

# Sidewalk snow clearing

January 18, 2022

## Presenters

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# MOTION

THAT Administration prepare a draft replacement bylaw for Council's consideration on January 18, 2022 for Bylaw 36-2013 - Sidewalk Clearing Bylaw, along with a report with cost implications and a review of sidewalk clearing timelines from comparable regional municipalities, to implement the following requirements:

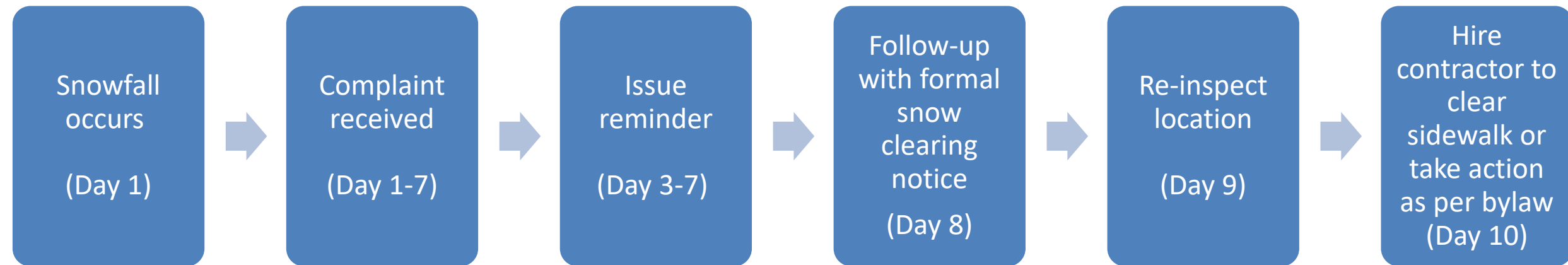
- Owners to clear sidewalks within 48 hours; (provision effective immediately upon passage)
- The County to clear Priority 1 (Centre in the Park and Bethel Transit Centre) and Priority 2 (Adjacent to school zones and major County facilities) sidewalks and trails within 48 hours; and
- The County to clear Priority 3 (Along major arterial roadways, collector roadways and trail linkages within residential areas and rural hamlets) and Priority 4 (paths within neighbourhoods that interconnect residential streets) sidewalks and trails within 96 hours.

# Sidewalk snow clearing bylaw review

# Current Sidewalk Snow Clearing Bylaw

- Infractions are enforced through a complaint-based system where specific locations are reported through County Connect.
- Eight days from start of snowfall to clear private sidewalks. If it snows again, the clock resets.
- Inspectors will review the site after a complaint and provide a reminder of the resident's requirements to clear their sidewalk.
- Inspectors visit the property after the eight days have lapsed to provide a 24-hour notice to clear the sidewalks.
- If the sidewalk is not cleared, Enforcement Services will proceed with a Violation tag and a contractor may be used to clear the sidewalk, and the cost is added to the homeowner's property taxes. The cost may range between \$200 to \$500.

# Current County inspection process



If a weather event occurs during the eight-day period, the clock resets back to Day 1, unless proof of activity can be found. This poses a challenge to prove if any actions were taken once it is covered again.

# Current bylaw and inspection stats

All owners of a parcel in the urban service area shall be responsible to remove all snow and ice from any sidewalk along the frontage and/or side of the parcel within eight days following the initial snow accumulation.

Year	County Connect cases	Cleared before reminder	Cleared before notice	Cleared after notice	Cleared after Enforcement notice
2017-2018	59				
2018-2019	61	7	48	5	1
2019-2020	173	69	70	17	6
2020-2021	95	21	43	11	10
2021 – December 18	21	2	4	2**	1

\*\*12 waiting for end of reminder period.

# Capital Region sidewalk bylaws

	Residential snow clearing bylaw	Enforcement	Timeframe	Penalty
<b>Strathcona County</b>	Yes	Reactive	8 days	\$100.00 Section 3.1* \$100.00 Section 3.2**
<b>City of Edmonton</b>	Yes	Proactive/Reactive	48 hours	\$100 and potential cleanup costs
<b>City of Fort Saskatchewan</b>	Yes	Proactive/Reactive	48 hours	\$100
<b>City of St Albert</b>	Yes	Reactive	48 Hours	\$100

\*Section 3.1 Failure to remove snow and ice

\*\*Section 3.2 Failure to apply a nonslip material

# Proposed Sidewalk Clearing Bylaw

*The owner of a property must remove all snow and ice from every sidewalk along the front yard and side yard of the property within 48 hours following the snow or ice deposit.*

*If an owner is unable to remove all snow and ice from a sidewalk as required by subsection (1), the owner shall apply a non-slip material that maximizes traction and renders the sidewalk safe for pedestrian use.*

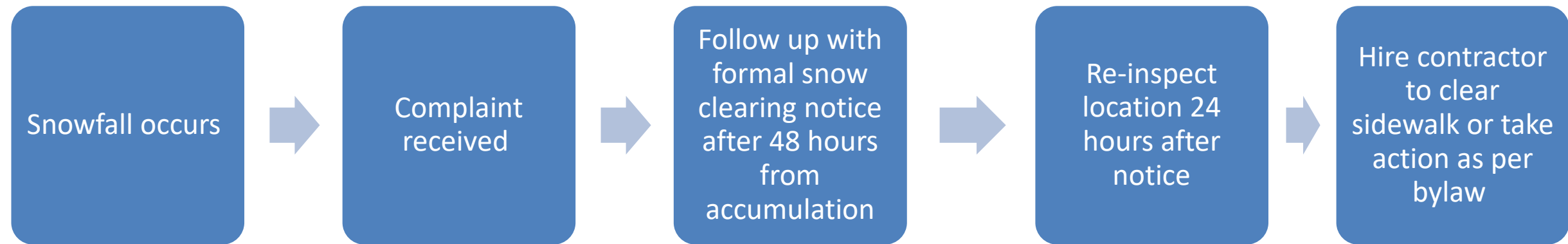
*If an owner applies a non-slip material to a sidewalk, the owner must remove all snow and ice from every sidewalk along the front yard and side yard of the property within 96 hours following the snow or ice deposit.*

*In the event of a weather event that results in a large accumulation of snow or ice in a short period of time, the Chief Commissioner is authorized to increase the time allowed for removal of snow and ice or application of non-slip material.*

*The Chief Commissioner is authorized to increase the time allowed for removal of snow and ice or application of non-slip material if the owner of the property is participating in a snow-clearing program authorized by the Chief Commissioner.*



# Proposed process for 48 hours



- Focus will be on safe sidewalks quickly, with the failure to comply resulting in clearing taking place and costs charged to resident.
- Repeat locations will have sidewalks cleared and will also then receive a violation tag and fine.
- Resource needs for inspection will be evaluated over remaining two months of this season and a future request for additional resource may be needed as part of the 2023 budget process.

# Considerations

- Requiring residents to clear their privately-owned sidewalks within 48 hours is a significant change from the current bylaw.
- It is important to allow enough time to inform residents about any changes to the Sidewalk Clearing Bylaw.
- While currently we have good compliance, that may change with the new timeframe.
- Infractions continue to be enforced through a complaint-based system.
- The goal of the new bylaw is to ensure private sidewalks are cleared in a shorter time frame.
- If approved, the timing of when the new sidewalk clearing bylaw goes into effect will determine our education and awareness approach.
- The following options outline potential considerations when determining timing.

# Option 1: Effective immediately (with grace period)

- Focus on education-first approach during the first few months the bylaw goes into effect.
- Provide friendly notice letters to educate and inform.
- Give time to clear sidewalks without a fine.
- Communications Plan will include a broad awareness campaign across all platforms.
- Variable message boards will be placed throughout the community to notify of the bylaw changes.

This option is more in line with Councils Motion.

# Option 2: Effective at a later date

- Enforcement to start during the 2022-2023 winter season.
- Provide more time to inform residents about the change.
- Announce bylaw changes coming soon.
- Focus to implement communications campaign at start of 2022-2023 winter season.

# Trail clearing review

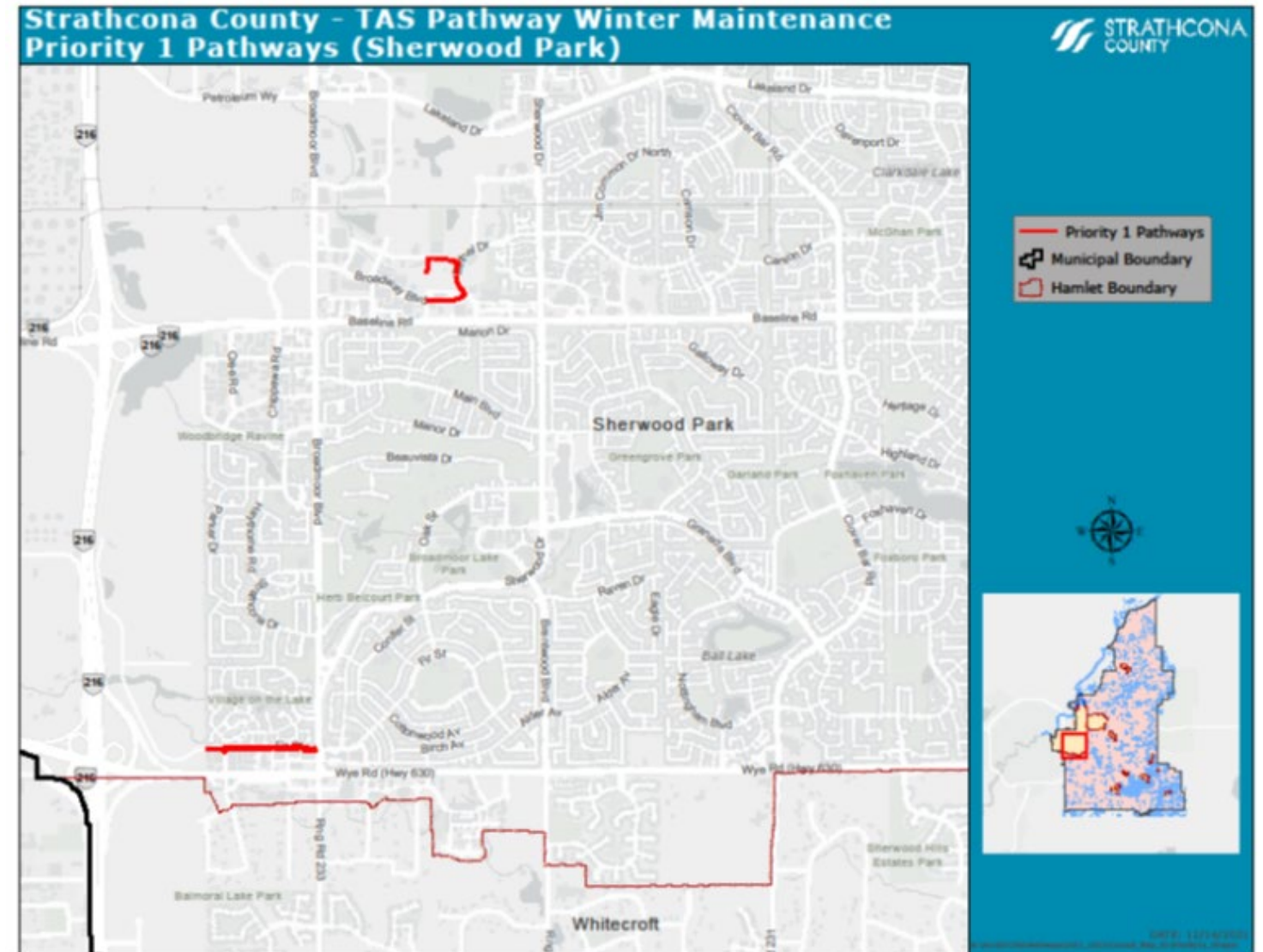
# Current trail clearing

- 232.8 km of trails and sidewalks are currently cleared.
- Clearing begins within 2 cm snowfall accumulation.
- Trails ranked from Priority 1 to 4.

If snowfall happens again before all priorities are completed, crews will go back to Priority 1 and restart.

# Priority 1

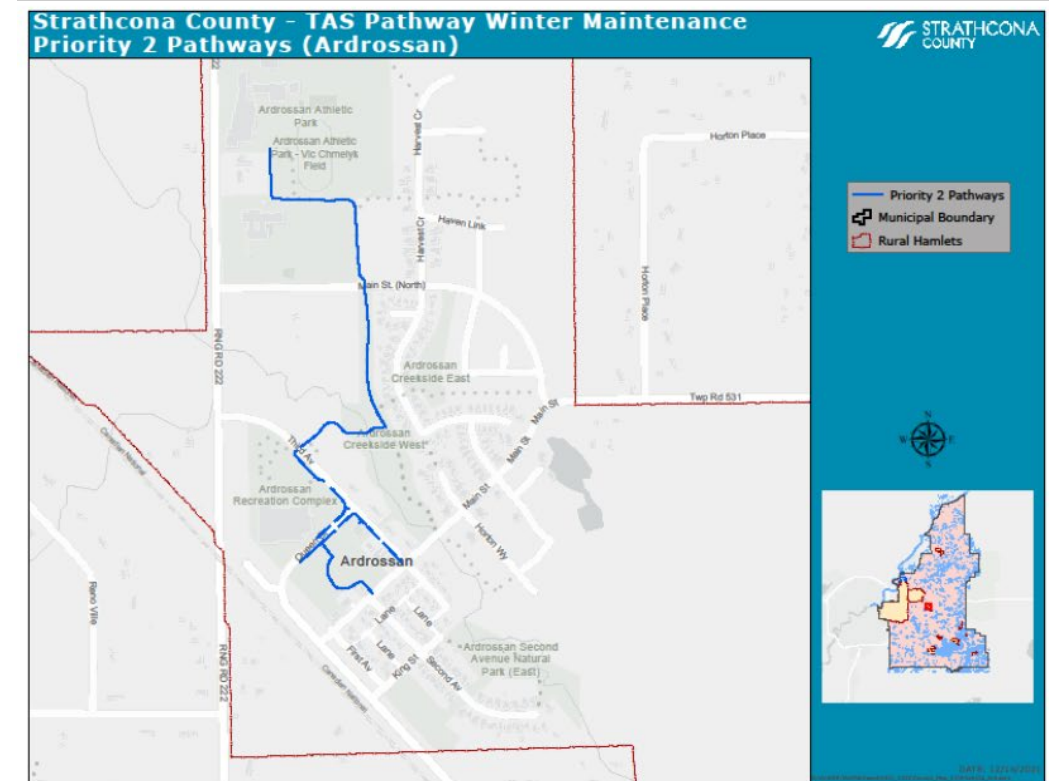
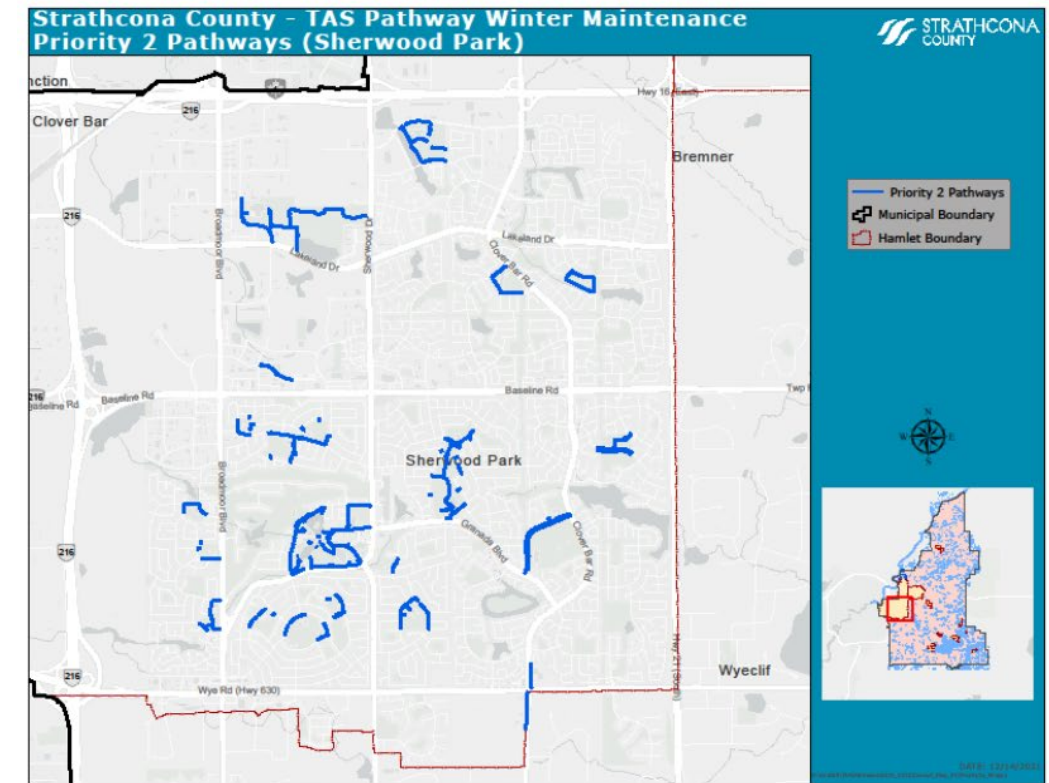
- Centre in the Park
- Transit park and ride facilities
- Trails adjacent major and high volume minor arterial roads and collector bus routes
- Total of 3.38 km
- Completed within first 24 hours of snowfall





# Priority 2

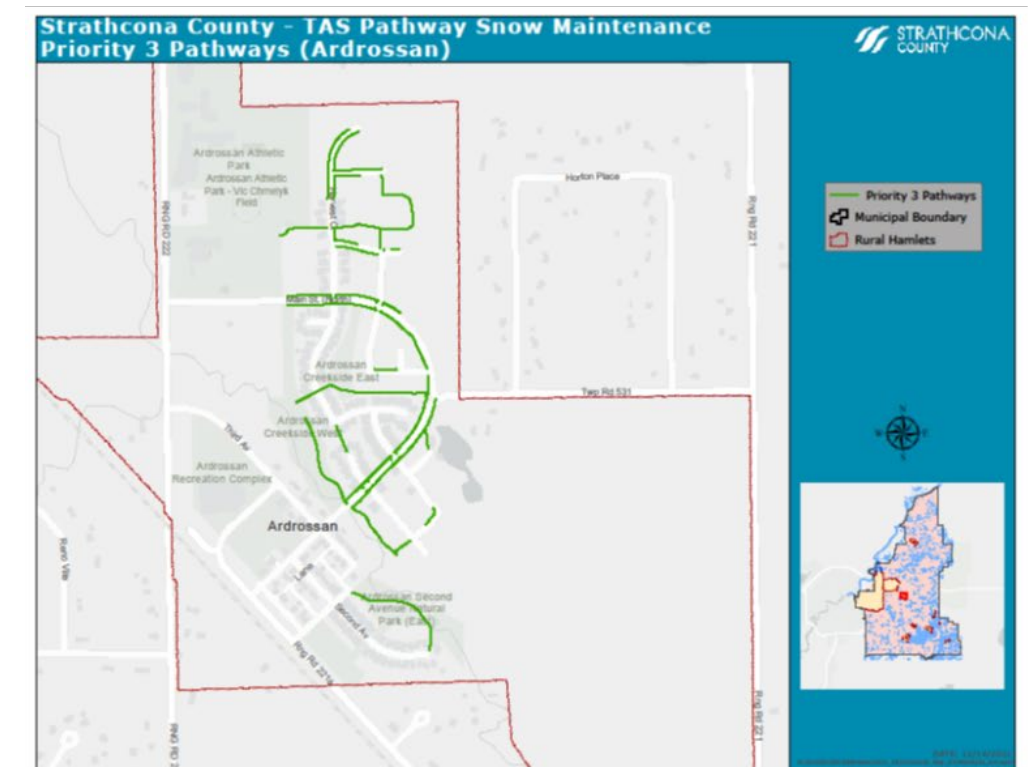
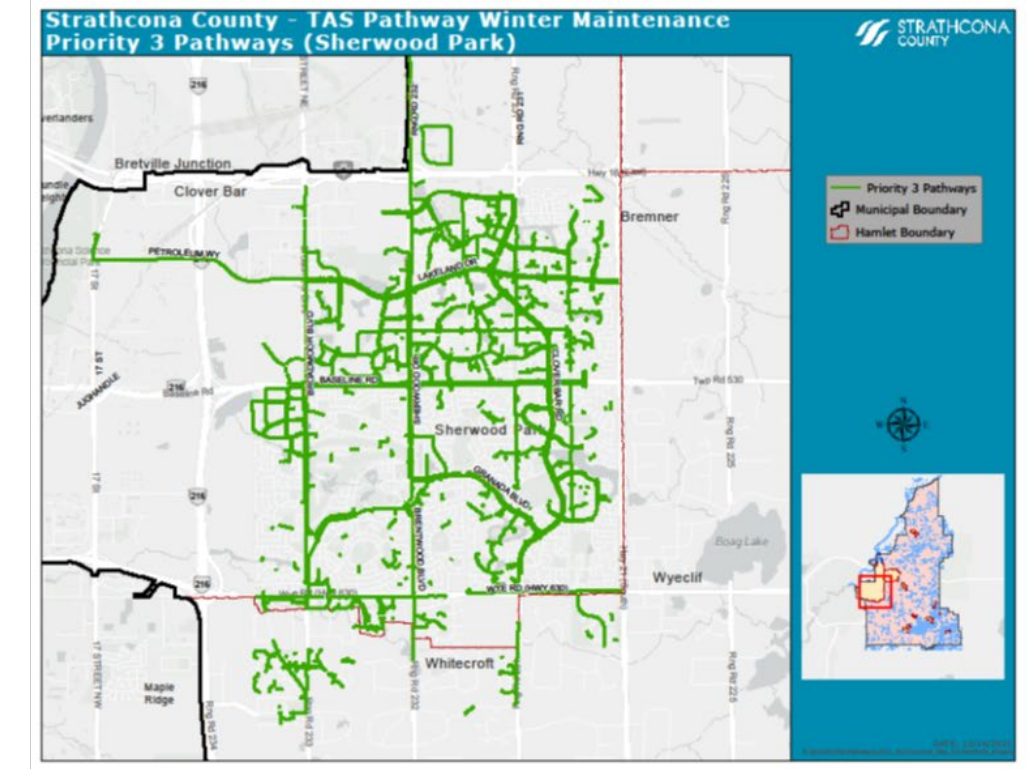
- All hard surfaced sidewalks and trails, including transit stops leading to public recreation facilities
- School parks
- School transit zones adjacent minor arterial
- Collector bus routes
- Rural hamlet roadways
- Total of 24.3 km
- Cleared within 48 hours following P1s





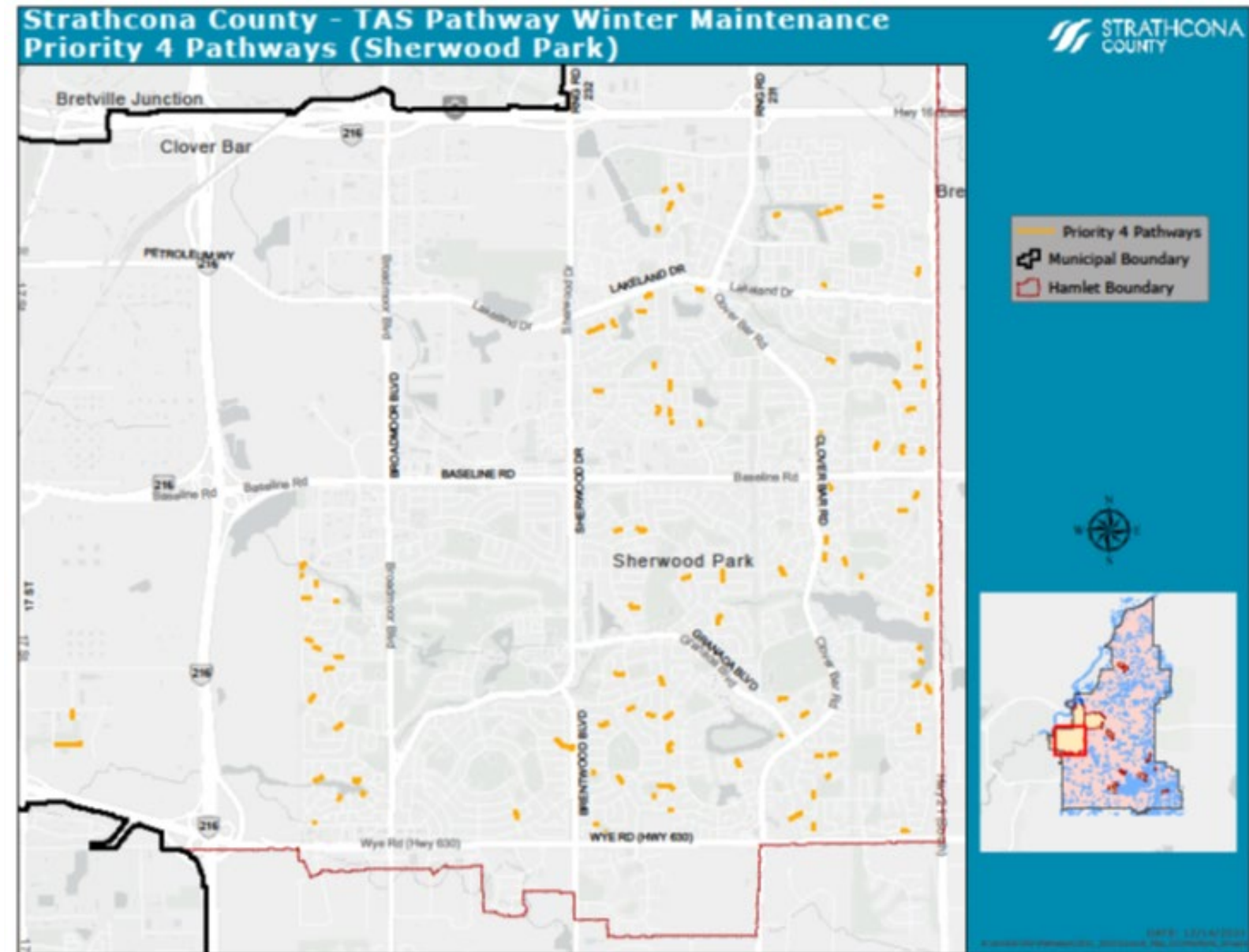
# Priority 3

- All remaining hard surfaced sidewalks along major and minor arterials, major and minor industrial roadways or in rural hamlets or public parks.
- Total of 197.6 km.
- 72 hours to complete following P2s.



# Priority 4

- Pathways between residential streets and parks.
- Current practice is to avoid clearing after 11 p.m.
- Total of 7.5 km.
- 72 hours to complete following P1s and P2s.



# Ice control

- Current ice control is to apply rock chips after clearing when necessary. This does not break down the ice, it provides traction.
- In extreme weather events, a mixture of rock chips and ice melt is used around schools, recreation facilities, as well as other high traffic areas when required to ensure pedestrian safety.
- Salt/sand mixtures are hard on pets' feet, as well as adjacent landscaping, so it is used only sparingly and to ensure safe mobility.

# Capital Region trail policies

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3/Priority 4
<b>Strathcona County</b>	24 hours	48 hours (Upon completion of P1 clearing)	120 hours (Upon completion of P2 clearing)
<b>City of Edmonton</b>	24 hours from end of snowfall	48 hours from end of snowfall; includes bus stops	No defined service level
<b>City of Fort Saskatchewan</b>	Within 24 hours of snowfall	Within 48 hours of snowfall	Once Priority 1 and 2 are completed Monday to Friday
<b>City of St Albert</b>	Swept 8 hours after 1 cm of snow accumulation	Plowed 48 hours after 2-5 cm of snow accumulation	Plowed 72 hours after 2-5 cm of snow accumulation

# Current operational improvements

Currently TAS has looked at ways to optimize resources and equipment to make improvements. Current efficiencies being tested include:

- In snow events the focus is to open all pathways first and quickly. This has allowed crews to single pass all trails, opening a partial cleared trail for users.
  - Current timelines for opening all trails is averaging 72 hours.
