
To: Regional Planning Committee

From: Raymond Kan, Senior Planner, Regional Planning

Date: February 15, 2019 Meeting Date: March 8, 2019

Subject: **The 2018 Regional Parking Study – Key Findings**

RECOMMENDATION

That the MVRD Board:

- a) receive for information the report dated February 15, 2019, titled “The 2018 Regional Parking Study – Key Findings”; and
- b) write letters to share the key findings of the 2018 Regional Parking Study and Technical Report to the Mayors’ Council on Regional Transportation, the TransLink Board of Directors, and the Councils of member jurisdictions.

PURPOSE

To communicate the 2018 Regional Parking Study key findings and seek MVRD Board approval to distribute the key findings of the 2018 Regional Parking Study and Technical Report to TransLink and Metro Vancouver’s member jurisdictions.

BACKGROUND

The 2018 Regional Parking Study (the Study) was co-led by TransLink and Metro Vancouver to expand the knowledge base of multi-residential (apartment) parking supply and demand in different areas of the region. Preliminary observations from the three phases of data collection were presented to the Regional Planning Committee over three meetings in 2018, and to staff advisory committees. The key findings of the Study have now been finalized and are ready for distribution.

THE REGIONAL PARKING STUDY

The 2018 Regional Parking Study is an update to the 2012 Apartment Parking Study, which was the first regional study of apartment parking supply and demand in Metro Vancouver and, at the time, the largest study ever undertaken in Canada and the United States. In general, these studies provide timely information and data to municipal planning and engineering staff as a consideration during parking bylaw updates, as well as rezoning and development permit reviews. Depending on the type of development, improving the match between supply and demand can also support housing affordability objectives.

Residential parking is a cross-cutting policy issue in *Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping Our Future (Metro 2040)*, the regional growth strategy, and TransLink’s *Regional Transportation Strategy*. *Metro 2040* encourages municipalities to establish or maintain reduced residential and commercial parking provision in Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas, while the *Regional Transportation Strategy* recognizes parking management as a form of transportation demand management.

Components of the 2018 Regional Parking Study

The Study collected data on 73 apartment sites across the region during the Fall/Winter 2017, and comprises three components: a Parking Facility Survey, Street Parking Survey, and Household Survey.

Parking Facility Survey

The purpose of the Parking Facility Survey was to capture parking utilization at peak times in a selection of apartment sites throughout the region. Access to 73 apartment sites was granted by the respective strata councils and/or property management companies. Surveyors entered parking facilities to complete the counts generally after 11:00pm on weeknights (i.e. Monday – Thursday) to ensure that the highest parking utilization was being captured. The surveyors also collected information on: the number of residential and visitor parking stalls; the number of parked vehicles; the presence of secured bicycle parking; and the presence of dedicated plug-in electric vehicle chargers.

Street Parking Survey

The 2012 study recognized that a more holistic and systems-based approach toward on-site and street parking is warranted. It was also noted that a limitation of the initial study was the lack of quantitative information on street parking utilization. The purpose of the Street Parking Survey as part of this latest iteration of the Study was to capture parking utilization on the streets within walking distance (~200 metres) of the surveyed apartment sites. Surveys were undertaken on weekdays (i.e. Monday – Thursday) between 6:30pm-8:30pm and 10:00pm-12:00am, and on Saturdays between 6:30pm-8:30pm.

Household Survey

The purpose of the voluntary Household Survey was to obtain additional contextual information about the residents who live in the participating apartment buildings, such as: vehicle ownership; whether they own or rent their dwelling unit and parking stall(s); visitor parking patterns; bicycle parking conditions; interest in purchasing plug-in electric vehicles; willingness to forgo a parking stall; and basic demographic information. Approximately 1,500 completed surveys, both online and hard copy, were returned out of 11,000 households in the survey area.

Project Advisory Group

In addition to consulting with the Regional Planning Advisory Committee and the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee on the Study's scope in 2017, Regional Planning established a Project Advisory Group as a means for local jurisdiction representatives to shape the scope and to review the data analysis. The Project Advisory Group comprised a self-selected group of planners and engineers representing nine local jurisdictions with an interest or expertise in parking issues. The multidisciplinary composition of the Project Advisory Group was in keeping with parking being a cross-cutting issue affecting many aspects of community planning and engineering in the region. The Project Advisory Group has shown interest in TransLink and Metro Vancouver staff to continue to convene the group on a regular basis to address and share knowledge around parking policies and management going forward.

