

Reviewing the Snow and Ice Control Investments 2019-2021

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Context

The City of Calgary’s Snow and Ice Control (SNIC) program is committed to helping make pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle passage along streets, sidewalks and pathways safer in winter. These services are delivered primarily by the Transportation Department, led by the Roads and Transit Business Units (BUs). Calgary Parks, Waste and Recycling Services and Calgary Community Standards (CCS) BUs also provide SNIC-related services, including bylaw enforcement.

In 2016, The City approved a pedestrian strategy called “Step Forward” that envisions a safer, more inviting and better maintained realm for pedestrians. For this to happen, action items were developed (Table 1) to improve winter conditions for walking, as snow and ice clearing was identified as a significant barrier to Calgarians.

| 2016 Pedestrian Strategy – Action Items | |
|---|---|
| Action 30 | Enhance the existing snow and ice control operations to reduce obstructions at transit stops and road crossings in high pedestrian activity areas. Investigate the trial alternative materials and equipment. |
| Action 31 | Undertake an assessment of engineering walkways, develop a management plan, amend the bylaw to address public concerns, and identify funding requirements to upgrade and maintain walkways city wide. |
| Action 36 | Increase the snow clearing response time to P1 (within 24 hours of a snow event) on City-managed sidewalks in high pedestrian activity areas. |
| Action 49 | Investigate ways to encourage property owners to undertake prompt snow and ice clearing from sidewalks, support those not able to carry out snow clearing, and improve bylaw enforcement on non-compliance. |

Table 1: 2016 Pedestrian Strategy – Action Items

Ice or snow that builds up on sidewalks and pathways creates much more than an inconvenience; it can contribute to slips or falls that result in injury. The City obtained statistics from Alberta Health Services (AHS) regarding slips and falls. Table 2 shows the number of emergency department and urgent care centre visits due to falls involving snow and ice on public streets and sidewalks. AHS statistics reveal that an average of 233 people per year are treated for injuries sustained by slipping or falling on public sidewalks and streets in Calgary alone, and 710 across Alberta. Table 2 also contains the number of 3-1-1 calls The City received about people who slipped and fell due to sidewalk conditions, and the total of uncleared sidewalk complaints that Calgary Community Standards (CCS) responded to over the past eight years

| AHS – Slip & Fall Injuries | | | 3-1-1 – Snow / Ice on Sidewalks (CCS) | | |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Year | Calgary | Alberta | Year | Slip & Fall | Total |
| 2013 | 287 | 1,406 | 2013 | 195 | 5,568 |
| 2014 | 267 | 848 | 2014 | 734 | 14,958 |
| 2015 | 166 | 518 | 2015 | 281 | 6,375 |
| 2016 | 129 | 374 | 2016 | 277 | 5,681 |
| 2017 | 303 | 657 | 2017 | 457 | 9,090 |
| 2018 | 302 | 736 | 2018 | 703 | 18,426 |
| 2019 | 206 | 555 | 2019 | 330 | 13,120 |
| 2020 | 205 | 586 | 2020 | 462 | 15,142 |
| Average | 233 | 710 | Average | 430 | 11,045 |

Table 2: Annual Slip and Fall statistics for AHS and City 311 (2013-2020)

With these concerns and opportunities in mind, Council directed Administration to enhance SNIC services for pedestrian spaces to improve the safety, accessibility and equity of Calgary’s winter walking network. This included adding new fines to be issued when sidewalks are not kept clear of snow and ice, and investing \$18.5 million in one-time funding to ensure The City’s own sidewalks were cleared of snow within 24 hours, adding 100 km of pathways to be cleared, and

500 locations where windrows (piles of snow) would be removed from wheelchair ramps at street crossings. The following information is an update on the effectiveness of these SNIC investments, as well as feedback from the Advisory Committee on Accessibility on the changes, and the service gaps that remain.

