

HAMILTON BURLINGTON PARKING MINIMUMS FINAL REPORT



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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of Report

- To help the WEHBA promote discussion on reforming minimum parking in Hamilton and Burlington.

Study Process

- Multi-step approach, from preliminary research, interim report preparation, analysis, and final report.

Vision and Principles

- Aspirational statements on the future vision of cities if parking is reformed; improvements to sustainability, affordability, walkability, and more.

Summary of Interim Report

- Hamilton and Burlington are growing cities facing affordability and housing supply issues; they have begun to review parking.
- Lessons learned from case studies from similar cities across North America; cities took different approaches to removal or reduction of minimums with no negative effects.
- Various themes emerged including the high cost of parking minimums
- SWOT analysis prepared, found many opportunities and strengths from the cities where parking reform can benefit



1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Challenges and Opportunities

- Lessons learned from the case studies; challenges come from automobile dominance in North American cities, but there is an opportunity as demographics change and focus shifts toward sustainability and complete communities

Future Scenarios

- Four potential scenarios are suggested which vary on scale and time frame:
 - Pilot Project(s)
 - Eliminate Requirements Along Major Transit Lines, MTSAs, Downtown Areas
 - Context Area(s)
 - Full-Scale Elimination

Implementation

- Zoning reform is required to facilitate parking reform, which varies based on the scenario
- Municipalities would be responsible for further study, while WEHBA would be responsible for education and advocacy

Hamilton and Burlington Cases

- Hamilton and Burlington have already begun to lower parking requirements across the city, with many developments receiving minor variances or zoning amendments for reduced parking
- Several examples of proposed and built developments that incorporate lowered parking



2.0 INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This final report was prepared in the interest of the West End Home Builders' Association, to inform and encourage reform of the parking minimum bylaws within Hamilton and Burlington. To support them in this objective, from January to April of this year we have performed preliminary research on Hamilton and Burlington. This report will outline the summation of research we have completed on the background analysis of Hamilton and Burlington and case studies done on successful parking reform observed across North America. Building on the interim report prepared this report applies these findings and will outline the potential ways parking reform can be implemented. Identifying potential challenges and opportunities, and addressing necessary actions that will need to happen as a result.

This report aims to help the West End Home Builders' Association promote open discussion on reforming minimum parking standards in Hamilton and Burlington. The suggested approaches here are not final recommendations instead they intend to provide guidance and support further discussions with Hamilton and Burlington.



2.1 REPORT STRUCTURE

We will begin this report with an overview of our interim findings to provide some context and set the narrative. This will be followed by the challenges and opportunities we have identified with the application of parking reform to Hamilton and Burlington. Next, to conceptualize how parking reform can be approached several potential future scenarios were created for application. To address these challenges and opportunities and make considerations for reform, we have identified a strategy for areas of implementation that involve key stakeholders and the roles they serve. Lastly, we share case studies directly from the municipalities of developments that have provided less parking and have done so successfully. To conclude this report we will share our final conclusions and findings.

2.2 VISION STATEMENT

Current parking provisions are not aligned with the goals and objectives of planning policies that Hamilton and Burlington have set as they grow and change. Representing an outdated image of cities, mobility, and automobile dependence, parking minimums are unsustainable, restrict growth, and are expensive. To adapt to evolving contexts and address current urban issues, parking minimums should be reformed to achieve complete communities. Parking reform will empower residents, businesses, and developers to provide the right amount of parking which best serves their communities.



2.3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Parking minimums within the municipalities of Hamilton and Burlington would benefit from reform in areas of high transit, walkability, and active transportation. Working towards establishing greater use of public spaces and repurposing underutilized parking spaces. In order to lay out the groundwork and values that such reform should follow, 8 guiding principles have been suggested to achieve targets and provides guidance on how this can be accomplished:

1. Reform to parking minimums will improve housing affordability and supply

Providing parking is extremely expensive, with each parking spot costing \$30,000 to \$80,000 in the Hamilton-Burlington area. By reducing the number of parking spaces required, the cost of housing and rent can be reduced.



2. Increase accessibility through human-scale built form

Currently, large surface parking lots impact the way people interact with the spatial environment, by reducing accessibility and safety. The design of parking should not obstruct public spaces, or pedestrians, or cause overcrowding.



3. Only provide the necessary amount of spaces, avoid overestimating needs

The provision of parking through zoning should not be a one size fits all solution. Many parking lots are too large; even at peak usage, they are often partially full. This is often due to high parking minimums in zoning. By reducing or eliminating these requirements, parking can be supplied at rates that reflect actual usage.



