

**Report to  
Rapport au:**

**Transportation Committee  
Comité des transports  
6 May 2015 / 6 mai 2015**

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**Submitted by  
Soumis par:**

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**Ward: SOMERSET (14)**

**File Number: ACS2015-COS-PWS-0009**

**SUBJECT: Little Italy Local Area Parking Study**

**OBJET: Étude sur le stationnement local dans la Petite Italie**

#### **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Transportation Committee receive the Little Italy Local Area Parking Study.**

#### **RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Comité des transports prenne connaissance de l'étude sur le stationnement local dans la Petite Italie.**

## **BACKGROUND**

The Parking Services Branch has undertaken a Local Area Parking Study (LAPS) in Little Italy. This was included in the Branch's 2014 Work Plan and approved by Council on November 13, 2013.

The Preston Street Business Improvement Area (BIA) and Dalhousie Community Association were supportive of proceeding with this study due to experiences with parking issues in the area. This study also aligns with other studies that have been undertaken, including the 2014 Bayview Carling CDP, the 2014 Gladstone District CDP and the 2014 Preston Mobility and Public Realm Study. The last parking study in this area was conducted in 1995, so there is also a clear need for updated information and a new assessment of conditions, particularly given the current and expected rate of development in the area.

LAPS provide for a comprehensive review of the state of parking management in a particular neighbourhood or community. These studies are an integral part of the Municipal Parking Management Strategy (MPMS) which was approved by Council on April 22, 2009. The LAPS process is well established through specific Terms of Reference which are included in the MPMS; so too are the objectives of the City's Municipal Parking Management Program:

1. Provide and maintain an appropriate supply of affordable, secure, accessible, convenient, and appealing public parking.
2. Provide and promote affordable short-term parking services, and fair and consistent enforcement services that support local businesses, institutions, and tourism.
3. Promote, establish, and maintain programs and facilities that encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation including public transit, car/van pooling, taxis, auto sharing, cycling, and walking.
4. Support residential intensification and resolve parking problems within residential areas caused by significant traffic generators or conflicting uses of the roadway, including implementing on-street permit parking programs to relieve area residents and visitors from parking regulations directed at the non-resident.
5. Ensure the revenues generated by the Municipal Parking Program are sufficient to wholly recover all related operating and life-cycle maintenance expenditures; contribute to a reserve fund to finance future parking system development, operation, and promotion; and assist in the funding of related initiatives to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Little Italy study area is bounded by Albert Street in the north, Carling Avenue in the south, Booth Street and Bell Street South in the east, and the O-Train Corridor in the west.

Parking Services retained the consultant group Morrison Hershfield to assist in this study. Initially, they established an inventory for all on-street and off-street parking in the study area. The on-street parking inventory included paid and unpaid parking, and the off-street parking included paid and unpaid municipal, public, and private parking lots. In total, the study area consists of a total of 4,337 parking spaces (854 on-street and 3,483 off-street). Within the study area there are 1,829 paid parking spaces (353 on-street and 1,476 off-street) and 2,508 unpaid parking spaces (501 on-street and 2,007 off-street). Of note, the only off-street municipally-owned facility in the area is located at 301 Preston Street and consists of 62 parking spaces.

Morrison Hershfield proceeded to conduct an occupancy survey in late May and early June 2014 to determine the utilization of parking within the study area. The occupancy survey included all on-street and off-street parking (including paid and unpaid parking) and was conducted on a Thursday, a Saturday, and a Sunday.

Additional information was collected through a travel survey. This involved face-to-face interviews with people on the street with the purpose of understanding parking behaviour, attitudes, and issues within the study area. A total of 128 surveys were completed, and through the course of this study 60 specific comments were received related to parking.

Consultation is a key component in the approach to the LAPS process. The feedback received from the travel surveys was one piece of this, but staff also connected at various points with key stakeholders to ensure all issues were captured and everybody was properly engaged through the entire process. These stakeholders included the Business Improvement Area (BIA) for Little Italy, Community Associations / representatives, and land owners, among others.

As noted, Parking Services was responsible for conducting the balance of the consultation in addition to undertaking the data review and analysis, as well as the development of the Little Italy Local Area Parking Study (Document 1).

When considering the results from the analysis of parking data that was collected, combined with the 135 points of consultation feedback, the following emerged as the key findings to consider and address within the study area:

- In the area south of the Queensway and west of Rochester Street, there is a lack of available on-street parking at different times;
- Off-street parking lots are underutilized during evenings and on the weekend when on-street parking is in highest demand;
- Intensification and development in the area (specifically south of the Queensway) will likely create further issues with respect to parking availability;
- On-street parking is underutilized south of the Queensway and east of Rochester Street at all times;
- There is sufficient parking supply relative to demand in the area north of the Queensway;
- Some people feel that parking rates are too high; and
- There is a lack of bicycle parking.

