

NO: **R015**

COUNCIL DATE: **FEBRUARY 2, 2015**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **January 29, 2015**

FROM: **General Manager, Engineering**

FILE: **8630-30 (TRUCKS)**

SUBJECT: **Truck Parking Status Update**

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Endorse the actions documented in this report in support of addressing the parking needs of commercial trucks in Surrey:
 - a) Continue with proactive search efforts to encourage development of truck parking facilities and other viable solutions;
 - b) Continue to work with the Province to secure provincial lands for truck parking;
 - c) Review the current zoning requirements and Temporary Use permits as they relate to truck parking to reduce requirements and improve financial viability;
 - d) Develop an Industrial and Commercial Enforcement Strategy; and
 - e) Continue enforcement of unauthorized truck parking within the ALR.

INTENT

At the September 8, 2014 Regular Land Use Council meeting, Council requested staff to bring forward a report outlining the current status of truck parking within the City.

This report provides an update to Council on the current status of trucks and truck parking in Surrey, actions that staff have taken and plan to take to address truck parking needs within the City, and seeks Council approval of key strategies to enhance the supply and management of truck parking in Surrey.

BACKGROUND

Commercial truck parking within Surrey involves over 6,000 vehicles; most doing business in compliance with established zoning and by-laws but approximately 1,300 are parking on a non-compliant basis, in some instances on agricultural property. This is an issue that requires a high level of ongoing monitoring, enforcement, and administrative coordination between various City departments (By-laws, Planning, and Engineering) as well as with interested parties at the provincial level (MLA's and regulatory agencies such as the Agricultural Land Commission and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure). While efforts have led to significant progress in meeting demand for truck parking, ongoing efforts are still required to achieve greater compliance while providing viable options for truck owners/operators.

Distribution of Trucks and Current Capacity

Vehicle registration data shows approximately 6,000 trucks with a licenced gross vehicle weight greater than 5,000 kilograms are registered to addresses within the City. These trucks are distributed within the City as follows:

Parking Associated with a Business - 2,400 Trucks:

Staff estimate that approximately 40% of the total trucks registered within Surrey, which equates to approximately 2,400 trucks, are associated with businesses that have their business premises where these trucks are parked.

Authorized and "In Process" Temporary Use Permit (TUP) Sites - 2,312 Spaces:

Within our inventory of authorized commercial/industrial parking facilities and "In Process" TUP facilities, we have a total of 2,312 spaces overall.

Agricultural Land Reserve – 300 Trucks:

Staff have observed approximately 300 trucks (5%) parked on various sites within the ALR. These sites are the focus of enforcement efforts by By-laws, as they do not comply with ALC regulations regarding ancillary uses in support of agriculture and in some cases increase soil contamination risks.

Developed Residential Zones - No Trucks:

Staff have been very successful with deterring trucks from parking within developed residential zones. Immediate enforcement action is taken whenever there are any infractions of this type which has resulted in virtually no trucks found parked in these zones.

Unauthorized Industrial / Commercial Sites – 1,000 Trucks:

The remainder of trucks are believed to be parked in unauthorized commercial/industrial sites (zoned or designated). These sites will be the primary focus of the City in upcoming enforcement efforts.

Based on a recent survey, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate an additional 10% (or roughly 230 vehicles) within Authorized and In-Process TUP's sites. There is also additional capacity within the unauthorized industrial/commercial sites.

DISCUSSION

The following guiding principles form the basis for consideration of initiatives related to truck parking in Surrey:

1. Truck owner-operator should not be viewed as just truck owners, but rather as business owners. The provision of parking should be viewed as a necessary part of the truck owner/operators business.
2. Truck parking lots will generally be interim uses on land that will be displaced by higher order use as land values increase.
3. The City of Surrey will facilitate, coordinate and enforce truck parking-where needed.
4. Interim truck parking solutions should not adversely affect other land uses.
5. Safety and environmental impacts must be considered while evaluating truck parking solutions.
6. Truck parking is a regional issue which requires intergovernmental solutions.

