

**RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER**

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STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: March 8, 2022
REPORT: 22-035
FROM: Road Maintenance/Resort Experience Operations
FILE: 569
SUBJECT: SNOW AND ICE CONTROL - COUNCIL POLICY A-40

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendations of the General Manager of Infrastructure Services and the General Manager of Resort Experience be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council adopt the proposed *Snow and Ice Control Council Policy A-40* attached as Appendix A to this Administrative Report 22-035 documenting the Resort Municipality of Whistler's snow and ice control maintenance program; and

That Council rescind *Inspection of Roads - Council Policy E-5* dated April 7, 1986.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the details of the proposed new snow and ice control Council policy (Policy A-40). Policy A-40 will be the guidance document for the Infrastructure Services road maintenance department and the Resort Experience operations department when performing snow and ice maintenance duties within the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW or municipality).

☐ Information Report ☒ Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

DISCUSSION

Background

Winter maintenance is performed by the RMOW on municipal roads, trails, sidewalks, as well as in designated areas of Whistler Village on behalf of its wholly owned subsidiary Whistler Village Land Co. (WVLC).

Winter maintenance occurs to ensure pedestrian and vehicle travel paths are passable for use. This work is carried out by municipal staff and by third-party independent contractors under contract to the RMOW. Winter maintenance activities are carried out between November 1 and March 30 each year.

Analysis

The new Policy A-40 encompasses the different types of snow clearing and ice management performed by the RMOW. Different levels of management participate to make sure that Policy A-40 is upheld. The level of service that municipal staff can provide during a snow event is based on constraints such as financial, economic and social factors within the community.

The goal of Policy A-40 is to set an expectation for maintaining municipal roadways, sidewalks and valley trail infrastructure during the winter months of the year. Historically, RMOW municipal crews have met community service level expectations by employing operational procedures that documented the expectations. A recent Supreme Court of Canada decision has ruled that having a policy adopted by municipal council that documents that the political, economic and social factors of the community have been contemplated when drafting the policy, provides evidence that a policy defence would be available when facing negligence claims.

For roadways, *Council Policy E-5 Inspection of Roads*, adopted in 1986 does not reflect the current best practice for local government policies. Staff are recommending that this policy be rescinded and replaced with the new Policy A-40. For pathways, Valley Trail and the Village, the Resort Operations department followed documented procedures when performing ice and snow management tasks. Staff are recommending that Council Policy A-40 be approved to act as the overall Policy framework for snow and ice control for the RMOW.

Resources for winter maintenance are considered annually as part of the municipal budget process approved by Council. A review by staff determines where the maintenance program can be adjusted to meet set objectives. Council and staff must balance all community needs with the available resources when making maintenance decisions. As such, not all objectives can be achieved across all areas of the municipality concurrently. Therefore, areas of higher priority are maintained first, and most frequently, to reduce potential risk to the users and to the municipality. Areas of lower priority have reduced service intervals and are maintained after high priority areas have been addressed.

The new Policy A-40 is a management policy that clearly differentiates the types of snow and ice control performed by municipal staff. The policy reflects a hybrid approach to resolving service requests either submitted by the residents when an issue is identified in the community or identified during periodic inspections performed by staff; but before becoming a concern of residents. Staff also utilize input from residents who contact staff to report any snow and ice maintenance deficiencies they see out in the community that may require a response. Those deficiencies are recorded and prioritized for a response based on their severity.

Snow clearing and ice management along municipal roadways is performed by the roads maintenance staff and roads are maintained based on their classification as reflected in the Policy A_40, designated as Priority 1, Priority 2 and Priority 3 roads. Routes utilized for public transit and emergency response are prioritized and maintained on a more frequent schedule compared to lower priority routes.

Sidewalks and Active Transportation pathways such as valley trails have their own priority designation. These locations around the community are either cleared and inspected daily, are unmaintained or are designated as multi use trails where no snow clearing is performed.

A series of community maps were developed to indicate where the different priority roads, sidewalks and valley trails are located and the maps are attached to the Policy A-40 as Schedule A of Appendix A.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions

Inspection of Roads - Council Policy E-5 – April 7, 1986

Corporate Plan

The RMOW Corporate Plan is updated annually and articulates strategic direction for the organization.

One of the RMOW's six Corporate Goals is "Corporate policies & operations ensure continuous excellence in infrastructure, facility & program management" Policy A-40 will help to ensure ongoing excellence in infrastructure management and resident satisfaction with road, sidewalk and valley trail snow and ice control.

Council Focus Areas

☒ Community Balance

*Effectively **balance resort and community needs** through deliberate planning, partnerships and investment*

☒ Climate Action

*Provide leadership to **accelerate climate action and environmental performance** across the community*

☐ Housing

*Advance strategic and innovative initiatives to enable and **deliver additional employee housing***

☐ Pandemic Recovery

*Leadership and support for **community and tourism recovery and sustainability** – priority focuses are where recovery needs intersect with other Council focus areas*

☐ Not Applicable

Community Vision and Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the RMOW's most important guiding document that sets the community vision and long-term community direction. This section identifies how this report applies to the OCP.

8.8.1.3. Policy

Promote land use patterns, transportation routes and community facilities, amenities and spaces that meet the needs of an aging demographic.

10.2.2. Objective

Prioritize infrastructure development and policies that support seamless, convenient and affordable access to preferred modes of transportation for intra-community travel.

10.2.2.1. Policy

Use every reasonable opportunity to further the use of preferred modes of transportation.

10.2.2.3. Policy

Increase year-round connections for *active transportation* modes throughout the community—especially in areas near convenience services.

11.5.2. Objective

Maintain and construct infrastructure to ensure the transportation system can meet the resort's needs cost-effectively.

Municipal staff currently manage snow and ice to enable preferred modes of transportation, to ensure appropriate emergency and transit services can be provided, to allow residents and visitors to safely travel by automobile on municipal roadways, and to protect the municipality from liability if an incident occurs along municipal road, sidewalk and trail infrastructure.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Policy A-40 documents the current work plan that municipal operation crews perform to manage snow and ice. No new budget implications are expected.

LIL'WAT NATION & SQUAMISH NATION CONSIDERATIONS

The RMOW is committed to working with the Lil'wat People, known in their language as *L'il'wat7úl* and the Squamish People, known in their language as the *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw* to: create an enduring relationship; establish collaborative processes for Crown land planning; achieve mutual objectives; and enable participation in Whistler's resort economy.

There are no specific considerations to include in this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

☒ Inform ☐ Consult ☐ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower

The RMOW performs snow and ice management and has moved to update the current policy to better document the work that is expected to be performed. Under the new Policy A-40, the level of service provided by the municipality will not change from what the community currently experiences.

REFERENCES

Appendix A - *Snow and Ice Control - Council Policy A-40*

SUMMARY

Staff are bringing forward this Council Policy A-40 at this time to document the expectations from Council of what municipal operations staff currently do to manage snow and ice to ensure pedestrian

and vehicle travel paths are possible for use in winter. Policy A-40 has considered the social, economic and financial implications of the snow and ice control program for the RMOW. Staff are also requesting that *Inspection of Roads - Council Policy E-5* be rescinded.

SIGN-OFFS

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