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**TO:** GENERAL COMMITTEE

**SUBJECT:** DUNLOP STREETSCAPE PROJECT - PARKING ACTION PLAN FOR PHASE 1B AND 2

**WARD:** ALL

**PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT:** T. WILLIAMS, BUSINESS SERVICES ANALYST, EXT. 5169

**SUBMITTED BY:** B. FORSYTH, DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT AND PARKING STRATEGY

**GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL:** R. JAMES-REID, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ACCESS BARRIE

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL:** M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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**RECOMMENDED MOTION**

1. That two-hour free parking be provided in the Chase McEachern Way and Maple Avenue Central parking lots during Phase 1B (March 2020 to Summer 2020) and Phase 2 (Summer 2020 to Winter 2020) of the Dunlop Streetscape Project.

**PURPOSE & BACKGROUND**

2. During Phase 1A of the Dunlop Streetscape Project, free parking was available for two-hour sessions on the fourth floor (P4) of the Collier Street Parkade and the east side of Owen Street between Dunlop and Collier was designated as a loading zone. These interventions were intended to mitigate the impacts of construction on downtown businesses.
3. The purpose of this report to General Committee is to address pending motions 19-G-236 and 19-G-300. This report was taken directly to General Committee instead of City Building Committee to ensure Council could provide direction prior to 2020, allowing sufficient lead time to communicate the parking action plan to the general public and business owners.
4. On August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019, City Council adopted motion 19-G-236 regarding Parking Action Plan – Dunlop Street East Corridor Improvements – Mulcaster Street to Toronto Street:  
  
“1. That two-hour free parking on the fourth floor of the Collier Street Parkade be provided during Phase 1A of the Dunlop Street East Corridor Improvements from Mulcaster Street to Toronto Street.  
  
2. That staff in the Engineering Department report back to General Committee whether or not the Program was successful during the 2019 construction period and, if successful that the Program be continued during the subsequent phases of the construction project.”
5. On November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, City Council adopted motion 19-G-300 regarding “Parking During Reconstruction – Downtown Barrie Business Improvement Area” as follows:

“That the request from the Downtown Barrie Business Improvement Area (BIA) for free parking in the parking lots and on-street in the Business Improvement Area (BIA) until completion of Phase 1B of the Dunlop Sidewalk Reconstruction be referred to staff in the Transit and Parking Strategy Department to review the effectiveness and cost of the request, and report back to the City Building Committee recommending suitable alternatives.”

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Phase 1A (August 2019 – November 2019)**

6. During Phase 1A, staff monitored the utilization of the free two-hour parking provided on the fourth floor (P4) of the Collier Street Parkade. An interim status update was provided through a memo to City Building Committee on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The trends in utilization data have not changed significantly since the interim status update. The peak utilization recorded was 64%, with an average utilization of 35% and a turnover rate of 2 hours. This suggests the time limit was effective in encouraging turnover of parking spaces and increasing access for downtown patrons.
7. Staff tracked feedback received from the public regarding the free parking incentive at the Collier Street Parkade. The majority of the feedback was focused on the following issues:
  - a) Location: the parkade was perceived as too far away from the construction zone
  - b) Convenience: the parkade was perceived as inconvenient and difficult to navigate
  - c) Clarity: the requirement to display a receipt was not clear

### **Phase 1B and 2 (March 2020 – Winter 2020)**

8. During Phase 1B and 2, staff recommend providing free two-hour parking in the Chase McEachern Way parking lot and Maple Ave Central parking lot. The combination of the two locations will provide coverage of the entire construction zone.
9. These parking lots are more suitable alternatives to the parkade for the following reasons:
  - a) They are located close to the construction zone. Most businesses will be within 300 meters of the parking lot, which is an acceptable walking distance according to industry standards.
  - b) They are surface parking lots, which are typically perceived as easier to navigate than parkades, because there are no stairwells or elevators.
  - c) The Chase McEachern Way parking lot provides a total of 90 spaces and the Maple Ave Central parking lot provides 34 spaces, surpassing the number required to offset the parking spaces that will be unavailable due to construction during both Phase 1B (approx. 20 spaces) and Phase 2 (approx. 40 spaces).
  - d) There are multiple parking lots nearby with capacity to absorb excess demand, if necessary (see Appendix 'A' for a map).
10. BIA staff and board members were consulted during the development of the parking action plan for Phase 1B and 2 to better meet the needs of business owners and their customers. During these consultation meetings there was a general feeling of support and feedback indicating the proposal was viewed as an improvement compared to the phase 1A parking incentive.
11. The request for free parking throughout the downtown was considered but it was not recommended due to concerns about reduced turnover causing downtown patrons more difficulty accessing businesses, conflict between short-term and long-term users and significant revenue losses (estimated at \$150K per month) that would make it more challenging to manage the deficit of the parking reserve.

12. Staff will engage with businesses impacted by Phase 1B and Phase 2 to understand their existing loading arrangements in order to optimize the loading zone location(s) to meet business needs and accommodate traffic flow as per the approved construction staging plan.
13. Staff will program the Pay-and-Display machines to issue receipts that explicitly state the two-hour free parking conditions. Downtown patrons must obtain a valid receipt and display it in their vehicle in order to qualify for free parking.
14. Staff will work with the BIA to prepare a cohesive Communications Plan that explicitly communicates the requirement to display a receipt in order to be eligible for free two-hour parking.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT MATTERS**

15. There are no environmental and climate change impact matters related to the recommendation.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

16. There is one alternative available for consideration by General Committee:

##### **Alternative #1**

General Committee could decide not to implement the free parking incentive at the Chase McEachern Way parking lot and Maple Ave Central parking lot.

This alternative is not recommended because it will make it more difficult for downtown businesses to cope with the impacts of construction.

#### **FINANCIAL**

17. The parking spaces in the Chase McEachern Way parking lot have the potential to generate \$10,725 per month, therefore providing free parking during the Phase 1B and 2 construction period (estimated duration of nine months) is projected to result in \$96,525 of lost revenue.
18. The parking spaces in the Maple Ave Central parking lot have the potential to generate \$4,051.67 per month, therefore providing free parking during the Phase 1B and 2 construction period (estimated duration of 9 months) is projected to result in \$36,465 of lost revenue.
19. Currently the parking reserve is anticipated to be in a \$1.2M deficit by the end of 2019 and has an estimated annual deficit of \$600K. Given the position of the parking reserve, free parking should only be offered if the projected loss of revenue does not compromise parking operations and the incentive contributes to a strategic initiative of the City.

#### **LINKAGE TO 2018–2022 STRATEGIC PLAN**

20. The recommendation included in this Report support the following goals identified in the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan
  - ☒ Growing Our Economy
  - ☒ Improving the Ability to Get Around Barrie

21. Providing a parking incentive will support the downtown business community that contributes to economic growth and it will make it easier for customers to access businesses during construction.

APPENDIX 'A'

"Dunlop Streetscape Project: Parking Action Plan Map"

