



Memorandum

From the Office of Councillor Zoë Royer

Date: April 27, 2021
Subject: Compassionate Leadership

Purpose

To seek immediate repair by the City of a broken grate over a ditch on city-owned property that prevents access to an elderly person's home as it causes vehicular damage if driven upon. It is important to note that there is no street parking anywhere near this home on a particularly busy, narrow stretch of loco Road. This means the grate covering the ditch at the entrance to the driveway is essential to gain access this home.

Earlier this month, Council received confirmation that Port Moody Firefighters and BC Ambulance Services will not go up this driveway due to the condition of the grate. As well, home care support will no longer come to this resident's home.

The resident contacted the City last Fall asking us to repair the broken grate at the entrance to her driveway. She was told that although the damaged grate was on City property, it was her responsibility to repair it. Her driveway was also breaking up, so she hired a paving company to replace the grate and redo the driveway.

When the paving contractor went to the City for a permit to repave the driveway (and fix the grate), they were told that under no circumstances was any work to be done on the property until the grate, that is on City property is restored.

The contractor was asked to comply with City regulations and complete water act notifications, etc, in accordance, before work could commence on fixing an existing steel grate on City property.

The steel grate bridges two concrete foundations which form an open-top driveway culvert. There is an existing ditch that provides drainage for loco Road on both sides of the driveway. The same ditch is fully culverted across Water Street. It is also fully culverted where the ditch crosses the driveways to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] loco road.

It is noteworthy to mention that the grate has been there for decades. In the winter, the City snowplows push muddy brine, bits of asphalt and snow into the ditch and over the driveway grate. In the Spring, the City's flail mower whips the vegetation, cutting a swath beyond the ditch and leaving leaves and broken branches in the ditch. A few years ago, the City fixed that stretch of loco Rd with a 1 meter wide 40-meter-long asphalt patch that is clearly visible today.

It is clear that the City has a responsibility to maintain its roads. Logic would dictate that if we don't require environmental approvals to fix potholes, we should not require special permits to replace a broken steel grate with a new one and replace damaged pavement with new pavement.

Nearing the end of April, this 87-year-old resident is concerned with having no ability to safely access her home and no ability to repair the City's culvert. She has already damaged one tire on her car and can't get home care support services to her home as a result of this issue. This could mean that she will be stranded now or into the winter, placing her in an impossible situation. The inability to make any repairs or access her home safely has put her in a state of distress.

Precedence

When the City rebuilt Gatensbury Road a couple years back, the City didn't limit itself to the road and sidewalk. Wherever required, the portion of the residential driveway between the sidewalk and private property line was also replaced. In fact, access points on the driveways to three homes in the one thousand block of Gatensbury had to be done twice. The first design caused the homeowners' cars to bottom out when entering or exiting their driveways. So, the City had to remove the freshly installed asphalt, fix the grades, and repave them a second time.

The rationale that a property owner would somehow have to fix the portion of their driveway that is within the City's road right-of-way didn't apply for the Gatensbury project and, surely should not apply in the tragic situation this resident finds herself in.

This memo is a call for Council to exercise compassionate leadership, use common sense and immediately order the replacement of a broken grate over a ditch on city-owned property.

Recommendation

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City promptly restore the grate within the road right-of-way to facilitate access to the home of an elderly citizen living at [REDACTED] loco Road.
