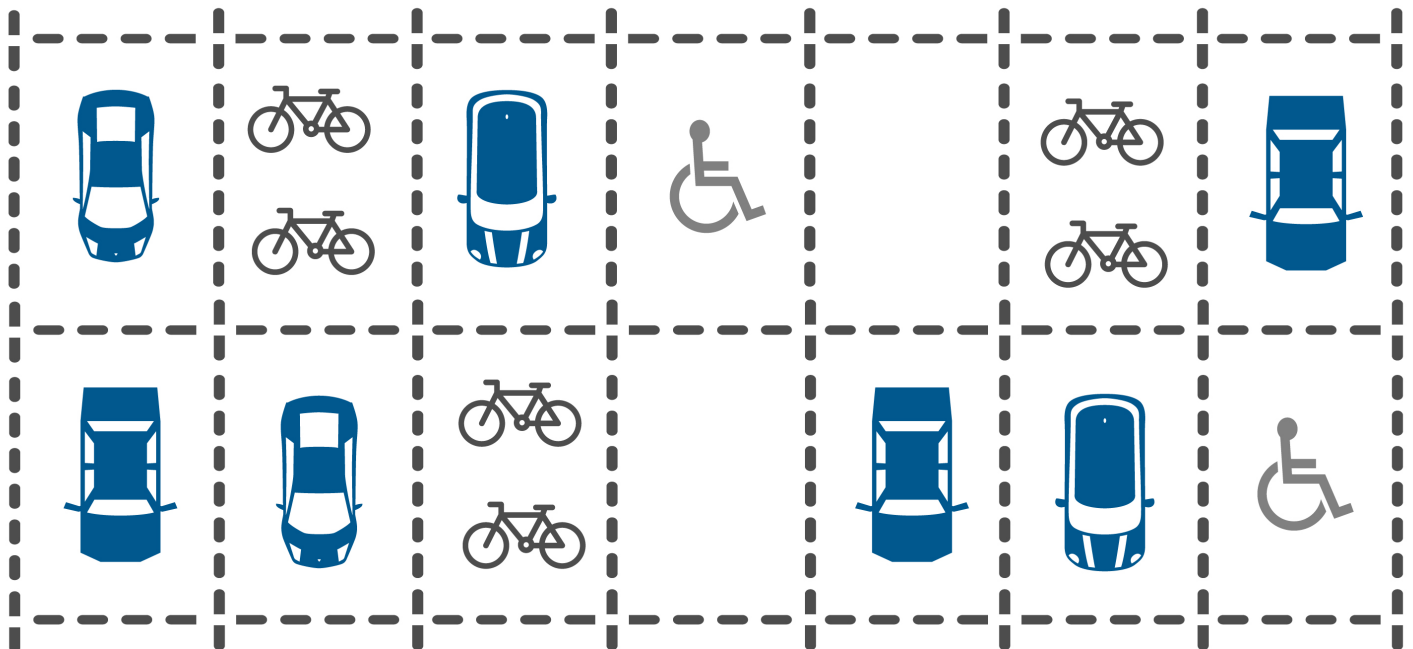




# Review of Parking Requirements for New Developments

Phase 1 & 2 Public and Stakeholder Consultation



## Public Meeting Summary

June 1, 2021  
7:00-9:00 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 Tuesday, June 1, 2021, the City of Toronto hosted a 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 first 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.

