TORONTO

REPORT FOR ACTION

2025–2026 Annual Winter Maintenance Report and Amendment to Blanket Contracts #C78, #C87, #C88 and #C89 with Rafat General Contractor Inc. for the Non-Exclusive Supply of All Labour, Equipment and Materials Necessary to Provide Single Axle, Tandem and Tri Axle Dump Trucks with Operators for Trucking Services

Date: May 5, 2026
To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee
From: General Manager, Transportation Services and Chief Procurement Officer
Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the City of Toronto's winter maintenance activities during the 2025-2026 winter season and seeks authority for amendments to existing blanket contracts for trucking services supporting snow removal haulage operations and summer haulage operations as these services are integral to the delivery of services and operational activities described in this report.

The 2025-2026 winter season was characterized by sustained operational demands due to a high frequency of winter events, including two major snow events in January 2026 that produced approximately 90 cm of snowfall and required extended response and recovery operations. These conditions required the activation of the City's Major Snow Event Response Plan (MSERP), enabling a coordinated one-City response across multiple divisions and partner agencies, including but not limited to Transportation Services, Toronto Emergency Management, Communications Division, Customer Experience Division, Fleet Services, Toronto Police Service Parking Enforcement, the Toronto Transit Commission, and other partners. In addition, multiple City divisions provided additional front line and support staff to assist with delivering the MSERP including Solid Waste Management Services, Toronto Water, Environment, Climate and Forestry, Parks and Recreation, Engineering and Construction Services

and Policy, Planning, Finance and Administration. CUPE Local 416 and CUPE Local 79 were strong partners in supporting winter operations during the major snow events.

The MSERP supported structured deployment of resources and improved coordination of surge support during and after the January 2026 major snow events. Refined in advance of the 2025-2026 winter season, it provided a unified approach for managing the response to major snow events.

The overall number of winter service requests increased significantly compared to the previous season, rising from approximately 28,888 to 49,534, reflecting both the greater amount of snowfall and the discontinuation of the 311 hold period. Despite this increase in demand, service performance improved, with on-time completion increasing by approximately 30 percentage points, supported by strengthened coordination, more effective triage and dispatch processes, and improved visibility of field conditions.

A range of operational enhancements were implemented for the 2025-2026 winter season to strengthen winter service delivery across both routine operations and major snow events. These included the discontinuation of the 311 hold period, the establishment of District Communication Centres, additional in-house equipment, and strengthened monitoring and inspection practices to support more consistent field oversight. Winter communications were also enhanced through a more coordinated, city-wide communications approach, supported by data-informed messaging.

Operational preparedness was further strengthened through targeted initiatives across multiple service areas, including additional treatment at priority TTC hill locations and proactive snow removal, as part of the broader snow removal operations, that collectively resulted in the removal of approximately 538,000 tonnes of snow.

Overall, the 2025-2026 winter season demonstrated improved performance and coordination, while identifying key opportunities for improvement such as snow removal along narrow streets, sidewalks and bike lanes, as well as improving the resiliency of in-house sidewalk plows for future winter seasons.

A summary of key improvements implemented or planned for future seasons is provided in Attachment 1.

This report also seeks authority to amend four (4) Blanket Contracts, 26TR-OM-610-TEY - BC #C78 (Toronto-East York), 26TR-OM-620-EY-TS - BC #C87 (Etobicoke-York), 26TR-OM-630-NY-TS - BC #C88 (North York), and 26TR-OM-640-SC-TS - BC #C89 (Scarborough). These contracts were awarded through Request for Quotation Doc5344653057 to Rafat General Contractor Inc. for the non-exclusive supply of all labour, equipment and materials necessary to provide single axle, tandem and tri-axle dump trucks with operators.

The amendment is required to increase the award values of the four (4) Blanket Contracts to ensure continuity and uninterrupted trucking services for both snow removal haulage and summer haulage operations. The contracts were issued with an initial term of one (1) year (2026), with the option to extend for up to three (3) additional separate one (1)-year periods (2027, 2028, and 2029). At the time of procurement, contract values were based on historical snow removal trends and typical summer usage requirements.

As a result of record snowfall in January 2026, it was necessary to remove and truck snow from city streets to maintain emergency access, transit corridors, bridge decks, access to hospitals, and other priority areas. The scale of response required during the 2026 major snow events exceeded original year one (2026) estimates for the trucking contract of $6,376,790 with spends totalling $18,254,199.

The total value of the four (4) blanket contracts, including option years, is $26,189,522 net of all taxes and charges ($26,650,458 net of HST recoveries). The amendment would increase the total value of the four (4) blanket contracts by $53,815,445 net of all taxes and charges ($54,762,598 net of HST recoveries), revising the value of the four (4) contracts, including option years, to $80,004,968 net of all taxes and charges ($81,413,056 net of HST recoveries).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Transportation Services and Chief Procurement Officer recommend that:

1. Infrastructure and Environment Committee, in accordance with Section 71-11.1(C) of the City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 71, (Financial Control By-law), grant authority to the General Manager, Transportation Services to amend Blanket Contract Number #C78, contract 26TR-OM-610-TEY-TS, for the Toronto and East-York District, with Rafat General Contractor Inc., increasing the current Blanket Contract value by $18,334,134 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($18,656,815 net of HST recoveries), revising the total Blanket Contract value from $6,952,670 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($7,075,037 net of HST recoveries) to $25,286,804 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($25,731,852 net of HST recoveries).

2. Infrastructure and Environment Committee, in accordance with Section 71-11.1(C) of the City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 71, (Financial Control By-law), grant authority to the General Manager, Transportation Services to amend Blanket Contract Number #C87, contract 26TR-OM-620-EY-TS, for the Etobicoke-York District, with Rafat General Contractor Inc., increasing the current Blanket Contract value by $7,205,184 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($7,331,996 net of HST recoveries), revising the total Blanket Contract value

from $6,936,981 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($7,059,072 net of HST recoveries) to $14,142,165 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($14,391,068 net of HST recoveries).

3. Infrastructure and Environment Committee, in accordance with Section 71-11.1(C) of the City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 71, (Financial Control By-law), grant authority to the General Manager, Transportation Services to amend Blanket Contract Number #C88, contract 26TR-OM-630-NY-TS, for the North York District, with Rafat General Contractor Inc., increasing the current Blanket Contract value by $19,382,626 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($19,723,760 net of HST recoveries), revising the total Blanket Contract value from $6,936,981 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($7,059,072 net of HST recoveries) to $26,319,607 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($26,782,832 net of HST recoveries).

4. City Council, in accordance with Section 71-11.1(C) of the City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 71, (Financial Control By-law), grant authority to the General Manager, Transportation Services to amend Blanket Contract Number #C89, contract 26TR-OM-640-SC-TS, for the Scarborough District, with Rafat General Contractor Inc., increasing the current Blanket Contract value by $8,893,501 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($9,050,026 net of HST recoveries) revising the total Blanket Contract value from $5,362,891 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($5,457,278 net of HST recoveries) to $14,256,392 net of all applicable taxes and charges ($14,507,304 net of HST recoveries).

5. Infrastructure and Environment Committee request the General Manager, Transportation Services, in consultation with Technology Services Division, Communications Division, Customer Experience Division, the Toronto Transit Commission, and any other relevant divisions or agencies, to undertake a coordinated review of winter operations service integration to identify opportunities to further improve triage, routing, and real-time coordination during both routine and major snow events.

6. Infrastructure and Environment Committee request the General Manager, Transportation Services, to consult with Members of Council, school boards, other city divisions, the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas, and other interest groups, as appropriate, on their experiences during the 2025-2026 winter season, to inform ongoing improvements to winter operations and service delivery.

7. Infrastructure and Environment Committee request the General Manager, Transportation Services, in consultation with Communications Division, Toronto Police Service Parking Enforcement, and the Toronto Parking Authority, to develop options to modernize winter parking management during Major Snow Event and Significant Weather Event declarations, including improved alignment between completion of snow removal operations and the duration of parking

restrictions, and enhanced public communications to improve clarity and compliance.

