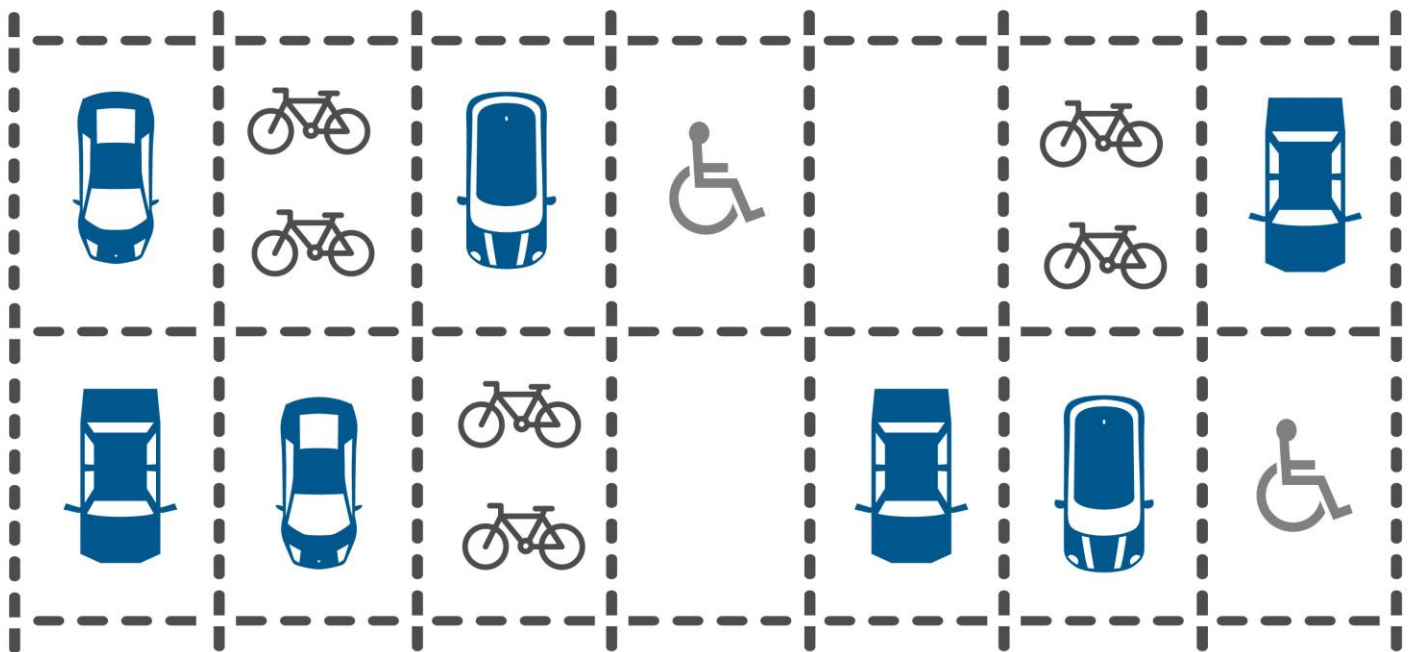




# Review of Bicycle Parking Requirements for New Developments

## Public and Stakeholder Consultation



### Public Meeting Summary

September 17 – 6:00 to 8:00 PM

September 18 – 1:00 to 3:00 PM



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## Background

Requirements for bicycle parking in newly erected or enlarged buildings are identified in the city-wide [Zoning By-law 569-2013](#). On December 15, 2021, [Planning and Housing Committee \(PH29.3\)](#) asked staff to review bicycle parking requirements and the City's Guidelines for the Design and Management of Bicycle Parking Facilities. The Review is guided by the principle that bicycle parking zoning standards should require sufficient parking to encourage people of all ages, abilities and means to bicycle for everyday transportation, recreation, and commercial activity.

In November 2023, the City hosted a series of public meetings and launched a survey to collect feedback on initial directions. Based on the feedback collected from the meetings and surveys, a draft proposal was developed for amending the city-wide zoning by-law standards of accessible parking and bicycle parking.

