

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: John Duguay, Assistant City Manager
DATE: October 25, 2021
SUBJECT: **Sidewalk Snow Removal Requirement – Pedestrian Routes**

Request

City Council provides feedback and direction related to the Sidewalk Snow Removal Requirement scope.

Background

Previously the City Council asked staff to review establishing an ordinance requiring commercial property owners to remove snow from adjacent public sidewalks, similar to what the city requires in the C-2, retail core business district.

At the June 28, 2021 Planning Session, staff shared the results of a survey of 29 DuPage County municipalities (Exhibit A) and their requirements for removal of snow from adjacent public sidewalks. There are 9 communities with some requirement for snow removal on sidewalks. The requirements are summarized in 4 general categories:

- Community Wide – 2 municipalities.
- Specific Areas Adjacent Public Sidewalks – 3 municipalities, geographic and/or zoning district.
- Specific Areas on Private Property – 3 municipalities.
- Specific Areas on Public Property – 1 municipality.

Two other areas of interest:

- Prohibition from depositing snow on public streets/sidewalks – All municipalities, including Wheaton.
- Public sidewalk snow removal provided by municipality, other than sidewalks adjacent to municipal owned property – 12 municipalities, including Wheaton (Commuter parking, etc.).

Challenges

Staff identified enforcement as the greatest challenge associated with a sidewalk clearing requirement. Other challenges include: clearing windrows that develop adjacent to high volume roads, determining the size of a snowfall to require clearing (2" or more, over some period of time, etc.) and the ability to receive timely contractor response to cure when a violation is determined.



Defining Areas for Required Removal

Staff presented 2 options for defining areas for required removal including: (a) defining a specific area, or (b) using the property's base zoning classification (C3, OR, R3, etc.). Staff recommended defining a specific area as the most effective approach, since many areas have a mixture of zoning where gaps would exist if a zoning district was used. It was noted that mandating snow removal areas by definition means, in addition to commercial properties, certain residential properties will also be required to remove the snow off sidewalks.

Staff Review

At the June 28, 2021, Planning Session, the Council's consensus was that requiring snow clearing on some sidewalks was worth pursuing and directed staff to review options and areas to consider. Comments from the Council at the Planning Session specifically cited a few areas to consider requiring snow clearance off sidewalks:

- School crossings at Roosevelt/Warrenville intersection
- Along Roosevelt Road (commercial corridor/public transportation)
- Along a walking path to the train station (West Street)
- Along the Prairie Path/Carlton Avenue

As staff reviewed Council feedback and these areas, it was noted that the scope of this requirement could easily be expanded, depending on City Council desires.

Commercial areas: If we are placing this requirement on Roosevelt Road property owners, should we also place this requirement on owners at College Avenue, North Main Street, Town Square and vicinity and/or other small strip malls?

Walking path to train: If we are placing this requirement on property owners along West Street from Roosevelt Road, should we also place the requirement along West Street north of the RR, Front or Wesley Streets west of West Street? For College Train Station, should Crescent, President and/or College Avenue have this requirement?

School Crossing Routes: Should all crossings be included in a snow clearing requirement? Should entire routes be included? For instance, if the Harrison/West intersection must be cleared, should West Street south to Seminary Avenue also be required for kids walking to Longfellow School?

Council Direction

At the meeting, staff will provide information and specifics related to what this requirement might look like in Wheaton. City Council feedback is requested related to the Council's desired policy and scope as the policy will dictate details while drafting the ordinance.