



CITY OF KINGSTON

**REPORT TO ENVIRONMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE &
TRANSPORTATION POLICIES COMMITTEE**

Report No.: EITP-09-022

TO: Chair - Environment, Infrastructure & Transportation Policies Committee

FROM: Denis Leger, Commissioner, Corporate Services
Jim Keech, President, Utilities Kingston

RESOURCE STAFF: Malcolm Morris, Director, Transportation
Damon Wells, Director, Public Works

DATE OF MEETING: June 9, 2009

SUBJECT: Winter Control Measures and On-Street Permit Parking

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Residential permit parking programs are available in a number of municipalities across the country. They generally exist in larger cities and have particular application in older downtowns that exhibit residential intensification. Although residential programs vary according to the objectives attempting to be met, the common element is to grant exemption privileges from existing parking restrictions. Many cities in northern climates restrict overnight parking on-street during the winter months to facilitate snow clearing and removal operations. This report examines the approach taken by 4 municipalities in terms of the privileges granted to residential parking permit holders as it relates to overnight parking during winter months. Staff has also provided an analysis of the impacts that are expected if permit holders were exempt from the overnight parking restriction.

The review suggests that the winter control costs for the pilot project area more than double from the current \$28,120 to \$59,660. This would have greater adverse financial and service implications if the pilot project results in permanent change to the pilot area or an expanded area. Accordingly, no changes to winter control overnight parking restrictions are being recommended.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the residential on-street parking pilot project proceed based on the approved terms of reference,

-and further-

THAT no action be taken with respect to exempting residential permit holders from the existing winter overnight parking restrictions.

AUTHORIZING SIGNATURES:

<p>ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER Denis Leger, Commissioner, Corporate Services</p>	<p>ORIGINAL SIGNED BY PRESIDENT & C.E.O., UTILITIES KINGSTON Jim Keech, President, Utilities Kingston</p>
<p>ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER Gerard Hunt, Chief Administrative Officer</p>	

CONSULTATION WITH THE FOLLOWING COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Beach, <i>Sustainability & Growth</i>	N/R
Commissioner Thurston, <i>Community Development Services</i>	N/R
Commissioner Leger, <i>Corporate Services</i>	N/R
Jim Keech, President, <i>Utilities Kingston</i>	N/R

(N/R indicates consultation not required)

OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:

At the regular meeting of City Council held November 25, 2008, the following motion was approved:

“THAT staff be directed to bring forward to the EITP Committee not later than its June 2009 meeting a report that reviews winter control measures in relation to on-street overnight parking in relation to residential permit parking areas. The report is to include a discussion of how this is managed in other cities, such as Ottawa.”

Initial investigations into residential on-street permit parking examined several Canadian municipalities with residential permit parking programs in place.

Halifax

The *Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)* has a policy in place for on-street parking and offers permits to qualified residents for a fee. Privileges granted to permit holders do not include an exemption from their overnight winter parking ban. Residents within the *HRM* are also subject to a provincial overnight winter parking ban on streets maintained by the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation.

Montreal

The City of Montreal offers residents of some sectors reserved parking spaces for the following reasons: the density of the population, heavy business activity, snow-clearing operations in narrow streets, or for the convenience of disabled persons. In order to take advantage of these reserved spaces, residents must obtain a permit that is reserved exclusively for residents living in designated sectors.

Additionally, the City of Montreal, offers “Rue étroite” (narrow street) permits, which allow for parking on much of the left side of streets (presumably one-way) designated as narrow, between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. This permit also provides access to off-street parking lots, rented by the City of Montreal, to accommodate residents of narrow streets at night, during snow-removal operations.

For the 16 “narrow streets” in Montreal, parking on the right side of the street is prohibited at all times, which allows for general snow clearing operations. For snow-removal operations and/or snow clearing operations on the left side of these streets, permit parking is temporarily prohibited.

Ottawa

The City of Ottawa initiates temporary winter overnight parking regulations through various notification processes based on Environment Canada snowfall and accumulation forecasts. Ottawa does have an on-street residential monthly parking program that exempts permit holders from the general winter overnight parking regulation, but does not exempt them from parking restrictions due to snow removal operations. The on-street residential monthly parking program applies only within established zones. To qualify for permit privileges, residents have to live in a zone that allows permit parking and must prove that they do not have access to off-street parking. Daytime or nighttime planned snow removal parking restrictions apply to all vehicles, including those with an on-street monthly parking permit.

