



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: November 25, 2024
To: Mayor and Council
From: Taylor Crinklaw, Director of Infrastructure Services
Report Number: COU24-140
Attachments: Archibald Engineering report Erie Street Parking Lot Alternatives dated November 13, 2024

Title: Erie Street Parking Lot Development Options

Objective: To provide additional information regarding development options for the Erie Street parking lot and to provide Council a general workplan to eventually progress development options for the site.

Background: At the August 12, 2024, Council Meeting, Staff were requested to investigate alternative options for the site and to report back to Council. To provide a timely response, Staff requested a general review and response be facilitated by Archibald Engineering. The corresponding review is detailed in the attached letter.

Staff have taken steps to move forward with the Erie Street resurfacing project. In tonight's meeting, as part of the City's purchasing policy, Staff have listed in the Consent Agenda a notification of the intent to tender for the resurfacing work.

Analysis: The attached report succinctly summarizes background for the Erie Street parking lot, points for consideration and recommended steps of action. The following paragraph highlights some of the key findings identified in the report.

The report's analysis indicates that there is no immediate need for additional parking. Due to the complexities of the site, any development will require time, significant staff resources, and may have substantial costs. Additionally, the future use of the Erie Street parking lot could be significantly affected by the potential development of the Grand Trunk Railway (GTR) site. Considering the uncertainty surrounding the ultimate type and density of redevelopment at the GTR Site, it may be premature to proceed with further development. The underlying recommendation provided in the report is that it is prudent to proceed with the cost-effective short duration improvements associated with resurfacing the Erie Street parking lot.

Recognizing the concerns raised by Council in August, Staff have adjusted the resurfacing design. Largely, adjustments were made to the draft resurfacing project

that would reduce the useful life of the project to be more in the range of 10 to 15 years and in-turn reduce overall project costs. The design also allows for future modifications if easements are revised in a way that would support optimized site development.

In terms of a general workplan, Staff support the recommended short and long-term actions as listed below.

1. Resurface the Erie Street Parking Lot in 2024 or 2025.
2. Resolve and adjust easements to a level that facilitates optimal development (2025-2027).*
3. Update the Downtown Parking Strategy Report following City Council approval of the redevelopment types and densities for the GTR Site (2026-2027)
4. In 2030 (Year 5 following resurfacing) formally review timing of the GTR Site build out and the implications on the Erie Street Parking Lot.
5. In 2033 (Year 8 following resurfacing) present a comprehensive strategy report to City Council with a timeline for redevelopment of the Erie Street Parking Lot.
6. In 2035 (Year 10 following resurfacing) proceed with preferred development if desired.

* The timelines associated with adjusting the easements may vary significantly, as they are largely dependent on receptiveness of abutting landowners to the proposed changes.

Several risk factors must be considered if the decision is made to proceed with development at this time. If the development process were to start now, it would still be years before any changes would be seen onsite. During this period, the existing parking lot would remain in its current state, with several deteriorating components that increase the risk of legal claims due to poor conditions, as well as erode public trust.

As noted in the analysis, proceeding with a development now may result in a product that does not align well with the future needs of the City. Particularly, as it relates to decisions that still need to be made about what is desired to be built at the GTR site. Lastly, embarking on such a large-scale initiative would divert staff resources and priorities away from the GTR site, potentially jeopardizing the progress of its development.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

There are no associated impacts to the current year operating budget.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

There are no financial recommendations made because of this management report.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities

Enhance our Infrastructure

This report highlights the benefits of resurfacing a highly utilized parking lot in the City. It also proposes a long-term planning strategy that would cost-effectively optimize the use of City assets.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Culture and Community

Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living.

Travel and Transport

Reducing the need to travel, encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon transport.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "Erie Street Parking Lot Development Options" (COU24-140), be received for information.

Prepared by: Taylor Crinklaw, Director of Infrastructure Services

Recommended by: Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer