

 TOWN OF COMOX		POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL
Section: COUNCIL	Number: CCL-042	Office of Primary Responsibility: CORPORATE SERVICES
MUNICIPAL SNOW PLOWING, SANDING AND DE-ICING		
Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Procedure	Authority: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative	Approved By: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Administrative Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Department Head
Date Adopted: May 2, 2001	Date Last Amended: May 17, 2023	Date to be Reviewed: May 2024
Manner Issued: Internal Memo		

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1. To describe the service levels and the manner in which snow and ice control will be delivered.

2 OBJECTIVE

- 2.1. To provide for the safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians within the Town of Comox by ensuring that snow and ice control operations are carried out on Town roads and applicable hard surface sidewalks in a timely manner in accordance with priorities identified by Council.
- 2.2. This policy provides a balance between public safety and the Town's resources and is reflective of best practices and established procedures.

3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. Minor Storm: Snowfall in a single event with forecasted or actual snow accumulation of less than 20cm as reported by Environment Canada.
- 3.2. Major Storm: Snowfall in a single event with forecasted or actual snow accumulation of 20cm or more as reported by Environment Canada or any freezing rain event.
- 3.3. Snow Plowing: The plowing of snow into windrows in storage areas on Town roads, lanes, sidewalks and boulevards (e.g. centre medians, boulevards, bike lanes, parking areas and other areas adjacent to the curb or sidewalk)
- 3.4. Passable Lane/Cleared Condition: Cleared roadway that may have accumulation of snow or slippery surfaces. May be limited to a single cleared lane on a local roadway. Drivable by most vehicles with suitable winter tires or equivalent.
- 3.5. Downtown Core: The area encompassing Development Permit Area 1 in the Town's Official Community Plan.

3.6. Priority A Roads:

- All Arterial and Major Collector Roads as defined in the Road Network Plan in the Town's Official Community Plan
- Downtown Core
- Roads accessing Town Facilities

3.7. Priority B Roads:

- All Minor Collector Roads as defined in the Road Network Plan in the Town's Official Community Plan
- Transit Routes
- Bike Routes
- School Zones (when school is in session, i.e. not at Christmas break or on weekends)
- Steep Hills

3.8. Priority C Roads: All roads not identified as Priority A or Priority B Roads

3.9. Town Facilities: Fire Hall, Town Hall, Community Centre, Municipal Works and other municipal facilities.

3.10. Transit Routes: Those routes on which BC Transit operates regularly scheduled transit service. These routes do not include areas serviced by custom transit (HandyDART) services.

3.11. Bike Routes: Those routes and lanes identified on the Bicycle Network map included in the Town's Official Community Plan or roads with installed bike lanes.

3.12. Snow Angel Pilot Program: A trial program that allows residents who need help to clear snow from sidewalks fronting their property to be partnered with a volunteer to help maintain the sidewalk following snow events. The program will be administered by Town staff.

OPERATIONAL POLICY/PROCEDURES:

The Manager of Public Works (or designate) is responsible for deciding how best to apply the resources at their disposal to address the particular snow and ice hazard.

Snow and ice control services are not intended to eliminate all hazardous conditions, but to assist vehicles that are properly equipped for winter driving conditions and operated in a manner consistent with good winter driving habits and also to assist pedestrians walking with care and attention to winter conditions.

Overtime will generally be limited to Priority A and Priority B routes unless otherwise approved by the Manager of Public Works. Clearing of snow on roads will be prioritized above the clearing of sidewalks.

4 POLICY

The Town of Comox will endeavour to provide for reasonably safe movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic when winter weather conditions prevail. This will generally be in compliance with operational policy and budget allocations.

In the event the circumstances do not permit the concurrent mobilization of resources to address the priorities outlined in sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, the Manager of Public Works will prioritize resources, dependent on the availability of equipment and trained personnel, to respond to the requirements in sections 4.1 and 4.2. In the attempt to achieve the goals outlined in sections 4.1 and 4.2 the normal service level, safe access to and use of infrastructure such as sidewalks, boulevards, parking spaces, bike lanes and other related infrastructure may be impacted and will not be addressed until time and resources permit subsequent to the completion of the procedures outlined in sections 4.1 and 4.2.

