

Recommendation Report Summary

SUBJECT: Citywide on-street residential parking permit

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Public Works
Transportation

Report Number: PWS-10-25

Wards Affected: All

Date to Committee: March 3, 2025

Date to Council: March 18, 2025

Recommendation

Approve the citywide on-street residential parking permit as described in public works report PWS-10-25; and

Direct staff to implement the citywide on-street residential parking permit, effective May 1, 2025, and make all necessary updates to Parking By-law 39-2016.

Executive Summary

This report and its appendices provide an overview of the proposed strategy to implement a citywide on-street residential parking permit system. The report confirms the immediate need for a program that offers a solution to residents who require on-street parking while identifying opportunities to align with other concurrent city initiatives, as related to the expansion of housing options.

Development of a citywide on-street residential parking permit directly supports HAF Initiative 3 – Support and encourage the creation of additional residential units (ARUs) and consider opportunities to increase as of right permissions (4 units as of right) on all residential lots within the urban area. The report identifies risks to the successful implementation of ARUs if current parking regulations aren't modified to evolve with the changing context of the housing landscape in Burlington. It also proposes a residential parking permit that will successfully implement the recently recommended Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments, as endorsed through PL-92-24, which rely on the reduction of minimum residential parking requirements to support the development of ARUs.

Success of the program will be determined based on a number of metrics:

- Enrollment into the permit program;

- Reduction in the number of 1:00 A.M. to 6:00 A.M. tickets screened and cancelled; and
- Increase in ARU applications as parking would no longer be a significant barrier to implementation.

Staff will report back to council in Q2, 2026 on the progress of the program and recommend any modifications or enhancements required to improve administration of the program and better support winter maintenance activities.

Key findings:

- Parking in residential areas is primarily for the use of local residents and the people, businesses, and service providers that visit them. Residential parking should accommodate all these user groups to allow for functioning, vibrant communities.
- Currently, on-street parking is restricted to 5 hours maximum, and not permitted between the hours of 1:00 AM and 6:00 AM, any day of the week.
- The restrictive nature of parking regulations has resulted in an increased need to develop a parking solution for a small subset of residents who have more vehicles than available parking spaces on their property. This issue is prominent amongst multigenerational residences and has been amplified in recent years.

As the city grows, the way people travel is changing. The 2022 approved Housing Strategy and Integrated Mobility Plan support the creation of complete communities that offer more choice in housing, mobility options and amenities.

While gentle density is planned within established neighbourhoods, the increase in housing options will inevitably attract more residents and visitors. It's critical that barriers to the creation of "missing middle" and multigenerational housing be addressed. The anticipated increase in vehicles and parking demand will be partly offset through improvements to walking, cycling and transit, but there remains a significant need to strategically manage residential parking and maximize the efficient use of existing infrastructure which can be achieved through permitting on-street parking.

Allowing for longer duration (greater than 5-hour) and overnight parking through the creation of a Citywide On-Street Residential Parking Permit offers a solution that helps to address current residential parking challenges in specific neighbourhoods, while supporting the creation of ARUs, effectively removing a barrier to the city delivering on its housing targets.

Implications (financial, legal, staffing, human resources, climate):

- Implementation of this Citywide On-Street Residential Parking Permit program has the potential to reduce Parking Operations 2025 planned parking enforcement revenue of \$1,250,000 by approximately \$71,840.
- Opportunity exists to mitigate budget impacts through the redirection of enforcement efforts to more offenses and redirect staff resources to the Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) program.

- While this initiative has an impact to the tax base, it is important to acknowledge that this program supports the development of ARUs which will expand housing supply and increase the tax base through accommodating additional residents.
- The financial impact of the recommended permit program expands beyond parking enforcement revenue and supports the city's broader strategic objectives.
- Creation of this program will alleviate the long-standing issue of residents illegally expanding driveways onto front lawns in order to meet their parking demands on-site. This is a long-standing concern which has negative impact on the natural environment and increases flood potential through the introduction of additional non-permeable surfaces.

Recommendation Report

Background

The city is evolving and facing significant growth pressures. Increasing options for housing, providing alternate mobility options, and maximizing the capacity of existing transportation infrastructure are key priorities of the Vision to Focus Plan (V2F). However, current parking regulations are not well aligned with the goal of designing and delivering complete communities. Specifically, Parking By-law 39-2016, Part 8 (Section 33) prohibits any vehicle from being parked at any time, on any highway:

- Exceeding a five (5) hour limit on a roadway and which has not been moved a distance of at least twenty-five (25) metres from its original parking location;
- Between 1:00 am and 6:00 am, any day of the week.

