



# CITY OF MEADOW LAKE

## POLICY

<b>SECTION:</b>	Public Works & Utilities	<b>NUMBER:</b> 800-13-001	<b>RESOLUTION:</b> 211/21
<b>TITLE:</b>	Snow Removal Policy	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> September 27, 2021	
<b>ORIGIN/AUTHORITY:</b>	Council	<b>LAST REVISED:</b> September 11, 2023	
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Office, Public Works		

### 1. OBJECTIVE:

The objectives of this policy are to maintain the City's roadways and sidewalks so as to:

- a) Reduce the hazards of icy conditions to motorists and pedestrians;
- b) Minimize economic losses to the community and industry resulting from unsatisfactory winter driving conditions; and
- c) Facilitate the handling of emergencies by Police, Fire and Ambulance services during the winter.

And to establish the level of service to be provided by the City for Snow Removal and ice control, recognizing that weather conditions are beyond the City's control.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the City's Snow Removal Bylaw and Traffic Bylaw.

### 2. DEFINITIONS:

- a) **"Clearing"** this is clearing a location of snow down to the pavement level where possible including moving snow into windrows where needed; this is generally the second stage of Snow Removal.
- b) **"Downtown Core"** means the downtown commercial area outlined in Appendix A and B, and includes Centre Street from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Street East and West from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, and adjoining Avenues.
- c) **"Hauling"** means the act of moving snow from one location (such as a road or sidewalk or windrow) to a different location; this is generally the third and final step in Snow Removal and often includes using the City's snowblower to blow snow into trucks to be taken away.

- d) **"Plowing"** means using the blades of a grader or other equipment to remove or level some of the snow in a location to create passable lanes for traffic, but not always clearing it to the pavement or creating a windrow; this is generally the first stage of Snow Removal.
- e) **"Shared Path"** means the public asphalt pathways intended for shared use by pedestrians and wheeled devices including but not limited to bicycles, walkers, strollers, scooters, etc.
- f) **"Sidewalk"** means the public pathways, paved or otherwise, intended for exclusive use by pedestrians, including those along streets and walking trails.
- g) **"Snow Removal"** means the full task of performing all three phases to remove snow from a location (Plowing, Clearing and Hauling) to clear a location of snow as completely as possible within reason.
- h) **"Snow Route Parking Ban"** means a parking restriction declared by the City under the Traffic Bylaw which impacts roads marked with year-round permanent signs that state "snow route when declared".
- i) **"Windrow"** means snow that is temporarily pushed by the City's equipment to the curb or boulevard or into the center of the road to allow for the passage of vehicles, but does not obstruct traffic flow.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a) City Council is responsible for establishing the annual Snow Removal budget of the City and for reviewing and establishing priorities and level of service policies.
- b) The City Manager is responsible for assessing the effectiveness of this policy and providing recommendations to Council.
- c) The Public Works Manager is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, for the overall Snow Removal operations, and for making budget recommendations to Council.
- d) The Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance of public roads within the boundaries of the City, for carrying out Snow Removal in accordance with this policy, and for providing recommendations for policy improvements where applicable.
- e) City residents and businesses are responsible for ensuring private Snow Removal is carried out in a way that is safe, does not negatively impact any other public or private property, and does not impede the City's Snow Removal program.

### 4. SNOW REMOVAL PROCESS:

- a) During a storm event, Snow Removal operations will be limited to ensuring emergency vehicles can respond to emergency calls. In the event of limited or near zero visibility, all operations will cease until conditions improve to safeguard both the public and City employees.
- b) Extreme cold can also cause safety issues and an increase in equipment damage. During extreme cold snaps, Snow Removal operations may be modified or paused at the discretion of the Public Works Manager.

