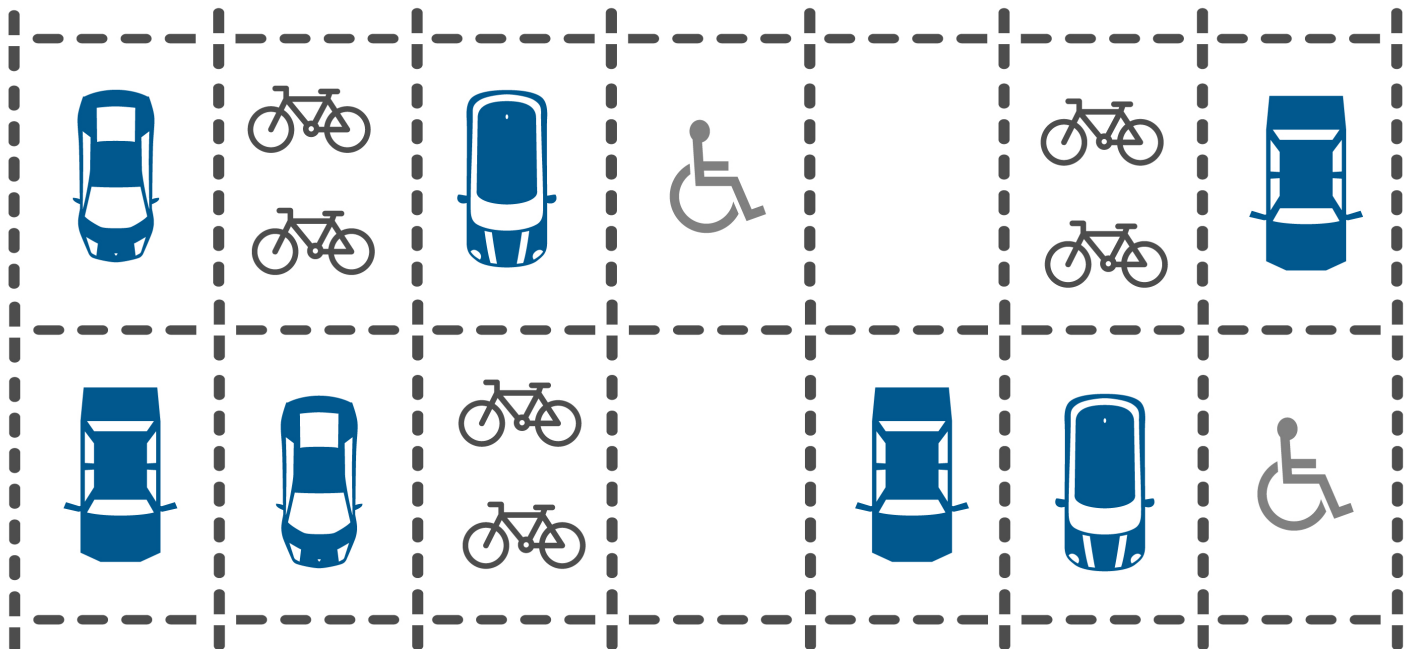




Review of Parking Requirements for New Developments

Phase 1 & 2 Public and Stakeholder Consultation



Public Meeting Summary

June 2, 2021
3:00-5:00 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 Wednesday, June 2, 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 second 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 36 participants joined this first meeting. Attendees included residents, business owners, developers, landowners, and advocacy groups (see Figure 1) whose primary modes of transportation were walking, public transit, cycling, and driving (see Figure 2).

