

Bryant, Shellie (Clerks)

From: City Council
Sent: August 24, 2018 2:22 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council
Attachments: aug_24_summer_300_block_main.jpg; march_3_post_clean_sweep_300_block_main.jpg

Submitted on Friday, August 24, 2018 - 14:21
Submitted by anonymous user: 71.17.144.164
Submitted values are:

Date: Friday, August 24, 2018
To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
First Name: Bruce
Last Name: Stone
Email: [REDACTED]
Address: [REDACTED] 9th St. E.
City: Saskatoon
Province: Saskatchewan
Postal Code: [REDACTED]
Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable):
Subject: Maintenance of Centre Medians Motion
Meeting (if known): Aug 27 Council
Comments:

I am writing council in regards to a motion being made by Councillor C. Block - Maintenance of Centre Medians [File No. CK. 6220-1] in the August 27, 2018 agenda (item 11.1). I have been in contact with Councillor Block over my concern that some residential blocks with centre medians are needlessly being damaged by a current winter grading policy.

This winter grading policy targets residential blocks for snow clearing purely based on their ability to store snow windrows on the centre median. Unlike the blocks identified in the priority network, the need for clearing is not a consideration in this policy. The placement of snow windrows on centre medians introduces unnecessary gravel, salts, and debris into these park areas that ultimately causes damage.

I believe Council needs to direct the appropriate department to eliminate this policy. Taking this position would have little impact on area safety, would reduce the number of medians being damaged, reflect a more sensible deployment of maintenance resources, and should result in an overall reduction in city spending.

I became aware of this policy earlier this year when I inquired about winter road clearing on three blocks in my area that did not appear on the priority network but seemed to be cleared as if they were. After several emails from city hall it became apparent the three blocks were not part of the priority network and did not have any requirements needed to be included in the priority network. When compared to parallel neighbouring blocks that did not receive snow clearing, there were no stated conditions that could justify their special treatment. I became aware that the reason these blocks received snow clearing was due to the presence of centre medians that the snow windrows were placed on.

When spring arrived I noticed the same three residential blocks received an early clean sweep. These blocks were fully clean before some of the city's collector and arterial roads. The neighbouring blocks waited roughly three months longer for the same clean sweep activity. Once again I asked the city to provide an explanation for this difference in area servicing. The city staff response indicated the early clean sweep on these three blocks was needed to mitigate the damage caused by locating snow windrows on the centre median.

Unfortunately the damage caused to our grass medians cannot be fully addressed by an early spring cleaning even with the special brushes that are used. The early spring sweep can only occur after the snow melt is complete. A recent study of salt infiltration in mid USA showed as much as 95% of road salts on green belts is absorbed into the soil during the spring melt period. The removal of surface gravel and salt after spring melt will not address the salts that have already entered the soil. Further, an inspection of some of the median will show that even with an early clean sweep using special brushes a significant amount of gravel can remain that negatively impacts summer grass health. (see attached photos)

The need to clear a residential block with a centre median before its neighbouring blocks does not seem reasonable unless the blocks

can meet the requirements of the priority network or demonstrate significantly higher volumes of traffic. The centre median alone does not create a higher need for snow clearing. Snow storage on these parks areas will create other seasonal issues and should be undertaken only when conditions demand it. It is important to consider that the effects of this activity is accumulative and it will eventually force additional summer parks maintenance. Unchecked, the salt infiltration and gravel will create areas that only weeds can thrive in.

This was a poorly considered policy that creates a cycle of unnecessary damage and repair that negatively impacts the city's operating costs. It increases the level of road salts entering the soil, and does not reflect a need or best allocation policy. I believe the creation of snow windrows on non priority network residential blocks with centre medians must be stopped this year to mitigate further damage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Attachments:

aug_24_summer_300_block_main.jpg: https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/webform/aug_24_summer_300_block_main.jpg

march_3_post_clean_sweep_300_block_main.jpg:

https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/webform/march_3_post_clean_sweep_300_block_main.jpg

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.saskatoon.ca/node/398/submission/252051>