

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF BURNABY

HOUSING AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND ALDERMEN

RE: MULTIPLE FAMILY DEVELOPMENTS - PARKING STANDARDS

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council authorize the Municipal Solicitor to prepare a bylaw amending the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw to:
 - a. Increase the parking standard for townhouses from 1.5 spaces per unit (which includes 0.2 for visitor parking) to 1.75 spaces per unit (which includes 0.25 for visitor parking);
 - b. Increase the parking standard for low-rise and high-rise apartments from 1.5 spaces per unit (which includes 0.2 for visitor parking) to 1.6 spaces per unit (which includes 0.25 for visitor parking);
 - c. exempt co-operative and non-profit housing developments from the above increases in parking standards (the standard will remain 1.5 spaces per unit which includes 0.2 for visitor parking);
 - d. provide a definition for 'townhouses', 'apartments', 'co-operative housing', and 'non-profit housing';
 - e. require a car wash stall for multiple family dwellings in the Multiple Family Residential Districts (RM1 to RM5);
 - f. provide a definition for 'car wash stall';
2. THAT Council authorize the bylaw be forwarded to First Reading on 1990 August 13 and to a Public Hearing on 1990 August 28 at 7:30 p.m.
3. THAT large parking spaces for recreational vehicles in multiple family developments not be required in the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND

At its meeting on 1990 March 26, Council considered a report on amending parking standards for multiple family developments. The report was referred to the Housing and Civic Development Committee for review, with the request that the Committee give consideration to the provision of parking spaces for recreational vehicles within multiple family developments.

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Generally, the recommendations of the staff report proposed an increase in parking requirements from 1.5 spaces per unit to 1.75 spaces per unit for townhouse developments, and from 1.5 spaces per unit to 1.55 spaces per unit for low-rise and high-rise apartment buildings. The report also proposed that co-operative and non-profit housing developments be exempt from these increases.

The Committee, as part of its review, deliberated on the effect of increasing the parking requirements beyond the levels recommended in the 1990 March 26 staff report to Council. The Committee's consideration included the topics listed below.

2.0 IMPACT OF HIGHER PARKING STANDARDS

2.1 Cost

The cost of providing additional parking will vary depending on the individual development. The cost is influenced by the size of the site, the amount of excavation and shoring required, the location of parking in relation to the building, and the number of parking levels. It is estimated that costs range between \$8,000 to \$13,000 per underground space, and significantly more for underground parking beyond two levels.

2.2 Design Considerations

From a design perspective, there are problems in providing more surface parking which is significantly less expensive than underground parking. Firstly, many projects will have little or no area available for parking at grade if the maximum floor area ratio and setback requirements are to be achieved. This situation applies particularly to low-rise developments and projects on small sites. Secondly, with most projects developing to their maximum floor area ratio, it is considered not desirable to reduce the amenity open space and landscaping of a project in order to accommodate more surface parking.

2.3 Impact on Housing

A change in parking standards may have an impact on the form of housing provided. That is, it may be more economical for a developer to provide larger and fewer dwelling units in order to minimize the number of parking spaces required for the project. This situation would make housing less affordable, particularly for households who are trying to buy into the condominium housing market and for renters who have lower household incomes.

2.4 Transportation Objectives

The provision of high parking ratios may encourage a greater number of households to own two or more vehicles, and thereby work against the dual transportation objectives of lessening the dependency of the private automobile and encouraging the use of public transit.

2.5 On-Street Parking

In the more fully developed apartment areas, on-street parking may be in short supply for various reasons: small street frontage, parking restrictions on the street, short-term on-street parking by residents and visitors, spillover of commercial parking, and a shortage of parking within the development. With the exception of the latter situation, these problems would not be alleviated by amending the Zoning Bylaw to further increase the parking standard for new developments.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDING THE PARKING STANDARD

As indicated in the findings of a parking survey conducted in January 1990, 80 percent of 758 respondents living in multiple family developments felt that parking was sufficient for members of their household. Those living in high-rise apartments were more satisfied with their own parking situation (95 percent) than those living in low-rises (78 percent) and in townhouses (77 percent). However, half of the respondents felt that parking for visitors (whether on the street or within the development) was inadequate.

The Committee, in developing its conclusion on the question of appropriate parking requirements, sought to achieve a balance between the desire for greater on-site parking and the practical and philosophical ramifications as mentioned previously.

After reviewing the impacts associated with increasing the parking standard and the findings of the parking survey, this Committee recommends that the parking standard be increased to 1.6 spaces per unit for apartment developments and to 1.75 spaces per unit for townhouse developments. These ratios include 0.25 space per unit for visitor parking (an increase from 0.20 which is the norm within the Greater Vancouver area). It is further recommended that no change be made to the present parking ratio of 1.5 spaces per unit for co-operative and non-profit housing developments.

The following table provides a comparison between the existing and proposed parking ratios for apartment and townhouse developments with a different number of units in order to better understand the magnitude of the parking standard increases.

	20 units	40 units	60 units	80 units	100 units
Existing standard : 1.50 spaces per unit (apartments & townhouses)	30	60	90	120	150
Proposal for Townhouses: 1.75 spaces per unit	35	70	105	140	175
Proposal for Apartments: 1.60 spaces per unit	32	64	96	128	160

4.0 THE PARKING PROBLEM FOR RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

Since many multiple family developments do not provide parking for recreational vehicles (e.g., campers, trailers, motor homes, 'camperized' vans), some owners have been parking them on the street. In some areas, this parking adds to the on-street parking congestion or obstructs the visibility of drivers who are attempting to turn. Other owners have been renting a space at a mini storage yard which are charging in the range of \$35 to \$90 per month, depending on the size of the vehicle.

Since there is a broad range of sizes among recreational vehicles, the parking requirements differ. Some types such as vans and small campers are able to park in a regular parking space (5.5 metres in length and 2.6 metres in width) provided within the development. However, other types of vehicles (e.g., motor homes and trailers attached to cars) are too large to fit in a regular space or too high to be able to park underground. It is this latter group of large vehicles that this report addresses.

5.0 PARKING REGULATIONS FOR RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

5.1 Zoning Bylaw

In the Zoning Bylaw, a "Recreational Vehicle" means a structure or vehicle that

- (a) is used or designed to be used for living or sleeping purposes,
- (b) is designed or intended to be mobile on land, and
- (c) is either self-propelled or towed by a motor vehicle and includes a camper, travel trailer, motor home, converted bus or other vehicle and tent trailer. A recreational vehicle shall not be considered a dwelling unit.

Section 6.17 of the Bylaw (in part) states that boats, trailers or any similar vehicles shall not be parked in the open in any Multiple Family (RM) District, with the exception that one boat and one trailer not exceeding 6.0 metres (19.69 feet) may be parked in the rear yard.

There is no provision in the Zoning Bylaw that requires a developer to provide large parking spaces for recreational vehicles or other over-height vehicles. For all on-site parking spaces, the Bylaw requires a minimum height clearance of 2.1 metres (6.89 feet). Therefore, it is on a voluntary basis that a developer provides a greater clearance to accommodate over-height vehicles in an underground parkade.

5.2 Street and Traffic Bylaw

The following sections of the Street and Traffic Bylaw pertain to on-street parking of vehicles, including recreational vehicles:

- . No person shall park a vehicle at any one place on any street for a longer period than 24 consecutive hours (Section 13(3)(d)).
- . No person shall park a vehicle over 8,000 pounds gross vehicle weight, or a trailer or mobile home unit, or a camper unit detached from a vehicle for more than two hours between the hours of 1:00 o'clock in the morning and 6:00 o'clock in the morning on any street (Section 13(5)).
- . No person shall, between the hours of 8:00 o'clock in the morning and 6:00 o'clock in the afternoon, park any vehicle on any street abutting any premises used for residential or commercial purposes for more than three hours unless such premises are the property or residence of such person or the property of his employer (Section 13(6)).
- . No person shall move a vehicle from one location to another in the same block to avoid the time limit regulations specified in that particular block (Section 13(9)).

These bylaws are usually enforced on a complaint basis.

6.0 PARKING ISSUES RELATED TO RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

In assessing whether or not large parking spaces to accommodate recreational vehicles should be required of all multiple family developments, there are a number of factors to consider: the extent of the problem, safety concerns, design implications, and the impact on other parking needs.

