



Winter Road Maintenance

Public Works
Policy N5

Policy:	N5 – Winter Road Maintenance
Policy Department(s):	Public Works
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Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the level of service that the County of Grande Prairie aims to deliver regarding the maintenance of roads in winter conditions.

Policy Statement

The County of Grande Prairie aims to maintain transportation networks in a safe, fiscally responsible, and effective manner.

Definitions

“Arterial Roads” means roads that feed directly into the provincial highway system and regularly have traffic volumes of 300 vehicles per day (VPD) or higher.

“CAO” means the person appointed by Council to the position of Chief Administrative Officer under the Municipal Government Act for the County or designate.

“County” means the municipality of the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 having jurisdiction under the Municipal Government Act and other applicable legislation.

“Farmland Access Roads” means roads within the County providing access to farmland only (no residences).

“Gravel Surfaced” means roads that are gravel surfaced and may have a dust abatement product such as oil or calcium chloride mixed in with the gravel.

“Hamlets/Residential” means named hamlets within the County of Grande Prairie whose roads are hard surfaced.

“Hard Surfaced” means roads that are surfaced with asphaltic concrete pavement.

“Local Roads” means roads which service subdivisions, local residential areas and rural roads which have average traffic volumes of less than 200 vehicles per day (VPD).

“Severe Snow Event” means a winter storm (snow, rain, freezing rain or wind, or other weather conditions) causing accumulations on driving surfaces which makes numerous County roads



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difficult to pass or impassable and is adversely affecting the ability of County crews to keep the roads clear.

“Snow and Ice Control” or SNIC means plowing of snow from the driving lanes of County roads and the application of sand, sand and salt mix, anti-icing chemicals or a combination thereof as required on hard surfaced roads.

“Snow Removal” means the removal of snow accumulations from the road or road allowance through the use of front-end loaders, grader, snow blowers, trucks or a combination thereof in subdivisions and hamlets where there are curbs and gutters.

“Snowplowing” means pushing snow off the road surface into the road ditch for storage.

“Emergency” means a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action to prevent or reduce bodily harm.

Policy Guidelines

1. The Director of Public Works and/or their designate are responsible for dispatching winter maintenance equipment in accordance with this policy.
2. Dedicated winter road maintenance crews clear and maintain over 3,600 kilometers of paved and gravel roads during the winter season. Crews may commence winter road maintenance at any point deemed appropriate to maintain and/or enhance operational efficiency, infrastructure, and safety.
3. Repairs to damaged landscaping in County right of way shall be at the sole discretion of the County of Grande Prairie.

Arterial Roads/Hard Surfaced Roads

4. Snowplowing is to commence when accumulations of snow reach eight (8) centimeters and conditions are safe to do so. Curves and hills and other safety factors may need earlier attention.
5. Salt and sand are to be utilized when weather and snow/ice conditions make it practical. The priority shall be intersections, curves on roads and hills.
6. The County shall make a reasonable effort to ensure roads are cleared of snow within three (3) business days following a snow fall event. Multiple snowfall events may alter the snow clearing cycle and require extended hours or days to complete. Ice accumulation, extreme cold and/or other extreme, adverse weather conditions will delay operations and extend the amount of time it takes to clear County roads.

Arterial Roads/Gravel Surfaced and Local Gravel Roads/Gravel Surfaced

7. It is beneficial to have a snow/gravel mix packed onto the roads after the first snowfall to reduce gravel loss. Packed mix shall not exceed five (5) centimeters.



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8. Snow and ice control will be scheduled when accumulations reach 15 centimeters, or based on extreme weather conditions.
9. Ice problems on gravel roads will generally be rectified by ice blading with motor graders. It is not common practice for Gravel Roads to be sanded. Icy hills, intersections and curves may be sanded if approved by the Director of Public Works and/or their designate. In special circumstances, other locations may be sanded, if authorized.
10. The County shall make a reasonable effort to ensure roads are cleared of snow within five (5) business days following a snow fall event. Multiple snowfall events may alter the snow clearing cycle and require extended hours or days to complete. Ice accumulation, extreme cold and/or other extreme, adverse weather conditions will delay operations and extend the amount of time it takes to clear County roads.

Hamlets/Residential

11. Snow removal within Hamlets will commence when snow accumulations reach 15 centimeters on the roadway.
12. After the end of a single snow event the County will endeavor to complete snow removal from the Hamlets on a 12-day cycle, multiple snow events may alter the 12 day cycle and require extended hours or days to complete the cycle.
13. Major collectors within Hamlets will be given priority for snow removal.

Farmland Access

14. Roads will be plowed a maximum of twice annually, upon request, unless they are being utilized to such an extent that more frequent plowing is required.

Excess Snow

15. Shall generally be stockpiled alongside the road in the road allowance and on other available public property. Snow will not be hauled to other stockpile locations unless public safety is at risk.
16. County operations staff will make a reasonable effort to minimize the size of the snow berm left across approaches into residential property. Maintenance will not be performed in front of approaches appearing inactive, which shall be at the discretion of County operations staff.
17. In the case of a Severe Snow Event, or other extreme, adverse weather event, the County is committed to providing the necessary resources and response in order to mitigate the impact to County residents and to reduce the potential damage to County controlled infrastructure.
18. In case of a Severe Snow Event it may be necessary to return to plowing of arterial gravel roads before the plowing of all local gravel surfaced roads has been completed.



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19. The Director of Public Works, in consultation with the CAO, will be authorized to utilize County equipment and staff for extended hours or full 24 hours of operations. External resources may be hired in these circumstances subject to approval by the Director of Public Works and/or their designate.
20. The County may suspend winter road maintenance operations, excepting an emergency, when circumstances warrant doing so, including extreme cold temperatures of -35. Operations will resume when circumstances improve or subside, and it is deemed appropriate to do so.

Attachments

N/A

References

Legal Authorities	N/A
Related Plans, Bylaws, Policies, Etc.	Policy B1 – Policy Development Policy N7 – Snowplowing for Seniors and Special Needs Individuals
Other	N/A

Revision History

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January 30, 2023	Reviewed and Amended CM20230130.050
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