

Subject: FW: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council
Attachments: walkways.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Sunday, May 30, 2021 5:45 AM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Sunday, May 30, 2021 - 05:45

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Date Friday, May 28, 2021
To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
First Name Cary
Last Name Humphrey
Phone Number [REDACTED]
Email [REDACTED]
Address [REDACTED] David Knight Lane
City Saskatoon
Province Saskatchewan
Postal Code S7k [REDACTED]
Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable) N/A
Subject Walkway Closure Policy Review
Meeting (if known) Standing Policy on Transportation
Comments
See attached letter regarding this issue to forward to Council prior to meeting on May 31, 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear City Council

At the May 31, 2021 City Council Meeting, Council is receiving a report from the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommending “that Administration draft a new walkway closure policy that enables closures more easily, based on experiences of residents.”

It is important to review policies to ensure they remain relevant based on the over riding intent of the policy, and its impact on the community as a whole. Changes to policy require feedback from those impacted in a positive and negative way. Major policy changes also require input from the residents of a community that will be impacted by a major shift in policy.

Having read the May 31, 2021 City Council Meeting report on walkway closures, I empathize with home owners directly impacted by individuals that have no consideration for peoples property. That said, City Council can't loose site of the intent of having walkways located in neighbourhoods as stated in the policy, as follows:

“Walkways are an integral component of pedestrian traffic infrastructure. Walkways can serve as routes for pedestrians to specific destinations within neighbourhoods. Some walkways may serve no direct public need.”

Silverwood Heights neighbourhood was designed with walkways as a prominent feature that allowed residents to walk and bike safely throughout the neighbourhood. City Council must not loose site of this design feature. For many years I have been a frequent user of walkways in Silverwood. Walkways I use allow for safe movement to parks, shopping, and to schools when my children were young. Granted there are walkways that may not meet the stated intent of the policy, as noted above, and could be considered for closure. Closures of certain walkways only pushes users (e.g, cyclists, school age children going to school or to a playground) having to use arterial streets that are busy with vehicle traffic.

So, a review of the Walkway Evaluation and Closure Policy is warranted, but City Council has to provide the Administration some clarity on what is meant by “enables closures more easily” to allow the Administration to come back to Council with policy changes to address the issue, yet not loose site of the overriding purpose of having walkways in the first place.

Any changes to the existing policy must take into consideration the following:

- Any closure should not be considered without extensive public input.
- Walkways that provide a safe direct link to parks, school, and local business should not be considered.
- Residents directly impacted by walkway vandalism adjacent to direct links should be provided with some financial compensation for upkeep of their property.
- The City should step up in maintenance frequency of designated walkways that are used as a safe direct link to neighbourhood amenities.

- Walkways that serve no direct link as identified by the Administration, should have an easier process to follow to close the walkway.
- If a closed walkway forces cyclists to use busy arterial roadways, designated signage and/or roadway markings should be installed to educate drivers to share the road with cyclists because cyclists cannot ride on sidewalks.
- Any policy change should be consistent with the City's Strategic Plan - Moving Around whereby the City provides an accessible network that encourages walking and cycling.
- It was the City that approved the neighbourhood design with walkways and therefore should carry a greater financial responsibility.

Kind regards,
Cary P. Humphrey