Minutes - Executive Policy Committee - March 18, 2003

REPORTS

Minute No. 174 Changes in Parking Meter Operation
File ST-2 (Vol. 23)

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee referred the matter to the Chief Administrative Officer for further study.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Gerbasi,

That the matter be referred to the Chief Administrative Officer for further study.

Carried

Re:	**CHANGES IN PARKING METER OPERATION**
For Submission To:	**EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE**
Submitted By:	**J. A. Thomson, P. Eng., Director of Public Works**
Report Date:	**January 23, 2003**
In Camera Item:	**No**

Recommendations: That;

1. Existing 1-hour on–street parking meters not be changed to 2-hour meters at this time.
2. This matter be referred to the proposed Special Operating Agency adopted by Council on September 25, 2002 to manage city owned off-street parking facilities and on-street parking meters.
3. The Special Operating Agency be advised to review this issue with the Downtown BIZ and the Exchange BIZ.

REPORT SUMMARY:

Key Issues:

- Depending on the nature of their business some businesses prefer 1 hour parking meters and some prefer 2 hour meters.
- One-hour parking meters can serve more motorists per day than two-hour meters.
- The cost of replacing 800 one-hour mechanical parking meter mechanisms with new two-hour electronic mechanisms is approximately $260,000.
- Changing from one-hour to two-hour parking meters requires an amendment to Schedules A and B of the Parking Meter By-law.
- This issue should be reviewed by the proposed Special Operating Agency as part of the larger issue of managing city owned off-street facilities and on-street parking meters.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION(S):

General Implications:

	None
	For the organization overall and/or other departments
X	For the community and/or organizations external to the City
	Involves a multi-year phase in process

Comments: Changes in parking meter duration affect parking opportunities for adjacent businesses.

Policy Implications:

	No
X	Yes

Comments: Changing from one-hour meters to two-hour meters requires an amendment to the Parking Meter By-law.

The responsibility for managing the Parking Meter By-law would be transferred from the Transportation Division to the proposed Special Operating Agency.

Financial Implications:

	Within approved current and/or capital budget
X	Current and/or capital budget adjustment needed

Comment: Approximately $260,000 is required to effect the changes from one-hour to two hour parking meters if implemented at this time.

REPORT

Recommendations:

That;

1. Existing 1-hour on–street parking meters not be changed to 2-hour meters at this time.
2. This matter be referred to the proposed Special Operating Agency adopted by Council on September 25, 2002 to manage city owned off-street parking facilities and on-street parking meters.
3. The Special Operating Agency be advised to review this issue with the Downtown BIZ and the Exchange BIZ.

Reason for the Report:

At its meeting held on December 4, 2002 Executive Policy Committee requested, that the Administration investigate and report back on this matter.

History:

Subsequent to a resolution made by the Executive Policy Committee to approve changes to the fines structure for parking fine payment rates and amendments to By-law 789/74, the Administration was requested to investigate the feasibility to convert the existing one-hour parking meters to two-hour and to increase the existing number of two-hour parking meters in the downtown area.

Discussion:

In the Downtown area there are approximately 35,000 parking spaces, 32,600 of which are off-street and 2,400 are on-street spaces regulated by parking meters. The 2,400 metered spaces consist of 800 one-hour meters and 1,600 two-hour meters.

For the most part, the one-hour parking meters are contained within the core of the downtown. On-street parking accounts for approximately 7% of available parking downtown. Hence, on-street metered spaces cannot accommodate the total demand for short-term parking in the downtown area. Currently, many motorists have to use off-street parking facilities for which they pay a fee that is comparative or higher than that of the current parking meter rate of $1.00 per hour.

On-street parking is generally the most convenient parking opportunity in the downtown area and is therefore in high demand by motorists. In general terms, more motorists per day can be served by each of these premium spaces if the limit is one hour than if it were two hours. Consequently, if motorist who have a need to park for less than one hour cannot find an on-street parking space, they will be required to seek a less convenient off-street facility sometimes removed from their destination. Logically, off-street parking spaces should serve the longer term parking need, and on-street spaces should serve the shorter term parking needs.

Discussion: (cont'd)

A parking meter can be converted from one-hour to a two-hour limit by: (a)-replacing the current mechanism at a cost of $325, and (b)-amending the Parking Meter By-law. Over the years, this Department has consulted with fronting businesses affected by parking control changes before they are implemented. Some business owners prefer one-hour parking and some prefer two-hour parking. This preference is dependent on the nature of the commercial establishments in the vicinity of the parking meters. For example, cafes and coffee shops generally prefer one-hour limits since their customers generally can be served within 30 minutes. More expensive restaurants generally prefer two-hour limits since their customers generally stay longer than one hour. Similarly, businesses such as camera and gift shops prefer one-hour parking meters where as services such as hair salons prefer two-hour meters.

Changing a parking meter from a one-hour to a two-hour limit requires a by-law change and $325 and the replacement of all one-hour parking meters results in a total cost of $260,000. It should also be recognized that replacing these 800 parking meters will take several months to complete.

Streets having commercial frontage outside the downtown are generally signed with non-metered one or two-hour limits. The manner in which this is done is based on a process that petitions the agreement of the majority of the fronting business. Generally, finding an open parking space on streets having a two-hour limit is more difficult than on those streets that have a one-hour parking limit.

There are currently some metered streets with one-hour limits that are not within the Downtown core area (e.g., north of City Hall) and a change to two-hour meters appears to be more compatible with the short-term parking needs of the area. In the core of the downtown, the one-hour limit more closely reflects the need for high turnover in each parking space.

Prior to any commitment to alter parking meter time limits, it is recommended that this matter be referred to the proposed Special Operating Agency (adopted by Council on September 25, 2002) assigned to manage City-owned off-street parking facilities and on-street parking meters and that the views and preferences of the Downtown BIZ and the Exchange District BIZ be attained.

In preparing this report, there was consultation with and concurrence by: N/A

This Report Submitted by:

Department:	Public Works Department	
Division:	Transportation Division	
Prepared by:	Luis Escobar, P. Eng.	Phone No. 986-5895
Processed by:	Carol Kawaza	Phone No. 986-5288

Document Name:ChangesinParkingMeterOperationReport.doc

Project Name:

Changes in Parking Meter Operation

COMMENTS:

There is no financial impact to the city as this report recommends that existing 1-hour meters not be changed to 2-hour meters.

Approved by D. Stewart, CA
Manager of Finance & Administration

Approved by Divisional Accountant Trainee: ☒