Enforcement

Calgary Community Standards (CCS) provides education and enforcement related to snow and ice on sidewalks with a goal of improving public safety and accessibility in pedestrian spaces. Community Peace Officers (CPOs) respond to complaints from Calgarians through 3-1-1, and proactively address snow and ice concerns during the course of their regular duties.

Under section 67(1) of The City's Street Bylaw 20M88, public sidewalks and pathways bordering private property must be cleared of snow and ice within 24 hours of a snowfall ending. The owner or occupant of the property is required to clear the sidewalk down to the bare surface. These provisions do not apply to sidewalks or pathways separated from the rest of the parcel by a developer-built retaining wall, a community screening fence or a sound attenuation barrier.

When a service request is submitted to 3-1-1 for a snow and ice concern, a Snow and Ice Letter is generated and sent to the registered property owner to advise of the complaint. This letter is sent as a courtesy to educate property owners on the bylaw requirements and to advise that a CPO will be attending the property to inspect the sidewalk. Over the past 5 years, the compliance rate following receipt of a Snow and Ice Letter is 61 per cent, with no further action required by CCS.

If a CPO attends a property and finds that the sidewalk has not been sufficiently cleared of snow and ice, they may issue a Snow and Ice Warning Notice giving the owner or occupant 24 hours to comply. The Snow and Ice Warning Notice allows the CPO to proceed immediately with corrective action should the owner/occupant fail to clear the sidewalk within the 24-hour time period. If the situation has not been remedied upon the CPO returning for a recheck, the file is sent to a City-approved contractor who dispatches a crew to clear the sidewalk. The property owner is invoiced for the cost of snow removal, which has a minimum flat rate of \$150 plus GST and administrative fees. If the property owner fails to pay the invoice these costs are added to the annual property tax bill. Since 2013, just over 10 per cent of all snow and ice service requests required corrective action by a contractor (Table 3).

| 3-1-1 Service Requests for 'Snow and Ice on Sidewalks' | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Year | Annual Snowfall (cm) | Total SR generated | Complied without Warning | Warning Issued | Complied with Warning | Standard Work Order Generated | Percent to Work Order |
| 2013 | 146.3 | 5,568 | 49.10% | 2,834 | 89.50% | 551 | 10.50% |
| 2014 | 175.3 | 14,958 | 50.59% | 7,391 | 92.50% | 1,076 | 7.50% |
| 2015 | 104.1 | 6,375 | 47.23% | 3,364 | 85.80% | 896 | 14.20% |
| 2016 | 61.7 | 5,681 | 50.77% | 2,797 | 88.20% | 649 | 11.80% |
| 2017 | 144.6 | 9,090 | 66.22% | 3,071 | 90.30% | 866 | 9.70% |
| 2018 | 213.8 | 18,426 | 65.12% | 6,427 | 88.88% | 2,049 | 11.12% |
| 2019 | 190.9 | 13,120 | 64.88% | 4,608 | 90.98% | 1,183 | 9.02% |
| 2020 | 162.3 | 15,142 | 58.17% | 6,334 | 90.21% | 1,482 | 9.79% |
| 2021 (Q1) | 52.4 | 6,862 | 62.31% | 2,586 | 92.36% | 524 | 7.64% |
| Average | 149.9 | 11045 | 56.5% | 4603 | 89.5% | 1094 | 10.5% |

Table 3: 311 Service Requests for Snow and Ice. Averages do not include the Q1 2021 values.

Although CPOs respond to all complaints with an education-first approach, there are a small number of chronic offenders who regularly fail to maintain their sidewalks. In 2018 July, amendments to the Street Bylaw were approved by Council which introduced a \$250 fine for failing to remove ice and snow from an adjacent sidewalk or pathway within 24 hours. Following an implementation period between 2018 September and 2019 May which focused on raising public awareness of the new fine, CPOs were granted the authority to issue violation tickets in instances where property owners have already received a Warning Notice and/or corrective action within the previous 12 months.