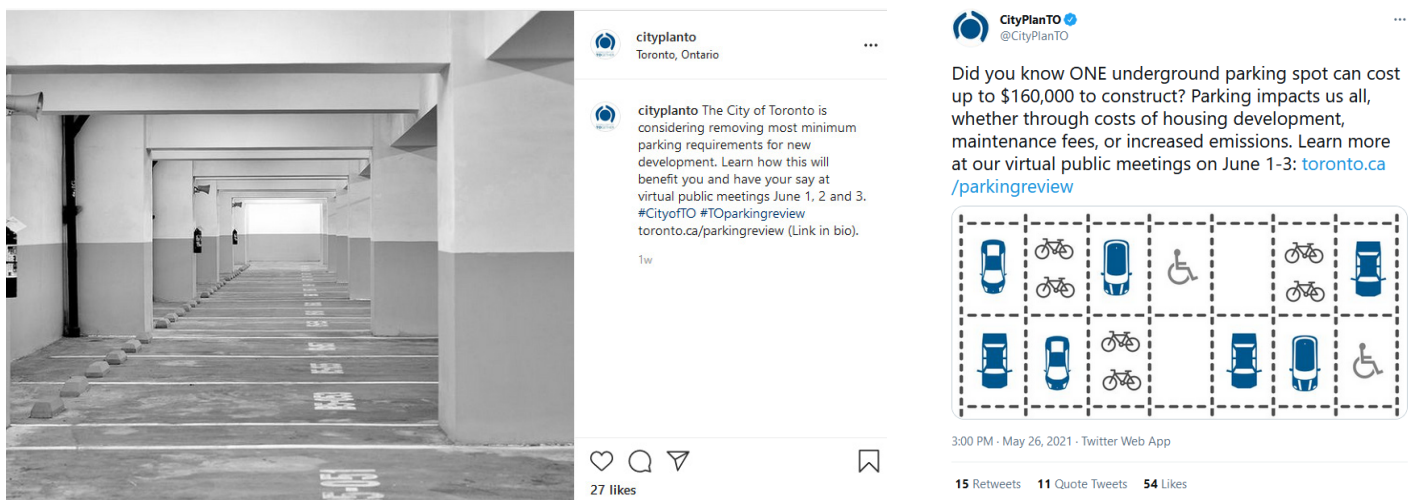


Image 1-2: Sample social media posts from the communications campaign promoting the meetings



Over 27 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.

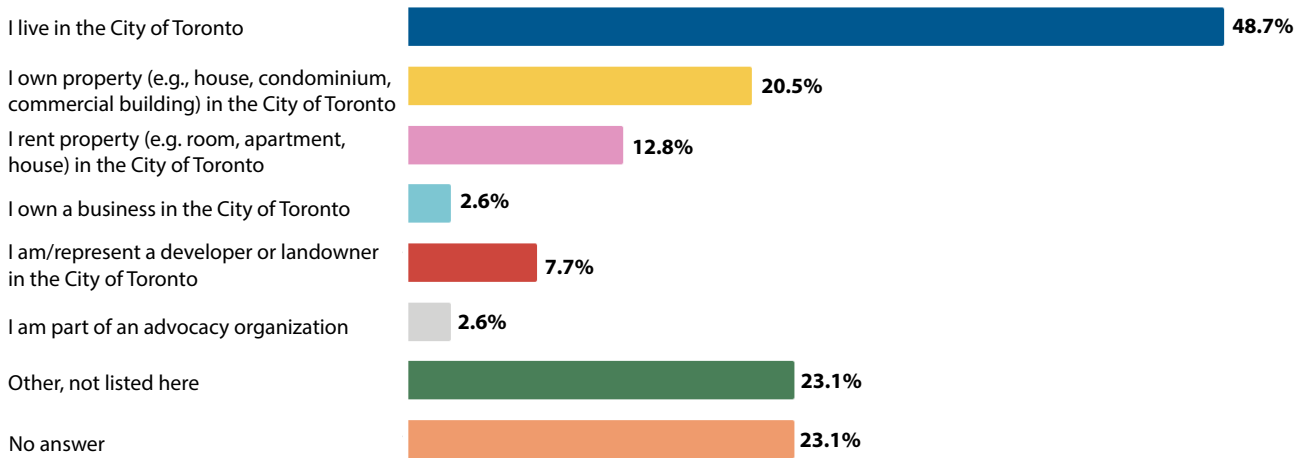
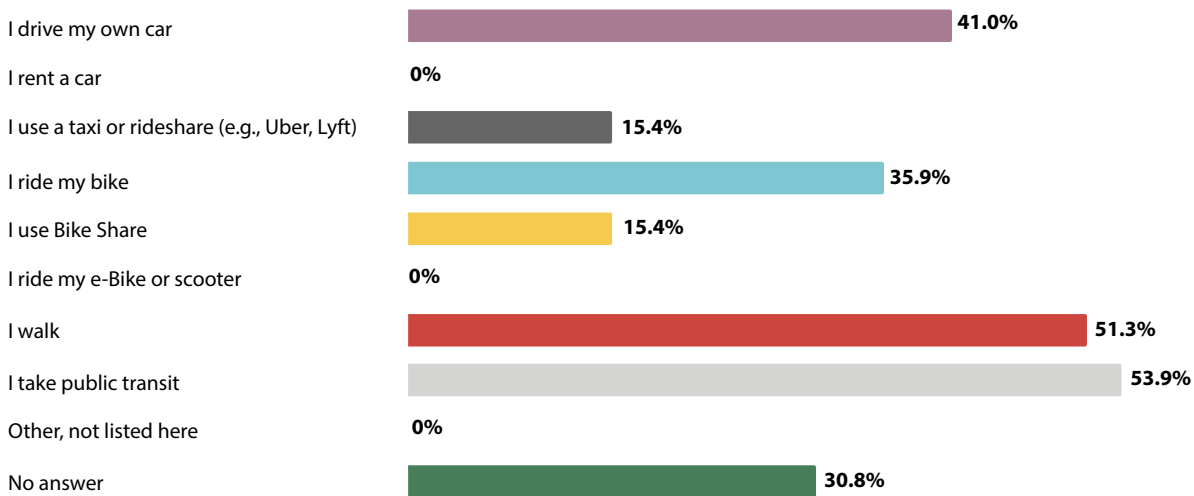


