
Subject: Residential Parking Review

Staff Report No. DS-048-24

**Department/
Commission:** Development Services Commission

Date: October 16, 2024

Recommendation:

- 1) That Council direct Staff to hold a Statutory Public Meeting for Town initiated Zoning By-law Amendments to introduce necessary amendments to the zoning by-law requirements for parking in residential zones; and,
- 2) That Council direct staff to report back to Council on a review of the existing Parking By-law (2008-114-PR) and bring forward any necessary recommendation and amendments.

Report Highlights

- There is an ongoing concern being raised by residents and staff related to unauthorized parking areas in residential neighbourhoods within the Town.
- Staff believe the best approach to addressing these concerns involves a cross departmental solution to develop a comprehensive plan to address residential parking issues.
- Changes to the Zoning By-law and Parking By-laws are a first step to achieving on-going compliance and enforcement within the community of Stouffville.
- Staff are seeking Council endorsement to authorize staff to initiate a public process to explore possible solutions and undertake necessary initiatives to address the residential parking issues.

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council regarding ongoing parking related concerns that have been raised by Members of Council, Municipal Law Enforcement Staff and members of the Public, at numerous occasions over the course of several years. Staff are also seeking direction from Council to bring forward recommendations for amendments to various By-laws which will attempt to address residential parking related issues and find necessary solutions for implementation and enforcement of parking standards, going forward.

2. Background:

Parking plays a crucial role in shaping our communities and neighbourhoods. The availability and location of parking has an impact on many areas of suburban life and influences the design, structure and functionality of our neighbourhoods and the satisfaction we feel living within the neighborhoods. There are a number of tools that the Town is able to utilize to control the location, method and composition of parking within various residential areas of the Town.

In the recent years, parking in the residential areas, both on private properties and public boulevards has resulted in numerous complaints and concerns being raised about location and method of parking, expansion of driveways and parking areas and other zoning non-compliances related to residential parking in front yards.

