



The Corporation of the City of Courtenay

Briefing Note

To: Council
From: Director of Operational Services
Subject: Snow and Ice Control 2025-2026

File No.: 5400-11
Date: December 10, 2025

PURPOSE:

To inform Council of the City's 2025-2026 Snow and Ice Control Program.

BACKGROUND:

During snow and ice conditions, the City of Courtenay's Operational Services Department is prepared and ready to respond 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The snow and ice control season runs every year from October 1st to March 31st.

City Crews maintain over 341 lane-kilometres of roads throughout the City with crews working up to 16-hour overlapping shifts during snow events to provide the most effective program possible. Crews are also dispatched to clear high-priority sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use pathways (MUP), and the City's stormwater catch basins to prevent flooding post-melt. Additional maintenance activities include pothole patching, winter road patrols, health and safety training, and repairs to equipment, tools, and property.

DISCUSSION:

City Operations staff control or minimize the effects of snow and ice on our roads, multi-use pathways, sidewalks, and bike lanes by following a set of procedures to ensure residents and visitors can connect to and access spaces, services, facilities, and transportation networks no matter how they travel, despite the weather.

The City's winter maintenance operations include patrolling, brining, plowing, salt and sanding (applying product), as well as snow removal. As capacity is limited, crews work in order of priority. On local roads, cul-de-sacs and lanes, residents should expect a single plow pass to accommodate emergency access for police, fire and ambulance. Snow removal includes activities such as bus stop clearing, snow removal with loaders, snow dump operations, and snowbank removal in the downtown core. In addition, when resources are available, efforts are made to clear snow ahead of solid waste collection.

The priorities for roads are as follows, as illustrated on the City's website¹:

1. Arterial and major collector roads, emergency services facilities, bus routes, and the downtown core.
2. Minor collector roads, streets with steep hills, and school zones.
3. Local roads.
4. Cul-de-sacs and lanes.

The City also clears snow from sidewalks and multi-use pathways on high-volume active transportation routes where mechanical clearing is possible. This includes arterial roads, the downtown core, park

¹ <https://www.courtenay.ca/EN/main/departments/public-works/snow-and-ice-control.html>

frontages, transit areas, sidewalks adjacent to municipal facilities, and prioritized paved walking trails. Snow is also cleared from sidewalks on collector roads without residential homes where mechanical clearing is possible and on fully separated bike lanes.

The priorities for sidewalks are as follows, as illustrated on the City’s website² :

1. Arterials and the downtown core, prioritized multi-use pathways and walking trails and separated bike lanes.
2. Collectors, secondary neighbourhood multi-use pathways.
3. Connecting walkways, prioritized residential neighbourhoods, and park frontages.
4. Transit areas, intersection letdowns, and catch basins.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

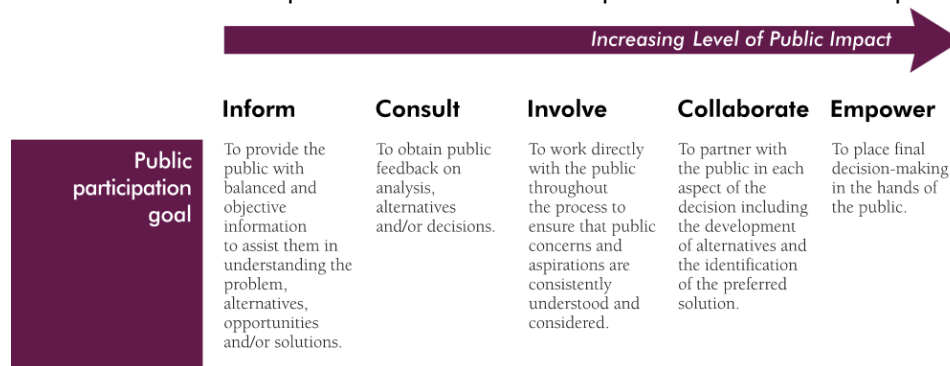
Costs to deliver snow and ice control vary from year to year and are included in the annual budget.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

Staff from Operations, Information Services, and Communications are involved in the snow control program which includes the snow control work along with efforts to inform the public through news releases, mapping updates and regular communication.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Staff would inform the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:



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RECOMMENDATION: THAT Council receive the “Snow and Ice Control 2025-2026” briefing note for information.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Snow and Ice Control Presentation

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² <https://www.courtenay.ca/EN/main/departments/public-works/snow-and-ice-control.html>