## Meeting Overview

On Tuesday September 17, 2024, and Wednesday September 18, 2023, the City of Toronto hosted public consultation meetings to present a draft proposal to amend the zoning by-law standards of bicycle parking, answer questions, and receive feedback from the public. The meeting was promoted through the City's social media channels, mailing lists, and on the City of Toronto website. Across both meetings approximately 40 participants joined.

Michael Hain, the Program Manager of the Transportation Planning, Policy, and Analysis unit within the City Planning division led the opening remarks and housekeeping sections of the meetings. Following his remarks, Luna Xi, Transportation Planner, delivered a presentation on the findings and emerging directions of the review. The presentation is available on the project website: <https://www.toronto.ca/parkingreview>.

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 25 questions and comments were received on the following topics.

## Questions & Answers

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

- Proposed Draft Changes to Zoning By-law 569-2013
- Payment-in-Lieu of Bicycle Parking (BILOBP) Program
- Bicycle Parking Utilization Data Collection and Residents Survey
- E-bike Parking and Charging
- Guidelines for the Design and Management of Bicycle Parking Facilities (Design Guidelines)
- Transition Policies
- Miscellaneous



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

### **Proposed Draft Changes to Zoning By-law 569-2013**

***Regarding the proposal of restricting stacked and vertical racks, what does the “floor level” refer to?***

The floor level in this case refers to the surface of any floor in the building that people would walk on and bicycles would be rolling on. The upper-tier of a stacker or vertical spaces cannot be counted towards floor-level spaces.

***Regarding the proposal of having minimum bicycle parking spaces in relation to vehicle parking, how will it be impacted if we are trying to reduce vehicle parking? Will this squeeze down the number of bicycle parking? Would this requirement be in addition to the Zoning By-law bicycle parking rates that are based on dwelling units and GFA?***

This is another way to set the minimum for how much bicycle parking must be provided, and an applicant is always free to provide more bicycle parking, if they want. This requirement is intended primarily for land uses that do not have a rate based on dwelling units or GFA (i.e., the greater of this requirement or the rates based on unit/GFA will be applied). The absolute number of bicycle parking spaces per dwelling unit would usually be the governing factor for how much bicycle parking needs to be provided in a residential development.

***For the proposal of bicycle parking at transit stations, will it cover light rail stations (e.g., Eglinton Crosstown)?***

We are still working on the language of this proposal, but we want the requirements to cover any sort of stations. We did not intend for the requirement to cover an outside stop that you might see on the surface portion of the Eglinton Crosstown. However, we do want bicycle parking available at any enclosed stations.

***Regarding the requirements of access and path of travel, can you clarify the maximum slope of 7%? This seems to be quite strict as typical ramps are 15%, which may have challenges in certain buildings.***

The maximum 7% slope requirement came from Waterfront Toronto’s Green Building Requirements. This requirement prioritizes the safety and ease of access to bicycle parking areas. One situation we would like to discourage is having bicycles share a ramp with vehicles, but we recognize this is not always possible. There are also methods other than bicycle ramps to provide access, such as placing bicycle parking spaces on the ground level or installing a bicycle elevator. Proposals for other innovative and bicycle-friendly mechanisms are welcomed.

***Have you considered adding requirements on the distance between the sets of doors? It is common for buildings to have vestibules that can make it difficult for bikes to get through.***

We haven’t thought about it, but this is a helpful point and we will consider it.

***Is there a technical definition of staggered bicycle parking space in the Zoning By-law? There may be potential challenges with how it is interpreted or applied.***

There will be a specific definition added to the Zoning By-law including whether the stagger is for one or both wheels and the range of allowable staggers. The requirements in the Zoning By-law needs to be clearly interpreted with no judgment.