3. Analysis:

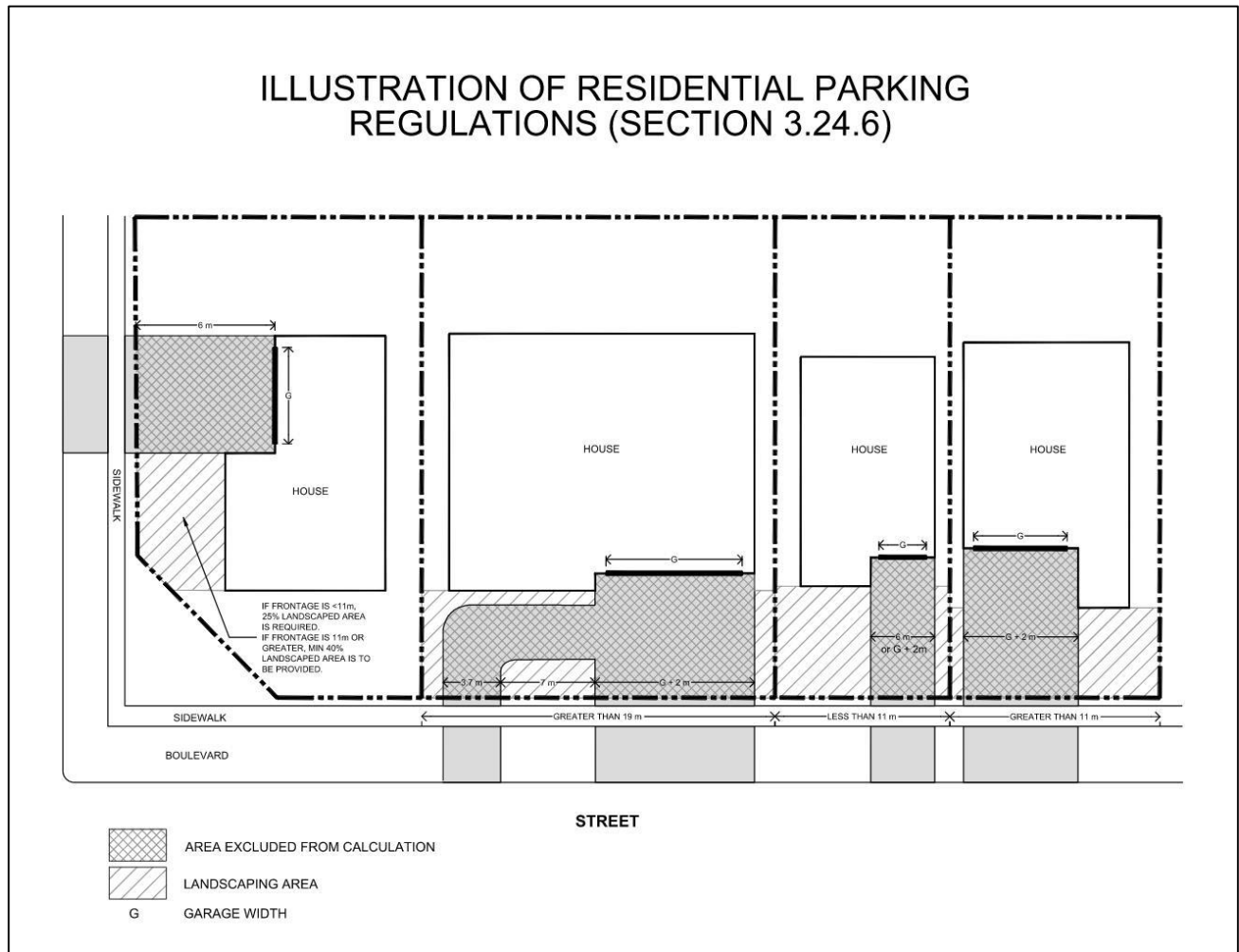
The following section provides a detailed background of the issues related to residential parking and an overview on some of the changes being investigated by Staff which may improve the overall availability and adequacy of parking for residents on residential lots, while still maintaining safety for pedestrians and motorist on Town Streets.

3.1 Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2010-001 ZO and Zoning complaints for residential parking

Currently, the primary tool used to control the location of parking on private property is the Town's Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2010-01-ZO (the "Zoning By-law"). This document outlines the minimum requirements for parking for all land uses as well as regulates the locations and compositions of parking areas which includes but not limited to regulations for minimum and maximum sizes of parking spaces, length and width of driveways. The Zoning By-law also includes minimum requirements related to setbacks of driveways or parking spaces from property lines and establishes the minimum requirements for soft landscaping or permeable front yard areas, for all zones including residential zones in the Town.

Figure 1 below is the Illustration that is currently included in the Town's Zoning By-law to assist residents with interpretation of the rules related to driveway widths.

Figure 1



Town’s Service Request Manager System (SRM) has captured zoning related parking complaints that include but are not limited to expansion of driveways, over paving or hardscaping of front yards and front lawns to accommodate additional parking areas on residential lots.

The Town’s Zoning By-law currently contains calculation methods for the permitted driveway width in the front yard, which relies on four factors:

- 1) Property Frontage;
- 2) Garage Door Width;
- 3) Setbacks to property lines; and,
- 4) Percentage of soft landscaping in the front yard

Following examples illustrate the existing parking and driveway related conditions, in many neighbourhoods in the Town.

