METROLINX

REGIONAL PARKING POLICY

Executive Summary

Background Paper to the
2041 Regional Transportation Plan

Prepared for Metrolinx
by WSP
2017

Study Background

The purpose of this study is to provide Metrolinx with off-street parking related policy recommendations to include in the RTP update.

Approach

Background research was completed which consisted of four components:

Case study review: national and international case studies were reviewed and evaluated against draft goals and objectives defined during the RTP update process.

Jurisdictional scan of GTHA municipalities: A scan of municipal parking regulations, policies and practices was conducted for each local and regional municipality in the region to determine which off-street parking trends had been implemented by municipalities and transit authorities.

Comparative pricing analysis: The high-level study of parking prices in the GTHA was intended as a selective review to understand general parking pricing trends in the GTHA across a range of sizes of municipality.

Interviews with municipality representatives: Telephone interviews with representatives from each municipality were conducted during the development of this report. The interviews provided an opportunity to expand on the analysis of each emerging practice.

Policy Implications

Recommended RTP updates were identified for the following emerging off-street parking practices:

- New Development Parking (Commercial / Residential)

- Employer Parking Strategies
- Transit Station Parking
- Emerging Technologies

Recommendations

The topic-specific recommendations, including recommended updates for the RTP. Each practice has been categorized as either a priority local practice, encouraged local practice or a monitored practice.

New Development Parking (Commercial / Residential)

New Development Parking (Priority Practice)

i. Strengthen the policy language to present this as a priority practice by indicating zoning by-laws shall be updated to remove minimum parking requirements (where appropriate) rather than simply indicating decreases are needed

ii. Define where and under what scenarios parking minimums should be removed (i.e. higher density, nodes and frequent transit corridors)

iii. Consistent with provincial land use policies, introduce development guidelines for parking supply to correspond with existing and planned levels of transit

Parking Maximums (Priority Practice)

i. Strengthen policy language to present parking maximums as a priority practice for inclusion within municipal zoning by-laws, with recommended maximum levels of parking per use

ii. Define where and under what scenarios parking maximums are most appropriate (i.e. higher density, nodes, frequent transit corridors)
iii. Consistent with provincial land use policies, introduce development guidelines for parking supply to correspond with existing and planned levels of transit.

Unbundled Parking (Priority Practice)

i. Include a policy supporting unbundled parking regulations in zoning by-laws and local policies to present the cost of parking during all purchasing or leasing decisions
ii. Recommend local or provincial agencies study which conditions should accompany unbundling to ensure parking is available to residents where needed and that the amount of spaces purchased per resident is capped
iii. Recommend local or provincial agencies undertake a study to define unbundling guidelines for the GTHA to support local policy making

Shared Parking (Priority Practice)

i. Strengthen the language contained in the previous RTP and present shared parking as a priority practice for the GTHA
ii. Define a framework (including calculation method) for shared parking provisions and opportunities
iii. Define a communication strategy to inform developers on the benefits of shared parking and to provide

guidance pertaining to the ownership of shared facilities

Electric Vehicle Parking (Priority Practice)

i. Include preferential parking policies for both electric vehicles and low-emission vehicles as a regional priority practice
ii. Include policy on the provision of electric vehicle infrastructure within parking facilities to ensure the necessary connections are available for future retrofitting
iii. Define a resiliency standard for parking facilities to maintain flexibility across all vehicle types and for emerging technologies

Car-share Parking (Priority Practice)

i. Strengthen the language of the policy so that car-share parking spaces are provided for all new major developments, including major transit station areas, as a regional priority practice
ii. Acknowledge this practice as a market driven practice whereby local or provincial agencies should leverage the car-share services available locally and explore private partnerships

Bicycle Parking (Priority Practice)

i. Include bicycle parking as a regional policy for both residential and non-residential land uses and state the regulation of bicycle parking within zoning by-laws as a regional priority
ii. Develop guidelines to demonstrate the importance of bicycle parking

facilities in supporting the regional cycling network

Stormwater Charges (Priority Practice)

i. Use regional policy to encourage stormwater management charges that are applied by municipalities so that developments cover the full cost of stormwater management associated with impervious surfaces

Employer Parking Strategies

Parking Cash-out (Encouraged Practice)

i. Include stronger language within policy to encourage opportunities for parking cash out as a recommended area-wide practice for all major employers

ii. Recommend that local and regional agencies lead by example and implement parking cashout initiatives first for internal staff

Workplace Parking Levy (Encouraged Practice)

i. Investigate workplace parking levies as part of a wider investment strategy initiative

Transit Station Parking

Charging for Parking (Priority Practice)

i. Strengthen policy language and identify as a priority practice; include wording that links transitioning to paid parking to recovering capital and maintenance costs

ii. Act as a champion by implementing strategy at Metrolinx facilities

iii. Can be pursued as part of a wider investment strategy

iv. Implementation to be context specific i.e. ensure opportunities for accessing station with other modes such as transit are viable

Preferential Parking – Electric Vehicles (Priority Practice)

i. Include policies that support preferential parking for sustainable modes of transportation, including Electric Vehicles, at transit stations as a regional priority practice

Preferential Parking – Car-share (Priority Practice)

i. Continue to include policies that support car-share vehicles at mobility hubs and major transit station areas, but update language to state preferential parking for these vehicles as a regional priority practice

Preferential Parking – Car-pool (Priority Practice)

i. Continue to include policies that support car-pool vehicle spaces at mobility hubs, major transit station areas, but update language to state preferential parking for these vehicles as a regional priority practice

Bicycle Parking (Priority Practice)

i. Strengthen the language and identify as a priority practice to better support the removal of barriers for active transportation

ii. Include more prescriptive language that specifies a requirement for

bicycle parking at all transit station locations

Emerging Technologies

Smart Parking (Encouraged Practice)

i. Encourage implementation of smart parking technology in areas with high occupancy rates and demonstrate the benefits of the investment to owners (i.e. data collection and increased utilization)
ii. Identify opportunities to work with the private sector to implement smart parking technology in privately owned parking lots

Mobile Payment (Priority Practice)

i. Encourage the utilization of mobile payment technology for parking facilities
ii. Develop an approach to ensure inter-jurisdictional compatibility to improve user convenience across municipal boundaries

Demand Responsive Pricing (Encouraged Practice)

i. Encourage local or provincial agencies to consider the implementation of demand-responsive pricing where parking supply and demand are poorly matched

Peer-to-peer parking (Encouraged Practice)

i. Investigate regulatory provisions for peer-to-peer parking

Autonomous Vehicle Parking (Monitored Practice)

i. To support municipalities, Metrolinx could track and study emerging technologies including autonomous vehicles and consider their potential impacts on parking facilities and regulation
ii. Recommend that new parking facility developments are constructed in a manner that allows for re-purposing of space

Parking Pricing

i. Strengthen the policy language to present paid parking as a regional priority practice at all municipally-owned parking facilities
ii. Suggest local policies to be updated to report pricing management strategies and the priorities behind parking pricing decisions

Role of Metrolinx

In addition to the specific recommendations developed for each parking practice, the following three key recommendations have been developed by WSP.

1. Educate and Market Off-street Parking Strategies
2. Coordinate the Provision of Off-Street Parking with Transit Expansion
3. Develop a GTHA Parking Charter