



TO: FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: WATERFRONT PARKING PERMIT UPDATE

WARD: ALL

PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT: S. FAVRETTO, PARKING PROJECT LEAD, EXT. 5144
T. TURNER, MANAGER OF BUSINESS SERVICES

SUBMITTED BY: B. FORSYTH, DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT AND PARKING

GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: R. JAMES-REID, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR ACCESS BARRIE

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That a digital Waterfront Parking Permit be made available through the HotSpot app and website as outlined below:
 - a) Issued on a per-vehicle basis;
 - b) No limit to the number of permits that can be issued per municipal address;
 - c) Costs for permits will remain the same as the current hangtags, except Barrie residents will not be charged \$20 for third and subsequent permits; and
 - d) Resident permit will be valid for two calendar years.
2. That existing resident waterfront hangtags issued since 2017 that did not have a set term (until a new program is released) will now expire December 31, 2023, and that staff will transition away from issuing new hangtags ahead of the summer of 2022.
3. That the Executive Director of Access Barrie and the Director of Transit and Parking be delegated the authority to issue waterfront parking permits in exceptional scenarios and implement minor, cost-neutral program adjustments to enable staff with the ability to provide an enhanced customer experience as this digital program is launched.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

4. The purpose of this report to Finance and Corporate Services Committee is to provide an update on the waterfront parking program.
5. The Waterfront Parking Pass Program began October 2017 with Council (motion 17-G-234) directing Access Barrie to administer the program. The parameters the program currently follows are:
 - a) Each municipal address in Barrie (upon proof of residency) is entitled to two free passes and additional or replacement passes are available at a charge of \$20 per pass. The pass does not have a set term but has a disclaimer that the pass is valid until such time that a new program is released.

-
- b) Non-resident waterfront passes are available at a charge of \$90.00 (residents of Oro, Springwater, Innisfil, Essa) and \$130.00 (all other non-residents) and are valid for one calendar year.
6. As committed within the Council-approved City of Barrie Parking Strategy, the Transit and Parking department has been expanding the functionality of the HotSpot parking app. The parking app first launched hourly and daily parking in March 2021, then monthly and annual parking passes for downtown lots in August 2021, followed by the digital residential permit pilot in Allandale in January 2022. Over 15,000 Barrie parkers have created HotSpot accounts and there have been 27,850 parking sessions.
7. The City will be expanding access to parking services by making the digital permit available through the HotSpot self-serve mobile phone app and website. The HotSpot digital waterfront permit is being developed for summer 2022 and a memo to Council will be provided once a launch date is confirmed. Given the uptake of HotSpot as well as the ease of registration, it is expected this will be a preferred method for obtaining a waterfront permit for most residents, business owners and non-residents. In consideration of those without access to the internet/mobile phone or unwilling to use HotSpot, Service Barrie will be able to assist in validating and registering the digital permit in HotSpot.
8. Offering the waterfront permit through HotSpot will provide greater public access to parking services, reduce wait times, limit misuse of hangtags, and provide greater efficiency for administration. Features include:
- a) **Apply and register for your waterfront parking permit anytime and anywhere:** No more lining up in person or emailing to apply for the waterfront pass hangtag. Users can set up an account and apply for the waterfront permit from the comfort of their home, vehicle, or workplace.
 - b) **No lost or stolen hangtags:** With a HotSpot digital permit, there is no risk of losing your hangtag. Once your permit application is accepted, it is associated to the licence plate number that you applied with. You'll receive a receipt by email, and your active permits appear in your HotSpot account's permit section.
 - c) **Each vehicle has its own digital permit:** No need to remember to transfer the hangtag to your other vehicle as each vehicle registered will have its own permit.
 - d) **Expanded customer service:** HotSpot's customer service provides frontline support for all account, technical, and payment concerns. HotSpot will forward all City-related matters directly to Service Barrie to ensure users receive a seamless customer experience.
9. Residents who require a waterfront permit will be able to apply via the HotSpot website, htsp.ca, or the HotSpot mobile app by creating an account (if new to HotSpot) or logging in and visiting the Permits section. The resident will need to upload two (2) documents to apply: motor vehicle registration and proof of residency (i.e. utility bill) which will ensure that each vehicle registered is tied to a Barrie address. Once approved, HotSpot will confirm via email that the digital permit is registered and it will be included in the Permits section of the resident's HotSpot account. For business owners with a Barrie address, the same validation process applies, and staff are finalizing the application details.

