

## **SNOW CLEARING OF PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY AREAS (2015-2018 ACTION PLAN)**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report outlines Administration's strategy for snow clearing of priority pedestrian and transit customer links.

### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Priorities and Finance Committee recommends that Council direct Administration to report back through the SPC on Transportation and Transit in conjunction with the annual update on Snow and Ice Control activities, on the effectiveness of this initiative.

### **RECOMMENDATION OF THE PRIORITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE, DATED 2015 MARCH 17:**

That the Administration Recommendation contained in Report PFC2015-0293 be approved.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

At the 2014 November 24 Special meeting of Council the following motion was approved:

MOTION ARISING, Moved by Councillor Pootmans, Seconded by Councillor Keating, that with respect to Report C2014-0863 the following be adopted:

That Council direct Administration to create a working group consisting of Roads, Transit, and Community & Neighbourhood Services Business Units to determine the best use of the \$2 Million fund aimed at mobility challenged people, returning with a strategy to Council through the Priorities and Finance Committee, no later than the end of Q1 2015.

### **BACKGROUND**

New funding (\$2M/year) for snow clearing of important pedestrian and transit customer links was approved as part of Action Plan 2015-2018. The funding is intended to assist Calgarians, and particularly those with mobility challenges, to reach work and community destinations.

### **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

Representatives from Roads, Calgary Transit and Community & Neighbourhood Services (CNS) met in 2015 January to develop a strategy that would have the greatest impact. The following priority approach was determined to allow implementation in early 2015:

- Level 1: priority 1 clearing of bus zones near agencies for people with disabilities, community and senior facilities including the removal of windrows (100 bus zones have been identified and are shown in Attachments 1 and 2).
- Level 2: contiguous sidewalk connections from community destinations to bus zones, with a focus on zones that are used by seniors.
- Level 3: contiguous sidewalk connections needed for Access Calgary clients and Calgarians with mobility challenges to make Calgary a more accessible city.

The locations identified in Level 1 will be targeted in Q1 and Q2, with implementation of Level 2 and 3 anticipated in the fall of 2015 and according to available funding. Following the end of

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Q2, Roads will provide an update on benefits and detailed costs of this new level of service including feedback from Council's Advisory Committee on Accessibility and 311 service requests.

The Level 1 locations were collected from three sources to establish the list:

1. Stops where the wheel chair ramp was deployed greater than 30 times in the past 3 months,
2. Known facilities where seniors and people with limited mobility live, using data from CNS and Access Calgary.
3. Known facilities where seniors and people with limited mobility have medical or social appointments, using data from CNS and Access Calgary.

To initiate snow clearing of pedestrian priority areas early, an existing Roads contract has been extended to include the Level 1 locations. To-date, Contractors have cleared Level 1 locations on two recent snow events, both having less than 2 centimetres of snow. The Contractors successfully responded within a P1 timeframe or within 24 hours. It is anticipated that Roads will initiate an RFP in the fall and would administer this new contract going forward.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

Collaboration between Roads, Calgary Transit and CNS created an initial go-forward plan that could be implemented in the 2015 snow season. Monitoring of 311 combined with lessons learned will be gathered from the Contractor and Calgary's Advisory Committee on Accessibility to refine the approach and extend the service in the 2015 fall.

### **Strategic Alignment**

Snow clearing of pedestrian priority areas aligns with the following goals in the Calgary Transportation Plan:

- CTP Goal #2: Promote safety for all transportation system users.

The snow clearing of pedestrian priority area such as, bus pads, bus stops and windrows, promotes safety as it prevents falls and injuries. For people that use mobility devices, crutches, canes and guide dogs, snow clearing provides safe and seamless entry to a fully accessible public transit system.

- CTP Goal #3: Provide affordable mobility and universal access for all.

During the winter months, if snow is not cleared from priority bus stops, the transit system will not be universally accessible for users with mobility issues. For example: clearing of windrows allows for improved ramp deployments on buses. Many people with mobility issues use Calgary Transit as their only affordable transportation option to get around the city.

- CTP Goal #4: Enable public transit, walking and cycling as the preferred mobility choices for more people.

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People with mobility issues will choose to use public transit options, if they can get to the bus stop and on the bus or LRT. This will only be available to more citizens, if the bus stops, bus pads and windrows are cleared.

The snow clearing of pedestrian priority areas also aligns with the following CNS goals and strategies:

- Strategy P12.1 in *Action Plan*, states CNS will: “Steward relevant policies and strategies that address the needs of vulnerable populations including Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and immigrants.”
- CNS’s 10-Year Strategic Plan states it will deliver on four key pillars. One of these pillars is to: “Ensure the integrated service delivery to vulnerable populations.”
- The Advisory Committee on Accessibility’s Strategic Plan states as a goal: “To have transportation areas include all Calgarians.”
- Finally, there is also alignment with the Seniors Age-Friendly Strategy which aims to develop a cross-departmental, community-wide strategy to prepare for Calgary’s aging population.

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

Removing barriers in the transportation network allows participation by a larger number of Calgarians for work, medical and leisure trips. Encouraging walking / wheeling and other sustainable forms of transportation reduces our footprint and improves air quality. Efficiencies and customer service enhancements gained through the initial stages of this enhanced snow removal will be applied in future snow seasons to have the greatest benefits for Calgarians.

### **Financial Capacity**

#### **Current and Future Operating Budget:**

The budget for this new level of service was approved in the 2015-2018 Action Plan. The number of bus zones selected for Level 1 balances the ability to launch this pedestrian program in the 2015 winter season and to provide lessons learned to scale future contracts. A new contract will be issued in 2015 fall and will include Level 2 and 3 elements according to the experience in 2015 Q1 and Q2.

#### **Current and Future Capital Budget:**

This report has no impact on current and future capital budgets.

### **Risk Assessment**

Quality winter maintenance practices will mean improved safety for all road users.

#### **REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):**

The outlined strategy is expected to meet the expectations in Action Plan to improve mobility for pedestrians.

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**ATTACHMENT(S)**

2015 Calgary Transit Snow Priority Bus Zones