

## REPORT

### PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING DATE: APRIL 13, 2015

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**FROM:** Engineering and Construction Department

**DATE:** January 27, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Downtown Parking Garage Feasibility Study

**LOCATION:** Downtown Oakville Commercial District

**WARD:** 3

Page 1

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Church Street Commercial Parking Garage feasibility study by Urban Strategies Inc., as detailed in the report from the Engineering and Construction department dated January 27, 2015, be received; and
2. That a business case assessment for a new downtown parking garage be undertaken and presented to Council prior to consideration of the 10 year capital forecast later this year.

#### KEY FACTS:

- Lakeshore Road through downtown is at or near the end of its service life and it will need to be reconstructed in the near future.
- The town has undertaken the Downtown Transportation and Streetscape Study, which recommends a master plan for all streets within the downtown core.
- The reconstruction of Lakeshore Road East will result in the temporary loss of on-street parking; there is a concern that with less parking, shoppers and visitors may not visit the downtown during the two-year reconstruction period.
- The 2012 Downtown Oakville & Kerr St Village Commercial Parking Study Commercial Parking Study had previously recommended the town consider the need for constructing a second downtown parking garage sometime in the future.
- A report entitled *Strategies for Oakville's Main Street Commercial Districts* was presented to Community Services Committee on July 14, 2014; Council approved a recommendation for staff to initiate a study to assess and review the feasibility of constructing a second parking garage in Downtown Oakville.
- Urban Strategies Inc. was retained to review the feasibility of the construction of a parking structure on Municipal Lot 2 at Church and Thomas Streets.

From: Engineering and Construction Department  
Date: January 27, 2015  
Subject: Downtown Parking Garage Feasibility Study

- The preliminary preferred option (2A) for a second garage in the downtown is a 7 level garage (4 above ground, 3 below); 348 spaces; preliminary estimate is \$23 million.
- A business case assessment for a parking structure at Municipal Lot 2 is recommended prior to consideration of such a project in the 10 year capital forecast.

## BACKGROUND:

In late 2013, staff began work on the Downtown Transportation and Streetscape (DTS) Study. The DTS study includes a recommended streetscape master plan for all of the existing downtown streets. A staff report to Planning and Development Council seeking approval of the DTS study is on the same agenda as this report.

Throughout the DTS study public consultation sessions, the business community has been advised that the condition of Lakeshore Road East is deteriorating and will need to be reconstructed in the near future. There have been many positive comments during the various public engagement sessions about the streetscape designs for downtown; however, staff have also heard several concerns from the downtown business community about the potential impacts of the reconstruction of Lakeshore Road East on the success of businesses during the construction period.

Council also heard these concerns, and directed staff to prepare a mitigation plan for the reconstruction of Lakeshore Road East. The reconstruction plans for Lakeshore Road will be developed during the engineering design phase of the project; mitigation strategies are also discussed in further detail in the DTS study staff report.

Prior to the initiation of the DTS study, Council approved the Downtown Oakville & Kerr St Village Commercial Parking Study (2012) – Final Report by D. Sorbara Parking & Systems Consulting. This study included a recommendation that the town should consider the need for constructing a second downtown parking lot at some point in the future.

Staff also presented a report entitled *Strategies for Oakville's Main Street Commercial Districts* to the Community Services Committee at its meeting of July 14, 2014. Council approved a number of recommendations included in the report, including that staff initiate a feasibility study for a second downtown parking garage on Municipal Lot #2. The firm of Urban Strategies Inc. (USI), the lead consultant on the Downtown Cultural Hub (DCH) study, was retained to undertake the feasibility study. USI assembled a team of consultants consisting of Read Jones Christoffersen and N. Barry Lyons Consultants Ltd. to assist with the work.

