Winnipeg

CITY OF WINNIPEG POLICY NO. PW-001

POLICY TITLE *Snow Clearing and Ice Control*	**ADOPTED BY** *City Council*	**EFFECTIVE DATE**
ORIGIN / AUTHORITY *Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works*	**CITY POLICY NO** *PW-001*	**MOST RECENT CONSOLIDATION**

1. Purpose:

The goal of the Policy on Snow Clearing and Ice Control is to maintain the City's roadways, back lanes, sidewalks, active transportation routes and designated park pathways in such a manner so as to:

- Provide safe and accessible operating conditions for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians;
- Reduce the hazards of icy road conditions;
- Minimize economic losses to the community and industry resulting from unsatisfactory winter driving conditions;
- Facilitate the handling of emergencies by Police, Fire and Ambulance Services during the winter;
- Provide safe and accessible operating conditions for the Transit system and facilitate their essential operations during a snow emergency.

2. Definitions:

(Approved by Council September 30, 1987)

2.1 **"Priority I Streets"** means streets that can be designated as being major thoroughfare and are defined by the criteria contained in Appendix A and by and large includes Regional Streets.

2.2 **"Priority II Streets"** means streets that are defined by the criteria contained in Appendix A and generally include transit routes not included in Priority I and residential collectors.

2.3 **"Priority III Streets"** means all remaining streets not included in the Priority I and Priority II categories and includes residential alleys.

3. Snow Clearing and Ice Control Policy

3.1 Plowing of Streets and Back Lanes

a) Priority I Streets

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

Priority I streets shall normally be maintained to bare pavement over the full pavement width. Generally, snow accumulating beyond a depth of 3 cm shall be removed through the use of de-icing chemicals and/or by plowing.

Streets shall be plowed on a continuous basis until completed. Plowing shall be undertaken during the night as much as possible in order to minimize the problems associated with traffic and parked vehicles. The snow plowing operations shall be completed within thirty-six hours following the end of an average storm. During extreme snowfall events where the snowfall amount and/or accompanying severe drifting conditions makes it impractical to complete the snow clearing operations on the street system with a full complement of resources and continuous effort, the time limits specified may be extended.

Excessive ice or snow build-up along gutters and medians or between traffic wheel paths shall normally be removed.

b) Priority II Streets

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

Priority II streets shall normally be plowed to bare pavement over the full pavement width. However, minor snowfall accumulations and the City policy restricting the use of de-icing chemicals on Priority II streets may result in a layer of compacted snow on the street surface between all-out plowing operations. A plowing operation shall normally be initiated when the snow has accumulated beyond a depth of 5 cm.

Streets shall be plowed on a continuous basis until completed. During a major storm, advanced priority for plowing shall be given to bus routes. The snow plowing operations shall be completed within thirty-six hours following the end of an average storm. During extreme snowfall events where the snowfall amount and/or accompanying severe drifting conditions makes it impractical to complete the snow clearing operations on the street system with a full complement of resources and continuous effort, the time limits specified may be extended.

Excessive ice or snow build-up along gutters and medians or between traffic wheel paths shall normally be removed.

c) Priority III Streets

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993 and October 22, 1997)

Priority III streets shall normally be maintained to a compacted snow surface as opposed to bare pavement. However, Priority III streets shall be plowed to the pavement surface whenever conditions allow during an all-out plowing operation. Plowing on Priority III streets shall commence after an inspection warrants a clearing operation, usually following a 10 cm snowfall accumulation or equivalent local drifting conditions.

The snow plowing operations shall normally be completed within five working days following the commencement time of the plowing effort on Priority III streets. Work on weekends and holidays shall be limited if streets are passable. During a major storm, the Priority I and II streets shall be brought to a satisfactory condition prior to work commencing on the Priority III streets.

