

## REPORT

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE: DECEMBER 3, 2013

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**FROM:** Engineering and Construction Department

**DATE:** November 25, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Commercial Parking Study

**LOCATION:** Downtown Oakville and Kerr Business Village

**WARD:** Multiple Wards: 2 & 3

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### RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the recommendations as detailed in the Commercial Parking Study staff report from the Engineering and Construction Department, dated November 25, 2013, be approved; and
2. That the revised parking rates and fees schedule included in the Commercial Parking Study report from the Engineering and Construction department, dated November 25, 2013, be approved and incorporated into the 2014 rates and fees schedule.

### KEY FACTS:

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

- The town has completed a Commercial Parking Study of the Downtown and Kerr Street Business Districts
- Various surveys and analyses were conducted, and stakeholders engaged, in order to understand the nature of the parking demand.
- Recommendations arising from the study are detailed in this report.
- A schedule of revised parking rates and fees is appended to this report.

### BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the findings and recommendations of the recently completed Commercial Parking Study.

The town manages commercial parking operations in the Downtown Oakville and the Kerr Village business districts. Regular reviews of commercial parking operations (utilization surveys) are carried out to inventory, analyze and assess the current state of the parking. Approximately every five years, a larger scale

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Commercial Parking study is undertaken to assess the overall operations and to make recommendations going forward.

In 2012, D Sorbara Parking & System Consulting was retained to undertake the commercial parking study of Downtown Oakville and the Kerr Business districts.

The study was initiated in the fall of 2012 and collected information through various surveys in both commercial districts. This information was reviewed, analyzed, summarized and presented to each of the two commercial districts via public information meetings. The study findings resulted in a number of recommendations that are outlined in this report. An executive summary of the Commercial Parking Study is attached as Appendix A. A full copy of the study can be found on the town's website at: <http://www.oakville.ca/townhall/commercial-district-parking-study.html>

## **COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

### Surveys

To understand the current state of parking in Downtown and Kerr Village, an analysis of the parking demand was carried out. This analysis considered the physical environment, trip characteristics, attraction of the parking supply, parking operations and customer experience.

Surveys were undertaken to capture the utilization, duration and turnover of parking to realize how the parking supply responds to the parking demand. Within the Downtown, parking surveys were conducted on a Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday between October 13, 2012, and November 22, 2012. In Kerr Village, surveys were conducted on Friday November 2, 2012 and Saturday November 3, 2012.

To collect input from those using the commercial parking services, on-line surveys for employers, employees and customers/visitors were conducted. In addition, customer/visitor postcard surveys were completed.

Summarized findings of the surveys were presented in public meetings held in the Downtown and Kerr Village on June 5, 2012 and June 13, 2012 respectively. Following the public meetings, online surveys were conducted to provide stakeholders for each commercial district an opportunity to rank options.

### Summary of Study Findings

The study inventoried that there are a total of 2190 commercial parking spaces in the Downtown and 2049 in Kerr Village (both municipal and private parking). The breakdown of spaces is presented in Table 1, below:

Table 1 – Commercial Parking Space

Type of Space	Downtown Oakville	Kerr Village
On-street (Municipal)	616	220
Municipal off-street	822	45
Private off street	719	1780
Municipal Accessible	33	4
Total	2190	2049

The average duration of stay on the municipal spaces was found to be 1 hour and 20 minutes in Downtown and 1 hour in Kerr Village.

The peak utilization of all parking spaces was 73% in the Downtown and 61% in the Kerr Village. Figures 1 and 2 show how these utilizations compare with previous survey findings.

Figure 1 – Recent History of Parking Utilization in Downtown Oakville

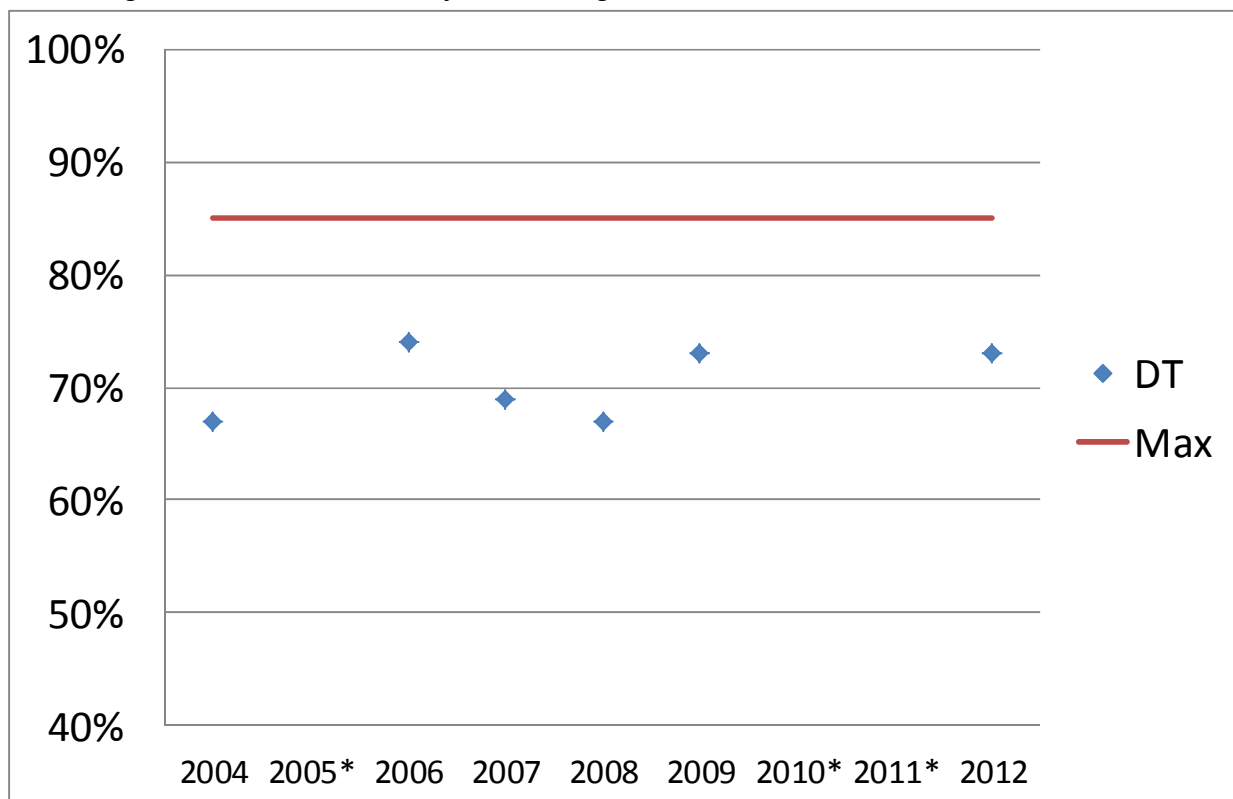
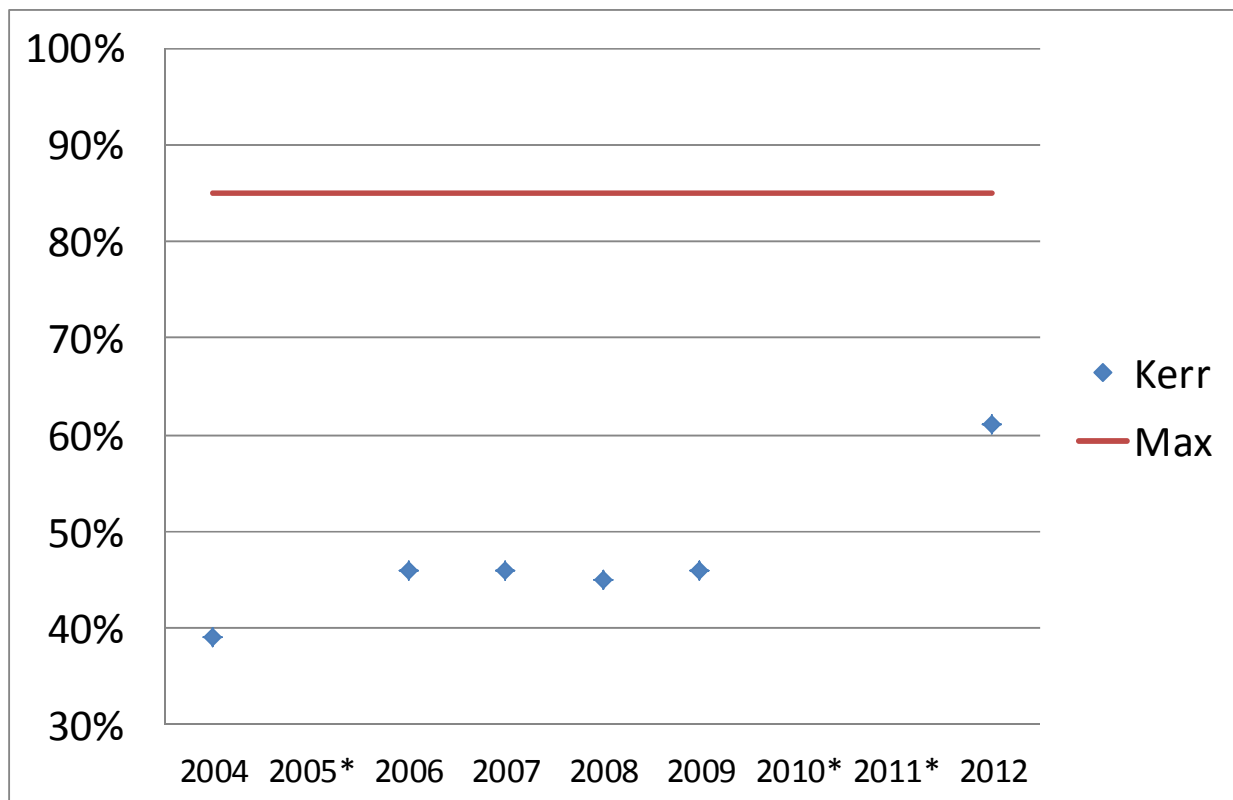