Engagement

A key lesson learned from the 2012 study was the need to engage regularly with staff from member jurisdictions and the Regional Planning Committee. The feedback received has been useful in helping to shape the scope, conduct of the analysis, and the interpretation of the findings of the Study.

Regional Planning staff presented preliminary observations of the component parts of the Study to the following committees in 2018:

- Preliminary Observations of Parking Facility Survey:
 - Regional Planning Advisory Committee – May 11, 2018
 - Regional Planning Committee – June 8, 2018
 - City of Burnaby planning staff – June 21, 2018
 - Regional Transportation Advisory Committee – June 27, 2018
 - Housing Committee – July 13, 2018 (information item; no presentation)
- Preliminary Observations of Street Parking Survey:
 - Regional Planning Advisory Committee – July 13, 2018
 - Regional Transportation Advisory Committee – July 26, 2018
 - Regional Planning Committee – September 7, 2018
- Preliminary Observations of Household Survey
 - Regional Planning Advisory Committee – October 19, 2018
 - Regional Transportation Advisory Committee – November 29, 2018
 - Regional Planning Committee – October 5, 2018

Key Findings

The key findings of the 2018 Regional Parking Study are consistent with those in the 2012 study, with some new insights about street parking. Member jurisdictions and the housing development community will be encouraged to review and engage in a dialogue about the key findings and technical report (Attachment) to supplement local data and contexts as appropriate. It is anticipated that the findings and data will: inform the review of apartment rezoning and development applications; municipal parking bylaw reviews; considering the impacts and needs of rental housing projects; the preparation of area and neighbourhood plans; and street parking management efforts.

The key findings are:

1. **For both rental and strata buildings, apartment parking supply exceeds use across the region.**

Supporting information (based on the Parking Facility Survey and Household Survey):

- For strata apartment buildings, parking supply exceeds utilization by 42 percent;
- For market rental apartment buildings, parking supply exceeds utilization by 35 percent;
- For mixed tenure and mixed rental apartment buildings, parking supply exceeds utilization by 41 percent;
- Parking supply exceeds utilization in strata and rental apartment buildings across the region;

- Parking supply appears to be declining for newer strata and market rental apartment buildings;
- Small strata or market rental units (0 or 1 bedroom units, or unit less than 800 sq.ft.) tend to have at most 1 parked vehicle per unit;
- The smallest market rental units (0-bedroom units or units less than 600 sq.ft.) have the largest oversupply of parking.

2. Apartment parking supply and use is lower for buildings closer to frequent transit.

Supporting information (based on the Parking Facility Survey and Household Survey):

- For strata apartment buildings, parking utilization near frequent transit (bus or SkyTrain) ranges 0.86 – 0.97 vehicles per unit, compared to 1.09 for buildings further away;
- For market rental sites, parking utilization near transit (bus or SkyTrain) ranges 0.35 – 0.72 vehicles per unit, compared to 0.99 for sites further away from the FTN;
- Parking supply is lower in buildings close to frequent transit;
- Small strata or rental units (0 or 1 bedroom units) tend to be most responsive to proximity to frequent transit, followed by 2 bedroom units.

3. Transit use is generally higher where apartment parking use is lower, especially for rental buildings.

Supporting information (based on the Parking Facility Survey and transit data):

- Transit boardings (bus boardings within 400 metres of the apartments; SkyTrain/SeaBus boardings within 800 metres of the apartments) are higher when apartment residential parking utilization is lower;
- The relationship is stronger for rental apartment sites, than for strata sites.

4. Street parking is complex in mixed-use neighbourhoods. Some of the factors contributing to street parking use include: visitors to non-residential land uses in the evenings; apartment visitors on weekends, holidays, and special occasions; and some apartment residents parking on a nearby street.

