REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: June 21, 2021

FROM: Municipal Enforcement Services Department

DATE: June 15, 2021

SUBJECT: **Waterfront Parks Parking Improvements, By-law 2021-080 and By-law 2021-082**

LOCATION: Various
WARD: Ward 1 & Ward 2   Page 1

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That parking improvements at Bronte Beach and Tannery park areas as outlined in the June 15, 2021 report from the Municipal Enforcement Services department be implemented; and

2. That By-law 2021-080, a by-law to amend By-law 2013-013, Parks By-law, attached as Appendix B, to the June 15, 2021 report from the Municipal Enforcement Services department, be passed; and

3. That By-law 2021-082 a by-law to amend By-law 2015-071, the Parking Administrative Penalties By-law, attached as Appendix C, to the June 15, 2021 report from the Municipal Enforcement Services department, be passed; and

4. That the report from Municipal Enforcement Services dated June 15, 2021 titled "Waterfront Parks Parking Improvements", be received.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- In 2020, there was a significant increase in visitors to the town's waterfront parks

- Operational improvements and updates to the Parks By-law can help manage and control the parking lots

- Updates to the Parks By-law and the Parking Administrative Penalties By-law provide requirements to implement a 10 p.m. park closure and clarify unauthorized parking and unauthorized vehicles in parks

- Although not recommended, options such as time limits and paid parking at Bronte Beach and Tannery Park areas can assist in managing parking in those areas – optional recommendations have been included should Council wish to proceed with paid parking and/or time limits.

BACKGROUND:

During COVID restrictions in 2020, there was a significant increase in visitors to the town's parks and in particular the waterfront parks. With the increased use there were numerous issues and complaints, many of which related to parking at and near these parks.

Staff undertook a review of the parking lots associated with waterfront parks and identified options to help improve the parking management and control.   While the review considered a number of parking locations, the areas of greatest concern, based on 2020 issues were Bronte Beach Park (including Bronte Bluffs/Sovereign House parking lot) and Tannery Park. At these locations, there were various parking issues identified.

At the May 25, 2021 meeting, Council requested that the following be considered in regard to waterfront park paid parking:
- Modification to the 3 hour parking limit in the parks by-law.
- Parking on side streets in waterfront areas.
- Consider other municipalities and if they are charging out of towners only.
- Consider effects of downtown BIA and those who pay for long term parking.
- Consider cost of Enforcement and Parks staff response to heavy traffic in parks since COVID-19 began vs. pre-pandemic costs

This report provides recommendations to assist with the parking management at Bronte Beach Park and Tannery Park areas and responds to Council's request.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Parking Review

The town provides a number of waterfront parks for the benefit and enjoyment of residents and visitors. Parking areas and lots are provided to accommodate users of the parks, as well as recreational boaters who have Town moorings. In 2020,

with COVID restrictions, visiting parks was a popular alternative for residents not being able to travel. The increased attendance at the waterfront parks created a number of issues including vehicles parking outside of designated areas, parking after park closure and overflow parking into neighbourhood areas.

Staff reviewed the parking areas at the waterfront parks and determined improvements that could help alleviate some of the parking issues. Introducing time restrictions, improved permits, paid parking and enforcement could improve compliance. As well, operational changes including new signage, delineation of parking, bike racks and gates could assist in controlling and managing the parking at the waterfront parks.

