



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 21-0421, **Version:** 2

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Resolution to Improve Winter Sidewalk Maintenance

Whereas, Sidewalks are vital transportation corridors;

Whereas, 27% of Ann Arbor residents walk or use transit to get to work;

Whereas, The Americans with Disabilities Act sets accessibility standards for the design of sidewalks and curb ramps, but access is also critically impaired by snow and ice;

Whereas, Uncleared or piled snow on sidewalks, curb ramps, and crosswalks is dangerous, as exhibited by the February 2020 death of an Ann Arbor resident who fell and died after attempting to step over a mound of snow left by a snow plow in a downtown crosswalk;

Whereas, In October 2015, City Council accepted the Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force report and tasked City Administration with review and implementation of feasible recommendations;

Whereas, The 2015 Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force Report finds that our current transportation network places an emphasis on the mobility of motorized vehicles at the expense of pedestrian mobility and safety;

Whereas, The 2015 Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force report recommendations include 1) eliminating impassable snow piles left in crosswalks, sidewalk ramps, crossing islands, and bus stops and 2) undertaking and assessing the financial, operational feasibility and level of community support of the City undertaking snow and ice removal on the City's public sidewalk system;

Whereas, In June 2020 City Council unanimously adopted the A2Zero Carbon Neutrality Plan which includes as a core strategy reducing vehicle miles traveled by at least 50% by 2030;

Whereas, In February 2021, SnowBuddy released a report "*Access for All: Maintaining Our Sidewalk Transportation Corridors in Winter*" which proposes options for the City of Ann Arbor to conduct winter maintenance of city sidewalks in a safe and professional manner in all neighborhoods;

Whereas, In February 2021, the Transportation Commission endorsed the goal of municipal sidewalk snow removal and views this goal as an urgent need for City spending and planning;

Whereas, The Comprehensive Transportation Plan community engagement process established core community values of creating a safe, equitable, and accessible transportation system; and

Whereas, Reversing inequities in transportation investments and policies is an important component of a comprehensive Vision Zero strategy and an important objective in the community of Ann Arbor;

RESOLVED, City Council directs the City Administrator review, assess the feasibility, and propose cost estimates and strategies for a municipal sidewalk snow removal program;

RESOLVED, City Council directs the City Administrator to realign City policies, procedures, and

budgets to ensure the winter maintenance of the municipal sidewalk network (including crosswalks and curb ramps, access to transit stops/facilities, and routes through parks that improve our network), such that an accessible pedestrian route exists in a timely manner concurrent with the clearance of the streets;

RESOLVED, City Council directs the City Administrator review the City's snow removal policies and strategies and recommend adjustments to our operational model to address identified deficiencies that would make the pedestrian transportation network safe and consistently accessible to all users during the winter. An immediate goal should be to eliminate snow piles in crosswalks, sidewalk ramps, crossing islands and impeding access to bus stops. Recommended solutions should include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Strategies for addressing problems by zone/area of the City (e.g., DDA, residential neighborhoods, commercial and transit corridors); and
- 2) Immediate remedies that can be implemented by the winter of 2021-2022, such as changes to city ordinances, enforcement strategies, and/or changes in city operations.

A draft of this report will be shared with the Transportation Commission by August 2021 and a final report presented to Council by September 6, 2021;

RESOLVED, City Council directs the City Administrator to pilot solutions, preferably along a major transit corridor(s) and in the DDA, during the winter of 2021-2022 and report back to Council on the success of these pilot operations; and

RESOLVED, City Council directs the City Administrator, following the feasibility study in the first Resolved Clause, to conduct community engagement strategies to determine the level of community support for municipal sidewalk snow removal and preferences for a funding source, such as a millage or user fee.

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Briggs, Griswold, Eyer, Grand and Mayor Taylor

**As Amended and Approved by Ann Arbor City Council on March 1, 2021**