

Staff Report

Presented By: Matt Prentice, Director, Operations

Meeting Date: October 15, 2024

Subject: Southampton Sidewalk Plow

Attachment(s): Figure 1 - Southampton Sidewalk Routes and Future Developments

Recommendation

That the second Southampton Sidewalk Plow be included as a “high” priority in the 2025 Business Plan for Council consideration.

Report Summary

A second Southampton Sidewalk Plow was included in the deliberations related to the 2024 Business Plan, albeit at a “medium” priority. For the reasons outlined in the background/analysis section of this report, it is recommended that the second sidewalk plow be included in the 2025 Business Plan as a “high” priority for 2025.

Background/Analysis

Currently there are five (5) sidewalk plows in the Town fleet:

- Four (4) sidewalk plows service Port Elgin and maintain a total of 46 km of sidewalk in the winter. 12 km of sidewalks in Port Elgin are not winter maintained (21% of Port Elgin total).
- One (1) sidewalk plow services Southampton, and maintains a total of 12 km of sidewalk in the winter. 9 km of sidewalks in Southampton are not winter maintained (43% of Southampton total)

A second Southampton sidewalk plow is currently included in the 10-year plan, and during the 2024 Business Plan deliberations, was included in the year 2026 at a “medium” priority. Medium priority fleet items were not approved by Council for inclusion in the 2024 Business Plan.

The 2025 Business Plan includes a new Public Works Division Highlight to update the Winter Operations Plan in 2025. It is expected that, in the preparation of this update, service resources and service standards for sidewalk winter maintenance will increase, for the following reasons:

- The forecast near and medium term continued development pressure, and subsequent increase in sidewalk kilometrage, coupled with the high expectations for winter maintenance that will be expected in new developments.
- Ever-increasing need to provide documentable “Minimum Maintenance Standards” to demonstrate compliance with Provincial regulations, and to defend the Town against claims.
- The need to clarify the status of sidewalks which are not included in winter maintenance. There is considerable liability associated with slip-and-fall events and subsequent claims. Steps should be taken to mitigate this risk, which could include a combination of clearing more sidewalks, and/or clearly signing those that are not maintained in winter.

Please refer to [Figure 1](#), which shows possible future developments in Southampton, the existing sidewalk plow route, and those sidewalks which are not currently maintained in the winter. The exact sidewalk plow route will be updated as part of the Winter Operations Plan update.

If the sidewalk plow is approved as part of the 2025 Business Plan, it will be available in the 2025/26 winter season. Please note this report is not a “pre budget approval” request since expediting the process will not make the equipment available in the 2024/25 winter season in any case.

There is a plan to ensure enough staffing resources to operate the equipment. This is related to, but not strictly dependant on, the overall 10-year staffing requests in the Business Plan.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 1: Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community
- Business Plan Alignment: Operations Capital Highlight

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

Estimated cost of \$250,000 associated with this equipment will be included in the 2025 Business Plan for Council consideration

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