Figure 2 – Townhouse Dwelling (no municipal sidewalk)

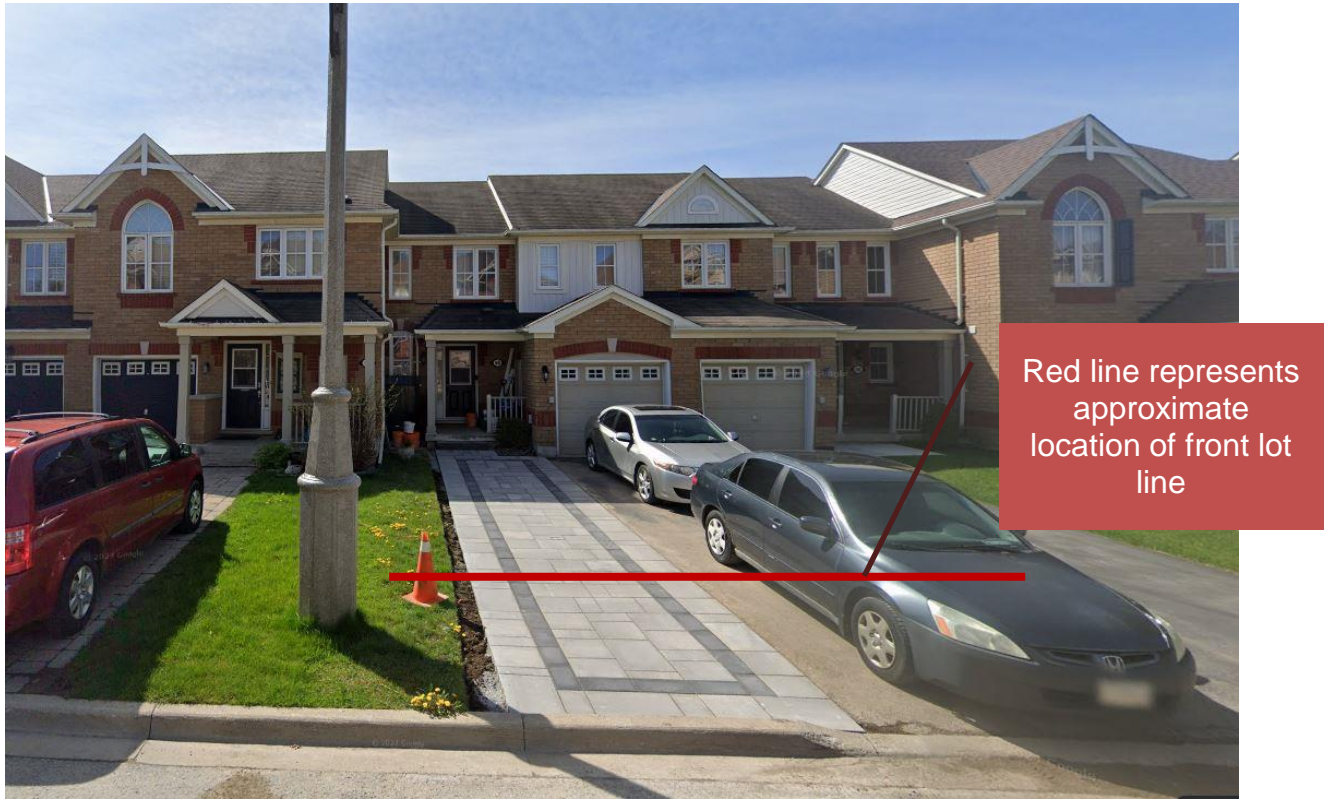


Figure 3 – Single Detached Dwelling (no municipal sidewalk)– Driveway widening and length