4. Provide and improve multiple modes of mobility available to the public

Current parking minimums reinforce the outdated idea that the car should be the main form of transportation, and cities should be built around cars. In tandem with parking minimum reduction or elimination, other transportation forms such as walking, cycling, active transportation, and public transit should be enhanced.



5. Promote the development of complete communities

High requirements for parking promote the development of large parking lots and single-use areas such as malls. By reducing parking minimums, smaller-scale developments that meet the daily needs of local residents will be encouraged, with fewer parking spaces that spread out land uses and prevent easy access.



6. Improve sustainability with higher and better use of land

With inconsistent usage and occupancy, parking spaces are left unused or underused to a high degree despite the high costs to achieve. The potential of the public realm cannot be realized or achieved due to the disconnect and restrictive attitudes reinforced by parking minimums.



7. Improve environmental impact

High levels of parking come with the cost of increased surface runoff, reduced vegetation, interruptions to groundwater, and cities built around cars. By reducing parking requirements, environmental outcomes can be improved to achieve the sustainability goals of the Province and municipalities.



8. Ensure myths are dispelled and encourage communication

Parking minimum reform should be communicated in a way that dispels common misconceptions, such as assuming that removal of parking minimums means no more parking will be built or available. By closely communicating with politicians, businesses, residents and all stakeholders, the benefits of parking reform can be emphasized.



9. Ensure the synchronization of entire regional development

Parking minimum reform should be synchronized with surrounding areas. The suburban and rural areas should also benefit from development or be compensated for it.



3.0 SUMMARY OF INTERIM REPORT

3.1 HAMILTON-BURLINGTON OVERVIEW

The City of Hamilton and Burlington, as the core of the Hamilton and the surrounding region, carry important responsibilities for residents to live, work and play. In addition, they are key municipalities identified in the Provincial Growth Plan. Today, the cities of Hamilton and Burlington's land use are moving towards higher densities due to an influx of new residents and businesses. For these two municipalities, the overall number of parking spaces is adequate and there is an overall surplus of parking spaces as new development takes place. However, the emergence of personal transportation providers such as Uber and Lyft, as well as the popularity of micromobility services, have expanded transportation options and reduced the need for residents to own cars. As a result, cities' municipal parking systems are facing a change in demand.



Hamilton is distinguished for its unusual blend of urban and suburban structures and extensive rural villages. Hamilton's downtown is energetic, developing, and thriving. The city is investing in the development of affordable and market-rate housing, but some projects are not without public reservation. Hamilton is ringed by its suburban districts to the west and south, where single-family homes and fewer public transport options exist, and to the north by its rural district with its lowest population density and heavy automobile dependence.

For the downtown area, parking regulations were already amended partially, reducing them for buildings with more than 12 residential units, and eliminating them for buildings with 12 or fewer units. Parking regulations were also reduced, but not fully eliminated, for institutional and commercial use. Multiple dwelling buildings with excess parking spaces are now permitted to rent to non-residents. Parking needs in suburban areas tend to aggregate near transit hubs, while rural areas do not appear to have parking needs that would be harmed by the elimination of all development requirements.



Burlington is located along Hamilton's northwestern border, its downtown is situated along the waterfront and the urban core is surrounded by suburban communities. More than half of Burlington is made up of protected areas which include Greenbelt lands and Niagara Escarpment. Its population size is less than half that of Hamilton. It is served by three Go Transit stations, which present an opportunity for targeted development, and a modest bus system. Public sentiment appears to suggest that public transport must be enhanced for parking reform to be palatable. In the "Downtown & Waterfront Plan," drafted in 2013, it was found that 40% of private parking in lots and garages were vacant most of the time. In the downtown area during peak periods 30% of parking remained vacant. CityPlace, a shopping centre located within the downtown area, had reduced 500 parking spots, yet in 2019 there were plenty of spaces that remained vacant. A study into car usage of Burlington residents further supported earlier findings, as 39% of working residents do not drive to work. Car ownership for households overall found roughly 15% do not own a car and in households closer to the downtown 25% do not own a car. Parking regulations for new developments were reduced (upon appeal) but not eliminated, with a commitment to revisit the issue soon.

3.2 KEY LESSONS FROM CASE STUDIES

Toronto



Highly invested in public transport, half of the people downtown do not own a car, and the housing affordability crisis still encodes minimum parking requirements of developments.

Edmonton



Eliminated all parking requirements from new developments in 2020 with no negative impact.

