

September 12, 2019

To: Members
Community and Protective Services Committee

Re: Parks Maintenance & Seasonal Roadway Operations Efficiencies

RECOMMENDATION

That this report be received and filed.

CONCLUSION

This report discusses winter maintenance and clearing of park pathways and sidewalks, and new opportunities for efficiencies between Parks Maintenance and Seasonal Roadway Operations.

BACKGROUND

Within the City's current organization structure, two branches are responsible for road, sidewalk and park pathway snow clearing: The Parks Maintenance Branch (PM) within the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department and the Seasonal Roadway Operations Branch (SRO) within the Roadways and Transportation Department. After a snow event, paved park pathways are cleared by Parks Maintenance. Streets, sidewalks and transit stops are cleared by Seasonal Roadway Operations.

Distributing the work between these branches allows each area to focus on their area of expertise with the equipment available to them, and ensures snow is cleared throughout the City in a timely manner. For example, immediately following a snowstorm, Parks Maintenance staff are assigned to clear pathways, while Seasonal Roadway Operations staff focus on streets, sidewalks and transit stops.

At the City Council meeting held December 10, 2018, Council directed Administration to report back with a report by Q3 seeking efficiencies in the following areas: parks and road maintenance.

DISCUSSION

Parks Maintenance and Seasonal Roadway Operations have met throughout 2019 to discuss opportunities for efficiencies between these branches. This report outlines the current practices of each group, details service level and maintenance criteria, and outlines a number of opportunities for each branch to assist each other to ensure sidewalks and pathways are cleared in the most efficient way.

Current Division of Responsibilities & Service Levels

The following table outlines the current maintenance practices and service levels for each group:

	Seasonal Roadway Operations	Parks Maintenance
Responsible Assets	Roads, alleys, sidewalks and transit stops	Paved park pathways and urban plaza spaces downtown
Relevant Policy Guidelines	Roadways Winter Maintenance Policy: Specific sidewalks around parks are maintained: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to City owned parks on Category 1, 2, 3, and 4 streets. • Adjacent to City owned parks that are next to a public school. • Adjacent to City owned buildings or parks not accessed by the public in winter on Category 1 and 2 streets. 	Parks Maintenance Services Guide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the Council approved service level increase in 2018, all paved pathways in parks are cleared. • F.W. Hill Mall, City Square Plaza and the Queen Elizabeth II Court at City Hall are cleared. • Outdoor ice rinks are cleared.
Snow Accumulation	Sidewalks are cleared after a 5cm single snow event.	Pathways are cleared after 2.5cm of snow accumulation or drifting.
Maintenance practice and equipment	Sidewalks are cleared by trackless unit with a 4-foot blade.	Park pathways are generally cleared by truck with an 8-foot blade attachment. Parks Maintenance purchased a utility work machine (Toolcat) with blade and a walk behind snow blower after the 2019 budget approval, so that narrow park pathways are also able to be cleared.
Labour	Snow clearing is done by permanent and casual staff.	Snow clearing is done by permanent staff.
Outside of a snow event	Seasonal Roadway Operations staff work on backlog in other areas or clearing snow piles from roads throughout the city.	Permanent Parks Maintenance staff focus on maintaining the ice rinks, litter pickup, training, planning, scheduling and recruitment for the upcoming season.
Results	Service levels have consistently been met by Seasonal Roadway Operations within the approved timeframes. Routing efficiencies in 2018 resulted in a \$100,000 annual savings.	Service levels have consistently been met by Parks Maintenance within the approved timeframes. As of 2019, all paved park pathways are being cleared.

A survey with our municipal benchmarking partners in MBN Canada shows a variety of maintenance practices in other municipalities, most follow a similar work share to Regina:

Municipality	Winter Maintenance Notes
Regina	In general, park pathways are cleared by Parks Maintenance, sidewalks and roads are cleared by Seasonal Roadway Operations.
Calgary	Park pathways and sidewalks are cleared by Parks Operations. Sidewalks are cleared by Roadways Operations. Park pathways are cleared with a combination of half ton and blade as well as Bobcat.
Halifax	Park pathways are not cleared in winter with the exception of regional parks. These are cleared by Parks staff with a skid steer or Bobcat. The Roadways department is responsible for clearing sidewalks and street to street connectors.
Hamilton	Park pathways that receive winter maintenance are cleared by Parks staff; sidewalks are maintained by Roadways staff.
Saskatoon	Park pathways are cleared by Parks Department Supervisors, sidewalks and roads are cleared by Roadway Operations.
Thunder Bay	The Roads department clears roads, sidewalks as well as any park pathways that receive winter maintenance.
Windsor	Roads and sidewalks are cleared by Public Works, except for sidewalks directly around parks, which are cleared by the parks staff while they clear the park.
Winnipeg	Park pathways are cleared by both Parks and Roadways staff. Sidewalks are cleared by Roadways. Note that most park pathways are no longer cleared in winter due to budget constraints.