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

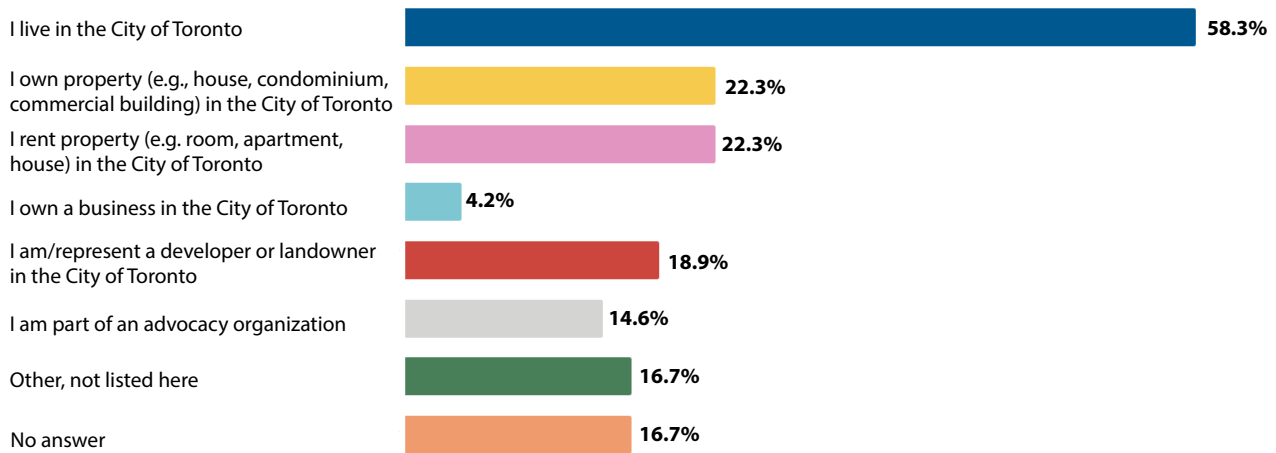
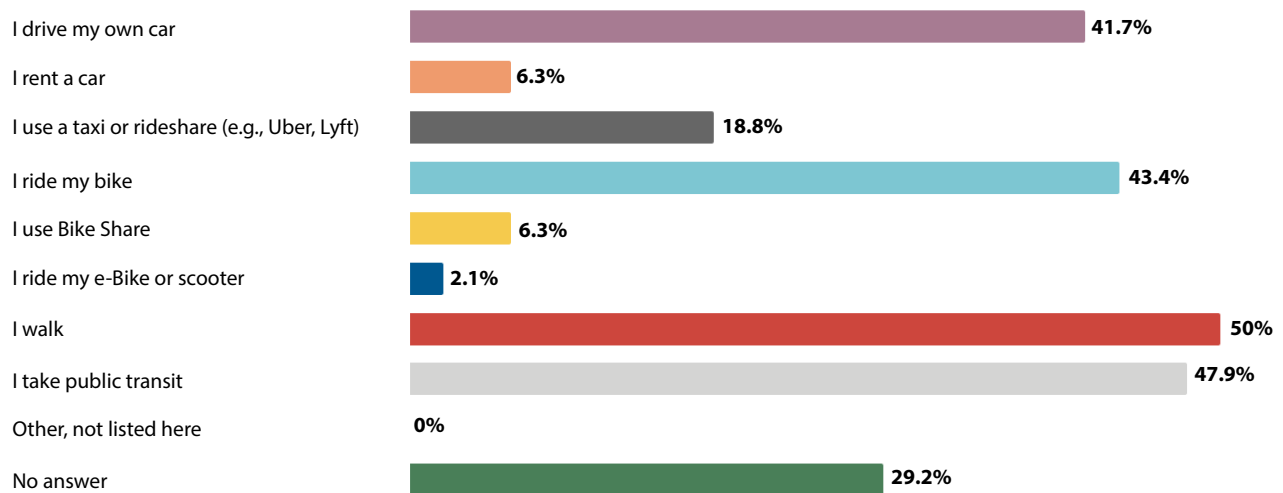


Figure 2 What modes of transportation do you most often use to move around the city? Please respond based on your activity prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and/or how you plan to travel post-pandemic. Select all that apply.



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 32 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:

- Data
- Demand for parking spaces
- Details on removal of parking rates
- On-street parking demand
- Equity
- Cycling and bicycle parking
- Miscellaneous

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

Data

- ***Will there be a new TTS 2021 survey? Or will it be delayed until things are back to our new normal? It may be too early to be changing things based on ancient data.***

The new [Transportation Tomorrow Survey](#) will very likely be postponed until 2022, when travel patterns return to normal. After the data is collected it will need to be processed, so it is likely that the TTS data won't be released until 2024. Fortunately, travel behavior doesn't typically change quickly.

