



**SUBJECT: Green parking lot design guidelines for new parking lot at John and Caroline Streets and future builds**

**TO: Planning and Development Committee**

**FROM: Mayor's Office**

Report Number: MO-12-19

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: N/A

Date to Committee: September 10, 2019

Date to Council: September 23, 2019

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**Recommendation:**

Direct the Director of Transportation Services to review the newly built parking lot at the corner of John Street and Caroline Street with the goal of developing and implementing design changes providing more greenspace, trees, and a seating area.

Direct the Director of Transportation Services to review the safety of pedestrian movements at the intersection of Caroline Street and John Street.

Direct the Director of Transportation to review the practices of other municipalities on parking lot design, and report back to committee and council with draft green parking lot design guidelines.

Direct the Director of Transportation to consult the City of Toronto's "Design Guidelines for Greening Surface Parking Lots" as a reference on future parking lot designs, rebuilds or resurfacing in Burlington until Burlington guidelines are approved by Council.

**Purpose:**

This action supports our goals of:

- A Healthy and Greener City
  - Healthy Lifestyles
  - Environmental and Energy Leadership

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## **Background and Discussion:**

Following the expansion of parking Lot 3 at Caroline Street and John Street, the City has received constructive feedback concerning the lack of green space and seating area, along with questions and concerns around how this design supports Council's recent climate emergency declaration, specifically as it relates to green municipal infrastructure.

Other municipalities, notably Toronto, have developed green parking lot design practices to address environmental and urban design criteria that, among other things, "include strategies for reducing the urban heat island effect, improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, using energy efficient fixtures and recycled materials, managing storm water run-off on-site, and preserving and enhancing the urban forest."

The guidelines note that "typically, the emphasis in parking lot design is on accommodating vehicle movements, maximizing the number of parking spaces, and ensuring ease of maintenance and servicing. When functional requirements are the only objectives considered in parking lot design, the design outcome is generally undesirable, with poor quality landscaping, unattractive streetscapes and a lack of pedestrian safety, comfort and amenity."

The new Caroline and John Street parking lot was designed and constructed with the goal of maximizing the number of parking spaces, resulting in little to no area for trees, green space or seating areas. The photos below illustrate the configuration of the new lot and how green space was not a primary consideration.

### **PHOTOS OF CURRENT LOT:**



By incorporating further design changes into part of the lot, nearest to John Street and the intersection of Caroline/John, we have an opportunity to enhance this area from an environmental and beautification perspective, adding trees, green space and perhaps a bench. By developing our own green parking lot design standards, we will provide staff direction on elements that must be included in future city owned parking facilities.

**Examples of Toronto's design guidelines are as follows:**



Additional detail on Toronto's guidelines can be found via this link:

<https://web.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/9642-Design-Guidelines-for-Greening-Surface-Parking-Lots.pdf>

### **Financial Matters:**

Proposed capital cost estimate of design changes to the existing parking lot is to be determined by staff with funding to be drawn from the downtown parking reserve fund that was originally used to construct the parking lot expansion.

### **Public Engagement Matters:**

Design concerns have been received at the Mayor and City Manager's office regarding the lack of trees and greenspace at the new parking lot and how the design does not align the City's strategic goals and priorities of being a greener, more environmentally-friendly city.

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### **Conclusion:**

Incorporating further design changes into the existing parking lot will better support our city's goals and messaging, and will help the city to lead by example on low impact development and green design. The creation of green parking lot design guidelines will clearly guide staff on the design and construction of future city parking lot projects and provide a strong message to all developers to incorporate green space into private parking designs.

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Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward

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**Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.