

STAFF REPORT

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG



Report to:	Mayor and Council Members	Priority:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low
Submitted by:	Laurie Wills Director, Public Works lwills@cobourg.ca	Meeting Type:	Open Session <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed Session <input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting Date:	November 15, 2021		
Report No.:	Public Works-066-21		
Submit comments to Council			

Subject/Title: Parking Rate Increase Proposal

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council choose the preferred parking options, if any; and,

FURTHER THAT Council choose a preferred rate increase for the downtown and waterfront parking area, if any; and,

FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to refer this Staff report and Council's motion to the Transportation Advisory Committee, DBIA, and Waterfront Working Group for review and comment by November 26, 2021; and,

FURTHER THAT Staff provide a summary of comments from the Transportation Advisory Committee, DBIA, and Waterfront Working Group by December 2nd to be published on the December 6th Committee of the Whole agenda; and,

FURTHER THAT Staff provide a final budget requirement to implement the preferred parking options and rate increases, if any, at the December 6th Committee of the Whole meeting.

1. STRATEGIC PLAN

N/A

2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The DBIA was consulted with a similar version of the enclosed proposal in 2018.

Meetings held with the Waterfront Working Group to discuss information and recommendations from Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) resulting from the Beach User Survey.

Staff are recommending that the enclosed proposal be forwarded to the Transportation Advisory Committee, DBIA, and the Waterfront Working Group for review and comment prior to a final vote of Council.

3. PURPOSE

To provide Council with options for changes to parking areas and parking rate increases within the downtown and waterfront and provide capital and operating expenses associated with the changes as well as projected revenue increases for incorporation in the 2022 budget.

4. ORIGIN AND LEGISLATION

In 2014, a parking study was completed for the Town by Paradigm Transportation Solutions Limited (attached) which provided a wide variety of recommendations to improve parking effectiveness in Cobourg including rate increases.

Since the parking study was completed, the Town has implemented several recommendations already such as:

- Paid parking downtown.
- New delineated parking spaces at the Third Street lot (behind LCBO) and on Hibernia Street.
- Additional bike racks installed on King Street and at Centennial pool parking lot as well as throughout parks; 10 additional racks installed in 2021.
- Updated parking website and map.
- Increased By-law enforcement on weekends.
- Free shuttle services for major special events.
- Clear and consistent downtown municipal parking lot signage.

The parking study provided recommendations for rate increases that included and were not limited to the following:

- Monthly pass rate increases to be consistent with other municipalities, increase revenues and encourage the use of alternate modes of transportation. Rates should be as much or more than monthly transit passes.
 - Currently, a monthly adult transit pass in Cobourg is priced at \$60/month and is also under review for an increase.
- King Street corridor pay for parking at \$2.00 per hour for a maximum of 2 hours.
 - Currently, pay for parking on King Street is \$1.00 per hour for a maximum of 8 hours (1-2 hours maximum is typical for downtown)

meters).

- Institute pay for use parking amongst the prime off-street public parking lots with a short term limit (4 hours)
 - Currently, prime off-street parking lots are free for 2 or 3 hours and are paid by permit only. Pay per use would require implementation of pay & display machines at all lots.
- Institute pay for use parking amongst secondary off-street public parking lots with 2 hours free and a subsequent rate of \$1.00 per hour to a maximum of 8 hours.
 - Currently, secondary off-street parking lots are free for 2 or 3 hours and are paid by permit only. Pay per use would require implementation of pay & display machines at all lots.

In July 2021, Council endorsed a report from the Deputy Director of Community Services regarding the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee's Review of Victoria Park Beach. Council also endorsed establishing an Internal Working Group to review, provide feedback, implement, and provide recommendations to the 2022 budget process. One of the items listed in the recommendations under parking is to explore options such as a resident parking pass or 'permit only' parking spaces in waterfront parking lots, as well as recommendations of a significant increase in parking rates.

5. BACKGROUND

In 2008, a Town of Cobourg parking pass cost \$25 dollars per month. In an effort to encourage employee use of parking lots and free up on-street parking for businesses, the Town, in partnership with the Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA), reduced monthly parking passes to \$15 dollars per month.

In 2016, Council endorsed purchasing new parking software (AIMS) at a cost of \$56,360.72 USD for ticket and permit management. In 2018, a capital budget request was approved for AIMS Web Functionality at a cost of \$20,000.00 USD which provides a self-service portal that provides the Town of Cobourg online functionality including online ticket payments, permit registration, and payment. A convenience fee of \$2.00 per transaction is applied at checkout.

The 2018 budget also included AIMS Enforcement API for Honk Mobile at a cost of \$5,000.00 USD, which provides a real-time connection to third party pay-by-phone systems. Honk Mobile provides its pay-by-phone parking application, management back office, credit card processing and bilingual customer service. A user fee of \$0.35 per transaction is applied to the customer for use of this service. In 2019 there were 9,471 Honk sessions in Cobourg. Visit <https://www.honkmobile.com/how-it-works/> for more information.

Recent parking enforcement technology enhancements allow the opportunity to proficiently monitor parking, issue parking permits and provide additional parking payment options. The public benefits from these new technologies by not having

to purchase passes or tickets in person at a Town facility during regular office hours and they can top up their parking meter remotely.

The Town leases three (3) parking lots within the downtown core, Second St Lot, Albert St Lot and a portion of Trinity Lot that backs onto Swayne St. There is always potential for these lots to become unavailable to the Town due to development of the private lands.

The annual cost of rent totals \$68,000.00. The Town also contracts out garden maintenance and snow removal services at an annual cost of approximately \$70,000.00.

Parking revenue is typically dedicated to maintenance of lots including paving, grading, gravel, pothole filling, garden maintenance and weed control, snow plowing, rent, pay & display machines, meter maintenance and replacement, line painting, By-law enforcement, administrative staff, and nearly half of all revenue is dedicated to parks and waterfront maintenance. From time to time parking revenue funds capital projects such as the AIMS and Honk Mobile software enhancements.

Parking rates have not increased since 2003 and were in fact decreased in 2008. The cost of maintaining and administering parking continues to increase as should the hourly rates in order for the Town to recover maintenance and operational costs as well as fund capital improvement projects as needed.

6. ANALYSIS

Tiered Rate Parking Lots

In 2021, in accordance with the recommendations of the 2014 Cobourg Downtown Parking Study, Staff are proposing to divide the parking lots into the following categories:

Premium Lots

Covert Street
Second Street
Albert Street (Nov-April)
Third Street

Secondary Lots

Trinity
Hibernia Street
McGill Street (Nov-April)

**Premium parking passes are valid in all downtown municipal parking lots.*

The objective of the tiered parking lots is to encourage use of the secondary lots for longer parking usages (downtown employees) which in turn encourages more turnover within higher demand parking areas for shoppers and clients, etc.

Staff have corresponded with other municipalities to prepare a comparison of rates parking rates (Appendix A).

Waterfront Parking

The following is a proposal for changes to the existing paid parking areas as well as the addition of new areas for paid waterfront parking.

Existing Paid Parking Area Improvements

Currently, waterfront parking is as per Figure 1 whereby fees are only charged from Victoria Day weekend to Thanksgiving weekend. Parking is offered for payment utilizing a mix of coin meters and pay & display machines. At \$2/hour and 8 hours/day allowed the machines are filled frequently and require by-law enforcement do collection several times per week in order to ensure machines are not jammed up by being over filled and causing revenue loss. Finance also requires significant resources on a weekly basis (4-12 hours) to dry, sort, count and deposit coin.

Based on observed highly utilized usage of parking all year on: Third Street south of Albert Street; Queen Street between Division Street and McGill Street; and Albert Street during the summer months especially, Staff are proposing to include these locations in the waterfront parking area as shown in Figure 2.

