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Item No. 12.1.1
Transportation Standing Committee
April 27, 2017

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Bruce Zvaniga, P.Eng., Director, Transportation & Public Works

DATE: March 31, 2017

SUBJECT: Alternate Side of the Street Parking to Allow for Daytime Cleaning

ORIGIN

Item 11.1 of the January 26, 2017 meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee:

MOVED by Councillor Mason THAT the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report outlining operation and cost implications to implement alternate side of the street parking to allow for daytime cleaning in high parking utilization areas as described in the staff report dated November 22, 2016.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Subsection 322(1) of the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* provides that, "The Council may design, lay out, open, expand, construct, maintain, improve, alter, repair, light, water, clean, and clear streets in the Municipality."

Subsection 34(3) of the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* provides that, "The Council shall provide direction on the administration, plans, policies and programs of the Municipality to the Chief Administrative Officer."

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council:

1. Direct the CAO to instruct staff to begin removal of overnight parking restrictions related to street cleaning activities in those areas where daytime parking is minimal and switch to daytime sweeping operation in those areas;

Recommendation continued on page 2..

2. Direct the CAO to instruct staff to continue overnight sweeping operations in those areas where high-demand daytime parking exists using the new, quieter sweeper equipment to determine if operations would still impact residents as it pertains to noise; and,
3. Direct the CAO to instruct staff to continue to assess street sweeping routes on an on-going basis to identify any further areas that could be moved to daytime operations because of minimal daytime parking demands.

BACKGROUND

The practice of overnight street cleaning of residential streets on the Halifax Peninsula has been in place since the late 1970s. At the time, residents were surveyed to determine if there was support to have restricted parking during the overnight hours to accommodate the service between the hours of 12:05 am – 8:00 am. The survey received positive support and parking restrictions were put in place throughout these residential neighbourhoods.

The street sweeping program (the program) is managed by Road Operations & Construction and operates annually from April to November, weather permitting. The program currently employs a fleet of 8 street sweepers operated by 11 staff working a combination of day and night shifts.

Overnight sweeping is carried out Monday to Friday by 4 operators/sweepers, twice per week in the downtown area and weekly on the residential streets signed with the overnight parking restrictions. All other residential areas are swept 3-5 times per year by 7 operators/sweepers working through the day, Monday to Thursday.

Concerns regarding this practice have been raised by residents since the initiation of the overnight service and are primarily related to the noise created by the machinery used to do the work.

DISCUSSION

In order to determine the impact created by eliminating overnight sweeping activities, staff reviewed the existing signed sweeping routes. This exercise has identified that approximately 15% of the current night routes have minimal demand for on-street parking during the day. These could be switched to daytime sweeping by removing the parking restrictions currently in place and reassigning staff and equipment to the day shift. This could be done fairly quickly as it only involves the removal of signs and at this time, it is anticipated that this could be done without the need for additional equipment and would have no significant financial impact.

In areas with high demand for on-street, daytime parking (areas near hospitals, universities, business areas, etc.), eliminating overnight sweeping by switching to alternate side of the street parking would require significant changes to the existing parking control signage. As a starting point, staff looked at the area bounded by Quinpool Road, Coburg Road, Robie Street and Oxford Street, which was identified as a potential pilot area for alternate side of the street parking at the January 26, 2017 meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee. Based on an assessment of this area, it is estimated that approximately 630 signs would need to be installed to implement alternate side of the street parking, at an estimated cost of \$75,000. Significant time would be required to change existing parking restrictions in order to switch to alternate side of the street parking. At this time, staff anticipate that switching to daytime sweeping operations in the pilot area could be done using existing equipment and the cost related to the change in signage would be the only financial impact.

The pilot area identified above, would represent approximately one fifth (1/5) of the total area that would need to be converted to alternate side of the street parking to allow for the elimination of overnight sweeping in residential areas. Conversion of the entire area to daytime operation would therefore result in significant cost to replace / install new parking signs, potentially in the range of \$375,000, plus the impact

of time and staff resources required to get the signage produced and installed. In addition to the signage costs, if the entire overnight sweeping operation was moved to days, staff has estimated that two additional sweepers may be required in order to maintain service levels of sweeping all streets 3-5 times per year. This would result in additional cost of approximately \$360,000 (\$180,000 per machine). Overall, moving the entire overnight sweeping operation to days could result in additional cost totalling approximately \$735,000.

Staff is currently in the procurement process to obtain two new street sweepers to replace older equipment in the fleet. These new machines operate significantly quieter than existing equipment. The current street sweepers, when in operation, produce sound at a level of approximately 90 decibels (dB), whereas the new sweepers operate at 80 dB. A decrease of 10 on the decibel scale would be considered significantly quieter as this would equate to noise level being reduced by about half. To provide context, 85 dB would be equivalent to the sound of city traffic heard from inside a car.

Implementing daytime sweeping in areas where demand for on-street parking is minimal in addition to making use of the new quieter equipment to maintain overnight operations in high on-street parking demand areas, will provide an opportunity for staff to determine the impact to equipment and staffing resources with no financial impact. This approach will also allow for the evaluation of the new equipment and how much of an improvement it will provide in relation to noise concerns in residential neighbourhoods.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was not deemed necessary as this report was a result of resident input submitted through the Councillor to Transportation Standing Committee.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

ALTERNATIVES

The Transportation Standing Committee could forward a recommendation that the Audit & Finance Standing Committee identify a funding source, and that Halifax Regional Council direct the CAO to instruct staff to proceed with piloting alternate side of the street parking to allow for daytime street sweeping in the area identified in this report. Staff does not recommend this alternative because of the cost and resources required to implement a temporary pilot, when there is potential that new equipment could resolve the current concerns with nighttime operations.

ATTACHMENTS

None

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> [or other appropriate Committee link] then choose the appropriate [Community Council/Board] and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

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