Ottawa



Drastically reduced and eliminated parking requirements from new developments in 2016 with no negative impact.

Minneapolis



Last year eliminated minimum off-street parking requirements citywide while increasing bicycle parking, electric vehicle charging stations and public transport investment.

Salt Lake City



Planners created four districts to separate out and address different parking needs. A proposal that reduces, but does not eliminate, development parking requirements is making its way through the legislative process.

Seattle



Reduced or eliminated off-street parking, especially in proximity to transit hubs, since 2006. More recently, unbundled parking rental from housing rental permitted underused private lots to be used for parking and reinvested in its public transit system.

Denver



Last year reduced minimum parking requirements for new developments.

Buffalo



In 2017, the first American city to eliminate all off-street parking requirements for new developments. While there have not been negative effects, conservative commercial lenders have pressured developers to include excess parking, not to reduce it.

3.3 EMERGING THEMES

Examination of North American parking minimum case studies yields several themes:

- The cost of parking is high
- Parking has a high impact on the affordability and feasibility of developments
- Parking is very often oversupplied in many contexts
- Elimination of parking minimums does not result in no parking provided
- Transit has a large impact on parking reform
- Parking can often be reduced for a whole municipality, but can also be modified based on context

3.4 SWOT ANALYSIS

Introduction

A SWOT analysis is an essential component of the study process to evaluate potential internal and external factors that may impact how Parking reform takes place. The SWOT analysis prepared will detail the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that Hamilton and Burlington face. To provide organizations, institutions and the public a clear understanding of obstacles that present themselves within each municipality and determine the appropriate strategies to adopt.

STRENGTHS



- Demographics, changing attitudes towards private cars and the spread of sustainable practices and green travel concepts have reduced the demand for private cars.
- More extensive regional and cross-regional public transportation service connections provide residents with more and greener ways to travel. Ex: Go transit Regional Connecting Services and Metrolinx Hamilton LRT Development
- Adequate public transportation services in urban and suburban centres.
- Intensification of the entire city (urban, suburban, rural) is expected.
- The development environment is cheaper than the rest of the GTA area.

WEAKNESSES



- Currently high levels of car ownership and culture toward private cars usage.
- Scattered population and housing distribution in rural areas.
- Different area patterns (urban, suburban, rural) require different needs.
- The stigma of public transit use, walking, active transit as viable transportation options
- Zoning and city policy would require heavy time cost studies.
- An insufficient supply of investment-ready lands.

3.4 SWOT ANALYSIS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Removing the minimum number of parking spaces would promote the development of complete communities along transit corridors and MTSA areas, thus providing an opportunity for Hamilton and Burlington to fully utilize or repurpose existing parking spaces.
- Burlington has begun their city-building phase, the Mobility Center, which focuses directly on how to build on existing transportation infrastructure, and supports the removal of minimum parking restrictions.
- Using a broad consultative approach, the process of encouraging public discussion about removing minimum parking restrictions can be a way to educate residents and improve the existing car culture.
- Could be a low-cost solution for improving housing affordability and supply. (providing parking spaces is expensive, and the cost is passed on to home buyers/renters)
- If the reduction of minimum parking restrictions can be successfully implemented, it can be a model for providing experiences for other cities to study in the future.

THREATS

- The uneven development of public transportation in rural areas.
- Concern from residents and council over: "where will the cars go?"
- How do we make up for the loss of parking?
- There is no clear program to make up for the possible missing parking spaces.
- Are new developments adding to parking, as they re-use existing parking lots?
- The influence of auto companies and interest groups on politics.
- Whether the cost of travel is reduced and whether people are willing to accept it?
- Limitations of reducing/eliminating minimum parking: may only be part of the solution to the housing affordability problem.

4.0 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



4.1 INTRODUCTION

North American society remains automobile dominant. This has led to an overabundance of parking spaces applicable to both Hamilton and Burlington. The result is wasted space, unsightly garages, excess pollution from car exhaust, and street water runoff. Today's cities are interested in sustainability, best land use, the inclusion of public space, better public transit and encouragement for the citizenry to walk, bike, or take public transit to work. Under these circumstances, parking reform is not only needed, but also an integral part of a broader city revitalization plan.

4.2 CHALLENGES

Change is difficult, and accomplishing change involves imagining new systems, new behaviours, and new ways of doing things. Elimination of parking requirements for new developments sounds scary without further explanation. This change does not mean any new parking. Instead, it allows the developer to look at the market, the location, the connection to transit and other demographic factors to arrive at a more reasonable parking allowance within new developments. For example, in an urban area near a transit hub, such as a commuter railway station, a residential developer can most likely eliminate off-street parking, as such a development would attract people who live a car-free lifestyle, such as half of those living in downtown Toronto. The key is the adequacy of public transport.

