

ANNUAL UPDATE ON SNOW AND ICE CONTROL ACTIVITIES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Council with an annual update on the Snow and Ice Control (SNIC) program for the winter season of 2014/2015.

- The 2014/2015 SNIC expenditures for 16,266 lane kilometres of roadway totalled \$36.75 million. This is significantly less than the \$51 million spent during the 2013/2014 SNIC season.
- 2015 SNIC operations is presently under budget due to reduced snowfall in February, March and April of 2015.
- In the past year (August 18, 2014 to August 17, 2015) Roads received 80,465 Service Requests, of those requests 6,832 were SNIC related – about 8.5 % of the total.
- Roads met their service target to plough and sand 100% of the Priority 1 and 2 routes within 24/48 hours during the 2014/2015 season.
- Citizen satisfaction results indicated that 84% of respondents were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with travel conditions due to snow and ice control services when driving or being in a vehicle on Calgary roads. This is an improvement compared to 2013/2014 survey results which indicated 81% of citizens were similarly satisfied with road conditions. Consideration must be given to the different weather patterns.
- The snow fall for the 2014/2015 SNIC season was 140 cm. The average snow fall from 2010-2015 was 147.6 cm. This indicates that the 2014/2015 SNIC season experienced an average snow fall amount.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the SPC on Transit and Transportation recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Direct Administration to provide future annual reports on SNIC activities to Council and the public via Calgary.ca

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT, DATED 2015 OCTOBER 14:

That the Administration Recommendations contained in Report TT2015-0553 be approved.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At the 2015 March 17 Priorities and Finance Committee meeting, the Committee recommended that Council direct Administration to report back through the SPC on Transportation and Transit on the new funding associated with mobility challenged citizens in conjunction with the annual update on SNIC activities (see Attachment 1: Snow and Ice Control Annual Report 2014-2015 Season).

BACKGROUND

The Roads Maintenance Division is responsible for The City's Snow and Ice Control (SNIC) Program. They are committed to helping make Calgary safe for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicle passage along the developed rights-of-ways according to the Council approved policy and

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priority system. An effective and efficient snow and ice control program is essential to allow the municipality to function under normal winter weather conditions. The SNIC Program helps reduce public hazards related to snow and ice and to provide reasonable and reliable winter mobility on City infrastructure including roadways, public transit, sidewalks and pathways.

New funding was approved as part of Action Plan 2015-2018 for snow clearing of important pedestrian and transit customer links. The funding is intended to assist Calgarians, particularly those with mobility challenges, to more easily reach work and community destinations.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The 2014/2015 SNIC season experienced an average amount of snowfall and snow days compared to previous years (see Attachment 1). The city received a total of 140.0 cm of snow over the past winter season, which is more than the recorded snowfall in both the 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 seasons, but much less than the 179.1 cm of snowfall experienced during the 2013/2014 winter. The exceptional 2014 September snow storm that deposited 28.2 cm of snow over three days, represented 20% of the total snowfall for the season.

Budget expenditures for the 2014/2015 winter season totalled \$36.75M. Expenditures by category were: Equipment (35.1%), Labour (43.1%), Materials (19.7%), and Miscellaneous (2.1%).

Roads Maintenance utilized a total of 207 vehicle units during SNIC operations. These units range from tandem axle dump trucks, loaders and snow blowers to 1-ton trucks, trailers, and small broom equipment. The 92 dump trucks, outfitted with sanders and snow ploughs, represent 44 per cent of the SNIC fleet. This past season, Roads replaced four of the self-propelled snow blowers (machines over 25 years old) with more efficient loader-mounted snow blowers. SNIC operations also applied 32 per cent less salt and chlorides in 2014/2015 than in the previous season.

To operate the SNIC equipment and deliver service levels as per the Council approved SNIC Policy, a total of 460 staff were employed by Roads Maintenance to maintain 24/7 stand-by coverage over four shifts.

Roads received a total of 6,832 SNIC service requests from June 2014 - April 2015 SNIC season. SNIC Service Requests account for less than 20 per cent of the 33,196 calls received.

The joint project between Roads, Transit and Community & Neighbourhood Services (CNS) to improve safety and access to the public transportation network for those citizens with mobility challenges was successfully applied to 100 high priority transit locations. The trial was conducted to understand the cost implications associated with the work. It is anticipated that 350 key sites will be able to be maintained annually as Priority 1 responses during an average winter season within the approved Action Plan 2015-2018 budget.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

The HarGroup Management Consultants conducted a SNIC Citizen Survey in May of 2015. The survey was given to 803 randomly selected Calgarians via land and cellular phones. 84% of

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respondents stated satisfaction with travel conditions due to snow and ice control services when driving or being in a vehicle on Calgary roads. Almost half (48%) stated that conditions for traveling on Calgary roads this winter season were better than they have observed in previous years. Satisfaction numbers were higher than the recorded 81% last SNIC season.

Strategic Alignment

The 2014/2015 SNIC operations were carried out in alignment with the Snow and Ice Control Policy (TP004). The objective of the SNIC program was to maintain Calgary's mobility throughout the winter season.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

SNIC operations maintain reasonable conditions on roadways and sidewalks throughout the winter to minimize delay in the movement of people and commercial goods, ensures safe access for emergency vehicles, and maintains the availability of all mobility options to the public throughout the winter season.

SNIC operations may result in less greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles due to reduced traffic congestions. However, they may also increase the amount of chlorides and sediment released into the environment. Utilization of improved equipment seeks to apply chlorides and grit materials in a more efficient manner.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

The 2015 SNIC operating budget is \$35.78 million dollars. 2015 SNIC operations is presently running under budget due to reduced snowfall in February, March and April of 2015.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

Future capital costs associated with this report include \$26M identified for upgrades to SNIC Material Storage facilities, and a \$52M infrastructure upgrade to Snow Storage sites. Both capital projects are currently unfunded.

Risk Assessment

There are no risks associated with this report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Administration feels that the annual report on SNIC activities, budget, and performance should be published on Calgary.ca and form part of our accountability and reporting to Calgarians.
2. The report should be made public via Calgary.ca to keep citizens and Council members informed of any changes or upgrades to the SNIC program.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Snow and Ice Control Annual Report (2014-2015 Season)