

# **Winter Maintenance Windrow Rebate/Pathway Program Review**

**General Committee  
June 13, 2016**

**Morgan Jones, Manager, Roads Operations**

# Background – Existing Windrow Clearing Program

- City-wide
- Approx 3,500 Households as of May 2016 (2016 budget of \$237,270 included windrow removal service for 3,200 households)
- Increasing approx 200/year
- Proof required >60 years or Doctor certificate unable to clear snow (age 12-59)

# Rebate Program – Potential Challenges

- Increased demand for rebates may increase City costs
- Decreased customer satisfaction
  - City plow trucks fill in driveway after hired contractor cleared snow
  - Proof required that licensed contractor was hired
- Residents manage own contractor/service delivery
- Residents may not wish to spend money on previously City provided “Free Service”
- Increased staff time: applications/documentation/rebates

## Should Council Wish to Consider Pilot – Consider Following:

- Two wards with voluntary participation.
- In order to qualify for the pilot program, residents must have been a 2016-2017 program registrant and meet the City's current windrow clearing program criteria.
- Qualified pilot program residents will be required to obtain and manage their individual snow clearing requirements through contracted services independent of the City.
- The City will offer a rebate of \$70 per household to those homeowners that have hired a contractor to provide the service.
- Pilot program to be capped at 200 residents in total.
- Pre-qualified homeowners will be required to provide official documentation of final invoice from contractor as proof of services rendered by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year.
- Cost of the pilot is estimated to be \$14,000 (\$70 x 200 participants), which will be reallocated within the proposed windrow budget. Additional resources will be required in Accounts Payable, Contact Centre, and Corporate Communications. These costs will be tracked and monitored as part of the pilot.

## Windrow Subsidy Pilot Program Details Cont'd

- Pilot program would commence in the 2017-18 season (Nov 2017 to Mar 2018).
- Evaluation criteria will be developed including a survey on participant feedback to determine the success of the program and provide information for further recommendations.
- Staff will report back to Council after completion of the pilot project to provide our recommendation for Council consideration.

### Pilot Project Timeline:

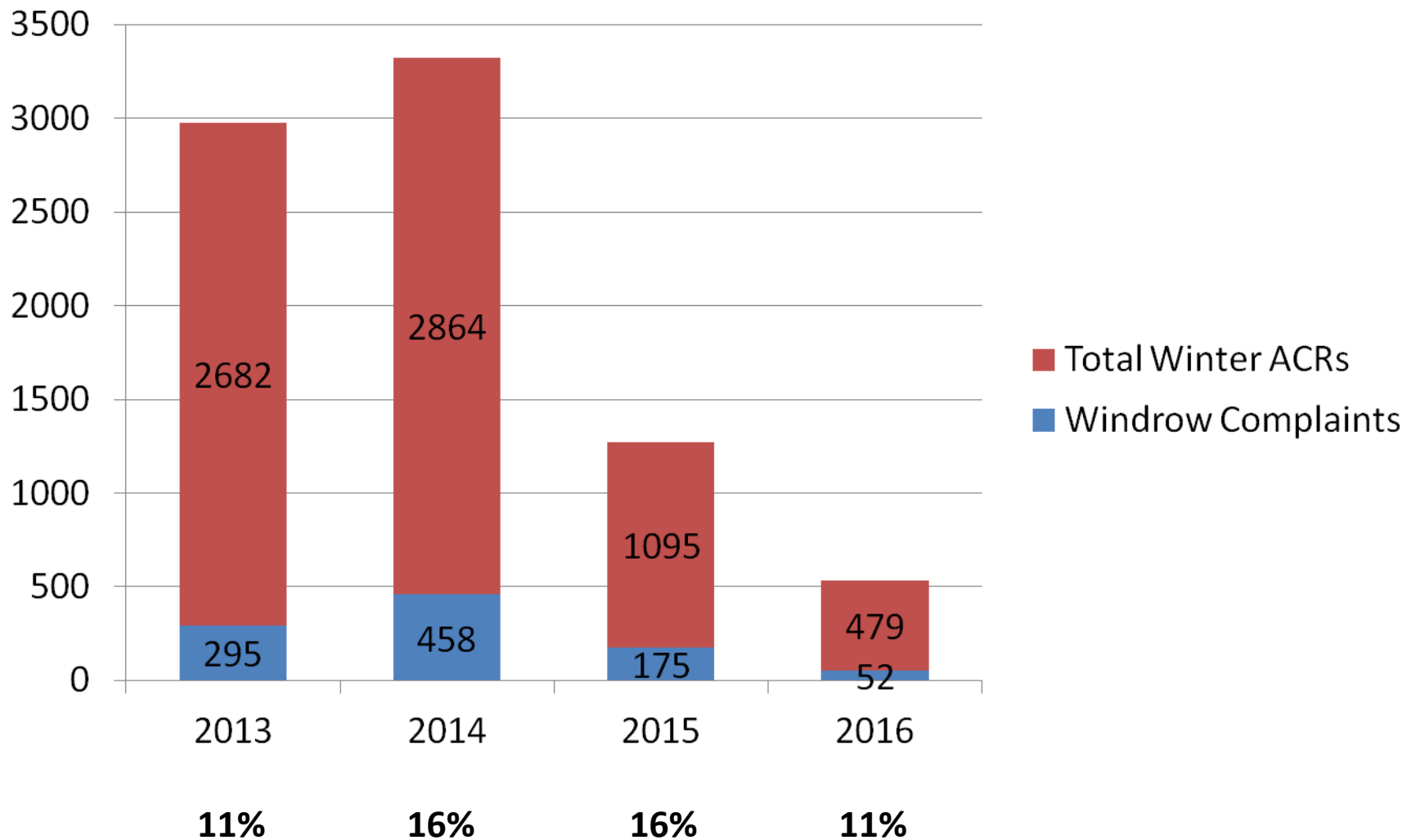
September 2016	2017	Fall 2017	May 1, 2018	Spring 2018	June 2018
Communicate with residents	Communication Plan Q1-Q2  Public open houses	Participants advise Contact Centre of Windrow/Rebate intention.  Participants arrange own snow plowing	Participants submit 2017-2018 contractor proof to Contact Centre	Assess Pilot	Report to Council