A summary of the waterfront parks parking review is provided as Appendix A to this report. The review looked at the parking in the following areas:
- Bronte Harbour
- Oakville Harbour
- Bronte Outer Harbour
- Coronation Park
- South Shell Park
- Gairloch Gardens

From the review, staff identified opportunities to improve the management and control of parking at waterfront parks:
1. Update Parks By-law to clarify parking restrictions and regulations
2. Review and update signage with clear conditions, timelines and restrictions for parking
3. Review and update parking permit terms and conditions
4. Review and add delineation of parking spaces and areas
5. Review and install cycling infrastructure
6. Review options and locations for gating or closing parking lots
7. Review and implement options to reduce impact of overflow parking
8. Implement time limit restrictions at waterfront parks
9. Implement a paid parking program to promote turnover of parking spaces
10. Increase patrols and enforcement to promote compliance of parking regulations in and near waterfront parks
11. Update the town's website to provide information on the parking programs at the waterfront parks
12. Develop a communication plan to provide to provide information on the parking programs at the waterfront parks

Bronte Beach Area
The following table lists the parking areas at Bronte Beach Park including a
description of the parking users:

Location/Park	Parking area & # of spaces	Users
Bronte Beach Park	gravel lot near West River Street • 25-30 unlined spaces	• Bronte Harbour permit holders • Overflow parking from transient boat launch users (boats with trailers) • Park visitors
Bronte Beach Park	Berta Point asphalt lot • 20 permit only spaces	• Bronte Harbour permit holders
Bronte Beach Park	main asphalt parking lot • 26 public spaces • 26 permit only spaces • 18 vehicle with trailer spaces	• Bronte Harbour permit holders • Boat launch users (vehicles with trailers) • Park visitors
Bronte Beach Park	Bronte Harbour Yacht Club parking (West River Street) • 4 unlined permit only spaces	• Bronte Harbour Yacht Club members
Bronte Bluffs/Sovereign House	gravel lot • 18 unlined spaces • scheduled for resurfacing	• Sovereign House visitors • Sovereign House members and meetings • Park visitors including overflow parking from Bronte Beach

While Bronte Harbour mooring permit holders are provided parking permits for the
boating season, and boat launch users pay for daily use, park visitors currently use
the parking lots on a first come first serve basis with no time limit between 6 a.m.
and dusk. There are currently 143 mooring permits at Bronte Beach and Berta
Point, and a permit holder is provided 2 parking permits. If these permit holders are
not able to find parking in their permit area, they park in the public parking areas on
a first come first serve basis.

In response to overflow parking requirements in Bronte village in 2018, the town implemented a temporary parking area within the winter boat storage area on the Bronte Marina property (2508 Lakeshore Road West). This parking area was delineated and signed for public parking during the summer. Through discussions with Parks staff, there is an opportunity to provide a similar parking area during the 2021 boating season. This area would provide overflow parking for visitors to Bronte Beach Park, within about an 8 minute walk. Similar to 2018, the area would need to be delineated and signed. As well, additional signage and communication will be needed to direct visitors to the area.

With the expected increase of visitors to Bronte Beach Park this year, staff are recommending a number of parking improvements. These include amendments to the Parks By-law, updated signage, new and updated permits, and parking lot improvements.

Recommended Improvements at Bronte Beach Area
1. Amend Parks By-law to define park closure time, unauthorized parking and unauthorized vehicles.
2. Update signage to reflect parking rules, time limits and closure
3. Update Bronte Harbour mooring holder's parking permit terms and conditions to clarify parking locations, restrictions and process for overnight/extended parking
4. Coordinate with Sovereign House members to provide permits and plan for lot closures to support their events
5. Delineate parking spaces and areas in the gravel lot at West River St, Bronte Harbour Yacht Club parking area and the Bronte Bluffs/Sovereign House parking lot to better define parking areas, subject to available funding and budget approval
6. Install cycling infrastructure such as bike racks to promote visiting the park via bicycle, subject to available funding and budget approval
7. Implement and sign a temporary overflow parking lot at Bronte Marina
8. Communicate parking changes at Bronte Beach Park area.

