

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING August 26, 2019

AUTHORED BY DAVID LABERGE, MANAGER, BYLAW SERVICES

SUBJECT TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS REGULATION BYLAW AMENDMENT

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present for Council's consideration an amendment to the City of Nanaimo "Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw 1993 No. 5000" relating to disabled parking permits.

Recommendation

That:

1. "Traffic and Highways Regulation Amendment Bylaw 2019 No. 5000.046" (To remove the time-limit and payment exemptions for vehicles displaying disabled parking permits in City parkades) pass first reading;
2. "Traffic and Highways Regulation Amendment Bylaw 2019 No. 5000.046" pass second reading; and
3. "Traffic and Highways Regulation Amendment Bylaw 2019 No. 5000.046" pass third reading.

BACKGROUND

The City's "Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw 1993 No. 5000" (the "Traffic Regulation Bylaw") was enacted in 1993. Section 8 permits vehicles displaying disabled parking permits to park in off-street parking facilities (City parkades) without charge and for indefinite periods of time.

Demand for long-term on and off-street parking downtown has increased steadily over time. On certain days of the week, public parking inventory in City-owned parkades is near capacity. Parking permits are sold with provisions to accommodate long and short-term parking needs.

DISCUSSION

The exemptions provided in Section 8 of the "Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw 1993 No. 5000" are intended to provide people with disabilities access to short-term on and off-street parking at no cost.

Some members of the public have been using the exemptions under Section 8 for long-term parking of their vehicles within City parkades at no cost.

Fourteen vehicles displaying disabled placards were recently found to be stored (i.e., not moved daily) in Harbour Front and Port of Nanaimo Centre (Vancouver Island Conference Centre) parkades. The Bastion parkade was not included in this count. Staff estimate that revenue lost

at current parking rates would total \$18,480 annually (\$110/month = \$1,540 per month, or \$18,480 in lost revenue annually).

Long-term storage of vehicles in City parkades free of charge was not the intention of the exemption under Section 8 "Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw 1993 No. 5000". These vehicles contribute to parking congestion in parkades which at times are operating at capacity, and prevent motorists from accessing spaces reserved for disabled parking.

The proposed amendment will remove the time-limit and payment exemptions for vehicles displaying disabled parking permits in City parkades. Vehicles with disabled placards will still be exempted from paying for on-street parking.

OPTIONS

1. That:

1. "Traffic and Highways Regulation Amendment Bylaw 2019 No. 5000.046" (To remove the time-limit and payment exemptions for vehicles displaying disabled parking permits in City parkades) pass first reading;
2. "Traffic and Highways Regulation Amendment Bylaw 2019 No. 5000.046" pass second reading; and
3. "Traffic and Highways Regulation Amendment Bylaw 2019 No. 5000.046" pass third reading.

The advantages of this option:

- There is a small subset of the population who are taking advantage of an exemption in the bylaw. By addressing this issue, Council will be able to increase parking revenues and free up more space for hourly/daily use of disabled parking in the City's parkades.
- The exemption for on-street parking will remain for vehicles with disabled placards.

The disadvantages of this option:

- Staff time will be needed to work with the small user group to find alternative parking solutions

2. That Council deny approval of the amendments to City of Nanaimo "Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw 1993 No. 5000", and vehicles displaying an official "Disabled Persons Parking Placard" continue to be exempted from parking time limits and payment in City parkades.

The advantages of this option:

- The current bylaw will remain unchanged. Staff are currently working on a comprehensive review of the Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw and the amendments identified in this staff report could be incorporated into the larger review process.

The disadvantages of this option:

- There is a small subset of the population who are taking advantage of an exemption in the bylaw. By not amending the Bylaw at this point in time, the current practice will continue.

3. That Council provide alternative direction.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The Traffic Regulation Bylaw currently exempt vehicles displaying disabled parking placards from parking time limits and payment in City parkades.
- There is increased demand for on- and off-street parking downtown, and at times City parkades are operating at near-capacity.
- The disabled parking placard exemption was not intended to provide long-term vehicle storage in parkades, free of charge.
- A small subset of the population who are accessing the exemption results in a loss of revenue and loss of hourly parking spaces in the parkades for persons with disabilities.
- The elimination of time-limit and payment exemptions in City parkades is recommended. Free on-street parking would still be provided for vehicles displaying disabled parking placards.

ATTACHMENTS

“Traffic and Highways Regulation Amendment Bylaw 2019 No. 5000.046”

Submitted by:

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Concurrence by:

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