

May 8, 2000

Julian Fantino
40 College Street
Toronto, ON
M5G 2J3

Dear Mr. Fantino,

RE: New Policy – Three-Hour Parking Bylaw – Enforcement

I am writing to you with concerns about the attached letter from Douglas Reynolds, Superintendent, Parking Enforcement Unit. As you will see from the attached letter, Mr. Reynolds is changing a policy that has been very successful for many years.

The policy of enforcing the statutory 3-hour restriction was established to end the indiscriminate ticketing of residents' cars. Mr. Reynold's predecessor, Mr. Dan Hutt established a policy whereby the 3-hour limit would only be enforced at the request of a Councillor or the Commissioner of Public Works (Emergency Works and Services). This policy enabled concerned area Councillors to weigh the reasonableness of parking complaints, poll the neighbourhood and if necessary, guide applications of the by-law.

In my experience when I have conducted polls of residents who live on a street with a 3-hour maximum limit, the majority of residents do not wish to have a blitz conducted on their street. With this new policy you will inevitably find that the majority of complaints about the enforcement of the 3-hour by-law will be received from residents who wake up in the morning to find a ticket on their cars' window, placed there by an enforcement officer at 3:00am in the morning.

Most streets that have the 3-hour regulation do so because there has traditionally not been a problem with parking on their street. Once a problem is identified, a change is proposed and often made to those regulations, either by instituting a permit system, or by introducing a more stringent parking regulation, such as the 1-hour limit.

I could cite 3 quick examples of streets where you are certain to receive complaints from one or two residents, who have an ongoing conflict with one or more of their neighbours and would be quick to use the tool of aggressive parking enforcement to spite those neighbours.

For example, for a number of years I have been dealing with complaints about parking on Erskine Avenue, east of Mount Pleasant Road. A number of homeowners do not have on-site parking and as such, park on the street. One homeowner on this portion of Erskine Avenue has a pet peeve with his neighbours' parking practices. A permit parking initiative was turned down in 1998. I have done numerous polls of the street and have determined that the community does not support the enforcement of the 3-hour limit and is happy with the status quo. Under this new policy however, those residents who do not have on-site parking and have been unable to find alternatives would be penalized, most likely on an on-going basis.

Further to this, many residential streets in the City of Toronto, particularly the former City of Toronto, are flanked at their corners by apartment buildings, many of which are old and have insufficient on-site parking. Tenants are forced to park on surrounding streets because of the lack of any alternative. These tenants would be subject to ticketing blitzes at the whim of an area homeowner. A Councillor or City Commissioner is more able to vet the reasonableness of these requests and their significance within the neighbourhood.

This new policy by your department appears to be driven by the need to raise money. This policy is short sighted, unfair, undemocratic and unworkable. Perhaps some of my colleagues believe that this new policy will make less work for them, but in reality the number of complaints about unfair ticketing practices will increase dramatically.

You will also note from the attached letter that no background information or reasoning is given for this major change in policy. I would appreciate an explanation of this apparent change and I would like to know under what authority such a change was unilaterally made.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Walker
Councillor - North Toronto

JCP
Attachment