Tannery Park Area

The following table lists the parking areas at Tannery Park area including a description of the parking users:

Location/Park	Parking area & # of spaces	Users
Tannery Park	Walker Street parking lot • 38 unlined spaces • scheduled for resurfacing	• Oakville Harbour permit holders • Park visitors

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Tannery Park	parking along docks • 74 parking space	• Oakville Harbour permit holders • Park visitors
Tannery Park	Walker Street on-street parking • 18 lined spaces	• Park visitors

Oakville Harbour mooring permit holders with assigned dock spaces in Tannery Park are provided parking permits during the boating season. There are currently 97 mooring permits at Tannery Park, with 194 parking permits. Park visitors also use the parking lots at Tannery Park. The parking is currently available on a first come first serve basis with no time limit between 6 a.m. and dusk. The on-street parking on Walker Street, adjacent to Tannery Park also provides parking on a first come first serve basis, for up to 3 hours.

Staff are recommending a number of improvements to control and manage the parking with the expected increase of park use this year.

Recommended Improvements at Tannery Park Area
1. Amend Parks By-law to define park closure time, unauthorized parking and unauthorized vehicles.
2. Update signage to reflect parking rules, time limits and closure
3. Update Oakville Harbour mooring holder's parking permit terms and conditions to clarify parking locations, restrictions and process for overnight/extended parking
4. Delineate parking spaces and areas at the Walker St parking lot to better define parking areas, subject to available funding and budget approval
5. Install cycling infrastructure such as bike racks to promote visiting the park via bicycle, subject to available funding and budget approval
6. Communicate parking changes at Tannery Park area.

Parks By-laws Amendments
The Parks By-law 2013-013 prescribes the rules and regulations for the operations of parks within the Town of Oakville. The by-law currently provides a number of parking regulations including:
• Park other than on a roadway within a park
• Park a bus within a park without authorization
• Park where prohibited within a park
• Park obstructing traffic within a park
• Park overnight within a park

Staff have reviewed the by-law and identified a number of opportunities to clarify the parking regulations in parks.

With respect to park closures, the Parks By-law states that:

> *No person shall, in any Park,*
> *be present in any Park between dusk and 6:00 a.m. in the forenoon, except*
> *as a participant or spectator of any function approved by the Director. Upon*
> *the completion of such function every person shall promptly leave the Park*;

Since the time of dusk changes from day to day, it is less obvious as to when the park is closed. The park opening is set at the fixed time of 6:00 a.m., therefore a fixed closing time for the park would be consistent. Through staff discussions, the recommended park closing time is 10:00 p.m. With a fixed time for the park closure it will be easier to communicate and enforce the closure and unauthorized use of the park. Notwithstanding the park closing time, participants or spectator of any approved function can remain in the park until completion of the function.

The Parks By-law also states that:
> *No person shall, in any Park:*
> *park any vehicle overnight except with the written authorization of the*
> *Director;*

As the by-law does not specify when the overnight parking is prohibited, it is recommended that parking in a park be prohibited when the park is closed, except as authorized by the Director.

The Parks By-law prohibits and regulates certain vehicles from parking in parks, but there is opportunity to clarify other parking regulations relating to commercial vehicles, trailers using boat launch ramps, and permit holder parking. Recommended updates to the Parks By-law include:
- Updated definition when the park is closed
- Specified time when overnight parking is prohibited
- Prohibition of unauthorized commercial vehicles
- Prohibition of vehicles with trailers from parking without launch pass
- Prohibition of vehicles from parking without authorized permit, in specified areas
- Prohibitions of unlicensed or inoperable vehicles

By-law 2021-080, attached as Appendix B, provides recommended amendments to the Parks By-law and By-law 2021-082, attached as Appendix C, provides recommended amendments to the Parking Administrative Penalties Bylaw 2015-071. These by-law amendments provide for regulating and enforcing the following parking violations in Oakville's parks:

