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This council is missing its mandate

By Jose Rodriguez

Hold on a moment, is that a voice of reason coming from city hall?

Someone actually talking about dealing with things that matter and punting busybody motions.

Common sense councillor Diane Colley-Urquhart refused to endorse a hike in littering fines when it was put to council earlier this week.

Not because she likes the cigarette butts and burger wrappers that dot the city, but because there are already laws in place to deal with those who believe they should use the streets as their trash can and setting unenforceable fines is a waste of everyone's time.

But what is most telling about her refusal to endorse the make-work plan are the comments she made afterwards.

Colley-Urquhart pointed out a disturbing trend with this current council.

"The amount of social engineering that we're getting into down here at city hall is ridiculous," she said.

"The next thing we're going to hear is that they want not only a bigger budget for pesticide police, but butt police now."

Yes, Calgary city council seems to be split into two very distinct camps.

One -- led by Druh Farrell with Brian Pincott in tow -- would love to encase the city in an impenetrable bubble of antiseptic bliss.

Limit the number of newspaper boxes on street corners, ban pesticides, tinker with litter laws and anything else that plays well in the granola guide to big city management.

The other group, which includes Colley-Urquhart and fellow common sencer Ric McIver, looks at getting back to the roots of governing.

What do Calgarians need and how can we most cost-effectively give it to them?

It's time to throw support behind those councillors who understand what Calgarians expect from them.



The city just hiked taxes 4.5% and is setting itself up to be able to borrow more money.

Parking in downtown is the least affordable in the nation, murderous gangs are striking fear into pockets of the city and homelessness is out of control.

As Colley-Urquhart points out, there are bigger fish to fry.

Don't give up the fight, Diane.