



## **Staff Report for Council Meeting**

**Date of Meeting:** May 27, 2020

**Report Number:** SRCS.20.13

**Department:** Community Services  
**Division:** Community Standards

**Subject:** Lake Wilcox Park Pay Parking

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### **Purpose:**

To implement pay parking in the Lake Wilcox Park parking lots.

### **Recommendations:**

- a) That Staff Report SRCS.20.13 be received;
- b) That the Lake Wilcox Parking Study prepared by IBI Group, dated April 17, 2020 (Attachment 1) be received;
- c) That the Commissioner of Community Services be authorized to negotiate, enter into, and execute an agreement with Precise Park to implement pay parking at Lake Wilcox Park;
- d) That By-law No. 37-20 (Attachment 2 to staff report SRCS.20.13) be enacted to amend the Parking Regulation By-law No. 402-89 and Municipal Code Chapter 1116 regarding the regulation of parking within the City of Richmond Hill;
- e) That By-law No. 18-20 (Attachment 3 to staff report SRCS.20.13) be enacted to amend Schedules "A" and "B" of the Administrative Penalty By-law No. 69-16;
- e) That By-law No. 38-20 (Attachment 4 to staff report SRCS.20.13) be enacted to amend the Tariff of Fees By-law No. 108-19 to include \$4 per hour and \$5 per hour fees for parking at Lake Wilcox Park applicable to all vehicles not registered to individuals living in Richmond Hill.
- f) That \$10,000 be allocated from the Transportation Network Reserve Fund to the Roads Operating Budget to fund the regulatory signage necessary to implement parking restrictions on residential streets in the vicinity of Lake Wilcox Park as described herein.

### **Contact Person:**

Tracey Steele, Director of Community Standards, extension 2476

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Dan Terziewski, Director of Development Engineering and Transportation, extension 6358

### **Report Approval:**

**Submitted by:** Darlene Joslin, Acting Commissioner of Community Services

**Approved by:** Mary-Anne Dempster, Acting City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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### Background:

Lake Wilcox Park is one of Richmond Hill's six Destination Parks and is intended for use by residents city-wide because of its unique amenities and location on the shoreline of Lake Wilcox. Over the past several years Richmond Hill has invested in the enhancement of facilities at Lake Wilcox Park. The Oak Ridges Community Centre opened in the park in 2012 and walking trails, a splash pad, a skateboard park, and beach volleyball courts, among other facilities, were subsequently built in the park.

The tremendous environmental and natural recreational opportunities associated with the lake, combined with the recently constructed recreational amenities, have resulted in Lake Wilcox Park becoming a significant City destination that attracts visitors from across Richmond Hill and beyond. The current volume of park use has led to a number of concerns being expressed by local residents. These concerns include:

- an increase in neighborhood litter and litter in the park
- park users not adhering to Park Use By-law rules and regulations
- traffic safety issues
- parking issues
- visitors from outside the city not contributing to the costs of operating the park

Over the past years the City has responded to these concerns by, among other things:

- providing a Parks Operations presence in the park full-time in the summer months
- implementing all day by-law and parking enforcement patrols in the park and surrounding areas on summer weekends
- having park security contractors visit the park after hours to patrol for unauthorized use
- implementing better parking and directional signage including instituting a one way travel movement in the main (splash pad) parking lot

On July 10, 2017 Council directed staff “to undertake a parking analysis that will review the overall adequacy of parking provided at the Lake Wilcox Park to address the current lack of parking.” The City retained the services of IBI Group to complete the requested parking analysis in 2019. The resulting Lake Wilcox Parking Study report is attached to SRCS.20.13 as Attachment 1. The report includes a detailed summary of statistical data collected in the park during the summer of 2019 and makes recommendations based on analysis of the data. The immediate term recommendations of the report are:

1. Implement paid parking (for non-residents) in all parking lots
2. Restrict parking on nearby residential streets
3. Add wayfinding/directional signage for drivers and pedestrians

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### Discussion:

Staff recommend implementation of the immediate term recommendations of the Lake Wilcox Parking Study. SRCS.20.13 brings forward the necessary actions to facilitate this implementation.

