

Brief to Regina City Council Safe and Accessible Sidewalks

Your Worship and City Councillors,

My name is Brian Harris and I am here to speak to the motion on behalf of the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism. The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism is a provincial umbrella organization headquartered in Regina, that brings together Seniors organizations to improve quality of life for older adults in Saskatchewan.

The SSM supports the motion asking the City Administration to prepare a report on the proposal to introduce enforcement options for clearing sidewalks adjacent to residential properties so that they can be used safely by all citizens.

Design Regina, the Official Community Plan, speaks to the kind of community we want to be and includes a statement of support for “aging in place” within the design of new and existing neighbourhoods. Aging in place is not only what most people want to do but contributes to healthy seniors and healthy communities.

Unfortunately, as is noted in the preamble to the motion, many older people and people with disabilities can become housebound for periods during winter months if sidewalks are not cleared.

The other issue facing these members of our community is that they may be unable to clear their sidewalks themselves and may be unable to arrange for assistance because they don't know who to call or they do not have the resources to pay for outside help.

We believe that a review of this issue should be citizen focussed and sensitive to individual needs and circumstances and should consider the following:

Clear sidewalks will reduce falls and promote safe use by all citizens, including those who use canes, walkers or wheelchairs.

A “Snow Angel” program should be developed and promoted by the City and Community Associations.

In cases where the citizen does not have the physical or financial ability to meet their obligation, discretion to not enforce must be built in.

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism
February 26, 2018