Staff are also recommending that the Albert Street Lot be added to the waterfront parking as it is highly utilized in the summer months due to its close proximity to the beach for overflow as well as for visitors to the trailer park. If the Albert Street lot is added to the waterfront parking area, it would not be available for monthly parking passes for the summer months and there would be no free hours offered during the summer months. A pay & display machine would also be required and would service the on-street parking on Albert Street as well. In the winter months, this lot would have the option of monthly passes and pay & display hourly parking at the same rate as the downtown.

In order to best facilitate these improvements Staff are recommending that the cash only parking meters be replaced with pay & display machines or credit card meters. By providing a method for credit card/debit payment, resource time commitments will be reduced for by-law and finance and there will be more flexibility for increasing hourly rates and implementing daily passes as will be discussed further within.

Regarding the Waterfront Working Group's suggestion to have permit only or reserved parking spaces for purchase in waterfront lots, this would not be recommended for the Town to incorporate into operations. Each parking space would have to be identifiable either by signs or pavement markings. Signs can easily be stolen or relocated, pavement markings are not feasible in gravel lots. It would be expected that people who have reserved a spot will find their spot already occupied upon their arrival and By-law / police would be inundated with calls and complaints to have cars removed/towed and/or for refunds. Also, reserving spaces would limit revenue generation as there would be no possibility of space turnover during the day ie. Someone could reserve and pay for the day and then not use it or leave after a short time leaving the space unoccupied.

Proposed New Paid Waterfront Parking Areas

Waterfront paid parking is limited and it is evident that the beach area is extremely busy in the summer with parked vehicles lining residential streets in close proximity to the beach where parking is free. Currently there is no daily waterfront rate or pass due to the limited availability of spots. Buying a parking pass in advance is too much of a risk for visitors since there would be a good chance that there is no available paid waterfront parking remaining by the time they arrive.

Staff are recommending to expand the paid parking areas to include the residential streets to the southeast of Victoria Park as described below and illustrated in Figure 3.

- Queen Street from Church Street to D'Arcy Street
- Perry Street from Paul Currelly Way to D'Arcy Street
- Bay Street from Green Street to D'Arcy Street
- Green Street from King Street East to Bay Street
- Henry Street from King Street East to Water Street
- King Street East from Church Street to Henry Street

Parking spots are already delineated on most of the identified streets with the exception of Henry Street, Green Street and King Street east of Church Street to Henry Street. In total, the additional paid parking spots that could be added in this residential area is approximately 211.

On King Street in front of St. Peter's Church, Staff are proposing a 15 minute drop off location be implemented at the furthest west parking spot (for ease of access) as well as an accessible parking spot where the curb cut already exists.

Proposed New Daily Waterfront Pass

Installing meters or pay & displays in a residential area is not desirable for the local residents, the cost is substantial for installation and maintenance, and there is often not enough sunlight to power the pay & display machines which operate on battery stored solar power. The resource requirement to maintain and empty the pay machines would not be sustainable. Typically the waterfront area is free parking during the winter months and the pay & display machines are removed and stored indoors to protect them from the elements and to prevent vandalism. Installing and removing the number of machines or meters that would be required in this area would not be feasible from a resource or storage perspective.

Paid parking in these new residential areas will be best managed by issuing a daily parking pass that will only be available for purchase online either in advance or on the day of use. Passes will not be required to be printed or displayed as the licence plate will be registered to the paid pass instantaneously. By-law enforcement will simply have to enter the licence plate number to check if parking has been paid.

Upon the purchase of a pass, purchasers will be required to read and acknowledge that parking is only available on a first come-first served basis, there will be no guarantee of obtaining a parking spot, and there will be no

refunds if a spot cannot be located. Daily passes will be valid for all areas outlined in the waterfront parking area map (Figure 4).

Minimal signage will be required on the proposed residential streets, identifying the dates when paid daily parking is enforced. An additional small amount of pavement marking would also be beneficial to delineate the parking on the streets that currently are not marked. The pavement marking helps to ensure that cars are not blocking driveways or sight lines at intersecting streets.