The following provides a brief summary of all of the efforts taken to date as well as ongoing and new initiatives.

Improvements to the Temporary Use Permit (TUP) – Complete:

Changes to the TUP have been implemented to help streamline the permit process and reduce onerous requirements to encourage the development of truck parking facilities in a cost efficient manner. Some new conditions were introduced into the TUP to address concerns relating to parking organization and surfacing identified by truck operators.

Truck Parking Webpage – Complete:

In efforts to assist truckers in finding authorized truck parking facilities, the City has created a truck parking facility webpage. This page lists the authorized parking facilities within Surrey and enables truck operator to independently locate parking lots and obtain contact information.

Contacting Industrial Property Owners – Complete:

Approximately 6,000 information packages were mailed out encouraging industrial property owners to consider utilizing surplus land for “third party” truck parking.

On-Street Parking in Industrial Areas – Complete:

Staff evaluated the possibility of permitting “on-street” truck parking in industrial areas of the City. This initiative was not supported due to objections of owners of fronting properties in relation to their needs for on-street parking for their business needs. In addition, due to the size of commercial vehicles and the space required to park these vehicles, only a very limited number of truck parking spaces could be achieved between driveways. Furthermore, truck operators raised concerns with the lack of security and uncertainty about the availability of such spaces on an ongoing basis.

Truck Parking Coordinator – Ongoing:

In 2008 in recognition of the scope of issues associated with commercial truck parking, Council endorsed the hiring of a Truck Parking Coordinator who has been working with truck owners and industrial land owners to find a sufficient supply of appropriate truck parking facilities, both permanent and temporary.

BC Hydro Lands – Ongoing:

Staff have met with BC Hydro and reviewed various options in an effort to utilize lands located within BC Hydro transmission line corridors in industrial areas for truck parking. BC Hydro was not willing to lease land to the private sector due to concerns with orderliness and contamination issues, but was willing to lease the lands to the City and permit the City to sublease to the private sector. Upon locating a viable location, the City issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a private sector proponent to construct and operate a truck parking facility; however, proponents required substantive contributions from the City, as well as underwriting any losses. As well, BC Hydro required that the City be responsible for all aspects of the lease, which would include the operation and remediation of any soil contamination. These issues made proceeding non-viable.

Staff have followed up with BC Hydro to determine if they have any other viable lands that they would allow to be used for truck parking. Senior Management from BC Hydro has advised that they have potential upcoming projects at their Surrey Campus (88 Avenue/128 Street) and thus this site will not be available for truck parking. They did not identify any other lands that they could make available for truck parking. Staff will continue to follow up with BC Hydro regarding any other opportunities for truck parking that may arise.

Senior Levels of Government – Ongoing:

There has been significant Provincial interest surrounding the concerns related to truck parking. The Province has held meetings and invited the City to take part in extensive dialog with MLA's and Ministers in efforts to find long term, viable solutions.

The MOTI has hired a consultant to aid in the review and evaluation of potential measures, including Provincial lands along South Fraser Perimeter Road (SFPR) which may be surplus to their needs and suitable for truck parking. Staff have been working with the consultant and provided information on the work the City has completed to date in the efforts to expedite the review and assist in finding workable solutions.

Proactive Search – Ongoing:

Staff will continue to work to identify underutilized vacant industrial/commercial zoned sites that are suitable for interim truck parking. Staff will contact the property owners of these sites and provide them with the requirements for converting their site into a truck parking facility. In addition, staff will continue to review and investigate any other viable options to increase the supply of truck parking spaces.

Truck Parking Application Process – Ongoing:

Staff will continue to work with Truck Park applicants (Temporary Use Permit and permanent sites) to guide and fast-track them through the process.