#### 1. Implementation of Pay Parking

Staff have undertaken a market assessment of pay parking management vendors. The assessment involved discussions with eight different vendors and a comparison of their costs, operational options and technology. Two of the vendors were selected for more detailed interviews and presentations. As a result of the market assessment process, staff from various City divisions arrived at a consensus decision that Precise Park provides the best option for the provision of a pay parking system at Lake Wilcox Park. The Precise Park solution includes payment pedestals that accept coin and credit card payments as well as a mobile app (Flowbird) which provides for electronic payments via phone. Many people are familiar with the Precise Park solution as it is the system used by the Toronto Parking Authority and various other municipalities.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Lake Wilcox Parking Study, staff recommend that only park visitors from outside Richmond Hill be required to pay for parking. Richmond Hill residents are already paying for the operation of the park through their property taxes so charging non-residents for parking will facilitate equitable cost distribution amongst park users. Residents will be able to register for free parking at Lake Wilcox Park by visiting a city facility (including the Oak Ridges Community Centre) or registering through the AIMS (parking control software) system.

Staff suggest that non-resident payment for parking will be required between 7 a.m. and 11:30 p.m. every day during the spring/summer season from April 1 until September 30. The proposed cost for parking will be \$4 per hour in the two Oak Ridges Community Centre lots and the north gravel lot, and \$5 per hour in the central parking lot adjacent to the splash pad (See page 4 exhibit 2.2 of Attachment 1 for Map of Lake Wilcox Park parking lots).

In order to implement the pay parking program three City by-laws must be amended as follows:

- i. The Parking Regulation By-law No. 402-89 must be amended to clearly indicate the area designated for pay parking, and provide an offence related to parking in the designated pay parking area without a permit. The recommended amendment is attached as By-law No. 37-20 (Attachment 2).
- ii. The Administrative Penalties By-law No. 69-16 must be amended to provide for enforcement of the new parking offence through the City's Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS). The recommended amendment is attached as By-law No.18-20 (Attachment 3). Note that Attachment 3 also includes administrative adjustments to Schedule 'B' of By-law 69-16 in order to provide consistency with York Region's Parking By-law.

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- iii. The 2020 Tariff of Fees By-law No. 108-19 must be amended to include the desired parking fees of \$5 per hour for the main/splash pad parking lot and \$4 per hour for the other three parking lots at Lake Wilcox Park. The recommended amendment is attached as By-law No. 38-20 (Attachment 4).

## 2. Parking Restrictions on Residential Streets

In order to help prevent the pay parking at Lake Wilcox Park from creating a situation wherein users attempt to park on streets to avoid payment, it is recommended that parking on all residential streets within 500 metres of Lake Wilcox Park amenities be limited to use by local residents only, on summer weekends. Streets subject to this new restriction will be those within Zones 1 thru 4 of the Lake Wilcox Parking Study (see page 4 Exhibit 2.2 of Attachment 1)

Parking on the Zones 1 thru 4 residential streets will be signed as “Parking by Permit Only – Weekends and Statutory Holidays from April 1 to September 30.” Residents of these streets will have the same abilities to park as residents on other residential streets. Each household will be automatically issued (via mail) one permit to facilitate 3 hour maximum street parking during summer weekends. Additional permits for households will be available at no cost upon request to the Community Standards Division. Residents will still need to purchase standard temporary parking permits if they wish to park on the streets in excess of 3 hours or overnight (consistent with requirements for residents in other areas of the City).

An appropriate offence to facilitate this parking arrangement is already contained within the Parking Regulation By-law:

### 4.2 Parking- designated hours – permit displayed – only

Where properly worded signs have been erected and are on display, no person shall park a motor vehicle in an area designated for permit parking only, during the hours designated therein, except a motor vehicle issued a parking permit by the City on which such parking permit is readily and openly displayed upon the front windshield.