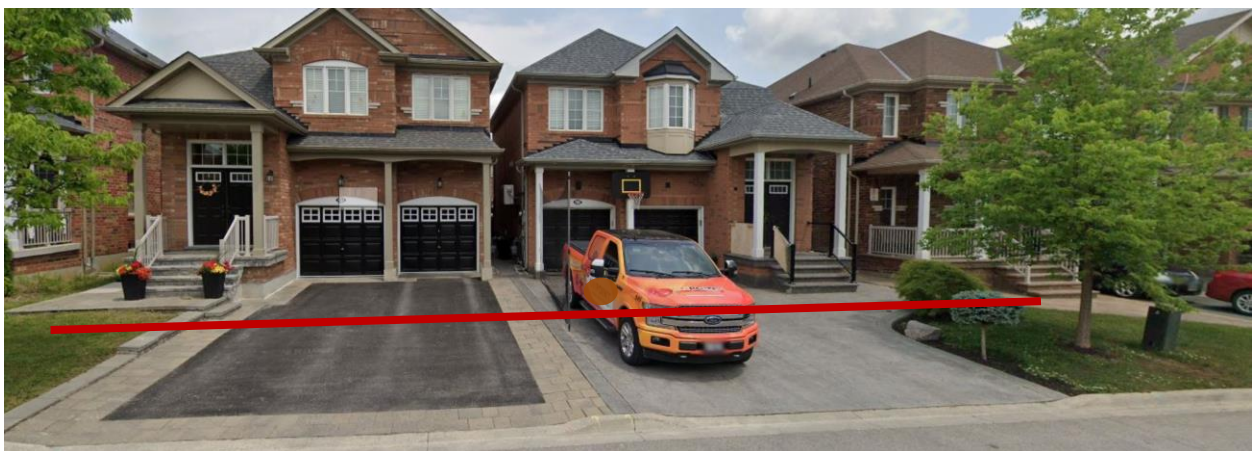


Figure 4 – Townhouse Dwelling (Municipal sidewalk)

