



**SUBJECT: Former Robert Bateman High School - parking options**

**TO: Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Cttee.**

**FROM: Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services**

Report Number: EICS-12-23

Wards Affected: all

Date to Committee: September 12, 2023

Date to Council: September 26, 2023

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### **Recommendation:**

Direct the Manager of Realty Services to explore with the Halton Catholic District School Board the option of utilizing land behind the Ascension Elementary School in order to include park amenities for the public and school for outdoor activities; and

Direct the Manager of Realty Services to enter into discussions with the Pineland Baptist Church and Good Neighbour Ministries, for the option of leasing parking spaces to support the phase 1 occupancy requirements for the former Bateman site; and

Direct the Executive Director of Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services to apply to the Committee of Adjustment for a variance to reduce on-site parking requirements at the former Bateman site based on a site specific parking justification analysis giving consideration of alternate modes of transportation and peak demand timing of the various uses on site; and

Direct the Executive Director of Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services to apply to the Committee of Adjustment for a reduction of the on-site parking required at the former Bateman site based on leasing parking spaces at Pineland Baptist Church and/or Good Neighbour Ministries (subject to a lease agreement being agreed to) in order to support parking requirements and obtaining occupancy for phase 1 operation of the former Bateman site; and

Based on the outcome of the submissions to the Committee of Adjustment for on-site parking reductions, authorize the Executive Director of Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services to design and construct any additional surface parking at the rear of the site to accommodate phase 1 occupancy requirements; and

Direct the Director of Engineering Services to undertake a conceptual design exercise of the open space at the former Bateman site, including the Frontenac Park land and the land behind Ascension School (subject to HCDSB approval) to provide enhanced pedestrian connections, looped pedestrian trail and park amenities such as a junior sports field that would meet the needs of the students at Ascension Elementary school and the public; and

Direct the Director of Transportation Services to assess the parking utilization of the former Bateman site after the opening of phase 1 and report back to council on the outcomes for phase 1 and parking requirements to support phase 2.

## **PURPOSE:**

### **Vision to Focus Alignment:**

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
- Support sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment
- Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture
- Deliver customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation

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## **Background and Discussion:**

The City of Burlington has purchased the former Robert Bateman High School building and site. With sustainability and community-building in mind, the City of Burlington is repurposing the existing Robert Bateman High School into a City-owned multi-purpose community-focused asset that will align with the City's objective of being net-zero carbon in city operations by 2040. The reuse and conversion of the former secondary school will result in extensive interior renovations including renewal of all major building systems and exterior site and building modifications required to support the intended community uses.

When the renovation is complete, tenants including Brock University, Burlington Public Library, Halton District School Board, Tech Place and City of Burlington will move into the building and begin offering services. There is currently parking, a small woodlot associated with the adjacent Appleby Creek Valley and a track with a football field (inside the track) located on the site. The building and property will remain in public ownership. In addition to the existing pool and gymnasiums and the new enhanced common areas of the building there will be approximately 21,000 square feet of new dedicated community recreation space and approximately 9,000 square feet of

temporary recreation space that do not have defined uses at this time and that would form part of Phase 2 of the project.

Council, at their meeting of March 21, 2023, received Report EICS-02-23, which provided an update on the project tender process, schedule, integrated transit plan and next steps. In addition, the following staff direction was passed:

**SD-08-23** “Direct the Executive Director of Environment, Infrastructure & Community Services, to work with the Director of Transportation, and the Executive Director of Community Planning Regulation and Mobility to report back to council by Q4 2023 with costs and timelines related to alternatives to accommodate additional parking for the Project inclusive of Phases 1 and 2 that minimizes impact to the existing greenspace, including but not limited to:

1. Amending the city-wide zoning bylaw related to parking, or granting council Public Authority to amend the requirements where circumstances warrant.
2. Construct structured parking on the existing built area of the site.
3. Providing layby parking on New Street in front of Bateman.
4. Exploring share and leased parking options with nearby sites.
5. Providing time limited on-street parking signed for the community centre uses.
6. Provide additional parking requirements utilizing permeable materials.
7. Other options.

