

SNOW & ICE CONTROL

Public Engagement What We Heard July 2020



The primary goal of the City's Snow & Ice Control Program is to ensure safe passage on city roadways. There are various factors that influence the effectiveness of snow and ice control practices, most importantly are the changing weather patterns. Every year The City of Red Deer conducts an annual review of the program to measure success and identify opportunities for improvements.

In 2019, The City engaged with residents, the driving industry and Public Works staff both in-person and online to gather their input on the program, what is working and what could use improvement.

The key objectives of the engagement process were to work with the public to:

- 1) Understand the successes and challenges of the Snow & Ice Control Program
- 2) Identify the impacts of current changes to the program
- 3) Discover areas and ideas for improvements, enhancements or changes.

This report highlights the key findings and results from this public engagement process.

The engagement process was launched February 12, 2020 and was completed on April 9, 2020. Over 57 days, 701 people participated in-person and online. This is the largest number of residents we have been able to engage with regarding snow and ice control in Red Deer, and we are grateful to residents for their participation.

SNOW WORKSHOPS:

These two-hour long workshops brought the public together in-person to understand and discuss the various experiences, challenges and ideas for the Snow & Control Program. Originally, six workshops were scheduled. Unfortunately, only two open, public workshops were completed at Northside Community Center and Festival Hall, before all public gatherings were cancelled according to Alberta public health orders due to COVID-19.

ONLINE SNOW ENGAGEMENT:

This allowed the public to contribute their ideas whenever and wherever it was most convenient for them. The platform incorporated an ideas wall where all comments were publicly visible, a survey and information about the program. Over 500 residents participated with this online platform.

POP UP ENGAGEMENT:

City staff went to various public locations throughout the city and in conjunction with other events to promote awareness about the engagement opportunities, and gather public input on the spot. Nine pop-ups were held at the Downtown Safeway, GH Dawe Community Centre, minor hockey games and practices at arenas across the city, Collicutt Centre, Red Deer Museum and Art Gallery, onboard Red Deer Transit and at Bo's Bar & Stage.

RESULTS:

We listened, heard, and confirmed our understanding of what the community values for snow and ice removal. We heard we are doing well on Purple, Red, Blue, and Green Routes, and that pressure points remain around windrows, on street parking, and signs. Feedback also identified that opposing views are common, as one method of snow plowing was suitable to some, while another method was more favorable to others.



CITY-WIDE SATISFACTION:

When asked how satisfied they are with the program in non-residential areas throughout the city, 52 per cent of participants were satisfied or very satisfied with it. The reasons for this level of satisfaction included timely response and having main routes cleared and well maintained. Participants also mentioned that The City's Notify Red Deer program and road signs were very helpful and convenient to know when plowing would be taking place.

**77%
SATISFIED**

(City-Wide Satisfaction)

RESIDENTIAL AREA SATISFACTION:

When asked how satisfied they are with the program in residential areas, 29 per cent of participants were ok, satisfied or very satisfied. The reasons included issues with the timing of residential plowing, feeling that it happened too early, too late or that it wasn't needed, and when done that it left the roads in worse conditions.

**29%
SATISFIED**

(Residential Area Satisfaction)

STICKING POINTS:

Feedback confirmed there is no single snow removal program or solution that works for all residents and road types.

Some of the sticking points for residential clearing as identified by residents include:

- Windrows
- Timing for residential plowing
- On-street parking
- On-street signage

We also learned that we need to better inform the public of why we do what we do, specifically, program scope, scale, time to complete, costs, historical data, and the need to action preventative maintenance works to ensure mobility is maintained under rapidly changing weather conditions.

The City understands that there are many preferences when it comes to Grey Route plowing and we will continue to adjust the program where we can in order to address resident concerns; however, we are unable to address all of the concerns we heard within our current resources. Administration will bring information collected from residents forward to Council and through further discussions, Council may consider directing administration to modify or adjust service level to address the identified "sticking points".

Options and recommendations for changes to the program, which consider input received from residents, will be delivered to Council in summer 2020 for their review and final approval. Public Works will continue to look for operational efficiencies, timely and effective traction control measures, fine-tuning the balance between mobility and on-street parking especially on Grey Routes, and developing greater customer satisfaction while maintaining the level of service framework.