- ***Travel Patterns going from 40% in 1986 to 38% in 2016 is hardly a decline in car use for the rest of Toronto households. Do you have other data that supports the reduction in car use in Toronto outside of downtown?***

The TTS survey is very large. Considering it reflects over 17 million daily trips, a 2% change in mode share is a significant decrease in car use.

- ***Is the data being used only for downtown trips, not non-downtown trips?***

We are also considering data related to trips not going to and from downtown. This presentation demonstrates that automobile ownership rates and automobile usage trips show a general trend away from the automobile. The City has many policies about reducing automobile use; we know not everyone is able to do so but we are proposing to reduce the minimum to make it easier for people to choose to live without a car.



Demand for parking spaces

- ***How are the impacts on residential and main street areas close to hubs (e.g., Forest Hill, Lawrence, Mount Pleasant, Midtown) being assessed? These adjacent areas are being affected by an increase in development and a lack of parking, yet they are not close enough for people to walk to. People are being pushed from condos without parking spots and can't find parking.***

Much of this issue is about enforcement. The City needs to increase the amount of enforcement, specifically of on-street parking. Parking demand should not be outsourced to the City to provide parking for private developments.

- ***How do you determine if there will be parking impacts as a result of new development? Just providing dramatically fewer parking spots for cars does not reduce a demand for cars - other than wishful thinking. We are seeing new development applications providing very few car parking spots and at the same time providing insufficient bicycle parking (i.e., less than one bike parking spot per unit).***

To some extent, the amount of parking that is required sorts itself out through market mechanisms. If someone wants a parking spot, they can get one through renting or purchasing a property that includes a parking spot. If developers realize they are unable to sell units without parking, parking will be provided. The City feels this will self-regulate and developers will respond.

- ***My concern is with respect to grocery ghettos: in areas where there aren't grocery stores nearby, people have to drive to places like Costco. Do you have plans for incorporating more grocery stores into the downtown area or providing transportation to grocery shopping? This should be one of the data elements you use when considering parking in specific areas (radius to transit and radius to grocery stores).***

Thanks for sharing this suggestion for data analysis – we will look into this.

Details on removal of parking rates

- ***Why is the city limiting the scope of where minimums will be eliminated instead of relying upon the market to determine parking levels city-wide?***

The City believes the decision should generally be left up to individuals to determine their parking needs (i.e., unit with parking space vs. unit without parking space). More enforcement may be needed to effectively incentivize individuals to ensure they have sufficient parking for their needs. The effectiveness of enforcement to discourage non-routine, short duration uses such as loading and pick-up and drop-off is more limited. This is particularly true in areas where there are not good alternatives to automobiles, such as areas a long distances from the transit system. This means parking minimums may be needed for uses which generate such activity in such areas.



- ***Will the City keep to hard minimum and maximum limits on parking spaces? It is clear now that the market can allocate parking better than anyone else.***

Yes, the City recognizes that the market is able to determine how much parking is able to be required in particular areas. A monitoring program is being planned to allow the City to determine the effect of changes to the parking requirements and see if further changes are needed in order to achieve overall policy objectives.

- ***What exactly are you proposing – why won't you eliminate parking for the City and not just rely on the market?***

We plan to dramatically increase the size of the Policy Areas. We plan to eliminate parking in areas served by subways, LRTs, and GO Stations (i.e., to include the Major Transit Station Area boundaries). The City has not come to a decision regarding the areas served by surface transit.

- ***How will parking guidelines support people who do not use their cars for daily commuting needs but instead for errands and out of town trips? This data is based on driving trends in congested areas.***

We propose removing parking requirements in areas well-served by transit, such as Policy Areas. This will not remove any existing parking but instead slow the growth of the overall parking supply.

- ***How has the removal of parking minimums affected parking space development in cities other than Buffalo and London?***

Many of these minimums have been removed relatively recently, so studies and academic literature have not yet caught up to the impacts. However, we do know through media scans that those who have removed parking minimums have not re-imposed them, which speaks to their success.

On-street parking demand

- ***Do people in condominium units tend to get access to on-street parking permits?***

This is beyond our team's scope, but we understand it has become a common practice for local Councillors to exclude new development from participating in the on-street parking system.