From: Engineering and Construction Department  
Date: January 27, 2015  
Subject: **Downtown Parking Garage Feasibility Study**

The 2012 commercial parking study had indicated the town should consider another downtown parking garage within the next 10 years; USI and its project team were tasked to determine if it was feasible to build a parking garage on Municipal Lot 2 (Church Street east of Thomas Street). Municipal Lot #2 was chosen as it is the largest municipal lot within closest/central proximity to Lakeshore Road East and it would complement the existing Church Street Parkade further to the east. Historically, Municipal Lot #2 was identified as a site for a future second garage.

This staff report focuses on the findings of the USI feasibility study and recommended next steps

### **COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

#### **Church Street Commercial Parking Garage Feasibility Study:**

The Church Street Commercial Parking Garage feasibility study reviewed:

1. The potential to construct a parking structure on Municipal Lot 2.
2. The number of parking spaces that could be provided in such a structure.
3. The potential to include ground floor commercial uses in the parking structure, fronting on Church Street.
4. Preliminary construction cost estimates.

A copy of the feasibility study is included as Appendix A to this report. The feasibility study includes diagrams of the potential parking structure heights and layouts, a memo regarding the potential for ground floor commercial uses, and preliminary cost estimates.

Municipal Lot 2 is located on the south side of Church Street east of Thomas Street – it currently provides 73 parking spaces. Commercial buildings border the south side of the parking lot and many of these business have rear door delivery access from within the parking lot. To the east is the parking for the CIBC bank which is located at the corner of Lakeshore Road and George Street. An aerial photograph of the site is highlighted on page 3 of the attached feasibility study.

Municipal Lot 2 has historically been considered as a future site for a second parking garage downtown. It is relatively large, has central proximity to the primary downtown business corridor (Lakeshore Road) and would complement the Church Street Parkade further to the east. In addition, it is adjacent to the former Canada Post Building. Another municipal parking lot of similar size is Municipal Lot 8 at Church and Randall; however, converting this lot to a parking garage would not offer the same benefits to the downtown businesses and visitors due to the greater distance between the site and Lakeshore Road and is too close to the existing Parkade.

USI and their team examined five (5) scenarios for the type and size of a parking structure that could be feasibly constructed on Municipal Lot #2, including:

- Option 1A:
  - Built totally within Municipal Lot #2 property
  - Retail at-grade, fronting on Church and Thomas Streets
  - Design to accommodate potential future private development within the adjacent CIBC rear parking lot.
- Option 1B:
  - Acquisition of the CIBC parking lot
  - Retail at grade fronting on Church, Thomas and George Streets
  - Three (3) levels of office space at Church/Thomas (above first floor retail level) and underground parking below the entire structure (see Table 1)
- Option 1C:
  - Acquisition of the CIBC parking lot
  - Retail at grade fronting on Church, Thomas and George Streets
  - No office space (i.e. larger parking structure than in 1B)
  - Underground parking below the entire structure (see Table 1)
- Option 2A
  - Built totally within Municipal Lot #2 property
  - Retail at grade, fronting on Church and Thomas Streets
  - Design to accommodate future private expansion/connection from CIBC lot development into parking garage (below grade)
  - LEED-type initiatives on roof (e.g. green roof or solar panels)
- Option 2B
  - Acquisition of the CIBC parking lot
  - Retail at grade, fronting on Church, Thomas and George Streets
  - Underground parking below the entire structure (see Table 1)
  - LEED-type initiatives on roof (i.e. green roof or solar panels)

For each scenario, a preliminary cost estimate, an estimate of the number of parking spaces that could be provided, and preliminary layout drawings were produced, as summarized in Table 1 below:

From: Engineering and Construction Department  
 Date: January 27, 2015  
 Subject: Downtown Parking Garage Feasibility Study

**TABLE 1**

	Option 1a	Option 1b	Option 1c	Option 2a	Option 2b
<b>Parking Stalls (high)*</b>	413	435	479	348	370
<b>Parking Stalls (low)**</b>	261	261	305	196	196
<b>Retail (m2)</b>	480	1005	1005	480	1005
<b>Office (m2)</b>	0	1575	0	0	1575
<b>Land Acquisition</b>	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>LEED Initiatives</b>	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Cost Estimates</b>	\$15M - \$25M	\$22M - \$35M	\$19M - \$33M	\$13M - \$23M	\$21M - \$33M

\* parking both above and below ground    \*\* parking above ground only

It should be noted that the parking counts listed in Table 1 are gross counts. The net increase in parking spaces by building a structure over the existing surface parking lot would be 73 spaces less under each option (i.e. subtract the existing parking spaces in Municipal Lot #2).

