

Re: Item No. 11.1.11

**HALIFAX**

# **Options to Support Business Recovery with Parking Programming**

Victoria Horne, Director Parking Services

June 8, 2021

# Original Motion

That Regional Council

*Request a staff report with recommendations and financial impacts for investing in projects to promote parking in areas with on street paid parking, including but not limited to via variable message signs at gateways to commercial areas and in the ROW at parking entrances, as well as a trial period of three to six months where the municipality may:*

- paying users Hotspot fees to encourage app use*
- providing a measure of free parking on Thursday and/or Friday while continuing to support the goals of the parking management policy partnering with BIDs to provide funding to enable flexible free parking strategies for and definition of special events as a part of larger, BID lead marketing strategy*

# Recommendation

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Waive the requirement for the Audit & Finance Standing Committee to review and make a recommendation to Regional Council regarding the increase to Project No. CI990031 Parking Technology in the amount of \$24,000;
2. Approve an increase to Project No. CI990031 Parking Technology in the amount of \$24,000 with funding from General Contingency Reserve Q421, as outlined in the Financial Implications section of this report;
3. Adopt and implement the marketing strategy valued at \$50,000;
4. Cover HotSpot pay-per-use fees for a period of three months up to \$15,000;

# Recommendation cont.

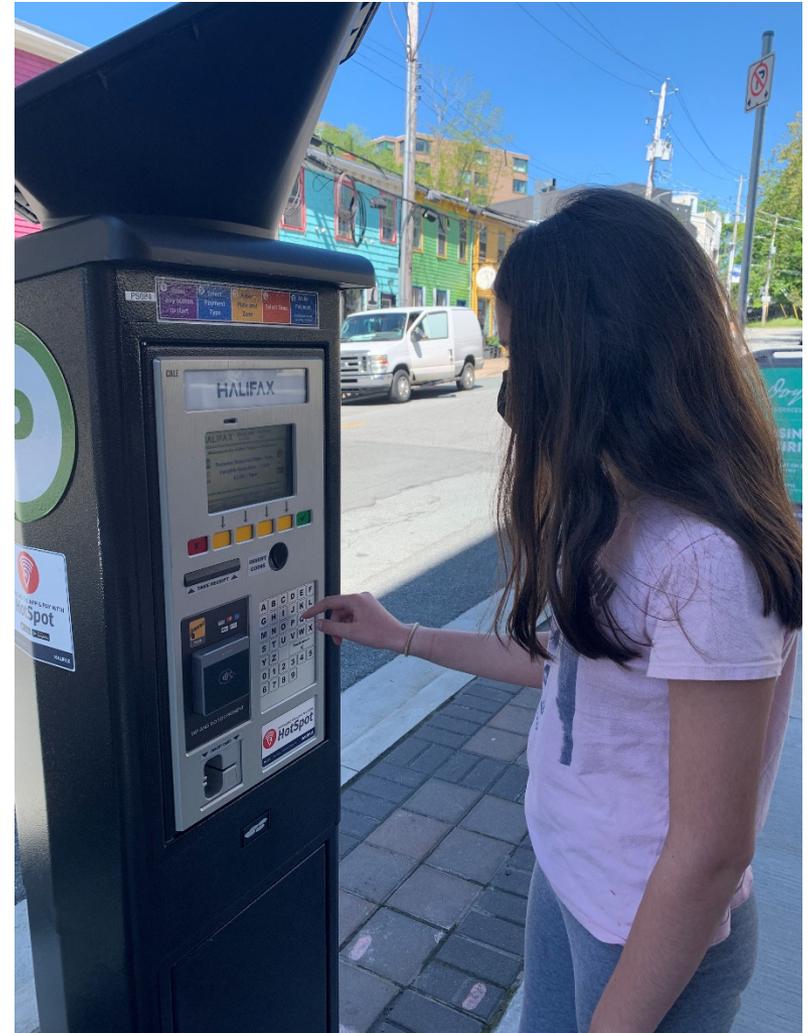
5. Execute a contract change order with Precise Parklink on terms satisfactory to the Chief Administrative Officer, to cover set up costs and the first year of subscription fees of a merchant validation program for up to 200 merchants, to be administered by the Business Improvement Districts; and
6. In Support of COVID Recovery Programming waive parking rates pursuant to section 12A of Administrative Order 15 Respecting License, Permit and Processing Fees to offer free on-street metered parking between 4-6 pm subject to any public health directives in force at that time, on the following days:
  - June 17,18,24,25
  - July 2,8,9,15,16,22,23,29,30
  - August 5,6,12,13,19,20,26,27
  - September 3, 4, 10, 11

# What we heard...

- Increase marketing and communication
- Improve customer experience with the new technology
- Incentivize and grow traffic on the HotSpot mobile app
- Introduce Merchant Validation
- Implement “free” on-street parking to drive traffic during key periods of the summer and into fall.