- c) Every effort will be made to complete initial Plowing on primary routes within or better than the timeframes established in this policy. However, this policy is a guideline only and is subject to equipment and personnel availability. Where extraordinary or back-to-back storm events occur, higher priority will be given to ensuring roads are passable rather than clear, and Public Works may return to Priority 1 areas before reaching the end of the priority list.
- d) Snow Removal will start when vehicles are having trouble moving; snowfall at 4" (four inches) and above or upon the Public Works Manager's or City Manager's recommendation.
- e) Between winter storm events, routes will be maintained in accordance with the priority levels outlined below. As stated in Section 4(c) above, if more snow is received before City staff are able to Plow all routes, they will return to Priority 1 and Plow by priority before finishing lower priority streets. If there are multiple back-to-back storms, there may be a significant delay before the lower priority streets can be Plowed and Cleared.
- f) Hauling of snow will be conducted as soon as possible after Windrows are Plowed, and further Plowing or Clearing of streets may be postponed until equipment is available in order to avoid having Windrows become too hard packed to remove.
- g) City of Meadow Lake staff and equipment are not responsible for Snow Removal on or from private property, and will only consider such a request if it must be done to allow emergency vehicle access.

## 5. PRIORITY ROUTES

- a) In establishing the Snow Removal Policy, the City must take into consideration its fiscal, equipment, and personnel resources to determine the budget required to meet the level of service established in this policy.
- b) Priorities are established with the intent to provide the greatest benefit to the majority of the travelling public, and consider factors such as traffic volumes, emergency services routes, and road classification.

The following priority areas and service standards have been established

### **PLOWING & CLEARING**

#### Priority I Roads: Arterial and Emergency Services

As shown on the map in Appendix A, Priority 1 includes all roads determined as main routes for access to the Hospital, RCMP Detachment and Fire Station.

Roads will be Plowed and have ice control applied within 24 hours of the conclusion of a major snow event. Every effort will be made to maintain Priority 1 roads as close to bare pavement as practicable, though during a major storm a compact drivable surface will be an acceptable standard. Snow will be Cleared into Windrows to the side or center of the street and hauled as equipment allows. Due to traffic congestion, hauling of snow, particularly in the downtown area will typically be performed prior to 7:00 a.m.

### Priority II Roads: Schools and Downtown

As shown on the map in Appendix A, Priority 2 includes roads determined as main routes for access to schools, and local businesses, including the remainder of the downtown core and service roads.

Roads will be Plowed and have ice control applied within 48 hours of the conclusion of a major snow event. The City will aim to maintain Priority 2 roads as close to bare pavement as practicable, though during a major storm a compact drivable surface will be an acceptable standard. Snow will be Cleared into Windows to the side or center of the street and hauled as equipment allows.

Due to traffic congestion, Snow Removal in the downtown area will typically be performed prior to 7:00 a.m. Wherever possible, Snow Removal will not be performed within school drop-off zones between the hours of 8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m.

### Priority III Roads: Primary Residential and Industrial Roads

As shown on the map in Appendix A, Priority 3 includes all paved residential through roads not already included in Priority 1 or 2, as well as the industrial business area.

Roads will aim to be Plowed and have ice control applied within 4 business days of the conclusion of a major storm event. A bare pavement surface is difficult to maintain throughout an average winter due to the extent and width of residential streets. As a general standard, a drivable, packed surface will be maintained. Between major snow events, snow will be Cleared into Windows and Hauled away as time and equipment allows, following the priority routes for those services.

Wherever possible, Snow Removal will not be scheduled for the same day as an area's residential garbage or recycling cart collection.

### Priority IV Roads: Local Residential Roads

As shown on the map in Appendix A, Priority 4 includes all remaining residential roads that serve local traffic only, including crescents, cul-de-sacs, and streets East of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street East.

Roads will aim to be Plowed and have ice control applied within 7 business days of the conclusion of a major storm event. A bare pavement surface is difficult to maintain throughout an average winter due to the extent and width of residential streets. As a general standard, a drivable, packed surface will be maintained. Between major snow events, snow will be Cleared into Windows and Hauled away as time and equipment allows, following the priority routes for those services. On gravel streets, a bare surface will not be maintained as a general standard through the winter. Snow will typically be Plowed to the side of the street.