Figure 2 What modes of transportation do you most often use to move around the city? Please respond based on your activity prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and/or how you plan to travel post-pandemic. Select all that apply.



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 31 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 the public:

- Policy Areas and areas of influence
- Cycling and bicycle parking
- Public consultation
- Application of parking maximums
- Rideshare
- Zoning By-law
- Equity
- Miscellaneous

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

### Policy Areas and areas of influence

- ***Are the Policy Areas being expanded to reflect the “area of influence” of transit and mobility options versus simply the former “avenue corridor designations”? This could speak to the actual mobility characteristics of areas of the City as opposed to the zoning designations applicable to the areas of influence.***

This is the intent. For example, in Policy Areas well-served by transit, the boundaries would be expanded to include all Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs).

- ***You talked about establishing a process for expanding parking policy area boundaries when new transit infrastructure begins operation. Has there been consideration of expanding parking policy areas when new transit is planned instead of only operation? Generally, we see development planned even before new higher-order transit begins operation.***

Our current thinking is to expand the policy area boundary when the MTSA ([Major Transit Station Area](#)) boundary is approved. The boundary would have to be approved after the transit line was completed.

- ***Is there guidance for how parking minimums will be adjusted within the Policy Areas that reflect both existing higher-order transit and planned/improved transit nodes and connectivity? Especially for development applications that are in the approvals process and would like to reflect the direction that is clearly evolving through this timely exercise by the City?***

The transition guidelines haven't been developed yet. They will be prepared by September, but may only be publicly ready for the Council report in November or December.



- ***In speaking to the MTSA characteristics and the mobility options they would offer, would streetcar routes qualify as rapid transit routes, given their exclusive corridor characteristics?***

No. Similar to the bus routes along Eglinton Ave, Kingston Road, and St. Clair Ave, streetcars do not rise to the standard of LRT (light rail transit).

- ***Do you have any thoughts or research about expanding areas of influence to include major bike routes that don't have transit near them (e.g. Shaw St.)?***

We hadn't considered that, but now we will!

- ***How are the Policy Areas being consolidated or expanded given the principle of by-law simplification and minimum parking rate reductions?***

We are looking at having two different Policy Areas plus the rest of the City. One of these Policy Areas would look at the lands that are in the area of influence of higher-order transit, while the other would be within areas of influence of surface transit. The housing. If the pool of money towards parking became smaller, there would be more money available for the housing component. Ultimately, it's up to Council to execute this change.

- ***Do you have a sense of scale of reduction for the two planned Policy Areas?***

We are discussing the full elimination of parking minimums from the Policy Areas, with the possible exception of visitor and accessible parking.