8. Infrastructure and Environment Committee request the General Manager, Transportation Services, in collaboration with CreateTO and Corporate Real Estate Management, to explore opportunities to optimize snow storage and haulage operations, including identification of additional temporary and potential permanent snow storage sites, to support the improved use of existing facilities, reduction of haul distances, and truck queuing.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The 2025-2026 winter season required significant emergency, surge, and contracted resources to support operational response and recovery efforts under the City's Major Snow Event Response Plan. Financial impacts associated with the 2025-2026 winter season are currently under review and will be reported at the earliest opportunity through the 2026 quarterly operating variance reporting process.

Winter Maintenance Program Improvements and Future Budget Considerations

Lessons learned in the 2025-2026 winter season will help inform the development of future winter maintenance contracts, including any enhancements related to the ongoing refinement of winter operations and improved snow removal services. Any such enhancements beyond routine operational capacity will be brought forward for consideration as part of future years' budget submissions for Transportation Services.

Amendment to Blanket Contracts for Trucking Services

The total value of the requested amendment for all three (3) option year periods (2027, 2028, and 2029) of the four (4) blanket contracts is $53,815,445 net of all taxes and charges. The total cost to the City is $54,762,598 net of HST recoveries.

Funding related to these amendments will be considered as part of the 2027 Operating Budget submission for Transportation Services, as well as in future years as appropriate. Any funding associated with the Option Year Terms remains subject to review and approval through the City Council's annual operating budget process.

Funding details are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Financial Impact Summary (net of HST recoveries)

Cost Centre	Description	Option Year 1 (2027)	Option Year 2 (2028)	Option Year 3 (2029)	2027-2029 Total
TS6020	26TR-OM-610-TEY-TS	$6,218,938	$6,218,938	$6,218,939	$18,656,815
TS6030	26TR-OM-620-EY-TS	$2,443,998	$2,443,999	$2,443,999	$7,331,996
TS6030	26TR-OM-630-NY-TS	$6,574,586	$6,574,587	$6,574,587	$19,723,760
TS6020	26TR-OM-640-SC-TS	$3,016,677	$3,016,675	$3,016,675	$9,050,027
Total		$18,254,199	$18,254,199	$18,254,200	$54,762,598

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact statement.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on March 25 and 26, 2026, City Council directed the Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Services, in coordination with the General Manager, Transportation Services, the Chief People Officer, the City Solicitor and Local 416, to develop a paid surge capacity shovelling program.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.EX29.13

At its meeting on March 25 and 2026, City Council referred Item CC39.2 Forensic Audit of the 2021 Winter Maintenance Procurement to the May 6, 2026 meeting of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee, for consideration.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.CC39.2

At its meeting on February 25, 2026, the Infrastructure and Environment Committee referred the report IE27.1 – Response to Council Directions on Sidewalk Clearing Requirements and the Status of Modernizing PlowTO to the General Manager, Transportation Services, to incorporate into the annual report on winter maintenance.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.IE27.1

At its meeting on February 25, 2026, the Infrastructure and Environment Committee requested that the General Manager, Transportation Services, include in the next winter services report, options and associated costs to provide improved winter access for pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles to laneway homes and garages.

https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.IE27.15

At its meeting on February 10, 2026, City Council requested that the General Manager, Transportation Services, in consultation with relevant City divisions, report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on the feasibility, costs, and implementation considerations of enhanced snow clearing support for seniors and residents living with disabilities during declared major snow events, including potential pilot options.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.CC38.1

On December 29, 2025 in accordance with Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 195, Procurement, Section 8.1(D), the Chief Procurement Officer awarded Doc5344643057 Request for Quotations for the non-exclusive supply of all labour, equipment and materials to provide Axle, Tandem, and Tri Axle Dump Trucks with Operators to Rafat General Contractor Inc. for a one (1) year period with the option to extend for up to three (3) additional separate one (1) year periods.
Awarded Contract Record - Awarded Contract Records - Toronto Bids Portal

At its meeting on November 12 and 13, 2025, City Council considered the 2025 Winter Maintenance Program Review Update and directed the General Manager, Transportation Services, to report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on the effectiveness of improvements made to the Winter Maintenance Program in the 2025-2026 winter season resulting from the program review and to report, in consultation with the Chief Technology Officer, options to enhance public access to real-time winter operations information. At the same meeting, City Council directed the City Manager, in consultation with the Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Services, to report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on plans to require corporate property owners to clear municipal sidewalks abutting their properties, as well as an update on the modernization of PlowTO.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.EX27.2

At its meeting on July 23 and 24, 2025, City Council directed the City Manager to report to the Executive Committee with an update on the 2025 Winter Maintenance Program Review. At the same meeting, City Council directed the General Manager, Transportation Services and the Executive Director, Customer Experience, to remove the temporary service request hold period to enable the public to create winter maintenance service requests at any time during a winter event.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.EX25.5

COMMENTS

Background

As a four-season city, Toronto's winter maintenance program plays a critical role in maintaining safe and accessible public rights-of-way for pedestrians, cyclists, people using mobility or assistive devices, motorists, and public transit users. Winter maintenance services are delivered through a combination of in-house operations, contracted services, and coordination across City divisions and partner agencies, including those responsible for transit operations and emergency response.

Winter maintenance services include the application of liquid de-icers (brine), salt, plowing of expressways, arterial, collector, and local roads, mechanical sidewalk clearing, winter servicing of cycling infrastructure, and snow removal in locations where accumulated snow limits mobility, access, or available storage capacity. Services are delivered in accordance with City Council-approved service levels and are intended to balance safety, mobility, and operational efficiency across the City during winter conditions.

2025-2026 Winter Season Review

The 2025-2026 winter season was characterized by a high frequency of winter events, with more than 100 activations between October 2025 and April 2026. While many events involved lighter snowfall and were managed through routine winter operations, two major snow events in January 2026 produced more than 90 cm of snowfall over a 10-day period, resulting in sustained operational demands and the need for interdivisional coordination through the Major Snow Event Response Plan (MSERP).

With the removal of the 311 service request hold period, this season's winter service requests increased significantly compared to the previous year. Between October 2025 and April 2026, Transportation Services received approximately 49,534 winter-related service requests, compared to approximately 28,888 during the same period in 2024-2025, representing an increase of approximately 72 percent. Despite this increase in demand, on-time completion improved by approximately 30 percentage points compared to the previous season. This occurred alongside operational changes informed by prior post-season reviews and the 2025 Toronto Winter Maintenance Program Review, including the discontinuation of the 311 hold period and the introduction of District Communication Centres (DCC), which improved the real-time triage, routing, and visibility of incoming service requests during winter events.

Detailed information on winter weather events, activations, and service request activity is provided in Attachment 2.

The most significant operational impacts occurred during the January 2026 major snow events, which affected roadways, sidewalks, cycling facilities, transit operations, and neighbourhood access across the City. As conditions intensified, Transportation Services escalated operations through a Divisional Operations Centre (DOC) and activated enhanced coordination with Toronto Emergency Management (TEM) in accordance with the MSERP. Proactive snow removal commenced on January 15, 2026 with targeted clearing in priority areas, followed by the transition to city-wide snow removal operations on January 27, 2026. These operations resulted in the removal of approximately 538,000 tonnes of snow over a 39-day period.

Key Improvements Implemented for the 2025-2026 Winter Season

Improvements implemented for the 2025-2026 winter season, summarized in Attachment 1 and further detailed below, focused on strengthening operational readiness, service request management, communications, and preparedness for major snow events.

311 Service Requests

At the direction of Council, the temporary 311 winter service request hold period was discontinued, allowing winter maintenance requests to be submitted continuously throughout the season. As previously noted, the change resulted in an increase in service requests received by Transportation Services from 28,888 in the 2024-2025 winter season to 49,534 in 2025-2026. However, it also supported improved visibility of service request patterns through the use of data-driven heat maps identifying problem locations for further investigation. Further details regarding winter service request data are provided in Attachment 3.

