



Winter Maintenance Annual Report (2025 / 2026)

Winter Service Overview

The City of Calgary (The City) is committed to the provision of a safe, customer focused, efficient and sustainable transportation system that supports mobility choices. The Mobility Business Unit (Mobility) partners with Calgary Parks & Open Spaces, Calgary Transit, Fleet Services and the Emergency Management & Community Safety Business Units to deliver the winter operations services Calgarians receive and is committed to a well-maintained road, transit, sidewalk and pathway system in winter for all travel modes. City of Calgary staff and contractors support the delivery of safe winter driving, cycling and walking conditions through The City's Winter Maintenance Program.

Spotlight on the 2025 / 2026 Winter Maintenance Program

Near Average Snowfall / More Snow Events

- The total amount of snowfall for the 2025/2026 winter season was 149 cm, substantially more than the prior winter season (96 cm) but comparable to average accumulations for the prior 4 winter seasons (142 cm). There were 31 total snow events compared to 29 in the prior winter season. There were multiple periods of -15C or colder average temperatures in December, January and February (20 days total).
- There were 4 snow events with accumulations above 10 cm and one event on March 25, 2026 with approximately 24 cm received over the course of several days.

High Performance Achieved

- Performance targets were achieved by completing Priority 1 routes within 18 hours (100% of events) and Priority 2 routes within 36 hours (100% of events). No snow route parking bans were activated during the winter season. The last snow route parking ban was in February 2019.
- From October 2025 to April 2026, Mobility received 7,069 SNIC winter service requests (SRs).
- Contracted service providers responsible for clearing pedestrian infrastructure such as bridges, traffic islands and priority bus stops achieved high levels of performance (92% average completion within service timeframes). Pathway snow clearing crews achieved comparable levels of service completion achieving 90% average completion across 131 pathway/sidewalk routes.

Budget

- 2025/2026 winter maintenance expenditures totalled \$52.1 million which was below budget. The Winter Maintenance Reserve total balance remained stable at \$7.8 million due to savings contributions from favourable budgets. An \$8.5M reserve contribution was completed in Q4 2025.
- Expenditures in early 2026 were above budget due to a higher severity winter. The snowfall from Jan-Apr was 110 cm which exceeded entire 2024/25 winter season. A total of \$32.7 million was spent with \$25.5 million budget remaining in 2026.

Table of Contents

Winter Service Overview	1
Introduction.....	3
Background.....	3
Priority Day Plan	3
3-1-1 Service Requests.....	4
Winter Maintenance Materials.....	4
Snow Storage Sites.....	5
Budget Review 2025/2026.....	6
Policy Metrics.....	8
2025/2026 Snow Route Parking Bans.....	9
Personnel, Equipment and Infrastructure	9

Introduction

The City's Winter Maintenance Program Plan (Program Plan) provides detailed plans and strategies to meet the expectations set out in Council's Winter Maintenance Policy. The Winter Maintenance Policy and the Program Plan support the response to changing weather patterns, funding levels, innovation, best practices and lessons learned. The Policy and Program Plan are established to address normal winter weather conditions, with strategies to address extreme winter conditions and emergencies. Trained personnel and the required resources are deployed to provide safe travel conditions on city infrastructure during the winter season.

Background

The goal of the Winter Maintenance Policy is to provide reasonable winter driving conditions for vehicles/cycles that are properly equipped for winter driving and are operated in a manner consistent with good winter driving habits. Council and Administration remain committed to the delivery of winter services within a policy framework that is efficient, inclusive and fiscally responsible. Extreme winter conditions and snow emergencies are addressed in operational plans as they are likely to occur. The City is aware that response to extreme winter weather conditions requires a systematic approach with internal awareness and collective commitment to a safe and well-maintained road system for all travel modes. Historically, the Winter Maintenance program was referred to as the Snow and Ice Control (SNIC program) and a number of existing documents still reference this naming convention.

Average snow clearing response times were formally established within the Council approved Winter Maintenance Policy (CP2024-06) in 2024 to 18 hours for Priority 1 routes and 36 hours for Priority 2 routes. These service enhancements contributed to improved reliability for transit service and the active mobility network in addition to aligning with desired citizen service expectations.

