



Staff Report

By-law Enforcement

Report To: COW_Finance_Admin_Fire_Community_Services
Meeting Date: April 29, 2024
Report Number: FAF.24.057
Title: Resident Parking Pass Process and Update
Prepared by: Debbie Young, Interim Manager of By-law & Licensing

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report, FAF.24.057, entitled "Resident Parking Pass Process and Update" for information;

AND THAT Council consider the Options provided in the within Staff Report;

B. Overview

This report will outline the Resident Parking Pass process that has moved into step 2 of the Town's Paid Parking Enforcement Program. Staff will also outline the pros and cons of the parking pass hangers and the reason the Town has transitioned to digital registration. When this new digital registration system was implemented, staff took the following steps to ensure that residents were aware of this new process:

1. A write-up was on the front page of the newsletter that went out with the property tax bills in February.
2. An email blast was sent out by the Communications Division to email subscribers.
3. The Town's home page of the website had a large article about this new process.
4. The Parking section of the Town's website was modified to advise of this change as well.
5. Notification was provided on social media platforms that the Town currently manages.

C. Background

On June 29, 2020, Council passed the following motion:

'THAT with respect to Staff Report FAF 20.110, entitled "Follow up to Staff Report FAF.20.104 COVID-19 Phase 1 Reopening Plan", THAT individuals who are permitted to vote in The Blue Mountains Municipal Election, including residential owners and residential tenants, are exempt from any paid parking requirements and time limitation in paid parking areas with The Blue Mountains'.

In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act*, the qualifications of an Elector is provided below:

- 17(2) A person is entitled to be an elector at an election held in a local municipality if, on voting day, the person,
- (a) resides in the local municipality or is the owner or tenant of land there, or the spouse of such owner or tenant;
 - (b) is a Canadian citizen;
 - (c) is at least 18 years old; and is not prohibited from voting.

It is noted that an “owner or tenant” means a person who is the owner or tenant shown on the assessment roll of land assessed under the *Assessment Act* and a non-residential tenant of land assessed under the *Assessment Act*, whether or not the tenant is shown on the assessment roll, but does not include an owner or tenant of land who is entitled to use the land under a timeshare contract unless the person is entitled to use the land, on voting day, or for a period of six weeks or more during the calendar year in which voting day of the election is held.

Trailer owners in campgrounds are tenants of the campground; therefore, they are potentially eligible electors. Under a timeshare contract, to be eligible, the person must be entitled to use the land on Voting Day, or for a period of six weeks or more during the calendar year in which the election is held. To be eligible, the tenant would be required to produce a rental agreement for a period of six weeks or more for the year of the election.

In previous years, the parking pass hangers were implemented and sent to all property owners with their property tax bills. Unfortunately, this process also included the Short-Term Accommodation properties and all businesses within the Town that did not meet the eligible resident criteria. There were also several claims that residents did not receive the passes in the mail.

The Paid Parking Program remains the same, the only change is the way residents receive this parking benefit. To date, approximately 30 residents have provided correspondence to Council and Staff indicating their dissatisfaction with the registration process. After discussions with some residents and a review of their correspondence, the common complaint is that they cannot provide the pass to friends and family or apply the resident parking pass to other vehicles. The other complaint was that some did not want to provide personal information.

The online registration process requires a resident to upload proof of residency which can include such things as a tax bill, utility bill, etc. as well as proof of vehicle ownership. The vehicle ownership serves two purposes: 1) confirmation of owner, and 2) confirmation of license plate. In 2023, we also had the plate registration that was conducted by staff and residents provided us with the incorrect plate number and received parking tickets as it was written on the registration form incorrectly. This is a safe measure put in place to confirm the accuracy of the vehicle. When a resident uploads their personal information to the online portal, once the vehicle is registered, the personal documents are deleted and not maintained on the Town’s server.

If a resident chooses to attend Town Hall to register their vehicle in person, they simply provide us with a visual of their residency and vehicle ownership. No copies are retained by the Town. For residents who are unable to attend Town Hall, they may have a representative do so on their behalf.

D. Analysis

Staff are implementing Council's directive in relation to the resident parking pass. A change to the current parking pass eligibility criteria may require a Council reconsideration.

