

Report to/Rapport au :

**Transportation Committee
Comité des transports**

and Council / et au Conseil

**September 25, 2013
25 septembre 2013**

Submitted by/Soumis par :

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SOMERSET (14)

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SUBJECT: CHINATOWN LOCAL AREA PARKING STUDY

**OBJET : ÉTUDE SUR LE STATIONNEMENT LOCAL DANS LE QUARTIER
CHINOIS**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Transportation Committee receive the Chinatown Local Area Parking Study.
2. That the Transportation Committee recommend Council approve the continuation of free on-street parking on Saturdays along Somerset Street within the limits of the Somerset-Chinatown BIA, as described in this report. .

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

1. Que le Comité des transports prenne connaissance de l'Étude sur le stationnement local dans le quartier chinois;
2. Que le Comité des transports recommande au Conseil d'approuver la continuation du programme de stationnement sur rue gratuit les samedis le

long de la rue Somerset dans les limites de la ZAC Somerset-Quartier chinois, tel que décrit dans le présent rapport.

BACKGROUND

The Chinatown Local Area Parking Study (LAPS) was undertaken as part of the Parking Operations, Maintenance and Development's 2012 Work Plan as approved by Council on March 28, 2012.

On January 25, 2012, Council approved a motion to extend Free Saturday parking within the Limits of the Somerset-Chinatown Business Improvement Area (BIA,) pending the results of the Local Area Parking Study.

DISCUSSION

The study area consisted of Somerset Street West from Preston Street to Bay Street and side streets approximately 1 to 2 blocks north and south of Somerset. It evaluated the current supply and demand for parking in Chinatown area and identified issues to be addressed. The study assessed future parking requirements that may result from infill and redevelopment of existing properties. In addition, it identified strategies to address current and future parking needs, encompassing both the management and supply of parking. The two report recommendations are discussed below.

Recommendation 1: Receive the Chinatown Local Area Parking Study

There are a total of 1,437 parking spaces in the study area, 172 of which are on-street paid parking spaces and 67 of which are off-street paid spaces located in two parking facilities managed by the City.

The study identified the following parking issues to be addressed in Chinatown:

- Too few on-street spaces available on Somerset Street from Booth to Bay on weekday evenings, weekend evenings, and Sunday at midday.
- Underuse of on-street pay-and-display spaces from Preston to Booth and from Bronson to Bay on weekdays.
- Too few off-street spaces available at the municipal Cambridge Lot Saturday at dinner and Sunday at midday.
- Underuse of the municipal Empress Lot for all days and time periods.
- Underuse of off-street parking spaces on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Too much overtime parking on weekends.
- Lack of Tour Bus Parking.
- Disruptive delivery truck activity at Somerset Street and Upper Lorne Place.
- Desire for more bicycle parking.
- Potential for infill development to reduce public parking.

The last issue noted above, the potential for infill development to reduce public parking, was looked at in greater detail. A high and low parking demand projection for Chinatown was developed that considers the loss of supply resulting from the potential redevelopment of existing surface lots and from the increased demand from new development (where all parking demand for the new uses introduced is not satisfied on site). Using the time of week when paid parking is in effect as the basis for the calculation, the low projection for new parking spaces required by 2031 is zero. The high projection is 98.

A parking toolbox was created of various measures that can be used to affect parking supply and demand. The toolbox is comprised of various components as follows; on-street parking regulations (hours, duration); enforcement practices; parking pricing; parking supply; signing underused parking supply; encouraging walking, cycling, and transit; and using policy measures such as adjustments to parking provisions in the zoning by-law, or use of cash-in-lieu of parking or similar development tools.

The measures were presented to the Somerset Street Chinatown BIA. As a BIA result, the supports increasing the permitted parking durations and decreasing parking rates, but not increasing parking rates or extending paid parking times. The measures were also presented at a public open house on April 17, 2013. Of the five comment sheets submitted, 4 noted support for adjusting enforcement, and a total of 3 noted support for optimizing existing supply, adjusting prices, and encouraging active travel modes.

Recommendations to improve the management of the public parking system on Somerset Street West, based on the issues identified, were then put forward. They are presented in detail in section 8.1 of Document 1, attached to this report.