The issue of parking enforcement was also raised on different occasions, but there was variation with respect to how it was presented. For others (primarily business owners and patrons), the indication was that enforcement was 'too aggressive' which created issues for those visiting the area. For others (primarily residents), it was felt that enforcement was 'too relaxed' and that more needed to be done to address issues with cars illegally parking and obstructing driveways and sidewalks in the process. This was particularly identified to be the case during special events. There were some requests and potential outcomes associated with regulation changes (e.g. implementing a 'no parking' zone) to address these issues. These will be referred to Traffic Services for consideration.

Overall, there are clear parking management concerns south of the Queensway and west of Rochester Street. The City's Municipal Parking Management Strategy and industry best practices indicate that where 85 percent of parking spaces are occupied, parking is operating at 'practical capacity' and there is an ideal balance between parking supply and demand. In this specific area, the on-street parking utilization exceeds 'practical capacity' at different times, including when paid parking is in effect and not in effect.

What compounds this issue is that parking demand within the same area is expected to increase significantly in the future. Major intensification is planned for the study area and much of this is focused in the section south of the Queensway. All told, this is

projected to result in a 63% increase in the number of people living in the entire study area between 2011 and 2031 (compared with a city-wide projected increase of 22%).

The issues with parking management in the area south of the Queensway and west of Rochester Street require the most attention. Different strategies have been developed and are reflected in the recommendations of the study.

Parking price reductions will be put in place in different places immediately outside of this area. Short term and long term rates at the municipal lot (301 Preston Street) will be reduced, and on-street rates along Rochester Street and to the east will be reduced from \$3.00 to \$1.50 per hour. This is intended to draw more people away from parking where current demand is highest and into the areas or facilities where there is ample available supply.

There are also items identified that will improve the visibility of off-street parking facilities to attract more people. In the case of the surface lot at 301 Preston Street, existing plans to enhance signage will be carried out. Also, Parking Services will continue to evaluate the potential viability of a policy to allow for private owned / managed off-street parking lots to be promoted by installing wayfinding signs on public property. This could impact and promote privately-owned lots at Preston Square and at 450 Rochester Street.

This study has brought into focus the impact of parking requirements related to developments. Within the Zoning By-Law, there are minimum requirements related to resident and commercial / visitor parking. In the case of some developments, requests are submitted through Planning Committee (as a Zoning By-Law Amendment) to relax these requirements for different reasons. Parking Services will continue to provide input into this process with respect to the anticipated impacts on the overall parking supply, particularly where the requirements for visitor spaces are being reduced and there are local issues with available short term parking. In the Little Italy area, it will continue to be the stated position of Parking Services that if visitor parking is not provided or is reduced, visitors who cannot find a parking space on-site will be forced to park on-street which will have an impact on local businesses and will transfer the deficiency to the municipality to address in the future.

Parking Services will also ask Planning and Growth Management to consider the following as part of their pending review of parking requirements within the Zoning By-Law:

- Introduce a requirement for developers to provide car sharing spaces; and

- Provide developers with more flexibility to 'unbundle' parking or the provision of public parking as part of private developments.

The intent of the first point would be to reduce the necessity for someone living in a higher density development to own a vehicle. While this could provide a benefit anywhere, it could be particularly impactful for an area such as Little Italy which currently lacks certain amenities such as a grocery store and where access to a vehicle may be seen as more of a necessity. If an alternate method of arranging transportation is automatically available and results in fewer people owning a vehicle it could reduce the requirement for resident parking and result in fewer vehicles in the area.

In instances where there is a reduced demand for resident parking (either through the introduction of car sharing or otherwise), it is currently very difficult from a zoning perspective for developers to transition the usual spaces to public parking. By removing or reducing these barriers and allowing developers to 'unbundle' parking, this could have a positive effect in terms of increasing the supply of public parking.

While these strategies and actions are expected to have a positive effect on parking in the area, ultimately what has been captured through this study points towards a need to address the parking supply issue in a more direct manner. To this end, going forward staff will prioritize the search for opportunities to increase the parking supply within the section south of the Queensway. This may involve construction of a new facility or a partnership with a developer.

The full list of outcomes / recommendations is contained within the study document on page 75. Many of these can be undertaken by staff as part of an existing program.

Included in the recommendations is the installation of additional Ring and Post bike racks in order to respond to the feedback and observations that there are gaps in available bike parking, particularly on Preston Street and Beech Street. With the Multi-Use Pathway along the O-Train corridor, there is an opportunity for more people to access this area by bicycle, and improved facilities will help to make this an even more viable option.

