



POLICY REPORT

Report Date: April 23, 2018
Contact: Lon LaClaire
Contact No.: 604.873.7722
RTS No.: 9944
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: May 16, 2018

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services
SUBJECT: Mount Pleasant Industrial Area Parking Strategy and Access Improvements

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve the Parking Strategy for the Mount Pleasant Industrial (MPI) area as outlined in this report, including the introduction of a new parking payment-in-lieu (PIL) area in the MPI I-1, I-1A, and I-1B zoning to address future parking needs from increased employment.
- B. THAT Council direct the Director of Legal services to prepare the necessary Parking By-Law changes to implement a PIL area in the MPI I-1, I-1A, and I-1B zoning, in coordination with the planned 2018 Parking By-Law updates.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a Parking Strategy for the Mount Pleasant Industrial (MPI) area that takes into account future growth, zoning changes, and rapid transit improvements as outlined in Transportation 2040. The Strategy is intended to support sustainable transportation modes for both visitors and businesses in the area.

For on-street parking, the Strategy recommends a performance parking based approach that includes the introduction of new parking restrictions such as time limits, short-term metered parking, and long-term metered parking to achieve target block occupancies (typically 85% full).

For off-street parking, the Strategy acknowledges the historical nature of the lots in the MPI and limitations in access, and that providing all off-street parking required by the Parking By-law is not always possible. In response, the introduction of a new PIL area as a tool to achieve parking requirements as set out in the Parking By-Law is recommended.

This report also provides an update on potential access improvements to the MPI area to facilitate east-west pedestrian and cyclist movements and simplify vehicular movements. In the short term, a crosswalk on the north side of the 7th Avenue, Kingsway and Main Street intersection is recommended to help facilitate a safe east-west connection to the Mount Pleasant Community Centre.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Relevant Council policies for this city-led initiative include:

- Updates to Payment-in-Lieu Parking Program (2018)
- Mount Pleasant Industrial Area Zoning Changes (2017)
- Mount Pleasant RT Zone Review (2017)
- Mount Pleasant Community Plan Implementation Strategy (2013)
- Transportation 2040 (2012)
- Greenest City Action Plan (2011)
- Vancouver Economic Action Strategy (2011)
- Mount Pleasant Community Plan (2010)
- Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan (2009)

The Mount Pleasant Community Plan was approved by Council in November 2010, and contains community-wide and sub-area policies to address issues and guide development in the area for the next 30 years.

In 2013, Council motions passed for the approval of changes to the I-1 Zoning in the MPI area to allow for larger buildings, increased job space, and additional support for the innovation economy. At this time, Council directed staff to report back with a Transportation and Parking Strategy for the MPI area as well as potential improvements to the Main Street, Kingsway, and 7th Avenue intersection.

In 2017, it was proposed to council to further expand the rezoning of industrial lands from I-1 into separate zonings I-1A and I1B (The Digital District). The intent of the new I-zoning classifications is to retain and support the growth of digital and technology businesses through additional density bonuses and increases in height limitations.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Engineering Services recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

As part of the report to Council in early 2013 for the Mount Pleasant Light Industrial areas (RTS-9189), staff were directed to report back on:

- a transportation and parking strategy for the Mount Pleasant area in order to support the ability to add jobs in the area and anticipate future enhancements to rapid transit in the area, as outlined in the Transportation 2040 Plan; and,

- potential access improvements to the Main Street, Kingsway, and 7th Avenue intersection to facilitate east/west pedestrian and cyclist movements and simplify vehicular movements in the Mount Pleasant area.

The MPI area is illustrated in **Figure 1** below, showing the I-1, I-1A, and I-1B boundaries.



Figure 1: Map of the Mount Pleasant Industrial Area

Strategic Analysis

To help quantify the parking and transportation demands for the MPI area, a series of travel mode surveys were sent out to businesses. Questions asked ranged from their preferred travel modes, parking location, cost for parking, arrival times, age and vehicle ownerships. A key finding from the survey given to the businesses indicated that 58% of respondents drive to the MPI area with the remaining respondents utilizing greener modes of transportation. Key findings from the travel mode surveys can be found in **Appendix A**.

