. While some parking spaces are necessary, much of the current land dedicated to parking could instead be utilised for affordable housing. Fairly pricing parking based on its social cost would enable developers to allocate more land for dense housing, reduce expenses associated with constructing expensive underground parking lots, and promote the overall density of Toronto. This can be achieved through the moderate

levy of 17 cents per hour which if the city wishes to further its stated goals then this policy is incredibly beneficial.

Sincerely,

Ryan Flynn
More Neighbours Toronto

^[1] City of Toronto Commercial Parking Levy Report 2023, pg. 28

^[2] Statistics Canada. 2017. Toronto, C [Census subdivision], Ontario and Toronto, CDR [Census division], Ontario (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.