

Good Afternoon Oakville Town Clerks, Mayor and Councillors

Regarding Council - Tuesday, 9 July 2024 @ 6:30 PM - 9. Confidential Consent Item(s), 9.1 Towing Vehicles from Private Property - Legal Update

Please note that my comments are all from Bronte perspective. Accordingly, I am not sure how applicable to other areas of Oakville. Yes, I am promoting Bronte, but not intentionally at the expense of any other area of Oakville.

I have recently attended Bronte Village Streetscape Study public meetings. Accordingly, I am aware that one goal is to attract visitors to the area/neighbourhood.

My understanding is the topic of Item 9.1 is to address the issue of “predatory towing” in Oakville, which is running rampant in Bronte Village.

I am aware that Downtown Oakville has paid public parking. I have personally used and am finding the cost of such to be quite reasonable.

Ward 1 Councillors had commented during previous meeting that there is a severe lack of public parking in Bronte. Accordingly, such options are simply not feasible for Bronte area.

There are several privately owned parking lots in Bronte Village. But ALL are being closely monitored for people not using the associated businesses or services. AND, ticketing AND towing are multiple daily occurrences. (The towing company retained has a tow truck more or less permanently parked in lot in the immediate vicinity.)

I respect the rights of the property owners to prioritise parking for clients/customers of their commercial tenants.

BUT, I also believe they should want to be “responsible and reasonable” neighbours in Bronte, especially after THEY have chosen to be located in Bronte.

Again, one goal of Bronte Village Streetscape Study is to attract visitors. BUT, visitors are NOT going to visit if their vehicles get ticket and/or towed. VISITORS TO BRONTE WILL BENEFIT ALL BUSINESSES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS.

But, again respecting the rights of the property owners, I am definitely NOT suggesting they should be forced to offer free parking to anyone, especially when not visiting one of their commercial tenants.

But, I am also seeing many of these parking lots being effectively empty when their commercial tenants are closed for the day.

Again, one goal of Bronte Village Streetscape Study is to attract visitors. BUT, visitors are NOT going to visit if their vehicles get ticket and/or towed. Many businesses, especially restaurants, and service providers in the area unfortunately have severe shortage of available parking, specifically within relatively close proximity to their location.

My understanding is that “predatory towing” contravenes the laws of Ontario, which now regulates the towing industry, but the local police are reluctant to enforce, believing instead of

the “rights” of the property owners. Is, therefore, my understanding that this item (9.1 Towing Vehicles from Private Property - Legal Update) is attempt to generate bylaw compliant with Ontario Law that will give local police the authority, direction and incentive to address the issue of “predatory towing”.

I am in total favour of such a bylaw.

I also feel there is a reasonable compromise solution available.

Respecting the rights of the property owners, agreeing that not just anyone should be permitted to park in their lots (without needing to pay some compensation for usage or visiting one of their commercial tenants) I believe a “pay-and-display” type system can be utilized, similar in nature and pricing to that existing in downtown Oakville, but with the proceeds, or at least some of the proceeds, going to the property owners for use of their parking facilities. (a “public-private-partnership)

Commercial tenants can have “forms” for their clients/customers to display in their vehicles to enable “enforcement” to differentiate between these vehicles and those parking via the “pay-and-display” method. (My dentist uses this method in Mississauga. They have limited “allocated” parking spaces in the commercial facility where they are located, but often have patients numbering higher. IMMEDIATELY, as I walk into their office they have stand containing such “parking permission forms”. Can be a “form” or simple “laminated card” to help discourage forgeries. Would need to specifically identify the business being visited, such that becomes immediately invalid outside of business hours for that business or service provider. I agree would not be reasonable for some businesses where actual “visiting times” is minimal. (For example, people visiting a “sandwich shop” generally would not stay as long as someone eating in “sit-down” resident.) But, such “form” could be available for anyone wishing to “sit down”. The element of REASONABLE will definitely also need to be applied to the solution (example, someone picking up a sandwich for take-out needs to be allowed reasonable time to conduct their transaction before leaving).

Regarding pricing of such “pay-and-display” parking, downtown Oakville parking has already set rates. So, simply following such should remove any arguments or complaints. Basically, same rates for “pay-and-display” parking wherever you park in Oakville.

I recently visited the constituency office of Anita Anand, MP for Oakville (301 Robinson Street, Trafalgar and Lakeshore area). Parking cost me \$0.50 for 20 minutes. I am sure that I paid more for the gas for my car for driving there and back.

I have also noted that violators (people parking without displaying proof of payment) HAVE been ticketed. I do not know if anyone has been towed. (I HAVE seen the tickets on vehicle windshields.)

Accordingly, I am in TOTAL agreement regarding including ENFORCEMENT as part of this bylaw, even if proceeds go to the property owners (which I continue to feel would be fair and reasonable).

When I go to downtown I am expecting to and prepared to pay for parking. Cost of such is VERY REASONABLE, in my opinion and experience.

In my opinion, anyone planning to visit a local restaurant, and NOT wanting to park in free public parking (due to slight walk), should not be upset when needing to pay few \$\$\$ for local parking. The price to park "legally", using the rates already existing for Downtown Oakville, and not get ticked or towed, is negligible when compared to the price of the entertainment/meal they will be spending on.

So, WIN-WIN-WIN all around for Oakville/Bronte, parking lot property owners and local businesses and restaurants not fortunate enough to have sufficient local parking available. The only losers, as I see, will be the "predatory towing companies". But, as I am understanding, they already are violating Provincial Laws anyway.

I am not wishing to make public presentation. This email is the only presentation I wish to make. Since Items 9. are Confidential Consent Item(s), I am not sure if public presentation will be permitted for such anyway.

Regards
Ross Grandy