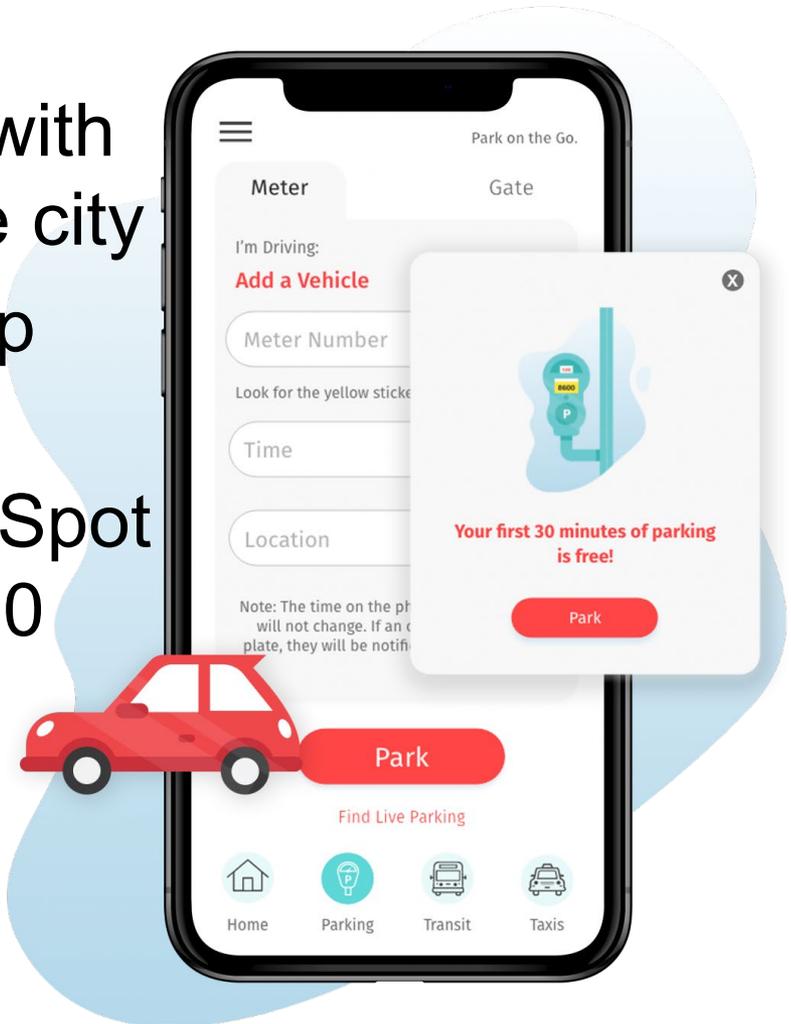
# Marketing and Wayfinding

- Investment in wayfinding signage
  - Directing residents to pay stations and off-street parking
- Simplified user experience at the pay station
- Investment in social marketing, print, TV, radio and billboards promoting options to get downtown
- Amplifying existing campaigns from Downtown Halifax, Downtown Dartmouth, Spring Garden Road, North End and Quinpool Road business associations
- Promotion of the [“How to Get Around”](#) website



# Increasing HotSpot Users

- 83,064 active subscribers with Halifax listed as their home city
- HotSpot payments make up 59% of total transactions
- Staff propose covering HotSpot per-use transaction fees (10 cents) for 3 months



# Merchant Validation

Staff propose a program that offers the following:

- 200 tablets purchased and distributed to BIDS
- HRM covers the subscription fees for business owners for the first year
- Merchants would be responsible for the validation cost of the parking and future subscription fees



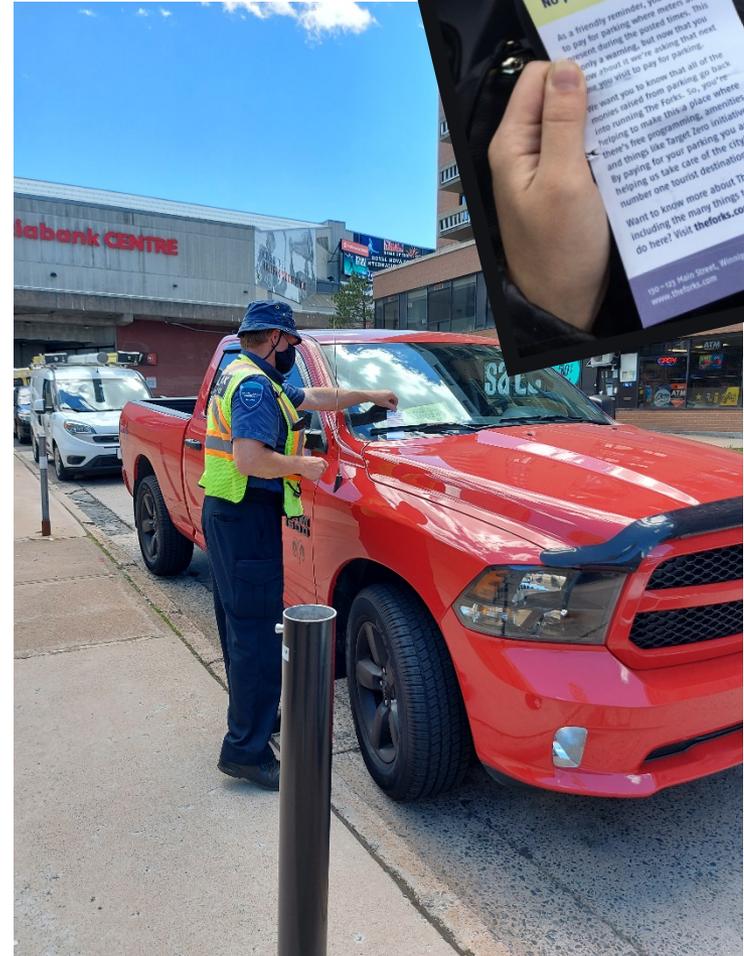
# “Free Parking” and special events

- Staff propose free parking from 4-6 pm.
- Continued investment in creating 15-minute loading zones when requested by business
- Conversion of paid parking spaces into patios and in support of street closures like Bedford Row and Argyle.



# Relaxing Enforcement

- Paid parking violations make up less than 25% of total parking enforcement revenue
- Staff propose shifting to a “warning” for first-time offenders in the downtown areas
- Enforcement staff will place “welcome back to downtown tickets” instead of parking tickets on windshields.



# Total investment

The proposed options result in a cost of \$184,000 to the municipality, however are outweighed by the benefits to support business recovery.