While the city offers a free 15-day exemption program that permits vehicles to park on-street for up to 15 days (per plate) per calendar year in the event of extenuating circumstances (i.e. during home renovations, to accommodate visitors, etc.), there has been an increasing desire to develop a long-term solution to better accommodate longer duration and overnight parking needs. Some of the most commonly cited reasons for requiring an extension of the exemption program include multi-generational households, a shift to hybrid or remote work, a need to accommodate personal care (i.e. nighttime nursing care), and a desire to construct a secondary unit within the home, etc.

Over the years, area-specific parking programs such as the Neighbourhood On-Street Parking Program (NOSPP) and the Alton Village Residential Parking Permit have been developed to meet the needs of local neighbourhoods. However, these programs have been developed on an ad hoc basis and have not been applied uniformly across the city. **Table 1** summarizes the volume of requests for extensions to the citywide 15-day exemption program and Alton Village Residential Parking Permits issued over the past 5-years.

Table 1: Exemption Extensions and Residential Permits Issued

Year	# of CRM requests seeking information on overnight parking	# of exemption extensions granted	# of Monthly Alton Village Residential Parking Permits Issued
2020	232	47	167
2021	548	295	311
2022	480	304	544
2023	783	548	993
2024	968	629	1,216

The data demonstrates a year-over-year increase in demand for an overnight parking solution, while also indicating a need for a broader city-wide program.

How Parking Supports Housing Options

The City's commitment to increasing housing options is demonstrated through the approved Housing Strategy (PL-05-22) and implementation of the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) Action Plan (CS-13-23) as updated through the Draft Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw Amendments (PL-92-24). The Housing Strategy contains 12 actions, some of which are supported, to varying degrees, through the creation of a citywide on-street residential parking permit:

- Action 7 – Support, permit and encourage the development of alternate forms of housing, including higher density types of housing, where feasible and appropriate;
- Action 8 – Provide incentives through a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the delivery of housing options to meet the needs of residents; and
- Action 11 – Encourage Additional Residential Units (ARUs) and consider a registry and monitoring program to evaluate the success of the framework and to make sure the ARUs meet health and safety standards.

While the City's Housing Strategy sets out a series of actions, the HAF Action Plan identifies initiatives that accelerate housing supply and implement policy that supports long-term housing objectives to deliver on the Housing Strategy. Development of a citywide on-street residential parking permit directly supports HAF Initiative 3 – Support and encourage the creation of additional residential units (ARUs) and consider opportunities to increase as of right permissions (4 units as of right) on all residential lots within the urban area.

Under current by-law regulations, all parking associated with an ARU is required to be accommodated on-site, as overnight on-street parking is prohibited. The lack of overnight street parking is a significant barrier to the creation of ARUs, compounded by the garage conversion program that further reduces available on-site parking, thereby increasing the demand for street parking. The creation of a citywide on-street residential permit program provides a parking solution for existing residents who require overnight parking, while supporting the city's commitment to creating ARUs to address the housing crisis.

Analysis

Robust engagement was undertaken prior to developing alternate solutions. Engagement was multi-faceted as there are a wide range of interested and affected parties that have potential to be impacted by a citywide program. The first phase of engagement commenced in January 2023 and consisted of a survey open to all residents to gauge the need and support for a citywide solution. A total of 3,076 responses were recorded, with 72% of respondents indicating that their parking needs were satisfactorily accommodated on-site within a garage / driveway. When asked where vehicles are parked that don't fit on-site, responses indicated that they are parked on-street (67%), followed by the boulevard or lay-by (14%) and within

local parks (10%). When asked if an on-street residential parking permit was needed to facilitate overnight parking, 45% of respondents agreed and supported the need for a citywide on-street residential parking permit. While 15% of respondents were undecided and/or didn't have a need for the program themselves, the remaining 40% of respondents indicated they would potentially oppose such a program.

The intent of the program is to offer a solution to those residents who require it. Staff are satisfied through the community engagement survey results that the proposed citywide program meets the needs of affected residents and offers a solution. The detailed engagement report is contained in **Appendix A** for further reference.

Three alternatives were considered when generating solutions:

1. Do Nothing.
2. Develop a citywide permit that enables parking on-street.
3. Eliminate the 1 AM to 6 AM offence and extend the 5-hour limit in order to accommodate on-street parking overnight.

ALTERNATIVE 1 – Do Nothing

Benefits: No change to implement. Meets the needs of residents who can satisfactorily accommodate parking demands on-site.