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Violation	Penalty*
PARK OTHER THAN ON A ROADWAY WITHIN A PARK	$75
PARK OTHER THAN IN PARKING LOT WITHIN A PARK	$75
PARK A BUS WITHIN A PARK WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION	$50
PARK WHERE PROHIBITED WITHIN A PARK	$50
PARK OBSTRUCTING TRAFFIC WITHIN A PARK	$50
PARK 10 PM TO 6 AM IN A TOWN PARK	$50
PARK UNLICENSED MOTOR VEHICLE IN A TOWN PARK	$50
PARK WRECKED, DISMANTLED OR INOPERABLE VEHICLE IN A TOWN PARK	$50
PARK A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE WITHIN A PARK WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION	$50
PARK WITHOUT LAUNCH RAMP PASS	$50
PARK WITHOUT SEASON PASS	$50

*penalties align with similar violations, subject to review through annual budget process

Parking Management and Control Considerations

Key criteria of an effective parking management system would include:

- ease of use
- ability to enforce
- difficult to misuse
- equitable
- time limits and restrictions
- increased access through turnover of parking spaces
- opportunity for cost recovery

Parking management systems may include permits, reservations, gates, time restrictions, paid parking or combinations thereof. While the town's current parking programs provide for permits, gates (at the Church Street Parkade), time restrictions, and paid parking, staff looked at other municipalities to determine how they are managing parking at waterfront parks.   Appendix D, provides a summary of parking systems used to manage waterfront parking at a number of municipalities. The following paragraphs review parking management and control options for Council's consideration. Should Council wish to approve one of these options, Appendix E provides optional recommendations.

Time restrictions

Time limits and restrictions can provide a means for managing and controlling parking. Time restrictions define when vehicles can and cannot park and time limits create opportunity for parking. The shorter the time limit, the more turnover there is at a parking space, creating more opportunity for a vehicle to find available parking.

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The Parks By-law does not limit the how long a vehicle can be parked in a park. A time limit in popular parks would allow visitors a maximum time to enjoy the parks while providing opportunity for more visitors to access the parks.

Council requested modification to the staff recommended 3-hour parking limit presented at the May 25, 2021 Council report. The 3-hour parking limit was recommended to achieve maximum turnover in a parking space during the prime parking time between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. If parking time limits are increased, parking space turnover is decreased. With 26 public parking spaces at Bronte Beach, the following table is provided as an example of how alterations of the time limit can affect the potential number of vehicles/visitors attending the parking lot.

Parking Time Limit	Maximum Turnover in 10 hours (9 a.m. to 7 p.m.)	Maximum number of vehicles/visitors in 10 hours
3 hours	3.3	87
4 hours	2.5	65
5 hours	2	52
No limit	1	26

Time limits alone, without a system of payment or reservation, requires increased resources to enforce. Time limit enforcement requires officers to attend on multiple patrols to track parked vehicles and denote which vehicles have exceeded the maximum time limit.   Vehicles can be parked significantly longer than the time limit before they are ticketed.

Setting different time limits at the various parks is an option, however having one standard time limit keeps it simple and easy to communicate. The 3-hour time limit aligns with the on-street parking regulations in Oakville.   A 4-hour or 5- hour time limit would provide more time to visit the park, while still providing turnover of the parking spaces.

Parking Permit Programs

Some communities are implementing programs at their waterfront parks that require paid parking for visitors and permits for residents. These programs can:

- hinder time limits and delay turnover of parking spaces
- be seen as inequitable to those who are not eligible for permits
- increase Freedom of Information Act breach risks when providing personal information to verify residency
- be open to misuse if residency verification is not required
- be costly to operate
- create an expectation that parking is available when a resident has a permit

Communities that have implemented resident parking programs at their waterfront parks tend to have numerous parking areas for visitors. As Bronte Beach and

Tannery Park also provide parking for mooring permit holders, the available visitor parking varies and can be very limited.

A resident permit system could be implemented for Bronte Beach and Tannery Park areas. The program would cost $8,000 to develop and would take about 4 weeks to implement. A resident parking program may address some resident concerns but would not ensure available parking, promote turnover or increase access to waterfront parking for park visitors.