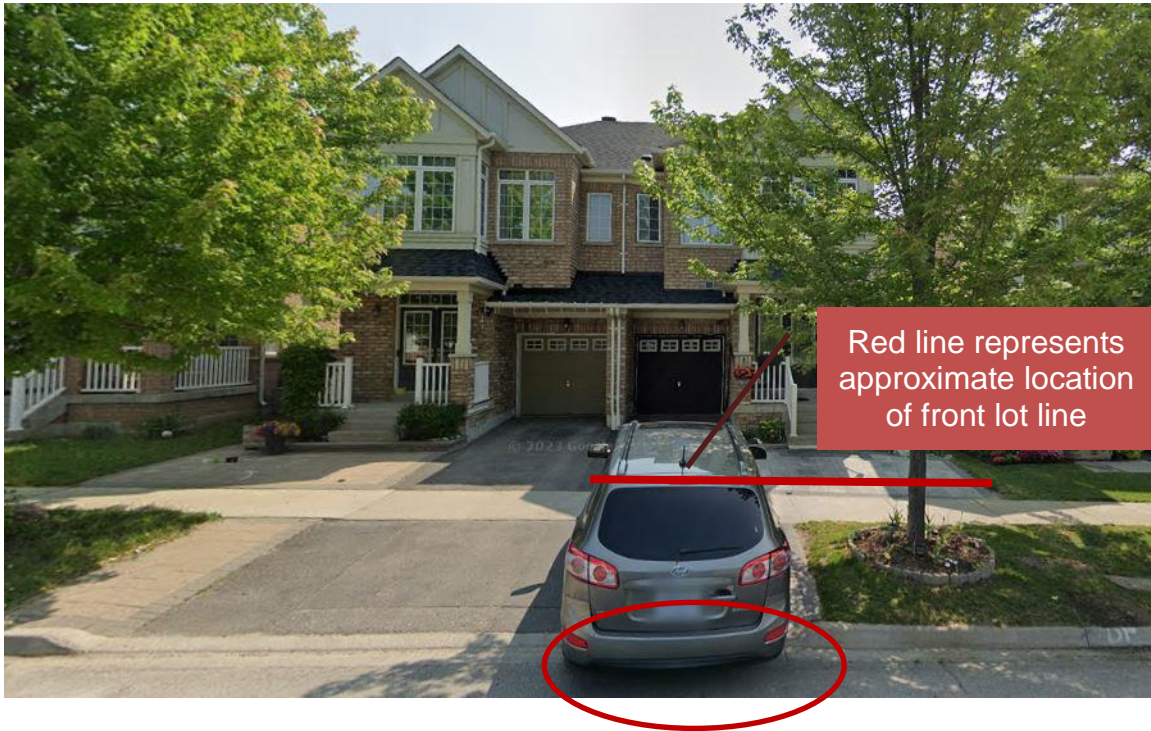
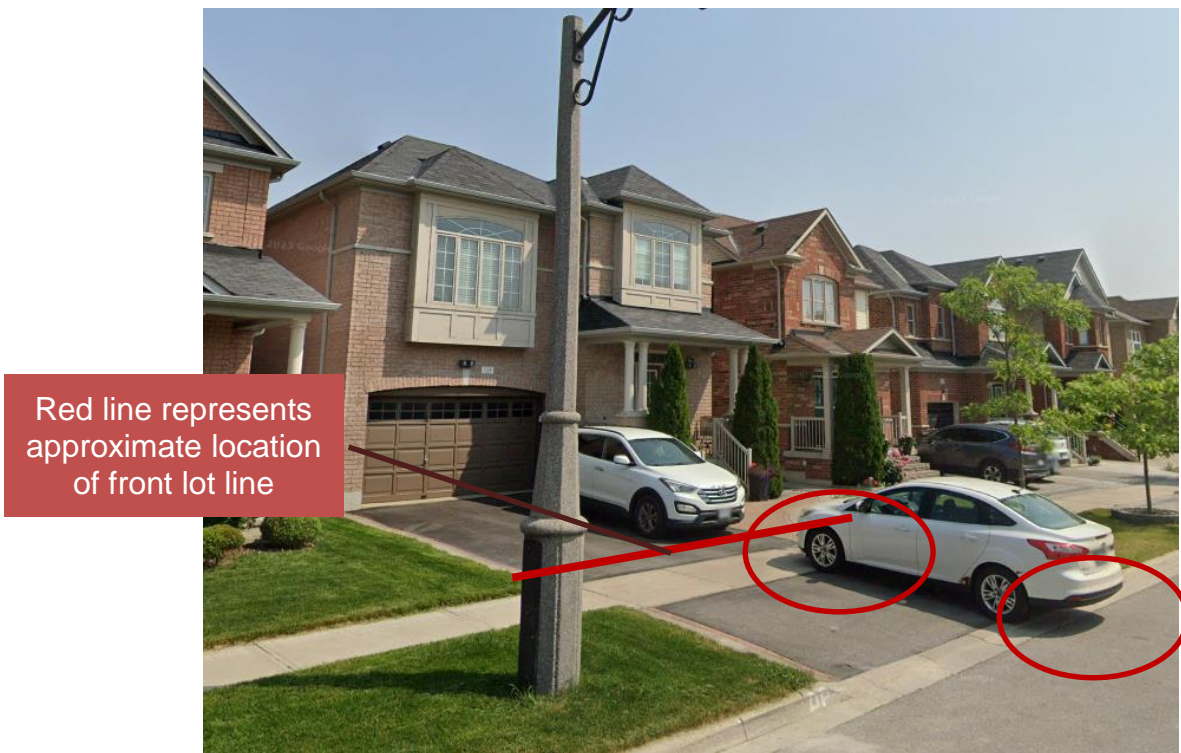


Figure 5 – Single Detached Dwelling (Municipal sidewalk)



The above photos illustrate infractions to both the Zoning By-law and Parking By-law. As it relates to Zoning, none of the above examples maintain the required setback to the interior side yards or the required landscaped area in the front yard.

The red lines on the photos represent the approximate location of the front lot line for each property. It is observed that some of the examples above do not appear to include minimum soft landscaping requirements. The required landscaping must be accommodated on the private property to maintain stormwater and drainage standards.

The red circles highlight the overhang or encroachment of the vehicles into the public right-of-way both on the municipal sidewalks in front of the dwellings and the travel portion of the lane. This represents a major safety concern for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists on Town roads and municipal sidewalks. These conditions also create a problem seasonally as the overhanging portions of the vehicles impact snow removal operations and maintenance by the Town.

