

Janzen, Heather

From: City Council
Subject: FW: Email - Request to Speak - Candance Savage - Wild about Saskatoon - Sweeping Streets, Medians and Additional Cost-Savings - CK 1700-1
Attachments: Re Sweeping Medians and Fall Street Sweeping.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Friday, November 17, 2023 5:07 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Candance Savage - Wild about Saskatoon - Sweeping Streets, Medians and Additional Cost-Savings - CK 1700-1

--- Replies to this email will go to hello@wildaboutsaskatoon.org ---

Submitted on Friday, November 17, 2023 - 17:06

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Friday, November 17, 2023

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Candace

Last Name: Savage

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: hello@wildaboutsaskatoon.org

Address: [REDACTED] Albert Avenue

City: Saskatoon

Province: Saskatchewan

Postal Code: [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Wild about Saskatoon

What do you wish to do ?: Request to Speak

If speaking will you be attending in person or remotely: In person

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: Multi-year Budget, Nov 28-30

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: Sweeping of Soft Medians. Fall Street Sweeping re Storm Utility maintenance

Comments:

Joanne Blythe and/or Chad Hammond will attend the meeting to speak to our recommendations if their schedules permit.

Sweeping Streets and Medians: Additional Cost-Savings

We are writing to recommend eliminating two activities as a way to reduce costs, cut GHG emissions and support ecological health.

- Eliminate sweeping of soft medians.

In August, Council decided to reduce the sweeping of “soft,” or grassy, medians from yearly to every two years as a cost-cutting measure. (This change is reflected on pp. 165ff of the City’s draft Operating and Capital Budget.) Meanwhile, the City has also been encouraging people to garden in these wide, cultivable strips. Uptake by gardeners has been limited, partly because the medians are overrun by large mechanized brushes every year or two.

To save money, reduce emissions, increase food security and restore ecological health, we recommend eliminating this activity all together in 2024-25. Additional saving: \$200,000

- Eliminate fall street sweeping

Page 165 of the City’s draft Operating and Capital Budget states that residential streets are swept once a year, in May and June. But the City also conducts an additional sweep in the Fall in 10 neighbourhoods (Buena Vista, Caswell Hill, City Park, Exhibition, Holiday Park, King George, Mayfair, Nutana, Riversdale and Varsity View) which have mature street trees. We understand that this activity is funded through the Storm Utility budget. It is not itemized in the budget documents we have seen, presumably because the exact timing and extent of the work depends on the weather and varies from year to year.

The purpose of this sweep is to remove leaves that might otherwise block storm drains. But according to p. 106 of the draft budget, the City deploys staff to clear catch basins, so the street sweeping seems redundant. More importantly, leaves are not litter. They are a valuable resource that can be used as mulch to retain moisture, composted to build soil or left where they fall as habitat for pollinators and other beneficial insects.

We recommend eliminating this activity to save \$\$ and reduce emissions. Some of the savings could be invested in upgrading the City’s efforts to educate residents about the value of fallen leaves and about their responsibilities under the Traffic Bylaw No. 7200 and Anti-Dumping Bylaw No. 5711. We realize that quantifying the savings may be difficult because this activity varies from year to year, but City staff should be able to provide you with a five-year average.

These two steps would result in significant, bankable savings that would improve the City’s triple bottom line. Ideally, we would like to see these funds invested in the development of new policy and process for protecting natural areas, a priority initiative that is currently unfunded. (See Saskatoon Climate Budget 2023, <https://pub-saskatoon.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=195363> p. 14/20, item P. 10093.

In addition to these immediate cuts, we also recommend that the City revise its Landscape Guidelines and landscaping practices to foreground native plants. Recent studies document cost savings (for water, fertilizer, machinery, fuel, etc.) of between 20% and 50% to maintain native plantings compared to “conventional” lawns. These savings are accompanied by reduced water consumption and GHG emissions, and enhanced biodiversity. (See <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/homesite/news/reno-homes/2023/05/27/make-your-garden-a-carbon-sink-instead-of-source-of-emissions>)

Through our popular Pollinator Paradise YXE program, Wild about Saskatoon is working to bring native plants home to yards, balconies, boulevards and parks in and around the city. We are proud to report that we have now registered 107 gardens as part of our network, a sign of wide-spread public support for ecological land care. Appreciating and valuing the gifts of Nature is a joyful and positive response to the challenges of the climate and biodiversity crises and our contribution to meeting the City's goal of net zero by 2050.

We hope you will find our recommendations helpful in your complex deliberations.

Joanne Blythe
Andrea Carroll
Chad Hammond
Candace Savage

For Wild about Saskatoon
www.wildaboutsaskatoon.org
hello@wildaboutsaskatoon.org

Background information from finance@saskatoon.ca

Fall Street Sweeping

In relation to the fall-sweep, this is not an "approved service-level" standard like the spring sweep is (which is a robust city-wide program).

The fall-sweep is simply a program which is funded by the storm utility program to help ensure high risk areas (big trees, potential for spring run-off etc.) are cleared up in the fall as best as possible. The fall program is variable as the City needs to wait until the majority of the leaves have fallen from the trees, and before freeze-up which can cause a very limited window at times. For this reason, the costs associated with a fall sweep are also variable.

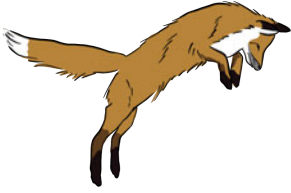
Citizens safety is a top priority, so if in fall there becomes winter conditions (like we saw this year with an early freezing rain), resources move to de-icing and clearing roadways of snow where required.

Some of the issues which also impact the fall sweep is when leaves are pushed into the roadway from adjacent sidewalks, yards and boulevards, which is against City bylaw – this can also impact the limited timeframe of delivering a fall program.

Attachments:

- [Re Sweeping Medians and Fall Street Sweeping.pdf](#) 2.68 MB

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No



Wild about Saskatoon
November 17, 2023

To City Council

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Street Sweeping

City crews sweep up leaves collected along the curb to reduce drainage problems for spring melt. In mid-October, yellow No Parking signs are posted on scheduled streets within neighbourhoods with high-tree density.

Limited area fall street sweeping begins October 16, 2023

Crews are on the way to these 10 neighbourhoods: Buena Vista, Caswell Hill, City Park, Exhibition, Holiday Park, King George, Mayfair, Nutana, Riversdale and Varsity View. Help us reduce street flooding next spring by moving vehicles by 7 a.m. on your sweeping day so we can pick up the heavy leaves. Sweepers won't be able to clean to the curb if your car is there when they arrive and may have to tow your vehicle.

Leaves



Please collect any fallen leaves that can blow into the roadway from your yard, and any adjacent sidewalks and boulevards, to help prevent leaves from blocking catch basins along the road. We also ask that you avoid pushing leaves or other material into the roadway to avoid creating drainage issues and hazards for pedestrians or drivers. For more information about the placement of material on City roadways, including leaves, please check out the [Traffic Bylaw \(No. 7200\)](#) and the [Anti-Dumping Bylaw \(No. 5713\)](#).