Supporting information (based on the Street Parking Survey):

- Generally, street parking utilization is higher in the evenings (weekday or Saturday) than on a weekday late night;
- Out of 65 surveyed street networks, 7 networks experienced high street parking utilization in at least two of the three surveyed time periods. The exceedances typically occur in the evenings. Nearby non-residential trip generators, such as parks, restaurants, and other commercial uses appear to be one factor;
- Apartment visitors typically encounter greater difficulty finding a parking space in the apartment parking facility or nearby street on weekends, holidays, and special occasions;
- Where households reported parking on a nearby street, they typically park within a five-minute walk of their apartment building;

- For rental sites where residential parking is not included in the rent, both apartment residential parking supply and utilization are lower compared to sites where parking is included in the rent. For the former, nearby street parking utilization is also higher, but does not exceed the 85 percent threshold.

5. The design and capacity of bicycle parking facilities in apartment buildings appear to discourage use by many residents.

Supporting information (based on the Household Survey):

- About one-third of bicycle-owning households do not use their building’s secured bicycle parking facility. The rate of usage is consistent across different building ages. The most frequently cited concerns were risk of damage to or loss of the bicycles, crowded facilities, and adverse perceptions of safety and convenience.

The technical report (Attachment) also contains a ‘Looking Ahead’ section, which outlines some of the issues, challenges, and opportunities associated with parking regulation and management that haven’t been explored as part of the Study. These future considerations include: the implications of ride-hailing on curb management and parking requirements; the opportunities and challenges of shared parking facilities; trends in increasing personal and commercial vehicle sizes; and accessibility needs with an aging population. These issues and others may be explored during the forthcoming updates to the *Regional Transportation Strategy* and *Metro 2040*.

TransLink and Regional Planning will continue to work with the Project Advisory Committee to develop a summary booklet for the Regional Parking Study.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the MVRD Board:
 - a) receive for information the report dated February 15, 2019, titled “The 2018 Regional Parking Study – Key Findings”; and
 - b) write letters to share the key findings of the 2018 Regional Parking Study and Technical Report to the Mayors’ Council on Regional Transportation, the TransLink Board of Directors, and the Councils of member jurisdictions.
2. That the MVRD Board receive for the information the report dated February 15, 2019, titled “The Regional Parking Study – Key Findings” and provide alternative direction to staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with either alternative. In 2017, a memorandum of understanding was signed between TransLink and Metro Vancouver setting the project scope, roles, and responsibilities. TransLink is the majority funder of the Regional Parking Study at approximately \$100,000 and is responsible for managing the consultant contract. Metro Vancouver contributed \$20,000 out of the 2017 MVRD Board-approved Regional Planning budget. All the data analysis and report writing were completed by project staff with guidance provided by the Project Advisory Group.

REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Parking is both a land use and transportation issue. Regional Planning will continue to look for opportunities to undertake research for the benefit of member jurisdictions, including incorporating the study findings in regional planning efforts, such as the Lougheed Corridor Land Use and Monitoring Study and the *Metro 2040* policy reviews. As requested by the Project Advisory Group, TransLink and Regional Planning staff will continue to convene the group on a regular basis to address and share knowledge around parking policies and management going forward.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

The 2018 Regional Parking Study is a major planning research initiative that was co-led by TransLink and Metro Vancouver. The Study's findings are consistent with those of the 2012 study, with some new insights about street parking. While the Study's key findings are not exhaustive, the key findings and technical report provide timely information to local municipal planning and engineering staff as a consideration for municipal parking bylaw updates, rezoning and development reviews, developing area and neighbourhood plans, corridor planning efforts, and street parking management efforts. Depending on the type of development, improving the match between supply and demand can also support housing affordability objectives.

Regional Planning has engaged and consulted extensively on the project scope and draft analysis with the Project Advisory Group, comprising local jurisdiction planners and engineers, as well as the Regional Planning Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Regional Planning Committee.

The Regional Parking Study provides information to inform ongoing dialogues about integrated land use and transportation, housing affordability, and neighbourhood livability. Given the interest in parking in general, a subsequent deliverable will be a summary booklet to articulate the technical information in a more readily accessible manner. For the reasons of advancing the key findings and technical report to practitioners and policymakers, staff recommend Alternative 1.

Attachment: Regional Parking Study Technical Report

Reference: [Regional Parking Studies Webpage](#)

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