ANALYSIS

Waterfront Parking Pass Program

10. The number of waterfront passes that the City issued or sold in all of 2020 and 2021:
 - a) 21,805 Resident passes:
 - i. 19,934 no-cost passes to residents of Barrie (2020: 11,434 and 2021: 8,500)
 - ii. 1,871 \$20 passes to Barrie residents who exceeded the two-pass household limit (2020: 632 and 2021: 1,239)
 - b) 276 Non-Resident passes:
 - i. 190 \$90 passes to Oro, Innisfil, Essa and Springwater residents (2020: 45 and 2021: 145)
 - ii. 86 \$130 passes to other Non-Residents (2020: 17 and 2021: 69)
11. These numbers indicate that the waterfront parking program is very popular, especially with Barrie residents. The program would benefit from this digital, self-serve option that will provide a quick and convenient way to apply for and obtain a waterfront permit, reduce wait times, and ease administrative burden.
12. Based on analysis of the current waterfront pass program and HotSpot's digital permit features, staff recommend that the waterfront pass program transition to a digital Waterfront Parking Permit made available through the HotSpot app and website as outlined below:
 - a) **Issued on a per-vehicle basis.** The digital permit validation process will determine which permit the applicant can obtain as it requires 2 documents: 1) motor vehicle registration and 2) proof of residency (i.e. utility bill). A Barrie address will qualify for the no-cost resident digital permit; an Essa, Innisfil, Oro or Springwater address will qualify for the \$90 non-resident digital permit. While this is similar to the existing validation process where the resident needs to provide proof of residency, there is an added verification at the vehicle level as the licence plate is the mechanism to ensure the validity of the permit within Hotspot for the Waterfront parking zones.
 - b) **No limit to the number of permits that can be issued.** Having no limit to the number of permits that a person can register for provides the flexibility to register each of their vehicles. This also controls misuse and fraud by ensuring that each vehicle is registered to a municipal address and that the permit cannot be transferred to an unvalidated/unregistered vehicle.
 - c) **Costs for permits will remain the same as the current hangtags, except Barrie residents will not be charged \$20 for third and subsequent permits.** This allows for more flexibility for multi-unit dwellings. HotSpot's validation process will ensure that each resident permit will be issued to a current resident of Barrie.
 - d) **Resident permit will be valid for two calendar years.** For example, a permit issued July 2022 will expire December 31, 2023, and as permit issued January 2023 will expire December 31, 2024. There will be no change in the expiry of the non-resident permit which is valid for one calendar year. It is important to note that one of the benefits of registering through HotSpot is that it notifies permit holders ahead of the expiration date.