Highlights of the report EICS-02-23 and the discussion at the March 21, 2023 Council meeting, related to parking, are as follows:

- The city is motivated to retain as much open space and park land as possible to provide outdoor opportunities for the community to be active and connected.
- The project is required to conform with the City’s Zoning By-law requirements for parking.
- Parking requirements are calculated based on the proposed future uses within the facility. With the current use of the building as a High School the site has a supply of 235 existing parking spaces.
- Building Permit for Phase 1 construction has been issued based on this existing use. However, prior to occupancy and the conclusion of construction the site will need to conform to the parking requirements of the City’s Zoning By-Law under the proposed uses.
- A review of proposed and required parking supply for the proposed uses was completed by zoning staff and the findings of the analysis are summarized below:

Required Parking Phase 1 as per ZBL Existing Site Parking	368
Existing Parking Spaces	235
Parking Deficiency for Phase 1	133 additional spaces for Phase 1 redevelopment

- Although an exact number of parking spaces required to accommodate Phase 2 uses will not be known until the proposed uses for Phase 2 are finalized, it is estimated that an additional 100 parking spots will be required for a total onsite parking requirement of approximately 468 spaces by the completion of Phase 2. A total of 233 additional parking spaces would be required when both Phase 1 and Phase 2 are completed based on existing zoning by-law requirements.
- Through a site specific analysis staff are of the opinion that the Phase 1 parking requirement could be reduced by 48 spaces for a total parking supply of 320 spaces. This proposal would need to go through a Variance Application to the Committee of Adjustment. The application would be supported by a parking justification report that would consider alternate modes of transportation and peak demand analysis amongst other considerations. The proposed uses have differing parking demand peaks which lends itself to shared parking management – utilizing a common pool of parking for the overall site, as opposed to designating parking areas for specific uses. A review of the anticipated operating characteristics of the uses within the site has confirmed that peak parking demand is expected to occur between the hours of 10 AM and 3 PM (weekdays). This would limit the amount of additional parking to be required in Phase 1 of the project at the rear of the building from 133 to 85 additional parking spaces. Should Committee of Adjustment not approve the requested parking reduction for Phase 1, then an additional 133 parking spots will need to be provided in this area prior to occupancy.
- In addition it may be possible to utilize offsite parking, subject to an application to the Committee of Adjustment, to accommodate some of the on site parking requirements.

Council awarded the tender for the Phase 1 construction project at their meeting of April 18, 2023 (EICS-23-09) to Norlon Builders Limited. A Building Permit has been issued for the construction based on the existing/former use as a High School. Construction of Phase 1 has commenced on site and Substantial Performance and Occupancy is scheduled for April 30, 2025. In order to obtain Occupancy based on the proposed uses the on site parking requirements for the new uses needs to be addressed and constructed prior to this date. This means that a final determination of parking

requirements for Phase 1 is required this fall to allow for the design and construction of the required parking to take place during the 2024 construction season.

### Strategy/process/risk

A staff working team, reporting to a steering team has completed a review of the various parking options being considered to mitigate the impact on the green space and park, while providing sufficient parking to effectively support the delivery of the various services offered at the site and being aware of additional financial impacts.

A decision on how to handle at minimum the Phase 1 parking needs, is required by fall 2023 in order for the parking plan to be implemented in time to secure the occupancy permit by May 2025. This timing is important so the Phase 1 tenants can commence to move in and undertake required tenant fitups and in particular, for Brock to be able to commence classes in September 2025. A longer-term strategy for parking needs, inclusive of Phase 2, can come at a later date and/or be phased.

As part of the planning for how to manage the increased parking requirements for the soon to be busy community hub, it is important to keep top of mind the customer experience that will be provided when the many and varied attendees come to the site as well as the impact on the local community and their experience as the city draws more people to this community hub, and integrates it's day to day operations into the existing neighborhood.

A summary of the various options reviewed to address the parking shortfall is outlined below.

### Options Considered

Option	Overview	# of Spaces to Potentially Add	Recommendation
<b>Apply for a variance to the Committee of Adjustment (CofA) to reduce on-site parking requirements</b>	<p>Would need to be supported by a parking justification report that would consider alternate modes of transportation and peak demand analysis, amongst other considerations.</p> <p>With the proposed uses of the facility having different parking demand peaks, this lends itself to shared parking management – utilizing a common pool of parking for the overall site as opposed to designating parking for specific purposes.</p>	48 (subject to CofA approval)	Pursue
<b>Revise parking rates in the Zoning By-law</b>	Following an extensive study, in 2019 Council approved revised parking rates which reflected current transportation and land use realities. (Report PB-65-19 file# 520-07/19 from September 19, 2019)	0	Do not pursue further

Option	Overview	# of Spaces to Potentially Add	Recommendation
	<p>The 2019 parking rates were the result of an extensive study from consultant that included parking utilization surveys across Burlington and municipal benchmarking.</p> <p>The 2019 parking rates were reduced from the previous parking rates as a reflection of current transportation and land use realities and the anticipated application of multi modal transportation options.</p>		
<b>Eliminate compliance with parking from the public authority section of the Zoning By-law</b>	<p>The Public Authority Section of the Zoning By-law allows the city to exempt all zoning regulations with the exception of parking and loading requirements for Public Authorities</p> <p>In the interest of transparency and equality, the city has always made best efforts to hold itself to the same development standards as the private sector.</p>	TBD	Do not pursue further
<b>Construct parking structure</b>	<p>Above ground on west side – would eliminate the shops from community use.</p> <p>Above ground at the back side – would impact track, requiring an underpass through the parking structure.</p> <p>Under ground beneath the sport field – more costly.</p> <p>Would require up to 3 years to construct which would not support phase 1 requirements.</p> <p>Cost estimates range from \$11.5M to \$23.6M</p> <p>Would need to have consideration for the placement of the GEO thermal installation.</p> <p>During construction, would remove some on-site parking for Phase 1 and 2, which could impact our compliance with zoning depending on number of spaces removed and our ability to secure other spaces to meet our minimum requirement.</p>	From 220 to 380	Do not pursue further
<b>Lease parking from 2 local churches</b> (See appendix A for map that shows the location of the 2 churches)	<p>Representatives of the 2 churches are supportive of exploring the possibility of leasing parking spaces for a fee.</p> <p>Possible access during the day Monday to Friday with the exception of special events.</p> <p>Could be assigned to more regular users such as staff and students.</p> <p>Uncertain if this is possible. If possible, will have limitations on when available and if leases expire or are cancelled in the future, parking needs would need to be addressed elsewhere. Better positioned as a temporary solution.</p> <p>May assist with CofA reducing on-site parking requirements for phase 1 occupancy if City undertakes to address any actual operational deficiencies prior to Phase 2</p>	Up to 90 spaces (not guaranteed and subject to CofA approval)	Explore further

Option	Overview	# of Spaces to Potentially Add	Recommendation
<b>Ascension School</b> (see appendix B for a map that shows the location of the school lands)	<p>School board staff are supportive of exploring the collaborative use via a long-term lease, of the land behind their adjoining school to be shared park space with amenities that also suit the board. Will not consider these lands being used for parking.</p> <p>City would be required to provide the capital and operating budget to support the redevelopment of this land.</p> <p>Could support replacing public open space behind the Former Bateman site that is required for parking, while creating an opportunity to connect school lands with the lands at Frontenac Park and behind the Former Bateman site in order to provide an enhanced pedestrian trail that supports connections to the neighbourhood and park amenities that meet local community interests,</p> <p>School Board approval would be required.</p>	None directly but would allow replacement of publicly accessible open space behind the Former Bateman site and enhanced pedestrian connections/walking trail	Explore further
<b>Lay-by parking on New Street</b>	<p>Loading and unloading of vehicles into a live lane of traffic is undesirable, especially within the context of the adjacent use (recreational and community uses) where high turnover is expected, and younger occupants may be existing the vehicle into the live land of traffic.</p> <p>Lay-by parking creates additional and unnecessary conflict points for transit vehicles and negatively impacts the City's ability to deliver on future protected cycling facilities.</p>	12	Do not pursue further
<b>Time limited on-street parking for community centre uses</b>	<p>5-hour maximum parking is currently provided, daytime and evenings, 7 days a week, for all residents.</p> <p>Signing on-street parking for exclusive uses (i.e., community centre) would be difficult to monitor/enforce and has potential to negatively impact availability of on-street parking for local residents.</p>	Minimal	Do not pursue further
<b>Utilization of permeable materials</b>	<p>A review of geotechnical reports for the Former Bateman site identified that this was not a suitable location for the application of a permeable hard surface material.</p> <p>A permeable surface does not easily support recreational uses when not used for parking</p> <p>On-going maintenance is required.</p>	TBD	Do not pursue further
<b>Utilize a portion of open space behind Former Bateman site for surface parking and re-develop remaining space as a park, including land behind Ascension school (subject to board</b>	<p>Would remove track/field and require a park re-design with remaining land base.</p> <p>HDSB approval would be required to incorporate their land into an overall park re-design (not guaranteed).</p> <p>Reduces city green space for a parking lot – not preferred by Council and community.</p> <p>Would ensure ability to get occupancy and provide sufficient parking for all phases as needed.</p>	Up to maximum required	Explore further

Option	Overview	# of Spaces to Potentially Add	Recommendation
approval) and Frontenac Park	<p>Can phase parking by initially providing sufficient for phase 1 and then determine needs for phase 2 at a future date.</p> <p>Significantly lower construction cost than building a parking structure, included in scope of existing construction contract.</p>		

