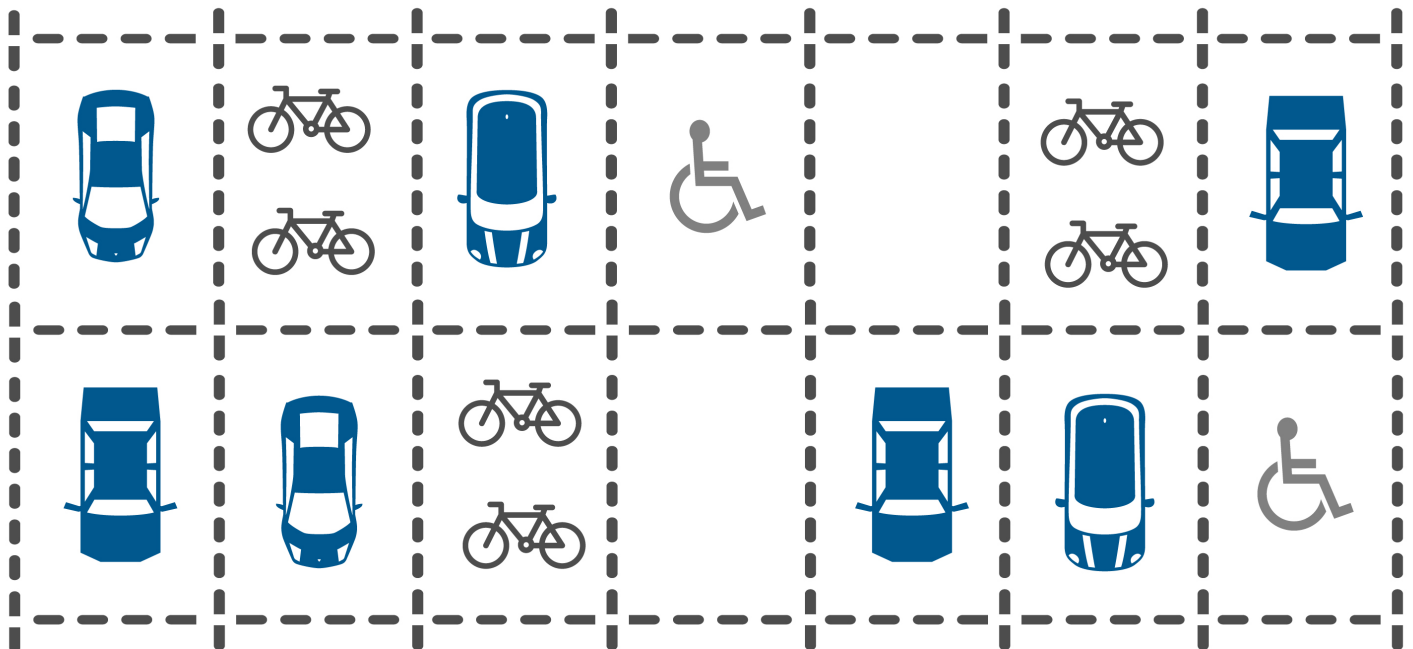




Review of Parking Requirements for New Developments

Phase 1 & 2 Public and Stakeholder Consultation



Public Meeting Summary

June 3, 2021
1:00-3:00 PM

*Prepared by Gladki Planning Associates
for the City of Toronto,
June 2021.*



Background

Requirements for automobile and bike parking in newly erected or enlarged buildings are identified in the city-wide [Zoning By-law 569-2013](#). On January 19, 2021, [Planning and Housing Committee \(PH20.4\)](#) asked staff to review these requirements to better align them with the objectives of the City’s Official Plan. The Review is guided by the principle that parking standards should allow only the maximum amount of automobile parking reasonably required for a given use and minimums should be avoided except where necessary to ensure equitable access, such as for accessible parking or in areas which would be difficult to serve with transit.

The Review is expected to conclude by the end of 2021 and will include public consultation meetings in June and September, through which City staff will seek the public’s feedback on proposed amendments to parking requirements in the zoning by-law and other related work.

Meeting Overview

On Thursday, June 3, 2021, the City of Toronto hosted the third public consultation meeting to present initial findings and emerging directions for the City-wide Parking Review, answer questions, and receive feedback from the public. Based on the expert advice of the City’s Medical Officer of Health to practice physical distancing to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of Toronto residents and City staff, the meeting was held online and phone-in only via WebEx Events.