The focus of the outcomes is in addressing issues that are currently occurring in Little Italy south of the Queensway. The study also considers trends elsewhere in the study area and while it has been determined that there is currently a suitable supply of parking north of the highway, it is known that development and intensification will occur there as well in the future. Parking Services has identified a go-forward requirement to monitor

the entire area to ensure that any changes in parking and any issues that arise are captured and handled appropriately.

## **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

The recommendations of this report will not affect rural residents, lands, services or businesses.

## **CONSULTATION**

The following stakeholders were consulted through this process. Their feedback can be found within the Little Italy Local Area Parking Study document (Document 1):

- Ward Councillors
- Little Italy BIA
- Dalhousie Community Association
- Jamie Liew – Representing small residential streets near the O-Train corridor
- Visitors to the area (through 128 travel surveys)

The following is a summary of the key consultation activities:

- March 2014 – Attended Little Italy AGM to provide an overview of the study and receive feedback on issues.
- March 2014 – ‘Start up’ notice distributed to key stakeholders via e-mail. This described the study, identified the purpose, and solicited any comments
- May / June 2014 – Travel Surveys
- January 2015 – Public Open House (invitation sent through all key stakeholders). This was followed up with a distribution of all materials from the open house to all stakeholders with an invitation to provide further feedback.
- February 2015 – Briefing provided to the Parking Stakeholder Consultation Group on the outcomes of the study.
- March 2015 – Copy of the study report circulated to all key stakeholders with an invitation to provide comments.

In addition, briefings and updates occurred with various stakeholders (such as the BIA and the Ward Councillor) as they were required through the entire process. Internal staff groups (notably Planning & Growth Management, Traffic Services, and Parking Enforcement) have been engaged and will continue to be consulted through the implementation of the recommendations. These staff groups were provided with a copy of the study report and given the opportunity to provide comments.

**COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)**

The Councillor's office has reviewed the report and supports the recommendations.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal impediments to receiving this report for information.

**RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications to implementing the recommendations of this report.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations contained in this report.

**ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

Staff will ensure that any applicable accessibility standards are adhered to during the execution of the projects and initiatives identified in this report. This will involve consulting with the appropriate staff within the City.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

Appropriately managed short-term parking promotes long-term sustainability and reduces our environmental footprint by maintaining and improving the quality of our air; this reduction is achieved by ensuring people who are driving are not creating traffic congestion and contributing more to green-house gases by cruising for parking. Shared short-term public parking is also more land-efficient than scattered private use-specific parking facilities.

**TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no Technology Implications to implementing the recommendations in this report.

**TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

This report directly impacts the following 2011 – 2014 Term of Council Strategic Priorities:



**Economic Prosperity:** On-street municipally managed short-term parking is an asset to local businesses. The report indicates that this parking is being appropriately managed.

**Transportation and Mobility:** On-street municipally managed short-term parking meets the needs of residents who are driving, and is one transportation option within a balanced transportation system.

**Environmental Stewardship:** Appropriately managed short-term parking promotes long-term sustainability and reduces our environmental footprint by maintaining and improving the quality of our air; this reduction is achieved by ensuring people who are driving are not creating traffic congestion and contributing more to green-house gases by cruising for parking. Shared short-term public parking is also more land-efficient than scattered private use-specific parking facilities. Where paid parking is introduced, infrastructure is generally solar powered.

**Healthy and Caring Communities:** Appropriately managed short-term parking helps all residents enjoy a high quality of life and contribute to community well-being through healthy, safe, secure, accessible, and inclusive places. Specifically, appropriately managed short-term municipal parking ensures there is adequate on-street parking available to serve those with accessible permits who need to park close to their destination.

**Service Excellence:** Appropriately managed short-term parking improves client satisfaction with the delivery of municipal services to Ottawa residents by measurably increasing the culture of service excellence at the City, by improving the efficiency of City operations, and by creating positive client experiences. Specifically, the service the City is delivering is an open parking space within a reasonable walking distance of the client's destination. Prices are affordable as they are set at the lowest possible level while achieving 85% occupancy. Having a legal parking space available means that fewer clients take the risk of parking in an illegal parking space (loading zone; fire hydrant; too close to a laneway; etc.) and getting a ticket.

**Governance, Planning, and Decision-Making:** This report is consistent with the Municipal Parking Management Strategy which requires consultation with local stakeholders, as well as the Parking Stakeholder's Consultation Group. The involvement with stakeholders improves the level of trust in how the City is governed and managed. Further, the parking study process uses a sustainability lens to decision making, and creates a governance model that compares well to best-in-class cities around the world.

Financial Responsibility: The Municipal Parking Management Strategy requires that the short-term paid parking program be financially self-sustaining. Sound long-term choices are ensured through the tabling of a 10-year capital plan.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 – Little Italy Local Area Parking Study

**DISPOSITION**

Staff will carry out the recommendations identified in the Little Italy Local Area Parking Study and this report.