Additionally, individuals with a prior conviction within a 12-month period may be fined \$500 for a second offence and \$750 for a third offence and each offence thereafter. Since the new provisions of the Street Bylaw were introduced, only 0.2 per cent of all snow and ice service requests have resulted in a violation ticket (Table 4).

| Tickets Issued for Failing to Keep Sidewalks Clear | | | |
|--|------|------|-----------|
| 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 (Q1) |
| 0 | 6 | 56 | 12 |

Table 4: Tickets Issued for Failing to Keep Sidewalks Clear of Snow and Ice

Reviewing the Enhanced SNIC Services

Council approved the current Snow and Ice Control Policy (TP004) in 2011. The policy established the priorities, standards and service levels of The City’s snow and ice control operations for streets and sidewalks. However, the policy defines response targets that are focused primarily on the roadway conditions for vehicles.

Prior to 2018, this meant that SNIC resources were often redeployed back to Priority 1 and 2 streets if snow continued to fall for several days, resulting the interruption of work to clear pedestrian infrastructure. This resulted in snow accumulations that would make travel more difficult, particularly for people with limited or reduced mobility. It also meant that The City was delivering SNIC for sidewalks well after the 24-hour response time expected of citizens.

Council’s decision in 2018 to allocate a total of \$18.5 million to expand and prioritize SNIC services for pedestrian infrastructure has resulted in a more reliable network for winter travel. Table 5 shows the SNIC service levels for The City’s pedestrian infrastructure. This includes the specific improvements for City inventory sidewalks to be cleared of snow within 24 hours, adding 100 km of pathways to be cleared, and 500 locations where windrows would be removed from wheelchair ramps at street crossings.

| SNIC Service Levels for Pedestrian Infrastructure | |
|--|--|
| Infrastructure Type | Current Level of SNIC Service |
| Pathways | 442 km are completed 24 hours after snow stops falling |
| Sidewalks (City inventory to clear) | 958 km are completed within 24 hours. Includes Parks, Roads and City facilities |
| Bus Zones | 1089 priority locations are completed within 24 hours All other bus zones are cleared within the 7-day plan |
| Pedestrian Bridges | 19,2 km cleared within 24 hours |
| Wheelchair Curb Ramps | 500 priority locations. Windrows cleared within 24 hours |
| Medians and Traffic Islands (at crossing locations) | 1970 locations cleared |
| Traffic Calming Curb crossings | 123 locations cleared |
| Public stairs and other locations requiring hand-clearing | 190 locations cleared |

Table 5: SNIC Service Levels for Pedestrian Infrastructure

Budget

The \$18.5 million allocated for the enhanced SNIC services was based on cost-range estimates developed at the time. Administration was committed to delivering the new levels of service in the most cost-effective manner possible, including quality assurance reviews of operations, and strategic deployment of labour between contracted and City work forces. The actual expenditures for each winter season are presented in Tables 6-8.

| For the period of October 2018 to December 31 2018 | | | | |
|--|------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Pathway & Sidewalk SNIC | Department | Budget | Expenditures | Recovery from Enhanced Budget |
| | Roads | 1,110,035 | 1,878,313 | 768,278 |
| | Parks | 224,766 | 1,791,240 | 1,566,474 |
| | 2018 Total | 1,334,801 | 3,669,553 | 2,334,752 |
| For the period of January 2019 to May 31 2019 | | | | |
| Pathway & Sidewalk SNIC | Department | Budget | Expenditures | Recovery from Enhanced Budget |
| | Roads | 1,466,296 | 2,007,825 | 541,529 |
| | Parks | 1,392,289 | 2,557,812 | 1,165,523 |
| | 2019 Total | 2,858,585 | 4,565,637 | 1,707,052 |
| 2018/2019 Season Total | | 4,193,386 | 8,235,190 | 4,041,804 |