# Windrow Rebate Program – Benchmarking

## City of Brampton – Rebate Program

- Grant program to help senior citizens and physically challenged homeowners receive a grant of up to \$200 for non-corner lot properties or up to \$300 for corner lot properties.
- Grant fees recently adjusted through a review of invoicing fees which could be as high as \$700.
- Program is intended to offset both windrow and sidewalk maintenance.
- The number of participants fluctuates between 1800 – 2000 residents.
- The total costs to participants was approximately \$360,000 for the 2015-16 winter season.
- There is no formal screening process, this is an honour system.

## Windrow ACR Complaints



## 2017 Windrow Budget Requirement

- The 2016 budget for Seniors Windrow Removal Program was \$237,270 for 3,200 properties. As of May 2016, the number of properties has increased to 3,500. Based on historical trending, staff estimates there could be additional growth of 200 properties to bring the total to 3,700 qualifying for the senior windrow removal program in 2017. This would result in a budget increase of \$37,000 from \$237,270 to \$274,270.

<b>Current Windrow Budget</b>	<b>12 trucks for 3,200 properties</b>	<b>\$237,270</b>
Growth	Additional 500 properties (\$74 x 500)	\$37,000
<b>2017 Windrow Program</b>	<b>13 trucks for 3,700 properties</b>	<b>\$274,270</b>



# Markham Pathway Maintenance Practices

- The City has an inventory of approximately 151 kilometres of pathways. City-wide. The pathway system is located in parks, parkettes, valleylands, and woodlots. Pathways are considerably different than sidewalks in terms of use and method of construction.
- There is no provincially legislated service level for maintaining pathways.
- Current practice is to clear snow from hard surfaced, street to street pathways only.
- Safe pedestrian routes are provided on City sidewalks.
- Other City pathways are currently posted with sign “NO WINTER MAINTENANCE PROVIDED”.

# Markham Pathway Maintenance Practices Cont'd

Maintenance is not provided for the following reasons:

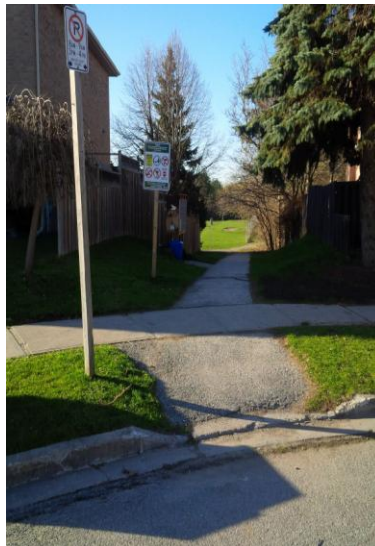
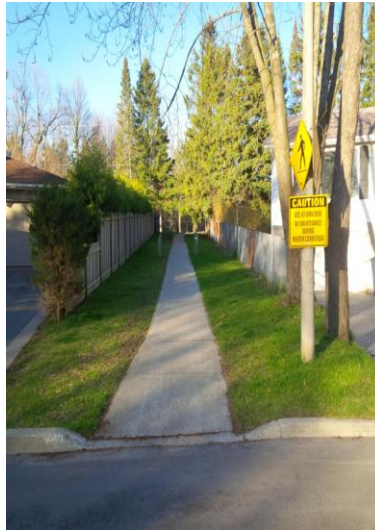
- Pathways can be constructed of asphalt, gravel or simply be a well worn path.
- Pathways are difficult to find under snow cover.
- Limestone pathways provide durable, accessible & environmentally sustainable recreational surfaces.
- Pathway bedding construction is different than sidewalks as increased bedding is required to support the machines required to provide maintenance.
- Damage to pathways would be considerable to any of the surface types during winter operations.
- Positive drainage during freeze/thaw cycles in pathways is inconsistent, exposing the City's risk exposure for claims due to slip and falls.
- Pathways are not typically illuminated ensuring visibility for safe footing.

# Pathway Winter Maintenance Financial Costs

- The cost to maintain the pathway system during winter months would be approximately \$692,197 annually, including the cost to maintain and repair the pathway system for summer use.

Type	Cost
Snow Clearing	\$ 400,000
Repair Costs	\$ 12,390
Turf Repair	\$ 120,649
Limestone Repair	\$ 69,158
Program Oversight	\$ 90,000
Total Cost	\$ 692,197

# Winter Maintenance & Pathways City-Wide



# Recommendations

1. That the City continue its current practice of providing windrow snow clearing to eligible residents.
2. Operations staff recommends the City continues its current practice of not providing snow clearing services for pathways throughout the City during winter months.
3. That the 2017 budget for the windrow clearing program be increased by \$37,000 from \$237,270 to \$274,270 to accommodate growth.

# Discussion