

## **Snow Clearing Challenges Review**

Adam Roy Cohoon, a wheelchair user with a limited income, expresses concerns about the inefficiency and lack of clear responsibility in snow clearing, which impacts his ability to access essential services. He highlights the difficulty of setting up a profile with 311 to request snow clearing, and the frustration of being unable to access his bank, grocery store, and favourite restaurant due to unclear paths. Adam emphasizes the significant impact of snow clearing on his daily life and hopes for improvements to avoid the prolonged isolation he experienced the previous winter.

- The speaker, a wheelchair user on a limited income, expresses frustration with the lack of clear snow-removal responsibilities and the difficulty of arranging accessibility accommodations when calling 311.

During the February 2025 storms, Adam Roy Cohoon noted that private contractors cleared retail areas quickly, but the city's snow removal was inadequate, particularly for wheelchair users. Adam highlighted issues with city mapping and communication, a lack of public consultation, and the inability to permanently mark his disability status on 311. Despite these challenges, local efforts and a

three-day thaw helped improve accessibility. Adam suggested more public involvement and better planning for future snow events, recalling past successes with army assistance in 1999. Adam emphasized the need for community support and better city coordination to address snow-clearing inefficiencies.



The sidewalk on Front Street East in the Canary District outside my building, on February 23rd, 2025

## **Action Items**

- [ ] Investigate the process of triaging 311 calls and explore ways to flag users with disabilities for priority permanently.
- [ ] Conduct more public consultations and encourage broader community feedback on the city's snow-clearing efforts and strategies.
- [ ] Explore ways to better coordinate with private contractors and retail vendors to assist with snow clearing in the Canary District and similar neighbourhoods.
- [ ] Develop a public communication plan to provide updates and guidance to residents during significant snow events.
- [ ] Evaluate the feasibility of involving the public and private contractors more in the snow-clearing process, with clear guidelines and incentives.

## **Outline**

### **Snow Removal Challenges During February 2025 Storms**

- Adam Roy Cohoon discusses the initial storm, noting that the area was cleared and curb cuts were adequate. The area was cleared of just enough snow, allowing him to navigate.
- Adam mentions that private contractors cleared the retail areas quickly, but the city's sidewalks were not

well-maintained, especially for wheelchair users.

- Adam highlights the city's lack of communication, despite the storm being declared a significant event, and the need for better public consultation.
- Adam suggests that retail snow-clearing contractors could have helped with sidewalk maintenance, but the city's mapping issues and lack of communication hindered this effort.

## **Impact of Equipment Issues and Communication Gaps**

- Adam notes that equipment issues were reported in the media, but he believes there were more places in his neighbourhood where snow could have been safely piled.
- Adam criticizes the city's communication, stating there was no real help or encouragement for neighbours, unlike during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Adam expresses frustration with the 311 system, which does not allow him to permanently note his disability, which affects his priority for snow clearing.
- Adam calls for more public consultation and a better understanding of snow-clearing processes to improve future responses.

## **Community Efforts and Historical Context**

- Adam recalls the 1999 snowstorm and the city's call to bring in the army for extra resources, which he believes helped clear the snow more effectively.
- Public maps help direct community efforts in snow

clearing, with commercial and retail vendors also contributing their resources.

- Adam emphasizes that the city should be responsible for snow clearing, but encourages public participation to speed up the process.
- Adam concludes by expressing gratitude to Mother Nature for helping clear the snow in his neighbourhood, despite the city's initial failures.

## **I. Snow Removal Challenges During February 2025 Storms**

- City snow removal was inadequate, especially for wheelchair users, compared to private contractors clearing retail areas.
- Issues with city mapping and communication.
- Lack of public consultation regarding snow-clearing strategies.
- Retail snow-clearing contractors could have assisted with sidewalks, but were hindered by mapping and communication issues.

## **II. Impact of Equipment Issues and Communication Gaps**

- Equipment issues were reported, but more snow could have been piled safely.
- There is a lack of city communication and encouragement for neighbours to assist, unlike during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Frustration with the 311 system's inability to

- permanently note disability status for priority service.
- There is a need for greater public consultation and a deeper understanding of snow-clearing processes.

### **III. Community Efforts and Historical Context**

- Recalled the 1999 snowstorm and army assistance as a successful model.
- Suggestion for public maps to direct community snow-clearing efforts, with contributions from commercial and retail vendors.
- The city should be primarily responsible, but public participation should be encouraged and supported.
- Gratitude for the natural thaw despite initial city failures.

### **IV. Action Items**

- Investigate and improve 311 call triaging to flag users with disabilities for permanent priority.
- Conduct more public consultations on snow-clearing efforts and strategies.
- Coordinate with private contractors and retail vendors for snow-clearing assistance.
- Develop a public communication plan for updates during significant snow events.
- Evaluate the public and private contractors with clear guidelines and incentives.

\*\*\*\* IN THE COMMUNICATIONS SECTION OF THE ITEM'S AGENDA LISTING, PLEASE HYPERLINK OUR PDF DOCUMENT so that THE PUBLIC MAY HAVE ONLINE ACCESS TO THE CONTENTS OF This submission \*\*\*\*

