



City of Whitehorse

2121 - 2nd Avenue, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 1C2 Bus: (867) 667-6401 Fax: (867) 668-8398

November 30, 2020

Whitehorse Urban Cycling Coalition  
connect@wucc.ca

Dear members of the Coalition,

**RE: Winter maintenance on trails**

Thank you for your letter dated November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 regarding winter maintenance on various City trails. The City would like to address your various concerns.

As you may know, there are over 700 kilometers of mapped trails within the municipal boundaries of the City of Whitehorse. The City is responsible for the maintenance of specific trails that meet established criteria. The level of service for identified trails is determined using a system of prioritization outlined in the City Trail Maintenance Policy.

- **Two Mile Hill to CGC and Hamilton Blvd**

As you now, the multi-use pathway on the North side of Hamilton Boulevard is currently designated as a part of the motorized multi-use (MMU) trail network. It does not get plowed by the City after November 11<sup>th</sup>, as there is an agreement in place with the Klondike Snowmobile Association. They groom and maintain this trail starting November 12<sup>th</sup> and all throughout the winter season, so it can be used by many user groups for winter recreational activities: snowmobiling, cross country skiing, show shoeing, etc.

The City does recognize that this pathway has a number of competing winter use interests, each with differing operational requirements. Snow and ice removal on the pathway would better accommodate pedestrian and cyclists, however, not snowmobiles. On the contrary, grooming the pathway as is currently done, provides a reasonable level of service for pedestrians and fat bikes when the condition of the groomed trail is good.

Please be aware that the City is exploring options with our partners to create a harder snow pack so that Hamilton Boulevard is more functional for non-motorized traffic. The City has begun a pilot project where an 18" groomer for bicycles is going up one side of the paved path in an attempt to pack the snow and make the section of the Hamilton Blvd trail from the highway to the CGC more bike friendly in this section. This pilot project is in progress.

The Street Sign and Traffic Committee is also collecting data for typical non-winter and winter usage of this trail segment. If it is determined that there is significant use by all users during all seasons, the City may consider adjusting snow and ice removal practices on this section of pathway, as well as the study of an alternative route for snowmobile users.

- **Airport Trail between Alaska Highway and Black Street Stairs**

This multiuse paved path is maintained by the City, as guided by snow removal priorities of the current Snow and Ice Control policy as well as the Trail Maintenance Policy.

City crews worked very hard to clear the snow in a timely manner after the record snow fall on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, nevertheless the City does recognize that it took longer that we would have liked to clear the Airport Trail. Please accept our apologies regarding this.

- **Access points to major trails**

The Parks and Community Development department maintains the Waterfront Trail, the Millennium Trail and the trail leading up to Puckett's Gulch Stairs (Black Street Stairs). These trails are non-motorized trails listed as Type 1, Priority A trails and maintained as outlined in the Trail Maintenance Policy.

- **Curb cuts and crosswalks**

Property owners are responsible for snow removal from all sidewalks bordering their properties, including the depressed portions of a concrete or asphalt sidewalk that exit to a roadway, as per the Maintenance Bylaw.

The City maintains sidewalks bordering City owned property. Any property owners, both residential and commercial, are required to remove the windrows that block curb cuts and crosswalks bordering their properties, along with the City owned sidewalk.

Please note that the City's Operations Department is responsible for snow and ice control on approximately 600 lane kilometers of roadways as well as specific City owned paved paths and sidewalks that border City property. After each snow fall, the City has a specific order of priority established to clear roads, sidewalks and paved paths. The first priority is to clear major arterial roads, emergency routes and major bus routes, among others.

The City's snow removal crews are doing their best to get everything done in a timely manner. It is important to understand that the snow removal equipment used to clear the roads is not the same equipment used to clear paved paths and sidewalks.

- **Sidewalk clearing by business owners**

Bylaw Services communicates the clearing directions several time throughout the winter months via social media, newsprint, pamphlets and radio in order to facilitate compliance and raise public awareness regarding safety.

When complaints are received into Bylaw Services, assigned officers will work with the subject of the complaint to educate and gain voluntary compliance. When a business fails to come into voluntary compliance, violation tickets are issued.

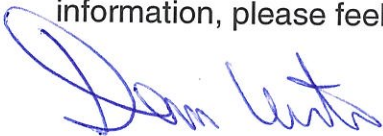
Residents can contact Bylaw Services at 867-668-8317, or [bylaw.services@whitehorse.ca](mailto:bylaw.services@whitehorse.ca) to make a complaint.

- **Two Mile Hill South Trail**

Unfortunately, the City cannot plow or encourage winter use of this multiuse paved trail, as it is connected to a curb and the road design does not allow for adequate snow storage. The trail is not closed due to lack of snow clearing, it is closed to allow for snow storage as a result of snow clearing of the adjacent road (Two Mile Hill) and to allow for access for steamers to thaw an often frozen stream.

In closing, the City of Whitehorse is sensitive to your concerns and requests regarding winter maintenance for self-propelled road users, but please keep in mind that the City roads crews work extremely hard and around the clock during the winter months to maintain the City's roads and many of the paved trails.

If you have concerns regarding snow removal at a specific location, or would like more information, please feel free to contact Operations Department at 867-668-8345.



Sincerely,

**CITY OF WHITEHORSE**

Dan Curtis  
Mayor

c: City Council