Figure 2 – Recent History of Parking Utilization in Kerr Village



Note: Asterisks \* denotes years where utilizations figures are not available.

When looking at parking utilization, the parking industry standard considers 85% as the maximum utilization. This takes into account the flow of vehicles searching for parking spaces, parking and leaving. When parking reaches 85% consistently over time, something needs to be done to the parking system by either increasing the supply or reducing the demand. From the 2012 survey findings, the peak utilization in both downtown and Kerr Street are below the maximum utilization, showing that the parking systems have available capacity.

#### Stakeholder Comments

Through the various on- line surveys, postcard survey and public meetings staff received feedback from various stakeholders on commercial parking operations. Some of the feedback was common between the two commercial districts. These included comments on the level of enforcement and the request for bicycle parking.

In Downtown, specific issues identified included increasing on-street parking duration from 2 hours to 3 hours, requests for more parking facilities, improved directional signage, more monthly permit parking and wider options for payment.

For Kerr Village, specific issues identified included site specific drop off areas and free parking.

### Study Recommendations

There are a number of recommendations arising from the study and are highlighted below.

1. Maintain Current Levels of Parking Supply: Through the various surveys and analyses, the study has determined that the current parking supply in both the Downtown and Kerr Village are sufficient to meet the existing parking demands. It is therefore recommended that the current supply be maintained.
2. Monitor the Land Uses and their Impact on Parking Supply: Changes in land use through development or redevelopment, changes in occupancy of existing land uses, potential loss of parking supply and changes in customer profile can all impact the parking supply and demand in the commercial districts. It is therefore recommended that the town continue to monitor the land use changes and their impacts on parking through regular utilization and duration surveys as well as development review. This will be an ongoing activity.
3. Secure Longer Term Parking Assets to Accommodate Long Term Parking Demand and Supply: With the potential changes relating to the Downtown Cultural Hub Project, the town needs to ensure the parking supply and demand are considered. In addition, efforts should be made to jointly develop a parking component to any development that may impact existing parking assets in both commercial districts. While current parking supply is sufficient to meet existing conditions, the study suggests that the town should be looking to secure longer term parking assets for the 2018+ timeline.
4. Investigate New Parking Supply and Financing Opportunities: There are limited opportunities to provide additional parking. The study suggests that any opportunities for joint use developments for providing parking should be explored as they arise. In the area of Kerr Village (specifically Kerr Street at Prince Charles Drive) it is recommended that pay parking be introduced on-street to manage the use of this area and to be consistent in the application of pay parking in Kerr Village. The implementation of this recommendation can start in 2014 with the installation of new meters on Kerr Street south of Prince Charles Drive. There may be some opportunities to provide new parking spaces through “angled” parking on some low volume streets within the Downtown. It is recommended that this be referred to and considered through the Downtown Transportation and Streetscape Study.