## Payment-in-Lieu of Bicycle Parking (PILOBP) Program

***Where can we access more information of the Payment-in-lieu of Bicycle Parking Program that developers are eligible for?***

It is available online via the following link: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/payment-in-lieu-of-bicycle-parking/>

***Back in the day the city allowed 4:1 ratio when providing car share to consider reduction in vehicle parking. Have you thought about doing something like that? It could align with payment-in-lieu where developments sometimes provide Bike Share stations?***

The Payment-in-Lieu of Bicycle Parking Program is similar to that in that it allows the short-term residential bicycle parking in Bicycle Zone 1 to be reduced in exchange for financial contributions. The funds are used solely to expand Bike Share stations. In 2024, the contribution required per short-term bike parking space reduced is \$538. We are proposing to extend the program to all uses, types of bicycle parking and areas of the city.

***What was thought process behind the decision to not reduce mandated rates, despite studies showing significant overprovision of bike parking under the current bylaw? Recognizing that Bike Share should be well-funded, it seems strange for developers to have to choose between providing a provenly unused asset, reducing space available for popular private and public uses near grade, versus paying into the program through cash in lieu.***

The intent is to encourage people to adopt bicycle use not just for recreation but for utilitarian use as well. The City expects bike usage to continue to grow over time. Looking at the existing bike parking utilization wouldn't reflect what we expect to see in the future. The provision of bike parking could be done in other ways, such as through the Payment-in-Lieu of Bicycle Parking program for expanding the Bike Share system. This doesn't substitute for all types of bicycles uses, which is why we aren't proposing 100% reduction.

***Does the minimum required rate change or does it remain the same and then the amount provided can be adjusted down with cash-in-lieu?***

The required amount stays the same and is adjusted based on how many spaces are being contributed to the Payment In-Lieu of Bicycle Parking (PILOBP) Program. For example, if you are required to provide 100 long-term bicycle parking spaces and 5 are being contributed to PILOBP, 95 spaces are required to be provided on site and we would expect to see financial contribution to PILOBP equal to 5 long-term spaces.

## Bicycle Parking Utilization Data Collection and Residents Survey

***Regarding the survey and the different locations on the map, what is the differentiator between short and long-term parking?***

The red and blue dots on the map represent 20 locations in total. We collected usage for both long-term and short-term bicycle parking. Long-term bicycle parking is intended for use by residents or occupants, while short-term bicycle parking is intended for visitors to the building.



### ***Are the buildings all new condos?***

The intent was to test rates in the current Zoning By-law, so the data collection focused on the recently built buildings. We tried to capture different buildings, condos and rental apartments, to understand utilization of bike parking up to the current standards. However, there are still several buildings that were developed before the current Zoning By-law came into effect.

### ***I am trying to understand the rationale behind the great number of proposed bicycle parking spaces to the relatively low number of vehicular parking spaces for new developments across the city. If current long-term bicycle spaces at existing residential buildings are underutilized according to your stats, why is the trend to allow new developments to continue to bring hundreds more bicycle parking spaces to the city?***

The intent is to encourage people to adopt bicycle use not just for recreation but for utilitarian use as well. We would like to encourage bike usage, so it continues to grow over time. Looking at the existing bike parking utilization wouldn't reflect what we expect to see in the future. The provision of bike parking could be done in other ways, such as through the Payment-in-Lieu of Bicycle Parking program for expanding the Bike Share system. This doesn't substitute for all types of bicycles uses, which is why we aren't proposing 100% reduction.

## **E-bike Parking and Charging**

### ***How will the Zoning By-law factor in the growing market of e-bikes and cargo e-bikes, not in terms of size and weight, but issues and concerns over battery safety?***

We consulted with Toronto Fire Services. They advised us not to introduce new requirements related for e-bikes, primarily due to fire safety concerns with the battery. We are not planning to include a requirement. However, the Toronto Green Standard (TGS) V4 has a requirement that at least 15% of long-term bicycle parking spaces should include an energized outlet.

### ***Does that mean the By-law won't prohibit an e-bike to be parked?***

Correct. Asides from dimensions of spaces, we are not introducing new regulations in the Zoning By-law. However, we are not prohibiting it.

