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Committee of the Whole
Halifax Regional Council
February 11, 2003

February 18, 2003

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Paynter", written over a horizontal line.

Rick Paynter/P.Eng., Director of Public Works & Transportation

DATE: February 5, 2003

SUBJECT: By-Law S-300 - Sidewalk Snow Removal

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Halifax Regional Council meeting of January 21, 2003, item 9.6.1.

BACKGROUND

Council asked that the issue of sidewalk snow removal be referred to the HRM By-Law Rationalization Committee to determine if some flexibility for compliance can be provided during adverse weather conditions. In addition to a request for a staff presentation on suggestions to residents on how they may meet the requirements during adverse weather conditions, it was moved that HRM should comply with the requirements of By-Law S-300 in areas where the Municipality undertakes sidewalk snow clearing.

DISCUSSION

Staff presented a proposed amendment to the By-Law Rationalization Working Group on January 31, 2003, which was intended to provide By-Law Enforcement staff with some flexibility in the enforcement of Part 1 of the by-law, whereby in adverse weather conditions, where it was determined that the abutters had provided a reasonable level of effort in attempting to clear the sidewalks to the standard as contained in the by-law.

During review of the proposed amendment by the By-Law Rationalization Working Group, it was determined that other areas of the by-law required review as well. On the basis that even if the proposed amendments were approved at the January 31, 2003 meeting, the earliest date for enactment of the amended by-law would have been March 14, 2003, it was moved that the by-law be returned to the Working Group for a comprehensive review prior to the next winter season.

Regarding the level of service HRM provides for sidewalk snow clearing outside the former City of Halifax, the attached Snow and Ice Control Program Service Standards were approved by HRM Regional Council in 1998. The standards relating to sidewalk clearing were developed to be achievable at a reasonable cost, and acknowledged that the Municipality would be challenged to provide the degree of care that the abutters would be able to provide, given the relative scope of individual responsibility (the Municipality presently clears some 540 kilometres of sidewalks and walkways).

It is intended to incorporate tips for abutters on sidewalk snow clearing presented at the February 11, 2003 Committee of the Whole, in a comprehensive public relations program to launch in the fall of 2003 in preparation for the 2003/04 winter season. In addition, this program would include service standards for the various winter services provided, an introduction to salt management, service expectations and parking restrictions.

Other comments raised by members of Council during discussion at the January 21, 2003 Regional Council meeting, will be addressed in a report on sidewalk snow removal, to be presented to Regional Council in the spring of this year.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications at this time.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

There are no recommended alternatives.

ATTACHMENT

Snow and Ice Control Program Service Standards

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Wayne Legere, Manager of Streets & Roads Services



PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION

Snow and Ice Control Program

SERVICE STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

The Public Works & Transportation Department is responsible for all aspects of the Snow and Ice Control Program. It is a seasonal operation that has significant impact on HRM during winter conditions.

It is the intent of this document to identify the Service Standards which will be maintained by HRM. At the same time, it is not the intent to identify how the Snow & Ice Control Program will be managed.

The goal is to set an attainable standard which align the levels of service with the financial constraints of the HRM budget.

OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the Service Standards are:

- To reduce the hazards of ice and snow conditions to motorists and pedestrians
- To minimize economic losses to the community and industry
- To facilitate the handling of emergencies by fire, hospitals and police officials.

CLASSIFICATION OF ROUTES

In order to set effective priorities for snow and ice activities within the region, the routes must be classified as to their impact on the overall transportation system.

For the purpose of these standards the HRM has classified all of the routes and will service them (salt, sand and plow) in the following order of priority:

Class 1 - First Priority

Includes:

- Arterials
- Serve as connectors/collectors between areas and routes
- Serve as emergency routes to hospitals and fire equipment
- Serve as snow routes in major hilly terrain during weather situations
- Transit - for major bus routes

Class 2 - Second Priority

Includes:

- Medium to low volume of traffic including residential and rural routes

Other Surface Types

- HRM will regulate the maintenance of the other surfaces, mirroring the priorities given to the adjacent routes unless specified differently for a particular activity. Items within this classification include:
- Sidewalks (not including sidewalks covered under by-law 300)
- Bus stops
- Walkways and overhead crosswalks
- Parking lots
- Handicap parking
- Private roads and lanes provided winter maintenance under agreement

STANDARDS

The Snow and Ice Program will endeavour to ensure the following levels of service.

- Class 1** Surfaces as bare as possible with frequency of coverage during a storm not to exceed 3 hours, with clean-up to be completed 12 hours after the end of the event.
- These roads are priority 1, and shall be salted/plowed to their full width.
 - Parking shoulders where no sidewalks are provided shall be plowed when there is appreciable accumulation of snow after one or more light snow falls.
 - Snow removal will be carried out based on operational requirements for snow storage and visibility concerns at intersections.
- Class 2** These routes are second priority and will be maintained on regular shifts, with clean up to be completed 24 hours after the end of the event.
- Primarily two lane residential streets
 - Coverage will be on both sides of the centre line to allow two-way traffic.
 - These routes will be completed after the priority 1 routes.
 - Snow removal will be carried out based on operational requirements for snow storage and visibility concerns at intersections.
 - Under circumstances where multiple events occur, these routes may not be fully completed when work must start again on the priority 1 routes.

Other Surface Types

- These surfaces will be completed during regular shifts.
- The Snow and Ice Control Program will endeavour to complete these areas not later than three days after any weather event.
 - Under circumstances where multiple events occur, these routes may not be fully completed when work must start again on the priority 1 routes.
 - Cleaning of sidewalks will follow the standards set in by-law 300.