Staff have outlined the following options below for Council's consideration:

OPTION #1 – "Hybrid Parking Pass System" Include a hybrid option in relation to the parking pass system which would provide residents the option to purchase a maximum of two parking pass hangers for their exclusive use for the balance of 2024 for eligible residents. These hangers would be available to purchase at a cost of \$5.00 which represents the costs associated with the administration only. Staff would be required to keep a spreadsheet to track the residents who have purchased the two parking passes, and this will create additional staff input. Staff will have no control over whether the passes will be used for their intended use. There is no budget for the purchase of the parking pass hangers for the 2024 year.

OPTION #2 – "Continue with the current Resident Parking Pass Registration System, launched in January, 2024" Continue with the registration of digital license plate registration as intended for the parking enforcement program. This will require residents to register their plates each year through the Town's website portal, through an APP or through personal attendance at Town Hall.

OPTION #3 – "Discontinue current Resident Parking Pass Registration System that was launched in January 2024". Discontinuing free parking for residents and free parking registration. This means that residents would also be required to pay for parking at the designated areas within the Town.

OPTION #4 – "Dissolve Paid Parking Program" Dissolve the paid parking program and canvass other areas where the paid parking revenue can be captured. This is not ideal as the paid parking program currently generates substantial revenue for the Town.

After a few years of using the residential parking pass hangers, several issues evolved creating some challenges for the Town which staff have outlined below.

1. Passes falling off and forgetting in another vehicle.
2. Claims that the pass was lost or stolen and requesting a replacement.
3. Sharing the resident pass with non-eligible friends/family.
4. Requests for Administrative Monetary Penalty ("AMP") screenings increased based on passes not being properly displayed.
5. Screening requests cost the Town to pay for a Screening Officer based on the above issues.
6. Passes being sold and transferred to ineligible individuals.

7. 2 passes were mailed out to all taxpayers including businesses and STA's (that are not eligible to receive the pass.)
8. Approximately 30% of the parking tickets issues were to residents.
9. Costs associated with hangers (approx. \$6,000 - \$10,000).

The transition to the digital license plate residential parking pass process was reached after staff conducted research and canvassed the process from our neighbouring municipalities as set out below:

1. Collingwood – registration of license plates only through an APP, with a limit of two per household.
2. Meaford – registration of license plates by attending the Town location only with no limit on the number per household
3. Grey Highlands – does not have a paid parking program.
4. Wasaga Beach – transitioning to an online license plate process.
5. Owen Sound – does not have a free resident parking process. Residents pay \$30 per month to park in paid parking lots.

The next step in the Paid Parking Program is to move towards a digital registration of a resident parking pass which will transition into a proposed parking enforcement software that allows by-law enforcement to walk/drive along and scan a license plate to confirm parking registration. This program will ultimately print a parking infraction ticket and upload it to the Town's software. It is anticipated that this program will be implemented in July or August 2024.

This process has the following positive outcomes:

1. Very cost efficient.
2. No pass - no paper, print, plastic, etc. environmentally friendly.
3. No claims of forgotten, lost, or stolen passes in another vehicle.
4. Simple search verification of any vehicle plate on the HonkMobile App for the plate.
5. 100% confidence that the vehicle plate is registered to a resident.
6. No worry for Town Residents to remember their pass for the vehicle.
7. Compatible with HonkMobile APP – used for paid parking.
8. Available to register online or at Town Hall.
9. Quick process.
10. Limits the amount of time spent by by-law officers looking for passes and they will be able to scan license plates.
11. Can register as many vehicles as owned by the resident.
12. Personal documentation uploaded to the online registration portal is not saved and deleted right after the registration of plates.
13. Personal documentation provided at Town Hall is not copied only viewed.
14. Have received several positive comments about the Town's new digital system.

Staff does not recommend Option #1 as outlined in the recommendations as it takes a step backward in the implementation of the parking enforcement program. Staff recommends that Council endorse Option #2 for the reasons outlined above.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

Reduction of paper waste

G. Financial Impacts

Reduction in by-law enforcement time looking for parking hangers.

The Town may realize a financial impact if changes are made to the current Resident Parking Pass Registration System, which could include a loss of revenue, and/or an increase in costs.

H. In Consultation With

Corrina Giles, Town Clerk

Ryan Gibbons, Director of Community Services

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required.

However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Debbie Young, Interim Manager of By-law & Licensing bylawadmin@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

None

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Young
Interim Manager of By-law & Licensing.

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	FAF.24.057 Residential Parking Pass Process And Update.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Apr 18, 2024

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

Ryan Gibbons - Apr 18, 2024 - 4:40 PM