



Staff Report for Council Meeting

Date of Meeting: July 9, 2019

Report Number: SRCS.19.21

Department: Community Services
Division: Public Works Operation

Subject: **SRCS.19.21 Winter Operations – On-Street
Parking Management & Communication Plan**

Purpose:

This report is in response to a motion of the Committee of the Whole meeting on July 2, 2019, requesting an amendment to the City's Parking Regulation By-law No. 402-89; and development of a communication strategy for ensuring vehicles parked on the roadway during a winter event are removed to allow for effective service enhancements.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That Staff Report SRCS.19.21 be received.
- b) That By-law No. 107-19 (Attachment 1 to Staff Report SRCS.19.21), be enacted to amend the Parking Regulation By-law No. 402-89.

Contact Person:

Ilmar Simanovskis, Commissioner of Community Services, Extension 2422

Report Approval:

Submitted by: Ilmar Simanovskis, Commissioner of Community Services

Approved by: Neil Garbe, City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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Background:

At its meeting of July 2, 2019, Committee of the Whole discussed staff report SRCS.19.14 – Enhanced Winter Services and Windrow Clearing Program Update. Further information and direction was provided to staff through the following motion:

Moved by: Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli

a) That staff report SRCS.19.14 regarding Enhanced Winter Services and Windrow Clearing Program Update be referred to the July 9, 2019 Council meeting to permit staff to provide the following additional information:

- i) an overview of the tools and methods that will be used by staff to effectively communicate the windrow program and the beginning of a winter operations event to the residents of the City; and
- ii) a draft by-law that will provide staff the authority to ticket and/or tow any vehicle that impedes a winter operation.

Carried Unanimously

The intent of this motion as understood from the discussion of the Committee is to effectively communicate that residents cannot park on roadways during declared winter operations, and to ensure that staff are provided the tools and authority to remove parked vehicles from streets as efficiently as possible when deemed necessary to allow for winter operations.

Parking Regulation By-Law Amendment

Pursuant to the City's current Parking Regulation By-law No. 402-89, as amended (Municipal Code Chapter 1116), it is a violation to park on a street in a manner that interferes with the clearing of snow:

1116.3.6 Parking prohibited – specified places – no signs

No person shall park a motor vehicle:

(g) so as to interfere with the clearing of snow from the highway

Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS) hearings have been definitive in the position that “clearing of snow” is not interpreted to apply broadly to sanding and salting operations. Additionally, evidence collected by Parking Enforcement Officers must demonstrate that the vehicle has “interfered” with City operational activities.

In order to effect a regulatory framework that requires removal of vehicles from roadways whenever a winter operations event is declared, the Parking Regulation By-law must be amended. The proposed by-law amendment (Attachment 1) includes definitions for “winter event,” and “winter operations”, a provision providing the Director of Public Works Operations with authority to declare a winter event, and prohibitions

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against parking on streets during a winter event or parking so as to interfere with winter operations.

Approach to Removal of Parked Vehicles

Staff are proposing the following approach to clear streets of parked vehicles during winter operations:

- Prior to the winter season, the community will be advised of the new winter parking regulations, the importance of these regulations, and the implications of not following them (see Proactive Communications below).
- Based on a weather forecast predicting icefall or greater than 5 cm of snowfall will occur within the next 24 hours, the Director of Public Works Operations will declare the initiation of a winter operations event.
- The community will be notified through various communications channels (see Winter Event Communications below) of the declaration of the winter operations event and the need to remove all vehicles from municipal streets.
- By-law Enforcement, Parking Enforcement and Operational staff will be deployed to areas that have historically been an issue with vehicles parked on streets in advance of the start of the snowfall to begin having vehicles moved from streets. This may include voluntary compliance efforts and/or tagging and towing.
- Only vehicles that are preventing operations vehicles from accessing a street or interfering with windrow removal service will be towed. Staff are currently working to determine best options for the logistics of towing (e.g., locations for towing parked vehicles, contracts with tow operators).

This process will allow for timely community notification and initiation of vehicle removal from the streets in advance of the snow or icefall actually starting. While vehicle removal will need to continue throughout the winter event, the proactive start on vehicle clearing should allow operational crews to proceed efficiently and complete windrow service to driveways.