Wherever possible, Snow Removal will not be scheduled for the same day as an area's residential garbage or recycling cart collection.

### **BACK-ALLEYS / LANES**

With the exception of certain designated alleys (see Appendix B) which are generally lanes and alleys behind apartment / condominium complexes that do not have street access, certain downtown area alleys, and alleys/lanes that need to be cleared at the city's own facilities, back-alley Plowing is generally not performed at any time during the winter months.

Alleys may be Plowed where conditions are deemed warranted at the direction of the Public Works Manager, and while there is no guarantee for the timeliness of this work, alleys are generally Plowed when neighbouring roads are being Plowed at the direction of public works. Snow Removal requests for Back Alleys/Lanes must be requested using the standard Service Request system through City Hall, with the requestor providing justification of where and why the Snow Removal action is needed. The Public Works Manager will deem whether the work is warranted or possible.

### **WINDROWS AND HAULING**

- a) Windrows and Hauling of snow will not necessarily follow the Plowing and Clearing priority routes, as equipment availability, timing, and road widths must be taken into consideration.
- b) Due to the narrow width of certain roads, the City will set a service priority to Plow, Clear, Windrow and Haul **consecutively** in the areas listed in Appendix C, following the conclusion of a storm event. These are the same roads that will normally be signed prior to snow removal which are:
  - a. Semchuk Drive
  - b. Jackson Drive
  - c. Coupland Crescent
  - d. Dunfield Crescent
  - e. Stack Crescent
  - f. Morin Crescent
  - g. Marion Crescent
  - h. Charpentier Place
  - i. Carter Place
  - j. Ducluzeau Place
  - k. Evans Place
  - l. Esau Street
  - m. Palenchuk Place
  - n. Fournier Drive
  - o. the 500 block of 3rd Street West (in front of old Lodge) – not signed.
- c) Due to traffic congestion and on-street residential parking, Snow Removal for the Appendix C roads will typically be performed after 9:00 a.m. Wherever possible, Snow

Removal will not be performed within school drop-off zones between the hours of 8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m.

## **6. PARKING, SIGNAGE AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:**

- a) The City will endeavor to communicate with residents regarding Snow Removal operations through this policy, through the city website, and through the Voyent Alert system.
- b) It is not always possible to place temporary signage in advance of Snow Removal operations in higher priority areas.
- c) Snow Route Parking Ban
  - a. Permanent signage may be placed along designated roads as noted in Appendix 8 of the Traffic Bylaw indicating that a Snow Route Parking Ban will be in effect when declared.
  - b. A Snow Route Parking Ban:
    - i. shall be in effect for the duration from October through the month of April on roads where signs have been erected.
    - ii. may be declared if there has been more than 4 inches (roughly 10 cm) of snowfall at once and may be re-declared if the snow continues.
    - iii. can be declared during the noted duration (October through April) with at least 4 hours notice (where practical).
    - iv. means that parking is prohibited on all signed roads during a declared Snow Route Parking Ban
    - v. will be declared and effective no earlier in the morning than 8:00 am, and no later in the evening than 11:00 pm (where practical).
    - vi. means that vehicles must immediately be removed once a Snow Route Parking Ban has been declared or re-declared
    - vii. will generally last no more than 24 hours, unless persistent snowfall requires a parking ban to be re-declared.
    - viii. requires notices to be issued when declared (or re-declared) to local media, sent out through VoyentAlert, and posted on the City's website and on Facebook.
  - c. If the Priority 1 Streets are cleared before 24 hours has passed and there is no threat of a continuing storm, the parking ban may be withdrawn by the City. In such cases, notices will be sent out in the same manner as the original notice where the ban was declared.
  - d. Once snow removal is complete on a signed road, the ban will be lifted for that road. However, a ban may be re-declared if the snow continues. During lengthy storms, snow removal may be required to be done more than once. Crews work their way down the priority list until worsening conditions cause them to return to the top of the list. While you may park on a road that has been completely cleared

(this includes having the windows removed), owners of vehicles parked in these areas are encouraged to pay close attention to any bans that are re-declared.

