



# Staff Report

## Infrastructure & Public Works

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**Report To:** Committee of the Whole  
**Meeting Date:** August 21, 2017  
**Report Number:** CSPW.17.081  
**Subject:** Winter Maintenance of BMR Commercial Sidewalks  
**Prepared by:** Jim McCannell, Manager of Roads and Drainage

### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive Staff Report CSPW.17.081 entitled "Winter Maintenance of BMR Commercial Sidewalks";

AND THAT Council direct Staff to bring forward an addition to the base Budget for consideration during the 2018 Budget process to expand winter maintenance of sidewalks in the Blue Mountain Resort (BMR) village core area.

### B. Overview

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The Town has received inquiries about the winter maintenance of sidewalks in and around the Blue Mountain Village areas. In 2017 the Village Association made a request to the Town to provide winter maintenance to the sidewalks along the front of the River Grass Condominiums on Fairway Court and to the commercial rental units within the Snowbridge Development. Staff have considered how sidewalks outside of Thornbury could receive winter maintenance.

### C. Background

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Historically the Town has provided winter maintenance to the sidewalks in and around the Blue Mountain Resort Village Core, this included Jozo Weider and Canning Drive. Through a tender process the Town hired the Blue Mountain Resort (BMR) ground staff to provide this service. The BMR staff are working in the area to clear other Condo units as well as some private open spaces that are used by pedestrian traffic. Residential sidewalks in Craighleith do not receive winter maintenance. Signs are posted along the residential or secondary sidewalks to notify residents that no winter maintenance is provided. A copy of the sign is shown below.



The Town has two classes of sidewalks: Primary and Secondary. The Primary sidewalks are generally in the commercial areas or around the school in Thornbury. These sidewalks receive a higher level of service. Once the amount of snow exceeds 5 cm the Contractor is required to clear the snow within 16 hours for primary sidewalks and within 24 hours for secondary sidewalks. A smooth but snow packed surface is acceptable, sidewalks are not expected to be bare and dry.

#### Secondary Sidewalks outside of Thornbury.

There are approximately 10 kilometers of residential sidewalks located outside of Thornbury that do not receive winter maintenance. There are sidewalk sections in the BMR Village, Tyrolean Village, the Alta and Alpine Meadows subdivisions, the Camperdown Developments and Lora Bay. Unfortunately these sidewalk sections are not connected and as such pose a challenge when looking to provide winter maintenance. Within Thornbury the sidewalk machine is able to start from a depot and drive along the sidewalks with very little road transit required. Clearing the sidewalk is efficient as the equipment is able to work up one side of the road and back on the other side of the road or on the next street over. In other areas outside of Thornbury the sidewalk machine must be delivered to the site, unloaded to perform the work and then loaded and transported to the next site. Staff has given consideration as to how the unconnected sidewalks section could be serviced in the winter.

#### Option #1 Contracted Winter Maintenance of Sidewalks.

The winter maintenance of sidewalks is currently contracted out as the Town does not have the equipment or staff to complete this work. The efficiency of clearing sidewalks in Thornbury is high due to the concentration. The sidewalk machine is considered Road Maintenance Equipment and does not require license and registration. This helps to control costs.

In order to service the other areas, crews will need to travel and transport equipment. This adds to the cost significantly. The cost for a truck and trailer to haul a heavy piece of equipment on early morning roads will be higher. Trucks and trailers must be licensed and “fit” for use on the highway and so have higher operating costs. Hiring one contractor to service all of the sidewalks may require a premium cost due to travel distances. This will reduce the Staff time required as only one contractor is required to be managed.

Staff have investigated hiring contractors that are in proximity to the sidewalk areas. The idea is to hire local contractors in Craighleith, Camperdown, Thornbury and another in Lora Bay. The challenge is the additional administration required for these contracts. The potential for litigation is very high and so both the Town and Contractor are required to have excellent work records and inspection records. Additional staff time will be required to ensure the work and the documentation is completed, collected and checked. Additional hardware and software will be required if all contractors are to be tracked using GPS.

Staff have received quotes that indicate the cost to maintain the additional 10 km of sidewalk could be between \$50,000 and \$60,000. As new developments are assumed these costs will increase. If the new sidewalk areas are connected or very close together the cost may increase only a small amount for additional machine time. New developments that are separated and not connected will require additional transit time that could increase costs significantly.

Option #2 Additional Town Staff.

The Town may consider hiring additional staff and purchasing or leasing equipment to provide winter maintenance to sidewalks. The Roads and Drainage Division have found they receive better value by directly hiring staff to work for the Town for road snowplowing operations. The Town staff have proven to be more engaged in the service they are providing. When staff is not required for plowing snow they are available for other works that are required. Further investigation may be warranted to determine if the best value to the Town can be found by hiring or extending contracts to summer staff for the winter months.

It is anticipated that four (4) additional staff would be needed to provide service in the areas outside of Thornbury. At least 2 truck, trailer and sidewalk machine combination units would be required. Town staff may want to investigate starting with serving the areas outside of Thornbury and in the future consider taking on the Thornbury/ Clarksburg areas. Further investigation through the Active Transportation Study may help determine the best options for providing year round maintenance for the Town's sidewalk system.

Option #3 BMR Village Commercial Areas.

The Town may wish to acknowledge the Commercial aspect of the rental condominiums around the Blue Mountain Village. Requests have been made to consider maintaining the sidewalks along Fairway Court and within the Snowbridge Development due to the pedestrian traffic associated with the rental units that are managed and promoted through the Village Association. These areas could be serviced by extending the existing service contract held with BMR. A map of the sidewalk areas being considered is attached. See Attachment #1.

Staff is recommending extending the service contract with Blue Mountain Resorts to provide winter maintenance to the rental facilities along Fairway Court and Snowbridge subdivision until such time as the Active Transportation Study is completed. The Active Transportation Study will help determine the level of service that is expected by residents and may assist in determining the best methods of providing these services.

**D. Analysis**

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The current budget for clearing sidewalks in the BMR village core is approximately \$10,000. This includes spring cleanup of the sidewalks and boulevard. BMR has indicated that their staff are willing to take on this additional work. It is anticipated the cost to provide winter maintenance along Fairway Court and to the Snowbridge Subdivision will be approximately \$10,000 but will fluctuate from winter to winter. Staff will have a better understanding of the costs after 3 winters.

## **E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan**

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Goal #3: Support Healthy Lifestyles

Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational & Operational Excellence

Goal #5: Ensure Our Infrastructure is Sustainable

## **F. Environmental Impacts**

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None.

## **G. Financial Impact**

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An enhancement request will be brought forward during the 2018 Budget deliberations.

## **H. In consultation with**

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Shawn Everitt, Director of Community Services.

## **I. Attached**

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1. Map of additional areas to receive winter maintenance.

Respectfully submitted,

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