

AUDIT AT A GLANCE
2025 Winter Maintenance Program Follow-Up
Status of Auditor General's Previous Recommendations

WHY THIS FOLLOW-UP
MATTERS

Contracted winter maintenance services are part of the City's snow and ice management plan to ensure the safety and mobility of all road, sidewalk, cycle, and path users.

In March 2025, City Council requested that the Auditor General (AG) review whether previous AG recommendations were implemented by management ahead of the February 2025 winter storm. This report presents the status of the **30 recommendations** made in three previous AG winter maintenance reports.

Our review found that issues with the GPS dashboard and field audits continue to hinder implementation of previous recommendations.

BY THE NUMBERS
(winter 2024-25)

- **0.06-1.36** km road segments assessed per field audit, totalling only **6.45-9.34** km or **2%** of contract area, on average, per winter event
- Over **50%** of field audit reports contained one or more pieces of missing information
- Almost **29,000** 311 service requests
- **51** deficiency and **1,598** plow damage work orders issued
- **\$43** in liquidated damages and **\$381k** in disincentives for winter 2023-2024; **\$63k** and **\$195k**, respectively, for 2024-2025 winter (to January 2025)

HOW RECOMMENDATIONS
WILL BENEFIT THE CITY

Implementing the **9 remaining** and **3 new recommendations** will help management more efficiently and effectively monitor contractor performance, and report on winter maintenance service levels.

RECOMMENDATION STATUS

Report	Total Number of Recs	Recs Closed in 2023	2025 Follow-up Cycle Results		
			Fully Implemented	No Longer Applicable	Not Fully Implemented
Winter Road Maintenance Program - Phase One Audit (October 2020)	22	9	5	-	8
Winter Road Maintenance Program - Phase 2 Analysis (June 2021)	4	2	-	2	-
Winter Road Maintenance Program Follow-Up (June 2023)	4	-	3	-	1
Total	30	11	8	2	9

WHAT WE FOUND

Progress

- Winter Maintenance Contract Administration Manual with standard operating procedures for staff and contractors
- More structured process for installing, maintaining, and repairing GPS devices on vehicles
- Watchdog reports to help confirm GPS devices are functioning properly, and equipment is available

Challenges

- Continued issues with GPS dashboard and field audits – the two main tools Transportation Services uses to hold contractors accountable for achieving required service levels
- GPS dashboard used to monitor route completion is still not effective three years into the performance-based contracts
- Contractor deficiencies identified through field audits and 311 service requests are now tracked through work orders, but better analysis is needed to understand and address root causes

A. Strengthening Real-Time Monitoring and Verification Using GPS Technology

- Ongoing GPS dashboard reliability issues hinder the Division's ability to monitor contractor performance. Significant effort is spent manually comparing expected routes with GPS information, which is labour-intensive and time consuming
- Although staff have applied some performance-based priced adjustments (disincentives) based on manual processes, this is an inefficient, unsustainable, and unreliable method for consistently detecting all non-compliance

B. Improving Field Audits for More Effective Oversight of Contractor Performance

- Transportation Services' field audits provided minimal coverage of overall contract area. Longer road segments should be sampled
- Additional risk-based field audit samples could help to identify the need for deficiency work orders, substantiate that routes were not fully completed within the allotted timeframe, and help to identify instances where equipment used by contractors did not meet the required pavement outcome
- Over half of the field audit reports we reviewed had one or more documentation issues. Field audits need to be properly documented

C. Enhancing Other Operational and Compliance Controls

- Transportation Services can continue to improve tracking of vehicle breakdowns and spare equipment, and address delays in updating daily rate sheets
- More robust analysis of 311 service requests is needed to identify trends and root causes and to ensure common areas of concern are properly assessed and addressed