

Snow ? and new on-street parking rules ? cause headaches

By Brock Weir

This past weekend, as the snow mounted, many Aurora residents were left wondering when their roads would be cleared ? so much so that Mayor Geoff Dawe took to social media to offer his apologies on behalf of the Town.

?Please accept [The Town's] apologies and bear with us as we sort out our street snow plowing,? Mayor Dawe posted on Facebook on Saturday afternoon. ?At least the sidewalks are reasonable.?

The post provoked a mixed response from one resident with a view of the Joint Operations Centre stating that snow plows had not moved out of the Industrial Parkway North facility since the snow began to fly, with others pointing out the locations of snow removal already underway through the municipal ?Where's My Plow?? app.

In time for 2015, Aurora approved a motion setting 8 cm as the threshold of snow on residential streets before the plows come to clear. Previously, this threshold was set at 5 cm.

Councillor Tom Mrakas has re-introduced his notice of motion from last year, which was voted down the first time around, to reverse its decision. This is expected to hit Council on January 24.

Plowing is just one snow-related issue the Town is currently ?working out? ? along with kinks being experienced by residents and snow removal crews alike since the Town lifted its on-street parking ban for nights when a snow event is not in the forecast.

The pilot project was brought up during last Tuesday's Council meeting following an early week snow removal which was, it seems, far more successful than the one experienced at the end of the week.

?We had a successful snow clearing with approximately 12 hours to clear all the streets with the exception of a couple of secondary routes,? said Techa van Leeuwen, Aurora's Director of Corporate Services, responding to Councillor John Abel, who requested an update on the on-street parking pilot. ?We received about 15 complaints or concerns. All of those complaints and concerns, for the most part, were with respect to sidewalk clearing and damage. [Infrastructure & Environmental Services] is going to follow up with the contractor to improve service. Bylaw services started their morning at 5 a.m. and were out and about.?

Pleased with the response, Councillor Abel said communication is still needed to drive home the message that cars need to stay off the road for 24 hours within a snow event.