- ***Should these requirements apply not only to MTSA's but also to TTC lines and bus routes? Will your proposal produce an option for Council that applies these standards regardless of whether the transit route is funded by the province and is carried under MTSA or TTC?***

Policy Areas that have MTSA's are an easier example to explain; one of the other Policy Areas is the areas of influence around surface transit. We're still determining the exact boundary and size for that area of influence by looking at the mode shares at different distances from transit stops based on the [Transportation Tomorrow Survey](#). California is looking at removing parking minimums half a mile from any transit stop, even those that come every 15 minutes. If we used this standard, it would cover almost the entire City of Toronto. The provincial threshold is approximately 800 metres from the transit station. City Council has adopted a few boundaries, generally between about 700 and 1000 metres from higher-order transit stops (e.g., subway station, GO station, etc.); however, they have yet to be approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.



## Cycling and bicycle parking

- ***What data is being used to support the increase in bicycle parking requirements? Where is the demand coming from?***

The main data source was the [Transportation Tomorrow Survey](#), which saw an increase in mode share in bicycles. We expect this to continue given the City's investment in cycling infrastructure.

- ***Are City staff considering alternatives to the current standards of bicycle parking space dimensions and locations in residential condo buildings?***

For both bike parking and auto parking, this review is only looking at the number of spaces that are required. The dimensions of bike parking would be reviewed during the update of the Bicycle Parking Guidelines, which is not part of this review.

- ***When you say "Explore payment in lieu of bike parking policy for bike share," does this mean specifically the Toronto Bicycle Share or bike infrastructure in general?***

Yes, the Toronto Bicycle Share, although there is openness in looking at other places it could go. Revenue raised from this are not high so it's unlikely to support a bicycle network.

- ***Is the plan to provide Bikeshare with every Toronto Parking Authority lot?***

[Toronto Parking Authority](#) has a strategy to provide Bikeshare stations at all Green P lot locations, especially near transit stations and bike lanes. However, there will be some exceptions (e.g., below-grade parking facilities).

## Public consultation

- ***What methods will be used to reach out to the public for further consultation? I only found about this meeting from the Toronto Planning Twitter account. For the majority of the population who don't follow the account, how will they know that they can engage in this issue to learn and voice their opinion about the issue?***

This meeting was shared on the City's website and email subscriber list, social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter), and Councillor's mailing lists. If you have suggestions, please [let us know!](#)



## Application of parking maximums

- I love the concept of parking maximums but how is this going to be applied? When looking at infill opportunities, you don't want to lose your parking, especially if you are looking to subdivide or sell. Often you have to build up or build out so you can repurpose the former large parking lot into infill.*

Parking maximums are structured like parking minimums: there is a number of spaces required per 100 sq. metres or per unit type. The thinking right now is to maintain this kind of structure; the requirement would shift depending on what is being constructed.

- One problem with this approach is that you can't increase the parking density above the maximum to then reduce it at a later date. Is this being planned? Other cities that did this killed infill development.*

We haven't considered this yet – we will bring it back to the team to review.

## Rideshare

- Are you looking at provisions for car sharing options? What considerations will be given if a rideshare service is offered to a housing development in getting parking minimums removed?*

We don't have any specific plans to allow reductions for a rideshare service. For the most part, parking minimums will be removed. In the parts of the City where there are minimums, the [Toronto Green Standard](#) has requirements for travel demand management measures to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips.

## Zoning By-law

- To what extent can this by-law review be used as part of parking reduction justification for current development applications, given that a number of applications have already accepted applications not meeting the minimum requirement?*

This ongoing review does not have official status until Council decision; therefore, it cannot be used for justification. However, the data we are using is all public and could be used to make an argument of your own against parking minimums.

- Will there be any guidance or consideration for similar relief under former city zoning by-laws (which apply to many properties and often impose more significant minimum parking requirements)?*

Our hope is to make the changes to parking requirements city-wide, regardless of whether properties are currently covered by former City zoning by-laws.





## Equity

- ***An affordable housing project intended to have 33 seniors' co-op units was killed because it was in an area with a requirement for 1.3 parking spaces per unit, which meant that it required 42 underground parking spaces. I'm concerned when I hear that parking will still be required for affordable housing purposes. We are big supporters of 0 parking requirements for affordable housing, depending on what level of affordability you are referring to, as many people in the \$30,000-\$50,000 annual income range are not operating a car. How will you make sure this change doesn't hurt affordable housing developments?***

This project is not about minimum requirements for affordable housing in the zoning by-law. Instead of having a guideline for the City when developing affordable housing, it is a guideline for how much parking they provide to ensure that people that need affordable housing and a vehicle can have both; for example, if they live or work far away from public transit. This is an important and context-sensitive question – the intent is to leave it open where there isn't a hard parking requirement, but to have a guideline that draws out these considerations.