- e. Vehicles that stay parked on a road after a Snow Route Parking Ban has been declared are considered in violation of the City's Traffic Bylaw and risk fines and towing.
  
- d) Priority 4 roads that are historically too congested or narrow for the Snow Removal equipment to access without vehicle removal will be signed a minimum of 12 hours in advance. For greater clarity, signage will typically be installed by the end of the work day for Snow Removal operations on those roads planned for the following work day. As per the City's Traffic Bylaw, vehicles left on a road that has been signed for Snow Removal may be ticketed or towed at the Public Works Manager's direction.
- e) The roads that will normally be signed prior to Snow Removal are: Semchuk Drive, Jackson Drive, Coupland Crescent, Dunfield Crescent, Stack Crescent, Morin Crescent, Marion Crescent, Charpentier Place, Carter Place, Ducluzeau Place, Evans Place, and the 500 block of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street West (in front of the Northland Pioneer Lodge). Notification will also be issued through Voyent Alert wherever possible.
- f) The City will endeavor to follow the published and signed Snow Removal route. However, unforeseen circumstances such as additional snow, equipment breakdown, or other factors, may require streets to be rescheduled on short notice.
- g) Roads normally signed are noted on the map in Appendix C. Signs are generally placed at the main entrances to each road.
- h) The general public will be reminded in Snow Removal communications of the City's Zero Tolerance Policy for harassment of employees.

## **7. SIDEWALKS, SHARED PATHS, PARKING LOTS:**

- a) The City will set a service priority for Snow Removal operations for sidewalks and shared paths as shown in Appendix D following the conclusion of a storm event. Only those sidewalks and shared paths located on the map in Appendix D, will have a service level established for clearing by the City.
- b) The remainder of sidewalks within the city limits are required to be maintained by the owner/occupant of the adjacent property subject to the Snow Removal Bylaw according to the standards listed within the bylaw.
- c) Snow Removal operations will be performed on City-owned parking lots after sidewalks and shared paths, and when required to provide access to municipal facilities. Ice control and Hauling will be performed as required.
- d) Between storm events, city facility parking lots, sidewalks and shared paths will be maintained as necessary per the priorities indicated in Appendix D.

- e) Property owners adjacent to sidewalks cleared by the City who desire a higher degree of Snow Removal will be responsible for doing so themselves on a voluntary basis.
- f) The City may perform Snow Removal on sidewalks outside of the areas noted in Appendix D at the discretion of the Public Works Manager, if department operations allow and resources are sufficient, but the City makes no guarantees that this will be done at any point during the winter season.

#### **8. USE OF SALT AND SAND ON CITY PROPERTY:**

- a) The Public Works Department will monitor roads, and city sidewalks, paths and parking lots, and salt/sand as required. In the event of a substantial snowfall, roads will be Plowed first before applying salt and/or sand.
- b) The use of salt/sand is only effective for the melting and removal of ice and snow accumulations on the pavement when surrounding temperatures are above -7°C, depending on pavement temperatures, the radiant heat of the sun, wind conditions, traffic speed and volume. This temperature limitation will be considered in the application of salt and sand to City property.
- c) Salt/sand application will generally follow priority routes, with a focus on intersections and safety of both vehicles and pedestrians.
- d) The City's sand/salt pile will be available for people to access to sand/salt the sidewalks adjacent to their property.

#### **9. SNOW REMOVAL RESERVE**

- a) Annual Snow Removal budgets are based on the average historical costs and snow events, and staffing costs for the winter months and include a contingency budget for emergency contracted services.
- b) Should the weather in any year result in the Snow Removal budget not being completely used, the balance, particularly of any unused contracted services amounts, will be placed in an operating reserve account for future Snow Removal years.
- c) Should an extreme weather event in any year require Snow Removal funds over and above the established budget, the Snow Removal reserve may be accessed to cover these costs.
- d) City Council will be notified any time the Snow Removal reserve is accessed for operations and will approve the amounts to be transferred to the reserve at year end.