The meeting was the third in a series of meetings for the public in June 2021, promoted through the City’s social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram), Councillors’ mailing lists, and on the City of Toronto website.



Image 1-2: Sample social media posts from the communications campaign promoting the meetings



Over 22 participants joined this first meeting. Attendees included residents, business owners, developers, landowners, and advocacy groups (see Figure 1) whose primary modes of transportation were public transit, walking, driving, and cycling (see Figure 2).

Figure 1 What brings you to this public meeting? Select all that apply.

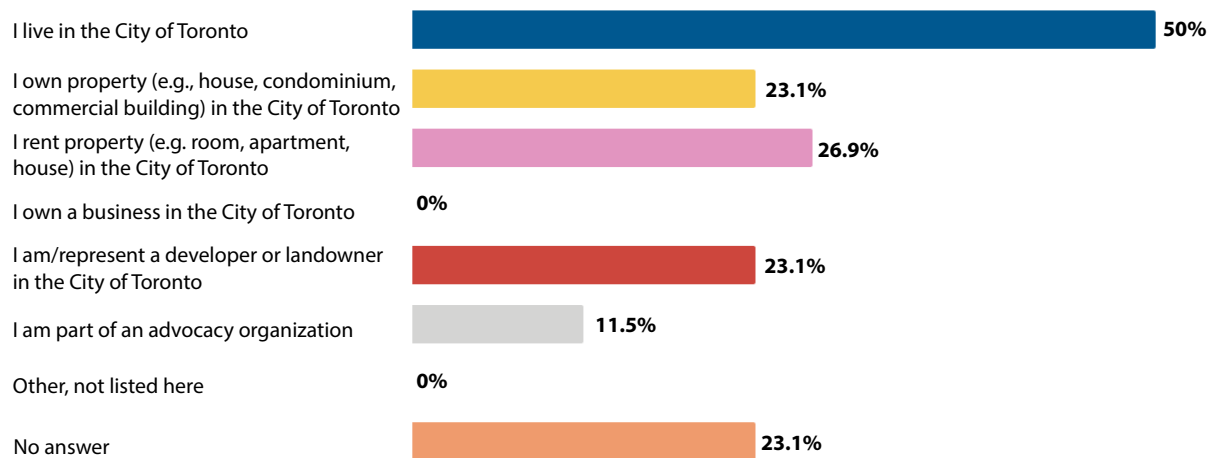
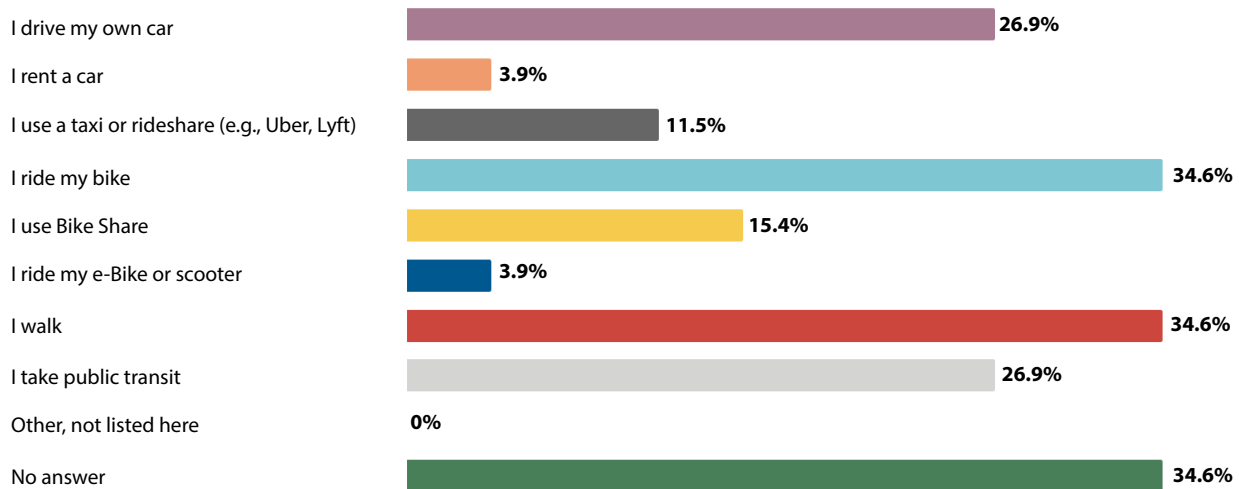


Figure 2 What modes of transportation do you most often use to move around the city? Please respond based on your activity prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and/or how you plan to travel post-pandemic. Select all that apply.



