

Preliminary Parking Strategy Action Plan Items

Initiative (Numbers are drawn from the above discussion and do not represent ranking order)	Issues/Strengths Addressed
Short term Planning Horizon (Immediate to 2 years)	
<p>1. Maintain the current level of parking supply in the downtown to meet existing parking demand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides continued level of customer service • Provides opportunities to enhance use through revenue control • Preserves infrastructure assets to respond to future marketing • Evidence shows that reduction in the parking service around Market Square can be accommodated within the current inventory and no-change in the operations
<p>16. Continue to monitor parking activity trends in occupancy of space, duration of stay profiles and turnover of parking space with the view of improvement and adjustment to parking rates, time restrictions and the parking system's response to changing land use (demand) conditions in the short and long term planning horizon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides solid historical data that serves to measure changes in the performance of public parking services • Provides more solid support evidence to measure changes over time due to changes in parking and travel demand drivers in the downtown • Full parking activity metrics to more clearly show changes in performance and why those changes might have occurred
<p>3. Secure longer term (6 to 10 years) parking assets to accommodate long term parking demand and supply.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides control over assets in order to more effectively and economically responds to changes in market opportunities • Demonstrates municipal commitment to the provision of the parking service in the short and longer range planning horizons • Provides the potential to market asset as a development site that could meet other municipal objectives (student housing, residential, commercial activity, public space, and parking for example)
<p>4. Address Customer Service Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist customers in understanding that on-street plays a different role than off-street spaces. - Consider pricing the on-street to reflect its true value to the customer. - Consider pricing the off-street as an incentive to use that product with greater frequency. - Consider the technology or a program that accepts payment by cell phone and that can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of Space • Technology • Payment options • Time Restrictions • Longer term parking contracts • One purchase for multiple destinations • Enforcement • Role of parking products – on- and off-street spaces

message customer when time limit is approaching. It does require marking areas or block faces as distinct parking zones. It does require some up front software. Not everyone of course is tech savvy so there would need to be alternatives for payment. The key in this is that users get notified so this reduces their anxiety over time limits. There are operational features that can allow the purchase of more time if so desired.

- Consider a technology that allows parking at multiple locations. This program serves to provide parking time to those who over-estimated their duration of stay at one space. It requires a mobile enforcement team to monitor and electronically verify that the vehicle has purchased enough time no matter where they parked.
- There is a mobile enforcement solution – License Plate Recognition System – that makes use of cameras mounted on a vehicle and a software package that records and stores time of arrival and departure, and can automatically issue a violation to the owner via email.
- Increase the time restrictions on selected side streets. Requires enforcement and management as it will impact largely the residential community. Paired with the technology mentioned above option, this can be readily feasible.
- Some consideration can be given to the sale of contract parking on the streets that do not logically serve visitors. Potential conflict with local residents however needs to be addressed openly.
- One uniform pricing system for all on-street parking space regardless of their location. Although this does not reflect level of service and convenience, we do appreciate that it might be more complicated to implement. Let us keep it simple but discuss changing or altering time restrictions on a non-uniform

basis to better reflect local micro-level demand characteristics.

- Better communicate the role that the Lots have in serving customer and visitor parking needs and price accordingly. This strategy will tie in with marketing individual facilities to serve specific markets in their area.
- The on-street parking space is critical to the level of service and convenience to customers/visitors, therefore price their use to reflect that value - it should cost more to park on-street than on the Lots. This remedy of course contradicts the uniform price strategy above. This remedy needs to be discussed with evidence brought to the table.

9. Maintain the current level of accessible parking spaces; improve signage for on street accessible spaces and request input from the Accessibility Advisory Committee when utilization indicates more spaces are required.

- Data provided to the study team shows good use of current inventory
- Parking industry best practice generally identifies accessible spaces through pavement and blue metered revenue control units and well as sidewalk signage
- Continue to be an active participant on the Accessibility Advisory Committee

5. Investigate new parking supply and financing opportunities.

- As it relates to responding to new opportunities
- Stand-alone parking facilities are considered to be a lost opportunity to provide public service in addition to parking
- Partnerships and multiple uses is the best practice approach

6. Address the permit parking distribution by allocating 20 percent of off-street parking inventory to this customer type.

- Responds to the observed longer walking distances that longer stay users exhibit
- Valuable on-street space and off-street space should be priced to cater to the shorter stay, higher turnover visitor customer
- Seasonal permits is an option that should be considered

17. Evaluate the extension of pay parking periods from 6 pm to 9 pm Monday to Saturday in the downtown as well as extending pay parking services on Sundays.