Proposed New Resident Waterfront Seasonal Pass

In response to the Beach User Survey and Waterfront Working Group's suggestion, Staff are proposing that a resident waterfront seasonal pass be established. The resident pass would be valid for the same time period as all waterfront paid parking is enforced between Victoria Day and Thanksgiving. Passes would be valid at all waterfront parking areas as well as the southeast waterfront neighbourhood as illustrated in Figure 4.

In order for a resident to purchase a waterfront seasonal pass, documentation will be required showing proof of ownership or residence. Seasonal resident waterfront passes are proposed to cost the same as a daily pass for non-residents. Resident seasonal passes will have the ability to register two (2) vehicle licence plates to share with household members or visitors. Licence plate numbers can be changed at any time using the online AIMS parking pass system however, only one vehicle can use the pass at any given time.

In 2009, the Town of Cobourg's former Parking Committee forwarded a motion to Council requesting parking meters be installed on Church Street and Charles Street and further that residents on Church and Charles be provided with one (1) free parking pass. Staff are recommending that Church Street and Charles Street residents be required to purchase a resident waterfront parking pass in order to maintain consistency and fairness among residents with regards to paid parking in the southeast area of Victoria Park.

Downtown Parking

Rates

As noted previously, the downtown parking lots have a minimal fee of \$15/month or \$5/day as well as a downtown metered rate of \$1/hr or \$8/day. For anyone wanting to visit the beach for the day, those are the desirable locations to park due to the lower daily costs in comparison to the current and proposed waterfront parking rates.

Should an increase be applied to the waterfront parking rates, a downtown (lots and metered) parking rate increase is also required otherwise beach goers will tend to park further away in the downtown core where cheaper rates exist for the day.

Existing and Proposed Parking Infrastructure

In 2021, the Town replaced parking meters on King Street from Hibernia Street to McGill Street on the north and south sides with pay & display machines. The benefits of switching to pay & display machines are as follows:

- ✓ minimal maintenance requirements
- ✓ less replacement parts needed on hand
- ✓ less maintenance staff resources required for repairs
- ✓ less snow removal expenses
- ✓ frees up By-law enforcement resources required to collect coin
- ✓ frees up finance resources required to dry, sort, count, and deposit collected coin
- ✓ less vandalism opportunity/less chance of lost revenue
- ✓ more attractive aesthetic for downtown
- ✓ credit card payment option

In the 2022 budget, Staff are proposing to proceed with additional pay & display machines to replace older meters in the downtown core where parking is concentrated such as Division Street north of King Street (west side), Third Street between King and Albert (west side), and Second Street. Incorporating credit card payment for parking will more easily permit rate increases and reduce mechanical failure/loss of revenue due to the amount of coin input/collection requirements with higher hourly/daily rates.

Should Council approve an hourly rate increase in the downtown, the older parking meters are not capable of being updated to a different rate and will be required to be replaced. In areas where there are not enough parking spots to be serviced by a pay & display machine, parking meters will be replaced with newer meters that accept credit card payments. If the waterfront meters are changed out, there are many newer mechanisms that can be salvaged and used in the downtown instead of replacement.

Also in 2022, Staff are proposing to implement paid parking with credit card meters on King Street (north side) between Spring Street and Ball Street. Currently these parking spots permit 1 hour free parking however turnover is reported to be minimal or non-existent. Meters have never existed at this location.

Maximum Time Allotment

As recommended in the 2014 parking study, it is proposed that the maximum parking time allotment for the downtown metered area be limited to two (2) hours to encourage turnover of shoppers and discourage beach/daily parking in close proximity to businesses.

Proposed Daily Pass Changes

Currently there is a \$5/day parking pass available that is valid in any downtown municipal parking lot. Considering the proximity of many parking lots in Cobourg to the beach, this is an extremely low rate for parking especially during the summer months. In order to establish increased waterfront parking rates, the daily pass is being recommended to increase in fees as well as be limited to only

the Covert Street parking lot being that it is the furthest away from the waterfront area. Proposed rate increases are indicated in Section 7.