The required amendment to Schedule ‘E’ of the Parking Regulation By-law, to include the streets above as Permit Parking locations, is included in Attachment 2.

## 3. Wayfinding Signage

One of the common comments made by visitors to Lake Wilcox Park is that there is a lack of directional wayfinding signage to help people navigate to the various amenities within the park. There is a pedestrian wayfinding sign that was installed at the entrance to the new Youth Area (see page 20, Exhibit 4-6 of Attachment 1). This sign should be used as a template for additional signs to be installed at other park entrances.

Additionally, the survey of park users conducted through the Lake Wilcox Park Parking Study found that almost 25% of the visitors were not aware that there is more than one

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parking lot serving the park. This creates traffic and parking issues as cars circulate within the same lot waiting for other vehicles to leave because drivers are not aware they could exit that particular lot and find parking elsewhere. The Flowbird app associated with the Precise Park parking management system will help to resolve this problem as it will show people using the app that there are additional nearby pay parking lots. However, additional wayfinding signage will also be provided along Bayview Avenue to help guide drivers who choose not to use the mobile app. It is recommended that signs with arrows indicating the direction of additional parking be installed along Bayview to direct drivers to the gravel lot and the south Community Centre lot.

### Implementation/Timing

The Lake Wilcox Park parking lots are currently closed to the public in response to Covid-19 – related concerns. Optimally, reopening of the lots would coincide with the commencement of pay parking. This would provide for the simplest and most straightforward communications and messaging to the public. However, at present timing for reopening of the parking lots is not known. It is proposed that staff move forward with project implementation in an effort realize the goal of reopening the lots with pay parking in place; but, it should be acknowledged that this may not be possible given the unpredictability of the current situation.

Closure of the parking lots to prevent use of park facilities and gatherings during the Covid-19 emergency has resulted in issues associated with people parking on nearby residential streets to access Lake Wilcox Park. To help resolve this issue it is recommended that the parking restrictions on residential streets in the vicinity of Lake Wilcox Park should be implemented as soon as possible via installation of signage and distribution of permits over the next couple of months. Similarly, work to install the wayfinding signage, communicate the intent to install pay parking to the public, and issuance of free permits to Richmond Hill residents could begin immediately.

Communications will be required to ensure residents are aware of and have enough notice to park without paying. This may include print and digital ads, web content, social media and traditional media. In addition, direct communication with local area residents is required to ensure they understand the changes happening on the nearby streets. Customer service staff in Access Richmond Hill and the community centres will be provided with information to address questions and issues.

### Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

#### Capital/Start-up Costs – Total \$65,500

Implementation of the Precise Park pay parking system at Lake Wilcox Park will require approximately \$20,000 for initial set up and integration with the City's AIMS parking control software. It is proposed that this amount be funded from the existing capital account for the AIMS parking management software purchase and configuration, which currently contains approximately \$450,000 in uncommitted funds.

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Approximately \$30,000 will be required to install proposed pedestrian and wayfinding signage within Lake Wilcox Park and along Bayview Avenue. It is proposed that this amount will be sourced from the existing capital account for the Lake Wilcox Park Youth Area project which currently contains approximately \$460,000 in uncommitted funds. Note that this expenditure is recommended regardless of whether pay parking is implemented or not in order to provide park visitors with better wayfinding information.

\$10,000 is required to install the regulatory street signs necessary to implement the new parking restrictions on residential streets. It is proposed that this amount be allocated from the Transportation Network Reserve Fund to a Roads operational account.

Approximately \$5,500 will be required for communications and marketing. This amount is proposed to be sourced from existing Community Service Department printing and marketing operating accounts.