The Town, unless otherwise directed by the Manager of Public Works, will not truck snow from any area within Town. Snow will be disposed of through natural melting.

4.1. ROAD ICE CONTROL:

Road ice control refers to the application of road salt or sand in order to prevent or respond to slick road conditions resulting from frost or ice on the road. Road ice control is generally independent of Snow Plowing activities but can be performed in conjunction with Snow Plowing during a Major or Minor Storm event.

4.1.1. Ice control will consist of spreading of road salt when determined necessary by the Manager of Public Works (or designate).

4.1.2. Ice control will be prioritized in the same order as the Road Plowing Priorities. Roads with steep hills will also have road salt or sand applied when ice control activities are performed.

4.2. ROAD SNOW PLOWING:

Plowing will commence when the depth of fallen snow reaches or is expected to reach 10 cm on Priority A Roads or when the road conditions are such that a lesser depth of snow is causing dangerous conditions as determined by the Manager of Public Works or designate.

Snow plowing will result in windrows on both sides of the road. The clearing of windrows in front of driveways left by snow plowing equipment shall be the responsibility of the adjacent property owner or occupant. The Town will provide no support to the clearing of windrows from driveways.

4.2.1. ROAD PLOWING PRIORITIES:

1. Priority A Roads
2. Priority B Roads
3. Priority C Roads

4.2.2. Snow clearing of roads shall be done in a manner to achieve at least a 4.0m Passable Lane in each direction.

- 4.2.3. Staff will initially clear the Priority A Roads and maintain Priority A roads in a Cleared Condition until the termination of snowfall.
 - 4.2.4. Priority B Roads will be cleared once the Priority A Roads can be maintained in a Cleared Condition.
 - 4.2.5. Priority C Roads will be cleared once the Priority B Roads can be maintained in a Cleared Condition.
 - 4.2.6. Service delivery will be evaluated continuously during events and may require the re-focusing of Town staff efforts back to Priority A or Priority B Roads.
 - 4.2.7. Snow clearing operations will continue until snowfall accumulation terminates and all Priority A and B roads are in a Cleared Condition.
 - 4.2.8. Snow clearing operations may be halted during the overnight hours to allow for rest breaks. This decision will be made by the Manager of Public Works (or designate) and will consider worker and public safety and forecasted weather conditions.
 - 4.2.9. Due to plowing prioritization, snow accumulation may exceed 10cm on Priority B and C Roads.
 - 4.2.10. Snow clearing operations will result in snow being placed in bike lanes and parking lanes. Bike lanes may be cleared once all Priority A, B, and C roads can be maintained in a Cleared Condition. Clearing of bike lanes will only be completed during regular working hours and only as time and resources permit. Overtime will not be approved for clearing of bike lanes. Where bike lanes and parking lanes are adjacent to one another, they will be cleared at the same time. Clearing of bike lanes and parking lanes will result in windrows being created. It is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner or occupant to clear windrows from driveways.
 - 4.2.11. In the event that available resources are not adequate to meet the snow clearing demand, unsafe or impassable roads may be temporarily closed by the Manager of Public Works (or designate) until the Town has the resources available to clear the roads.
 - 4.2.12. Catch basin/culvert clearing shall be performed on an as needed basis and will be secondary to snow and ice clearing in priority unless there is a life safety or significant property damage concern.
- 4.3. SIDEWALK SNOW PLOWING AND DE-ICING:
- 4.3.1. Snow removal and de-icing of sidewalks shall be limited to sidewalks along arterial and major collector roads in the Town and sidewalks fronting Town owned properties.
 - 4.3.2. As resources are available, the first priority will be to clear sidewalks identified in 4.3.1 along one side of arterial and major collector roads.