Parks Maintenance and Seasonal Roadway Operations have developed a close working relationship in the past few years that enables the two branches to work together to address needs in a flexible manner. For example, in 2016, Parks Maintenance was asked to assist Seasonal Roadway Operations by clearing snow away from some transit stops after a major snowfall. This allowed Seasonal Roadway Operations more capacity to meet service levels in other areas and ensured transit stops were made accessible to residents. Parks Maintenance staff remain available to assist with this service after extreme snow events.

In 2017, Parks Maintenance and Seasonal Roadway Operations partnered on a pilot project around Victoria Park where Parks Maintenance would also take on responsibility for clearing the adjacent sidewalks. Traditionally, Seasonal Roadway Operations was responsible for clearing the sidewalk around Victoria Park, while Parks Maintenance was responsible for clearing inside the park. This work trade has allowed Seasonal Roadway Operations more opportunity to meet service levels in other areas.

Opportunities for Additional Efficiencies

Parks Maintenance and Seasonal Roadway Operations met in Spring of 2019 to identify further opportunities to share work and find efficiencies to help improve service levels after a snow event. Opportunities were identified by comparing route maps and schedules for each group. Parks Maintenance purchased a utility work machine (Toolcat) in 2019 that enables Parks Maintenance to assist Seasonal Roadway Operations on some sidewalks around parks.

The following have been proposed as new areas to pilot additional work sharing between Parks Maintenance and Seasonal Roadway Operations in 2019/2020:

Quadrant	Location	Work Shift	Description
Downtown	Central Park Sidewalk	SRO to PM	Sidewalk around Central park. Currently cleared by SRO. Can be done by PM at same time as park pathway with Toolcat unit.
North East	Pasqua & 7 th Avenue Park Path	PM to SRO	Short path through park, currently cleared by PM. Can be done by SRO at same time as adjacent sidewalks around park.
North East	Garnet Park Sidewalk	SRO to PM	Garnet St in front of park entrance. Currently done by SRO. Can be done by PM, the park path is now being cleared by the Toolcat unit.
North East	Sangster Park East Sidewalk	SRO to PM	Sidewalk along east side of park entrance. West side of Sangster Blvd from Orr bay to Hyland Cres can be done by PM instead of SRO, they are not in area otherwise.
North West	Juniper Park North East Sidewalk	SRO to PM	PM clearing park can do sidewalk on north east corner, saves SRO from coming into area. Park is now cleared by Toolcat, can do sidewalk.
North West	Lakewood and Ewert Park Sidewalks	SRO to PM	Lakewood Park sidewalk and Ewert Park sidewalks. Specifically, the sidewalk lining the park on the west side on Devonshire, the north entrance of the park and the section on Devonshire in front of Ewart park. Lakewood park is now cleared by PM Trackless unit and sidewalk can be cleared at the same time. Allows SRO to focus on other sidewalks in the area.
North West	Memorial Cross Sidewalk	SRO to PM	South side of Ellard Way. Ellard Way from Sherlock Dr to Stockton St. North side of Memorial Cross park. PM now doing park with Toolcat, can do sidewalk. Saves SRO from coming into area.
South East	Gocki Park Path	PM to SRO	Path through the park from 15th Ave to the building parking lot. SRO is able to clear at same time as sidewalk.
South East	Park District 2 Sidewalk	SRO to PM	South side of 14th Avenue along frontage of City owned building/lot. Can be cleared by PM.
South West	Darke Park Path	PM to SRO	Park pathway can be cleared at the same time as adjacent sidewalk.
South West	Munroe Park Path	PM to SRO	Park pathway can be cleared at the same time as adjacent sidewalk.
South West	Hudson Park Path	PM to SRO	Park pathway becomes the sidewalk along Parliament in front of Hudson Park, then becomes sidewalk again. SRO will clear this entire spot; PM will not need to go to the area.

There are no financial savings identified through this work exchange, each group will take roughly one kilometre of the others workload in 2019. Distributing work in these areas will allow staff more time to meet service levels and move on to their other assigned tasks after a snow event.

The attached maps (appendix A and B) show both Seasonal Roadways Operations and Parks Maintenance service areas. Both branches will be required in each quadrant of the City for the most efficient clearing schedule.

Parks Maintenance and Seasonal Roadway Operations have committed to evaluate the work exchange at the end of each winter season to ensure that pathways and sidewalks are cleared in the most efficient way.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

There are no financial savings identified through the work exchange. Distributing work between these branches will enable the City to improve the allocation of resources to meet service levels after a snow event.

Policy and/or Strategic Implications

The snow clearing service supports the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan, The Official Community Plan and the Transportation Master plan by reliably providing access to multiple modes of transportation in the winter season.

Snow clearing service levels are outlined in the Roadways Winter Maintenance Policy, approved by City Council in 2015. This policy is under review and an updated version will be coming to Committee in Q3 2020.

Other Implications

None with respect to this report.

Accessibility Implications

Sidewalks and park pathways that are free of snow support mobility and accessibility during the winter season.

COMMUNICATIONS

None with respect to this report.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Consideration of this report is within the authority of the Community and Protective Services Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,



Laurie Shalley, Director, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

8/26/2019

Respectfully Submitted,



Kim Onra, Executive Director, Citizen Services

8/29/2019

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