Table 6: SNIC expenditures on pathways and sidewalks during the 2018/2019 SNIC season

| For the period of October 2019 to December 31 2019 | | | | |
|--|------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Pathway & Sidewalk SNIC | Department | Budget | Expenditures | Recovery from Enhanced Budget |
| | Roads | 1,082,217 | 1,924,501 | 842,284 |
| | Parks | 337,824 | 1,753,347 | 1,415,523 |
| | 2019 Total | 1,420,041 | 3,677,848 | 2,257,807 |
| For the period of January 2020 to May 31 2020 | | | | |
| Pathway & Sidewalk SNIC | Department | Budget | Expenditures | Recovery from Enhanced Budget |
| | Roads | 1,174,836 | 1,546,715 | 371,879 |
| | Parks | 1,017,856 | 3,268,089 | 2,250,233 |
| | 2020 Total | 2,192,692 | 4,814,804 | 2,622,112 |
| 2019/2020 Season Total | | 3,612,732 | 8,492,652 | 4,879,919 |

Table 7: SNIC expenditures on pathways and sidewalks during the 2019/2020 SNIC season

| For the period of October 2020 to December 31 2020 | | | | |
|--|------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Pathway & Sidewalk SNIC | Department | Budget | Expenditures | Recovery from Alternate funding |
| | Roads | 1,000,772 | 969,837 | |
| | Parks | 550,000 | 1,799,836 | |
| | 2020 Total | 1,550,772 | 2,799,673 | |
| For the period of January 2021 to April 30 2021 | | | | |
| Pathway & Sidewalk SNIC | Department | Budget | Expenditures | Recovery from Alternate funding |
| | Roads | 908,269 | 916,005 | |
| | Parks | 570,000 | 1,838,946 | |
| | 2021 Total | 1,478,269 | 2,754,951 | |
| 2020/2021 Season Total | | 3,029,041 | 5,554,624 | 2,525,583 |

Table 8: SNIC expenditures on pathways and sidewalks during the 2020/2021 SNIC season

The total pedestrian SNIC expenditures for the three winter seasons (2018-2021) was:

| | Budget | Expenditures | Recovery from Alternate funding |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2018-2021 Total | 10,835,159 | 22,282,466 | 11,447,306 |

The number of annual snow events does influence the total SNIC expenditures. The 2019/2020 winter season had an unusually high number of events, almost double of what was experienced in 2020/2021 (Table 9).

| Annual snow events (2018-2021) | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
| Snow Events | 25 | 39 | 21 |

Table 9: Annual snow events (2018-2021)

Performance

Calgary Parks and Roads report that approximately 95% of routes were cleared within the 24-hour window. Of the 5% where this target was not achieved, the following contributing factors occurred:

- Vehicle and/or equipment breakdown or failure
- Extreme weather conditions resulting in very heavy snowfall during a single event
- Contractors not mobilized due to warm weather melting the snow within 24 hours, negating need for call-out to contractors
- Back to back snow events where equipment may already be in-field
- Technical issues, such as software failure or tracking hardware malfunction (clearing is still achieved, but may show false positive of clearing not occurring, affecting reporting)

Operations Staffing

Administration runs SNIC operations 7 days a week. Calgary Parks annually hires 17 dedicated staff to conduct seasonal SNIC operations as well as one seasonal Foreman. Calgary Roads has contracted resources to provide the pedestrian SNIC service.

However, City staff are responsible for the customer service and administrative duties that support the entire SNIC program, including:

- Processing and assigning 311's to correct regions
- Processing and approving/querying contractor invoices
- Reviewing additional locations for addition to routes, based on select criteria
- Addition of reviewed locations via GIS software and documentation
- Operational cost tracking and time management
- Contractor and staff supervision
- Processing insurance claims

For Parks, staff also conduct additional SNIC activities, such as:

- Clearing snow and ice around parked vehicles adjacent to narrow sidewalks
- Drifting snow clearing from existing areas
- Sanding and pickling sites throughout the city
- Field work assessments and repairs due to SNIC activities
- Staff and contractor Route inspections

