

Shared Parking Impact to High Demand Parking Areas

Recommendation

That the March 23, 2021, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development report CR_8390, be received for information.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the June 23, 2020, City Council Public Hearing, the following motion was passed:

That Administration examine the impacts of how the opportunity of shared parking has affected communities, like those around the University of Alberta, Commonwealth Stadium, Rogers Place, and other high demand parking areas, and return with the Zoning Bylaw Work Plan Update, with recommendations on amendments, if necessary.

Executive Summary

The intended outcome of Open Option Parking is to find the right amount of on-site parking - not too many spaces that go unused most of the time, and not too few spaces that people search extensively for an open parking space. Shared parking is a complementary part of Open Option Parking that helps to reduce red tape for builders and landowners alike, helping to achieve the right amount of parking supply in an area by allowing flexibility to use on-site parking supply in new ways. This in turn enables the strategic policy directions established in *ConnectEdmonton* and *The City Plan*, by welcoming more compact urban development and providing housing and development choices to Edmontonians.

Since Open Option Parking came into effect on July 2, 2020, Administration has examined parking complaint datasets and can report that no discernable change has been observed to shared parking impacts in neighbourhoods such as the University of Alberta, Commonwealth Stadium, Rogers Place, or other high demand parking areas. Administration recognizes that the impacts of COVID-19 are likely to have influenced these outcomes. However, without observable evidence of significant impacts, Administration proposes continued monitoring to determine if intervention is required in the future, and that no significant alterations be made to alter the intent of shared

parking in Zoning Bylaw 12800 at this time. This report proposes minor technical and administrative changes to Zoning Bylaw 12800 to ensure that shared parking can function as intended. These proposed changes will be advanced to a future Public Hearing date, targeted for Q2 2021.

Report

Open Option Parking Background

Between 2017 and 2020, Administration conducted a comprehensive review of on-site parking requirements, and examined the relationship between parking utilization and other factors - including geographic location, use, building type, and transit access. The review found there was no relationship between these factors and parking demand. This led to regulatory change to Zoning Bylaw 12800 on June 23, 2020, known as Open Option Parking, which allows property owners to choose how much parking to provide, based on their needs, activities or lifestyle. This bylaw amendment came into effect on July 2, 2020, and was accompanied by a number of other amendments intended to support the successful rollout of Open Option Parking, including shared parking.

What is shared parking, why is it important, and how does it work?

Shared parking is a parking management tactic to optimize and achieve higher utilization of existing off-street and privately owned parking supply (i.e. not street parking or public parking lots owned by the City of Edmonton). Shared parking means that parking spaces are available for other users and uses, as determined by the property owner. This is in contrast with the previous approach where Zoning Bylaw 12800 closely regulated all private parking spaces and limited how or by whom they may be used. Shared parking supports Open Option Parking because it:

- Helps to increase choice in how people use their land, including the right amount of parking for a site that best suits the needs of the activities there.
- Allows existing private parking supply to be efficiently utilized through agreements between private landowners or individuals. This is especially effective for uses that have off-set operating hours, such as an office building and a movie theatre.
- Allows people to park on a site for a purpose other than to visit the primary use on the site, which can reduce pressure on public parking supply, and support areas such as Business Improvement Areas where demand exceeds that public supply .
- Enables opportunities for sites with surplus parking, such as a religious assembly that has a popular service once per week, and the rest of the time the parking lot sits empty.

To mitigate the proliferation of parking spaces on private sites, there are limitations to where and how shared parking is permitted. For example, stand-alone surface parking lots are limited to specific zones that are commercial in nature. For more information on what shared parking is and how it works, please see Attachment 1 - How Shared Parking Works.

Shared parking impacts in high-demand parking areas

To determine if there had been an impact in high-demand parking areas, Administration examined datasets relating to resident complaints between July and December, 2020 - and did not uncover shared parking-related complaints in the areas surrounding the activity nodes identified in the motion (University of Alberta, Commonwealth Stadium, and Rogers Place). General parking complaint data identified that the total number of complaints in 2020 was down compared to 2019. Additional engagement with City staff, including Municipal Enforcement Officers, Development Compliance Officers and 311 operators, did not reveal anecdotal evidence of a difference in the severity of complaints about parking in the high demand parking areas relevant to the motion from the June 23, 2020, City Council Public Hearing.

There are several mitigating aspects to these findings:

- The period of time between the passage of Charter Bylaw 19275 and the preparation of this report was too short to draw a reliable conclusion. It may take years to collect enough data to observe the effects of a policy shift of this nature
- The time period in question has been completely within the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, when most or all major events and large gatherings have been cancelled. This is likely to have been an influential factor to explain why Administration did not observe a change to the demand for parking in these activity nodes and why there were a reduced number of parking complaints received in 2020

Due to the absence of data and the unprecedented restrictions on gatherings and travel, Administration will continue monitoring impacts in proximity to the University of Alberta, Commonwealth Stadium, and Rogers Place to determine if intervention is required in the future.

Looking ahead

Edmonton is the first major city in Canada and one of only a few in North America to completely remove minimum parking requirements. It is through ongoing monitoring that the City can collect data and learn in order to better respond and manage potential negative outcomes associated with Open Option Parking and shared parking.

Next Steps

At the June 23, 2020 City Council Public Hearing and in response to the circulation of this report to stakeholders, Administration heard some concerns raised about potential shared parking impacts in low-density residential areas, like stand-alone surface parking lots and increased traffic, as well as the practical application of the shared parking regulations. Through listening and learning, Administration is proposing some minor 'clean-ups' to Zoning Bylaw 12800 that will enable shared parking to function as intended. These proposed changes are outlined in Attachment 2 - Mark-up of Proposed Changes. The proposed changes will be advanced to a future Public Hearing date, targeted for Q2 2021.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Edmonton is attractive and compact			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
The city is attractive	Edmontonians' Assessment: Well-designed Attractive City (% of survey respondents who agree/strongly agree)	53 percent (2017)	55 percent (2018)
Neighbourhoods are designed for more efficient use of land	City Wide Density (units per net residential hectare)	27.8 (2014)	75.00 (2018)
Corporate Outcome(s): Edmontonians use public transit and active modes of transportation			
Edmonton neighbourhoods are more vibrant as density increases, where people and businesses thrive and where housing and mobility options are plentiful	Mobility choice: Edmontonians who choose walking, biking, and/or public transit as their primary choice or main mode of transportation to work, school, and completing their other daily needs	2019: 18 percent to work 56 percent to a post-secondary institution 9 percent other	2019 Baseline

Attachments

1. How Shared Parking Works
2. Mark-up of Proposed Changes

Others Reviewing this Report

- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- M. Persson, Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services

- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- K. Fallis-Howell, Acting City Solicitor