Throughout the winter, snow removal may be planned during the day or night. When snow removal is planned, “no parking” snow removal signs are posted ahead of time alerting motorists when snow removal is to occur and when parking is not permitted. These restrictions apply to all vehicles including those with on-street parking permits.

A discussion with the City of Ottawa’s, Road Maintenance Division Manager, indicated that while there was recognition of the need for on-street parking by some residents, the program did result in increased winter control plowing costs and scheduling issues due to “return” plowing requirements for cleanup plowing and to get the accumulated snow back to the curb.

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For snow removal operations, locations are advertised by various means and through various media, advising of the parking ban for all vehicles the removal period. Additionally, affected streets are "signed" in advance. Typically, removal operations are conducted on an "every other street" basis; this allows for permit and other parking on adjacent streets where snow is not being removed.

Vehicles parked on signed streets are ticketed and towed to an adjacent, non-removal street. The vehicle locations are logged by police and owners can call the police for retrieval information.

Ottawa could not indicate if in general the winter permit premium of \$96.00 per month, covered the actual costs incurred, but did indicate that with the heavy snow fall experienced the last couple of winters, the winter premium probably did not cover the additional cost.

Toronto

The City of Toronto also has a permit parking program that entitles permit holding residents to park their automobiles on the street within a specified area exclusively during permit parking hours. This program generally services residential areas where driveways and/or garages are not common. Permit holders have the privilege of parking their vehicles overnight and are exempt from 1, 2 and 3 hour parking restrictions, but are not exempt from the winter overnight parking ban.

Current Winter Control Issues and Practices

Due to the heavy daytime on-street parking load in the proposed residential permit parking pilot project area, daytime winter control activities are limited to clearing only the center of these mainly residential streets. Even with the various time of day parking restrictions throughout this area, cars are typically parked on both sides of many of these streets. Street plows have little or no opportunity to plow snow to the curb and also for property damage liability concerns, must be careful not to push snow banks up against parked cars. Hence, the limitation of only clearing the center of these streets.

Additionally, with the heavy daytime on-street parking, day-time sidewalk plows can only proceed very slowly and are limited in where they can deposit plowed snow, again for property damage liability concerns, both for parked cars and for private property immediately behind the sidewalk.

With the current winter overnight parking restrictions in place, winter control plowing is completed through the early morning hours when both street and sidewalk plows have more ready access to plow snow to the curb. Towing of illegally parked vehicles is not a practice as it has proven to be ineffective during snow clearing operations because of the time delay between identifying the vehicle and actually having it removed as it would prove to be ineffective. Typically these "cleanup" operations can be carried out on the first night shift following the end of a snowfall event leaving both clear streets and sidewalks for the following morning.

Snow removal operations in the Pilot Project area are currently undertaken during the 12:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. night shift because the winter overnight parking restrictions are in place and typically only a few illegally parked cars restrict access to the curb lane. Curb line snow banks act as storage for plowed street and sidewalk snow. Illegally parked cars are towed to facilitate removal operations. Typically, snow removal operations in the pilot project area are carried out 2 to 4 times seasonally.

With the winter overnight parking restrictions in place, notice is not given or advance signage posted for proposed snow removal operations.

Pilot Project Expected Issues and Proposed Activities

As with all winter control activities, the actual winter weather experienced will determine required actions. The following expected issues and required actions are based on what could be considered a current average winter season. Accordingly, actual issues, demands and costs will vary depending on actual winter weather conditions experienced.

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The proposed residential permit parking pilot project as proposed will not exempt permit holders from the current winter overnight parking restrictions. With those restrictions still in place, there will be little effect on winter control operations for the Pilot Project area.

It is expected however, that as there will be a charge for the parking permits, there will be a demand for increased snow removal frequency, by at least one additional removal per season.

Impacts of an Exemption to the Winter Overnight Parking Restriction

If residential permit parking vehicles were to be exempt from the current winter overnight parking restrictions, significant changes would have to be made to winter control operations in the pilot project area and/or expected winter control levels of service for both streets and sidewalks in this area. Given the City of Kingston's commitment to accessibility considerations, and the general public's expectations for winter control levels of service, it is expected that a reduction in service levels would not be well received.