Following opening remarks and housekeeping by Gladki Planning Associates, Michael Hain spoke on behalf of the Transportation Planning, Policy and Analysis unit within the City Planning division. His presentation spanned current and shifting conceptions of parking rates, findings and emerging directions, among others. The presentation is available on the [project website](#).

Participants then had an opportunity to ask questions and share their thoughts. Feedback was accepted in writing through the Q&A function on WebEx and verbally through the Raise Hand function. Over 22 questions and comments were received on the following topics.



Questions & Answers

The Q & A portion of the event gave rise to a number of main question themes from stakeholders:

- Equity
- Cycling and bicycle parking
- “Missing Middle” housing
- Data and analysis
- Car share
- Electric vehicles
- Autonomous vehicles
- Miscellaneous

A full list of the questions received is below, accompanied by answers.

Equity

- ***Where does WheelTrans fit in? Are you communicating with them to ensure that your projections are in sync with theirs?***

WheelTrans is under the jurisdiction of the TTC, with whom we have been speaking. They require pick-up and drop-off spaces but not parking.

- ***I am concerned that including affordable housing as a reason for reducing parking rates sets a dangerous human rights precedent that low-income people are somehow less important than affluent people or that low-income people must change jobs if they require a vehicle for work. Could you comment please?***

This parking review will maintain minimum parking rates in areas far from transit and are understood to have more affordable housing. Affordable housing will not be connected to an elimination of parking rates.

- ***If a lone accessible spot at a desired location is taken, is there any ability to help support accessibility through programs allowing such vehicles to park at nearby accessible locations and get discounts on accessible last-mile taxis?***

This is an interesting idea. We will take it back and discuss.

- ***What is the City's current requirement for accessible parking spaces in a residential building?***

The [amount of accessible parking required](#) ranges from 2% to 20% of the total parking, depending on how much parking is provided.



Cycling and bicycle parking

- ***How do we better align vehicle parking requirements with bike parking requirements? As we look to incentivize changes in usage towards bikes (including cargo bikes and e-bikes), how do we combine these to recognize bikes as a key part of transportation, not solely recreation?***

The City supports increasing parking requirements for bicycles. If we want people to bike, then there needs to be parking available. Measures to accommodate cargo and e-bikes will be considered in an update to the City's Bicycle Parking Guidelines.

- ***You referred to different types of parking for cargo bikes. What might this look like? From my experience, finding parking for a cargo bike is sometimes difficult when I am out shopping.***

Cargo bikes are generally too large to fit in standard bike parking. Measures to accommodate cargo bikes will be considered in an update to the City's Bicycle Parking Guidelines.

- ***Will there be bicycle parking at Major Transit Nodes? Not only at subway stations but also at major bus and streetcar terminals.***

The TTC is working towards having bike parking available at all subway stations. The City is working with Metrolinx to include parking at new transit stations. The City and TTC are working through some issues associated with bike parking at surface transit stops and are hopeful to bring more bike parking to these areas.

"Missing Middle" housing

- ***Will eliminating parking minimums also be coupled with further zoning reform to allow more dense built forms? Especially along major subway corridors such as the Danforth.***

The City recently launched a [Municipal Comprehensive Review](#), which outlines what is allowed in Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) and along major subway corridors. The City is looking at [expanding housing options in areas designated as Neighbourhoods](#).

- ***Will policies look at accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and non-apartment households through the apartment or non-apartment lens? The residents of such housing might be more like apartment households, but limiting these built forms.***

We are working closely with the team that is at [expanding housing options in areas designated as Neighbourhoods](#) to ensure that the parking requirements we set for some of these "missing middle" types of housing will not discourage them in any way. We hope to cover most of where that development will happen by removing minimum requirements in Policy Areas. Several of the new housing types approved by Council in the last couple of years have come with the removal of parking minimums.



Data and analysis

- ***Do you have any trend lines for population groups (e.g., Torontonians who cycle, jog, walk)? How are these groups going to change relative to the proportion of the total population?***

The City is aware of general population trends, but we have not yet examined transit and cycling use by age. We are aware of a general trend in the direction of more active transportation (i.e., walking and cycling).

- ***What analysis is being done for residential, commercial and office parking usage to inform both development and the public? For example, the City of Waterloo studied their downtown parking lots to inform the public that their usage was 25% to 40%, and not even 70% during peak times. This helped the public better understand oversupply.***

At the moment, we have to look at historical data. Collecting data during the COVID-19 pandemic would not be representative of typical patterns.

