



# **WHY SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL MATTERS**



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# WHY SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL MATTERS

Despite how much snow Duluth gets, it requires clearing over 400 miles of sidewalks to ensure accessibility, public safety, and the well-being of every community member—including you. While the City of Duluth is responsible for clearing snow alongside city property, collaboration between residents and local businesses is essential for keeping sidewalks clear of snow and ice.

Prioritizing sidewalk snow removal also fosters a livable community for all ages by helping you and your fellow community members safely access and navigate sidewalks during daily commutes to work, medical appointments, errands, and civic and social engagements.

In addition to enhancing a livable community for all ages, sidewalk snow removal can positively impact the local economy and protect the integrity and longevity of Duluth's infrastructure for present and future generations.



## **The City of Duluth Comprehensive Plan states:**

“An important component of the pedestrian infrastructure is facilities that provide accessibility for all.” Given Duluth’s winter climate, it’s vital to maintain sidewalk accessibility in all weather conditions.

### **SECTION**

# **1**

## **IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY**

People with disabilities have experienced long-standing inequities, including but not limited to accessibility, employment, education, healthcare, and social inclusion.

By enabling safe access to sidewalks throughout the year, we can ensure everyone, from transit riders and students to older adults and individuals with mobility or cognitive challenges, can safely and freely participate in all aspects of their community life.

When we all do our part to prioritize sidewalk accessibility, we create a more inclusive and equitable community for everyone to safely access public transportation, health care, essential services, and opportunities for employment, education, and social activities.

In addition to cultivating a more accessible, inclusive, and equitable environment, clear sidewalks can help facilitate safe access to homes and essential services—ensuring all community members receive prompt support from police, emergency responders, and home health services.



