

Snow Clearing: What to Expect

Equipment:

The Town of Altona uses a variety of equipment to clear away snow. This equipment includes:

- Grader
- 2 x wheel loaders
- Tractor with front mounted snow blower
- Skidsteer with front mounted snow blower
- Small tractor with front mounted snow blower or sweeper
- Small tractor with rear mounted sand spreader
- Dump truck with sand spreader
- 2 x Dump truck

Process (Streets & Sidewalks):

Snow clearing for the Public Works team begins as early as 5:00 am, and for the most part follows a set route for efficiency and access to priority roads.

The sidewalk blower starts the day at least 30 minutes ahead of the rest of the equipment – this is done so that the snow from downtown sidewalks can be blown onto the roads where the street clearing equipment will push it into piles to be hauled away.

The downtown streets are first to be cleared by the grader, and one of the loaders with a blade on the front. Once the downtown area is cleared, the grader continues in the North East corner.

The *other* loader starts the day by clearing the Civic Centre parking lot, Police parking lane, Fire Department parking lot, Millennium Exhibition Centre parking lot, Gallery in the Park parking lot, and then both loaders work on bays and cul-de-sacs throughout town.

While the grader is still hard at work clearing the downtown, two snow blowers are clearing back lanes. Once they are done the back lanes, they start chasing the grader, cleaning up the windrows left in the gutter area of each street.

By this time, usually the Public Utilities Department will have finished their daily rounds, and will sand the downtown area and streets that have been cleared.

Once the lots and cul-de-sacs are finished, two loader operators head back to the Public Works shop to swap out the blade for a bucket, and a loader for the dump truck, and start hauling piles of snow from downtown.

Once the downtown and North East corner are cleared, many factors determine where is cleared next. Those variables include the amount of fresh snow, whether it is still snowing, wind direction and speed, and which waste collection day it is.

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Process (Trails & Parks):

The Recreation Operations team uses a toolcat with either a snow blower attachment or a rotary broom attachment to clear the park trails, and trails around town. They also coordinate with the Public Works team to clear the nature pond skating surface when it is frozen. They head out as early and as often as possible to remove snow, working around the arena schedule.

Heavy Snowfall:

When there is a heavy snowfall in Altona, the process begins the same way – with clearing downtown. After the downtown area is clear, we will clear a main thoroughfare route of 10th Ave NW & NE, 6th St NE & SE, 4th Ave SE & SW, 4th St SW and 5th St NW. In extreme cases, we will open one lane for emergency services and travel. The windrows will not be cleaned up as quickly as normal, but we will get to them.

Things to Remember:

- Leave at least 10 metres between you and any piece of snow removal equipment at all times. When snow removal equipment is blocking a street, it is done intentionally for your safety and ours. Please find an alternate route to your destination. Do not attempt to sneak around, or under, equipment, as this puts everybody at risk.
- When you are shoveling your driveway, snow must be moved off to the side, into your yard. The boulevard is a town easement that is used to store snow cleared from the street, and you are not permitted to deposit snow from your driveway onto the public road, street or lane. Once the grader has come by and there is a windrow at the end of your driveway, one of our two snow blowers is on route to clear it away for you.
- Keep your waste containers for collection on your driveway, back from the curb so that they aren't in the way of our equipment or at risk of being damaged.
- Remind children not to build forts or tunnels near the roads, *especially* in the piles that we make, as we will be removing those piles without warning.