



AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL

RFD# 2018147

Date: November 26, 2018

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Amherst Town Council
SUBMITTED BY: Jason MacDonald, Deputy CAO, Operations
DATE: November 26, 2018
SUBJECT: Downtown Parking Lot Leases

ORIGIN: The Town has historically leased various parking lots in the Downtown in order to provide public parking. The current leases have expired. Staff were given direction to procure public parking via a request for proposals.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: Municipal Government Act Section 65; Power to Expend Money (x) Land and Buildings required for a public purpose and (ap) Parking Lots and parking structures.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council approve the lease agreements for public parking lots and authorize the Mayor and CAO to sign them.

DISCUSSION: The Town currently leases approximately 381 parking spots for public parking in the Downtown area. Historically we have provided maintenance as well as snow and ice management services for these lots. In addition, the Town would pay the property tax on the portion of the property attributed to the parking lot. This resulted in an average cost per stall as low as \$11.05 per year in one lot and as high as \$112 per year in another lot. Other lots did not cost anything as they were owned by religious institutions and taxes were exempt.

In order to bring fairness to the situation and open the possibility of leasing parking to the Town to all property owners, at the November 2017 Committee of the Whole, the following motion was passed:

Moved by Councillor Byrne, Seconded by Councillor MacKenzie: That Council direct staff to develop an RFP for the provision of public parking spaces within the downtown area for Council's approval.

The following chart indicates which parking lots were included in responses to the RFP, as well as the evaluation score. A total of 368 parking stalls are included in the submissions which compares favorably to the 381 currently leased. All parking lots, with the exception of 13 Church Street received good and similar scores. While most of the parking lots received a low (3-4) PASER rating of the asphalt condition, all lots can be safely operated for the life of the lease with general maintenance from Town staff.



Parking Lot	Location	# Spots	Total Score
Lions Club	Electric St	35	72
Minocha	12 LaPlanche (last row of Town Hall lot)	10	80
Dayles	129 E Victoria	43	84
Trinity	20 Havelock	40	89
Christ Church	Behind Town Hall	41	79
First Baptist	Behind Town Hall	59	95
Cumberland Invest	13 Church (Tim's Lot)	10	50
George Blanch Compass Realty	25 Prince Arthur	130	95

It should be noted that the owners of the previously leased 'movie theater lot', did not respond to the RFP. While this lot had a fairly high vacancy rate in the 2017 parking lot usage survey, staff suggest that we contact the owners to see if they are interested in leasing this lot under the same terms as the RFP.

In addition, there are two owners of the parking lot located at 13 Church Street (Tim Hortons Lot). There are 10 spaces owned by the owner of Tim Horton's building and 32 owned by the owners of the court house building located across Church Street from the lot. The property manager of the court house building indicated that as the building was in the process of being sold, the company was not in a position to enter into a new lease. However, he did indicate that the new purchaser would likely be interested in leasing these spaces.

The owner of the Tim Horton's building has indicated that he is interested, but would like the Town to pay the property tax on the property. Staff recommend against this arrangement, as it would cost the Town about \$100 / stall for a total of \$1000 per year. Agreeing to pay this amount would be unfair to the other lessees. Finally, without the adjacent lot owned by the courthouse building, the 10 spaces owned by the Tim Horton's building do not make sense to lease and operate.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: We currently pay a total of \$6002.65 for the parking lot leases (we pay the property tax amounts). Under the terms of the new leases, the Town would no longer pay the taxes, saving approximately \$6002.65 / year. Maintenance and snow clearing will likely be a similar cost.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: The RFP process was open to the public and advertised according to applicable policy and legislation. In addition, all current lease holders were specifically notified of the process and owners of all parking lots downtown were hand delivered notices. Once leases are signed, new signage can be considered.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS: There are no environmental implications as a result of leasing the parking lots.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS: Once leases are signed, Town staff will determine the appropriateness and opportunity to best provide accessible parking in each of the lots.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Do not enter into the lease agreements and do not operate public parking lots in the downtown, other than at Town owned facilities.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Parking Lot Lease Template
2. Parking Lot Pictures

Report prepared by: Jason MacDonald, Deputy CAO, Operations

Report and Financial approved by: