



REQUEST FOR A DECISION

Mobility Committee open session – September 1st, 2022

To: Councillor Bruce Grandy, Chair, Mobility Committee and Members of the Mobility Committee

From: Charlene Sharp, Manager of Transit & Parking Services
Jon Lewis, Transportation Engineer

Date: August 22, 2022

Title: Admin Report - Residential-Commuter Parking Pilot Project Update - August 22 2022 Draft (3).docx

ISSUE:

In mid-2021, City Council approved a pilot project to introduce residential and commuter parking permits to several streets in the downtown core and adjacent to UNB. This admin report summarizes the results of the pilot project, highlights lessons learned, and recommends some adjustments to the parking restriction hours to reflect feedback from the community.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

A. Recommendation:

It is recommended that the following resolution be forwarded to City Council for consideration:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Fredericton authorizes and directs the Legal Division to amend By-law No. T-1, A By-law to Regulate Traffic, to make the following changes to Section 16.09: (1) add parking restriction times associated with the Residential Parking Permit Area on George Street and Charlotte Street between 1:30 pm and 3:00 pm; (2) to add Northumberland, Westmorland, Carleton, St. John, and Church Streets (between George and Charlotte Streets) to the Residential Parking Permit Areas effective between 1:30 pm and 3:00 pm; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Fredericton directs and authorizes the Legal Division to draft the appropriate by-law to amend By-law No. T-7, A By-law Relating to Parking Meters, Parking Zones, and Pay and Display Machines to: (1) add Northumberland, Westmorland, Carleton, St. John, and Church Streets (between George and Charlotte Streets) to Schedule A as Residential Parking Permit Areas and allow virtual payments for each street; and (2) to add Northumberland, Westmorland, Carleton, St. John, and Church Streets (between George and Charlotte Streets) to Schedule B as Residential Parking Permit Areas and allow daily permits for \$5.00 per day or annual resident parking permits for \$24.00; and, (3) to allow the purchase of daily permits in the Regent Street Carpark at a cost of \$5.00 per day under Schedule B; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mobility Committee recommends that staff develop a framework for how new residential/commuter parking zones can be created based on public requests and report back at a future Mobility Committee meeting.

B. Other options: Mobility Committee may choose to provide other direction to staff.

BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION:

The Pilot Project Explained

The residential/commuter pilot project arose as an option to implement modernized parking management solutions at the periphery of the downtown in order to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) increase flexibility of use of parking by area residents;
- 2) create additional parking options for people working downtown; and,
- 3) enable more efficient parking enforcement.

The Parking Master Plan recommended that the City “*Explore Commuter Parking Zones to build some additional short-term capacity and allow time to plan for a future parking structure*”. Prior to Covid-19, the City’s off-street parking facilities had reached or were nearing capacity, and all garages and surface lots had wait lists for long-term monthly parking. As well, some Town Plat area residents had expressed a desire for greater flexibility in the use of on-street parking during daytime hours. Staff investigated potential solutions for addressing current parking supply needs and identified a Parking Management Pilot Project designed to achieve these objectives.

City Council approved a pilot project to introduce residential/commuter parking zones to increase flexibility of daytime parking use for area residents, improve the City’s ability to enforce parking within the pilot area, and increase the supply of and access to daily parking for commuters as outlined below. The anticipated benefits are included below for each user, as first presented in a March 2021 Administrative Report.



1. **Pilot focus areas** (see map above):
 - a. George and Charlotte Streets from University Avenue to Smythe Street (divided into three zones)
 - b. Church Street east of Queen Square Park; and, Beaverbrook Street between University Avenue and McLeod Avenue.