## Miscellaneous

- ***With a reduction of parking built into new development, how will the city plan to augment on-street parking enforcement to ensure that drivers do not park in inappropriate places like bike lanes and transit stops/corridors?***

This hasn't been considered in detail yet, but it is an important issue and enforcement will be key.

- ***If there is a proposed Official Plan Amendment, will it be brought forward at the same time as any zoning by-law amendment? And how different will these policies be from existing parking policies?***

This project is not planning to make any Official Plan changes but an amendment to Zoning by-law 569-2013. This zoning by-law amendment will follow the statutory requirements.

- ***Is there any discussion around promoting gentle density into primarily single-family regions?***

More information on this topic is available on the City's [Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods webpage](#).

- ***Can Toronto's grid support that many EV spaces for level 2 minimums in a multi-use development?***

If the whole city was to convert to electric vehicles now, the grid would not be able to handle it. However, staff are currently working on a plan to be able to handle them.





- ***What is the City doing to tame development, something that ultimately contributes to additional parking (and subsequent vehicle use)?***

The City's Official Plan directs growth to particular areas that are well-served by the transit system and support a mix of uses. These compact complete communities make it easier to live without a car by bringing more destinations within easy reach of walking, cycling, and transit.

- ***Some of the City's policies encourage provided parking to be underground, increasing its cost, while others, such as this project want to eliminate parking rates to support affordable housing. Why are the policies at odds?***

You will find many points of tension between City policies. Parking is generally directed underground because of concerns about parking's impact on people's experiences at grade; this is an urban design policy rather than a transportation policy.

- ***What is the link with the Toronto Parking Authority (TPA) within this process?***

TPA staff are on the Technical Advisory Committee for this project and we have monthly discussions about how our work relates to their operations. As operators of Toronto Bike Share, they are important stakeholders.

- ***What ways could underground parking be redeveloped if there isn't a need?***

The following ideas were brainstormed by attendees:

- ***Can Toronto's grid support that many EV spaces for level 2 minimums in a multi-use development?***

- Converting parking spaces to bike parking or more locker space;
- Converting parking lots to urban farms;
- Converting a parking lot into a market square, because the height and open space is available (as was done in Spain), or community centres, indoor parks, indoor soccer fields.



## Comments & Feedback

The comments received from members of the public focused on three main themes: environmental concerns, seniors' considerations, inclusive consultation, and design considerations for delivery vehicles.

### Environmental concerns

- *Thank you for this meeting. Unfortunately, towers that are being built now in Toronto and their parking lots going many metres into the ground don't make any sense. The amount of carbon being used to make and pour all that concrete, all the steel and all the oil being burned by construction machines just to built houses for cars is staggering. It makes no sense. All these resources could have been used to built houses for people. I'm really happy for this review and hope for fast implementations.*

### Supporting families

- *Re: condo parking and the age demographic mix in a building, I'd like to add age considerations. Those that are now retired, not the millennials, tend to use cars more because they are used to doing this, also going to places not necessarily accessible by transit (e.g. non-work). Please consider mix of age groups.*

### Inclusive consultation

- *Although online advertising is great, I am still worried about this project getting out to the public. Only people who have an interest in this study will likely find out about it. I urge you to consider expanding your communication and promotion methods to reach more people. For example, posters at bus stops with a QR code could attract members of the public besides urban planners and those who subscribe to City channels.*

### Design for delivery/temporary vehicles

- *A building driveway has to accommodate both emergency vehicles and deliveries, and we've found that this has become problematic. The driveway for only residents isn't sufficient to allow the width or weight of emergency and delivery vehicles. Ultimately, it adds to congestion. In addition to parking space requirements, City staff should also consider site plans and approvals for loading area. Delivery vehicles are not required parking because they are here temporality, but they do need a layover space. This wasn't foreseen with our building.*



## 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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