3.2 Parking By-law, Complaints and Parking Infractions

The Town has a Parking By-law (2008-114-PR) which is primarily used to establish how and where vehicles are permitted and not permitted, to park within the municipality which includes fire routes, school bus loading areas, prohibited parking areas (adjacent to intersections or fire hydrants) and regulate parking on Municipal Property (Roads, Sidewalks, Municipal Parking Lots etc.). This By-law also provides the legislated authority to enforce the contents of the Parking By-law and establishes that Parking Violations be included in the Towns AMPS (Administrative Monetary Penalty System By-law).

In 2015 the Town hired LEA Consulting Ltd. to complete a Comprehensive On Street Residential and Commercial Parking Study for the Downtown Core and “specific residential neighbourhoods”. The final report was presented to Council in November 2017 following extensive public consultation and online engagement.

The report provided the following primary areas of concern:

- Lack of parking supply in specific residential neighbourhoods
- Lack of parking in commercial core
- Lack of an on-line parking permit program
- Lack of an on-line parking payment system
- Insufficient parking signage and wayfinding
- Lack of dedicated parking enforcement staff

The report also suggested that a Comprehensive Parking Management System was required which could help to address the following:

- Perceived lack of parking supply in residential neighbourhoods
- Apron parking and overhang issues
- Unauthorized residential driveway widening
- Perceived lack of parking and low turnover of parking in the Downtown Core

This study resulted in the formation of a Parking Permit program for on street and Municipal lot parking, as well as the hiring of additional by-law enforcement officers to monitor and issue violations for parking infractions. The report prepared by the consultant at that time also identified additional areas of concern for residents that have yet to be addressed such as lack of parking availability in residential areas, unauthorized driveway widening, and vehicles parked to obstruct (overhang) roadways and sidewalks.

Since the implementation of the Parking Management System in 2017, Town records show that the Town have received approximately 1750 parking related complaints through our internal servicing request management system. Historically the Town has responded to by-law concerns on a complaint basis inclusive of parking and zoning related complaints. When a complaint is received, officers will investigate and issue either warning notices or infractions and attempt to work with residents to rectify any non-compliance.

While reviewing the available reporting from Town's Systems, specifically for residential/front yard parking related complaints it is apparent that the location and method of parking and the unauthorized expansion of driveways and parking areas in New Residential Areas specifically, continues to be a very predominant issue for residents and enforcement staff alike.

It has become apparent that more work needs to be done to address non-compliance with the Zoning By-law (2010-001-ZO) and Parking By-law (2008-114-PR), complaints, and possible solutions for the Town's residents that are faced with parking shortages on their properties.

3.3 Staff recommendations

Staff are currently exploring and continue to review and identify possible solutions to the ongoing problem that residents, businesses and visitors to the Town are facing with respect to residential parking. It is staff's intent to find improvements and to permit more flexible parking permissions for residents as well as clear guidelines for Town's By-law Enforcement officers.

On this basis, staff are seeking Council endorsement to authorize staff to initiate a public process to explore possible solutions and undertake necessary initiatives to address the residential parking issues. Staff note that the process will require staff time and Town resources to complete this exercise.

3.3.1 Possible Amendments to the Zoning By-law

Staff have reviewed the recorded data related to Parking Infractions and Parking Permits in the Town. Staff have also reviewed the best practices and zoning by-laws related residential parking standards from other municipalities and have found some good examples to consider. Staff would continue to review and draft any necessary amendments to update the Zoning By-law and bring forward to Council and members of public for consideration through the statutory requirements of public consultation. It is staff's intention that any proposed amendments to the zoning by-law would aim to assist

in providing clearer direction for residents for residential parking requirements and regulations that are easily enforceable.

3.3.2 Possible Amendments to Parking By-law

The Town's current Parking By-law was originally passed in 2008 and multiple amendments have been completed since. Staff are in the process of reviewing the Parking By-law and can look to recommend necessary amendments to address current parking issues. Amendments would also consider updates to current parking standards and approaches that other Municipalities have implemented in response to similar parking issues experienced in those municipalities.