Priority Snow Plan

The City's winter response during the 2025/26 winter season was delivered through the Priority Snow Plan. This plan allows us to quickly address the impact of any winter event on the mobility of Calgarians and communicate the level of service effectively. The plan is a systematic response that addresses high volume and high-risk transportation assets first and then moves to lower volume and lower risk assets. If another snow event occurs prior to completing the plan, our response resets back to day one.

Over the 2025/26 SNIC season, Calgary received 149 cm of snow. Snow Event #1 started on October 11, 2025 with 1 cm of snowfall. The Snow Plan was activated 31 times in 2025/26 which was 2 more events compared to the previous winter and 9 more than 2023/24. Table 1 shows snowfall comparison for the last five winter seasons.

Winter Season Snowfall (cm)					
Month	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
September	0	0	0	0	0
October	4.2	24.2	16.0	0.6	1.0
November	3.8	29.4	5.2	40.0	21.7
December	25.5	26.1	21.0	6.0	15.4
January	3.7	22.4	28.1	5.2	7.9
February	32.5	32.1	21.2	15.0	16.6
March	11.0	18.1	68.4	17.8	47.8
April	43.1	3.7	32.3	11.2	37.2
May	1	0	0	0	1.0
Total	125	156	192	96	149
Declared Snow Events	32	28	22	29	31

Table 1: Winter Season comparison 2021 - 2026

3-1-1 Service Requests

During the 2025/26 winter season, Mobility received 7,069 service requests (SRs). Table 2 shows the historical data from the past five seasons.

Historical 3-1-1 Data					
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Total SNIC SRs	3,750	11,300	6,020	6,596	7,069

Table 2: Winter Service Requests received by Mobility from 2021 - 2026

Winter Maintenance Materials

The City uses four main Winter Maintenance materials: road salt (sodium chloride), sanding chips, calcium chloride brine and sodium chloride brine.

Sanding chips are six-millimetre rock particles which contain up to three per cent salt. The liquid brines help the material stick to the road surface and are also used as an anti-icing agent applied directly to the road surface.

As anti-icing agents, sodium chloride brine and calcium chloride brine perform over different temperature ranges. The sodium chloride brine is used during warmer winter temperatures whereas calcium chloride brine is used during colder winter temperatures.

Studies have shown that without pre-wetting, only 46 per cent of the material applied to a roadway will stay in the middle third of the roadway. However, if the material is pre-wet, 78 per cent will stay in the middle third of the roadway. This practice increases the efficiency of the sanders, reduces costs and helps minimize our impact on the environment.

A five-season comparison of Winter Maintenance material consumption is shown in Table 3. Road salt usage during the 2025/26 SNIC season was 58,779 tonnes, which was a 47% increase due to the substantially higher snow accumulation over the course of the season. Sanding chip consumption during the 2025/26 SNIC season was 42,680 tonnes, which was comparable to the prior winter season.

Winter Maintenance Material Consumption					
Winter Season	Road Salt/NaCl (tonnes)	Sanding Chips (tonnes)	Calcium/Sodium Chloride Brine (litres)	Snow Days	Snowfall (cm)
2021/22	51,229	39,544	58,030	52	125
2022/23	59,884	58,004	74,249	47	156
2023/24	67,266	39,479	59,720	47	192
2024/25	39,950	42,026	18,940	39	96
2025/26	58,779	42,680	53,393	41	149
Average	55,422	44,347	52,866	45	148

Table 3: 2021-2026 Winter Maintenance materials consumption, snow days and total snowfall

The City has continued to explore several trials to evaluate new materials that could potentially decrease long-term usage of road salt materials and these trials will continue. The City continues to use Beet 55 as an anti-icing and de-icing agent on pedestrian cycling infrastructure for Priority 1 and 2 routes. Beet 55 is a trademarked liquid organic accelerator alternative to other anti-icing and de-icing products. When this is blended with salt brine at 65% salt brine and 35% Beet 55, the freezing point will be lower than by using pure salt brine but higher than by using calcium chloride at 30% concentration.

Snow Storage Sites

The City has three snow storage sites to manage snow removed from roadways. Planning for future sites is underway to ensure the availability of snow storage locations in Calgary. These sites are found in Table 4 below:

Site	Address	Capacity (cubic metres)
Highfield	1320-50 Ave. S.E.	~600,000
Spring Gardens	1025-32 Ave. N.E.	494,100
Pumphouse	2140 Pumphouse Ave. S.W.	55,805

Table 4: Snow Storage sites

As an alternative to removing and storing snow, The City's operational teams reviewed the effectiveness of mechanical snow melter equipment. However, it was determined that the resulting water from the melting process would not meet environmental guidelines for discharging into the storm water system.