A full non-storm related widening/spot maintenance plow on Priority III streets may be initiated as a result of an assessment of the depth of ruts and/or the difference in depth of compacted snow and ice in the parking lane of a street as compared to the traffic lane. This plowing operation will normally be initiated in February, depending on weather conditions.

d) Enhanced Snow Clearing Services Adjacent to Schools Within the City of Winnipeg

(Approved by Council April 29, 1998 and November 15, 2017)

Provide Priority II level of snow clearing service on selected portions of Priority III Streets for those schools accessed only by Priority III Streets.

e) Back Lanes

(Approved by Council September 28, 2011)

Back lanes shall normally be maintained to a compacted snow surface as opposed to bare pavement. Plowing of back lanes shall commence after an inspection warrants a clearing operation, usually following a 5 cm snowfall accumulation or equivalent local drifting conditions. Snow plowing of back lanes shall normally be undertaken using rubber tired front end loaders.

An enhanced level of snow clearing shall be provided in back lanes for properties that have no front street access. In these locations it may be necessary to undertake supplemental plowing and snow removal operations to provide suitable access. Any excess snow shall be relocated along available rights-of-way in the neighbourhood.

The snow plowing operations shall normally be completed within two days following the end of an average storm. Generally, the plowing of back lanes shall be undertaken concurrently with Priority I and II streets and prioritization may be necessary to facilitate refuse pickup.

During extended periods of mild weather, it may be necessary to undertake additional plowing of back lanes, where specifically warranted, to reduce rutting. A full non-storm maintenance plow of back lanes may be initiated based on an evaluation of back lane conditions city-wide. The plow should be a quality maintenance plow, preferably during day shifts, in order to result in acceptable driving conditions.

3.2 Use of Salt and Sand

(Approved by Council January 23, 1991)

The use of salt and treated sand for snow clearing and ice control purposes, shall result in a minimization of material quantities used, consistent with maintaining a reasonable level of safety to motorists and pedestrians, namely:

(a) The use of salt and treated sand is judiciously controlled so as to minimize quantities used, consistent with maintaining a reasonable level of safety to motorists and pedestrians as local conditions dictate.

(b) The application of 100% salt on City streets be subject to the following restrictions:

(i) To be used on Priority I Streets to achieve bare pavement conditions. The salting of Priority I streets on a continuous basis is to be authorized by the Director of Public Works or his designate.

(ii) Not to be used on Priority II Streets other than under extreme conditions equivalent to that caused by freezing rain. Any salting of Priority II Streets is to be authorized by the Director of Public Works, or his designate.

(iii) Not to be used on Priority III Streets.

3.3 Plowing of Sidewalks, Active Transportation Trails and Park Pathways

a) Sidewalks on Priority I and II Streets (Excluding Downtown Square)

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

(i) Sidewalks on Priority I & II streets shall normally be maintained to a compacted snow surface. Plowing shall commence when an inspection, following a 5 cm snowfall accumulation or equivalent local drifting conditions, indicates a necessity for a clearing operation.

(ii) The snow plowing operations shall be completed within thirty-six hours following the end of an average storm.

b) Sidewalks in the Downtown

(Approved by Council June 20, 2007)

(i) Sidewalks on Priority I and II streets within the Downtown shall generally be plowed to a paved surface whenever conditions allow. However, minor snowfalls and/or warming temperatures between plowing operations may result in a layer of compacted snow or ice on the sidewalk surface. A plowing operation shall be initiated when the snow has accumulated beyond a depth of 5 cm.

(ii) The snow plowing operations shall be completed within thirty-six hours following the end of an average storm.

(iii) For the purposes of this policy, the geographical area for snow clearing enhancements in the Downtown is established in conformance with the boundaries identified by the City of Winnipeg Downtown Zoning By-law.

c) Sidewalks on Priority III Streets

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

(i) Sidewalks on Priority III streets shall normally be maintained to a compacted snow surface. Plowing shall normally commence when an inspection, following an 8 cm snowfall accumulation or equivalent local drifting conditions, indicates a necessity for a clearing operation.