2. **Modify existing parking time restrictions** (ex. “2-hour max”, “max. 4-hour metered”) within the pilot area as follows:
 - a. Allow parking for residents and commuters between 8:00am and 5:00pm except:
 - i. Daily permit required if parking between 10:00am-11:00am and/or 1:30pm-2:30pm;
 - ii. Option for area residents to purchase an “Annual Resident Permit” that allows unlimited daytime on-street parking (all day, every day) for an annual fee of \$24.00. Proof of address based on vehicle registration is required.
3. **How it works:**
 - a. When parking any time of day except 10:00am-11:00am and/or 1:30pm-2:30pm, park and go;
 - b. If someone’s parking session will extend into one or both of the time restrictions of 10:00am-11:00am and/or 1:30pm-2:30pm, a daily permit is required;
 - c. Daily permits can be purchased for the day they will be used starting at 7:00am before arriving in one of the designated zones;
 - d. Park anywhere in the zone for which you have purchased a permit;
 - e. Defined zones will ensure residents can continue to park near their residence;
 - f. Annual Resident Permits can be purchased at City Hall;
 - g. Daily permits can be purchased online or at City Hall;
 - h. Maximum 2-hour free parking will continue to be available adjacent to the trail; and,
 - i. Overnight parking restrictions still apply during winter months.
4. **Benefits:**
 - a. Community:
 - i. Improved use of existing municipal asset;
 - ii. More efficient for enforcement using existing resources;
 - iii. Allows time to plan for future parking structure solution;
 - iv. Fosters data driven decision making; and,
 - v. Supportive of downtown businesses by increasing parking access for their employees.
 - b. Commuters:
 - i. Increased options for daily parking;
 - ii. Provides a flexible solution; and,
 - iii. Substantially more convenient solution that meets current demand.
 - c. Residents:
 - i. Significantly improves flexibility for parking during daytime hours (7 hours of unrestricted parking for residents and their visitors rather than max. 2 hour/day);
 - ii. Option to purchase daily permit if unrestricted access is needed occasionally; and,
 - iii. Option to purchase “annual resident permit” (\$24.00/year) if full unrestricted access is desired for 100% use (all day, every day) of on-street parking within their zone.

Ultimately, new parking signage was installed across the pilot project area, modifications were made to the HotSpot Parking App for daily permit purchases, registration processes for residential annual passes were developed and public communications were undertaken, such that the pilot project was live and in place by the early fall of 2021. This was a significant undertaking to deliver a new parking service offering.

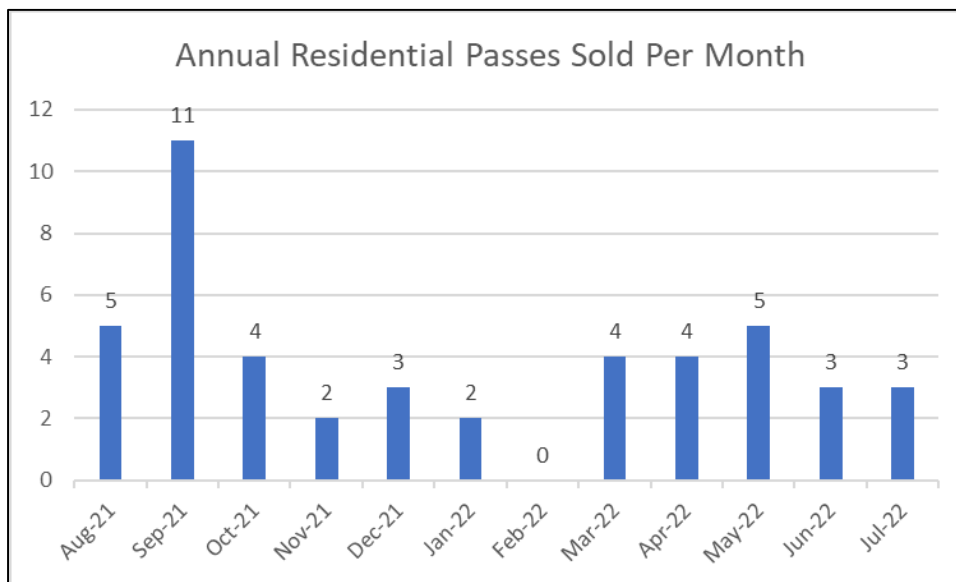
Parking Permit Demand

The number of annual residential permits sold, and the amount of daily commuter passes sold were tracked as part of the pilot project. Permits were available for sale starting in late August 2021 and the data presented below includes sales until August 8th, 2022.

The total annual residential passes sold until August 8th, 2022 was 46. The monthly distribution of sales can be seen in the figure below. There was an initial blitz of sales as the program began in the fall of 2021

