



Hamilton

CITY OF HAMILTON

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Operations Division**

TO: Chair and Members Public Works Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: March 18, 2013	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Winter Control Program Service Level Review (Class 3 Residential Plowing Activation and Target Condition) (PW13022) - (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)	
SUBMITTED BY: Gerry Davis, CMA General Manager Public Works Department	PREPARED BY: Darrell Smith, P.Eng. (905) 546-2424, Extension 7646
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the Winter Control Service Level Activation trigger for Class 3 Residential Streets be revised to 8 cm for plowing operation;
- (b) That the Winter Control Service Level for Class 3 Residential Streets be revised to bare pavement from snow packed;
- (c) That any budget variance due to the enhanced level of service for 2013 be mitigated with funds from the Winter Control Reserve and the on-going impacts be managed through the use of the continuous average expenditures for the delivery of the Winter Control Program each year, in the development of the operating budget estimates;
- (d) That staff be directed to use a continuous rolling budget for Winter Control;
- (e) That the items referring to the Winter Control Activation Levels and Winter Control Program (WCP) Service Levels be removed from the Outstanding Business List.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On October 30, 2012, Council passed a Motion directing staff to report back on the feasibility of changing the activation levels on Class 3 Residential (and sub classes) from 10 cm to 8 cm and to review optimizing the service provided to the Class 3 residential streets.

Staff has reviewed other alternatives and are recommending adjusting both the activation trigger and service level targets to address the Council direction

Alternatives for Consideration - See Page 4

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The Winter Control Reserve will mitigate any impact to the budget in 2013. The expenditures related to the service level changes will become part of the rolling average for Winter control expenditures in as such be reflected in subsequent budget estimates.

Staffing: None

Legal: None

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 2001, Council approved a Winter Control Service Level for all classes of roads within the City. The approved targeted service level for Class 3 residential roads is:

- 10 cm accumulation for plowing activation;
- commence plowing within eight hours after the activation trigger is reached;
- complete plowing within 24 hours of the activation trigger is reached; and
- provide a snow packed driving surface.

In 2003, Council approved a Road Salt Management Plan to be the operating guideline salt handling, storage, application and snow disposal methods for the City. Compliance to this plan will be considered as part of the review of the Winter Control Level of Service.

On October 30, 2012, Council passed a Motion directing staff to report back on the feasibility on changing the activation levels on Class 3 Residential (and sub classes) from 10 cm to 8 cm and a second Motion to review optimization opportunities of the Winter control service levels.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS/LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The Winter Control Level of Service will be revised to reflect the recommendations of this report as outlined in Appendix A, attached.

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The recommendations of this report do not concur with the intention of the Road Salt Management Plan. Staff will monitor salt usage as it relates to the plan and report back to Committee if required.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Staff from Risk Management were consulted to determine the potential exposure of the City of Hamilton to claims by changing the activation levels. They had the following comments:

- There is no increased risk exposure to changing the activation levels as long as the new levels are equal to or greater than the current Minimum Maintenance Standards as set out in Ontario Regulation 239/02; and
- there is potential for increased exposure if the City cannot consistently achieve the new standard.

Public Works staff confirms that the proposed level of service change exceeds the Minimum Maintenance Standards and that using our present system of internal staff and external contractors we will be able to meet this standard with the same consistency as the present standard.

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The following was considered as part of the analysis for these recommendations:

Perception of a Two Tier System - There appears to be a perception of a two tier response for similar classes of roads. Under the current system there are residential streets that are class 2B as well as Class 3. Adopting the recommendation will remove the potential for any misperception.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) - At present, the AODA does not address operational issues, but concentrates on design/construction standards; however, by adopting this recommendation, the City will provide increased accessibility to those residents with disabilities.

Budget - Based on the use of a continuous average of events and Winter Control Program expenditures required each year to achieve the current service level, it is estimated that the recommendations would drive a budget pressure of approximately \$1.6 million per season.