- As it relates to self-sustaining business operation, consider its study
- Raised concern from the online surveys
- Equitable treatment of daytime and after-six commercial businesses

Mid-range Planning Horizon

7. Maintain the current three hour time restriction and hourly charges for on street municipal parking service and maintain the current cost of parking permits for on and off street at their current rates with a review in 2 years' time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current on-street parking time limit matches observed durations of less than three hours• Three hours has become typical now• Review rates every 2 years within the scope that parking services should be self-sustaining
8. Market the time restriction and the role of on and off street parking space through online media tools, as well as, colour-code identification system on the pay stations to convey the notion that parking spaces are meant to be utilized by a number of customers with varying lengths of stay over the course of the day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tie in with technology considerations• Customer information should be online
10. Link to Active Transportation Initiatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treat parking sites as a stage for vehicles and other travel modes including bike, electric vehicles, self-parking vehicles• Geometry of parking space both on and off-street to consider multi-mode travel methods• After-parking pedestrian links to destinations must reflect safety (lighting, pavement condition and safety kiosk devices to assist our customers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study bike lanes and their integration with on-street parking• Provide a broader array of travel mode services (bike parking, bike repair station, re-charging stations for electric vehicles)• Be an active participant in the self- or assisted drive vehicles project currently underway in the City• Self-parking and assisted drive vehicle technology points to the potential for our parking service to provide drivers with current information on the available of parking space, where that parking space is located in advance of entering the downtown; in parking industry this is referred to as "Parking Guidance Systems"
11. Convert current revenue control system to "Pay by License Plate" Pay and Display unit for both on and off street facilities throughout the study areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexibility• Wider payment options including coupons• Pay and display unit can be a kiosk of events on that particular stretch of the street or in the downtown in general• Can advise customer of time left via SMS text message• Audit trail and use data is provided online to the parking management team• Customer especially business customers can see parking transactions for audit purposes• Metered units are becoming very difficult to service as they are largely being phased out• Tie this conversion to the study of active

	transportation initiatives so that the two are integrated
12. Maintain enforcement fines for parked at expired "meter".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a "firm but fair" business approach to enforcement • Online information should explain that compliance is our goal • Online information to explain why staying within the time restriction is vital to the service of many customers to the downtown
13. Expand and Explore Communication Themes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative ties parking service role and customer • Signage is excellent currently but we should consider identifying time restriction through colour of revenue control equipment (meters or pay and display units) • Online communication package
14. Maintain the bold way-finding / signage system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tie this initiative with parking guidance system • Pedestrian way finding is important; consistent signage to indicate where customer is and where primary destinations are in the vicinity • As suggested in Orillia and Oakville, information kiosks on the parking facility can be incorporated to provide shopping, geographic information to our customers
15. Continue to expand and improve pedestrian links to and from municipal off street sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study spoke to perhaps animating the pedestrian links with pop-up arts/craft displays that reflect season and promotions on-going • Safety design factors to be integrated • Weather protected where possible of course • Tie the name of the parking facility to the link through a reference on a sign along the pedestrian path
16. Continue to monitor parking activity trends in occupancy of space, duration of stay profiles and turnover of parking space with the view of improvement and adjustment to parking rates, time restrictions and the parking system's response to changing land use (demand) conditions in the short and long term planning horizon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides solid historical data that serves to measure changes in the performance of public parking services • Provides more solid support evidence to measure changes over time due to changes in parking and travel demand drivers in the downtown • Full parking activity metrics to more clearly show changes in performance and why

those changes might have occurred	
Longer-range Planning Horizon (beyond 6 years)	
<p>16. Continue to monitor parking activity trends in occupancy of space, duration of stay profiles and turnover of parking space with the view of improvement and adjustment to parking rates, time restrictions and the parking system's response to changing land use (demand) conditions in the short and long term planning horizon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should continue this task beyond mid-range planning horizon and become part of the parking operations
<p>2. Stratford will continue to monitor land use (new development and redevelopment) and their impact on parking supply over the mid and longer range planning horizons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to understand performance changes to parking supply use we need to know quantity and type of activity that is attracting that demand for parking space • Establish an in-house data repository that shows each building's current land use type and the quantity of floor space by that land use type (in appropriate planning units – floor area, number of units or seats for example) • Begin to integrate and make better use of information already available in other municipal databases – planning department and in particular the property tax assessment area

The recommended parking management strategy specific to the question of building parking structures rests with the continued analysis of parking activity as it responds to changes in the supporting land use. Flowing from the analysis the study proposes the following framework of parking analytics that need to be monitored and understood before decisions are made regarding the development of structures in downtown Stratford.

1. Is there documented evidence that the underlying demand for parking is changing?

Parking space demand responds to parking demand generated by land use intensification or significant changes to the commercial land use quantity. During the period of this parking study, two developments were firm - the Market Square and the Cooper site. While each site was still in the planning phases several design options were presented.