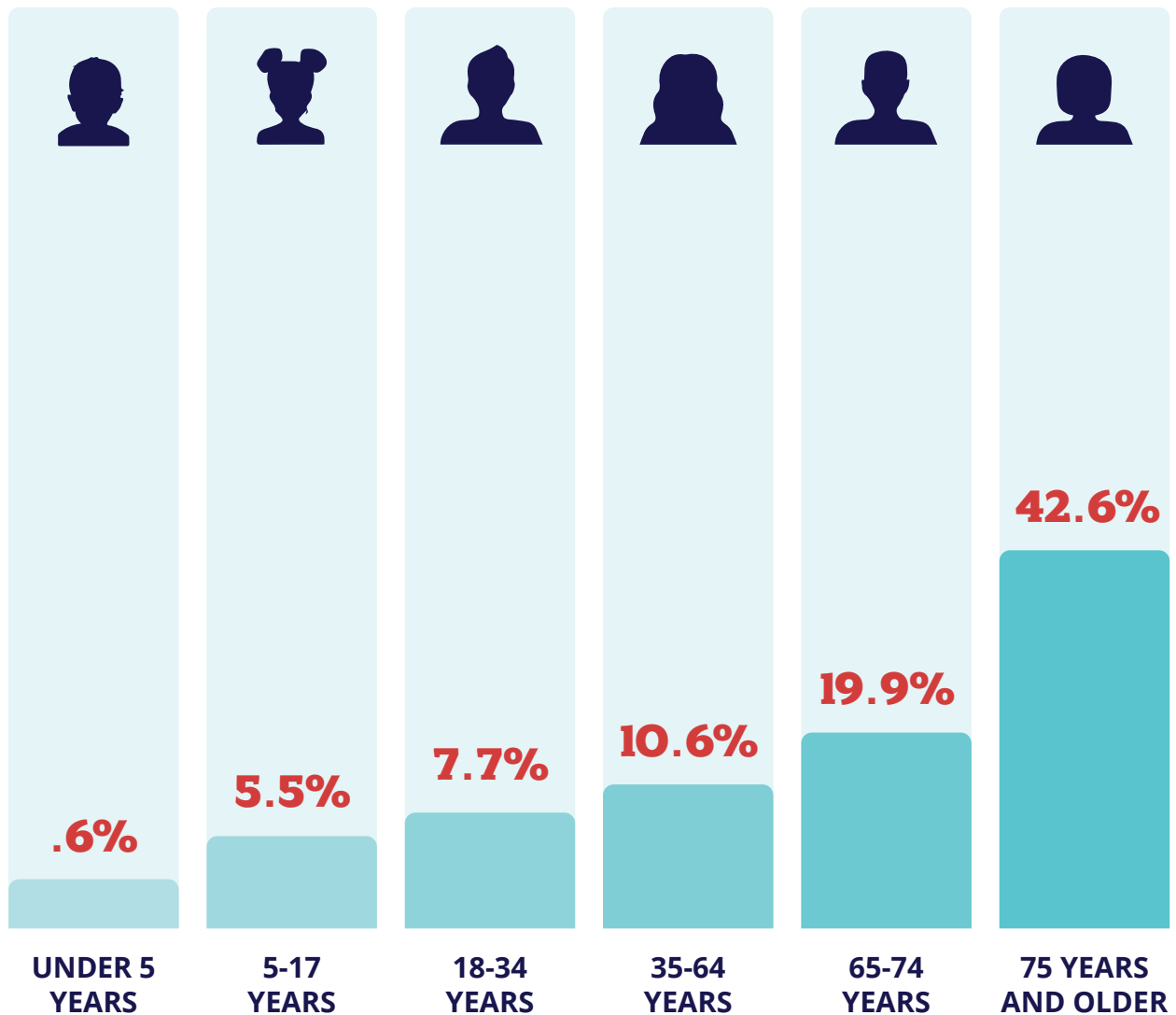
## SECTION 1 - AT A GLANCE

# IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY

- ✓ People with disabilities have experienced long-standing inequities, including but not limited to accessibility, employment, education, healthcare, and social inclusion.
- ✓ Sidewalk snow removal creates a more inclusive and equitable community for all, regardless of physical or cognitive ability.
- ✓ Access to clear sidewalks also enables all community members to receive prompt support services from police, emergency responders, and home health services.
- ✓ By working together, we can create a more accessible community that ensures everyone, from transit riders and students to older adults and individuals with mobility or cognitive challenges, can safely access and navigate their community.

# Percent of all Minnesotans with one or more disabilities

**11.5%**



\*Source: Minnesota Compass



## SECTION

# 2

## IMPACT ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Maintaining clear sidewalks is essential for ensuring public safety, especially for children, transit riders, older adults, individuals with mobility or cognitive challenges, and those who depend on outside sources for essential goods and services.

In addition to preventing injuries from slips and falls, keeping sidewalks clear from snow and ice can help enhance visibility for pedestrians and drivers alike. This improved visibility enables pedestrians to navigate their city safely and confidently. At the same time, drivers can better anticipate and respond to potential hazards or obstacles on the road—further reducing the risk of accidents or collisions involving pedestrians.

