



PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING

Staff Report

REPORT NO: PWE-2022-35

TO: Council

SUBMITTED BY: Jeff Molenhuis, P. Eng., Director of Public Works & Engineering

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REVIEWED BY: Sharon Chambers, CAO

DATE: September 26, 2022

SUBJECT: Traffic and Parking Bylaw update - Significant Snow Event Bylaw

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council amend the Traffic and Parking By-law to support the annual overnight parking ban and to allow the Township to declare Snow Events:

1. Amend Traffic and Parking By-law 2016-52 to create a new prohibition for parking on any Township of Wilmot roadway when a significant Snow Event is declared as shown in Section 1 – 11 of Schedule A of Report 2022-35
2. Amend Traffic and Parking By-Law 2016-52 to create a new prohibition for parking on any maintained municipal roadway at any time in a way that interferes with the movement of traffic or the clearing of snow as shown in Section 1 – 12 of Schedule A of Report 2022-35

SUMMARY:

This report outlines the purpose of the proposed by-law, the communication plan, enforcement requirements and how the Township will declare for Snow Events. It is anticipated that the benefits of this proposed by-law amendment will provide for better winter control clearing capabilities for staff and residents and will support response times to significant winter storm events.

BACKGROUND:

The current Traffic and Parking By-law (By-law 2016-52, as amended) states that no person shall park on any highway between the hours of 2:30 am and 6:00 am unless otherwise permitted by this by-law. This is the only section of the by-law that allows By-law staff to issue tickets to vehicles parked on the roadway during winter months.

The deficiency of the current system is that some residents leave their vehicles parked on the road during daytime hours while major snow events are occurring, which slows the overall response time as winter control operators must try to maneuver past and around these vehicles. At times streets cannot be plowed safely or efficiently by staff and the effort to clear the streets of snow must be delayed until owners move their vehicles or are ticketed and towed. It would typically require an additional route trip to clear the windrows and remaining snow accumulation left from moving around parked cars. Periodic damage to snowplows and parked vehicles can occur when winter control operators attempt to navigate narrower roads as a result and leave windrows of snow around vehicles for owners to clear. Having additional options for winter parking infractions will allow By-law staff to be proactive when issuing parking tickets during the day in addition to early morning enforcement efforts when the Township is preparing for significant Snow Events.

Staff have posted notice of the proposed by-law on the Township webpage, social media and in local newspapers inviting residents to review and comment on the proposed changes. An overwhelming majority of respondents are favourable with minimal opposition.

The Municipalities in Waterloo Region have coordinated their Traffic and Parking By-Laws to provide consistency in structure, phrasing, and content across the Region. The By-law is organized by Parts and Schedules with the Parts explaining the components or restrictions, and the Schedules list the location where that corresponding component or restriction occurs. Currently the Cities of Waterloo, Kitchener, and Cambridge, as well as the Township of North Dumfries, Wellesley and Woolwich, declare Snow Events.

REPORT:

Through various Region of Waterloo and area municipality working groups, Township staff reviewed the existing traffic and parking by-law to identify areas that can be improved in both operational and organizational respects. This review identified a need for a parking ban during critical winter storm events to help ease the operational burden for snow clearing efforts during

significant winter weather events. This by-law aims to improve the effectiveness of snow clearing operations and ensure they are carried out in a safe and efficient manner.

Declaring a Snow Event:

The Director of Public Works and Engineering or their designate will be responsible for declaring the Snow Event and the following parameters will guide how Snow Events will be declared:

1. Staff will attempt to declare a Snow Event by 5:00p.m. on the affected day whenever possible, providing time for media outlets to broadcast the information during 6:00p.m. and early morning newscasts.
2. The declaration will remain in place for a minimum of 24 hours from the time the Snow Event is declared. The expected duration will be announced with each event and may be subject to change according to weather conditions. The declaration of a Snow Event may be canceled prior to the 24-hour period if the snowfall is not as significant as anticipated.
3. Staff will attempt to declare snow events in conjunction with area municipality counterparts for a more consistent and predictable approach for public and communication purposes.
4. A general threshold for these types of events to be declared will be snowfall accumulating to a depth of 15cm of snow in 12 hours as per Environment Canada's criteria for snowfall warnings. However, an event may also be declared where deemed necessary based on snowfall conditions and cumulative patterns.

Communication Plan:

Upon declaration of the snow event, township staff will send a message through our communications team who can advise the public of the declared event through the following means:

- Share with local tv and radio broadcast partners
- Share to Township Social Media Platforms
- Update Township snow event webpage
- Share through an email sign up list on the Snow event webpage

Enforcement Practices:

Parking is prohibited on any Township road or street at any time (day or night) during a declared Snow Event. Vehicles parked on the road or street during a declared Snow Event can be ticketed and possibly towed. Ticketing by By-law staff, with assistance from designated Operations staff, can commence from the time that the Snow Event is declared and will continue until it is over or cancelled.

During normal winter operations, when a Snow Event is not declared, By-law staff will enforce the Traffic and Parking By-law including the total parking ban from December 1st to March 31st

between the hours of 2:30am and 6:30am. If winter control operators have difficulty clearing a roadway due to the locations of parked cars, By-law staff will issue a ticket for “parked interfering with snow clearing” section of the proposed by-law amendment. Vehicles will be ticketed if they are parked on a roadway that has not been plowed or salted, or where the road has been plowed but there is an obvious windrow of snow around a parked vehicle, or as requested by the Supervisor of Roads or their designate.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report supports the goals and strategies of:

- Responsible Governance through Active Communications and Service Reviews

ACTIONS TOWARDS UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and infrastructure

Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

ATTACHMENTS:

Schedule “A” – Proposed Snow Event By-Law