



NOTICE OF MOTION

RE: Improving Accessibility and Reducing Injuries Through Snow and Ice Control Reform

Sponsoring Councillor(s): Councillor Farrell

WHEREAS timely clearance of snow from sidewalks, pathways, and walkways is essential for ensuring safety and accessibility for Calgarians, particularly those with mobility challenges;

AND WHEREAS the Pedestrian Strategy gives direction to improve snow and ice control in areas with high walking volumes, investigate new clearing practices, address the lack of maintenance for engineered walkways, ensure City-responsibility sidewalks are cleared within 24 hours, encourage property owners to clear abutting infrastructure, improve bylaw enforcement, and support those who are not able to carry out snow clearing themselves;

AND WHEREAS existing snow and ice control policies are not updated to reflect Pedestrian Strategy direction;

AND WHEREAS private property owners are responsible for clearing abutting sidewalks and pathways within 24 hours after snow and ice are deposited;

AND WHEREAS Calgary employs complaint-based enforcement that results in fees for service for City-executed clearing, rather than fines and without cost recovery, and is inadequate to motivate timely and consistent clearing;

AND WHEREAS, the City of Calgary is held to a lower standard than for private property owners;

AND WHEREAS the Roads department walking-focused snow clearing budget is \$2.5 million (6 per cent) of a total \$38.8 million snow and ice control budget, with a further \$1.2 million allocated by the Parks department for sidewalk and pathway clearing;

AND WHEREAS the above budgets are less than other municipalities such as Ottawa and Toronto, which spend \$8.7 million (14 per cent) of a total \$64.3 million budget and \$17.5 million (19 per cent) of a total \$90.7 million budget on walking-focused snow clearing respectively;

AND WHEREAS, between the Roads and Parks departments, Calgary clears 600 kilometres (11 per cent) of its 5,600 kilometres of sidewalks within 96 hours, with an additional 400 kilometres (47 per cent) of Calgary's 850 kilometres of pathway cleared by Parks within 24 hours;

AND WHEREAS the above clearing standards are lower than other municipalities such as Ottawa and Toronto, which clear 2,100 kilometres (90 per cent) of 2,300 kilometres within 16 hours and 6,000 kilometres (75 per cent) of 7,900 kilometres within 48 hours respectively;

AND WHEREAS Calgary's current snow and ice control policies contribute to the following harmful effects:

- Alberta's slip and fall injury rate being three-times that of Ontario and the second highest in Canada;
- Alberta's 42.3 hospitalizations per 100,000 citizens from slips and falls between 2011-2016;
- Inconsistent or non-existent clearing of most City property abutting sidewalks, pathways, and engineered walkways;
- Inconsistent or non-existent clearing of private property abutting sidewalks, pathways, and engineered walkways;
- Consistently impassable wheelchair ramps and sidewalk crossings of laneway curb cuts;
- An inconsistent patchwork of infrastructure that results in severe barriers for those living with mobility challenges;

AND WHEREAS it is recognized that though flawless conditions cannot be expected, particularly during extreme winter weather events, current clearing policies are inadequate for public safety and basic mobility;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that City Council directs City Administration to review walking-focused snow and ice control policies to improve the accessibility, safety, and equity of Calgary's walking network, with particular consideration to:

1. An escalating fine schedule for failure to clear abutting infrastructure within the 24 hours currently required by the Streets Bylaw 20M88, as well as other mechanisms that increase accountability, create more consistent outcomes, and ensure cost-recovery for enforcement;
2. Updating snow and ice control policies to be consistent with Council-approved direction in the Pedestrian Strategy;
3. Identification of a high-priority network, including missing links, for improved City clearing that facilitates access to transit routes, the Centre City, Major Activity Centres, Neighbourhood Activity Centres, Main Streets, and other destinations with high walking volumes;
4. Increased coordination of snow and ice control between Roads, Transit, Parks, and other relevant City departments;
5. Improved timelines for clearing sidewalks and pathways abutting City property that would bring them more in line with expectations on private property owners;
6. Identification of options to provide winter maintenance for Calgary's 78 kilometres of engineered walkways;
7. Guidelines or rules for the clearing of wheelchair ramps, curb cuts, and sidewalk crossings of laneways;
8. Improved 311 phone, website, and mobile app reporting options;
9. Identification of winter maintenance funding for relevant City departments whenever new capital and annual network growth projects are implemented;
10. An updated strategy to assist Calgarians who are unable to clear abutting walking infrastructure themselves;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that City Council directs City Administration to report to Council with options to improve walking-focused snow and ice control, including One Calgary budget impacts, returning through the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation and Transit by the end of Q2 2018.