Transportation Services will continue working with the Customer Experience Division (CXD) to refine intake processes and continue to enhance the use of 311 data to identify hotspots, to support more timely escalation and coordination during snow events and any required removal operations.

District Communication Centres (DCC)

In previous winter seasons, winter-related service requests were managed without dedicated coordination centres, resulting in less efficient triage and prioritization. To address this, a key enhancement for this winter season was the establishment of four DCCs, one in each district, to manage and validate winter-related service requests. This model was also introduced to support the increased service demand following the discontinuation of the 311 winter service request hold period.

The DCCs were activated during moderate and major winter events and supported the prioritization, investigation, and routing of requests, improved coordination of field dispatch, and provided a direct point of contact for Councillors' offices to escalate urgent concerns. When activated, a structured triage model was used. The most urgent requests (Priority 1), such as those involving access to emergency services, medical appointments, or other time-sensitive needs, were dispatched directly to Transportation Infrastructure Patrollers (TIPs), who operated on a 24-hour schedule, and investigated these requests as a priority. Requests of moderate urgency (Priority 2) were reviewed to determine whether they required escalation to Priority 1, and whether they required field investigation.

Fleet & Equipment Readiness

During the February 2025 major snow event, challenges were experienced related to the performance and resiliency of sidewalk clearing equipment. Frequent breakdowns and reduced equipment availability had a negative impact on service efficiency. In response, Fleet Services Division (FSD) implemented several measures, including the introduction of additional equipment and pilot sidewalk equipment models, as summarized in Table 2. Overall, snow removal and melting capacity was increased by approximately 20 percent.

Table 2: Winter Operations In-House Fleet (Snow Removal)

Equipment Type	2024-2025 Fleet	2025-2026 Fleet
Front End Loaders	21	27
Skid Steers	10	10
Sidewalk Plows	59	64
Tractors	15	15
Snow Blowers	16	28
Snow Melters	3	5
Dump Trucks	28	28

Sidewalk Clearing Equipment

A pilot of alternative sidewalk clearing equipment was undertaken to assess the performance of varying sizes of equipment. The evaluation identified that larger, heavy-duty units provided strong operational performance but were less effective in constrained downtown sidewalk environments due to their size. Smaller, compact units performed well for general sidewalk maintenance and accessibility but demonstrated lower durability and higher cost considerations. Mid-sized equipment offered a balance of power and manoeuvrability and demonstrated the most consistent performance

across a range of sidewalk conditions. The results of the pilot are currently being analyzed and will inform future procurement of sidewalk clearing equipment.

Fleet Operational Improvements

In addition to the introduction of new and pilot equipment, FSD implemented a range of operational improvements to support winter maintenance activities. Field-level responsiveness was enhanced through the deployment of mobile technicians, which reduced equipment downtime. Equipment availability was further supported through targeted readiness initiatives including an increase in pre-season dry runs, operational testing, and strengthened preventative maintenance programs. Coordination with equipment vendors was enhanced to prioritize City assets, improve parts availability, and expedite repairs during periods of peak demand.

Table 3 provides a comparison of sidewalk clearing fleet readiness performance measures ahead of major snow events during the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 winter seasons.

Table 3: Sidewalk Fleet – Pre-Major Snow Event (2024-2025 vs. 2025-2026)

Performance Measure	2024-2025	2025-2026
Availability	66%	76%
Technician Vacancy Rate	10%	7%
# of Operators Certified	85	357
Increased Equipment Capacity	10%	20%

Visibility of fleet status and performance was improved through integrated dashboards, and garage operating hours were extended during major snow events to support continuous 20 to 24-hour operations, including overnight and weekends. Operational performance was also supported through increased coordination between Transportation Services and FSD, including regular operational discussions to align equipment availability with service needs and respond to emerging issues.

Continued investment in additional equipment, including improved spare ratios, is required to strengthen operational resilience. Further work will also focus on FSD's staffing capacity to support sustained extended operating hours, including the ability to rotate crews during major snow events.

<u>Enhanced Performance Monitoring</u>

Enhanced monitoring and targeted operational measures were introduced to improve visibility of field conditions, support operational decision-making, and strengthen contractor oversight. To better assess contractor performance, the length of road segments included in inspections was increased. Inspection documentation processes were also streamlined through the consolidation of multiple forms, improving consistency and strengthening sign-off controls. A preliminary in-season review found that the updated processes improved documentation completion.

Supporting Public Transit

Transportation Services and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) implemented a pilot at 10 priority hill locations where buses have historically become stuck during winter events. Transportation Services enhanced winter road treatments at these locations before and during winter events to improve traction and safety.

The pilot included increased brining applications, targeted salting and plowing, and enhanced field monitoring to support additional response during winter events. These measures contributed to improved outcomes, including fewer transit service disruptions, improved reliability at known high-risk locations, and significantly fewer incidents of buses becoming stuck at priority hill locations. Further review of 2025-2026 data on the effectiveness of the pilot is being completed to inform future implementation.

Beginning the 2026-2027 winter season, traffic cameras installed at all 10 priority hill locations will provide TTC with access to live feeds, supporting real-time monitoring of road conditions and enabling timely operational responses, including dispatch of tow support or additional winter maintenance resources where required.

Transit stop accessibility was also enhanced through a combination of mechanical clearing and manual hand crews. In advance of the 2025-2026 winter season, the TTC provided a list of priority stops and routes, which helped focus clearing efforts on high-traffic and higher-risk locations. During major winter events, snow clearing at TTC stops was supplemented through the redeployment of staff from other divisions. Regular meetings with the TTC were held throughout the season, and multiple times daily during major snow events, to review conditions, confirm priorities, and adjust operations where required.

Similar to previous winter seasons, challenges remained with parked vehicles impeding streetcar track allowances which resulted in delays to streetcar service along various routes. The TTC is currently reviewing its practices for addressing blockages. Transportation Services will continue to support this work by examining opportunities to remove snow along streetcar routes sooner, and work with Toronto Police Service Parking Enforcement and the TTC to improve coordination to address parked vehicle obstructions impacting streetcar operations during winter events.

Preliminary feedback from TTC indicated improvements in bus stop clearing as well as enhanced performance at priority hills. TTC also reported a reduction in instances of buses becoming stuck and fewer route closures compared to the previous winter season.

Proactive Snow Removal

Transportation Services introduced a proactive approach to snow removal to support safe movement of traffic on roads, sidewalks, bike lanes, and bridge decks, while also managing available space for snow storage between events. As noted earlier in the report, proactive snow removal commenced on January 15, with operations focused on streetcar routes, bridges, narrow streets, and hospital areas. While mobility impacts had not yet become significant at that time, removal activities were undertaken to provide storage capacity in advance of future winter events.

The proactive approach led to earlier snow clearing at high-priority locations, which reduced the build-up of snowbanks that can obstruct sightlines, pedestrian movement, transit operations, and emergency vehicle access.

Communications

Guided by the 2025 Winter Maintenance Program Review, an enhanced winter communications approach was implemented to improve the clarity and consistency of messaging during both routine and major snow events. A more coordinated communications model was established across operational, emergency management, and customer service partners. Over the two major snow events, daily communications across media, digital, social and Councillor channels were delivered, supported by real-time data from 311, media monitoring, and social listening. This included a marked increase in earned media activity, high volumes of public and media engagement, strong use of toronto.ca/winter as a centralized source of information, expanded social media reach, and more frequent, coordinated updates to Councillors' offices. Media coverage remained predominantly neutral or positive across both events, and digital engagement and website traffic increased substantially.

Detailed communications performance data, including media, digital, social and Councillor communications metrics, are provided in Attachment 4.

The reduction in information-seeking calls to 311 coincided with expanded communications and improved digital access, indicating increased public reliance on online channels for winter information. Toronto.ca/winter was used as the primary source for winter information, supporting improved public access to updates during

active winter events, with page views increasing from approximately 7,700 during regular winter conditions to more than 40,000 during the major snow events.

Pre-season briefings were provided to Members of Council and their staff, and the frequency and coordination of operational updates were increased during winter events to improve the timeliness and consistency of information provided across channels.

Post-season feedback was collected through a Councillor survey, with responses received from 13 Councillor's offices, providing qualitative insight into communications effectiveness during both routine and major snow events. Survey findings indicated that while improvements were recognized in the availability and coordination of information, performance varied across audiences. Communications with Members of Council were rated highly, while public-facing and operational communications were rated as average. Opportunities for improvement were identified, particularly during snow removal and recovery operations, related to the timing, accuracy, and level of detail of certain communications. Opportunities related to customer communications will also be addressed through CXD's "Closing the Loop initiative".

This feedback has informed opportunities for continuous improvement in winter communications. Further enhancements to winter communications will be explored, including strengthened pre-season public education, expanded multilingual outreach, and a centralized content library to support consistent responses to frequently asked questions throughout the season.

Transportation Services is also working with Technology Services Division (TSD) to identify opportunities to enhance how the public receives information about winter maintenance operations. This includes exploring the use of existing City technology to enable residents to sign up to receive service-related notifications.

Major Snow Event Response Plan (MSERP)

The MSERP provides the City's framework for a coordinated response when winter conditions are anticipated to exceed routine operational capacity. It establishes escalation triggers, governance structures, and coordination processes between Transportation Services and divisional and agency partners, including Toronto Emergency Management, Communications Division, the TTC, and emergency services, supporting a one-City approach to winter operations during major snow events.

Following the 2025 Winter Maintenance Program Review, Transportation Services worked closely with MVU and internal and external partners to further refine the framework for responding to major snow events, including clearer activation criteria, defined roles and responsibilities, and scalable response measures aligned to event

severity. The MSERP was also tested via a tabletop exercise in December 2025 to support implementation.

The response framework operates across multiple levels of coordination. As noted earlier, DCCs support district-level service request triage, field issues, local operational priorities, and serve as a point of escalation for Councillors' offices. The Transportation Services DOC manages divisional response and resource deployment, and TEM's Toronto Emergency Operations Centre (TEOC) provides city-wide strategic coordination. Together, this tiered structure supports real-time information sharing, aligned decision-making, and a coordinated response across the organization during major snow events.

The MSERP was activated twice during the 2025-2026 winter season, enabling the City to operationalize the updated framework and assess its effectiveness, including areas that performed well and opportunities for further improvement, which are outlined below.

Snow Removal

Snow removal refers to the physical collection and hauling of snow to designated snow storage facilities and is undertaken at locations where limited snow storage capacity within the public right-of-way may impact mobility or safety. Priority is given to transit corridors, hospitals, bridge decks, high pedestrian locations, by-lawed school zones, and narrow streets to support emergency access, transit operations, pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Snow removal operations are delivered by both in-house staff and contractors, using a range of techniques based on local conditions, road design, and traffic demands. These include full removal, partial removal (shaving), single-side removal, and targeted clearing. During major snow events, these techniques are used to improve access and mobility across the network; however, complete clearance of all snow is not always possible. As a result, some temporary impacts to mobility and accessibility remain during major snow events.

In addition to the in-house fleet enhancements noted earlier in this report, during the 2025-2026 winter season, Transportation Services further strengthened snow removal operations through additional contracted equipment. A pilot was also undertaken in Scarborough to coordinate the sequencing of plowing activities, whereby road and cycling infrastructure was cleared prior to sidewalk plowing to prevent sidewalks from being re-covered with snow pushed aside during road plowing. The pilot will be continued in the next winter season to further assess its effectiveness.

As the period of extreme snowfall experienced in January 2026 exceeded the capacity of existing in-house and contracted resources, an emergency contract was implemented to supplement operations and support broader network mobility and emergency access following the storm events. With the addition of this capacity, alongside surge staffing,

additional in-house and contracted equipment, and parking management measures, snow removal operations were completed more efficiently, and in less time than would otherwise have been possible given the record amount of snow that accumulated.

While there were improvements, some areas such as snow removal on local streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, and in the areas adjacent to parks, recreation facilities, and other institutions, did not meet public and Councillor expectations.

To support future operations, Transportation Services is investigating the use of a roster of pre-qualified contractors that can be deployed during future major snow events for the remainder of the current contract term. The roster will supplement in-house and existing contractor snow removal operations and will be used strategically to support snow removal in targeted priority locations including areas with very narrow streets, limited snow storage capacity, sidewalks and bike lanes.

Several opportunities were identified to further enhance snow removal planning and execution. These include clearer thresholds for transitioning from snow clearing to snow removal and improved coordination of snow hauling operations and snow storage facility capacity to reduce truck queuing. These opportunities will be considered as part of future operational planning.

Snow Storage

As part of winter maintenance operations, snow is stored in the right-of-way (e.g., on boulevards). During major snow events, these areas can fill up quickly, resulting in narrowed roads, obstructed driveways, reduced parking, and impacts to mobility and accessibility.

When right-of-way capacity is exceeded, the City relies on five (5) permanent snow storage sites, including two (2) equipped with snow melters. During recent major snow events, these sites have reached or approached capacity, requiring trucks to travel longer distances to access available locations. This reduces operational efficiency and prolongs snow removal operations.

To supplement the capacity at existing snow storage sites after January 2026’s major snow event, Transportation Services together with Corporate Real Estate Management (CREM), identified two (2) additional temporary sites for storage. The sites provided additional capacity and improved efficiency by reducing haul distances to available storage sites.

Transportation Services is developing a comprehensive snow storage strategy to support MSERP objectives. The strategy includes targeted enhancements to existing snow storage sites, such as increased snow melting capacity through additional equipment, and improvements to drainage, environmental controls, and overall site operations to reduce truck queuing.

Expanding the snow storage network presents challenges due to land availability constraints, competing land uses, and environmental and community considerations. As a result, the strategy includes ongoing collaboration with CreateTO, CREM, and other partners to maintain a roster of temporary snow storage locations to supplement the existing network, if required, during major snow events, while also identifying opportunities to establish new permanent sites over the longer term.

Business Improvement Areas

During major snow events, Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) experience distinct challenges due to their concentration of businesses, reliance on short-term parking, and high pedestrian activity. Following the January 2026 major snow event, numerous BIAs inquired about the timing of snow removal in their areas, as well as raised questions and concerns regarding parking restrictions along designated snow routes. In particular, the duration of the parking prohibitions, even after snow removal activities had been completed, was a source of frustration, as continued restrictions limited customer access and affected business activity.

Discussions were initiated with the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA) earlier this spring to review winter service delivery, parking management, and communication during major snow events. Discussions will continue with TABIA to identify opportunities for improvement ahead of the next winter season.

As an initial step, BIAs will be treated as a higher priority for snow removal operations to help minimize impacts to businesses. In addition, options to provide greater flexibility in parking management during major snow events, particularly where snow removal has already been completed, are being explored, as detailed later in this report.

Snow Clearing in School Areas

Winter maintenance responsibilities in school areas are shared. School boards are responsible for clearing snow on school property, including driveways, parking lots, and walkways leading from school property to the sidewalk. The City maintains the public roads and sidewalks surrounding school property, as well as by-lawed School Bus Loading Zones (SBLZs) on City property, where snow removal is undertaken after major snow events. Snow removal is typically completed between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. and on weekends to reduce safety risks, as student activity is generally lower during these periods.

To prepare for the 2025-2026 winter season, SBLZs were mapped in advance, with these areas prioritized for snow removal once operations commenced. As part of surge capacity following the January 2026 major snow events, Transportation Services was

supported by other City divisions to accelerate snow removal at SBLZs to improve completion times.