By-law Enforcement staff and some Operations staff are already appointed as officers for the purposes of enforcement of the Parking Regulation By-law and may provide support to Parking Enforcement Officers in this regard, particularly during the early period of the season.

In the past, Parking Enforcement Officers have issued approximately 15 to 20 penalty notices for “interference with snow clearing” per day that snow clearing operations have been in effect. This number is likely a factor of the number of Officers on duty (typically two) as much as it is reflective of the number of cars on the road, but it may help to provide some scale as to the number of vehicles that will need to be towed.

The City issues on average 600 to 700 Temporary On-Street Parking Permits per month in the winter (November to March). This number provides scale to the number of vehicles legally using the street for overnight parking in the winter. Temporary Parking

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Permit holders are already notified of the requirement to move their vehicles off the street to Community Centres when a snowfall starts. In the future, they will also be notified via email of the declaration of the winter operations event and the requirement to move their vehicle.

Winter Operations Communications Approach

On-street parked vehicles are always a challenge during winter operations. To provide a more efficient winter operations service, and to ensure the best performance of the windrow clearing program, on street parking restrictions must be well-communicated and enforced. Staff are proposing a two-pronged approach to communication with both a proactive and event-specific plan.

In addition to the following communication strategy, staff from the By-Law & Licensing Enforcement and Public Works Operations divisions will mobilize to enforce on-street parking restrictions once winter operations have commenced. These efforts will involve attempts to facilitate voluntary compliance when possible as well as tagging and towing when necessary.

General Communication Requirements

The communications plan will be developed based on experience from previously successful approaches. The purpose of communications will be to ensure residents are aware of, and complying with, important instructions relating to winter operations, including reminding residents that cars parked on the street will not be permitted and may be removed. A number of communication tactics will be deployed including:

- Communications will be sensitive to the diversity of languages and cultures of Richmond Hill
- Multiple channels will be used including news releases and website presence, advertising (including multicultural media), and mail-outs (where possible), specific handouts to vehicles parked on the roads and for pick up at various city department counters
- Posters will be displayed at libraries, community centres and arenas, which include promotion of Language Line services
- Information packages for Councillors' newsletters and websites
- Council education session
- Frequently Asked Questions and scripting for Access Richmond Hill

Proactive Communications Strategies

A proactive communication strategy will be prepared to educate and inform the community well in advance of winter events to build community awareness around the importance of removing parked vehicles from roadways. Approaches will include:

- Pre-season Communications (August to mid-November)
 - Automatic call outs to all residents twice in the early fall

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- Warning/mock “information” tickets placed on parked cars, which will provide the details of street parking restrictions and the consequences of not complying
 - Pre-promotion of new equipment with media story and photographs
- Ongoing Winter Season Communications (December to April)
 - Extensive use of social media
 - Eblast to recreation email lists
 - YouTube videos
 - Website updates about winter operations
 - Access Richmond Hill information requests
 - Advertisement in the Waste Calendar
 - Email parking permit holders

Winter Event Communication Response

Specific actions, will be taken, during a winter event to target communications to on-street parking violators. Communications will commence with the declaration of a winter operation by the Director and will include:

- A banner priority on the website that will inform all site visitors of the active winter operations and information related to the removal of on street parked vehicles
- Active social media and website updates
- Messages on LED signs at City facilities
- Eblast to email list participants

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

There are no financial impacts related to this report.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

More efficient residential snow windrow clearing aligns with the Strategic Plan Goal of Better Choice in Richmond Hill by exploring ways to provide better quality services. It also aligns with Stronger Connections in Richmond Hill by improving the function of our streets and neighbourhoods.

Conclusion:

This report provides the requested information on amendment of the Parking Regulation By-law to allow for a staff declaration of a winter event which will trigger the authority to tag and remove on street parked vehicles. It also provides requested information regarding how communications will be managed to best reach the broader community and specifically those residents who choose to use on street parking when such parking is not permitted.

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Attachments

Attachment 1 – By-law No. 107-19 Proposed amendment to the Parking Regulation By-law Np402-89

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Winter Operations Parked Car Removal Plan .docx
Attachments:	- Bylaw No107-19 Parking By-law Amendment - Winter Event July_08_19.docx
Final Approval Date:	Jul 9, 2019

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Neil Garbe - Jul 9, 2019 - 11:07 AM