(ii) The identification of sidewalk plowing routes on Priority III streets shall be undertaken in such a manner so as to prioritize, wherever possible, sidewalks in the immediate vicinity of elementary schools.

(iii) The snow plowing operations shall normally be completed within five working days following the commencement of work. Work on weekends and holidays shall be limited.

(iv) Notwithstanding the above, the plowing of sidewalks on Priority III streets and which are in the immediate vicinity of senior citizen complexes is further discussed in d).

d) Sidewalks on Priority III Streets (Designated Routes)

(Approved by Council on September 24, 2014)

(i) Sidewalk plowing routes on Priority lll streets shall be established as to identify a designated access route where applicable to the most logical Priority l or ll street.

(ii) Sidewalks on these access routes shall normally be maintained to a compacted snow surface. Generally, plowing shall commence when an inspection, following a 5 cm snowfall accumulation or equivalent local drifting conditions, indicates a necessity for a clearing operation.

(iii) The snow plowing operation shall be completed within 36 hours following the end of an average storm and shall normally be done in conjunction with the sidewalk on the connecting Priority l or ll street.

(iv) For the purpose of this policy, designated routes will consist of the following:

(a) Senior citizen complexes – shall be identified as a building that is devoted exclusively to senior citizens and has 10 or more dwelling units. and
(b) High volume pedestrian traffic areas – schools, high density developments.

e) Active Transportation Priority Routes

(Approved by Council September 28, 2011)

(i) Priority routes shall be established by the Public Works Department to identify a priority level for each trail, based on the functional use of those individual trails.

f) Removal of Windrows

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

(i) Windrows of snow plowed across private approaches and/or walks and resulting from sidewalk clearing operations shall not be removed.

g) Designated Park Pathways

(Approved by Council September 28, 2011)

(i) The activities identified in this Clause will only be undertaken when adequate funds are available in the annual Snow Clearing and Ice Control Budget.

(ii) Designated park pathways within community and neighbourhood parks shall normally be maintained to a compacted snow surface. Generally, plowing shall commence when an inspection, following a 8 cm snowfall accumulation or equivalent local drifting conditions, indicates an necessity for a clearing operation.

(iii) The park pathway snow clearing operations shall be considered as a Priority IV undertaking and shall commence following completion of the City's public sidewalk network.

(iv) For the purpose of this policy, the clearing of snow on the City's park pathways will be extended to include logical connections to the Active Transportation trails as well as including major pathways within our community parks system and critical pathways in some of our neighbourhood parks. Those pathways to be cleared in the community and neighbourhood parks system shall be determined by the Public Works Department.

3.4 Snow Removal

a) Removal of High Piles

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993 and October 22, 2003)

(i) The Public Works Department shall monitor visibility at intersections on a regular basis throughout the winter months and any identified high piles at bus stops, crosswalks, lane entrances and intersections shall be reduced so as to improve the line of sight for motorists and pedestrians. Priority shall normally be given to high piles located on Priority I and II streets.

(ii) Priority shall be given to high piles located at intersections and lane entrances in the vicinity of elementary schools.

(iii) Every effort shall be made to relocate the snow within the adjacent boulevard storage areas, but loading and hauling may be necessary in many instances.

(iv) In years of significantly above-normal snow accumulations, it may be impractical to undertake the reduction of all high piles within the City. On those occasions, efforts shall be concentrated on piles in areas of high traffic volumes.

(v) High piles located adjacent to private approaches shall not be removed.

b) Sidewalk Plowing Windrows

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

(i) Windrows of snow plowed across private approaches and/or walks and resulting from sidewalk clearing operations shall not be removed.

c) Removal of Boulevard Windrows – General

(Approved by Council June 20, 2007)

Windrows of snow shall normally be removed on Priority I and II streets where the following criteria are met:

(i) Bridges and underpasses;

(ii) Where lack of adequate storage results in a reduction in the number of available traffic lanes thereby prohibiting the reasonable movement of vehicular traffic under normal winter driving conditions;

(iii) Where lack of adequate storage prohibits the reasonable movement of pedestrians using the adjacent sidewalk; and

(iv) Traffic safety devices such as guardrails and impact barriers.

