






**CITY OF HAMILTON**

**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
*Downtown Renewal Division*

 <b>Report to:</b> Chairman and Members Planning and Economic Development Committee	 <b>Submitted by:</b> Lee Ann Coveyduck General Manager
 <b>Date:</b> September 30, 2005  <b>File:</b>	 <b>Prepared by:</b> Martin B. Hazell (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4588

 **SUBJECT: Minor Revisions to the Pre-Christmas Free Parking Strategy for Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) (PED05142) (Wards 1, 3 & 4)**

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 **COMMENDATION:**

That the Pre-Christmas Free Parking Strategy, approved by City Council on June 25, 2003, be amended as follows:

- (a) That on-street parking be free for the eight (8) Saturdays prior to Christmas annually and limited to two (2) hours in duration in the Westdale Village BIA; and,
- (b) That on-street parking be free at all times from November 15<sup>th</sup> to December 15<sup>th</sup> annually and limited to two (2) hours in duration for the Ottawa Street Business Improvement Area.

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Lee Ann Coveyduck  
General Manager  
Planning and Economic Development Department

 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this report is to request City Council's approval of minor revisions to the Pre-Christmas Free Parking Strategy for Business Improvement Areas in the Westdale Village and Ottawa Street BIAs. The recommendation was endorsed by Hamilton Association of Business Improvement Areas (HABIA) at its September 13, 2005 meeting.

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**BACKGROUND:**

In accordance with the direction of the City Council during the 2003 budget deliberations, staff consulted with HABIA and individual BIAs, in an attempt to develop a consistent Pre-Christmas Parking Program. The resulting program provides free on-street parking (with a two hour limit) in Business Improvement Areas from November 24<sup>th</sup> to December 24<sup>th</sup> annually, except in Westdale, Dundas and on Ottawa Street where there were different needs and desires. Concession Street chose not to participate in the “free” Christmas parking program because of concerns related to employee and visitor parking associated with the Henderson Hospital.

Westdale originally requested free parking only on the six (6) Saturdays before Christmas, as free parking during the weekdays would be difficult to control due to McMaster student parking. Dundas had a long-standing tradition of allowing free parking in their Municipal car parks rather than on-street and asked that this be continued. Ottawa Street asked that their month of free parking be applied during the month of November rather than December. Staff concluded that it would not be practical to force consistency in these three areas. The annual Pre-Christmas Free Parking Strategy was approved by the City Council on June 25, 2003, and sufficient funding for this program is provided in the operating budget of the Hamilton Municipal Parking System.

Recently, staff received a request from the Westdale BIA to allow their free parking to extend to the eight (8) Saturdays leading up to Christmas, and from the Ottawa Street BIA requesting that their month of free parking take effect from November 15<sup>th</sup> to December 15<sup>th</sup> annually.

**ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES:**

Not approving the Westdale and/or Ottawa Street requests to amend their pre-Christmas free parking privileges will provide less than the maximum benefits of this program to the respective BIAs.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Financial – There are no financial implications to the Ottawa Street request. An additional two Saturdays of free parking in Westdale will result in the loss of an additional \$800 in parking meter revenues, which can be absorbed in the operating budget of the Hamilton Municipal Parking System.

Staffing – N/A

Legal – N/A

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**POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:**

The request aligns with the City Council's Pre-Christmas Free Parking Strategy for Business Improvement Areas.

**CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES:**

The Hamilton Association of Business Improvement Areas (HABIA) endorsed these requests at their September 13, 2005 meeting.

**CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:**

While there is no quantitative measure readily available, HABIA and the individual BIAs advise that the Pre-Christmas free parking program increases business to some degree. The recommendation, therefore, aligns with a number of objectives within the "City of Growth and Opportunity" goal of the City's strategic plan.

MBH/kag