Road Salt Management Plan - Hamilton's Salt Management Plan provides a comprehensive framework for ensuring that the City improves the management of road salt used in its Winter maintenance operations on an on-going basis. In general, the plan addresses application, storage, training, technologies and monitoring. While the plan provides an overall strategy for the introduction of salt into the environment; it does recognize the public safety is paramount.

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The report recommendations, if approved, will challenge the WCP program in the achieving certain objectives of the Road Salt Management Plan and may present negative environmental impacts.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

The following alternatives were considered in preparation of these recommendations.

Do Nothing - Committee could decide to keep the current service levels in the Winter Control Level of Service Policy. Staff is not recommending this alternative as it would not provide improved service facilitating pedestrian movement universally within all residential class three roadways.

Snow Response Clean Up Phase - Staff reviewed the potential for completing clean up works after the initial Service Level Compliance was completed. This alternative would use City staff during regular shifts without the use of overtime or contractors to complete clean up works on all classes of roadways. These works would include plowing residential streets, cleaning up intersections and other related works which are not required for compliance to the service level, but seen as an enhancement. This approach would have the advantage minimum impact to the budget since the only additional costs would be fuel and materials.

There are; however, significant challenges to this approach. The first is the potential for frustration among the residents as there will be no firm timeline for completion of the clean-up work. For a moderate storm, we anticipate that it would take ten to fifteen days to complete the clean-up. Further, if another storm event were to occur during the clean-up phase, the initial work would be lost and crews would have to commence clean up all over again. Secondly, much of the clean-up work requires specialized equipment such as bobcats. Since the City does not own this type of equipment, staff would have to use less suitable equipment extending the clean-up time farther.

Based on the above, staff is not recommending this approach.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 - 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #1

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Strategic Objective

- 1.1 Continue to grow the non-residential tax base.
- 1.2 Continue to prioritize capital infrastructure projects to support managed growth and optimize community benefit.
- 1.3 Promote economic opportunities with a focus on Hamilton's downtown core, all downtown areas and waterfronts.

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- 1.4 Improve the City's transportation system to support multi-modal mobility and encourage inter-regional connections.
- 1.5 Support the development and implementation of neighbourhood and City wide strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents.
- 1.6 Enhance Overall Sustainability (financial, economic, social and environmental).

Strategic Priority #2

Valued & Sustainable Services

WE deliver high quality services that meet citizen needs and expectations, in a cost effective and responsible manner.

Strategic Objective

- 2.1 Implement processes to improve services, leverage technology and validate cost effectiveness and efficiencies across the Corporation.
- 2.2 Improve the City's approach to engaging and informing citizens and stakeholders.
- 2.3 Enhance customer service satisfaction.

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

Appendix A - Winter Control Level of Service Standards

Council Approved Service Levels (2013 Draft)

Winter Control Level of Service Standards									
Road Classification		Surface Condition		Snow Accumulation		Treatment			
Type	Priority	Target Surface Condition	Response Time	Target Response	Completion Time	Anti- Icing	De-icing	Salt	Sand/ Salt
Linc/Arterials	1	Bare	Immediate	2.5 cm	4 hrs	*	*	*	*
Escarpment Crossings	1	Bare	Immediate	5 cm	4 hrs	*	*	*	*
Primary Collectors e.g. Whitney Ave	2A	Bare	4 hrs	8 cm	8 hrs		*	*	*
Secondary Collectors e.g. Fletcher Rd	2B	Centre Bare	4 hrs	8 cm	8 hrs		*	*	*
Rural Roads Hard Surface e.g. Golf Club Rd	3	Centre Bare	8 hrs	10 cm	24 hrs				*
Residential e.g. Ravina Cres	3	Bare	8 hrs	8 cm	24 hrs				*
Loose-top Rural Roads e.g. Trimble Rd	3	Snow Packed	12 hrs	10 cm	24 hrs				

(all response times targets are relative to the end of weather event not the time of initial activation)