Governments in North America have regulated parking in their municipalities for the past half-century. Understandably, governments may be reluctant to give up this regulation. Governments and developers alike are trying to balance the needs of the individuals either living, working, or shopping in new, greener developments with the environmental needs of the community. Everyone is more conscious of ecologic sustainability and the need to incorporate a plan to address it within new developments. A one-size-fits-all approach to zoning may be unsuitable. The example of Salt Lake City is instructive in this respect, whereby by creating separate sectors that have different parking needs, Salt Lake City has been able to tailor more specifically parking needs to the community based upon economic activity, land use, need for affordable housing while at the same time reducing the requirements. This approach may be ideal for Hamilton, a municipality with urban, suburban, and rural neighbourhoods.

Burlington, on the other hand, is very similar to Buffalo, New York, in that its downtown is located near the waterfront, with significant sprawl outwards. Buffalo was able to eliminate parking requirements and let the market determine the need. There have been no ill effects from the change. Its waterfront and downtown are in the middle of a resurgence. Where Buffalo can improve, and perhaps Burlington, is in its investment in public transport. Optimized use of light rail, better bus systems, bicycle lanes and bicycle parking will lessen residents' dependency on the automobile.

4.3 OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities exist on many fronts through the elimination of parking requirements. An effective opportunity, as demonstrated by Melbourne, Australia, is the ability to uncouple or unbundle parking rental from housing rental. Because the population of people who live car-free is growing, parking requirements for residential developments risk wasted space and increase rents if the space is included. Allowing management to separate them, creates the opportunity to rent those spaces to others in the neighbourhood, and that includes businesses as well as residents.

Another opportunity is to decrease the parking requirements for developments and include bicycle parking in addition. This has been the strategy in Minneapolis. Bicycling as a method of commuting is good for the individual and good for the environment. Facilitating the use of bicycles requires having safe places to ride them and a place to park them. Many cities have redesigned their streets to include bicycle lanes, which is a good first step. New developments need to consider bicycle parking. Continued investments in cycling infrastructure in Hamilton and Burlington are already being made.

Community engagement is imperative. Education of the public about the benefits of parking reform can create an atmosphere that welcomes change. A successful education campaign will result in community advocates advancing parking reform. When the conversation is about sustainability, protecting the environment, and improving air and water quality, many people pay attention. This is a key opportunity for WE HBA to begin engagement on parking reform with the community, municipal staff, and Councils.

Finally, the greatest opportunity that has arisen is the change in commuting habits because of the COVID pandemic. It is estimated that as many as 40% of jobs that were previously performed in offices can be done at home. Many people prefer working from home, especially if their children are out of the home and physically at school. How this will impact cities, in the long run, remains to be seen. An important consequence of the pandemic is that many workers will not be returning to the office to work, even as social distancing restrictions are lifted. There may not be as much of a demand for business district parking as prior to the pandemic.

4.4 SUMMARY

Removing parking minimums will help to improve housing supply and affordability, and encourage active transportation. Allowing market demand to determine the appropriate parking supply will reduce development costs while better balancing parking supply with the anticipated demand for specific real estate applications.

5.0 POTENTIAL FUTURE SCENARIOS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

To begin conversations on how parking reform would potentially look and what it may entail, four potential scenarios have been developed as suggested approaches to consider. Each scenario was developed based on standards and best practices found during preliminary research demonstrated through Case Studies of successful parking reforms in North American cities, and equal consideration for the physical, geographical and political context of the Hamilton and Burlington area.

Each scenario will be measured against a criteria establishing standards on what is considered relevant to test the viability of the scenario. The criteria will critically evaluate whether the suggested potential scenarios can/ will address social, political, economical, and environmental concerns, and use best planning practices.

Criteria	+	4 Suggested Scenarios
To evaluate potential impacts on the area, social; environmental; political; economic; planning principles		Each differs in the scope of implementation, costs, flexibility and political feasibility

These scenarios intend to encourage open discussions on the many potential ways parking reform can be approached, and open discussions amongst stakeholders. This is emphasizing that reform does not necessarily have one best solution and can be measured in multiple ways.