Parking Ticket Fine Changes

Currently the fine for not paying or parking beyond an expired meter/pay & display ranges from \$20 to \$30. With an increase in daily and monthly rates it will also be imperative that parking fines are increased accordingly. These changes and recommendations will be brought forward based upon the direction of Council and will be included with the By-law Amendments.

In 2022-2023, By-law Enforcement will be looking at implementing an Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS) system to administer the parking dispute process. The *Municipal Act, 2001* allows municipalities to use an Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS) for parking by-law violations. An Administrative Monetary Penalty System is a more efficient way for municipalities to enforce parking by-laws. A Penalty Notice, which is the same as a Parking Ticket, will be issued by enforcement officers for failing to comply with the Town’s Parking By-law. The new process will allow the Town to deal with parking matters in a fair, effective and efficient manner. It is designed to streamline the enforcement process and is considered a service enhancement because parking violations are no longer disputed through the backlogged court system

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/BUDGET IMPACTS

Staff are proposing the following rate increases in consideration of municipal comparator parking rates, recommendations of the 2014 Cobourg Downtown Parking Study as well as recommendations of the Waterfront Working Group. All revenue projections are based on 2017/2018/2019 average revenue numbers.

Monthly Parking Lot Passes

Year	Rate / Month		Average Revenue
2017/2018/2019	\$15.00		\$41,564.00
Year	Proposed Premium Rate	Proposed Secondary Rate	Total Projected Revenue
2022	\$25.00	\$20.00	\$62,346.01
2023	\$30.00	\$25.00	\$76,200.67
2024	\$35.00	\$30.00	\$90,055.34

**The proposed monthly parking rate for 2022 is equal to the actual 2008 rate before it was reduced to \$15.00.*

Daily Parking Permits (Downtown)

Year	Rate / Day	Average Revenue
2017/2018/2019	\$5.00	\$875.00
Year	Proposed Rate	Projected Revenue
2022	\$8.00	\$1,400.00
2023	\$8.00	\$1,400.00
2024	\$10.00	\$1,750.00

**Proposal is to limit daily passes to Covert Street lot only*

***Current daily passes are valid at all downtown municipal parking lots*

Downtown Parking Rates

Year	Rate / Hour	Average Revenue
2017/2018/2019	\$1.00	\$152,897.79
Year	Proposed Rate	Projected Revenue
2022	\$1.25	\$191,122.24
2023	\$1.75	\$267,571.14
2024	\$2.25	\$344,020.04

**2 hour maximum parking time allotment*

Waterfront Hourly/Daily Parking Pass and Rate Options

Existing Paid Parking Areas (Figure 2)

Current Hourly (metered)	Current Daily Rate (metered)	Average Revenue
\$2.00	\$16.00	\$204,025.79
Proposed Hourly (metered)	Proposed Daily Rate	Projected Revenue
\$3.00	\$20.00	\$152,897.79
\$4.00	\$25.00	\$152,897.79
\$5.00	\$30.00	\$152,897.79

**Projected revenue does not include the addition of parking spots illustrated in Figure 2 therefore projection is low.*

Of note, the waterfront daily rate would be best to match or be greater than the cost of the monthly pass rate for the secondary lots.

If Council endorses an hourly rate of \$3.00 per hour or more, Staff are recommending that existing meters be replaced with Pay & Display or Beacon units (payable by credit card). Due to the amount of additional coin that would be anticipated, meters will become full and jammed more frequently creating more opportunities for vandalism and lost revenue as well as placing additional pressure on By-law enforcement resources to empty the machines more often.

Waterfront Daily Parking Pass and Rate Options

Proposed Paid Parking Areas (Figure 3)

Proposed Daily Rate	Projected Revenue
\$20.00	\$328,273.80
\$25.00	\$410,342.25
\$30.00	\$492,410.70

Costs Associated with Rate Proposals

Meters and Pay & Display Rate Changes

Any changes to the metered parking areas in the Downtown or Waterfront will cost approximately \$2,500 for all newer mechanisms to be reprogrammed and all old mechanisms to be replaced as they are not able to accept a rate change. These units will require replacement with a credit card meter (number of units will depend on Council decisions). Pay and display machine rates can be reprogrammed by Staff at no additional cost.