Staff have also been working with an external consultant to explore in detail the opportunities to improve connections at the Main, Kingsway and East 7th Avenue intersection. Other transportation improvements to improve pedestrian, cyclist, and vehicle connectivity are also being explored. Staff will report back on a complete transportation analysis with recommendations for the entire Mount Pleasant Industrial Area in 2019.

Parking Analysis

While both on and off-street parking work together to meet the needs of the MPI area, each has its own unique constraints. On-street parking is shared public space that serves the entire area and is fixed by the amount of curb space. On the other hand, off-street parking is privately held space that can be expanded (i.e. parking can be placed underground); however, this expansion is limited by site layout and economic feasibility. Today, there are approximately 1900 on-street spaces and 5300 off-street spaces in the MPI area.

On-Street Parking

The MPI area currently has a significant amount of unregulated free parking which is well utilized by businesses, visitors, and commuters in the area.

To help quantify the on-street demand, occupancy surveys were conducted on a typical weekday in January 2018 during the morning (5 AM – 10AM), mid-day (12 AM – 2 PM) and afternoon (3 PM to 9 PM) periods. General findings indicate that many of the on-street block faces in the area exceeded the parking threshold of 85% utilization with the peak on-street parking demand occurring in the mid-day.

To better manage on-street parking in the MPI area, a performance-based approach is recommended. In 2016, the Parking Meter By-law was amended to allow a data driven parking meter program that:

- Allows parking meters to be installed as required to manage curbside availability;
- Adjusts on-street parking rates to achieve about one or two free spaces on a block;
- Adjusts parking meter rates annually based on data collected regularly throughout the previous calendar year; and,
- Adjusts on-street parking rates independently for daytime and evening periods.

Given the limited amount of retail activity in the MPI area, which requires the short duration stays, as well as the use of on-street parking by commuters, metered parking introduced in the area will also be installed to permit long-term stays.

Off-Street Parking

The Mt. Pleasant light industrial area is characterized by smaller lots with existing industrial and office buildings. The I-1 Zoning in this area generally permits development up to 3.0 FSR, however provision of the parking and loading required for development of this density presents challenges on smaller lots. These smaller lots limit the amount of surface parking and are also encumbered by other loading and storage requirements. Shortfalls of this nature are typically remedied during redevelopment when additional parking and loading facilities can be constructed as per the requirements of the Parking By-law.

The Parking By-law is adjusted from time to time with the next significant update anticipated before the end of 2018 where Council will be asked to consider updated parking rates for a variety of uses, including office and commercial.

Given the types of land uses in the area and smaller lot dimensions, meeting the requirements of the Parking By-law may not be economically feasible. To address these situations, staff recommend introducing a new payment-in-lieu (PIL) area in the I-1, I-1A, and I-1B zoning areas.

The PIL fee takes into account the net cost of providing a parking space within civic parking facilities in the official PIL area(s). To establish this fee, construction costs are offset by income from the parking facility. Developers/building occupants that request the PIL option still have to pay market rates (e.g. monthly fees) for the use of any parking spaces the City provides. Once the parking space(s) are assigned the developer is given priority in leasing these spaces in a City parkade.

The city-owned site at 2221 Main Street, being re-developed to create additional mix-used affording housing (VAHA project), could be a recipient location for PIL in the MPI area. This surface lot previously had 100 pay parking stalls, and was generally well utilized by businesses and visitors of the area. Introduction of PIL in Mount Pleasant will help to fund construction of the replacement parking which will be built in tandem with the VAHA project scheduled to begin construction in 2018/2019.

Although there is existing parking demand for this site, it is expected to decrease with the opening of the Millennium Line Broadway Extension. Staff will monitor the amount of stalls being utilized at 2221 Main Street and explore options for additional sites if the uptake for PIL stalls increases with redevelopment in the area. Additionally, staff is investigating the potential to allocate PIL funds collected for commercial projects to sustainable transportation initiatives since this option is currently only available for PIL funds collected for residential projects. If approved by Council, changes to the Parking By-Law to introduce PIL in the I-1, I-1A, and I-1B zoning areas will be made concurrently with other proposed changes to the Parking By-Law in 2018.