- Once all trails are open crews return to widen out to full trail width and apply chips.
- During weather events, TAS will stage equipment at satellite locations to reduce travel time from Strathcona Public Services Yard (SPSY).
- Increase bulk chip bin locations and mobile unit for reloading empty equipment during chipping operation.
- Use larger equipment where appropriate (i.e.: Loader on wider trails).

# 2022 Policy update

In 2022, Transportation and Agriculture will be updating the Winter Maintenance Policy (SER-009-026), including a review of the trail and sidewalk clearing level of service.

Proposed approach to trail update will include:

- Q1 develop public engagement plan to better understand satisfaction with current trail priorities and level of service and determine accessibility needs.
- Q2 conduct public engagement.
- Q3 presentation to Council with the proposed policy update and budgetary impacts of those changes including staff, equipment and ice control material.



# Suggested phased approach to service level increase

- This winter, TAS will continue to work on efficiencies and work towards trails being cleared quickly and ice control placed.
- Starting in Q2 2022, TAS will start the update of the Winter Maintenance Policy including resident engagement on trail priority system with revised policy presented to Council in late Q3 2022.
- TAS will commence a review of ice control options to work on breaking down ice on trails with the blend of aggregates and chemicals.
- Policy update will also include a proposed budget increase for the 2023 budget for any increases in service level.

# Potential costs for service level increase

Budget comparison – current vs 96 hour	
Time to clear all trails	Budget
Current service level – 8 days	\$1,046,400
Proposed service level – 96 hours	\$460,000 estimated budget increase

Proposed budget increase will be required for additional Equipment Operators and rental equipment



# Questions