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5. Increase Monthly Permit Parking Supply and Re-Distribute: Through the parking surveys it was determined there is capacity in some of the downtown lots that could be used for monthly permit parking. In Municipal Lots #2 and #3 along Church Street, it is recommended that a maximum of 20 % of the inventory be allocated for monthly permit parking. Municipal Lot #6A (behind the former Post Office) has capacity that should be marketed entirely for permit parking. Although Municipal Lot #8 at Randall/Reynolds currently provides permit parking, with the high turnover and occupancy at this lot, permit parking should be discontinued. The remaining on-street areas and municipal lots that currently provide permit parking (Church Street Parkade, Municipal Lot #6, Randall Street, Reynolds Street, Municipal Lot #11B, Water Street) should continue to provide permit parking. These recommended changes result in approximately 60 additional monthly parking permits which will assist in significantly reducing the waiting list for monthly parking in downtown. In the Kerr Village, permit parking is provided on Municipal Lot #12 and should continue. The implementations of this recommendation can start in 2014.
6. Increase 2 Hour Parking Duration to 3 Hours and Increase Hourly Rate for On-Street Parking in Downtown: Through the stakeholder engagement there were many requests to increase the time limit for on street parking from 2 hours to 3 hours for on-street parking in the Downtown. Increasing parking duration has the effect of reducing parking supply and there is some concern about the reduction in parking “turnover” this could create. To better reflect the value of on-street parking and to ensure suitable supply/turnover, it is recommended that hourly rate for on-street parking increase from \$1.50 per hour to \$2.00 per hour in conjunction with the increase of the time limit to 3 hours. To potentially motivate customers to the municipal lots, it is recommended the current hourly rate of \$1.50 be maintained for municipal lots. Appendix B to this report provides a map showing the existing parking time limits and Appendix C shows the proposed time limits. The implementation of this recommendation can start in 2014. Staff will be monitoring utilization closely to determine the effect the increased duration has on parking turnover.

The study is not recommending these changes for the on street parking in Kerr Village (i.e. duration and on-street rates remain the same). It is acknowledged there may be some perception of “unfairness” from Kerr Village merchants; however, this was not an issue that was raised at all during stakeholder engagement for the Kerr Village.

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7. Market the Time Restrictions and the Role of On-Street and Municipal Parking Lot Parking: To improve use of municipal parking lots and create availability of on-street parking it is recommended the town more aggressively communicate and market the time restrictions and intended uses of the parking spaces. Specifically, shorter stay parking to use the on-street spaces at a higher cost and longer stay parking to use the municipal parking spaces at a lower cost. The implementation of this recommendation can start in 2014.
8. Maintain the Current Supply of Accessible Parking Spaces and Improve Signage for On-Street spaces: The current location of the accessible parking spaces was found to be within acceptable guidelines. It is recommended that the current supply be maintained and that when the utilization indicates the requirement for more spaces, the location of any new spaces be examined with input from the Accessibility Advisory Committee. The recommendation to improve the signage will be reviewed along with other signage improvements for commercial parking.
9. Link to Active Transportation Initiatives: The provision of bicycle parking was requested through stakeholder engagement input and identified through the study process. Since the initial survey work in 2012 the town has undertaken to install bicycle “rings” in Downtown and is working towards doing same in Kerr Village. It is recommended that bicycle parking facilities be included within the municipal parking facilities and that this be referred and considered through the Downtown Transportation and Streetscape Study.
10. Convert Current Revenue Control System to “Pay by License Plate”: The surveys identified patrons would like to have more payment options available to them. By upgrading to “Pay by License Plate” revenue control equipment the parking customer would have a broader range of payment options and would not need to return to their vehicle to display the ticket on the dashboard. This technology provides flexibility in time restrictions and payment options (e.g. integration with smart phones) and can also integrate with enforcement systems and license plate recognition. The conversion to “Pay by License Plate” revenue control equipment can begin in 2014 within existing budget provisions.
11. Maintain Enforcement Fines for “Parking at Expired Meter”: To encourage the turnover and availability of parking it is recommended that the current level of fine for parking and not paying (expired meter and no pay and display) remain at \$20 and the fine for overstaying the time restriction remain at \$35.