### Overview of the track and football field utilization for both structured and passive use – past and current

- Once the school closed, and with the pandemic, the school board took the track and field out of inventory and the facility is not being maintained to support athletics. When the track and football field were in inventory the field was used on average 275 times per year (based on 2015-2018 data). As the field does not have lights, it was used most weekday evenings until dusk and weekends. Primary users were field lacrosse and ultimate frisbee. These groups were accommodated at other fields.
- Since the track and field have been taken out of inventory, staff have observed that the green space is being used on a regular basis by residents for unstructured or passive activities such as kicking a soccer ball and walking the track with a running group informally using the track on a weekly basis.
- Staff recognize the community interest in having a walking trail to be active outdoors, improve physical and emotional well-being and provide opportunities for community connections. There is a new indoor walking opportunity coming on line in the local area as part of the under construction Skyway Community Centre. Continuing to have an outdoor walking opportunity at this site would be considered a desirable opportunity for the community to be active and connected.
- In the fall of 2023 council will be receiving a report on the Integrated Mobility Plan which will provide a community wide perspective on establishing pedestrian connections through open spaces, linking with local schools as well as providing recreation and fitness trail for outdoor walking. This plan will be considered as a re-design of the overall greenspace is considered.

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### Financial Matters:

The required surface parking to receive occupancy for phase 1 operation is included in the prior approved capital budget for phase 1 construction.



Should additional parking be required and secured through a lease with the two local churches, the 2024 operating budget will need to include the lease costs, which have not yet been determined.

Should a long-term lease to utilize the school greenspace to support an enhanced and broader park experience be approved by the city and HCDSB, future capital and operating budgets will need to reflect the costs to include this greenspace in the overall park design, construction and on-going maintenance.

In the event council decides to explore a parking structure to support on-site parking requirements, future capital and operating budgets will need to include funds to design, construct and operate this structure. Estimated capital costs to construct range from \$11.5M - \$23.6M based on the type and location of the structure being constructed.

### **Total Financial Impact**

No Applicable

### **Source of Funding**

Not Applicable

### **Other Resource Impacts**

Staff from Legal Services, Transportation Services, Community Planning, Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services as well as Recreation Community and Culture will be required to complete the tasks required to determine and then manage parking requirements at the Former Bateman Site.

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### **Climate Implications:**

The project aligns with the Council approved Climate Action Plan and our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint by building more efficient - low carbon buildings. The use of geothermal technologies will be part of this construction and must be a factor when determining parking options.

The facility is designed to accommodate active transportation uses through pedestrian connections and eventually cycling opportunities on New Street. Additional opportunities to support transportation demand management and enhanced public transportation modal split are planned.

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## **Engagement Matters:**

Public engagement is currently being conducted for how to utilize the additional indoor community space and what to name the facility. Following a council decision on how to manage the parking requirements for phase 1 of the Former Bateman Site, staff will advise the public as to the direction as part of project updates and as part of the engagement sessions planned for the use of the indoor space (as appropriate). The public will also be able to get an update, ask questions and provide input on the Former Bateman initiative through the Food for Feedback event scheduled for September 16, 2023.

Broader public engagement is in progress to update the Parks Recreation and Culture Asset Master Plan (PRCAMP). This engagement will provide input into the future needs of the community, across the city and will be used to influence the indoor recreation programs and services as well as outdoor recreational activities to be offered at the Former Bateman site. A more comprehensive, site-specific engagement for outdoor recreation amenities to be provided at the Former Bateman site will be undertaken once a decision is made on how to manage the parking requirements for the overall operation of this new community hub, including the phase 2 parking requirements.

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## **Conclusion:**

The former Robert Bateman High School is being converted into a City-owned multi-purpose community-focused asset that will align with the City's objective of being net-zero carbon in city operations by 2040. The reuse and conversion of the former secondary school will result in extensive renovations and modifications to support the expanded community uses. When the renovation is complete, tenants including Brock University, Burlington Public Library, Halton District School Board, Tech Place and City of Burlington will move into the building and begin offering services.

These new and exciting uses will require more parking to support the new community hub. Staff have proposed partnering with the adjacent school to provide green space for an enhanced park system and with two local churches to provide some parking support. Staff will also make submission to the Committee of Adjustment to reduce parking requirements based on a parking study and to utilize proximate parking to support phase 1 occupancy. Based on the outcome of these partnership discussions, including a decision from the Committee of Adjustment regarding parking required for the facility, staff will re-design the open space to support parking requirements for phase 1 which will need to be determined and constructed in 2024 in order to meet the planned occupancy date of April 30, 2025. Staff will report back to council on the parking results including monitoring of actual Phase 1 parking operations prior to confirming how to manage parking for phase 2 of the project, which includes the new recreation/community space.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Glenn

Strategic Project Lead

On behalf of the Former Bateman Project team

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**Appendices:**

- A. Arial View of Nearby Church Proximities
- B. Current Arial View Highlighting Ascension Elementary School Green Space

**Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.