While SBLZs are prioritized, adjacent areas are also frequently used for student drop-off and pick-up. Feedback from school boards, members of the public, and Members of Council, expressed the view that priority snow removal should be undertaken more broadly around schools, not limited to SBLZs. Although these areas receive snow removal as part of broader operations, only SBLZs are treated as priority locations. Expanding priority beyond SBLZs would require additional resources or result in delays in other priority locations.

Transportation Services will engage with school boards ahead of the next winter season to review winter maintenance practices during both routine and major snow events, and to identify opportunities for improvement.

Cycling Facilities

Transportation Services maintains over 650 km of bikeways, including 110 km of cycle tracks, 140 km of bike lanes and 400 km of multi-use trails. Maintaining bikeways, including during major snow events, is important to ensure the safety of road users and to promote active transportation trips.

Snow removal operations for bikeways, particularly cycle tracks located on arterial roads with a single motor vehicle lane in each direction, are complex and time-intensive, due to physical constraints and operational sequencing requirements. In response, and based on experience from the major January events, Transportation Services has now implemented a prioritized approach to snow removal in bikeways, with a focus on completing snow removal in the most essential and highest ridden bikeways first.

Snow removal priorities align with the City’s major on-street city-wide routes identified in the Cycling Network Plan, such as Danforth Avenue, Bloor Street, Sheppard Avenue, Richmond Street, Adelaide Street, Eglinton Avenue and Yonge Street, representing approximately 230 km of major city-wide cycling routes. Following progress on these routes, and in coordination with other snow removal priorities, operations expand to other high-ridership corridors including College Street, River Street, Davenport Road, Gerrard Street, Willowdale Avenue, and Shuter Street.

Operational considerations vary by road type and configuration. On corridors with limited vehicle capacity, including streets with one motor vehicle lane in each direction and cycle tracks, snow removal is generally undertaken during overnight periods to avoid blocking traffic and compromising pedestrian, motor vehicle, and cycling safety.

During the day, crews prioritize major city-wide cycling routes on multi-lane roads, and other high-ridership corridors where work can proceed without significantly affecting traffic flow.

During the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 major snowstorms, Transportation Services piloted new equipment to improve the efficiency of snow removal on streets with cycle tracks and limited snow storage. Based on the results of this pilot, Transportation Services has secured five (5) new units and has initiated procurement of an additional five (5) units for future deployments. These smaller units are equipped with snow blower attachments, enabling direct transfer of snow from bikeways into dump trucks in a single pass. This approach improves operational efficiency compared to previous methods, which required multiple passes and additional handling of snow.

Surge Plan and Readiness

A comprehensive surge plan was developed in December 2025 to identify additional internal staff and equipment from across City divisions that could be redeployed to assist with clean-up operations during major snow events. Planning for the approach included engagement with other City divisions and bargaining units.

Approximately 250 staff across six divisions (Solid Waste Management Services, Environment, Climate & Forestry, Engineering & Construction Services, Parks & Recreation, Toronto Water, and Policy, Planning, Finance and Administration) supported winter operations through field activities and coordination functions. This included snow removal, hand-shovelling, triaging 311 service requests, field investigations, and door knocking to support vehicle relocation in advance of and during snow removal operations, as well as the development of systems and processes to support surge response. In addition, equipment including dump trucks, loaders, backhoes, and other heavy equipment, were provided by other City divisions to support snow removal operations.

The deployment of surge staffing and equipment reduced recovery time following the major snow events and enabled a quicker return to normal operating conditions. Opportunities were identified to strengthen pre-season surge planning, including clearer roles, improved training, and more consistent deployment of resources during peak periods of activity.

Transportation Services will further enhance surge planning and coordination for future major snow events by strengthening pre-season readiness through training, creating a more structured framework to support consistency in deployment and coordination during major snow events, and considering approaches used by other municipalities to support surge capacity planning.

Parking Management

Parked vehicles impact winter maintenance operations by limiting access for equipment and slowing progress of snow removal operations. During Major Snowstorm Condition declaration, parking on roads designated as snow routes is prohibited, with vehicles subject to tagging and towing. To prepare for the 2025-2026 winter season, additional road segments were designated as major snow routes, and updated snow route signage with towing pictograms were added to the signs along major snow routes to provide a stronger visual deterrent to parking illegally.

Transportation Services and Toronto Police Service Parking Enforcement (TPE) supported more efficient snow removal operations through the timely ticketing and towing of illegally parked vehicles. During the period that the Major Snowstorm Condition declarations were in effect, approximately 22,500 vehicles were ticketed, compared to approximately 3,600 during the major snow event in February 2025. While these measures were intended to support operational access and efficiency, the volume of tickets indicates that compliance remained a significant challenge.

While efforts were made to improve coordination between operational crews and TPE, challenges were experienced where operational priorities or target areas changed during snow removal operations, resulting in the need for adjustments to TPE enforcement deployment. Transportation Services will work with TPE to strengthen operational communication to minimize the need for redirecting enforcement resources mid-operations.

Close collaboration with the Toronto Parking Authority (TPA) also supported parking management by disabling payment options on the Green P app along major snow routes and applying signage on pay-and-display machines to reinforce parking restrictions. In some instances, once snow removal activities were completed, parking payment options were reinstated to support a return to normal parking activity. However, as the Major Snowstorm Condition declaration remained in effect, parking continued to be prohibited under the by-law, resulting in vehicles being ticketed. This created confusion and frustration for the public; parking prohibitions remained in place even when they were no longer operationally required.

Despite these measures, opportunities were identified to improve how parking restrictions are applied and communicated during snow removal operations. Under current requirements, parking on designated snow routes remains prohibited for the full duration of a Major Snowstorm Condition declaration, even where snow removal has already been completed on specific segments. This resulted in continued parking restrictions after access was restored, creating challenges and frustration for residents and businesses.

Transportation Services is exploring options to provide greater flexibility in how these restrictions are applied, including potential by-law amendments to better align parking availability with completed snow removal activities. Work is also underway with Communications Division to improve clarity for the public regarding when and where parking is permitted during snow removal operations. Future improvements may also include identifying and communicating available public parking lots for resident use during snow removal operations, particularly in permit parking areas, or staggered snow operations and parking restrictions, which allow for permit parking on one side while snow removal is taking place on the other.

Recovery and Debrief

Recovery activities support the transition from active winter response back to regular operations following major snow events. This includes final cleanup activities, restoration of normal parking and traffic conditions, and the resolution of outstanding service requests.

The 2025-2026 winter season highlighted the importance of a coordinated approach to recovery, particularly in managing the transition from surge operations back to normal service delivery and the demobilization of surge resources. Coordination between Transportation Services and CXD supported the timely closure and resolution of outstanding service requests through increased staffing and enhanced daily coordination between DCC leads and 311 staff to identify emerging issues.

While the transition to recovery was coordinated, opportunities remain to further standardize recovery timelines, roles, and handoffs to ensure consistency following major snow events. Earlier identification of remaining service requests and incomplete work at the end of surge operations would also support a smoother transition back to normal service delivery and faster resolution of outstanding issues.

In previous years, post-season reviews were primarily conducted within Transportation Services to assess operational performance and identify areas for improvement. This year, the review process was expanded significantly to include input from partner City divisions and agency partners to support a broader assessment of winter operations and inform future planning.

In addition to the feedback on communications noted earlier in this report, feedback was also sought from Members of Council through the survey on the 311 intake process, escalations, and operations. Results indicated average to above average performance across all three areas.

These results will inform ongoing refinements to recovery processes, service request management, and operational coordination for future seasons.

Future Winter Maintenance Contracts

The current winter maintenance contracts expire in 2029. Transportation Services has commenced planning for the future contracts to allow sufficient time for executive-level governance, analysis, consultation, and alignment with operational, service delivery, and accountability requirements. This work will be informed by past Auditor General recommendations and the findings of the Forensic Audit of the 2021 Winter Maintenance Procurement.

A governance framework has been established to support this initiative. An Executive Steering Committee has been formed, comprised of the Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Services, General Manager of Transportation Services, and senior leadership from Infrastructure Services, Finance & Treasury Services, Purchasing & Materials Management, Legal Services, Fleet Services, together with a Fairness Monitor, to provide oversight and strategic direction.