Considerations: Does not provide a solution that addresses current residential parking concerns and prevents the implementation of ARUs, thereby negatively impacting the city's ability to deliver on housing targets.

Additional Considerations: This is not a viable alternative given the demonstrated need for long-term parking solutions that are required to meet the needs of both current and future residents.

ALTERNATIVE 2 – Develop Citywide On-Street Residential Parking Permit

Benefits: Provides a flexible solution for residents who require on-street parking and unlocks a barrier to successfully promoting the development of ARUs. This alternative supports the efficient use of infrastructure and will mitigate the concerning trend of residents expanding driveways on landscaped areas, thereby decreasing permeable surfaces, and contributing to negative climate outcomes (increased storm runoff, increased flood potential, etc.).

Permitting on-street parking overnight may potentially impact city services such as emergency services, leaf collection, winter snow clearing and routine maintenance.

Additional Considerations: This is the preferred approach as it strikes a balance between accommodating on-street parking where needed while managing on-street parking demands through the issuance of permits which helps to mitigating potential impact to city services. This option results in financial impact as fine revenue associated with the 5-hour offence will be

significantly reduced but offers opportunity to mitigate that impact through the generation of new permit revenue.

ALTERNATIVE 3 – Eliminate 1:00 AM to 6:00 AM Restriction

Benefits: Allows all residents & visitors to park on-street overnight, citywide, with no restriction. This alternative provides a parking solution for those who need it and supports the development of ARUs.

Considerations: Removes regulatory oversight and has potential to be misused as it may promote on-street parking for residents who currently park on-site in garages or on driveways. Impact to city services at a greater scale than that identified in Alternative 2. Reduced opportunity to educate residents on the rules and limitations of street parking as there is no interaction between the resident and City Staff.

Blanket permission to park on-street overnight may result in less adherence with posted restrictions and negatively impact the community at large. This option results in a significant reduction in fine revenue while offering no opportunity to recover costs through permit revenue.

Internal Collaboration

Once confirmed that there was support for the creation of a citywide program, staff engaged with internal departments to gain feedback on the impact of Alternative 2 to city operations. A facilitated meeting was held in July 2024 and included representation from the following departments:

- Transportation
- Roads, Parks & Forestry
- Community Planning
- Transit
- Fire

Internal stakeholders collectively agreed that the creation of the citywide on-street residential parking permit program was important and supports the creation of complete communities, addressing both a current need while supporting gentle intensification. It was also acknowledged that the proposed program would only impact overnight operations, as vehicles are currently permitted to park on-street during daytime hours. Given that the majority of city maintenance activities occur during daytime hours, the most significant impact raised was that of winter maintenance and snow removal. It was noted that transit doesn't generally operate on local residential streets, and that Fire/EMS access would be maintained through regulatory signage and enforcement. A summary of inter-departmental engagement and collaboration is contained in **Appendix B** and the analysis identifying risk and mitigation is contained in **Appendix C**. Further engagement with affected departments and a detailed communications strategy will be developed prior to implementation.

Recommendation Details

The recommended citywide residential on-street parking permit (Alternative 2) is, in essence, an extension of the Alton Village Residential Parking Permit program which came into effect in 2016. The program has been monitored for the past 7 years and generally works well. Permit holders are permitted to park their personal vehicle on residential streets 24-hours per day, up to 48-hours maximum. All other parking offences are applicable and there is one permit allowed per household. The proposed citywide program is structured as follows:

1. Free 15-day On-Street Exemption

The existing exemption program is to be maintained, permitting 15-days per plate, per calendar year at no cost. This continues to meet the needs of the majority of residents who have periodic need to park on-street.

2. Qualification for Permit Eligibility

For residents requiring exemptions greater than 15-days per year, the citywide permit can be purchased, which exempts permit holders from the 5-hour time limit and 1:00 AM to 6:00 AM restriction:

- Permit is only valid in residential areas (excludes rural areas);
- Permits will be issued for passenger vehicles only;
- Allows a maximum duration of 48 hours (meaning the vehicle has to move every 48 hours but can stay on the street);
- Residents seeking a permit must reside in Burlington and the vehicle must be registered to a Burlington address;
- One vehicle may be registered per permit. Additional permit requests will be considered on an individual basis with priority given to occupants of ARUs;
- Purchase of a permit does not guarantee a dedicated on-street parking space, only the ability to park in available spaces;
- Permits are not valid on streets that have paid parking; and
- Permit fees are consistent with Alton Village Residential Parking Permit, \$30/month per vehicle and \$350/year per vehicle.