Also, the difference in the cost estimates between Options 1A and 2A is the roof. Option 1A includes 65 parking spaces on the roof at an approximate cost of \$3.5 million. Option 2A includes either a green roof (approximately \$1.5 million) or photovoltaic cells (approximately \$500,000), instead of parking stalls on the roof.

An evaluation of the options is presented on page 34 of the attached feasibility study. The evaluation assessed the following questions/issues:

- Does the option meet criteria used in the Downtown Transportation Study?
- Can the option be constructed before or at the same time as the Lakeshore Road East Reconstruction Project?
- Relative costing between options
- Does the option fulfill the DCH criteria?
- LEED Initiatives

The evaluation also included a high level review of how each option met the DCH and DTS criteria. These criteria, especially those related to providing facilities and infrastructure that meet existing and future needs, contributing to an economically successful vibrant downtown, and developing solutions that are financially sustainable, would be examined in greater detail in a business review analysis.

The evaluation resulted in Option 2A being selected as the preliminary preferred option. It provides a sufficient number of parking stalls (348), provides higher ceilings for the at-grade retail space, does not require land acquisition, incorporates green-building aspects (green roof or solar panels). This option also allows for a

From: Engineering and Construction Department  
Date: January 27, 2015  
Subject: **Downtown Parking Garage Feasibility Study**

future connection/expansion of the underground parking levels should the CIBC parking lot be redeveloped in the future.

### **Demand for a Second Downtown Parking Garage:**

The demand for a second downtown parking garage is influenced by a number of factors, including the 2012 commercial parking study, the plans for Lakeshore Road reconstruction, and the Downtown Cultural Hub.

#### **2012 Commercial Parking Study:**

The town operates 1,336 commercial parking spaces downtown. There are 540 on-street spaces, 513 spaces in surface parking lots and 283 spaces in the existing Church Street Parkade. Approximately 514 monthly parking permits are sold each month, and there is a waiting list of approximately 689 people who would like to buy permits. Additional permits are not currently for sale as they would decrease the availability of short-term parking spaces for downtown visitors.

As a result of the 2012 Commercial Parking Study, additional permits were made available (included in above numbers) in 2014; however, there remains a high demand for additional parking permits downtown. A second garage downtown would assist in addressing the high demand of permit parking.

#### **Lakeshore Road and the DTS:**

During consultation for the DTS project, questions were raised by residents and business owners about the impacts of the reconstruction of Lakeshore Road on downtown businesses. The DTS staff report includes a backgrounder document outlining potential mitigation strategies that could be incorporated during the reconstruction of Lakeshore Road.

The implementation of the DTS recommendations will result in the ultimate permanent reduction of 39 on-street parking spaces in the downtown core after all the streets are reconstructed this represents an approximate 7% reduction in the town's on-street commercial parking supply. In addition, parking spaces along Lakeshore Road East will be temporarily unavailable during road reconstruction. The number of parking spaces that will be unavailable at any given time will be dependent on the construction staging plan; however, a preliminary review included within the DTS study staff report indicates that Lakeshore Road would be reconstructed in 2 separate phases and would result in the temporary closure of approximately half of the available on-street parking spaces along Lakeshore Road (approximately 60 spaces) during each phase of the reconstruction project.

The earlier construction of a second parking garage downtown would offset the permanent lost parking as a result of the ultimate street network reconstruction, and

From: Engineering and Construction Department  
Date: January 27, 2015  
Subject: **Downtown Parking Garage Feasibility Study**

assist in providing additional supply to offset temporary parking shortages during construction.