Parking Reservation Systems

A reservation system to manage parking can provide time limits, promote turnover of parking spaces and collect fees for cost recovery. This type of system has been implemented at Conservation Halton Parks and requires:

- online reservation system
- electronic gates and/or staff attendance at entry to verify registration before entry
- after hours and weekend back office customer service staff to support reservation system, payments and resolve issues, for all times the park is open
- entry lanes that provide space for queuing of vehicles prior to entry
- underutilized parking to ensure reserved spaces are available
- enforcement, including towing, for vehicle overstays to provide parking spaces for reservations

This type of parking program would be difficult and costly to implement in Bronte Beach and Tannery Park areas, as:

- there is not a static number parking spaces for visitors as mooring permit holders can park in permit and visitor parking areas
- there are multiple parking areas that would require gates or attendants at each entrance
- there is no area for vehicle queueing, which would result in overflow of traffic onto residential streets
- the cost to implement a reservations system would exceed $130,000, not including parking lot reconfiguration, staffing, ongoing maintenance and traffic management plans

Paid Parking Programs

Payment for parking is another common way to manage and control parking. The payment encourages compliance with the regulations and time limits, promotes turnover of the parking spaces and can help support the parking costs. The town

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currently manages commercial parking in downtown Oakville, Kerr Village and Bronte Village through paid parking programs.

In response to the paid parking report on the May 25, 2021 Council agenda, staff received significant feedback from residents opposing paid parking at waterfront parks. While staff's previous recommendation included paid parking, everyday throughout the year, there is opportunity to implement a reduced parking program that requires payment only during peak times. Such a program could still manage and control parking at waterfront parks, while allowing time for visitors to attend, without having to pay. Specifically, paid parking program could be reduced to:

- 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Friday, Saturday, Sunday, holidays
- May 1 to September 30
- Maximum 4 hours

The HONK mobile payment app would be leveraged and the program could still be considered for a two year pilot. After the two year period staff would bring forward a report and recommendations on the outcome of the pilot program.

If this program were considered, staff would still recommend a $3 per hour rate which is comparable fee with other municipalities and is not cost prohibitive. Note that Conservation Halton charges an entry fee of $10.74/adult for a 2 hour park visit (i.e. $5.37/hour effective June 14, 2021).

Park visitors attending by walking, cycling or transit would not be subject to a parking fee. As well, mooring permit holders would not be subject to paying the recommended parking fee, as their parking permits are provided as part of the mooring permit. Staff would also work with Sovereign House members to provide permits for their events.

Implementing paid parking at Bronte Beach and Tannery Park areas is not expected to impact long term paid parking in the downtown Oakville BIA or Bronte BIA areas.

Parking Management Systems

The following provide a summary comparison of parking management systems:

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	Permits	Time Restrictions	Reservations	Paid Parking
Promotes turnover of parking spaces		X	X	X
Equitable		X	X	X
Provides for time limits		X	X	X
Easy to use	X			X
Easy to implement				X
Easy to enforce	X			X
Difficult to misuse			X	X
Cost recovery			X	X

Overflow Parking – SPA

With the increase in visitors to the waterfront parks in 2020, when parking lots became full, visitors looked to on-street parking to be able to attend the parks. General options to limit overflow parking to the surrounding streets include:

1. Implementing parking time restrictions - to limit the duration of parking and help reduce on-street parking
2. Implementing parking prohibitions – to eliminate vehicles from parking on the street

In response to the impact of overflow parking in 2020, the town introduced Special Provision Areas ("SPA") where vehicles observed to be parked in signed "No Parking" areas were subject to higher penalties. The SPAs were introduced in areas near Bronte Beach Park and Coronation Park, along with increased areas of "No Parking" on the street. SPA was also approved for an area near Tannery Park, however the residents in the area did not support the increased areas of "No Parking" on the street.