#### **10. EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS**

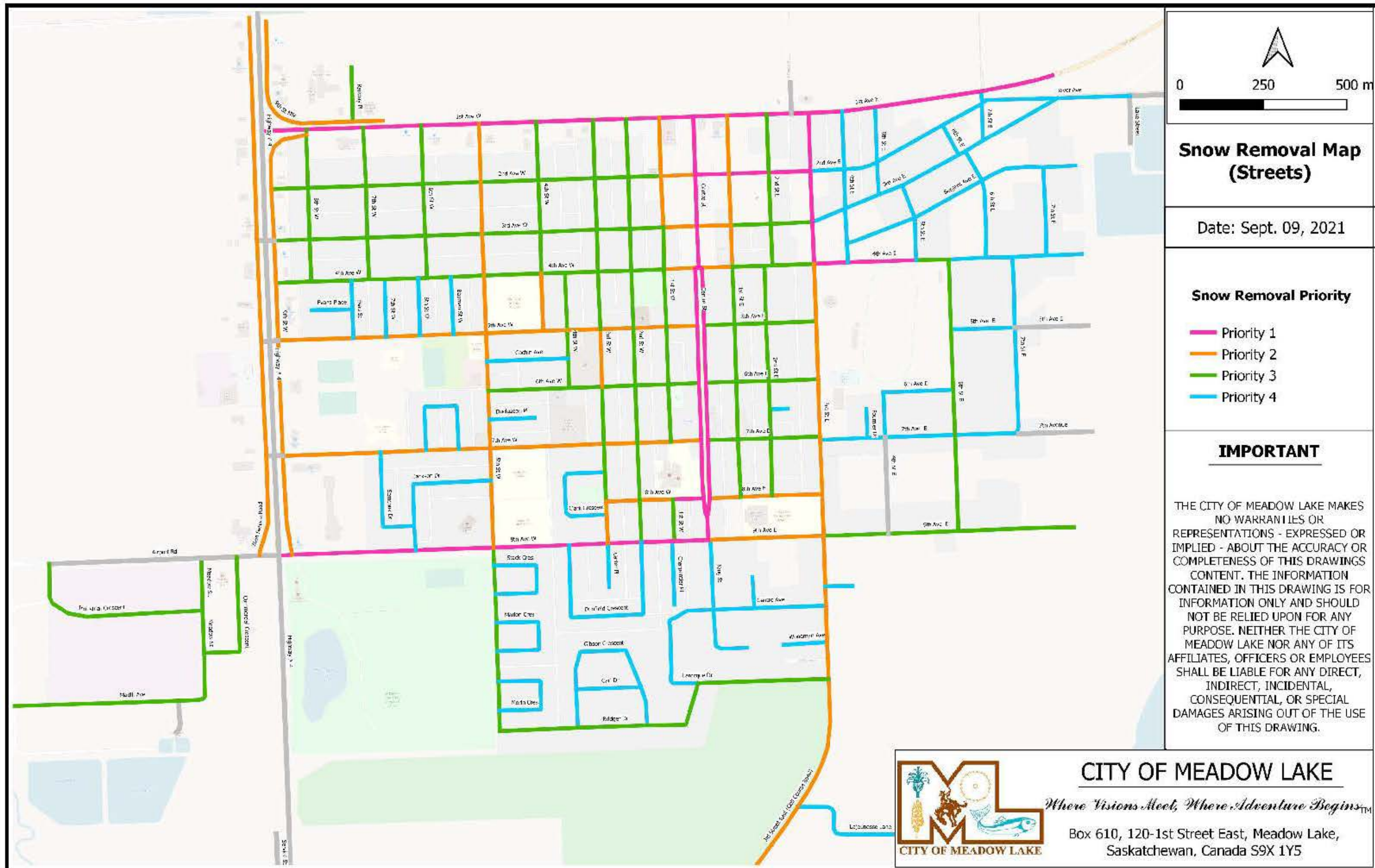
- a) Where possible, the City will maintain a list of pre-qualified contractors along with their rates from which the Public Works Manager is authorized to draw upon at their discretion when City resources are not sufficient to maintain safe and passable roads.
- b) During extreme weather events, or where conditions prevent the timely completion of the priority routes, the Public Works Manager may request a temporary transfer of staff

and/or equipment from other departments and/or hire labour and/or equipment to support Snow Removal activities. Such operating adjustments will also be reported to Council for information.