Planning for the future contracts reflects themes identified through the forensic and internal audits of the current contracts and procurement, which highlighted opportunities to strengthen procurement governance and documentation, clarify roles and accountabilities, and enhance contract oversight and performance monitoring. These considerations are being integrated alongside operational lessons learned, including the need for strengthened readiness for major snow events.

The procurement approach will incorporate refinements to support a clear and transparent process. Adequate time will be provided to vendors to review and submit bids, and to ask questions and receive timely responses. Evaluation methodologies will align with industry standards, with a Fairness Monitor engaged throughout the process.

Transportation Services has also engaged a post-secondary institution to explore AI technologies and will undertake an industry scan to identify emerging tools, practices, and opportunities to support future winter maintenance service delivery and contract development.

In addition, Transportation Services has established a dedicated management role focused exclusively on winter maintenance procurement and contract development. This role provides dedicated, full-time leadership for procurement planning, audit follow-up, and development of the future winter maintenance contracts.

Responding to Additional Council or Committee Requests

As part of the winter maintenance review, additional requests and related matters were identified for further consideration. This section provides responses to those items not already discussed earlier in the report.

Improved Winter Access to Public Laneways

There are 2,744 public laneways in the City of Toronto, representing approximately 334 kilometres of laneways maintained by the City. The Council-approved winter maintenance service level for public laneways is salting only, within 24 hours after the end of snowfall, to manage icy conditions; snow plowing is not provided. This service is delivered by in-house staff. This approach reflects the operational challenges associated with laneways and is consistent with municipal practice elsewhere in Ontario, where municipalities do not generally provide snow plowing services for public laneways.

Public laneways are often too narrow and typically lack sufficient on-site snow storage capacity, creating the potential for snow to be pushed against garages and fences, resulting in damage or obstructed access. In addition, the limited turning radii common to many laneways leave little room to manoeuvre, making it difficult for snowplows to operate safely and increasing the risk of property damage.

Transportation Services undertook a high-level planning analysis to examine the implications of increasing the level of service provided to public laneways. Due to the physical constraints associated with laneways, enhancing winter access would generally require snow removal, with snow cleared from the laneway to the roadway and hauled to a snow storage facility.

Based on current snow removal costs and the scale of the City's laneway network, any expansion beyond the existing salting service would require significant additional operating resources and substantial budget impacts, estimated at approximately $8.5 million annually, with completion expected to take up to seven days following snowfall events. This estimate is preliminary, assumes service after 10 cm of snowfall accumulation, which would typically be required approximately 8 to 10 times during an average winter season, and does not include potential costs related to any additional specialized equipment that may be required.

Based on these considerations, Transportation Services is not recommending changes to current winter maintenance service levels for public laneways at this time.

Enhanced Snow Clearing Support for Seniors and Residents with Disabilities During Major Snow Events

At the direction of City Council, Transportation Services is undertaking a review of options to enhance snow clearing support during major snow events for seniors and persons with disabilities. The review is examining approaches used in other municipalities, including different service delivery models (e.g., City-led, hybrid, and

financial assistance approaches), to assess feasibility, operational requirements, and scalability.

As part of the initial review, Transportation Services examined the City of Brampton's Senior Snow Removal Financial Assistance Program, which provides between $300 and $400 annually per household for snow clearing on both public and private property. The City of Brampton has approximately 82,000 senior citizens, of which 5% (3,500 seniors) have signed up for their program.

Based on 2021 Census data, approximately 338,500 households in Toronto include at least one resident aged 65 years or older. Applying a similar participation rate in Brampton to the Toronto context suggests potential enrolment of approximately 17,000 households, with an estimated annual cost of between $5 and $7 million. These estimates are preliminary and subject to further analysis.

In parallel, Transportation Services consulted with Social Development to better understand the City's existing snow clearing supports delivered through the Community Services Partnership Grant program. This program provides funding to non-profit organizations that deliver snow shovelling services through the brokerage and legacy subsidy models. In 2024, approximately $440,000 in funding supported eight agencies serving approximately 1,500 seniors city-wide.

This review identified that existing programs are constrained by funding and operational capacity, including staffing capacity, worker recruitment, and retention. Demand currently exceeds available service capacity. While incremental funding could expand service levels, meeting broader city-wide demands would require significantly increased and sustained investment.

Findings from these models will inform further analysis and development of options for Council's consideration.

Responsibility for Clearing Municipal Sidewalks Abutting Private Property and the Status of PlowTO

A report was considered by the Infrastructure and Environment Committee regarding the responsibility for clearing municipal sidewalks abutting private property and the status of PlowTO. The report was referred to staff for inclusion in this staff report. A summary is provided below, with the full report included as Attachment 5.

Responsibility for Clearing Municipal Sidewalks

City of Toronto by-laws state that private property owners are responsible for clearing snow and ice from municipal sidewalks abutting their property where the City has not

assumed responsibility. Under current service levels, the City begins sidewalk clearing once snow accumulation reaches 2 cm.

Shifting responsibility for sidewalk clearing to selected private property owners presents operational challenges, particularly in areas with mixed property types. This can result in inconsistent service levels along the same street, accessibility barriers, and increased enforcement requirements. Differences in timing between City operations and private compliance requirements may also create uncertainty following snowfall events, as City crews typically complete a full sidewalk clearing cycle within approximately 12 hours once accumulation reaches 2 cm.

Alternative approaches to assigning responsibility, including ownership- and zoning- or land-use-based models, were also assessed. These approaches present significant administrative and operational challenges, including inconsistent application across similar properties, definitional complexity, enforcement challenges, and misalignment between zoning designations and actual land use.

As part of the City's winter communications strategy for the 2025-2026 winter season, residents and businesses were encouraged to assist with sidewalk clearing to support safe access for pedestrians, transit users, and people with mobility challenges, and this messaging will continue in future seasons.

PlowTO

PlowTO is the public-facing winter operations map that shows when areas of the city were most recently serviced. The tool uses vehicle location data to provide near real-time information on winter maintenance activity across road, sidewalk, and cycling infrastructure. The map provides a snapshot of recent activity but does not display all winter maintenance operations. Feedback following the February 2025 major snow event identified opportunities to improve data accuracy, particularly related to the distinction between salting and plowing activities by in-house sidewalk plows.

For the 2025-2026 winter season, updates were implemented to improve reporting accuracy, including extending the PlowTO display period from 12 hours to 24 hours, allowing the public to view a broader and more representative period of recent winter operations. Additional updates included enhancements to in-house sidewalk plow location data to better distinguish salting and plowing activities.

Staff continue to explore opportunities to enhance the platform to improve clarity and completeness of public-facing winter service information. This includes the planned implementation of an address lookup function that will allow residents to enter their address and view expected completion timelines for winter services on their street.

Improvements are also planned for sidewalk mapping using satellite imagery to more accurately reflect sidewalk infrastructure and completed operations.

Amendment to Blanket Contracts C78, C87, C88 and C89 with Rafat General Contractor Inc. for the Non-Exclusive Supply of All Labour, Equipment and Materials Necessary Dump Trucks with Operators for Trucking Services

On December 29, 2025, through a competitive procurement process of a Request for Quotation Doc5344643057, the Chief Procurement Officer awarded Rafat General Contractor Inc. four (4) trucking services contracts to provide city-wide support for snow removal and summer haulage operations. The contract values were structured based on historical snowfall and operational requirements observed between 2019 and 2025.

The initial contract term runs from December 29, 2025, to December 31, 2026, with an option in favour of the City to extend the agreement on the same terms and conditions for an additional term of three (3) separate one (1) year terms. At the time of the bid closing, two (2) bids were received, with the second supplier significantly higher than the successful supplier.