6.1 The Extent of the Problem

Based on a recent parking survey of 758 respondents living in multiple family developments, about 3 percent (24 respondents) own a recreational vehicle. Some of these vehicles have been parking in a regular parking space or in a mini storage yard. Therefore, it appears that larger parking spaces are required for a very small number (perhaps less than 1 percent) of vehicle owners living in townhouses and apartments.

6.2 Fire Safety Concerns

The Chief Fire Prevention Officer has indicated some concerns about underground parking for recreational vehicles. Some of these vehicles are equipped with propane systems that are not closed systems. That is, the stove burners and ovens are manually turned on and have no automatic igniter, which could create a propane discharge. The propane vapour is heavier than air and will collect at the lowest points in the building such as sumps, drains or lower levels of parking. Any ignition source could set a fire which would be difficult to fight in an underground situation. Therefore, the underground parking of recreational vehicles is not recommended.

Other vehicles that use propane or natural gas as the primary source of fuel have a closed system from the tank to carburetor, lessening the chance of leaks.

6.3 Design Considerations

From a design perspective, there are a number of problems in providing surface parking for recreational vehicles on-site:

- a. Site limitations: In trying to maximize the floor area ratio while meeting setback requirements, many projects will have little or no area available for parking at grade. Maximization of the floor area ratio is based on virtually 100 percent underground parking.
- b. Open Space and Landscaping: With most projects developing to their maximum floor area ratio, it is considered not desirable to reduce the amenity open space and landscaping of a project in order to accommodate parking for recreational vehicles. To gain a small number of large parking spaces (say, 2 or 3) would result in a loss of amenity for the whole development, affecting large numbers of residents.
- c. Aesthetics: In a high density residential area, large recreational vehicles can be unsightly and obtrusive appearing, even if additional landscaping/screening is provided.

6.4 Other Parking Needs

In those developments which are able to provide a few surface parking spaces, the provision of parking for recreational vehicles will be at the expense of parking spaces for visitors or residents. One space for a large recreational vehicle can take up two regular parking spaces.

In the parking survey of multiple family developments, a shortage of parking for visitors (on-site or on-street) was identified as a problem by 54 percent of 758 residents. Another survey of parking in the Manchester Drive area showed that on-site parking spaces in four developments (519 units) were being fully utilized by the residents. Given this situation, any conversion of regular parking spaces to accommodate recreational vehicles will have an impact on other parking needs.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION FOR RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARKING

Small types of recreational vehicles can be accommodated within the regular sized parking spaces, as is presently provided for in some developments. For safety reasons, those vehicles which contain propane systems should be parked outdoors only.

For the large recreational vehicles (e.g., motor homes, large campers), mini storage yards are considered to be the most appropriate place for them, particularly since they are generally not used on a daily basis. Any provision for them within a development will reduce regular parking for residents and visitors, usable communal open space, and/or the landscaped area. After maximizing the permitted floor area ratio, there is very little area remaining for surface parking in most developments.

There are several mini storage yards in the Greater Vancouver area which provide secured outdoor parking for recreational vehicles at a cost ranging between \$35 and \$90, depending on the size of the vehicle. Within Burnaby, there is one facility which can accommodate up to 57 vehicles.

After careful consideration of the safety concerns related to underground parking for recreational vehicles, the impact on open space and landscaped areas, and the parking needs of visitors and residents, it is recommended that large parking spaces for recreational vehicles in multiple family developments not be required in the Zoning Bylaw. However, if a developer wishes to provide large parking spaces, the proposal can be considered in the Comprehensive Development (CD) rezoning process.

8.0 CONCLUSION

After a comprehensive examination of the issues and requirements for parking within multiple family developments, it is recommended that Council adopt the proposed text amendments to the Zoning Bylaw and authorize the Municipal Solicitor to prepare a bylaw for First Reading on 1990 August 13 and for a Public Hearing on 1990 August 28.

Respectfully submitted,

Alderman L.A. Rankin
Chairman

Alderman D.R. Corrigan
Member

Alderman F.G. Randall
Member