

Calgary Ability Network (CAN): Transportation

Improving Accessibility and Reducing Injuries Through Snow and Ice Control Reform



Background:

The CAN Transportation table is a collaborative of organizations and advocates from the disability community; our vision is **Transportation for All Calgarians**. We work together to enhance inclusive, accessible transportation for Calgarians through advocacy and collaboration.

Issue:

Failure to consistently and effectively clear sidewalks and pedestrian pathways puts the physical and mental health of Calgarians at risk, particularly persons with disabilities and seniors. Improperly cleared snow and ice can drastically reduce the independence of Calgarians with mobility challenges and increase their risk of injury. This not only puts a strain on emergency health care services, but also negatively impacts the well-being of Calgarians.

Recommendations:

1. Prioritize snow clearing through an equity lens, not just based on traffic volume

Snow clearing should prioritize routes that will ensure the more vulnerable segments of our community are able to access basic needs. In doing this, we ensure that we are creating supportive environments that increase independence while decreasing social isolation and the associated negative outcomes. We recommend prioritizing the following spaces:

- Hospitals and other spaces where people access health care services (e.g. Calgary Chronic Pain Center)
- Fixed route bus stops and *Calgary Transit Access* designated drop off zones
- Crosswalks (including the space around the crossing alert button)
- Grocery stores
- Public spaces (e.g. libraries, museums, etc.)

2. Consult with Calgarians about a dignified way to identify those who need their sidewalk cleared

An escalating fine system could be detrimental to Calgarians with physical mobility limitations that prevent them from being able to clear their sidewalks, particularly those on a low income. We recommend developing a system or policy to address this barrier, as opposed to dealing with it on a case by case basis, through consultation with Calgarians affected (e.g. Calgarians accessing AISH, Fair Entry, Alberta Seniors Benefit or Alberta Supports).

3. Take a multi-departmental approach to developing a snow and ice clearing strategy

Snow and ice on sidewalks is not the only barrier to access; windrows at crosswalks, transit stops and *Calgary Transit Access* drop off zones need to also be considered. The scope of improvements needs to be understood as a system.

4. Promote and increase access to tools that will help community members clear their sidewalks

Utilize the Federation of Calgary Communities to help promote the availability of free gravel and pickle mix to Calgarians and have it available at all community associations.

5. Simplify 311

Many Calgarians feel the system of reporting issues to 311 can feel very arduous and don't feel comfortable disclosing the amount of personal information required.

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