



# REALTORS® help clarify parking rules

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TREB PRESIDENT'S COLUMN AS IT APPEARS IN THE TORONTO SUN

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Imagine this scenario: you are a homebuyer who, with the help of your REALTOR®, has found a property that seems to match exactly what you are looking for but then you find out that the property does not have parking available for the vehicle that your family relies on to get to work, get the kids to school, and run all the chores of life. It is likely that, unfortunately, even though you love the property, you will have to move on and keep looking. Although many people choose car-less lifestyles, without question, adequate parking is still one of the key things considered by homebuyers. That's why REALTORS® recently took action to tell the City that it needed to clarify some of its rules that were creating confusion about where residents' vehicles are allowed to be parked.

Our concerns stemmed from confusing language that was included in the City's new Zoning By-law. Zoning By-laws play an important role in determining how cities grow and change by regulating how certain types of property can be used. By doing so, they help to prevent issues that can deteriorate quality of life for residents and the success of businesses.

Unfortunately, with regard to parking, the technical language of the City's new Zoning By-law created confusion about whether or not vehicles could be parked in driveways. In fact, according to media reports, the City's by-law enforcement officers were actually issuing notices to some homeowners deemed to be contravening the new by-law's parking rules. Although the City issued statements indicating that the new rules would not apply to existing homes, confusion remained as the media continued to report that the by-law was, in fact, being enforced against existing homes.

REALTORS® understand that the home buying process is not the time for surprises, so we strongly believed that the City needed to unequivocally clarify the by-law to ensure that parking in driveways would not be restricted. We told City Councillors that the confusion created by the new Zoning By-law would unnecessarily burden existing home owners who could be suddenly left with inadequate parking for existing vehicles. We also told City Councillors that it could raise concerns for many homebuyers for whom adequate parking is a critical consideration in their home-buying decisions, making it more difficult for them to find a suitable home and creating obstacles for home owners selling their properties.

I am happy to tell you that Toronto City Council heeded the advice that it was given and approved an amendment to the Zoning By-law to remove the confusion surrounding the ability to park in driveways. This is another example of how the work that REALTORS® do helps to ensure that the home buying and selling experience is a good one.

*Bill Johnston is President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 30,000 REALTORS® in the Greater Toronto Area.*

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