3. Existing NOSPP Streets

The Neighbourhood On-Street Parking Program (NOSPP) was implemented in 2001 and discontinued in 2016. There has been no expansion of the program since that time. The program offers differing exemptions based on street location and is not uniformly applied. It

is recommended that the NOSPP be grandfathered by way of offering one free citywide on-street residential parking permit to each residence of an NOSPP designated street, until such time there is a change of ownership. At that point, the new homeowner will be required to apply for a citywide permit. This maintains the intent of a uniformly applied and regulated permit system.

Processing a Permit Request

Upon receiving a request for purchase of a citywide on-street residential parking permit, staff will initiate a technical review of the street requested. The technical analysis will review current parking restrictions, road width, proximity to transit facilities and parks, and confirm that emergency vehicle access can be adequately maintained. The analysis provides an opportunity to identify any required restrictions or changes to signage prior to issuing permits. If the street is deemed eligible for on-street parking, a permit will be issued. More details on the criteria to permit parking on one or two sides of the street are contained in **Appendix D**.

Limitations

During snow events, and the 24-hour period after an event is declared, on-street parking will be prohibited to permit plowing operations to commence. This is critical to overall winter maintenance and is consistent with current practice. Residents will be required to relocate their vehicle during these times to allow for winter maintenance activities. Vehicles left on-street will be subject to fine and/or towing.

Key Dates & Milestones

- May 2025 – commencement of program

Implications

Approval of the recommended permit program will result in significant reduction in potential parking enforcement revenue associated with the 1:00 AM to 6:00 AM offence. In 2024, a total of 40,731 parking tickets were issued, 12,866 of those (approximately 32%) were for violation of the 1:00 AM to 6:00 AM restriction. The face value of the ticket is \$47, equating to approximately \$604,700 in revenue potential. However, based on best judgement and a review of available data, a significant proportion of tickets are screened through the appeal process. Approximately 10% of the tickets are cancelled, while another 10% are reduced to the \$25 price point by first attendants. It is estimated that the 1:00 AM to 6:00 AM offence generated approximately \$515,930 in fine revenue in 2024.

Approval of the permit program will result in a potential loss of fine revenue which directly impacts the tax base. The magnitude of fine revenue loss as a result of implementation of the

permit program is estimated at an additional 15%, equivalent to \$90,700. Staff note, however, that there is opportunity to mitigate the loss of fine revenue through the introduction of the Citywide On-Street Residential Parking Permit fees. Based on a review of the volume of residents currently enrolled in the recurring exemption (629) we anticipate that approximately \$18,870 could be generated in new permit revenue (based on a monthly permit cost of \$30). This is a conservative estimate based on only those residents requesting recurring exemptions. Introduction of the permit program will likely increase demand and result in additional permit fee revenue.

Staff estimate that approval and implementation of this program has the potential to reduce the 2025 planned parking enforcement revenue of \$1,250,000 by approximately \$71,840. In order to mitigate budget impacts, parking enforcement staff would be redirected to enforce more serious offenses which could further mitigate revenue loss, and the reduction in screening requests would result in increased staff capacity, allowing First Attendants to be redirected to Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) cases.

It's important to acknowledge that this initiative supports the development of ARUs which, once implemented, expands housing supply and increases the tax base through accommodating additional residents. The financial impact of the recommended permit program expands beyond fine revenue and supports the city's broader strategic objectives.

References

- Draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to increase housing options ([PL-92-24](#))
- City of Burlington Housing Strategy ([PL-05-22](#))
- Housing Accelerator Fund – Action Plan ([CS-13-23](#)) as approved through the Implementation Budget ([PL-82-24](#)) and the 2024 amending HAF agreement ([Approved Action Plan](#))
- On Street Residential Pay Parking Program ([TS-04-16](#))
- City of Burlington Parking & Idling By-law ([By-law 39-2016](#))

Strategic Alignment

- ☒ Designing and delivering complete communities
 - ☒ Providing the best services and experiences
 - ☒ Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change
 - ☐ Driving organizational performance
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Appendices:

- A. Get Involved Burlington Project Report – City Wide Parking Permits (2023)
- B. Understanding the Impacts of Overnight On-Street Parking – Internal Engagement (2024)
- C. Risk Analysis & Mitigation
- D. Citywide On-Street Residential Parking Permit Technical Framework

Draft By-laws for Approval at Council:

N/A

Notifications:

N/A

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and approved by the Head of Corporate Affairs, Commissioner, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Commissioner of Legal Services and Legislative Services/City Solicitor.