Transportation Analysis

Improvements to Transportation Network & Analysis of East 7th Avenue, Main Street, and Kingsway Intersection

An analysis was completed to explore changes at the intersection of East 7th Avenue, Main Street, and Kingsway. Based on the analysis, staff will formalize 7th Avenue from Main Street to Cambie Street as a collector street and maintain all vehicle movements at the intersection. This allows East 6th Avenue and/or East 8th Avenue to be explored as calmer local access streets with improved public realm for walking and cycling in addition to improvements to the 5th Avenue bikeway and Ontario Street greenway planned in the 2018-2022 5-Year Cycling Network Map.

Staff will advance the review of the Main Street, Kingsway, and East 7th Avenue intersection with the goal to provide a pedestrian crossing on the north side of 7th Avenue. Given the complex nature of the intersection, staff will be looking at this more closely and exploring all options including intersection signal timing and street redesign to allow the additional crossing while not introducing any new pedestrian and vehicle conflicts or concerns. In light of that, staff will move forward with a new pedestrian/cyclist activated signal at Main Street and East 6th Avenue which would be implemented in the next capital plan to improve connections to the Mount Pleasant Community Centre. As development occurs, staff is also recommending the installation of a pedestrian/cyclist activated signal at Main Street and East 4th Avenue to provide improved transit access and east-west walking and cycling permeability. The proposed improvements are summarized in **Figure 2** below.

While these access improvements will inform the overall transportation strategy for the MPI area, the installation timing for the noted signal and bikeway improvements will be evaluated against other City transportation priorities. Staff expect to report back on a complete transportation strategy for the Mount Pleasant Industrial Area in 2019.