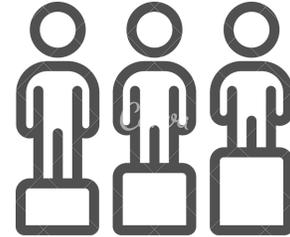


5.2 CRITERIA

Social Equity:

'Fairness for various social groups (approach is not narrow in scope; one size fits all); does it promote the creation of complete communities?

- Can it improve accessibility options by ensuring the availability of alternative modes of transportation e.g. cycling, transit?
- Can it create barriers to public spaces, and pedestrians, and result in overcrowding?
- Can it promote complete communities? (Growth Plan definition)



Planning Practices:

Evaluation through a planning lens; is it good planning?; does it promote the highest, best use of land?

- Can the scenario encourage the use of active and public transportation?
- Can it improve the urban form? (human scale prioritizing human interaction with the built environment (VannPashak, 2018))
- Can it better utilize land for new development, allowing infill development on smaller lots?
- Can it repurpose underutilized parking lots?



Environmental:

Promote practices that are environmentally conscious and sustainable

- Are metrics such as surface runoff, amount of vegetation, and energy use improved?
- Is the approach sustainable in practice; is it durable?
- Can the approach potentially be harmful to natural resources, such as green space, vegetation



Political:

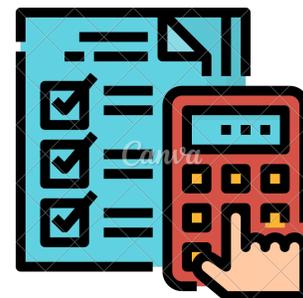
Evaluation of further political interests and different demographic needs

- Will there be pushback from residents, businesses, and politicians? Does the scenario incorporate meaningful public engagement?
- Does it align with the city's vision in the Official Plan and provincial policies?
- Is it feasible in the context of the area, such as built form, transportation options, and density? (suitability)

**Economical:**

Considerations for how application of scenarios will impact financial cost/ affordability

- Does the scenario decrease development costs for developers, the city, and businesses?
- Does it streamline the development process? By lowering development costs, associated with housing affordability. *Housing, approval costs
- Short term: Will the process to implement the scenario be financially burdensome/manageable? (expensive studies, zoning process)
- Long-term: Does it require sustainable, long-term funding/ commitment from municipalities?



5.3 POTENTIAL SCENARIOS

5.3.1 Eliminate requirements along major transit lines, MTSA's, downtown

Pros: 👍

- Will simplify the development process; many developments in these areas already go through OPA/ZBA/minor variance for parking, it could remove red tapes for developments.
- More in line with the needs of the people, utilizing existing transit infrastructures, density in these areas ensures adequate ridership to run transit services, and provides municipalities with incentives to further their transit investment.
- The scenario perfectly aligns with current transportation measures, Burlington is working towards their MTSA and Hamilton has plans to do the same along the LRT.

Districts/areas that are considered “Major Transit Station Areas”, have major transit lines, and areas downtown would be target areas to eliminate parking minimums. This is based on the idea that along active and populated transit areas there should not be a need to provide parking in a mobility hub. What this may look like within the Burlington context is along MTSA's, the Aldershot, Appleby, Burlington GO stations, and downtown, parking would not be required to be provided.

Cons: 👎

- Might put political pressure on municipalities to improve service and reliability, which may be difficult to achieve due to financial limitations.
- Only benefit developments at specific areas/ zones defined in the Official Plan, that can potentially serve a limited area due to the imbalance in public transportation infrastructure.

5.3.2 Pilot Projects



Ex. Wards wide/neighborhood wide lifting minimum parking restrictions.

Pilot projects scenarios could be used in specific areas, implementation would typically occur at a smaller scale (neighborhoods, corridors or boundaries). For instance, rather than eliminating parking minimums along the entire transit line, or city wide, a pilot program might test eliminating parking requirements along a specific segment of the transit line during an established time frame which can range in value. Providing a controlled experiment to conceptualize implementation of reform to minimum parking requirements.

Pros: 👍

- Implementation of the scenario is quite flexible, can be done in rural, suburban, and urban areas at a small scale
- Phased implementation can create less resistance from residents, allowing them observe results and see implementation at a smaller scale
- Public engagement can be done through preliminary feedback from residents, as well as political stakeholders
- Explore opportunities in areas outside the scope of the context-based approach

Cons: 👎

- Would be difficult to achieve politically and might receive opposition from the public and municipality due to concerns about total removal
- Some may take advantage of the opportunity by not properly providing parking to residents
- One size fits all approach is very risky and does not consider the varying built forms, density, and transit access across the municipalities

5.3.3 Context Area Approach



Ex. An area located in the downtown core with high density with high accessibility to public transit would be categorized into the 'Transit Area' context where the parking requirements would be the lowest in the entire municipality, if not completely eliminated

This approach would have the neighbourhoods or areas around the municipalities categorized into one of many 'context areas'. These 'context areas' would be established by the municipalities based on various neighbourhood factors and characteristics including; public transit accessibility, density, built form (suburban vs. urban), etc. Thus, each context area would have a set of corresponding parking requirements which would be tailored to their needs depending on the factors mentioned above. More information and details on this approach can be found in the appendix, under Appendix A in the Salt Lake City case study analysis.

Pros:

- Provides a more customized approach to sufficiently addressing the parking needs citywide
- Addresses the issue of having to accommodate as well as consider the varying built forms in neighborhoods across both municipalities

Cons:

- Could be expensive in developing such a plan (studies, time, etc.)
- Current lack of data and resources

5.3.4 City Wide Elimination



Ex. An area located in the downtown core with high density with high accessibility to public transit would be categorized into the 'Transit Area' context where the parking requirements would be the lowest in the entire municipality, if not completely eliminated

This scenario would entail the complete elimination of parking minimums city wide for both municipalities. New developments would not be subject to providing a minimum amount of parking and parking would be provided on the basis of demand. Existing parking within established areas would have parking requirements eliminated.

Pros:

- Allows developers, residents, and businesses to decide how much parking is appropriate for their needs
- Requires less zoning reform and would entail a simple removal of all parking minimums
- Reduction of oversupplied parking which would be provided at market demand rate

Cons:

- Would be difficult to achieve politically and might receive opposition from the public and municipality due to concerns about total removal
- Some may take advantage of the opportunity by not properly providing parking to residents
- One size fits all approach is very risky and does not consider the varying built forms, density, and transit access across the municipalities

5.4 SUMMARY

As conversation starters, the framework and suggested scenarios are intended to be some of the many possible ways for Hamilton and Burlington to implement their respective parking reforms.

6.0 RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

6.1 ZONING REFORM

To facilitate parking reform, it is necessary to amend zoning by-laws. A municipal-initiated Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) would be required to reform the necessary sections within existing zoning by-laws. Minimum parking regulations are only found in zoning by-laws. Official Plans may refer to providing adequate parking and minimum accessible parking requirements, but general parking minimums are limited to zoning.

Depending on the preferred scenario, zoning reform may look different. For example, if minimum parking is abolished city-wide, then all references to minimum parking, whether in general or specific to a zone category, may be removed. In scenarios where removal of parking minimums is limited to specific zones, then the relevant zones would remove reference to parking minimums, and general parking provisions would be altered to remove reference to parking spaces required for permitted uses in all zones, as is the case in Burlington's zoning by-law. Lastly, in cases where removal or reduction of parking minimums is based on an area not defined by a zoning category, then references to specific parking minimum requirements could be removed from the existing zoning by-law, or altered, and a new section of the zoning bylaw could be introduced defining areas where parking minimums are to be removed.

6.2 WHAT DO THE CITIES NEED TO DO?

An effective approach in beginning the conversation around parking reform in these municipalities could potentially be by undertaking a study to gauge the parking needs and attitudes of the general public, businesses and developers.

Prior to their parking reform, the City of Edmonton conducted a similar study with the same objectives in mind (refer to Edmonton case study in Appendix A for further details). They assessed several factors including; method of traveling, number of vehicles per household, etc. They also asked opinion-based questions such as who they felt should be responsible for determining parking needs. Data was collected from telephone/online surveys as well as in-depth interviews and focus groups.

Such a project would be highly beneficial to beginning the conversation around parking reform as it not only provides the municipalities with insight into the needs and behaviours of the residents, but it also provides the public with an opportunity to express their thoughts and opinions on the matter. Additionally, these surveys, interviews, and focus groups may act as an introduction to parking reform for many people given it is a fairly new and emerging movement in the Canadian context.

6.3 WHAT DOES THE WEHBA NEED TO DO?

In North America, the concept of the removal of parking minimums through municipalities has gained a lot of attention recently and has also been successfully accomplished throughout several municipalities. After we have completed our contribution to the WEHBA's Parking Minimums project, the main contribution that WEHBA will be conducting is through the tools of education and advocacy.