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12. Expand and Explore Communication Themes: Communication of the parking services can be used to improve the service for customers. Explaining the role of off-site parking and enforcement, posting occupancy information and parking locations can assist the customer in finding the right parking locations for their needs. Staff will be looking to further engage the respective BIA's in 2014 to review this and to implement a communication plan to address this.
13. Develop a Bold Way-Finding/Signage System: Along with expanded communication, parking way-finding and signage needs to be developed to better market the parking spaces. The signage on the off street facilities needs to be more concise. As well there may be opportunities to use the pay stations as parking information kiosks. It is recommended that the parking way-finding and signage system be the subject of further review for both commercial districts and also considered more specifically for the Downtown commercial district as part of the Downtown Transportation and Streetscape Study.
14. Improve Pedestrian Links to and from Municipal Parking Lots: With any redesign or new parking facility, consideration should be given to linking the off street parking facilities with the commercial area. Features could include lighting, surface treatment and signage. It is recommended that potential pedestrian links be considered through the Downtown Transportation and Streetscape Study.
15. Continue to Monitor Parking Activity Trends: Regular surveys of parking activities provide information and basis for improvements and adjustments to parking rates and time restrictions. Survey results also show the impact of changes in land use on the parking system. Monitoring parking activities will help evaluate the impact of extending the on-street parking duration limits to 3 hours and increasing the monthly permits in the Downtown. As well to ensure parking operations remains self-funding and the fine levels continue to promote a level of compliance, the parking rates, fees and fines should be reviewed on a regular basis. It is recommended that the overall parking activities be monitored through regular utilization and duration surveys starting in 2014.
16. Evaluate the Potential to Extend Commercial Operating Hours: Currently, commercial parking operations run from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Discussion with stakeholders is needed to consider the extension of the hours of commercial parking operations. It is recommended that this extension of pay parking periods be evaluated and reported back in 2015 after further utilization surveys (in 2014) are completed.



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### Parking Rates and Fees

Recommendations from the commercial parking study propose new rates and fees for 3 hour on-street paid parking in the Downtown commercial district and for monthly parking permits at Municipal Lots # 2, #3 and #6A. Appendix D of this report provides the amended parking rates and fees as have been revised through the recommendations of the commercial parking study. Upon approval, these rates and fees will be incorporated into the 2014 rates and fees schedule as approved in conjunction with 2014 budget approval.

### Next Steps

With the approval of the recommendations outlined in this report, staff will undertake a number of tasks to implement the changes in the short term:

- Update the signage and equipment to reflect the new rates, fees and time limits
- Install new meters on Kerr Street in the area of Prince Charles Drive
- Provide parking information to the Downtown Transportation and Streetscape Study
- Initiate the review for way finding and signage
- Initiate the utilization surveys for spring 2014
- Initiate the review of extending the pay parking periods
- Review a communication plan with the respective BIA's of the commercial parking services

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

#### **(A) PUBLIC**

A copy of this report will be forwarded to the Downtown Oakville and the Kerr Village BIA's for information, and the report will be available on the town's website.

#### **(B) FINANCIAL**

The commercial parking study proposes new rates and fees for 3 hour on-street paid parking in the Downtown and monthly parking in Municipal Lots #2, #3 and #6A. These new rates and fees will be forwarded to Council for inclusion within the 2014 budget.

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

Staff will work with parking enforcement staff in the By-law and Licensing division of the Clerks Department and also with staff from Traffic Operations of the Roads and Works Operations Department to coordinate the changes to the signage and equipment to reflect the new rates, fees, time limits in Downtown and new meters on Kerr Street.

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Staff will work with Corporate Communications staff to explore opportunities for expanding the communications of the commercial parking services.

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

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- continuously improve our programs and services
- provide outstanding service to our residents and businesses
- be fiscally sustainable

**(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY**

Municipal public parking within our commercial districts adds a critical component to the community's economic sustainability.

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix A: Downtown Oakville & Kerr St. Village Commercial parking Study  
2012- Executive Summary

Appendix B: Map of Current Municipal Commercial Paid Parking Time Limits

Appendix C: Map of Proposed Municipal Commercial Paid Parking Time Limits

Appendix D: Parking Rates and Fees Schedule

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