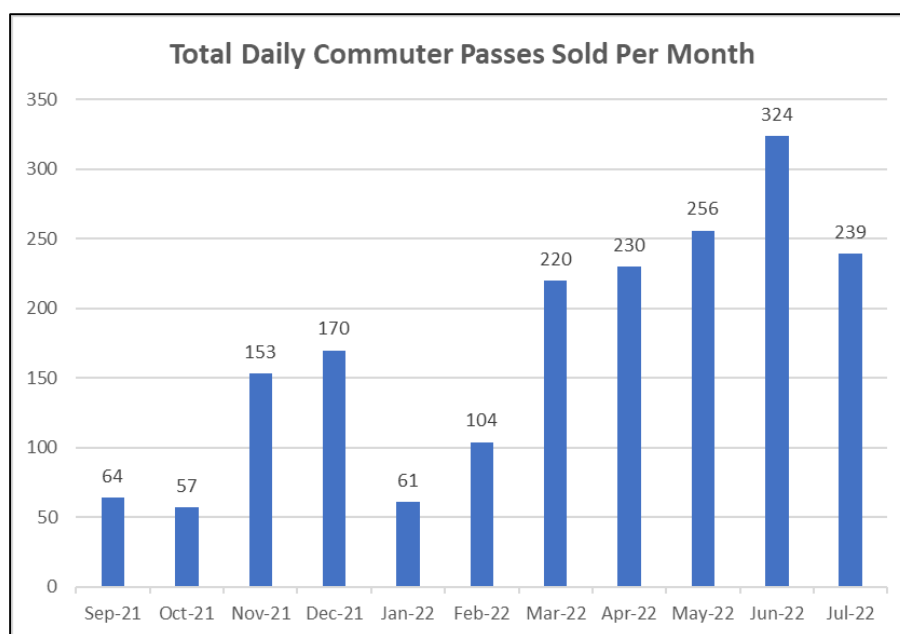
and local residents were notified of the program. Since this initial blitz, there has been a small continuous demand for annual passes from local residents through-out the entire pilot period.

The majority of annual residential passes have been sold in Zone B (80%), while there has been lower but consistent demand from Zone A & Zone C (20% each). There have been no residential annual passes sold in Zone Q.



The total annual daily commuter passes sold until August 8th, 2022 was 1945. The monthly distribution of daily passes can be seen in the figure below. In general, daily commuter pass sales were low in the first couple months as the pilot program was introduced. Sales increased as more commuters likely became aware of the program through the winter and spring (with the exception of a drop in parking in January/February likely due to the Omnicron variant outbreak). Sales have continued to increase through the late Spring with an expected drop in July coinciding with reduced parking demand from commuters in July.

It is worth noting, that during the Parking Master Plan, commuter parking permits was conceived as a way to provide more capacity for all-day parking when the City had lengthy wait lists at all city owned garages. Covid-19 has appeared to have a long-lasting impact on all-day parking demand within the downtown, as the City now has capacity within its parking garages. Despite increasing daily commuter pass sales, staff do not anticipate the need for additional streets to be added downtown to increase on-street parking capacity for commuters in the short term.



The majority of daily commuter passes have been sold in Zone A (77%), which represents the most central location of downtown. From a parking management perspective, it is helpful that the data appears to show that the highest residential parking demand and commuter parking demand are not occurring in the same zone.

Engagement with Local Stakeholders

Concerns were raised by several non-profit service groups operating out of downtown churches adjacent to George and Charlotte Street. The service groups indicated that their membership (primarily retired seniors) was negatively impacted by the parking pilot program. They requested that on George and Charlotte Streets, the morning restriction period be dropped as their meetings typically occurred in the morning.

In response to this concern, staff are recommending that the time periods where a permit is required be adjusted such that no permit is required for the morning period; however, the afternoon period for which a permit is required be lengthened to 1.5 hours (1:30pm to 3pm) to provide more time for adequate and effective enforcement. There are no changes proposed for Church Street or Beaverbrook Street and it is recommended that the current 1 hour parking restriction remain in both the morning and afternoon periods.

User Survey Results

A short online survey was sent to all residents who purchased annual residential passes and to commuters who purchased at least 1 daily permit. The intention of the survey was to gather feedback from actual users in terms of their overall level of satisfaction with the pilot project and to determine if they would like to see any changes moving forward. The results are briefly summarized below.

For the residential annual pass holders, the following feedback was received:

- Overall the program was seen as favourable,
- Side streets not included make it confusing,
- Process is onerous and should be on-line,
- Should allow overnight parking in the winter,
- Generally happy to have to ability to park on the street all day.

For the daily pass holders, the following feedback was received:

- It works great,
- Signage could be a little clearer,
- Would like to see it stay,
- Very reasonable rate.

Summary of Pilot Project Objectives

There were 3 overall objectives of this pilot project as follows:

- 1) increase flexibility of use of parking by area residents;
- 2) create additional parking options for people working downtown; and,
- 3) enable more efficient parking enforcement.