- e) **Existing resident waterfront hangtags issued since 2017 will expire December 31, 2023.** As per the Resident Waterfront Parking Pass Program approved under motion 17-G-234, the current pass does not have a set term but has a disclaimer that the pass is valid until such time that a new program is released. With the transition to the HotSpot digital permit system, it is beneficial to introduce an expiry date for the resident hangtags that have been issued since 2017. These changes will be communicated to residents through various channels to ensure awareness.
 - f) **Staff will transition away from issuing new hangtags ahead of the summer 2022.** Those without access to the internet, without an email address, or unwilling to use HotSpot to apply for a digital permit can bring their documentation (motor vehicle registration and proof of residency (i.e. utility bill)) to Service Barrie, who will be able to validate and set them up in HotSpot for their waterfront permit.
13. The introduction of the digital permit, combined with the expiration and discontinuation of hangtags, will create a streamlined process to apply for and obtain permits, provide greater public access to parking services, reduce wait times, limit misuse of hangtags and provide greater efficiency for administration.
14. As staff launch the digital Waterfront Parking Permit, providing the Executive Director of Access Barrie and the Director of Transit and Parking with delegated authority to issue waterfront parking permits in exceptional scenarios and implement minor, cost-neutral program adjustments, will allow the flexibility to accommodate the residents needs for the overall success of the program. Some examples may include:
- a) Exceptional validation scenarios – for example, a student living in Barrie that is using their parent’s car from another city.
 - b) Unforeseen process and technical updates – for example, a software update that provides new features to enable efficiencies.
15. After the launch of the digital Waterfront Parking Permit in 2022, the program will be assessed in 2023 to review lessons learned from any unexpected issues and identify new potential opportunities. Any significant changes to the program will be brought back to Council for consideration.

Friends and Family Waterfront Parking Pass Pilot

16. In April 2021, Council directed staff in the Transit and Parking Strategy Department per motion 21-G-075 to administer the Friends and Family Waterfront Parking Pass pilot program for 2021 in the spillover waterfront parking areas as follows;
- a) Each household is entitled to five (5) free passes to be picked up from Service Barrie upon proof of residency or mailed out upon request;
 - b) The pass is only available to residential addresses where the waterfront spillover parking restrictions are currently in place as identified in Traffic By-law 2020-107, as amended;
 - c) That each pass will be valid for one (1) day and can be used from June 15 to September 15, 2021, at which point the program will expire; and
 - d) That the cost of producing the permits be funded from the Parking Reserve to an upset limit of \$5,000.

17. During the pilot, 7% of eligible households requested the passes (266 residences out of 3,407 that were eligible) and utilization surveys conducted throughout the season found that passes were only used a total of 6 times (4,300 data points). Survey results illustrated in the chart below.

LOCATION	F&F PASSES
Centennial	2
Gables	1
Tyndale	2
Wilkins Park	1
Dock Road Park	0
Johnson's Beach	0
Kempenfelt	0
Minet's Point	0

18. There is currently not a feasible digital option available for administering friends-and-family waterfront parking passes at this time. Adoption of the program would therefore require a manual administrative process for hangtags at a cost of \$2,500 per year for materials in addition to staff resources. As this was a pilot program that expired in Sept 2021 and the uptake was extremely low, staff are not recommending the continuance of that Friends-and-Family Waterfront Pass Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT MATTERS

19. There are no environmental and climate change impact matters related to the recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES

20. There are two alternatives available for consideration by Finance and Corporate Services Committee:

ALTERNATIVE #1

Finance and Corporate Services Committee could alter the proposed recommendation by having the existing resident waterfront hangtags (issued since 2017) expire December 31, 2022 but having the hangtag program continue and, starting January 1, 2023, all hangtags will be issued with a one-calendar-year validity.

Although this alternative is available, this would not increase the efficiency of administration nor address the misuse of hangtags or the inconvenience of lost or damaged hangtags.

ALTERNATIVE #2

Finance and Corporate Services Committee could extend the Friends-and-Family-Family Waterfront Pass Pilot Program into 2022 with the manual administrative process for the spillover waterfront parking areas.

This alternative is not recommended due to low uptake of the pilot program in 2021.

FINANCIAL

21. The costs associated with the proposed recommendations have been captured within the annual business plan.

LINKAGE TO 2018–2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

22. The recommendation(s) included in this Report support the following goals identified in the 2018–2022 Strategic Plan:
- Offering Innovation and Citizen Driven Services
 - Improving the Ability to Get Around Barrie
23. This program update will provide enhanced public access to parking services and will be key to developing a broader residential permit program for parking within the city.