- ***We live in a downtown rowhouse in Toronto and we only have parking on the street. What are you planning to do about permit parking for people who need them in downtown Toronto? Many of the condos have parking permit stickers the same as ours, so it has become difficult to park close to our home.***

This issue will be addressed in the upcoming Residential Parking Strategy, another project by the City of Toronto. Generally, we do not want development to rely on the on-street parking system. Any new development is supposed to accommodate its own needs on site.



- ***Will the zoning by-law changes include targeted measures to prevent illegal overflow parking?***

This is primarily an enforcement issue. We recognize the importance of adequate enforcement to support reduced or eliminated parking requirements.

Equity

- ***Will the accessible parking review be based on the parking requirement or the proposed supply, particularly to reflect a reduced car parking supply?***

This remains under consideration. The current requirements are based on the total parking required, but accessible parking may still be needed even if standard parking is not. We are considering different ways to calculate the accessible parking requirements with the intent that the proposed calculation produces a parking requirement at least as high as the current framework.

- ***When you are talking about equitable access, what else is captured beyond accessible parking spaces?***

Other considerations captured under equitable access include areas not well-served by transit that may rely on vehicular travel as well as multi-generational requirements.

Cycling and bicycle parking

- ***How will the City address security when it comes to bicycle parking?***

This is an important issue but not directly addressed in this zoning by-law update. Future work will include updating the Bicycle Parking Guidelines.

- ***Are there any plans to improve the ability for people, especially seniors, to do winter biking (covered bike routes, street cleaning, etc.)? I'm wondering if this should be part of your review?***

This is not part of this zoning by-law update but it is definitely an area of interest from City staff. We recognize that for Toronto to be multi-modal, year-round cycling infrastructure is necessary.

Miscellaneous

- ***In the review for loading and pick-up/drop-off, what type of requirements will be put in place to address online shopping and increase in rideshare behaviour?***

This is another piece of future work. We recognize there is more pressure coming from online shopping, food delivery, and other uses which put pressure on the loading spaces available right now.



- ***As part of the parking reduction, is there an opportunity to consider car share spaces in lieu of residential parking formally within the by-law?***

Generally, we allow car share spaces, but if there are no minimum parking requirements then there are no spots to trade for car share. We are hesitant to require car share because there have been issues with car share companies pulling out because of a lack of memberships/demand.

- ***Will the City remove parking requirements for Multi-Unit Residential properties within a 500 m radius of Major Transit Station Areas?***

This is an example for which we would remove parking minimums, with the exception of visitor parking and accessible parking in areas of influence of transit (500-800 m from higher-order transit).

- ***What does the timeline look like for implementing these policies?***

First the by-law will need to be adopted by Council later in 2021. There may need to be transition details, which we expect to share in the next round of consultation on September 2021.

Comments & Feedback

The comments received from members of the public focused on three main themes: on-street parking, dependence on parking spaces, and supporting parking elimination.

On-street parking

- *If people in those areas need parking, they are always free to pay developers for a spot. If they park on the street, I hope the City will tow them.*
- *I like the answer for new developments and detaching them from on-street parking. Developers know to make parking spaces (except for bike security apparently).*
- *I strongly support making the default for new developments to be residents cannot get on-street parking permits. And exceptions would then be made, if appropriate.*

Dependence on parking spaces

- *I live downtown and have a car to travel out of town to visit my family, where they live. I hope I participate in the next TTS survey. I need a parking spot in any condo that I live in. When travelling in the City, I use TTC or walk. I hope the survey will not leave downtown Toronto residents with less parking than is required.*



- *We own properties within multi-use developments and have challenges with the supply of parking for our service personnel and deliveries. We need to remember that businesses need vehicles for operations as they cannot otherwise survive.*

In support of elimination of minimums

- *Very happy the City is working on this, want to remove minimums from parking across the city .*
- *Very happy to see the City looking to remove parking minimums!*
- *This presentation has convinced me that the city should eliminate parking minimums. Really interesting.*
- *Thank you for hosting this session. I'd like to voice support for dropping mandatory parking minimums. Especially in the most expensive housing markets, mandatory parking places too much unnecessary burden on buyers. If someone is bothered by a lack of market rate parking, they can move to some place that better meets their needs.*
- *Supportive of removing 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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