The initial awarded values of the four (4) Blanket Contracts are summarized in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Total Trucking Services Four (4) Blanket Contract Original Values

Existing	Initial Term (2026)	Option Year 1 (2027)	Option Year 2 (2028)	Option Year 3 (2029)	Total
26TR-OM-610-TEY - BC #C78 (Toronto East York, Wards 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19)	$1,663,500	$1,712,295	$1,762,554	$1,814,320	$6,952,670
26TR-OM-620-EY-TS - BC #C87 (Etobicoke York, Wards 1, 2, 3, 5, 7)	$1,659,750	$1,708,433	$1,758,575	$1,810,223	$6,936,981
26TR-OM-630-NY-TS - BC #C88 (North York, Wards 6, 8, 15, 16, 17, 18)	$1,659,750	$1,708,433	$1,758,575	$1,810,223	$6,936,981
26TR-OM-640-SC-TS (Scarborough	$1,283,500	$1,320,895	$1,359,412	$1,399,084	$5,362,891

District, Wards 20-25)					
Total Value (Net of all Taxes and Charges)	$6,266,500	$6,450,056	$6,639,116	$6,833,850	$26,189,523
Total Value (Net of HST recoveries)	$6,376,790	$6,563,576	$6,755,965	$6,954,126	$26,650,458

The volume and rapid accumulation of snow during the January 2026 snow events created hazardous conditions and impacted mobility across the road network. In response, enhanced snow removal operations were required to maintain safe access on City streets, including emergency routes, transit corridors, bridge decks, and hospital access points.

These operations included a substantial increase in trucking capacity to support the removal and transportation of snow to the City's five (5) snow storage facilities. Approximately 538,000 tonnes of snow were removed in response to the January 2026 events, compared to 253,000 tonnes during the major snow events of February 2025, reflecting the scale of the operational response required.

Under the terms of the contracts, the trucking supplier is required to provide 120 trucks per district, or a total of 480 trucks city-wide. During the January 2026 snow events, the trucking supplier provided approximately 700 trucks to support snow removal operations. This level of service was achieved through increased utilization of available trucking resources within the existing contractual framework in response to the severity of the storms. These additional resources were provided without any request for rate increases and contributed significantly to accelerating snow removal efforts.

The scale and intensity of these events exceeded the original contract value projections, which were based on historical data trends. This reflects a broader pattern of increasingly frequent and severe Major Snow Events in recent years. As a result, amendments to all four (4) Blanket Contracts are required to increase their total value and ensure that contracts are available to support future snow removal haulage operations at service levels consistent with those required during major snow events that have been experienced in recent years as well as summer haulage.

The revised award values of the four (4) Blanket Contracts inclusive of the amendment requested are summarized in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Revised Total Trucking Services Four (4) Blanket Contract Values (Including Amendment)

Revised Total Contract Values (Including Amendment)	**Initial Term (2026)**	**Option Year 1 (2027)**	**Option Year 2 (2028)**	**Option Year 3 (2029)**	**Total**
26TR-OM-610-TEY - BC #C78 (Toronto East York, Wards 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19)	$6,952,670	$6,111,378	$6,111,378	$6,111,378	$25,286,804
26TR-OM-620-EY-TS - BC #C87 (Etobicoke York, Wards 1, 2, 3, 5, 7)	$6,936,981	$2,401,728	$2,401,728	$2,401,728	$14,142,165
26TR-OM-630-NY-TS - BC #C88 (North York, Wards 6, 8, 15, 16, 17, 18)	$6,936,981	$6,460,875	$6,460,875	$6,460,876	$26,319,607
26TR-OM-640-SC-TS (Scarborough District, Wards 20-25)	$5,362,891	$2,964,500	$2,964,500	$2,964,501	$14,256,392
Total Value (Net of all Taxes and Charges)	$26,189,523	$17,938,481	$17,938,481	$17,938,483	$80,004,968
Total Value (Net of HST recoveries)	$26,650,458	$18,254,199	$18,254,199	$18,254,200	$81,413,056

Next Steps

The findings and opportunities identified in this report will inform the continued refinement of winter operations. Transportation Services will continue to leverage post-season reviews, operational data, and partner feedback to support continuous improvement and strengthen readiness for future winter events.

In parallel, Transportation Services will continue early planning for the renewal of winter maintenance contracts. Updates on contract development milestones and future winter maintenance planning will be provided through subsequent reports, as appropriate.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Key Improvements
Attachment 2: Key 2025-2026 Winter Weather and Activation Summary
Attachment 3: 2025-2026 Winter Service Requests
Attachment 4: Major Snow Event Response Communications Performance Summary
Attachment 5: Response to Council Directions on Sidewalk Clearing Requirements and the Status of Modernizing PlowTO

Attachment 1 – Key Improvements

Improvement Area	Actions Undertaken	Outcome / Observations and Next Steps
311 Service Request Management	• Discontinued 311 winter service request hold period • Regular daily updates to Members of Council (status, trends, dashboards)	• Significant increase in service requests, but improved visibility of hotspots through heat mapping • Faster identification of recurring issues **Next steps:** Continue refinement of intake processes with CXD and further enhance the use of 311 data to inform operational response.
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	• Engaged a post-secondary institution to explore potential AI applications for winter maintenance operations	• Work remains in early stages, with further analysis required to determine feasibility and implementation options **Next steps:** Continue exploring AI applications that could support winter maintenance operations.
Business Improvement Areas	• Responded to escalations from BIAs for snow removal • Met with Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA) to discuss opportunities to prioritize snow removal in BIA areas	• Sequencing of snow removal, and timing and duration of parking restrictions, impacted customer access and business activity **Next steps:** Continue engagement with TABIA to review snow removal sequencing and parking management to identify opportunities to lessen prolonged impacts to BIAs.

Improvement Area	Actions Undertaken	Outcome / Observations and Next Steps
Communications	• Coordinated cross-divisional messaging • Expanded use of Toronto.ca/winter as a centralized source of public information • Increased digital and media communications and real-time operational updates • Provided regular operational updates to Councillors, including dashboards and service summaries	• 4.7M+ impressions across 170 posts • Improved access to information for Members of Council • Communications to Councillors were rated highly; however, room for improvement was identified for public-facing communications • Clearer public messaging regarding snow removal operations (e.g., which streets/infrastructure types are completed first) is needed to manage expectations **Next steps:** Review and refine the Winter Communications Strategy, including better information on snow removal operations, expected service levels, and associated parking restrictions.
Councillor Escalations	• Through the DCC, provided an additional escalation pathway for Councillor's offices to complement existing 311 processes	• Improved visibility of location-specific issues through direct input from Councillor's offices • Feedback suggests escalation processes did not consistently meet Councillor expectations • **Next steps**: Transportation Services will consult with Members of Council to gather feedback on their experience escalating issues to inform the further refinement and development of the DCC model.
District Communication Centres (DCC)	• Established four District Communications Centres (one per district) • Activated during moderate and major snow events	• More consistent service across districts • Improved coordination of field dispatch • As DCC's were new, in-season refinement was required to ensure consistency across districts **Next steps:** Further refine DCC operations and procedures and deliver staff training in advance of the next winter season.

Improvement Area	Actions Undertaken	Outcome / Observations and Next Steps
Fleet and Equipment Readiness	• Increased in-house and contracted fleet capacity • Introduced pilot sidewalk clearing equipment • Implemented increased preventative maintenance, pre-season dry runs, and operational testing • Deployed mobile technicians for on-road repairs and troubleshooting; extended garage operating hours	• Improved equipment reliability and reduced downtime due to malfunction • Better real-time visibility of fleet performance • Pilot provided insights into equipment suitability for narrow sidewalks and constrained areas, which will inform future procurement of additional equipment • Continued investment in additional equipment needed to strengthen operational capacity **Next steps:** Transportation Services will work with Fleet Services to explore options to accelerate ongoing fleet renewal and replacement of aging equipment.
Future Winter Maintenance Contracts	• Initiated early planned for new contracts • Established Executive Steering Committee with senior leadership across the organization • Established a dedicated management role focused on winter maintenance contract development and procurement	• Audit findings will inform improvements to procurement structure • Executive Steering Committee will provide guidance, strategic direction, and independent oversight through a Fairness Monitor • The response to major snow events will be considered as part of contract design, oversight, and performance monitoring **Next steps:** Continue contract planning, including procurement approach, transparency, and alignment with service requirements, and integrate lessons learned to strengthen accountability, performance monitoring, and readiness for major snow events.

