

HALIFAX

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a brief update on some of the activities the Winter Operations group within Transportation and Public Works, has been working on since the last Accessibility Advisory Committees Town Hall.

YMCA Senior Snow Program – We continue to provide funding to support this program, which provides residential snow removal for eligible seniors or persons with disabilities. Last year, 592 residents participated. Once accepted into the program, residents can expect clearing of their front and back steps, walkways, ramps, and access to a fuel tank if required. The program operates on a first-come first-serve basis, however there were vacancies during the 2020/2021 winter season. If anyone is interested in applying, the application window for this winter season is now open and more information, including eligibility requirements, can be found on our website or the YMCA Halifax website.

Change to Service Standards – Transit Stops – The previous service standard of 48 hours, for clearing of transit stops, has been changed. Starting this year, winter maintenance of all Transit stops is to be completed within 24 hours after the declared end of a snowfall. This significant change in service should provide better accessibility for all transit users when embarking or disembarking following a snowfall.

Accessibility Training – Our winter operations group continues to facilitate this important training for staff and contractors, who perform winter maintenance for the municipality. Created in conjunction with our Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the training takes participants through a number of mobility challenges, that residents may face while trying to navigate city sidewalks and other infrastructure in the winter. Participants take turns maneuvering through a course using a few



different types of mobility aids, such as, Manual Wheelchairs, Walkers, and White Canes, to gain a better understanding of how the built environment impacts their mobility. Obstacles are present, such as excessive salt on sidewalks and ramps, barriers representing snowbanks, crosswalk signal buttons, etc. which create a real eye-opening experience for all. We continue to receive positive feedback from attendees, who often didn't recognize the challenges that poorly maintained infrastructure created, for residents with mobility challenges.

Winter Information – As winter is quickly approaching, we will be moving a link to our winter operations webpage to the Halifax.ca homepage. There you will find information on our service standards, interactive maps showing priority classifications for sidewalks and streets, answers to common questions, information on the Senior Snow program and a guide to registering for hfxALERT which provides winter parking ban notices.