When it comes to education and advocating, the WEHBA's main avenue for moving the project forward would be to promote and inform the public as well as several other municipalities within the local and regional context, about the benefits that could come from the removal of their currently used parking minimums. This could be done in several different ways - one way of achieving this would be through public outreach in the form of public meetings and surveys, these different forms would allow for the public to become interested and invested in the topic of parking minimum removal. It also may have the possibility to spur those to also promote and advocate for such parking minimum removal policies within their own respected municipalities.

Additionally, educational material on parking minimums can be created to facilitate public outreach, as seen below.

Parking Minimums
What are they? And why should we care?

City zoning codes often require a minimum amount of parking based on number of units or commercial area. They represent an outdated view of city, and reforming them can make cities more liveable.

Affordability
The cost of parking is high; in Hamilton, each spot costs developers \$30-80 thousand, which is passed on to homebuyers and renters. Building less parking can result in more affordability.



Built form
Large parking lots create uninviting, inaccessible public spaces; by lowering the amount of parking required, we can create more compact, walkable, transit friendly cities.



Environment
Parking lots create uninviting spaces for pedestrians and non-car users.
Parking lots can't absorb rain; surface runoff must be dealt with by the storm sewer. Less parking results in better environmental outcomes.



Transportation
Demographics are changing; less people are driving and more are choosing transit and biking. Developments near transit often require less parking, which should be reflected in zoning.



Parking minimum reform has the opportunity to help improve affordability, housing supply, create more complete communities, and improve the environment.

6.4 SUMMARY

Parking minimums are not independent elements to city planning, Requirements established involve a number of stakeholders such as Business Improvement Areas, community organizations and the municipality. Within the municipalities of Hamilton and Burlington historically, infrastructure and mobility has been built to support private automobile usage. Introducing reform will present a number of challenges and obstacles that will need to be addressed. Given the extensive network involved in parking minimums and the geographical context of the two municipalities, potential areas of implementations have been identified for zoning reform, the municipality, and WE HBA on steps that can be taken.

7.0 HAMILTON BURLINGTON CASES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Often discussions surrounding parking are neglected and overlooked despite how relevant parking is to city life extending beyond parking itself. With the added fact that private automobile ownership has become so common, dependency has increased. It's a given expectation where residents have become accustomed to expecting parking to be well supplied. Due to this any discussions of reform to parking minimums in the form of reductions or complete elimination are often not well received. However, as findings suggest reform is not such a foreign concept to Hamilton and Burlington. Case studies into parking reforms have revealed that Hamilton and Burlington have already begun to make progressive changes with lowered parking requirements across the city.

7.2 HAMILTON DEVELOPMENTS

Royal Oak Phase 3

315 Robert Street & 219, 225 and 247 East Avenue N

Developed by Indwell Community Home, The "Royal Oak" development is a high rise residential community that consists of **affordable housing and housing with support**. Phase 3 of the project proposes a three-story multiple dwelling with 31 units with a mix of one to three-bedroom options. The site is located in a primarily low rise residential neighbourhood with some mixed uses in its surroundings.



It is well served by existing transportation infrastructure such as bike lanes, frequent transit (HSR Routes) and is in proximity to planned high-order transit e.g. the proposed B.L.A.S.T. network and/or Light Rail Transit. Residents of the Royal Oak development are mainly individuals who face socio-economic barriers to vehicle ownership. The development is currently seeking a zoning by-law amendment to reduce its parking requirements from 39 parking spaces (including visitor parking) to 10 parking spaces. The reduction is supported by the Parking Study and Transportation Demand Management Report prepared by Paradigm Transportation Inc.

1540 Upper Wentworth Street

The proposed redevelopment is a 8-storey building with 126 dwelling units that comprises a mix of one to three-bedroom units. It will be an addition to the 70 townhouses units that are retained in the site. The subject lands are located on Hamilton's South Mountain in the Barnstown neighbourhood. The area is predominantly residential supported by nearby community facilities, local commercial and institutional land uses. It is served by existing transit e.g. bus routes and existing and planned bicycle lanes.



The development is seeking a zoning by-law amendment to reduce the required parking provision from 158 parking spaces to 64 parking spaces (including visitor parking). In response to the residents' concerns over traffic demand and on-street parking, the Transportation Impact Study confirms that site traffic can be accommodated at the study area intersections. With the proposed traffic demand management (TDM) measures, the study finds the proposed parking provision is appropriate for the development.

