



OLIVIA CHOW MAYOR

November 3, 2025

Dear Executive Committee,

RE: A Revamped Snow Program

Toronto needs to get better at clearing snow. Good snow removal keeps our city running and makes sure streets and sidewalks are safe for everyone.

Last winter, the City's snow clearing didn't work well enough. I asked City staff to create a new plan to fix Toronto's winter maintenance. The City Manager's report shows a new city-wide plan that uses all available resources to improve our snow program.

The current system has failed residents. For too long, people have waited for snow clearing that comes too late. City reports didn't match what people actually saw on their streets. The old approach didn't work, and we're fixing it. We're making big changes now for this winter and planning long-term improvements.

We need to address five key priorities:

1. Fixing the Contract: The 2021 contract only covers plowing, not snow removal. A forensic audit is reviewing how this happened. We need removal included in the 2029 contract, but we can't wait that long. The City will use our own equipment and workers to remove snow after smaller storms so we're ready when big snowfalls hit.

2. Ending the 311 Blackout Period: People should be able to report snow problems right away. We'll end the blackout period so you can call 311 immediately. A new Digital Command Center will handle complaints in real time and identify areas that need extra help.

3. One Team Approach: A major snowstorm affects the whole city and needs a city-wide response. During big storms, the City Manager will lead an emergency response, bringing in up to 200 workers from different departments to clear snow. Field teams can call for extra help to solve problems quickly.

4. Better Equipment: We need new machines, including better sidewalk plows. When equipment breaks, we need faster repairs. Mobile repair teams working 24/7 during storms will

help clear snow faster. These improvements will help us clear sidewalks more quickly and reliably.

5. Clear Communication: Torontonians need to know when their streets and sidewalks will be cleared. A city-wide snow communication plan will give people real-time information about clearing in their neighbourhoods based on actual results.

The City Manager has an operational plan ready for this winter, pending Council approval. Through constant evaluation and reporting, this plan will provide immediate improvements and a roadmap for future enhancements.

These improvements will work alongside existing services to create reliable, effective snow maintenance across Toronto.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Olivia Chow', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Olivia Chow
Mayor of Toronto