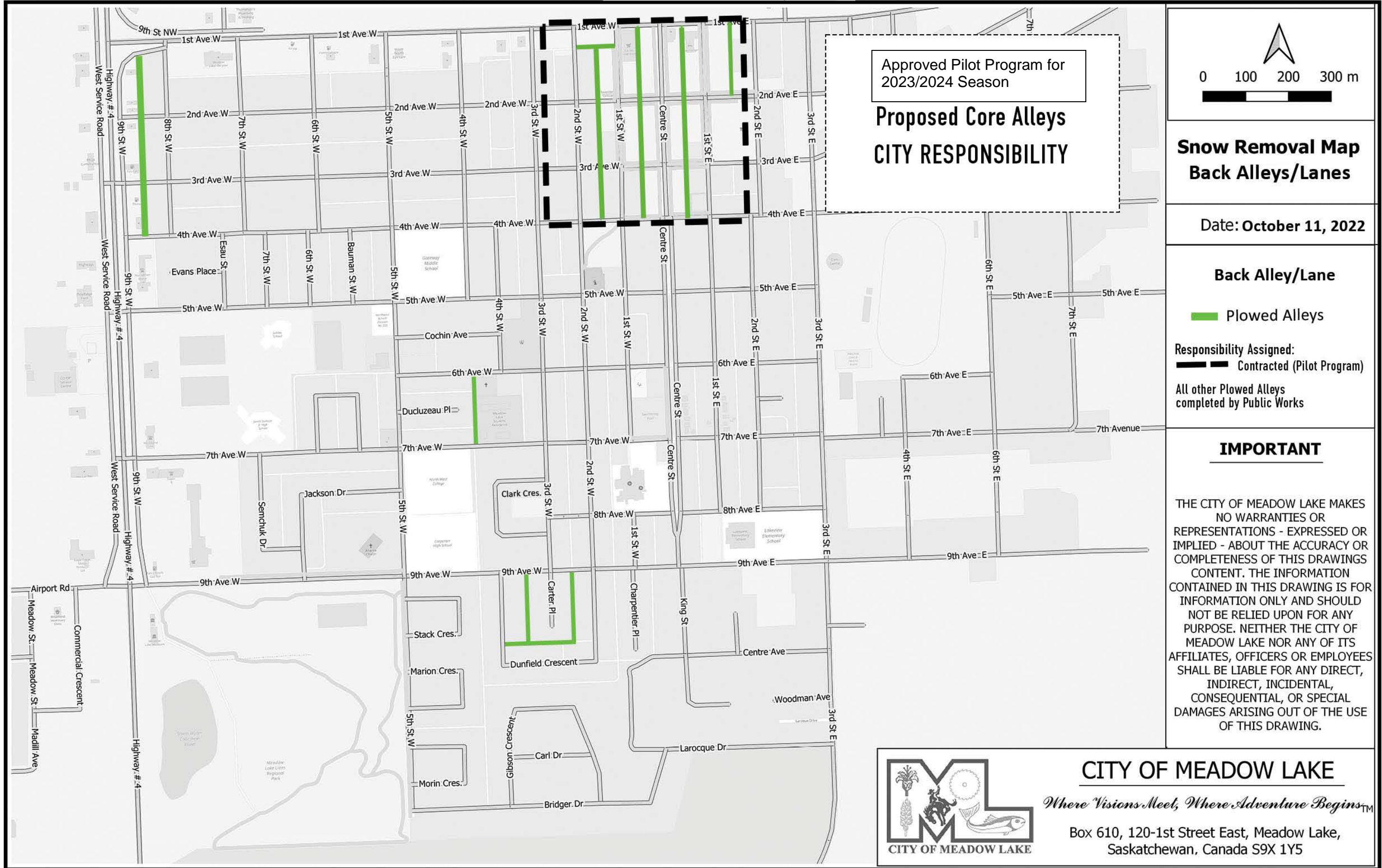
#### **11. OTHER POLICIES**

- a) It is advised that residents avoid parking their vehicles on the roads during Snow Removal operations, and to move vehicles to a driveway wherever possible. The City is not responsible for Clearing or Hauling Windrows away from vehicles that have been left on the road during Snow Removal operations.
- b) The Public Works Department may refuse to remove Windrows from the roads or boulevards that have been created or added to with snow from private residential or commercial properties.
- c) When snow is Windrowed to the middle of the road to prepare for Hauling, motorists are advised to exercise additional caution and that normal traffic rules still apply.
- d) When Windrows are pushed to the side of the road, the grader will make every effort to keep driveway entrances clear of snow. Small amounts or ridges of snow left behind by the grader are to be expected and are the property owner or occupant's responsibility to remove per