Updates to the Parking By-law could include additional specifications related to parking on Municipal Boulevard portions of a residential driveway that would allow for greater clarity for residents and allow for Municipal Law Enforcement Officers to enforce more efficiently and address any disputes such as the extent of overhang of the parked vehicles, obstruction to pedestrian traffic, the length of time the vehicle was parked, etc.

Staff intends to also review the maximum on-street parking time limits. Currently there is a 3-hour maximum for parking on Town Streets. Staff intend to review current best practices found amongst other municipalities and find an opportunity for improvement.

3.3.3 Possible Changes to Parking Permit Program

Since the start of the Parking permit program in late 2017 and through the updates to the Parking By-law that occurred in 2019, the Town has issued more than 50,000 free on street parking permits for parking more than 3 hours, to residents of the Town. Individuals can access the program a maximum of 12 times per year per plate number, and it is clear from the statistical records that there are hundreds of residents who utilize each of their allowed permits every calendar year. In addition to the more than 50,000 free on street permits, the Town has also issued more than 3,600 paid, Municipal Parking Lot permits since 2018 which has generated revenue of more than of \$100,000 since the program's inception.

The permit program has been successful and heavily utilized by the residents of the Town.

3.3.4 Options for noncompliant properties

One of the ongoing issues that staff have been exploring is how to address properties that have completed un-authorized driveway expansions/landscaping and have resulted in non-compliance with the Zoning By-law. Staff have done a preliminary review of the Minor Variance application process for non-compliant properties. Planning staff will be exploring a process that outlines the criteria for those applications, requirements, etc. Staff have done a very preliminary review of this option and intend to report back to Council with further details.

3.3.5 Other initiatives

Staff will continue to investigate the current issues related to residential parking and scan other municipalities to see if there are other solutions and improvement opportunities available besides any Zoning By-law and Parking By-law amendments. Some jurisdictions have implemented a public engagement campaign to educate and create awareness, while some have implemented special permit programs, etc.

Staff intend to report back with proposed recommendations for residential parking.

4. Options:

Option A (Recommended)

That Council direct Staff to hold a Statutory Public Meeting for any Town initiated Zoning By-law Amendment and introduce necessary changes to the Zoning By-laws and report back to Council. Further that staff continue to review the existing Parking By-law (2008-114-PR) and commence the required process to prepare an update to the Parking By-law. Staff is of the opinion that such initiatives will assist with addressing the current residential parking issues.

Option B

That Council direct staff to not proceed as outlined in this report and maintain the existing regulations of the Zoning By-law and provisions of the Town's Parking By-law. This option of "maintaining the status quo" is not recommended as the Town has experienced and continues to experience many issues over the years to regulate the location of parking in the residential areas.

5. Financial Implications:

There may be costs associated with rolling out any initiatives and/or changes to the By-laws that may arise from future proposed amendments to the by-laws, if approved by Council.

6. Alignment with Strategic Plan:

1. A Town that Grows
A Town that grows in support of complete communities
2. A Town that Moves
Improve the condition and efficiency of the local road network while addressing connectivity and advancing active transportation facilities
3. An Engaging Town
Increase Community Engagement & Outreach
4. A Safe Town

Make our community safer

5. Organizational Effectiveness
To Elevate our Organizational Effectiveness

7. **Attachments:**

Attachment No. 1 – On-Street Residential and Commercial Parking Study (2016)

8. **Related Reports:**

April 19, 2016 – Final Report On-Street Residential and Commercial Parking Study. [Final Report On-Street Residential and Commercial Parking Study](#)

PW-021-20 – Recommended Changes to the Town’s Management of Parking, October 20, 2020 [October 20, 2020 - Recommended Changes to the Town's Management of Parking](#)

Authors: Kathryn Jones, Planner II Development Planning
Hena Kabir, Manager of Development Planning

For further information on this report, please contact the Department Head: Dwayne Tapp, Commissioner of Development Services at 905-640-1900 or 1-855-642-8697 ext. 2431 or via email at dwayne.tapp@townofws.ca