

How Shared Parking Works

Background and Context

Historically in Edmonton, and in all jurisdictions with minimum parking requirements, many parking facilities have a significant portion of unused spaces, or spaces that are used only part of the time. Oversupply of parking in Edmonton was mandated by the City over several generations. Under-utilized parking spaces are non-productive assets; shared parking allows landowners to allow others to utilize their unused parking spaces. This makes better use of existing infrastructure, and is a market-based approach to resolve the existing issue of oversupply.

Prior to July 2, 2020, shared parking was prohibited in most situations. Generally, all uses were required to provide a specific amount of parking for the exclusive use of that particular location and activity. If the landowner wanted to allow a third party to park there, they would need to get a development permit for “non-accessory parking.” Also prior to July 2, 2020, most low density development required one parking space for the main dwelling, and one for a secondary dwelling, at a minimum. Those who did not use the required spaces were prevented from converting that space away from parking. Moreover, the previous rules about accessory and non-accessory parking prevented landowners from allowing others who were not residents or visitors to the site from using those spaces. The changes resulting from Open Option Parking, including to allow shared parking, make it possible for a homeowner to either decommission unused spaces to some other use or to share or rent parking spaces to others (see below for further details and regulations).

Shared parking allows the opportunity to rent parking spaces to neighbours or visitors to the area when they are in need. For example, if a neighbour has guests from out of town and they would like to park off the street, or a neighbour has redeveloped a site for a garden suite or a secondary suite and needs additional parking for visitors. Another example could be a church that mainly requires parking for weekend services could rent out parking spaces to the next-door commercial hub during off-peak times.

By providing opportunities for shared parking to satisfy parking demand, on-street curbside spaces could be used for other purposes, including active transportation, public transit and accessible parking for Edmontonians with mobility needs.

Existing Sites with Valid Development Permits

For a standard zone, a property owner could change the quantity of parking, or change the parking assignment (such as to reallocate visitor parking spaces to residents) without City involvement, unless their development permit specified a certain amount of parking for the site or use. In direct control zones (DC1 or DC2), there are several scenarios that could be considered, depending on the specific language contained in the direct control provision.

Whether a development permit is required or not, a property must still adhere to the various requirements for parking space and site design, as outlined in Zoning Bylaw 12800.

Small scale residential

The Open Option Parking amendments approved on June 23, 2020 combined with the amendments proposed in Attachment 2 of this report ensure that shared parking can function as intended. This means that homeowners may choose to share or rent up to three parking spaces on their property (e.g. driveway or garage spaces developed in conjunction with a house). If more than three spaces are provided on a site, then the development meets the definition of a surface parking lot, which would not be allowed in conjunction with a low density residential use.

The changes resulting from Open Option Parking and shared parking do not allow homeowners to tear down homes or use vacant lots in residential areas to build surface parking lots in their place. Vehicle Parking, in the form of stand alone surface parking lots, are only allowed in specific commercial and industrial zones.

Additionally, the definitions for parking lots work alongside other rules about the maximum width of a driveway, the driveway location/access, no parking in the front yard, landscaping, and hard surfacing regulations. Together, these regulations have the effect to limit the total quantity of parking spaces on a site.

Administration heard some concerns at the June 23, 2020 Public Hearing about the ability for a homeowner to rent out up to three spaces on their property. Following that discussion, Administration considered the merits of further restricting the number of spaces a homeowner could potentially rent out (to fewer than three spaces), or eliminating the possibility altogether.

Considering the recency of the Open Option Parking changes, the role shared parking can play in making efficient use of the existing parking supply, and the

lack of data to support a change at this time, Administration has not proposed a change to further limit the number of spaces a homeowner could potentially rent out. Administration will continue to monitor the application of the regulations to determine if future changes are required.

All other uses

Shared parking in a variety of contexts and situations is now possible between sites. Stand-alone surface parking lots and parkades are restricted to certain zones, as identified in Zoning Bylaw 12800.