Improvement Area	Actions Undertaken	Outcome / Observations and Next Steps
Major Snow Event Response Plan (MSERP)	• Refined MSERP framework in advance of the 2025-2026 winter season, including clearer activation criteria and response structure • Activated MSERP during January 2026 major snow events • Utilized the Divisional Operations Centre and Toronto Emergency Operations Centre during major snow events • Deployed surge staffing and equipment from across City divisions	• Coordinated city-wide response across multiple divisions and agencies with clear roles and responsibilities • Faster scaling of operations • Improved deployment of staff, equipment, and contractors • Reduced recovery time **Next steps:** Findings from the post-season reviews will inform refinements to the MSERP in advance of the next winter season.
Monitoring and Inspection Enhancements	• Expanded inspection coverage (longer road segments) • Streamlined documentation and sign-off processes	• Stronger oversight of service delivery • More consistent verification of work **Next steps:** Exploring the use of technology to provide increased contractor oversight of performance including clearing transit stops and ramps at intersections.
Parking Management	• Expanded designation of major snow routes and improved signage • Increased coordination with Toronto Police Service Parking Enforcement during major snow events • Worked with TPA to disable payment options on the Green P app, as well as notices on pay-and-display machines, while parking restrictions were in effect	• Reduced confusion regarding whether vehicles could park in TPA parking spaces during major winter events. • Public frustration when parking restrictions were still in effect when snow removal operations were not underway, or had been completed • Changes to snow removal locations during operations required adjustment to parking enforcement deployment mid-operation. **Next steps:** Transportation Services is exploring options to provide greater flexibility in how and when parking restrictions are applied during major snowstorm condition declarations and will continue to work with Toronto Police Service Parking Enforcement to further improve the coordination of parking enforcement during winter events.

Improvement Area	Actions Undertaken	Outcome / Observations and Next Steps
Permit Parking Areas	• Door-to-door in advance of snow removal for vehicle relocation	• Lack of alternate parking locations to relocate vehicles to facilitate snow removal • Difficulty contacting permit holders within a sufficient time period **Next steps:** Continue working with the TPA to identify public parking lots, where available, for residents to park during snow removal operations. In addition, exploring additional opportunities to notify permit holders of upcoming snow removal operations.
PlowTO	• Extended display period from 12 hours to 24 hours to provide a broader view of recent operations • Enhanced in-house sidewalk plow data to improve accuracy of activity reporting, and distinguishing between salting and plowing activities	• Increased ability for residents to view recent service activity across roads, sidewalks, and cycling infrastructure • Clarity and completeness of service information was not always consistent during the season, particularly during major snow events • Strong desire to provide forward-looking information on expected service timing rather than only reporting completed work **Next steps:** Continue to explore enhancements to PlowTO through the addition of features that provide expected service timelines, as well as improvements to sidewalk mapping.
Snow Removal	• Initiated proactive snow removal (in advance of city-wide snow removal) along streetcar routes, bridges, and hospital areas • Supplemented existing resources through an emergency snow removal contract • Enhanced coordination with Parking Enforcement and Toronto Parking Authority during major snow events • Utilized surge staffing resources to assist with removal operations	• More quickly reduced snow accumulation and snowbank impact on sightlines and access • Emergency contractor support enabled faster completion of snow removal operations • Issues remained (albeit at a lesser extent) with obstructed streetcar routes • Snow removal did not always meet public and Councillor expectations **Next steps:** Establish a pre-qualified contractor roster that can be used during major snow events.

Improvement Area	Actions Undertaken	Outcome / Observations and Next Steps
Supporting Public Transit	• Enhanced winter service at 10 priority hill locations • Increased pre-treatment (brining, salting, plowing) • Targeted monitoring during major snow events • Surge resources utilized to assist with snow clearing at TTC stops • Increased coordination with TTC	• Fewer transit disruptions • Improved reliability at high-risk locations • Positive feedback from TTC regarding effectiveness of changes; however, there were still challenges with obstructed streetcars **Next steps:** To support real-time monitoring, TTC will be provided with access to live feeds from new traffic cameras at the 10 priority hill locations in advance of the next winter season. Transportation Services will also work with Toronto Police Service Parking Enforcement and the TTC to improve coordination to address parked vehicle obstructions impacting streetcar operations during winter events.
Surge Staffing Plan	• Increased capacity through interdivisional collaboration surge staffing plan involving • Worked closely with Local 416 and Local 79	• Approximately 250 additional staff from across six City divisions were redeployed to support winter operations during major snow events • Improved capacity supporting faster recovery following major snow events • Greater ability to sustain extended operational hours • Great collaboration with local unions to support surge staffing • Despite increased surge capacity, there is a need for additional training and more advanced planning for surge staff deployment **Next steps:** Develop and implement targeted training for surge staffing levels to ensure sufficient capacity during major snow events.

Attachment 2: 2025-2026 Winter Weather and Activation Summary

This table summarizes winter weather conditions and corresponding winter maintenance activations for the 2025-2026 winter season, compared with the previous season.

Weather Conditions		
	2024-2025	**2025-2026**
Total Number of Snow Events	28	42
Total Seasonal Snowfall	147 cm	191 cm
Total Number of Major Snow Events	1	2
Total Duration of Major Snow Event and Significant Weather Event Declarations	21 days	20 days
Total Snowfall (Major Snow Events)	53 cm	90 cm
Number of Winter Activations		
Activation Type	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**
Anti-icing	11	11
Salting – Arterial/Collector Roads	39	55
Salting – Local Roads	29	32
Plowing – Arterial/Collector Roads	8	12
Plowing – Local Roads	7	15
Salting / Plowing – Sidewalks	20	44
Salting / Plowing – Bike Lanes	31	52
TOTAL	145	221

Attachment 3: 2025-2026 Winter Service Requests

Table 1: Winter Service Request Performance Summary
This table summarizes winter service request volumes received by Transportation Services and key performance indicators for the 2025-2026 winter season compared with the previous season. Higher request volumes in 2025-2026 are partially attributable to the removal of the 311 hold period. Despite a more severe winter season and higher service request volumes, requests were resolved faster than the previous year.

Winter Service Request Performance Summary		
	2024-2025	**2025-2026**
Total Service Requests	28,888	49,534
Service Requests Closed within Service Standard	48%	79%

Table 2: Top Five Winter Service Request Types
This table represents the top five winter service request types related to winter maintenance operations received by Transportation Services for the 2025-2026 winter season.

Service Requests (Top Five)		
Type of Service Requests	**2024-2025**	**2025-2026**
Sidewalk Snow Clearing	11,611	14,403
Road Plowing Required	5,954	12,947
Driveway Blocked by Windrow	4,049	8,713
Sidewalk Icy, Needs Sand/Salt	1,938	3,020
Road Sanding/Salting Required	1,020	2,497

Attachment 4: Major Snow Event Response Communications Performance Summary

Metric	January 15, 2026 Major Snow Event	January 25, 2026 Major Snow Event
Duration	5 days	17 days
News releases (City + Toronto Police Services)	3 total	4 total
Media bulletins	5	17
Earned media impressions	155 million	2 billion
Media sentiment — neutral/positive	97.4%	84.7%
Social posts published	30	140
Social Platforms active	5	7
Social impressions	706,733	4,021,789
Social shares	500+	2,800+
Social engagement rate *(avg: 3.3%)*	4.5%	3.2%
Paid advertising impressions	~1.16M	~6.4M+
Paid link clicks	1,200	9,237
Web page views	7,731	40,270
Unique web users	5,453	26,167
Councillor updates issued	5	16