

From: Randy Kay <
Sent: November 17, 2020 11:32 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Sidewalk Snow Clearing

To Chair and Members of General Issues Committee,

I am writing to encourage you to show leadership in the name of human rights related to mobility. It's fitting that as I write this, snow is falling. Delaying a decision on sidewalk snow clearing will disproportionately hurt the most vulnerable in our city.

I can share an experience, which for me, highlighted the difference in mobility between Hamilton and our neighbouring Burlington.

I few winters ago, I had business downtown Burlington. I trudged through unploughed snow on Dundurn and York Blvd sidewalks, to wait in front of Dundurn Castle for a bus to Burlington. The bus stop was not shovelled, and to enter the bus I had to climb up over an icy snowbank and step/slide *down* into the bus.

I got off the bus at Fairview and Brant Street in Burlington and walked south on Brant from Fairview to city hall on uninterrupted clear sidewalks ploughed by the city.

The Hamilton side of the journey was dismal and dangerous. Someone with mobility aids would likely have not been able to access the bus stop to begin their trip. Burlington provides the example we must emulate.

As the city of Burlington's website states:

"Burlington Sidewalk clearing begins after snow accumulates in excess of 5 cm (2 inches) and only after roads are cleared. Sidewalks on primary and secondary roads are plowed first, followed by residential roads and designated pathways. Generally, sidewalk clearing is completed within 48 hours after the snow has stopped falling; however, it may take 72 hours or more to clear all sidewalks during heavy or back-to-back snowfalls."

<https://www.burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/snow-removal.asp>

Engage Hamilton's survey revealed strong support for action, and I can assure you, as a homeowner, I would welcome the relatively small tax increase that snow removal would add to my property taxes for the added mobility it would provide residents of the city.

Mobility is a human right, and a lack of action on this basic right is an abdication of responsibility, in my opinion.

Lastly, I would add that making walking (and cycling) possible year round is a very good tactic to address climate change and to help people to move around the city safely during the pandemic. Since the city has agreed to make climate mitigation a priority, this small tax increase (up to 0.4%) would be a wise investment that would pay dividends in a healthier and safer city.

I've included some photos from last winter showing the poor quality of snow clearing efforts in the city of Hamilton (below).

Leaving this for another year is unacceptable, I urge you to do the right thing and fast-track the sidewalk snow clearing decision.





Thanks for your consideration,

Randy Kay