With basically unrestricted parking throughout most of the pilot project area, there would be little or no opportunity to carry out thorough cleanup plowing operations on the area streets and sidewalks. It is expected that this would result in multiple return plowing operations, for both street and sidewalk plows, along with Customer Service generated work orders, to try to cleanup those locations where cars were parked, while still trying to work around cars still parked on the street. The latter point increases the possibility of liability for property damage to parked cars, resulting not only in lawsuits and associated costs, but also affecting the City's CVOR (Commercial Vehicle Operators Registry) rating.

These return plowing requirements, would not only be direct additional costs, but would also hinder overall snow plowing productivity, by limiting available resources for other plowing activities. This would particularly be an issue with frequent, prolonged or back to back winter control events.

Costs associated with expected return plowing requirements for the pilot project area are somewhat difficult to assess, given the variability of winter weather events; but have been estimated based on a minimum of one return plowing requirement, for both street and sidewalk plows. These cost estimates are included in Exhibit A of this report.

Even with the return plowing operations, it is expected that no thorough, complete cleanup will be possible, following significant accumulations of snow, with on-street parked cars present. Further it is anticipated that there will be an expectation by parking permit holders, that street clearing levels of service will be maintained. To facilitate those service level expectations, it is expected that additional cleanup plowing activities will be required.

With the heavy demand for daytime on-street parking in the pilot project area, additional cleanup and snow removal operations would be carried out at night, unless noise issues dictated otherwise. The Ottawa model of "temporary" parking restrictions for all vehicles, including permit holders complete with advertising, notices, signing streets in advance and an alternating streets scheduling, would be followed.

With the heavy demand for daytime on-street parking in the pilot project area, snow removal operations would still be carried out at night, unless noise issues dictated otherwise.

Additional cost estimates associated with these "enhanced" cleanup and snow removal operations for the pilot project area are included in Exhibit A to this report. It should be noted that these are estimates of expected direct costs only. Indirect costs associated with the application of additional winter control resources to the residential on-street permit parking area, and what effect that application might have on overall city wide winter control effectiveness, is unknown at this time.

EXISTING POLICY/BY LAW:

Winter Control Plan
Winter Overnight Parking Restrictions

NOTICE PROVISIONS:

N/A

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

Reduced service levels, particularly sidewalk snow clearing, will impact accessibility for able bodied and disabled persons alike. It is however recognized that the ability to park close overnight will be an advantage for a few disabled vehicle owners, but at the expense of the many disabled who will have their sidewalk and road access reduced even more than it already is during the winter months.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Estimated costs to provide snow clearing and removal during the pilot project as proposed is \$32,660 or approximately \$4,500 more than current costs. Exempting residential permit holders from the winter overnight parking restriction is expected to double present costs to \$59,660 annually.

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Greg McLean, Supervisor, Bylaw Enforcement & Animal Control

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EXHIBITS ATTACHED:

Exhibit A – Winter Control Cost Comparison Table

Residential On-Street Permit Parking**Seasonal Winter Control Cost Comparison Table**

Activity Parking Status	Current Situation Pilot Project Area	Residential On-Street Permit Parking Pilot Project as approved (permit holders not exempt from overnight parking restriction)	Fully Implemented Residential On-Street Permit Parking Pilot Project (permit holders exempt from overnight parking exemption)
Daytime Street Plowing	\$145 per event, 25 events / season = \$3,625	same as current \$3,625	same as current, plus one return plowing per event \$6,345
Daytime Sidewalk Plowing	\$140 per event, 25 events / season = \$3,500	same as current \$3,500	same as current \$3,500
Night Time Street Plowing	\$225 per event, 25 events / season = \$5,625	same as current \$5,625	same as current, plus one return plowing per event \$9,375
Night Time Sidewalk Plowing	\$70 per event, 25 events / season = \$1,750	same as current \$1,750	same as current, plus one return plowing per event \$3,500
Snow Removal	\$4,540 per removal, 3 removals / season = \$13,620	same as current, but 4 removals / season \$18,160	\$6,810 per removal (over 2 nights), 4 removals (minimum) \$27,240
Additional "Posted" Alternate Street, Cleanup Plowing	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Nil</i>	\$1,300 per Additional Cleanup, (over 2 nights) 4 cleanups / season \$5,200
Snow Removal / Add'n Cleanup Plowing, Advertizing, Notification & Advance Warning Signage	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Nil</i>	1,000 per removal and/or cleanup (estimate only) 8 removals / cleanups \$8,000 -Bylaw enforcement costs undetermined at this stage.
Total Costs	\$ 28,120	\$ 32,660	\$ 59,660