Following Council's approval on April 26, 2021, SPAs were be implemented in the areas near Bronte Beach, Coronation and Tannery parks, from May 15 to September 15, 2021. Courtesy permits for residents to accommodate temporary on-street parking within the SPAs, were also provided.

Staff anticipate that removing SPAs would create increased traffic volumes from vehicles circulating and looking for additional parking when park parking lots are full.

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With increased traffic volumes experience suggests increased parking violations could impact safety, sightlines and access. It is not uncommon to prohibit on-street parking in areas near waterfront parks. From staffs review, other municipalities such as Ajax, Barrie, Collingwood, Hamilton, Innisfil, Mississauga and St. Catharines either prohibit parking or limit on-street parking to local residents only.

Using the process outlined in the April 26, 2021 report to Council discussing SPAs, staff have implemented an additional SPA in the Lions Valley park area. Based on contact to date, staff expect to process additional requests for SPAs in waterfront park areas. Any additional requests for SPAs would only be implemented after consultation with the ward councillors and residents within the impacted area.

Enforcement

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions and increased enforcement requirements in the town's parks, Municipal Enforcement Services have contracted additional staff from May until September 2021. To help control the activities the parks, the increased staff presence in the parks include:

- 15 Park Ambassadors – who provide information and education to park visitors – to stop or prevent violations
- 8 Park Officers – who also educate and inform, but can issued tickets for parking violations in and around the parks
- 8 Mobile Compliance Officers – who respond to escalated matters and all park violations – not just parking, including BBQ's in parks, dogs off leash, etc.

The cost of the additional staffing is expected to be $504,000 for the May to September 2021 time period.

Recommendations

The staff recommendations provide for operational improvements and updates to the Parks By-law and Administrative Penalties By-law to help manage and control the parking lots. The recommended improvements for Bronte Beach and Tannery Park areas, are listed earlier in this report.

Should Council wish to approve a parking management system for Bronte Beach and Tannery park areas as described in this report, Appendix E provides optional recommendations for Council's consideration.

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CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

Depending on the Council approvals, changes to the parking in the waterfront parks will communicated to park visitors through new signage as well as education/information programs through Parks Ambassadors. Staff will work to implement a communication plan including updates to the town's website and using social media.

Mooring permit holders at Bronte Beach and Tannery Park areas will be advised of the changes to parking along with updated terms and conditions of their parking permits**.**

(B) FINANCIAL

Revenues generated through parking rates, fees, and penalties support the cost of implementing and maintaining the program as the town's parking operation, is self-funded and does not rely on the tax levy to cover annual operating and capital expenses.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Support and coordination from a number of departments and divisions is required to implement the parking improvements at the waterfront parks. These include:
- Municipal Enforcement Services and Parks staff to review and implement park improvements
- Municipal Enforcement Services to coordinate updates to patrols and enforcement of parking programs
- Traffic Engineering, Traffic and Municipal Enforcement Services staff are working together to implement SPAs
- Legal staff review and provide input into by-law amendments
- Communication staff to assist in implementing a communication plan, including providing input on signage
- Finance staff to provide the required financial reporting to monitor and track parking programs.

(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS
This report addresses the corporate strategic goal(s) to:
- Provide effective licensing and enforcement framework to maintain community safety, protection and enjoyment

- Support a culture of continuous improvement and innovation to enhance cost-effective delivery of town programs and services

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION
The implementation of various improvements to the parking lots will provide a means to better manage and control the visitors parking at waterfront parks. Installing bicycle racks at the waterfront parks will help promote bicycle visits to the parks.

APPENDICES:
Appendix A – Waterfront Park Review
Appendix B – By-law 2021-080, a by-law to amend By-law 2013-013, Parks By-law
Appendix C – By-law 2021-082, a by-law to amend By-law 2015-071, the Parking Administrative Penalties By-law
Appendix D – Waterfront Parking Permit Programs
Appendix E – Optional Council Recommendations

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