Review of Requirements – New:

Development and servicing costs are a challenge when constructing truck parking facilities. Staff have engaged in a review of the current requirements and policies as they relate to truck parking, in efforts to reduce costs and further streamline the development of parking facilities. Zoning requirements to facilitate permanent facilities and Temporary Use Permits is the main focus of the review.

Unauthorized Truck Parking Enforcement

Staff have undertaken a phased enforcement approach to address unauthorized parking sites. While the main focus over the last year has been ALR sites, City of Surrey enforcement staff have continued to initiate immediate enforcement action on specific industrial/commercial sites when complaints/concerns have been raised or whenever truck parking was observed or reported in developed residential zones.

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) – Ongoing:

There are approximately 300 trucks currently parking on Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) which have a substantive impact on farm land by reducing the area available for farming, deposition of illegal fill, potentially contaminating the soil, and diverting natural drainage flows.

In the efforts to remedy this issue, enforcement on truck parking taking place on sites within the ALR sites has been underway since December 2013 based on concerns raised by the public and government agencies regarding the impact on agricultural land. All ALR property owners were sent a general information letter informing them of the City's restrictions related to parking commercial vehicles on ALR lands. Following this mail out, specific properties that were identified to be in non-compliance with the City's By-Law were contacted and provided an opportunity to relocate any excess vehicles to suitably zoned sites.

A significant number of sites voluntarily complied with the removal of the vehicles. However, ongoing Legal and enforcement effort is necessary to ensure continued compliance and address the remainder of the non-complying sites.

The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) has no explicit policy regarding non-farm truck parking in the ALR. At this time, the ALR Regulations do not permit any non-farm use within the ALR and this would include truck parking. If a person wishes to park a truck(s) on their property within the ALR they must apply to the ALC for authorization. The Province is currently reviewing ALR regulations as they pertain specifically to truck parking. City of Surrey By-laws only permit 1 non-farm related truck to be parked on a site provided it is ancillary to the residential use and is registered to the owner or occupant. Regulations of other local municipalities vary between 0 and 3 trucks.

Industrial and Commercial Sites – New:

For the second phase of enforcement, staff have been working to identify and quantify all unauthorized Industrial and Commercial, (zoned or designated) truck parking sites and preparing an enforcement/legalization strategy. In early 2015 staff will present a proposed enforcement strategy to the Transportation and Infrastructure committee.

Staff believe only a small percentage of unauthorized sites will be deemed unsuitable for truck parking activities, thus the fundamental intent of the overall enforcement strategy will be to seek improvements to legitimize the use of suitable sites for truck parking, while closing problematic unauthorized sites. Legitimizing the current supply of unauthorized sites will significantly add to the City's current inventory of truck parking spaces and address issues raised by truck owner/operators.

CONCLUSION

By virtue of its large land base and lower land values relative to some other Metro Vancouver municipalities, the demands for truck parking in Surrey have been growing. In many instances truck parking does not comply with zoning or ALC regulations. This has required enforcement and monitoring along with diligent efforts to source new supplies of parking that comply or could comply with zoning regulations.

The issues will ultimately diminish as the City matures, as has been the experience in Vancouver: truck parking lots will generally be interim uses that will eventually be displaced by higher order uses as land values increase. In the meantime, considerable and coordinated effort will be required from Engineering, By-laws, and Planning.

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council:

- Endorse the actions documented in this report in support of addressing the parking needs of commercial trucks in Surrey:
 - a) Continue with proactive search efforts to encourage development of truck parking facilities and other viable solutions;
 - b) Continue to work with the Province to secure provincial lands for truck parking;
 - c) Review the current zoning requirements and Temporary Use permits as they relate to truck parking to reduce requirements and improve financial viability;
 - d) Develop an Industrial and Commercial Enforcement Strategy; and
 - e) Continue enforcement of unauthorized truck parking within the ALR.

Fraser Smith, P.Eng., MBA
General Manager, Engineering

FS/JB/DH/RJS/clr/ras