Notwithstanding any of the above, the City shall take advantage of mechanical blowing snow to adjacent properties to accommodate snow storage wherever possible, rather than resorting to hauling.

d) Removal of Boulevard Windrows – Commercial Areas

(Approved by Council June 20, 2007)

Windrows of snow shall normally be removed on Priority I streets where the following criteria are met:

(i) Fronting commercial business areas with on-street parking; and

(ii) Windrows present significant barriers to street/sidewalk access.

e) Private Approaches

(Approved by Council September 28, 2011)

Windrows of plowed snow in excess of 20 cm (8") high shall normally be removed from all front street driveway approaches in conjunction with the street plowing operation and during the same shift as the street is plowed.

If an emergency snow condition exists and it is necessary to cover a maximum area in the shortest possible time, the clearing of the windrows may be delayed until satisfactory resources are available.

Windrows of plowed snow across entrances to private yards resulting from back lane plowing operations shall not be removed. However, snow windrows may be removed as part of the enhanced level of snow clearing that shall be provided in back lanes for properties that have no front street access.

f) Accessibility Access to Private Property

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

Private crosswalks between the sidewalk and the curb shall be cleared to a width of 0.7 meters by City forces/Contractors, after the street clearing operations are completed, for property owners/occupants who sign a declaration on an annual basis to the effect that:

(i) the property-owner/occupant is physically incapable of shoveling snow (copy of medical certificate required).

(ii) no other able-bodied person resides in the property owner's/occupant's house; and

(iii) the property owner/occupant is unable to arrange having this work done by others due to financial circumstances.

g) Handi-Transit Loading Zones

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

Windrows of snow shall normally be removed at "Handi-Transit " loading zones, which have been designated by Transit as high volume locations and integral

to their "Handi-Transit " operations. These locations shall be identified in the field by special signing.

h) Commercial / Industrial / Apartment Loading Zones

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

Windrows of snow resulting from snow plowing operations shall not be removed from loading zones serving commercial, industrial or apartment buildings.

i) Churches and Synagogues

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

Windrows of snow shall be removed, upon request, from boulevards in front of churches and synagogues in order to facilitate weddings, funerals and other very special religious events.

j) Schools

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

Windrows of snow on boulevards adjacent to schools shall not be removed unless the lack of adequate storage has resulted in the adjacent sidewalk becoming obstructed so as to prevent the reasonable movement of pedestrian traffic.

3.5 Hours of Work

(Approved by Council September 22, 1993)

Snow clearing operations may be undertaken on an extended shift basis where longer hours of work will facilitate the completion of a snow clearing operation in an effective manner in accordance with the policy on Snow and Ice Control.

In addition, some snow clearing operations may also be undertaken on an extended shift basis where, notwithstanding the requirements of the snow policy, it has been determined by the Director of Public Works Department, or his designate, that the work can be accomplished more effectively and economically by working an extended shift.

POLICY TITLE	EFFECTIVE DATE	MOST RECENT CONSOLIDATION
Snow Clearing and Ice Control		

4. Appendices

4.1 Appendix A

(Approved by Council September 30, 1987)

Street Classification Criteria

Classification	No of Lanes	Min. Average Daily Traffic Volume	R.O.W. Width	Roadway Width	Parking	Sidewalk
Priority I (Regional Streets)						
a) Divided	4	4,000	100 – 400 feet	Variable	Restricted	Variable
b) Undivided	4	4,000	66 – 100 feet	Variable	Restricted	Variable
Priority II (Bus routes, collectors)	2	800	66 – 80 feet	24 – 46 feet	One side	Yes
Priority III (Residential and Lanes)	2	Less than 800	50 – 66 feet	14 feet	One side	Variable