



Committee of the Whole Report
For the Meeting of May 14, 2020

To:	Committee of the Whole	Date:	May 7, 2020
From:	Councillors Alto & Thornton-Joe		
Subject:	Extending Reduced Parking Fee Policy		

BACKGROUND

At the April 9, 2020, meetings of the Committee of the Whole and Council, council adopted the following Motion:

That Council direct staff, for duration of the provincial state of emergency:

- 1. Reduce rates in all parkades as follows: Daily rate - \$1 per hour to a maximum of \$5, with the 1st hour free; Monthly rate - \$85*
- 2. Reduce on-street metered rates to \$1 per hour*
- 3. Reduce parking lot rates to \$1 per hour with a \$5 daily maximum*
- 4. Suspend enforcement of time-limited zones, except for 30 minute zones.*

The city staff report outlining the rationale for this policy is attached.

In recent months, many businesses and services closed to observe the directions of Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry in consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the City slowly re-opens, under the terms provided by the Province of British Columbia on May 6, incentives would help to encourage people to return to supporting those businesses and services.

The rates charged for parking can change behaviour. Extending the parking fee policy that was adopted April 9 would create an incentive to attract patrons back to businesses, by encouraging longer-term use of parkades thus providing more on-street parking near businesses, while patrons and delivery agents make quick stops to pick up items. With an expected lighter than usual number of visitors from away, any encouragement for local and regional visitors will help bolster local businesses.

Parking capacity is not an issue in either the parkades or on-street. The City's five parkades currently have large capacity – almost 80% of monthly parkers are no longer using the parkades. It's common to find open meters throughout the downtown core.

Extending reduced parking fees will have an effect on city revenues. In its April 9 report, staff noted that, due to the pandemic, the net revenue decrease for parking then was approximately \$1.2 million per month, and the City continues to have ongoing costs for the parkades with costs

related to facility cleaning, security and hydro. Staff have been monitoring the situation and will be reporting back to Council on the impacts as they become known.

Despite reduced city revenue, encouraging vehicular access to businesses as they re-open may support that re-opening and small businesses' subsequent ability of to remain open and thrive.

As the date at which the provincial government may end the provincial state of emergency is not yet known, an extension of the current parking fee policies would help businesses rebuild their client base and support their ongoing capacity to remain open and solvent.

A review date of September 10, 2020, coincides with the first committee of the whole after Labour Day, which marks the traditional end to the summer visitor season.

RECOMMENDATION

Direct staff to extend the current parking fee policy, as approved April 9, 2020, through to September 10, 2020, and

Direct staff to report back to Council on the impacts of that policy, at the September 10, 2020, meeting of Committee of the Whole.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Alto



Councillor Thornton-Joe

Attachment