#### Downtown Cultural Hub:

The DTS study was undertaken in coordination with the Downtown Cultural Hub (DCH) study. It is envisioned that the final plan for the DCH will include additional parking for the cultural facilities (as parking is currently available at the Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts, for example). The earlier construction of second parking garage downtown would provide an opportunity to offset lost parking due to the redevelopment of Centennial Square and ultimately also provide additional parking options for visitors attending cultural events or festivals downtown. The location of a second parking structure in the vicinity of the former Canada Post Office Building would be ideal to serve additional parking demand that could be generated at that site.

#### Discussion and Next Steps:

While the USI report shows that it is feasible to construct a parking garage on Municipal Lot 2, and recommends a preliminary preferred option, it would be appropriate to undertake a business review study to determine the ability of a new parking structure to attract both short term and long term patrons – and to provide recommendations on how the town may ensure its success. This additional analysis would also develop a business case for the construction of a parking structure.

The proposed business review study would include:

- Analysis of expected parker characteristics (short/long-term, permits, etc.)
- A review on how the town may manage parking supply downtown
- Analysis of the parking demands related to the utilization study, mitigation of the impacts of Lakeshore Road construction, and the Downtown Cultural Hub Study
- Refined preliminary construction techniques and cost estimates, including a design build option or a review of pre-cast construction methodology

This additional work is expected to take 2 - 3 months to complete.

The proposed business case analysis would be completed in advance of Council's deliberations on the 10-year capital forecast later this year, and would assist in understanding the benefits and requirements in moving forward with the project, including having the garage in service before commencing the Lakeshore Road East Reconstruction and Streetscape Project. The DTS study staff report indicates that the earliest possible date to commence the reconstruction of Lakeshore would be the spring of 2017. This provides an opportunity for the town to consider moving forward on building a garage with the potential of delaying the Lakeshore

From: Engineering and Construction Department  
Date: January 27, 2015  
Subject: **Downtown Parking Garage Feasibility Study**

reconstruction by 12-24 months (to 2018 or 2019) or potentially less time if a design build construction of the garage is considered.

The DTS staff report recommends commencing the design work for Lakeshore Road in 2015 because there is still significant work to complete with regards to the engineering plans for Lakeshore Road. In addition, ongoing public consultation (selecting the type/colour of materials, furnishings and fixtures, etc.) is an important part of the Lakeshore Road design process. The recommendation to move forward with Lakeshore Road design work in 2015 stands even if the decision is made to construct a parking garage in advance of reconstructing Lakeshore Road. This design process will take approximately 2 years to complete, and by moving forward now, the momentum of the DTS process will be maintained.

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

### **(A) PUBLIC**

Through the public consultation sessions for the DTS study, staff has advised the public that a review of the feasibility of a parking garage at Church and Thomas Streets was being undertaken. Ongoing public consultation and discussion will occur following the presentation of the business case and input from the Downtown Cultural Hub study.

### **(B) FINANCIAL**

Preliminary cost estimates have been prepared for a parking garage, as outlined in this report. The preliminary estimate to construct a 7 level parking garage (4 levels above ground, 3 below) is \$23 million. Refined estimates will be prepared if the project proceeds to design. Funding for the construction of the garage would be supported from the parking reserve fund; however, funding options/implications would be fully reviewed during the development of the capital forecast.

### **(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**

Staff from several departments has been engaged in the study, including members of DTS and DCH project teams. Updates have been provided to both teams throughout the feasibility study.

### **(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS**

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- enhance our economic environment
- continuously improve our programs and services
- be innovative in everything we do
- always act as a team

From: Engineering and Construction Department  
Date: January 27, 2015  
Subject: **Downtown Parking Garage Feasibility Study**

- be valued/celebrated for outstanding service
- be the most livable town in Canada

**(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY**

Municipal public parking within our commercial districts adds a critical component to the community's economic sustainability. The Church Street Commercial Parking Garage feasibility study also aligns with the cultural and social pillars of sustainability by focusing on continued support to our Downtown main street commercial area including access during major construction projects and beyond.

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix A - Church Street Commercial Parking Garage (February 23, 2015)

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