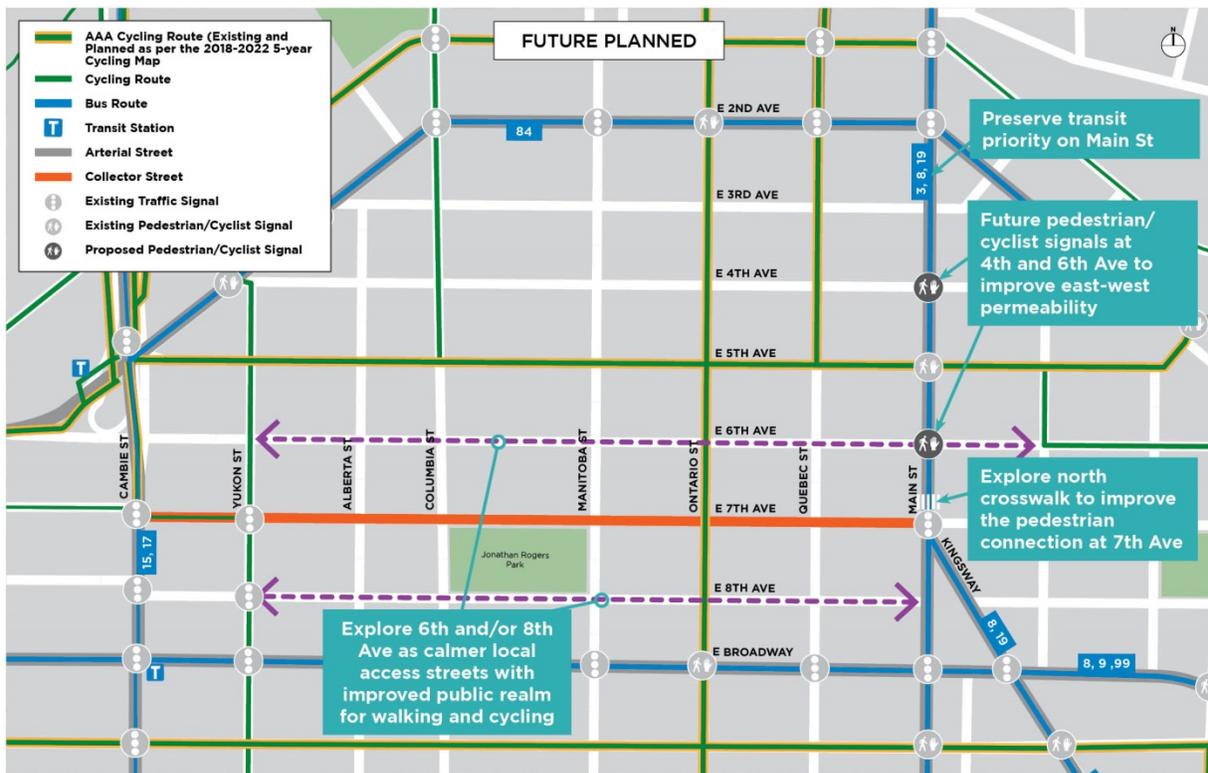


Figure 2: Map of Proposed Transportation Improvements in MPI area

Financial

Addition of a new PIL area will potentially generate additional revenue for the PIL reserve: Off-Street Parking.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommend the actions outlined in this report including the introduction of a new PIL area within the MPI I-1, I-1A, and I-1B zoning to assist in delivering replacement parking for new developments in the area. Staff will continue to monitor parking in the MPI area and manage on-street demand with time restrictions or pay parking. A crosswalk on the north side of the 7th Avenue, Main Street, and Kingsway intersection is recommended along with additional transportation improvements in the MPI area to continue to be explored into 2019.

* * * * *

Appendix A – Summary Results of Travel Mode Surveys

Key findings of the survey indicate that 58% of respondents drive to the MPI area with the remaining respondents utilizing greener modes of transportation.

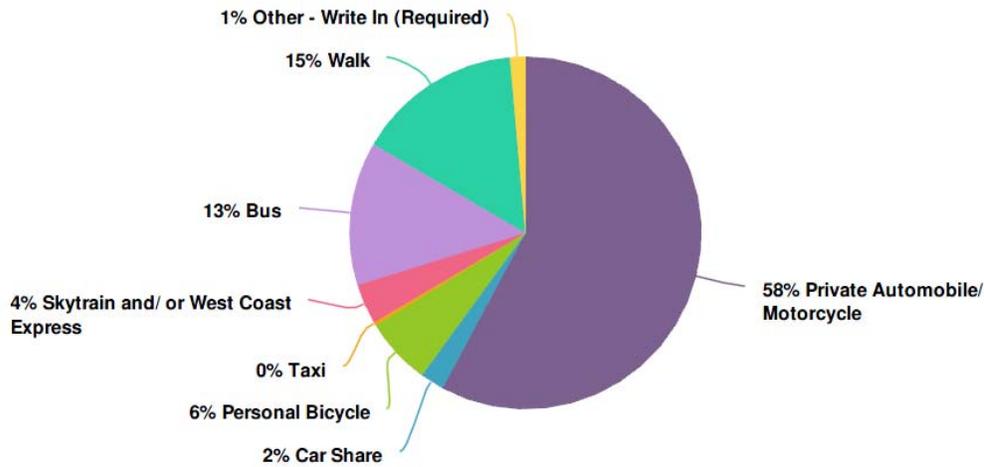


Figure A: Existing Travel Mode Splits MPI

Of the respondents that drove to their work or businesses, only 30% of respondents indicated they parked on-street with the majority of respondents (56%) parking vehicle in a private off-street lot.

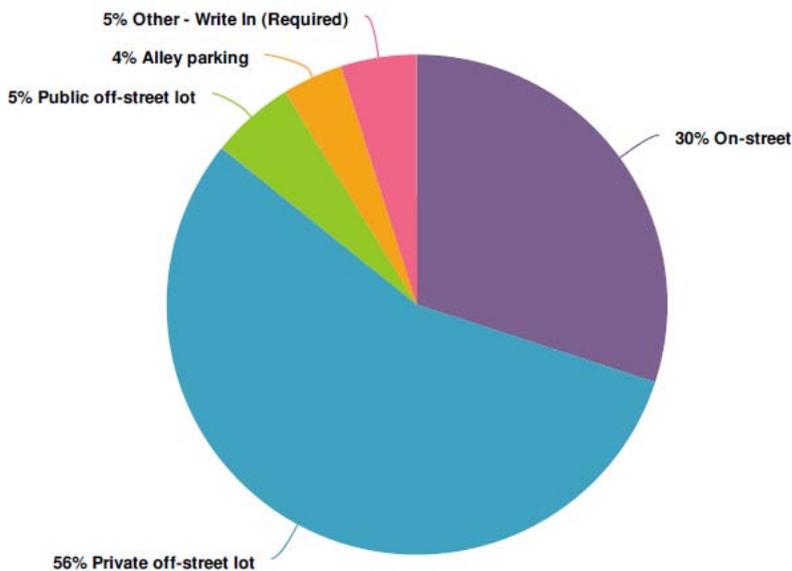


Figure B: Existing Parking Locations