

City of Mississauga  
**Corporate Report**



<p>Date: April 21, 2023</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of General Committee</p>	<p>Originator's files:</p>
<p>From: Jodi Robillos, Commissioner of Community Services</p>	<p>Meeting date: May 10, 2023</p>

## Subject

**Snow Clearing and Winter Maintenance for City Park Trails and Facilities**

## Recommendation

That the Corporate Report dated April 21, 2023 entitled "Snow Clearing and Winter Maintenance for City Park Trails and Facilities" from the Commissioner of Community Services be received for information.

## Executive Summary

- Park Operations is responsible for the snow clearing and winter maintenance of approximately 173 parking lots and 188.5 kilometers of City-owned land and trails.
- Policy 05-06-04 outlines approved service levels and minimum winter maintenance requirements at park trails and facilities.
- Park trails are maintained based on specific criteria and using a variety of equipment and materials depending on the location; some areas may use multiple types of approaches to complete maintenance.
- All existing standards and service levels align with Works Operations and Maintenance.

## Background

Park Operations is responsible for the clearing of snow around city community centres, arenas, and libraries in addition to city parks, school easements to parks, and applicable park and multi-use recreational trails City-wide, as outlined in the Policy #05-06-03. This policy was approved by Council in October 2021 and aligns with Works Operations and Maintenance Service Levels for similar assets.

In total, approximately 173 parking lots are plowed at parks and around City-owned facilities/buildings and 188.5 kilometers of City trails by full-time Park Operations staff. Winter maintenance of a trail is determined based on a number of criteria, including: no environmental

sensitivities surrounding the trail, transportation linkages, and the location is safely accessible by staff during winter conditions. Trails that are currently winter maintained can be found online by accessing a digitized map that displays all areas maintained by Park Operations and can be modified and updated as needed.

Winter maintenance at Recreation and Park facilities is completed by Park Operations staff using a variety of equipment, vehicles and materials depending on the location, including but not limited to hand shovelling, tractors, three ton trucks, salt, Eco traction, sand, etc. As some locations have various types of conditions there may be multiple different types of approaches considered to complete the trail, i.e. plow, tractor and hand shovel approach. Generally, sidewalk frontages and school easements (on City land) are completed by a tractor plow due to the width, while the majority of trails are completed by a plow truck as they are generally wider than easements and sidewalks. The City is responsible for the maintenance of City-owned trails and pathways and completes maintenance up to the property boundary for schoolboard or other owned property.

## Comments

### Approved Service Levels

The Corporate Policy 05-06-03 outlines the minimum winter maintenance guidelines at facilities that the Parks Division is responsible for. Each City facility and multi-use recreational trail network segment is classified into one of three Service Levels.

**Level A:** Community centres, Library parking lots, parkland adjacent to community centres, waterfront parks, and downtown parkland. For highly developed locations with high visitation that serve a regional purpose.

**Level B:** Trails, walkways, and school easements that serve as a transportation link for local communities and neighbourhoods.

**Level C:** Naturalised parkland, parking lots that receive no winter maintenance. User expectations are for a more natural environment used for activities such as hiking, cross-country skiing or bird watching.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting increased use of parks year-round, service enhancements were made to the total number of trails that are maintained in the winter; this has since remained as standard service levels. On a yearly basis, Parks Operations review its winter routes and classifications to ensure that new and redeveloped locations are added, and locations closed or under development are removed. Requests for additional trail clearing service requests are reviewed on request to ensure they fit within classification and criteria for maintenance.

Service Level timelines are dependant on the snow fall totals and based on the assigned level for that location as per Table 1 below.

<b>Snowfall Accumulation</b>			
	<b>15cm (6") or less</b>	<b>15cm (6") – 30cm(12")</b>	<b>More than 30cm (12") or successive storm</b>
Level A	Within 12 hours	Within 24 hours	Service levels may be suspended and will be completed as soon as attainable
Level B	Within 24 hours	Within 36 hours	Service levels may be suspended and will be completed as soon as attainable
Level C	Only when required for the safe passage of City Vehicles & Equipment.		

Service level timelines begin upon completion of snowfall. When extreme weather conditions reach a point where winter maintenance operations cannot continue without compromising public or public and/or employee safety, winter maintenance activities can be temporarily suspended through a declaration of a significant weather event. These standards and service levels align with those in Transportation & Works. Further enhancements to service levels for park trails will require a strategy to outsource for contracted service to ensure standby response.

### **Benchmarking**

City of Mississauga service levels for winter maintenance at facilities and parks is at, or above, the neighbouring cities and municipalities. The following municipalities implement services as per below:

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Service Level for Park Trails</b>	<b>Trigger Accumulation</b>
Mississauga	12-36 hours, accumulation dependent	5 cm
Brampton	24 hours	7.5 cm
Toronto	24 hours	8 cm
Oakville	12-48 hours, priority dependent	5 cm
Vaughan	48 hours	5 cm
Milton	24 hours	5 cm

The Ministry of Transportation sets out Minimum Maintenance Standards (MMS) for winter maintenance. While park trails are not specified within the standard, the analogous minimum maintenance standard for sidewalks (which is defined to be for pedestrian use) are identified to keep a depth of less than 8cm of snow within 48 hours of the end of a snowfall.

There is no requirement to clear snow to bare pavement. Current service levels for park trails exceed minimum maintenance standards for sidewalks. The City of Mississauga does not maintain access points on school property. The school boards determine which pathways on school property receive maintenance.

## Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts resulting from the Recommendations in this report.

## Conclusion

The City of Mississauga service levels and attached policy remain unchanged as outlined for the 2023/2024 season. As per above, the service level is on par with surrounding municipalities and is exceeding minimum maintenance standards as set out by the Ministry of Transportation. Once snowfall is completed, the park operations team works to ensure all snow clearing is done within or exceeding service levels (when possible) to provide optimum service and park usage to residents.

## Attachments

Appendix 1: Snow Clearing and Winter Maintenance for City Facilities Policy #05-06-03



Jodi Robillos, Commissioner of Community Services

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