Contract Resources

The City retains contracted resources to augment City personnel and equipment for various SNIC operations. Below is a table showing services provided by contractors to Parks, Roads and Transit.

| Business Unit | Services Provided to Pedestrians | Expenditure on Contractor/City Forces (%) |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Parks | Clearing of sidewalks adjacent to Parks' property and the priority pathways | 62% : 38% |
| Roads | Steps, sidewalks, priority bus zones and pedestrian overpasses | 100% contracted |
| Transit | LRT Station platforms, LRT Station parking lots, Park N' Ride Terminals Lots and walkways. | 100% contracted |

Table 10: Services Provided by Contractors

Quality Control / Assurance

Administration regularly reviews the services provided by contractors. This includes staff inspecting routes for deficiencies to be rectified after initial clearance, or when receiving reports of areas where ice and snow had not been fully cleared. Internal lists of 'Hot Spot' locations are also visited to evaluate known, repeat issues.

In Roads, contractors are required to take before and after pictures of each location, and email updates are provided every 3 hours to the Traffic Management Centre. Any service requests that are received related to quality of SNIC are assigned to Roads inspectors to investigate.

Parks utilizes technology to supplement the quality review, and to effectively track progress:

- Work is tracked via iPad GPS into GIS systems (Workforce, Collector & ArcGIS Online)
- Foremen monitor SNIC App to track contractor and Park staff progress on each route
- Detailed review of operation data conducted by Pathways Data Analyst to resolve queries, insurance issues etc. Determines if there have been delays in mobilization, or if progress along routes were slower than anticipated

Administration also conducts contractor evaluations with Supply at the end of each winter season.

Priority Bus Zone program

In addition to the 2018 investments to improve SNIC for pedestrians, \$2 million had been allocated to Calgary Transit annually since 2015 to focus on clearing bus pads and bare pavement bus stops with large windrow accumulation. These locations included bus stops with high numbers of transit ramp deployments (to assist citizens with mobility challenges), including hospitals, senior homes, and locations where mobility-challenged individuals frequently visit. Snow clearing would begin during the snow event and continue until all the identified locations were clear following the snow event. Calgary Transit and Calgary Neighbourhoods work together to provide a list of priority locations. During the 2020/2021 SNIC season, The City provided service to 1089 bus stop locations.

Engagement through the Advisory Committee for Accessibility

In 2020 and 2021, Roads engaged The City of Calgary's Advisory Committee for Accessibility (ACA) to discuss the 2018 investments made to expand SNIC services for the pedestrian environment, and to identify areas of ongoing concern. The members of ACA represent cross-disability individuals with lived-experience. This committee's role is to advise and recommend solutions to Council on accessibility and disability matters.

ACA feedback has shown there has been a marked improvement in how people navigate downtown because of the resources provided to SNIC in the last couple of years. It assists with navigation from the LRT along 7th Avenue to locations in the downtown where people work, attend school, play and have medical appointments. The clearing of windrows has been ideal for people using mobility devices, guide dogs and white canes. Pathway clearing has also been improved.

ACA Recommendations to Council

While improvements to accessibility have been experienced, challenges do remain. ACA recommends that priorities for SNIC services need to be re-evaluated and certain gaps should be addressed by Council in an updated SNIC policy and plan. This should include:

- Clearing windrows away from all bus stops
- Clearing the portion of public sidewalks that cross laneways/aprons
 - Consider either private or City resources for clearing these areas
- Clearing curb ramps & access to crosswalks that have windrows
- Develop a priority system for clearing windrows and using a grader gate on plows
- Engineered walkway snow clearing needs to be addressed and responsibility assigned
- Communications: Each time there is a snow event there must be a social media campaign to outline to homeowners & business owners what their responsibilities are for snow clearing.

