

December 11, 2017

Winter Maintenance on Pathways in Lower Sackville

During the winter months, municipal staff in charge of snow removal of streets, sidewalks and paths are responsible first and foremost for the safety of residents. While we focus on meeting our service delivery standards for snow removal, we must take into consideration the safety aspect of this operation.

For safety reasons, the municipality will not be providing winter maintenance on four specific pathway networks in Lower Sackville. Those pathways are:

1. The long, parallel pathway that connects Rankin Drive.
2. Pathway that connects Nordic Crescent and Neily Drive
3. Pathway that connects Hillside Avenue and Belvedere Dr.
5. Pathway that connects Hillside Avenue to Beaumont Drive and Summerville Drive.
6. Pathways that connects Smokey Drive, and Grennan Drive to Smokey Drive and Court, and Smokey Drive Elementary.

Signage has been installed at these locations to advise pedestrians. There are other pathways that need maintenance but these locations presented the greatest hazards when reviewed.

Significant deterioration of the paved pathway surfaces make them unsafe for both pedestrians and crews to access the pathways this winter. Given the current state of the paved pathways, any efforts to clear them would damage the surfaces significantly and create more hazards for pedestrians during winter conditions.

Specifically, deterioration of the hard surface resulting in gravel, mud and broken asphalt pieces presently being exposed which attempting to clear snow and ice will result in much more serious surface damages for summer use. Existing wash outs have caused undermining of some surfaces, narrow widths and a high potential of equipment and pedestrians sliding on ice and falling down steep embankments.

The existing uneven surfaces that remain due to deterioration, settlement of the ground, foliage and tree growth have resulted in there being no way to provide a bare surface as snow and ice will not be accessible for plowing techniques. This could lead to high volumes of slip and falls during winter and summer month activities.

The location of many of these pathway networks require equipment and pedestrians to travel and navigate through areas secluded by dense forest with limited lighting. There is a high potential for an operator or pedestrian to encounter a safety incident of sliding, falling and becoming injured and no one available to notify emergency services due to the pathway not being visible by the public. These are not typical short pathways that connect street to street with good lighting.

Residents are asked to use the sidewalks in these neighbourhoods where available. We recognize that using sidewalks may not be as convenient as the shorter routes via pathways, however this is the safest option for pedestrians.

Next spring, the municipality will be assessing these pathways for maintenance requirements and developing a plan to improve conditions which will address the current safety issues so that they can be avoided in the future.

The area service provider is aware of the inconvenience and impacts to some pedestrians and they will be providing the appropriate street service delivery in these areas so that pedestrians can safely navigate to their destination.