

Dear Mayor and Council,

This year we face a challenging winter.

Laura Rosella, an associate professor of epidemiology at the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health stresses the need to create incentives and opportunities for people to go outside since COVID19 will restrict our indoor activities. (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/winter-covid-19-indoors-transmission-1.5681175>)

However, encouraging outdoor activity is not sufficient: cities must also ensure that maintenance standards applied to pedestrian infrastructure are at a consistently high level throughout the city to allow everyone including seniors, those with disabilities or who use scooters/strollers the ability to travel outside safely. As well, psychological wellbeing can be ameliorated by going outdoors and obtaining not just physical exercise but by also getting exposure to nature, sunlight, fresh air, and other people (at a two-metre distance) so it's vital that sidewalks are safe and accessible THIS winter.

Staff has reported that clearing sidewalks on all arterial and collector roads in the city would increase the tax levy by \$8 per bill on average or \$16 on average to clear all sidewalks. Since 75% of almost 2000 survey respondents indicated that improving city walkability in the winter should be a "council priority", this is the time to act on address sidewalk snow-clearing budget shortfalls. Addressing it next year would be a missed opportunity to improve the quality of life for many Hamiltonians this winter when they need it the most.

Hamiltonians want to get out walking this winter. Please ensure they can do it safely and increase the budget to allow better cleaning of sidewalks across Hamilton.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lilly Noble