



COMMON COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING

**GENERAL SERVICE, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
Michael O'Brien, Chair**

DATE: Monday, March 23, 2020

PLACE: Chambers – 2nd Fl. City Hall

TIME: 5:30 PM

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:

RESOLUTION NUMBER 6.21.20R

**RESOLUTION TO PROMOTE EQUITY IN PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND
MOBILITY BY IMPROVING SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL FROM CITY SIDEWALKS,
STREET CROSSINGS AND BUS STOPS**

**DISCUSSION ABOUT WALKABILITY AND ACCESS ISSUES THROUGHOUT THE
YEAR**

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: Yes

Councilmember Fahey introduced the following:

RESOLUTION NUMBER 6.21.20R

RESOLUTION TO PROMOTE EQUITY IN PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND MOBILITY BY IMPROVING SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL FROM CITY SIDEWALKS, STREET CROSSINGS AND BUS STOPS

WHEREAS, the City of Albany is subject to significant intermittent snowfall and ice storms over a period of five months in every year that impedes the mobility and safety of its residents; and

WHEREAS, great efforts have been made and considerable resources expended annually by the City to clear its streets of snow and ice for vehicle traffic and parking by instituting a citywide Snow Emergency plan; and

WHEREAS, it is only fair and equitable that individuals who walk or take public transportation have comparable safe access to City streets and sidewalks after significant snow and ice storms; and

WHEREAS, some improvements have been made to reduce the time period by which property owners are required to clear their sidewalks; and

WHEREAS, the City does clear a certain number of sidewalks and street corners of snow and ice on a regular basis to improve pedestrian access; and

WHEREAS, the Capital District Transportation Authority does clear snow and ice at high volume bus stops on a regular basis; and

WHEREAS, these efforts are wholly insufficient because snow and ice removal remains a significant obstacle across the City for all pedestrians particularly low income and disabled individuals, seniors and children; and

WHEREAS, crossing at street corners or waiting at bus stops caked with large mounds of ice and snow place all pedestrians but particularly the young, elderly and disabled at risk of serious injury; and

WHEREAS, the education of young children is seriously impaired because families who depend on walking or bus transportation are more likely to keep the children home during winter months because of the treacherous condition of the sidewalks; and

WHEREAS, a high percentage of residents in the City of Albany do not have access to a personal vehicle and are dependent on either walking or taking public transportation to fulfill essential daily tasks and obligations; and

WHEREAS, establishing equity for Albany residents by reducing racial, social and economic disparities in all aspects of public life is a goal of both the Mayor and Common Council; and

WHEREAS, the current inability of pedestrians to safely access streets and sidewalks due to snow and ice in the winter months is a major disparity;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and her administration take the necessary steps to address the pervasive inequity and disparity that exists with regard to the removal of snow and ice from City sidewalks and streets during the winter months; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor involve the Capital District Transportation Authority in discussions regarding improvements needed to improve pedestrian access to bus stops during winter months; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and staff solicit input from the community as to improvements needed and potential solutions to effectively clearing snow and ice from streets and sidewalks.

To: Danielle Gillespie, City Clerk
From: John-Raphael Pichardo, Esq., Research Counsel
Re: Request for Common Council Legislation
Supporting Memorandum
Date: January 15, 2020

RESOLUTION NUMBER 6.21.20R

TITLE

A RESOLUTION TO PROMOTE EQUITY IN PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND MOBILITY BY IMPROVING SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL FROM CITY SIDEWALKS, STREET CROSSINGS AND BUS STOPS.

GENERAL PURPOSE OF LEGISLATION

To promote improvements in the law regarding snow and ice removal from sidewalks, street crossings and bus stops and ensure equity and parity for residents whose primary mode of travel is walking and/or accessing public transportation with those residents who drive vehicles

NECESSITY FOR LEGISLATION AND ANY CHANGE TO EXISTING LAW

Large snowfalls and ice accumulation during winter months continue to result in impassable street crossings, sidewalks, and inaccessible bus stops. The safety and mobility of low income and disabled individuals, seniors and young children is impeded. Snow removal from City streets for motorized vehicles has been prioritized over pedestrian access to streets and sidewalks creating an inequitable use of public funds and resources that must be addressed.

FISCAL IMPACT(S)

To be determined