Feedback from ACA members

Administration asked the following questions to help facilitate discussion and feedback on the expanded SNIC services:

- Has there been a noticeable improvement in pedestrian accessibility following The City's changes to snow clearing processes in 2018?
- Has the implementation of a fine structure created a change in perception among your client groups?

- Are there any other improvements you would like to see implemented in The City's Pedestrian Snow Clearing? What are some of the challenges your clients face?

Administration has presented the member feedback below, using their original responses and commentary.

Expanded SNIC service:

- Improvement. Generally, yes, along walking / biking trails and on sidewalks owned by The City and along residence and commercial sidewalks.
- Yes. In addition to improved crosswalk entry point clearing, I would like to see "greenbelt" sidewalks cleared by the city. Perhaps community associations would have a role in managing this. These asphalt pathways are difficult to clear, and I don't think it should be the sole responsibility of the adjacent homeowner. Those residents already have front sidewalks to clear, too. These shared asphalt greenbelt pathways between houses are a community responsibility. A few houses from me, there is an icy pathway that is very hard to keep clear despite residents' good intention and effort. Also, worth noting is that many residents in my area rely on these pathways to be safe for them to be able to access Calgary Transit routes. (Me included.)
- No, not a noticeable improvement. On the positive, park pathways such as Glenmore Reservoir are still cleared promptly and the community of runners / walkers in my area is very grateful. However, in the Kingsland / Haysboro area where I live, there are still ice and snow covered crosswalk entrances and in some cases a snowbank blocking entry to the crosswalk. While many people can hop over, this can be prohibitive to kids and seniors to get around.
- Calgary's Snow Removal Strategy is Inadequate. This most recent large snowfall, now over 3 weeks old, highlights the shortcomings of the City's snow removal strategy, especially as when seen from the perspective of accessibility. The strategy does not effectively support the concept of "Clear Path of Travel", particularly for pedestrian mobility.

Fines

- Good concept. I think this is the best motivator available to encourage people to shovel.
- Residents have noticed that some homeowners in the community have improved their snow clearing on their sidewalks since the introduction of the fine structure
- Enforcement is promoted as more "educational and improving awareness" Only people living under a rock in the city are unaware of their civic and moral obligation to clear their sidewalk.

- Generally, residents are NOT keen to report neighbours behaviours / lack of compliance due to potential conflicts.

Common Concern - Communications:

- There are better and more effective channels for “educational and improving awareness”
- Communicating to the public as to ‘why’ snow & ice clearing is so important, as well as having a clear path of travel in all seasons of the year is vital.
- When the new snow clearing policy was being developed – I criticized the lack of funds for EDUCATION. People generally WANT to do the right thing and since snow clearing will NEVER EVER be “perfect” education on shovelling and negotiating windrows and other difficult terrain would serve the community well.
- Communicate ON HOW to clear your sidewalk effectively WITHOUT hurting your back – the principal reason/fear that some are unable to do their duty.

Other Public Comments:

- A number of residents shared that they had fallen in December due to icy conditions and had been injured. This results in residents feeling isolated and experiencing challenges in accessing health appointments, grocery stores and other amenities. Even having residents come to a meeting to discuss snow removal was not possible for many residents as residents did not feel like they could safely make their way to the community space in the building next door.
- Residents spoke of the challenges with the curb cuts at crosswalks in the community. Residents felt that they are not regularly cleared and that snow/ice builds up, making it difficult for those in wheelchairs to use.
- When snowplows clear snow on the street they form ridges along the sidewalks or in the crosswalks making it difficult for wheelchairs to safely maneuver.
- Prioritization: Areas that have high density senior or physically - challenged residents should be prioritized
- To be time efficient graders have to keep on going even when they plow ridges on to bus stops, wheelchair ramps etc. COORDINATION of sweepers behind them to undo their damage should be considered in high need areas.
- Every year the Acadia Pool seems to have a different snow clearing service. For the last five years or maybe more, I've had to contact 311 and the pool staff to get the WHOLE sidewalk and crosswalk cleared. The sidewalk from the Lord Beaverbrook fence to the #10 South bus stop near the pool is usually cleared early in the morning after a fresh snow. These bus stops are used by people with four-wheel walkers and other neighbours with limited mobility. If the crosswalk is not kept clear on both sides, people cross between the lane and the #10 North bus stop without using the new light. A pedestrian would be blamed if injured when not walking between the white lines of the marked crosswalk. I often wear a safety vest when walking to/from the Lutheran Church after dark.