282 MacNab St. N Hamilton

The site of the development consists of a 13-storey condominium with 110 residential units located in Downtown Hamilton. The site had been approved by the city despite a 70% parking reduction of the city standards (Elkins, Kelly, Juhlke, 2018). The proposed parking supply by developers consists of 51 spaces which causes an undersupply of 114 spaces based on an in-force Zoning By-law 05-200. The development is well serviced by transit and is in direct connection to the new LRT line in Hamilton (Elkins, Kelly, Juhlke, 2018).



11 Robert St.

The site is located in Ward 2 within the Beasley, neighbourhood in Hamilton and has approved a 6-storey 28-unit residential building without any parking provided. The City of Hamilton recommended the zoning changes as minor variances for the property, and was instrumental for its approval.(Coleman, 2022).



7.3 BURLINGTON DEVELOPMENTS

101 Masonry Crt.

The development was proposed as two 7-storey residential buildings consisting of 181 parking spaces in an underground parking garage. The City of Burlington required 205 spaces to reduce street parking, but the Tribunal agreed with the developer's proposal, as they believed the reduced parking would promote the use of transit and other transportation methods (Adi Development Group, 2022).



490-492 Brock Ave and 1297 Ontario St.

The development is a 22-story mixed-use building with 170 residential units and a ground floor of commercial retail. According to the Zoning By-Law for high-density residential in Burlington, the development is required to have 1.00 parking spaces per residential unit, and 0.25 spaces for visitor parking (Molinaro Group, 2022).

The development was required to have a total of 212 spaces; 170 for residents and 42 for visitors. Developers met the standards for residential units with 170 spaces for residents but only provided 15 spaces for visitors. The decision looked to reflect initiatives such as Smart Commute Halton which look to reduce individual's reliance on motor vehicles (Molinaro Group, 2022).



1085 Clearview Ave

This development consists of a 7-storey residential building which was approved by the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal in Burlington with reduced parking at grade level. The City of Burlington did not initially support the reduced parking rates as the development would have 1.1 spaces, and they required 1.25 spaces per unit (Mazzucco, 2021). The Local Planning Appeal Tribunal approved the application as it was a



suitable area for intensification as the site is located only 250m away from Aldershot Go Station Major Transit Station Area. They believed that the previous By-laws were outdated and that this site would benefit from reduced parking as it would promote the use of different transportation methods (Mazzucco, 2021).

Address	Development type- No. of Dwelling Units	Required	Requested	Reduction
1107 Main Street West	Mixed Use - 535.2 sq m2 commercial space + 310 Units	303	228	-24.8%
315 Robert Street & 219, 225 and 247 East Avenue N (Phase 3)	Residential - 31 Units	39	10	-48.7%
1540 Upper Wentworth St.	Residential - 126 Units	158	64	-59.4%
282 MacNab St.	Residential - 110 Units	165	51	-69.1%
11 Robert St.	Residential - 28 Units	n/a	0	-100%
101 Masonry Crt.	Residential - 172 Units	205	181	-11.7%
490-492 Brock Ave. and 1298 Ontario St.	Residential - 170 Units	212	185	-12.7%
1085 Clearview Ave.	Residential - 164 Units	205	181	-11.7%

Table summary of the developments' parking reduction

7.4 SUMMARY

There are many developments that have been approved in both Hamilton and Burlington that contain reduced parking rates. Some have more of a reduction than others, but all base their rationale off several factors such as reducing costs, and promoting different active transportation methods. Being located in areas well supported by transit is extremely significant with regards to the approval of developments with reduced parking. The implementation of improved transit in both cities, specifically the new LRT line in Hamilton and within the MTSAs in Burlington will further promote transit use, and allow developers to have a stronger foundation for proposing reduced parking rates.

8.0 CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

In conclusion, our report on reforming current parking minimums within the municipalities of Hamilton & Burlington puts forth several comprehensive suggestions for pathways of implementation, which have been guided by real-world examples of municipalities with similar contexts to Hamilton and Burlington.

- Such Suggestions as whole-scale elimination of parking minimums within both municipalities.
- The Elimination of parking minimums along with key Major Transportation Areas, throughout both of the municipalities
- Small Scale Piloting Project's within designated areas that start as temporary in nature, with the ability to become permanent if deemed successful.
- And finally, an approach geared towards select context areas that have the possibility of needed Implementation of parking removal over other areas of the city, such as within rural communities.

These suggestions are only that, suggestions. As we have found throughout our research, reform of parking minimums can truly create sustainable growth and walkable communities within the municipalities they are implemented in. We hope that the ideas and principles put forth in this project can start a conversation between the different stakeholders within the region on the topic of parking minimum removal. We also hope that this study can truly become an example for other municipalities to potentially follow across Ontario.

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