Flexibility of parking for local residents has been achieved based on the considerable uptake in annual residential pass purchases. The feedback from existing residents who have purchased permits has been generally positive.

The creation of new all-day parking options for people working downtown has very clearly been achieved based on the growing demand for daily permits. The actual promotion of this parking option to commuters has been minimal since its introduction as there continues to be lots of long-term parking supply in the city's parking garages as the Covid recovery continues. Staff will continue to monitor the amount of daily parking passes being sold and start limiting the passes sold per zone if on-street capacity issues arise. As a way of providing more parking options in the downtown core, having a limited number of daily permits for the newly acquired Regent Street Parking Lot at the corner of Brunswick Street and Regent Street will assist in commuter parking. Currently, only monthly parking permits are available at this location.

Finally, the introduction of specific time periods where parking is prohibited unless a vehicle has a permit has enabled much more effective and efficient parking enforcement compared to maximum 2-hour parking. Enforcement officers only have to visit the location when parking is prohibited to confirm if there are any vehicles parked without a valid permit, versus the previous method of having to make multiple trips to the streets within the pilot and track individual vehicle parking durations. Further, all streets within the identified Zone areas, where parking is identified, will be adjusted to the permit program and the 2-hour parking signage will be removed so that the all-day parking can be expanded.

Potential Expansion of Residential/Commercial Parking Zones

With the successful undertaking of the residential/commuter zone parking pilot project, the next logical question would be how or when should the existing zones be expanded or should this parking approach be utilized in other areas of the City?

Staff are recommending that a methodology be developed for how residents can request the introduction of permit parking within their neighborhood. At this time, it is anticipated that any potential new zones would be added as a result of requests from local residents for more flexibility with adjacent on-street parking. Staff do not foresee the need in the short term to expand the existing parking zones to provide more commuter parking.

It is recommended that the Mobility Committee direct staff to create a methodology and process for local residents to request the potential creation of new permit controlled parking zones and present those findings to a future Mobility Committee for consideration.

- **FINANCIAL:** The capital costs of setting up the pilot (new signage, app development, public education) were covered under approved 2021 parking and traffic capital budgets. If the staff recommendations are implemented, any minor signage adjustments and additional public communications would be covered

under approved 2022 capital budgets. The pilot program has generated some small ongoing new revenue (permit fees and improved enforcement ability), but this is at-least partially off-set from the increased administrative cost of running the program and loss of meter revenue (from where parking meters were removed). The overall net operational impact of this program is likely currently small. If new areas of the City are considered for expansion to residential/commuter parking zones, it is important to continue charging an annual cost for residential passes to help cover the administrative costs of running the program

- **LEGAL:** By-law No. T-1, A By-law to Regulate Traffic, and By-law No. T-7, A By-law Relating to Parking Meters, Parking Zones, and Pay and Display Machines, require amendments in order to give effect to the decision of City Council and enable enforcement of the proposed parking changes.
- **COMMUNICATIONS:** Parking staff have worked with Corporate Communications through-out the pilot project including the creation of a dedicated webpage, the creation of notices for local residents and social media posts. Parking staff will continue to seek their guidance on how to notify residents and commuters if any changes are made going forward.
- **CLIMATE LENS:**

Does this proposal move the City of Fredericton closer to its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets of 50% reduction by 2030 and net-zero by 2050 in line with the City's Corporate Energy & Emissions Plan and/or Community Energy Emission Plan?

- ☒ Moves us towards GHG reduction targets
- ☐ No change in GHG emissions
- ☐ Moves us away from GHG targets but there are trade-offs with other Council or Municipal Plan priorities (*identify which priorities*)

The residential/commuter parking zones would have a small positive impact overall on greenhouse gas emission reduction. By more sustainably utilizing city streets to allow all-day parking, the need for a future parking garage is delayed.

Does this proposal improve the City of Fredericton's resilience to the impacts of climate change in line with our Climate Change Adaptation Plan?

- ☒ Moves us towards climate resilience
- ☐ No change in resilience
- ☐ Moves us away from climate resilience but there are trade-offs with other Council or Municipal Plan priorities (*identify which priorities*)

The residential/commuter parking zones would have a small positive impact overall on adaption by providing more commuter parking at a lower risk to being blocked by spring flooding than other lots currently downtown. During the major Spring floods of 2018/2019, access to several major City owned parking lots was temporarily lost due to high flood waters.

SPOKESPERSON:

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