### **Operating Costs – Total \$36,000 per year + Transaction Charges**

Precise Park charges approximately \$1,000 per month for rental and operating costs associated with each payment pedestal. Assuming rental of 6 payment pedestals, this amounts to a total monthly operating cost of \$6,000, which covers rental of the pedestals, management and collection of payments (both credit card and cash), and public customer service response. Assuming a July 1, 2020 opening of the parking lots the estimated 2020 operating cost for pay parking would be \$18,000. Assuming a full season of operation in 2021 the estimated 2021 operating cost would be \$36,000. As operating costs will be covered by revenues (as described below), specific operating funds will not need to be allocated for 2020. 2020 amounts will be used to provide more accurate expenditure and revenue estimates in the 2021 operating budget.

Precise Park also charges \$0.35 for each permit purchase transaction made via their mobile app and a 4.3% processing fee on all credit card charges.

### **Operating Revenue – Estimated \$175,000 per year (note 2020 will not be a full year and is subject to unknowns resulting from Covid-19)**

Based on survey data collected through the Lake Wilcox Parking Study it is estimated that pay parking for non-resident visitors to Lake Wilcox Park over the summer months as outlined in this report could generate approximately \$150,000 to 200,000 in net revenue annually (given a full six months of operation). This equates to approximately \$30,000 to \$40,000 revenue in the busiest summer months (June, July and August) and less in shoulder season months (April, May and September). It should be noted that the current Covid-19 situation may impact potential revenue.

Staff will monitor the use of the parking lots based on the \$4/\$5 rates for this summer and adjust the Tariff of Fees for next year accordingly with the target of 90% occupancy in the lots during peak times (as recommended by IBI Group, see Page 14 of Attachment 1).

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### **Relationship to the Strategic Plan:**

Pay parking at Lake Wilcox Park is consistent with the Strategic Plan goal of “Wise Management of Resources” as it ensures that visitors to Lake Wilcox Park from outside the City contribute to funding the operational costs of the park. Additionally, implementation of pay parking at the park will provide some control on the level of park use and in doing so help to ensure the protection and enhancement of this valuable green space.

### **Conclusion:**

The tremendous environmental and natural recreational opportunities associated with Lake Wilcox, combined with recently constructed recreational amenities, have resulted in Lake Wilcox Park becoming a significant City destination that attracts visitors from across Richmond Hill and beyond. The current volume of park use has led to a number of concerns, associated with parking, traffic, use and operating costs, being expressed by local residents.

In response to Council direction to undertake an analysis of the parking situation at Lake Wilcox Park, staff retained the IBI Group to complete a Lake Wilcox Parking Study. The study recommends the implementation of pay parking, parking restrictions on residential streets in the vicinity of Lake Wilcox Park, and improved pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding signage for the park. Staff support implementation of these recommendations in the short-term through amendments to the Parking Regulation By-law, the Administrative Penalties By-law and the Tariff of Fees By-law, and via execution of a vendor agreement with Precise Park.

### **Attachments:**

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- Attachment 1: Lake Wilcox Parking Study, March XX, 2020, Prepared by IBI Group
- Attachment 2: By-law No. 37-20 – Proposed Amendment to the Parking Regulation By-law No. 402-89 (Municipal Code Chapter 1116)
- Attachment 3: By-law No 18-20 – Proposed Amendment to the Administrative Penalties By-law No. 69-16
- Attachment 4: By-law No. 38-20 – Proposed Amendment to the Tariff of Fees By-law No. 108-19

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### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCS.20.13 Lake Wilcox Parking .docx
Attachments:	- By-law No 37-20 - Pay Parking.pdf - By-law No 38-20 - Tariff of Fees.pdf - By-Law No. 18-20 Parking AMPS Amendments.pdf - LakeWilcoxParking-FinalReport-IBI-20200417.pdf
Final Approval Date:	May 14, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Darlene Joslin - May 13, 2020 - 5:41 PM**

**MaryAnne Dempster - May 14, 2020 - 11:51 AM**