The technical discussion is contained in the attached sub-report: **Reflections on Market Square Development - Parking Strategy Options**. The urban planning question is whether or not a public structured facility should be incorporated in the re-purposed site plan for Cooper site. If so, should it be continue to be marketed as free of charge. The study discussed the "distortion" of walking distance and use due to the current free parking space product. If the City wants to subsidize the development and operating costs and abandon the self-sustaining business mission of public parking in Stratford, building

a free cost Parkade on the Cooper site should be key to this parking management strategy. It would mean that all other current off street sites and their consideration as structured parking development sites should be deferred until Cooper site is completed and its parking activity can be measured.

A parking management strategy that features pushing any additional supply to the outer support core of the downtown - such as Cooper site - is important. Supply located in that outer core serves the parking market although the strategy requires slightly longer walking distances. Supply located in that outer core also serves to distribute traffic in and out of the downtown away from the currently congested core area which not only serves traffic flow but provides a measure of safety with reduction of volume in that core area.

Technical Report A discussed current land use and its attraction of peak hour parking trips. That discussion presents another metric that is critical to the evaluation of the need for additional parking supply. The varying attraction levels of different land use types demonstrated that in order for say an additional layer of parking space (say 200 parking spaces) on the Erie lot to become critical the downtown floor space volume would have to net increase between 11 111 and 20 000 square metres based on observed peak hour trip demands of 1.0 to 1.8 spaces per 100 square metres of commercial space. This 11 to 20 thousand square meters of commercial floor space would represent the **threshold** above which enough demand would be attracted to the core to require 200 additional spaces.

2. Do the parking activity metrics collected and analysed in this parking study provide indication that the downtown requires additional parking space in the form of structured facilities?

Three primary parking metrics: volume, duration of stay and occupancy of parking space over the course of the day were presented and discussed in Technical report B. Key off street parking facilities in the downtown are performing as expected. The Erie lot has capacity to absorb changes to volume, duration of stay and accumulation that will arise from changes in its most immediate catchment area. The parking activity metrics of the off street parking sites are reflection of optimal use and of having enough space to continue to satisfy parking demand in the immediate and short range planning horizon.

The parking metric analysis went further to indicate the importance of reaching 90 percent of capacity but for a more sustained period of the day. These periods of intensity were documented to show that currently Albert St lot reflects a sustained period of intensity. The Albert St lot is in excellent position to continue to respond to any growing demands in its catchment area but its geometry does not lend itself to an efficient parking structure development.

The Erie lot shows available capacity. While its geometry is best suited to a parking structure, the current parking metrics discussed in Technical report B do not provide a solid case for building a parking structure today or in the short range planning horizon.

The parking study stressed that Erie site may be the most optimal geometry for a structure (mixed used development) but the Cooper site's current free parking market landscape provides an unknown in the economic analysis. The parking study provided some historical data based on previous consulting studies that pointed to a drop of 33 percent of the parking demand when parking services went from free to a

user charge for their use. That measure of impact makes the case for structured parking at Erie more risky.

3. If demand reached the optimal level that would require adding parking space in the form of a structure in the core of the downtown, what operational measures are required to build a more solid economic foundation?

A pro-forma exercise was conducted and presented in the sub-report: **Reflections on Market Square Development - Parking Strategy Options**. Within a public parking mission statement of providing service to the customer that is of high **quality**; and a service that reflects **innovation** that ultimately better serves the customer and makes the service delivery system more effective and efficient; and a service that is fully **sustainable** and supports the overall transportation system in Stratford, the following operational strategies are key:

- In order to build self-sustaining operation that can support the construction and operation of parking structures if and when required, a more solid revenue base must be established through a gradual increase in rates charged on both on and off street parking service. The report suggests a gradual increase be implemented every three years and that increase reflect the cost of structured parking space.
- Parking enforcement service is essential to maintain the turnover and fair use of limited parking space. Through technological innovation ("Pay by Licence" or "Pay by Space") costs of this vital service can be more effective and efficient. The recommendation is to review the cost of fines at the same time that the rates charged are reviewed - again with the target set to provide enough reserve funding for the longer term goal of structured parking if and when the need arises.
- Parking operations continue to be automated through the implementation of contemporary technology. Operations style should reflect the objective of servicing a broader range of payment options, and respond to the demographic and tourist marketplace here in Stratford. In our study team discussions we spoke of pre-purchasing parking space service along with theatre tickets that would allow patrons to be more directed to known available parking spaces in the downtown.
- As discussed in Technical Report A, developing technologies such as driver-assisted or shared economy transportation systems, along with already visible impact of online purchasing of goods and services have had and will continue to have profound impact on the parking demand and supply system. The parking strategy here needs to be mindful of these changes and they should provide a framework for operational and structural changes in the way in which parking service is delivered to the customer.
- Accept that any development in the longer term planning horizon that may include structured parking space should also include residential and/or commercial development components. Part of our parking management strategy here should reflect the value of parking service but also reflect that a Parkade-only development on valuable municipal property resource is not prudent. The multiple use aspect of any future development of parking site resources supports a

tight and intense commercial profile that is successful in the core. Multiple site uses also opens up opportunities for shared private and public investment on these critical land resources.