

BUDGET COMMITTEE REQUEST:

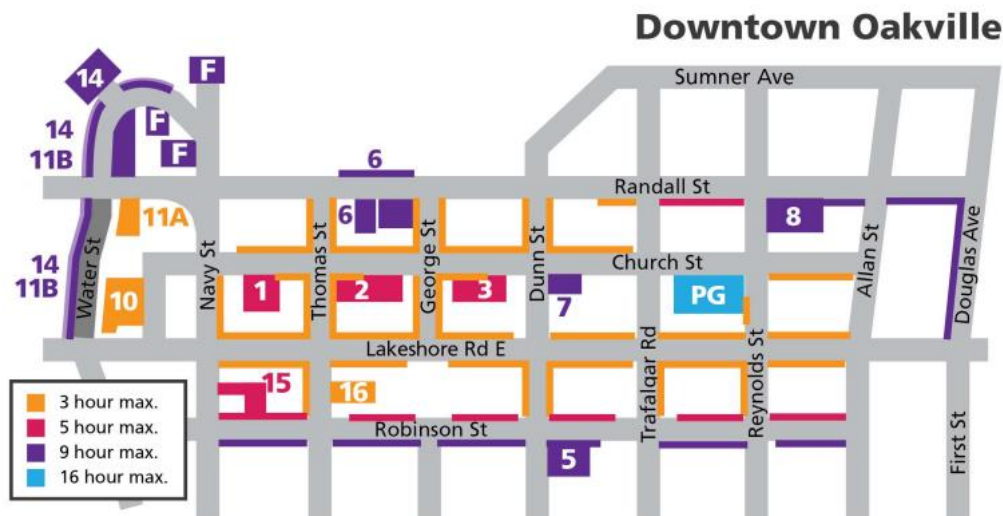
Provide the cost of adding larger parking wayfinding signage for parking in the downtown commercial area.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be received.

KEY FACTS:

- The downtown commercial area offers over 1,000 open-air parking spaces across 13 Town-operated lots and on-street parking. In addition, the parking garage provides 290 additional spaces.



- Two digital signs are currently installed at key entry points to the downtown commercial area, providing real-time information on parking locations and availability. The numbers displayed are organized by “street corridors,” meaning it includes both on-street and lot parking available in that corridor. One sign is located on Lakeshore Road East just before Navy Street and the other on Trafalgar Road just before Randall Street. Each sign measures 46 inches wide by 36 inches high.
- Several parking wayfinding signs, each measuring 30 inches wide by 24 inches high, are installed throughout the downtown area to direct drivers to available parking lots. However, the total number of signs and their exact locations are currently unknown. Additional signage is posted at all entrances to the parking lots and the parking garage.

Digital Signage



Parking Wayfinding Sign



COMMENTS/OPTIONS:

Digital Signs

The digital signs were installed in 2022 at a total cost of approximately \$25,000. This included \$15,000 for the signs (\$7,500 each) and \$10,000 for installation, which covered materials such as brackets and posts. Also, as these signs display real-time parking information through integration with the Town's parking sensor program, additional costs were incurred for modems on each sign. There is also an ongoing annual operating expense of \$2,160 for cellular connectivity to support this functionality.

A high-level quote was obtained from the vendor for larger digital signs, nearly twice the size of the current ones. The estimated cost for two new signs is approximately \$54,000 (\$27,000 per sign). Additional installation costs would apply, with the final amount depending on whether any existing brackets and posts can be reused.

Parking Wayfinding Signs

As noted, the Town currently uses several wayfinding signs at the standard size of 30 inches by 24 inches, with a cost of \$75 per sign to produce.

Pricing for a larger sign, measuring 36 inches by 24 inches, was also obtained from the Town's sign vendor at a cost of \$90 per sign.

Other Considerations

Municipal Enforcement Services (MES), in consultation with Transportation & Engineering, does not recommend purchasing larger signs. This is due to clearance requirements. Signs must be installed at a minimum height of 2.1 metres from the ground to ensure pedestrian safety, particularly along roads with narrow boulevard space. Additionally, signs should not extend into traffic lanes, as this could obstruct the movement of larger vehicles and compromise traffic flow.

Instead, MES recommends a review of the current inventory of parking wayfinding signs and identifying opportunities to install additional signs to improve navigation and assist drivers in locating parking lots. Signs would be placed in strategic locations including:

1. Major intersections leading into downtown: These high-traffic entry points are critical for capturing drivers' attention early, ensuring they are aware of available parking options before entering the core area. This reduces congestion and improves navigation.
2. Key streets leading directly to parking lots: Placing signs along feeder streets provides clear, continuous guidance, minimizing confusion and improving the overall visitor experience. This approach supports efficient traffic flow and maximizes utilization of all parking assets.

To enhance wayfinding coverage, it is estimated that approximately 20 additional signs will be required. At the current rate of \$75 per sign, the total material cost would be about \$1,500. Installation would involve a one-time labor expense of approximately \$500, along with other costs for supplies such as screws and fasteners of approximately \$300. Total estimated cost would be approximately \$2,300.

As the Parking program is self-funded, any required funding in the operating or capital budgets would come from the Town's Parking Enterprise Reserve.