Budget Review 2025/2026

The graph in Figure 1 shows the Winter Maintenance budget on a seasonal basis and actual expenditures compared to snowfall and snow days for the past five seasons. For the 2025 fiscal year, Winter Operations spend was \$56.4M (1% under budget including reserve contribution).

Budget expenditures for the 2025/2026 winter season totalled \$60.6 million including a substantial contribution to the Winter Maintenance Reserve. Expenditures by category were as follows: Equipment (27%), Staffing (35%), Materials (27%) and Contractors (10%). When crews are not working on snow clearing, they work on road repairs, debris pickup, winter sweeping, depot maintenance pothole repairs and service requests.

The Winter Maintenance Reserve total was approximately \$7.8 million as of September 2026.

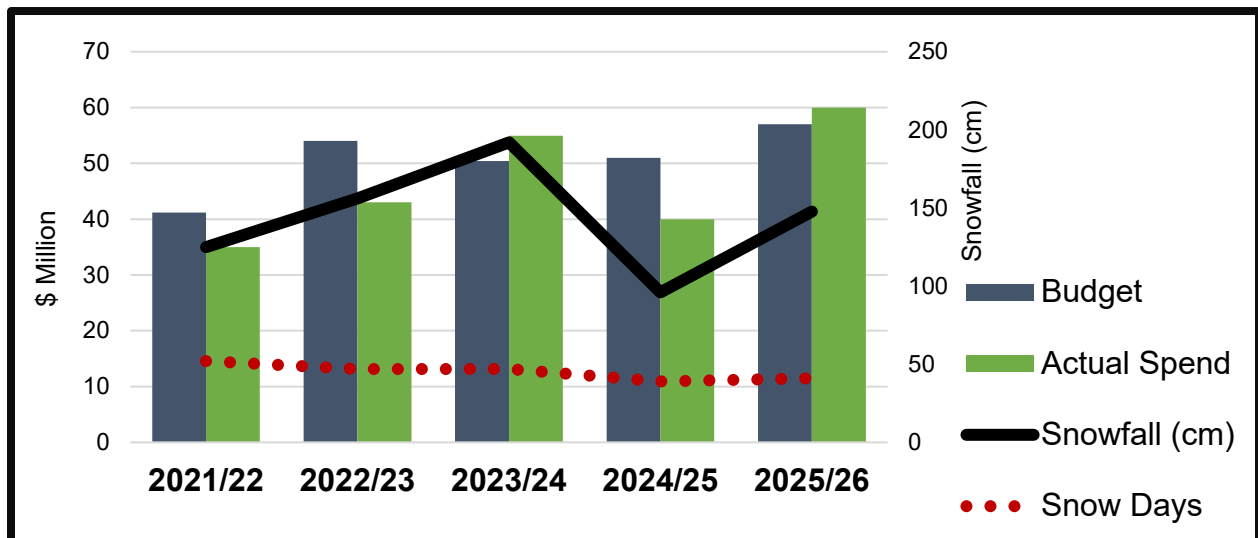


Figure 1: Winter Operations expenditures and snow days 2021-2026. Budgets reflect winter season totals and not fiscal year and account for reserve contributions.

Winter Maintenance Budget Details

The tables below show the actual cost for the winter season of 2025/2026 for the Mobility Business Unit.

	October 2025 to December 31 2025	January 2026 to April 30 2026
Activity	Actual Spend	Actual Spend
Snow Removal P1 and P2	108,307	941,241
Snow Removal Residential	28,290	208,550
Ploughing P1 and P2	1,299,508	1,892,008
Sanding and Salting P1 and P2	10,129,792	16,302,117
Residential Sanding and Ploughing	3,686,287	4,880,636
Snow Dump Site Maintenance		3,151
Separate Bikeways	233,166	232,762
Snow Fencing	59,149	42,725
Anti Icing	89,321	13,900
Material Handling and Storage	446,022	51,458
Sidewalk SNIC Clearing	749,700	2,960,189
Pathways Snow Removal	2,263,891	1,838,488
Winter Supplementary Work	359,580	3,330,915
Winter Operations	19,453,014	32,698,141
Winter Maintenance Reserve Contribution	8,503,996	
	27,957,010	32,698,141
	Budget	Actual
2025/26 Winter Season Total	57,469,232	60,655,151

