

Staff Report

Report To: Corporate Services Committee
Report From: Riley Brugess, By-law Enforcement Supervisor
Meeting Date: September 10, 2026
Report Code: CR-26-085
Subject: Parking Management and Enforcement Review I

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-26-085 respecting the Parking Management and Enforcement Review, the Corporate Services Committee recommends that City Council direct staff to:

1. Bring forward a by-law to amend the Traffic By-law as described in the report; and
2. Submit an application to the Ministry of the Attorney General to approve the new set fines for the Traffic By-law, as attached to the report.

Highlights:

- This report is the first in a series of parking management and enforcement reviews, focused on amendments to the Traffic By-law to address current enforcement gaps.
- The recommended amendments will improve public safety and parking availability by addressing parking near intersections, vehicles blocking bicycle lanes or multi-use trails, abandoned or inoperable vehicles, parking within marked parking spaces, winter overnight parking in municipal lots, and electric vehicle charging spaces.
- The proposed changes will create clearer, more consistent rules for residents, visitors, enforcement staff, and partner agencies, while

supporting active transportation, climate mitigation, and efficient winter control operations.

Vision 2050 - Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: A City that Moves – Facilitating sustainable transportation options and creating community connectivity.

Previous Report/Authority:

[Traffic By-law](#)

[Unauthorized Parking By-law](#)

Background:

This is the first in a series of reports that will be presented relating to parking management and enforcement. This report will focus on the Traffic By-law and enforcement gaps, while future reports will consider:

- permits and permit fees;
- policies and procedures;
- set fine amounts for offences;
- free downtown parking;
- signage;
- contract vs. in-house enforcement and hours of operation;
- private property parking enforcement; and
- winter overnight parking enforcement.

Operations

The City's parking enforcement contractor is responsible for parking enforcement in the downtown core, as well as at the Bayshore Community Centre during Owen Sound Attack games or special events.

The Owen Sound Police Service provides overnight/weekend parking enforcement, the majority of which relates to winter overnight parking restrictions. Parking enforcement is a lower priority call level for police.

The City's By-law Enforcement Services ("BES") provides parking enforcement outside of the downtown core during business hours. BES is mainly reactive (by complaint) but will issue tickets to illegally parked vehicles observed during patrols.

The City also allows for the appointment of private parking enforcement staff for private property, through the Unauthorized Parking By-law. Heritage Place Mall, Grey Bruce Health Services (now Brightshores Health System), Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey, and the Professional Centre are currently appointed to enforce parking on their private property.

Free Downtown Parking

In 2019 the City entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Downtown Improvement Area Board of Management (now the River District Board of Management) and implemented free parking in the downtown in accordance with prescribed circumstances:

- 5 hours of free parking in municipal lots; and
- 2 hours of free parking on municipal streets within a 5-hour timeframe.

An in-house parking ticket review policy was also implemented to provide members of the public the ability to have their ticket reviewed prior to going to court. This review process is well utilized by the public and requires a large amount staff resources.

In the last few years as upgrades were made to the River District, parking meters and pay and display machines have been removed. There are still a few areas where there are meters and pay and display machines, but they are no longer active. Signage used to be on the meters and pay and display machines so there is currently signage lacking in certain areas of the River District.

Analysis and Options:

Traffic By-law Amendments

The City's Traffic By-law regulates traffic and parking on the City's highways and municipal parking lots.

Outlined below are proposed changes to the Traffic By-law to improve the use and availability of parking spaces on Highways and in Municipal Lots, and to promote active transportation methods. The proposed changes are included in Attachment 1 – Amended Redlined Traffic By-law and the revised set fines are included in Attachment No 2 – Amended Redlined Traffic Set Fines. Each proposed amendment is numbered for ease of reference.

1. Blocking a bicycle lane or multi-use trail

Section 3.4.5 has been added to prevent the stopping or standing of a vehicle in a manner that blocks bicycle lanes and multi-use trails.

This recommendation supports the following City plans and strategies:

- Transportation Master Plan (Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure)
- Climate Mitigation Plan (Active Transportation)
- Trails Master Plan

2. Parking near intersections

Currently, the Traffic By-law requires a sign (“No parking here to corner”) to be installed and displayed to enforce parking too close to an intersection. This leaves many intersections open to vehicles parking immediately adjacent to a stop sign or the intersection, creating unsafe sightline issues and forcing vehicles into the opposing lane of traffic at the intersection.

The City receives numerous complaints about vehicles parking at intersections and must review the area to determine whether to install a sign at the location.