Car share

- ***Is the City considering a minimum parking requirement for car share in large condos and apartments?***

When the City had parking minimums, we would allow developers to trade required parking spaces for car share spaces. Without parking minimums, there is no longer incentive for this trade; however, there would still be a market incentive.

- ***Do you have any statistics on which areas are using car shares and which are not?***

At the moment, we have to look at historical data. Collecting data during the COVID-19 pandemic would not be representative of typical patterns.

Electric vehicles

- ***Do you have cost estimates for providing EV capabilities for every parking space in new developments? What is the capacity of Toronto Hydro to supply this level of power to the building?***

Municipalities in the Toronto area are currently conducting a study examining the cost increment that would be required for all new developments to be EV ready. We hope to have results from this report for the September consultation.



Autonomous vehicles

- ***How is the City taking on considerations for autonomous vehicles as part of this parking review?***

More information can be found in the [Automated Vehicles Tactical Plan](#). It is likely that if AV vehicles do become more popular, the demand for parking will decrease, particularly in dense areas with high property values. An automated vehicle may make it easier to not own your own vehicle, and removing minimums allows us to support that vision for the future.

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Miscellaneous

- ***Will this process include a review of parking standards for Industrial Employment uses?***

Yes, industrial uses are being included in this project.

- ***These ideas may make sense in downtown Toronto areas but they are not suitable for the suburbs. TTC service is inadequate in suburbs such as south and west Etobicoke. Condos with retail at grade that don't provide parking have constant issues with illegal parking. People also need parking where they shop, and many families require a car for their needs. Can you please comment?***

We are not proposing to remove any existing parking, but rather remove the requirement for parking. We want people to have the option to not pay for parking if they don't want to drive. Those who want parking will be able to get it.

- ***Thank you for this great start to the public engagement process. From what I have read, any minimum parking requirement is essentially a subsidy to car ownership. It sounds as though this is generally understood from your presentation material. Given this, and the City's stated goals for sustainability and affordable housing, what is the justification for maintaining a policy of parking minimums at all?***

Not everywhere in the City is well served by transit, so removing this requirement in some locations may have negative impacts on residents who are dependent on a vehicle.



- ***You described a Ryerson research study that found a flexible approach to reducing parking over the long term through building space can change uses in the future. You said that the authors of the Ryerson study are “comfortable” with your direction. Could you expand on that?***

The study was completed for the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario, not endorsed by the City of Toronto. It is [available online](#). The study recommended the City of Toronto reduce its parking requirements and allow parking to be located above grade, among others. We spoke with the main author of this report and he was comfortable with the direction of our work.

- ***Is the City exploring opportunities to engage with property owners in areas with underutilized parking garages? For example, there are neighbourhoods where vacant underground parking spaces could be better served by allowing access to other residents in the area who need it.***

Many buildings restrict people who are not occupants of the building from using their parking. In the medium and long term, the City will have to take steps to encourage them to open up.

- ***Has there been any work done to study the removal or transformation of on-street parking uses (e.g., CaféTO)?***

The [CaféTO](#) program has been replacing parking and, in some cases, travel lanes with patio space. The City is considering making these efforts permanent in certain areas. In addition, the Residential Parking Strategy is looking at how to improve the on-street parking permit program and front yard parking.



Comments & Feedback

The comments received from members of the public focused on two main themes: need for more data and support of elimination of minimums.

Requirement for more data

- *We need more data. We need current data before making these massive decisions.*

In support of elimination of minimums

- *I want to express my strong support for eliminating minimum and [setting] maximum parking requirements. Let potential buyers and renters decide whether they want to pay for parking spaces.*
- *Considering the climate crisis and housing affordability crisis, I urge you to remove car parking minimums. We should increase secure bicycle parking minimums to encourage ppl to change their mode share.*
- *I absolutely support eliminating parking minimums. Thank you for the meeting.*
- *Thank you for having this public consultation and I want to express my support for eliminating parking minimums.*
- *I fully support reducing or eliminating parking minimums.*

Next Steps

This report is not intended to be a verbatim transcript of the virtual meeting, but instead provides a high-level summary and answers to consolidated questions from participants. Our next steps include online engagement over the summer leading to a second round of consultation in September 2021.

Please visit [the project website](#) for more information, materials, and meeting notices. You can also subscribe to receive periodic e-updates about opportunities to participate throughout the duration of the City-wide Parking Review.

You can continue to contact City staff to provide your comments or ask questions directly:

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