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# REPORT TO COMMON COUNCIL

M & C 2010 - 207

October 4, 2010

His Worship Mayor Ivan Court  
And Members of Common Council

Your Worship and Members of Council,

**SUBJECT: 2009 – 2010 Winter Management Plan Review and Update**

## **BACKGROUND**

Council endorsed the current *Winter Management Plan for Streets and Sidewalks* (M & C 2009-352) on October 26, 2009. At that time, it also adopted the structure of priorities for winter operations, proposed street plowing objectives, proposed winter sidewalk objectives and the snow removal guidelines, as policies of Common Council.

Although the past winter season began normally, it proved to be much lighter than the previous 2 winter seasons.

## **ANALYSIS**

The *Winter Management Plan* is subject to ongoing review; encouraging ideas and suggestions, and allowing staff to work with citizens to assist in dealing with particular challenges over the winter season. This report is a review of the 2009 – 2010 winter season with recommendations for improvement of the Plan.

A number of improvements to the Plan have been made throughout the winter season to address mainly safety and Winter Street Parking Restrictions concerns. Below is a summary of the improvements. A more detailed analysis is enclosed in Appendix A.

- A comprehensive Communications Plan has been developed for the 2010 – 2011 winter season to remind the public of *Winter Management Plan* provisions and responsibilities related thereto. This Communications Plan is enclosed as Appendix B.
- A Storm Severity Index (SSI) for the City of Saint John has been created as a management tool to compare the level of difficulty for snow plowing and removal operations. The SSI is enclosed in Appendix C.



The City of Saint John

- The primary and secondary street plowing objectives were met during 5 of 7 winter storm events. In 2 events, the primary objectives were not fully met as a result of reduced equipment availability.
- Route priority changes were mainly made to reflect Saint John Transit route adjustments.
- As a result of high traffic volumes, locations of School District 8 bus stops and safety concerns brought forward by the public and Councillors, adjustments to the sidewalk servicing have been made to reflect an additional 0.5% increase using the existing resources.
- Salt inventory levels were maintained at an appropriate level throughout the winter season. Inconsistent brine quality hindered the City's efforts to undertake this new initiative in 2009 – 2010.
- 6 streets or portions thereof were exempted from the Winter Streets Parking Restriction upon completion of a second analysis by the City Traffic Engineer.
- A 30 year snow trend analysis shows that the risk of a major winter storm event outside the period of December 1 to March 30 is low. It is recommended that the Traffic By-law, Section 5(9)(a) be amended to reflect December 1 and March 31 rather than November 15 to April 15. In the rare occurrence of an anomaly, City personnel will respond with a reasonable level of service with cars parked on the street.
- The current snow 'dump' is located within an "environmentally sensitive wetland" off of Bayside Drive. It is necessary to identify and locate a facility in a more ideal location proximate to the snow removal operations while respecting environmental concerns.
- Winter drainage issues have been identified and are being addressed through both the General Fund Capital Program and the Operating Budget.
- Over 700 potholes were repaired between December 11, 2009 and March 16, 2010. Some potholes required numerous repairs.

Douglas Avenue received a one year exception provision from the *Winter Street Parking Restrictions* as outlined in M&C 2009-352. Many vehicles were parked on Douglas Avenue during and after winter storm events while driveways remained mostly empty

suggesting there is capacity for off street parking along most of Douglas Avenue. After a further review of the entire length of Douglas Avenue in July 2010, a series of four options were developed:

- a) Retain the current status.
- b) Apply the Winter Streets Parking Restriction along the entire length of Douglas Avenue.
- c) Change the current status to exclude only the portion of Douglas Avenue between Bentley Street and Alexandra Street from the Winter Streets Parking Restriction.
- d) Change the current status to exclude only the portion of Douglas Avenue between Bentley Street and Main Street from the Winter Streets Parking Restriction under Schedule R of the Traffic By-law.

Option c) is recommended as five of the properties on Douglas Avenue without adequate off-street parking (Civic 187, 191/193, 261, 263, 272) are within or close to the block of Douglas Avenue bounded by Bentley and Alexandra streets. Two additional properties found to be without adequate off-street parking (Civic 28 and 50) are close to Clarendon Street, which already permits overnight parking during the winter months.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Common Council:

1. Endorse the changes to the *Winter Management Plan for Streets and Sidewalks* that include:
  - a) Winter Sidewalks – addition of approximately 2167m (or 0.5%) to the sidewalk service inventory and adopting changes to the secondary sidewalk service level objectives Priority 1 (2 days after end of storm – bare walking surface) and 2 (3 days after end of storm – bare walking surface) to replace “bare walking surface” with “walking surface with traction”.
  - b) Street Plowing route priority changes to reflect Saint John Transit’s bus route changes and other requests based on merit.
  - c) The addition of the Winter Management Plan Communications Plan for the 2010-2011 winter season.

2. Endorse a proposed Winter Parking Ban change from “November 15 to April 15” to “December 1 to March 31” and refer the matter to the City Solicitor for review and preparation of the necessary amendment to paragraph 5(9)(a) of the Traffic By-law.
  
3. Endorse the Winter Street Restrictions Exemption of the portion of Douglas Avenue between Bentley Street and Alexandra Street and that other portions of Douglas Avenue be removed from Schedule R of the Traffic By-law and refer the matter to the City Solicitor for review and preparation of the necessary amendment to the Traffic By-law.

Respectfully submitted,

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Commissioner,  
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