- 4.3.3. The second priority will be to clear snow from the other sidewalk along arterial and major collector roads, as resources are available.
- 4.3.4. Service delivery will be evaluated continuously during events and may require the re-focusing of Town staff efforts back to priority sidewalks.
- 4.3.5. Clearing of windrows from sidewalk letdowns and crosswalks will be prioritized following all of the roadway snow clearing prioritization and will be performed as time and resources permit.
- 4.3.6. Sidewalks fronting municipal facilities that are not leased will be maintained on a regular basis during regular business hours.
- 4.3.7. During snow events and only during regular business hours when additional operational staff are available. The Town will assist in clearing sidewalks adjacent to Town owned property and the following areas listed in this section. Priority will generally be in the following order: the downtown area, transit shelters, sidewalks fronting parks, greenways and then the promenade.
- 4.3.8. Clearing of sidewalks other than those identified elsewhere in this section are the responsibility of the adjacent property owner or occupant as indicated in the Town's Street and Traffic Bylaw. The Town will not be regularly inspecting sidewalks adjacent to private property to ensure that they have been cleared of snow and ice and will generally rely on public complaints to identify noncompliance. Inspections will generally be complaint driven only.
- 4.3.9. The Town will organize a Snow Angel Pilot Program for the 2023 – 2024, 2024 – 2025, and 2025 – 2026 winters. Following the 2025 – 2026 winter (or prior), the pilot program will be evaluated to determine its effectiveness and a determination will be made regarding the continuation of the program on a permanent basis. Details around the Snow Angel Pilot Program will be administered based on Appendix A.
- 4.3.10. Snow and ice clearing at transit stops will be performed as time and resources permit following the clearing of snow from sidewalks fronting Town owned facilities and properties. Clearing of snow from windrows at transit stops will be limited to clearing a pathway in order to allow access to the front door of a bus. Clearing windrows from the length of a transit stop will not be done by Town staff. Clearing of transit stops will be prioritized as follows:
 - 4.3.10.1. Downtown Core
 - 4.3.10.1.1. Transit Exchange
 - 4.3.10.1.2. Transit stops with bus shelters
 - 4.3.10.1.3. Transit stops without bus shelters
 - 4.3.10.2. Arterial Roads
 - 4.3.10.2.1. Transit stops with bus shelters
 - 4.3.10.2.2. Transit stops without bus shelters

4.3.10.3. Major Collector Roads

4.3.10.3.1. Transit stops with bus shelters

4.3.10.3.2. Transit stops without bus shelters

4.3.10.4. Other transit facilities

4.4. ON STREET PARKING AREAS

4.4.1. Snow clearing from on street parking areas within the Downtown Core and will be performed in conjunction with snow clearing of the road. Depending on the amount of snow received, the width of the parking area will be reduced. Snow will be placed in windrows partially within the parking area and the adjacent sidewalk, with approximately half of the windrow in the parking lane. Snow will also be pushed to and placed in a windrow at one end of parking areas, reducing the availability of on street parking. Clearing of pathways from the parking area to adjacent sidewalks will not be performed by Town staff. It is expected that individuals parking in on street parking locations will access sidewalks at appropriate locations by walking along the road to the nearest intersection.

4.4.2. Clearing of snow from on street parking areas outside the downtown core will be performed at the completion of Major or Minor Storm events once all other cleanup is completed. Clearing of these on street parking areas will only be completed during regular working hours and only as time and resources permit. Overtime will not be approved for clearing of these on street parking areas.

5 REFERENCES AND RELATED STATEMENTS OF POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Amendment Date	Section Amended or Description of Amendment	Resolution Number
May 2, 2001	Policy established.	
Sep 16, 2009	Sidewalk snow plowing and de-icing expanded to those along arterial and major collector roads. Regulation transferred to operational policy (PWK-005).	
May 17, 2023	Policy rewritten to incorporate operational policy PWK-005. Addition of a sidewalk snow clearing assistance plan.	2023.169