Many of the recommendations can be undertaken by staff as part of existing programs and have therefore already been addressed. For example, bicycle parking has been installed, spaces are reserved for car share vehicles in the City's Cambridge lot, and Traffic Management and Operational Support is currently improving the loading zone at Upper Lorne Place. Further, the Parking Operations, Maintenance and Development branch has increased security visits and improved directional signage and adjusted the rates at the two municipal lots resulting in increased use.

Recommendation 2: Approve the continuation of free on-street parking on Saturdays along Somerset Street within the limits of the Somerset-Chinatown BIA

With regard to on-street rates, the study recommends considering introducing or reintroducing paid parking where utilization was over practical capacity in order to improve availability of parking spaces. The highest utilization was observed in the centre portion of the study area, on weekends (mid-day and evenings), and on weekday evenings.

The study also recommends considering measures to encourage greater utilization of on-street parking in the study area by reducing parking fees and/or increasing permitted duration where and when occupancy levels are consistently at or below 50%.

Since the Municipal Parking Management Program is mandated by Council to be financially self-sustaining, any reduction to parking rates needs to be considered with the extension of paid parking to Sundays, evenings, and the reinstatement of paid parking on Saturdays.

If these recommendations were implemented, overall rates would be decreased to encourage greater utilization during paid parking hours; paid parking hours would be shifted later in the day to increase use in the morning and increase availability of on-street spaces in the early evening; and paid parking on Saturday and Sunday would be implemented to improve availability of on-street spaces immediately adjacent to commercial uses.

However, after presenting these recommendations, the study notes “other adjacent commercial streets to the east and west do not charge for on-street parking on Saturdays, Sundays or in the evenings therefore, a broader policy review may be appropriate.” Staff agrees, and therefore recommends making no changes to paid parking in Chinatown until a broader policy review is undertaken or local area parking studies are completed for areas that are similar to it. This includes continuation of the existing free Saturday parking along Somerset Street within the limits of the Somerset-Chinatown BIA.

The concern about the inconsistency in parking pricing across the City was also raised at Transportation Committee on February 6, 2013, when members suggested that similar areas should be charged the same. Further, the City’s parking rate setting guideline states that “On and off-street rates and hours for different areas should vary only where there is an appropriate justification for the variance.” The Parking Operations, Maintenance and Development branch has created a procedure to ensure rates and hours in municipal off-street lots are fair and appropriate across the city, but have not yet created a procedure to put this guideline into practice for on-street spaces.

On April 3, 2013 the Transportation Committee tabled the recommendation to direct staff, “to examine the benefits and risks of implementing a city-wide performance pricing program (allowing for incremental upward and downward adjustments to parking rates based on utilization surveys) and report back to Committee”, and directed “that staff include the cost of administration to effect change on meters when required.” Transportation Committee further directed that this recommendation be tabled and that it come back following further discussion with stakeholders. The consultation regarding a broader policy review is scheduled to begin in 2014.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

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

CONSULTATION

Various members of the Somerset Street Chinatown BIA, the Dalhousie Community Association, St. Luke's Church, the Somerset community Health Centre, a representative of Vrtucar, the Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation, and the local Councillor's office were all specifically consulted.

Further, all properties located along Somerset Street West between Preston and Bay were notified of the study when it began, and later provided notice of the Open House help on April 17, 2013. All notices were provided in English, French, Traditional Chinese and Vietnamese.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

Councillor Holmes was consulted in the development of the report and is supportive of the report recommendations, with the exception of introducing or reintroducing paid parking.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to implementing the recommendations in this report

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with implementing the recommendations in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the report recommendation. The continuation of free parking on Saturdays and Sundays has previously been accounted for in the approved parking revenue budget expectations.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

Staff will ensure that any applicable accessibility standards are adhered to during the execution of the recommendations 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

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.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

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

Economic Prosperity: On-street municipally managed short-term parking is an asset to local businesses.

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 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) 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.

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 ten year capital plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – Chinatown Local Area Parking Study.

DISPOSITION

Subject to approval by Council, staff will carry out the recommendations identified in the Chinatown Local Area Parking Study and this report.

Once parking studies have been undertaken for the surrounding areas and/ or a broader policy review is complete and/ or staff will report back to Transportation Committee and Council prior to reintroducing paid parking on Saturdays along Somerset Street, or any other changes to paid parking within the limits of the Somerset-Chinatown BIA.