the Snow Removal Bylaw. Where a ridge has made access and exit from the property impossible, residents are advised to contact City Hall or the Public Works Shop for assistance.
- e) This policy and its priorities may be reviewed on an annual basis prior to setting the Snow Removal budget, at the request of Council or the Public Works Department.

# Appendix A - Snow Removal Priorities Map

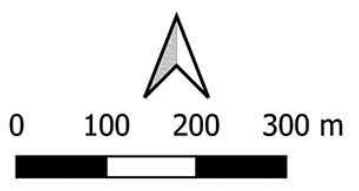


APPENDIX B - Snow Removal Policy



Approved Pilot Program for  
2023/2024 Season

**Proposed Core Alleys**  
**CITY RESPONSIBILITY**



**Snow Removal Map**  
**Back Alleys/Lanes**

Date: **October 11, 2022**

**Back Alley/Lane**

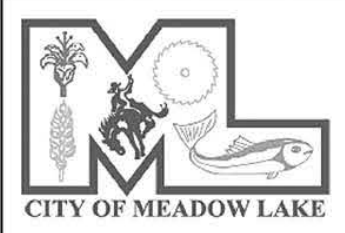
Plowed Alleys

Responsibility Assigned:  
 Contracted (Pilot Program)

All other Plowed Alleys  
completed by Public Works

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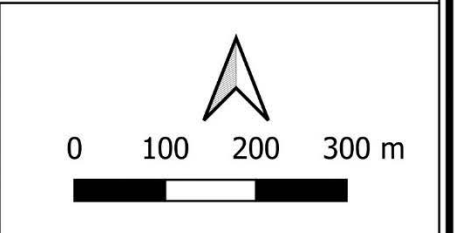


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APPENDIX C - Snow Removal Policy