Table 5: 2025/26 Winter Maintenance expenditures and budget

	October 2025 to December 31, 2025	January 2026 to April 30 2026
Activity	Recoveries	Recoveries
Transit SNIC LRT Stations	296,232	374,890
Transit SNIC Bus Zones	1,343,472	1,733,855

Table 6: Calgary Transit – 2025/26 Winter Maintenance activity expenditures versus recovery

Winter Maintenance Policy Metrics

The Winter Maintenance program service levels are based on the Council approved Winter Maintenance Policy. This policy is regularly updated to ensure it is meeting citizen expectations, provides clear direction to Administration and achieves desired levels of service. The purpose of the Winter Maintenance Policy is to:

- Support safe movement for Calgarians, visitors, goods and Emergency Services in accordance with the objectives of the Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan.
- Define The City of Calgary's Winter Maintenance operations by establishing priorities, service levels and guidelines for Winter Maintenance on streets, roads, sidewalks, pathways and transit facilities.
- Outline public responsibilities for Winter Maintenance of public spaces near private properties.

To align with the approved Winter Maintenance service levels outlined in the Policy, Performance Indicators (KPIs) were identified.

Category	Response Timeframe	Surfaces Maintained	Maintenance Standard
Priority 1	Within 18 hours	• High priority streets and roads with high motor vehicle volumes/speeds (20,000 vehicles per day) including those on the Primary Transit Network • High priority streets and roads within the Greater Downtown • Wheeling Lanes on or adjacent to Priority 1 routes including turn boxes and protected intersections.	Bare Pavement
	Within 24 hours	• Light rail transit stations • Priority bus stops • Priority pathways including stairs, ramps and bridges • Priority Curb Cuts, medians and traffic islands • Sidewalks adjacent to City owned infrastructure and land including stairs, ramps and bridges	
Priority 2	Within 36 hours	• Streets that typically support transit operations (volumes typically over 5,000 vehicles per day) • Wheeling Lanes on or adjacent to Priority 2 routes including turn boxes and protected intersections.	Bare Pavement
Priority 3	After 36 hours up to 72 hours	• Barriers of snow and/or ice at pedestrian crossings, major intersections, traffic islands and bus stops adjacent to Priority 1 and Priority 2 routes. • Playground zones	Snow and/or ice buildup cleared as needed
	After 36 hours and up to 7 Days	Residential Streets	Hard Pack
		• Bus stops • Stop and yield sign areas at intersections	Snow and/or ice buildup cleared as needed

Figure 3: Winter Maintenance service levels

2025/2026 Snow Route Parking Bans

A Snow Route parking ban may be considered when snow accumulation of 10 centimetres or greater is forecast. Snow routes include major roadways and most transit bus routes. An advisory is issued when a snow event is expected in the forecast and there is limited roadway capacity for snow storage. This advisory is meant to serve as a warning that parking bans may soon be in effect on snow routes. Vehicles should be moved as quickly as possible following the notice. Vehicles that remain parked on these roads during the ban are subject to enforcement, up to and including a parking tag and tow. Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and the downtown core have overnight bans (9 pm. to 6 am.).

During the 2025/26 winter season, no snow route parking bans were activated.

Personnel, Equipment and Infrastructure

The Mobility Business Unit commits personnel, material, equipment, infrastructure, capital and operational funds to Winter Maintenance operations as follows:

- 420 personnel working rotating shifts, available 24/7 continuously throughout the season
- Material, including equipment consumables (i.e. plough blades) and snow remediation substances (salt, de-icing liquids and abrasives).

The various machinery and equipment include:

- 101 City owned tandem trucks equipped to plough and apply materials
- 27 graders
- 9 snow blowers
- 17 smaller single axle trucks equipped to plough and apply materials in residential areas such as cul-de-sacs where tandems are unable to work
- 9 front-end loaders
- Over 25 pieces of small equipment (e.g. Holder S75/C70/S70)

Additional Information

Please visit The City's Snow and Ice Control webpage at [Calgary.ca/snow](https://calgary.ca/snow) for more information on winter operations, Winter Maintenance clearing updates and Snow Route parking bans.