- Road graders and dump trucks with blades are not flexible enough to lift the scrapers for crosswalks, bus stops and front driveways. Clearing roads is a priority BUT road snow is often piled along previously cleared sidewalks like Bonaventure Drive between 94th Ave and the back driveway to Co-op grocery store.
- One of my friends from Kerby meetings and private phone calls has been trying to arrange for help with snow clearing since June 2019. She is in a NW community without Calgary relatives or nearby friends. It is not as easy to arrange for help as page 46 of Kerby Seniors Directory of Services 2020 indicates even if a low-income senior has health problems. She is supposed to have snow cleared starting with the first snow after February 1, 2020.
- Snow clearing workers don't seem to realize that clean sidewalks and bus stops need to be CONTINUOUS. I often walk to Acadia meetings after dark and need to go around black ice on the boulevard.
- Neighbours are not all healthy "mountain goats" able to climb over ridges left by power equipment left by graders and sidewalk equipment. I have all I can manage to keep my corner as clear as possible including the section in front of community mailbox."
- I drive more than I walk in the winter largely because walking in my community continues to be treacherous at times. I have NOT noticed significant improvement although my viewpoint is limited to Acadia
- In alignment with the City's pedestrian mobility strategy, "*Clear Path of Travel*" tells us that individuals, regardless of ability, should be able to safely and independently move thru the City. However, today's reality is that, although 99% of a given sidewalk may be clear, five meters of uncleared snow significantly and adversely impacts the ability of all pedestrians, and in particular, a user with a mobility aid (i.e.: a walker, white cane, scooter, support cane, wheelchair), from travel.

Below are a few examples of ongoing failures of "Clear Path of Travel", even though 3+ weeks have elapsed since the last significant snowfall:

- Intersection of back alleys with sidewalks. No one is responsible for clearing this segment of sidewalk, and so it is typically left uncleared. When combined with the melt-freeze cycles, and the side-slope of the sidewalk, the result is quite hazardous.
- Reactive approach to enforcement. It appears that a property owner's failure to clear snow in accordance with the City's existing bylaw is only dealt with on a reactive basis. Three weeks on, it is now plainly clear who has not cleared their snow. A call to 311 does not solve the immediate issue in any timely way.
- Road crossings. Crossing the street currently requires overcoming deep ruts and snowbanks; difficult at best for able-body persons; often impossible for users of mobility aids.

Anyone traveling about these days will easily notice how these, and other snow-related issues, are causing problems for everyone, and in particular, for persons with mobility challenges.

We need to implement tactics to address these problems and thereby improve pedestrian mobility. Everyone will benefit. Possible tactics that do not cost the City anything can include:

- Public awareness and education. This can include awareness of responsibilities under existing bylaws as well as exhorting citizens to “go beyond”.
- Doing a video on the impacts of people with different disabilities when snow and ice aren't cleared using ACA members. Plan for it to across multiple communications channels next Fall/Winter, including captioning and sign language on the video.
- Proactive enforcement of existing bylaws. As part of Bylaw Officers' daily outings, observation of noncompliance can be brought to the property owners' attention. It is likely that just one such reminder will instill a long-term benefit. Subsequent failure to act will of course have negative consequences.
- Bylaw changes to assign enhanced responsibilities to property owners. Assign responsibility for clearing the sidewalk, where intersected by a back alley, jointly and equally to both adjacent property owners.

We have made some progress recently with SNIC; we now must solve the remaining issues.