**Snow Removal Map  
Windrows / Hauling**

Date: **October 11, 2022**

**Windrow / Haul  
(consecutively with Clearing)**  
 **Signed Streets**

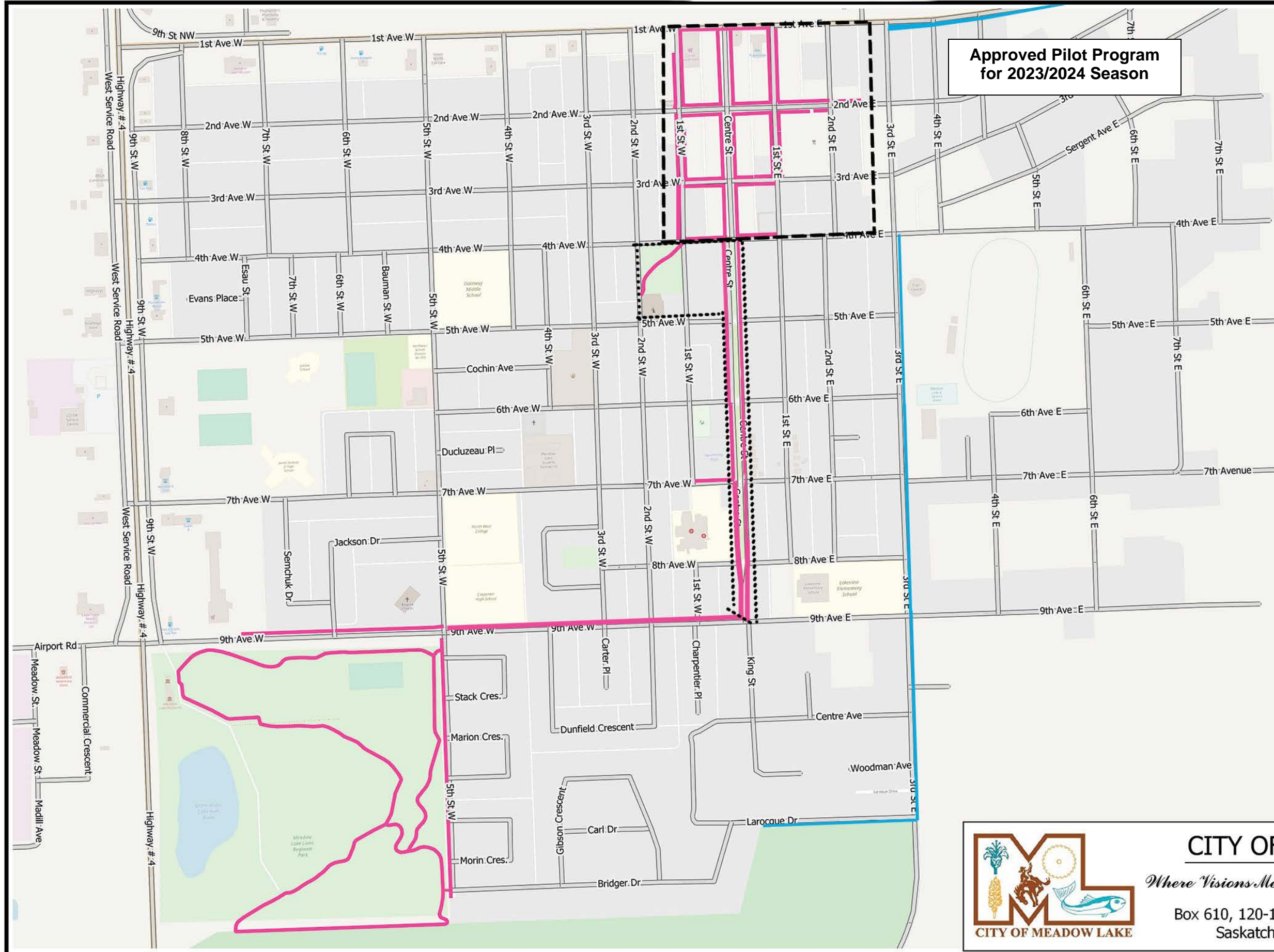
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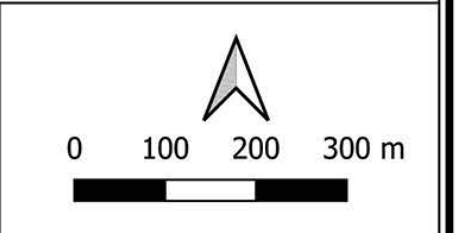


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APPENDIX D - Snow Removal Policy



**Approved Pilot Program  
for 2023/2024 Season**



**Snow Removal Map  
Sidewalks / Shared Paths**

Date: **Oct 11, 2022**

- Priority 1
- Priority 2
- Responsibility Assigned:**
- Contracted (Pilot Program)
- Public Works
- Remaining Priority 1 and Priority 2 completed by Parks & Recreation

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