The proposed by-law amendments repeal section 3.6.1, which requires a sign to be installed. Instead, a new section 3.5.19 is added to prohibit parking within 9 metres of every intersection, whether a sign is installed or not. Similar to parking on a sidewalk, no signage would be required for enforcement to occur. This amendment aligns with the County Parking By-law and municipal practices around the province.

3. Abandoned, unlicensed and inoperable vehicles

Section 3.5.14 provides that a vehicle may not be parked on a roadway “for an unreasonable length of time”. This is vague and difficult to enforce. In an effort to improve the response to complaints about vehicles being abandoned, this section has been amended to provide a maximum time for all roadways of forty-eight (48) hours. Enforcement of this provision would be by complaint only.

Section 3.5.19 has been added to prevent the parking of a vehicle that is un-plated, unlicensed, inoperable, or immobile. This will help prevent vehicles from being abandoned, especially in municipal lots, for an extended period of time.

4. Pavement Markings

Section 3.5.20 has been added to prevent the parking of a vehicle on a highway or in a municipal lot outside of a parking space designated by lines painted on the surface of the parking area.

5. Winter Overnight Parking in Municipal Lots

Sections 3.28.10.1 and 3.28.10.2 have been combined into one section. Subsection 1 currently prohibits winter overnight parking between 2:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. in lots 1, 3, 8, and 9. Subsection 2 currently prohibits winter overnight parking between 2:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. in lots 4 and 5. Exemptions for overnight parking permits apply in lots 5 and 9.

The prohibited parking timeframes have been adjusted to 1:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. for all lots mentioned above, to be consistent with on-street parking restrictions and to reduce confusion.

Section 3.28.12.1 has been added to provide a requirement that users of overnight parking permits move their vehicle to another overnight parking space every seven (7) days, and that they comply with permit conditions and signage. This provision is intended to prevent a person from purchasing a winter overnight parking pass for the purpose of storing the vehicle all winter. The consistent movement of vehicles is intended to improve snow removal in the approved winter overnight parking spaces.

Signage in municipal lots have been reviewed to ensure consistency with the proposed changes. Temporary alterations to existing signage will be required to update the time restrictions in lots 1, 4, 5, 8, 9. Lot 3 does not currently have signage. In future reports, comprehensive updates to signage will be proposed, including in municipal lots.

If approved, the adjusted winter overnight parking restriction times will be installed over existing signage by Public Works Staff.

6. Electric Vehicle Parking

Sections 3.41.1 and 3.41.2 have been added to regulate the use of electric vehicle charging stations. Subsection 1 prohibits parking a vehicle, other than an electric vehicle, in an electric vehicle parking space. Subsection 2 prohibits parking a vehicle in an electric vehicle parking space while not connected to the charging station and charging.

This supports Action 7 (Promote Grey County as an EV-friendly destination) of the Community Actions under the City's Climate Mitigation Plan.

7. Removal and Impounding of Vehicles

Section 6.2 currently provides for the removal and impounding (towing) of a vehicle parked or left in contravention of the by-law. Section 6.2 currently limits the towing of a vehicle to places where authorized signs are installed and displayed (no parking signs).

Under the *Highway Traffic Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8*, subsection 170 (15) provides that a municipal law enforcement officer, upon discovery of any vehicle parked or standing in contravention of a municipal by-law, may cause it to be moved or taken to and placed or stored in a suitable place and all costs and charges for the removal, care and storage of the vehicle, if any, are a lien upon the vehicle, which may be enforced in the manner provided by the *Repair and Storage Liens Act*.

Section 6.2 has been amended to remove the signage requirement, to be consistent with the *Highway Traffic Act*. This change is administrative in nature and does not alter the practices of By-law Enforcement or Police.

Resource Alignment:

Financial Resources

There is no anticipated financial impact from these changes. Within existing signage budgets, stickers will be ordered to amend the existing signage in municipal lots.

Human Resources

Public Works staffing will be required to install amendments to the existing signage in municipal lots. The proposed changes to winter overnight parking time restrictions may allow for temporary scheduling adjustments in By-law Enforcement Services for enhanced parking enforcement in municipal lots.

Time and Scheduling

N/A.

Technology and Infrastructure

N/A.

Climate and Environmental Impacts:

The recommendation supports both the City's Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan and the City's Climate Mitigation Plan.

Communication and Engagement:

This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the meeting. A media release will be issued highlighting key changes to parking provisions.

Report Developed in Consultation With:

- Manan Monga, Engineering Technologist
- Greg Gibbons, Transportation Superintendent

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1 - Amended Redlined Traffic By-law
2. Attachment 2 - Amended Redlined Traffic Set Fines

Reviewed by:

Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Riley Brugess, By-law Enforcement Supervisor at rbrugess@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1270.