## **Guidelines for the Design and Management of Bicycle Parking Facilities (Design Guidelines)**

### ***Why some elements of the Design Guidelines wouldn't be incorporated in the Zoning By-law to ensure that security and stacked bike racks are more usable, easier to lift, instead of hoping on the good will of developers to build high-quality infrastructure, why not put it in the by-law?***

We are trying to include as much as we can in the Zoning By-law, but the By-law language needs to be easy to interpret and understand without judgement. Therefore, in some case, it would need to be put in the Design Guidelines.

### ***Since the Design Guidelines have not been updated since 2008, will it be updated as a part of this parking review or separated?***

Yes, the updates of the Design Guidelines will be reported to the Planning and Housing Committee (PHC) at the same meeting with the proposed Zoning By-law Amendments.



***Will the updated Design Guidelines be available online as well?***

Yes, it will be posted on the project website shortly.

## Transition Policies

***What kind of transition provisions are being considered?***

We are still working on the transition clauses, but we envision something like when we removed parking minimums that Council endorsed in December 2021. The transition clause would allow the new requirements to come into effect after Council endorses the proposals.

## Miscellaneous

***Have you consulted with other municipalities for their experience?***

To some extent, we have, for example by reviewing standards that other municipalities have put in their own Zoning By-laws to judge whether our proposals are appropriate. We conducted a jurisdictional scan on bicycle parking requirements for over 20 North American cities.

***Regarding Bicycle Zone 1 and 2, what is the boundary and what is the basis for this?***

Bicycle Zone 1 is the area of the City bounded by the Humber River on the west, Lawrence Ave on the north, Victoria Park Ave on the east and Lake Ontario on the south. Bicycle Zone 2 includes all areas of the City not included in Bicycle Zone 1. The Bicycle Zones were established to reflect the parts of the city with more bike use, based on data from Census and Transportation Tomorrow Survey. Over time, the City expects bike use to become more popular and will consider changes to the boundary then.

***What is meant as a handlebar conflict?***

Conflicts can occur when contact between handlebars of bikes in an adjacent bike parking space prevent a bike space from being used correctly, or when someone tries to load or unload their bike from bike parking, and they must navigate their handlebars around the handlebars of an adjacent bike.

***Some apartment buildings in the city are quite old and provide almost zero bicycle parking, have those types of buildings been considered for this parking review?***

The Zoning By-law only applies to new and expanded developments. We cannot force retrofits in existing buildings, but we can try to find ways to encourage it. If you are finding it difficult to retrofit buildings with more bicycle parking, we can try to look at ways to improve that and make it easier.

***Will you send the presentation to those who registered?***

The recordings will be available on the website next week, as well as the presentation slides and other materials that goes into more details.

***What are the next steps in terms of your process? How it makes it way through Committee and council?***

We are planning to report to Planning and Housing Committee (PHC) in December with our proposed Zoning By-law Amendments. If it gets endorsed by the Committee, it will go onto the Council meeting on December 17-19, 2024. The reports will be made public one week before it goes to PHC. The draft material that we have developed should



be posted on the project website shortly, which will be quite close to what we recommend unless we hear comments that are significantly different from what we heard before.

## Comments & Feedback

The comments received from members of the public:

- The low utilization of bicycle parking may be a result of bicycling parking being low quality and not secure (e.g., people bring their bikes into their dwelling unit instead).
- Regarding the bicycle ramp at a slope of 7%, it can be more challenging on smaller sites where it could be harder to fit a bike elevator as an alternative. Certain slopes in the Ontario Building Code are about 10%.
- The width requirement of staggered bicycle parking should be a bit lower.
- I have experienced handlebar conflicts all the time.
- I agree on the emphasis towards quality over quantity and cash-in-lieu as it allows a builder to reduce the amount provided.

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.

Please visit the project website (<https://www.toronto.ca/parkingreview>) 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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