

Winter Maintenance Update

September 12, 2023

Presenters

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Outline

- Review the first year of the Community Standards Bylaw sidewalk enforcement
- Trail maintenance improvements implemented in 2022/23 winter season review
- Roadway maintenance summary and season review
- Areas being reviewed

Community Standards Bylaw – Sidewalk Clearing

- Winter 2021/2022 was the first winter of the 48-hour requirements for residents to clear their sidewalks to concrete.
- Completed a large communications campaign to inform residents of the new requirements.
- The impacts of the change saw an increase in complaints and inquiries about the requirements and those that failed to meet the requirements.



Communications

- Developed an awareness campaign to support the Sidewalk bylaw (Community Standards Bylaw).
- Required a tagline and visuals that balanced bylaw requirements with the importance of safety and accessibility.
- Survey results (December 2022):
 - 79% were aware of the updated sidewalk clearing requirements.
 - 78% said they clear their sidewalk within 48-hours “most of the time” or “always”.
 - 64% agree that the new timeframe improves safety.
 - 69% agree that the new timeframe improves accessibility.

48 HOURS **FOR THE SNOW TO GO**

Keep sidewalks safe for everyone

The Sidewalk Clearing Bylaw gives residents **48 hours** to clear their sidewalk after a snowfall.

Free rock chips are available to manage icy conditions.

Learn more:
strathcona.ca/sidewalkbylaw

STRATHCONA COUNTY

Complaint process

- Complaints taken by Transportation Engineering and Operations (TEO) were inspected once the 48-hour window ended.
- If locations failed inspection, residents were provided an information pamphlet at the door and a notice was either mailed or given at the door if resident was home.
- Following the mailed notice period of eight days, final inspections were completed, and the location was either passed due to actions of the resident or given to contractor for clearing.
 - During the notice mailing period Enforcement Services also called the owner to notify of the infraction. This process was effective, but also tied up Enforcement Services resources.
- Invoice for the County contractor clearing was then mailed to residents.

Sidewalk infraction statistics

Total complaints received	322
Complaints that passed initial inspection	65
Complaints received that were inquiries	37
Complaints that failed initial inspection	220
Notices generated	173
Complaints cleared by resident after receiving notice	140
Complaints cleared by contractor	33

Non-compliant or attempts made



Completed expectation



Sidewalk – common concerns

- Repeat offenders in neighbourhoods based on complainants' information.
 - “They never shovel!”
- The County walkway isn't even done yet!
- Residents were away or out of town, and no one shovelled.
- I am sick or injured and can't get out.
- Too cold outside.



Overall process review

- Inspections were timely and once a clear process was in place, very few issues with process.
- Once invoices given, most people complied and continued to shovel for the rest of the season.
- Inspections and monitoring is labour intensive as staff monitor for any attempts or action being made by resident.
- Enforcement Service staff calling each infraction is also labour intensive for their staff and ties up resources. This does not align with other bylaw enforcement processes.
- Weather conditions after December reduced the number of complaints with low snow fall and temperatures holding above freezing.

Inspection improvements

- Clarify the use of rock chips after notices given with our communications.
- Develop common approach for the partial clearing locations to consistently apply follow up info or clear the walkway as did not meet requirements.
- Update website info for clear expectations for what complaint/complete looks like.
- Review the use of Enforcement Services staff for calling on all infractions. This is reaching residents but is not standard way of providing notice.

Winter operations review



Winter operations

- Review pathway and trail changes
- Overall winter successes
- Snow route and residential clearing
- 2023/24 season updates and items being reviewed

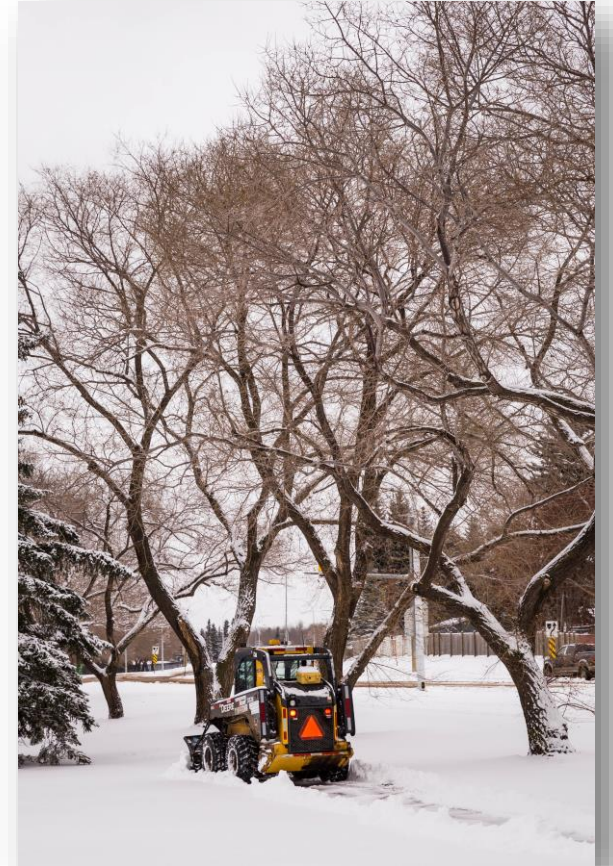


Trail improvements implemented

- Priority changes met the resident expectations with focus on the pedestrian generating locations first.
 - School boards saw the difference and their concerns were very low this winter.
- Focus on bulk opening of the trail network helped have majority of trails open earlier with a single pass. Average time to open was 48-hours.
- Timely application of rock chips ensured icy conditions were managed.
- Increased bulk bin locations and adjusted some chip bin locations.

Trail further improvements

- Reviewing the current clearing of some collector and local road sidewalks in older neighbourhoods throughout Sherwood Park.
 - Legacy operational practices have changed resulting in some sidewalks being considered to go back to residents to maintain.
 - Proposed changes will be communicated to Council in advance of any changes.
- Continue to assess additional chip bin locations for operations and resident use.



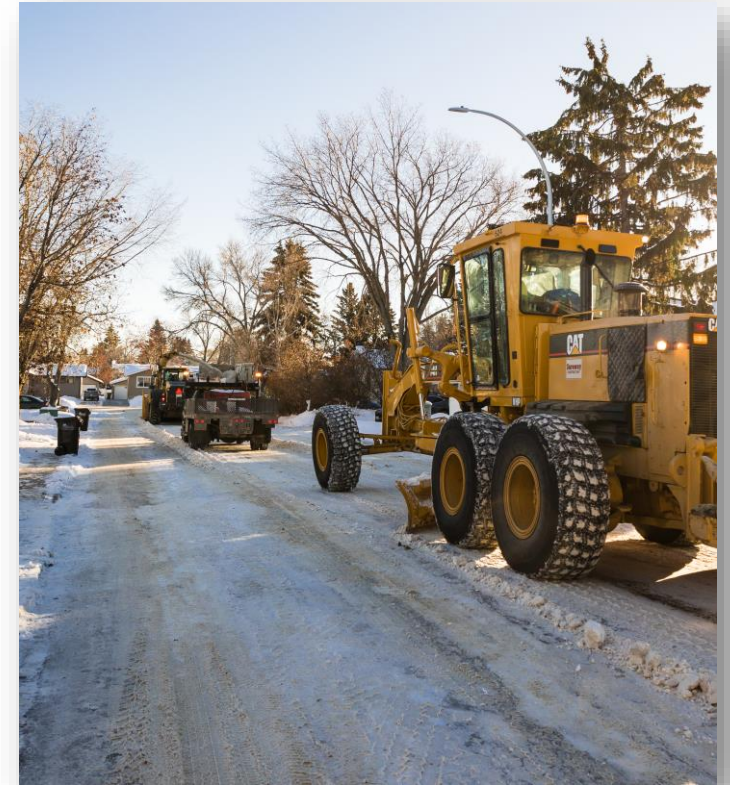
Winter roads

- Overall, the winter was a success with snow removal and ice control on all roadways meeting timelines and expectations.
 - Weather patterns and temperatures were stable and supported good road conditions.
- Snow route and residential clearing policy changes did not impact timing of the clearings due to lower snow levels in January and February.
 - Something that we will continue to monitor.



Snow route and residential clearing

- Completed two Snow Route clearings.
- Completed Residential snow clearing in January.
- Residential conditions had more snowpack and ice build-up due to no requirement for late winter clearings.
 - Resulted in some ice build-up with spring melt.



Winter Maintenance Policy communications

- Expanded Avoid a Tow campaign resulted in:
 - 161 new SC Alert subscribers
 - 730 subscribers to the new Winter Roads eNewsletter
- Decrease in number of vehicles left on road:
 - Priority 3 November 2022 parking ban: 675 (32% decrease from March 2022)
 - Priority 4 January 2023 parking ban: 1,652 (28% decrease from March 2022)
- Communications Award of Excellence in Public Sector/Government Communications from IABC Edmonton



Winter – future policy updates

Current areas under review and being considered for policy updates:

1. Ardrossan residential roadways

- Currently being done at Rural P4/Urban snow route (P3) standard, but being windrowed and removed at same time as urban snow route clearing

Proposed change: Change the local roadways to follow an Urban Residential (P4), remaining roadways will follow current rural standards.

2. Meadow Hawk subdivision

- Currently being completed as an Urban Priority 3 roadway

Proposed Change: Change the local roadways to follow an Urban Residential (P4) standard

Updates to Winter Maintenance policy will come back to Council this fall

Operational processes being reviewed

The following items will be monitored and reviewed this winter to provide future updates to processes and the Winter Maintenance Policy.

- Rural subdivisions being winged back to create storage room and maintain edge of roadway.
 - Currently being done as needed when ditches are full. Impacts to private driveways and items in ROW are at risk for damages.
- Narrow pathways in neighbourhoods with fences and landscaping will be reviewed to leave snow along trail edge and reduce amount of widening as conditions allow.
- Ongoing location review for chip bin and bulk bin locations.

Questions