Waterfront Infrastructure Upgrades

Should Council approve an increase in waterfront rates to \$3.00/hour or more, the following changes to infrastructure are required:

- Remove all existing coin meters
- Install pay & display machines as follows:
 - Albert Street lot (1 - will service Albert Street west of Division)
 - Queen Street (2)
 - Charles (1 - will service lot and street parking)
 - McGill (2)
 - Church (3)
 - Paul Currelly Way (1)
- Install credit card meters as follows:
 - Queen (2 double, 2 single between Division and McGill)
 - Division (5 double, south of Albert)

The cost of this infrastructure upgrade will be approximately \$81,000 including supply and installation. Additional operating costs will also apply on an annual basis in the amount of \$12,500. The costs include adding the areas indicated in Figure 2 to the waterfront parking area.

Should Council choose not to increase rates in the waterfront area, it is recommended that older meters start to be changed out with new credit card meters in locations where meters will remain indefinitely (not adequate number of spaces to be serviced by pay & displays). The total cost of \$8,000 would be required for the meter replacements and an annual operating increase of \$1,500.00

New Waterfront Parking Area

Cost associated with implementing paid parking in the residential area to the southeast of Victoria Park will be minimal. Additional signs, posts, and pavement markings will be required at an initial cost of \$3000. Annual expenses would only increase by \$500 to refresh the pavement markings as signage would be permanent.

Proposed Parking Fines

It is recommended that the parking ticket fine be double the rate of the monthly parking pass for the secondary lots. In accordance with the proposal here within, the secondary lot monthly rates will be the same as the waterfront daily rates. Parking ticket fines will be the same for any parking violation related to parking over the limit in a paid parking spot. If the fines are not high enough above the price of parking anywhere in town, there is no incentive to pay for parking but rather take a risk and only have to pay a few dollars more if caught.

Summary of Costs

Downtown Base Scope

Staff are proposing at minimum a change out of meters to pay & display machines in the downtown on Division Street (west side) north of King Street, Third Street (Albert to King), as well as on Second Street. Also, new credit card meter machines will be installed on King Street (north side) between Spring Street and Ball Street.

Capital: \$26,500

Annual Operating Increase: \$4,000

Downtown Rate Increase

Should Council approve a rate increase for the downtown, capital and operating costs in addition to the base scope are as follows:

- a) If waterfront meters are approved to be changed out with credit card/pay & displays:

Capital: \$0 (existing newer meter mechanisms can be salvaged and reused in the downtown)

- b) No changes to waterfront parking infrastructure:

Capital: \$15,000 (old meters replaces with credit card meters)

Annual Operating Increase: \$2,500

Waterfront Base Scope

Staff are proposing at minimum a change out of old meters with new credit card meters where metered parking will remain inevitably.

Capital \$8,000

Annual Operating Increase: \$1,500

Waterfront Full Scope Costs (including base scope)

Capital \$81,000

Annual Operating Increase: \$12,500

Total for all proposed works:

Capital \$107,500
Annual Operating Increase: \$16,500

8. CONCLUSION

Should Council approve the proposed parking changes within the 2022 budget deliberations, it is expected that everything could be operational by the Victoria Day weekend in 2022.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Parking Rate Increase Proposal - Public Works-066-21.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Appendix A Municipal Parking Rate Comparison.pdf- Figure 1 Current Waterfront Parking.pdf- Figure 2 Existing Paid to Add To Waterfront.pdf- Figure 3 Proposed New Waterfront Area.pdf- Figure 4 Proposed Waterfront.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Nov 5, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Tracey Vaughan, Chief Administrative Officer - Nov 5, 2021 - 11:09 AM