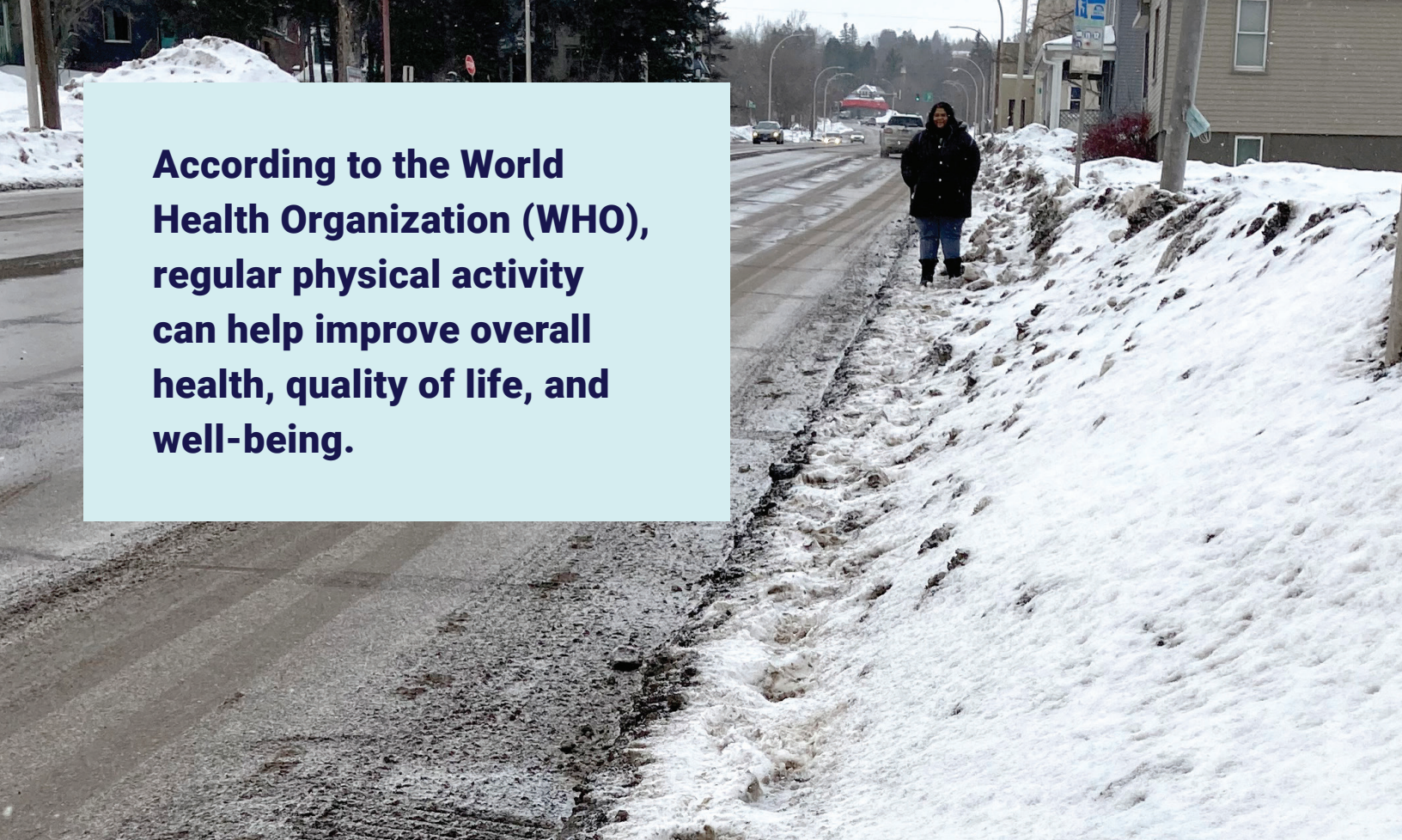
Beyond ensuring safety for pedestrians and drivers, accessible sidewalks can also help facilitate quicker emergency response times for those in need. When sidewalks are clear from snow and ice, they can empower law enforcement and residents to monitor neighborhood activity more effectively. This heightened vigilance can serve as a deterrent to criminal behavior and further contribute to the overall public safety of our community.



## SECTION 2 - AT A GLANCE

# IMPACT ON PUBLIC SAFETY

- ✓ Sidewalk snow removal ensures public safety—especially for children, public transit riders, older adults, individuals with mobility or cognitive challenges, and those who depend on them to deliver essential goods and services.
- ✓ Maintaining clear sidewalks can reduce the risk of slips and falls and enhance visibility for pedestrians and drivers alike.
- ✓ Clear sidewalks can facilitate quicker emergency response times for those in need.
- ✓ Improved sidewalk accessibility and visibility can also empower law enforcement and residents to monitor neighborhood activity and help deter criminal activity.



**According to the World Health Organization (WHO), regular physical activity can help improve overall health, quality of life, and well-being.**

## SECTION 3

# IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Prioritizing clear pathways year-round can positively impact the health and well-being of everyone in our community. Sidewalk accessibility can also encourage fellow residents to stay active and engage in physical activities such as walking, running, and cycling, even during the winter. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), regular physical activity can help improve overall health, quality of life, and well-being.

In addition to increasing physical activity, clear pathways can help foster a safer environment where older adults and individuals with mobility challenges can safely access essential amenities, services, and programs—including but not limited to public transportation, grocery stores, pharmacies, medical facilities, and community centers.

When individuals can access essential services and engage with neighbors, friends, and family members in their community, they're more likely to experience a greater sense of belonging and connection that leads to increased happiness and overall well-being.





## SECTION 3 - AT A GLANCE

# IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- ✓ Prioritizing clear pathways year-round promotes the health and well-being of all community members.
- ✓ Keeping sidewalks clear of snow and ice encourages residents to stay active and engage in physical activities like walking, running, and cycling, even in the winter.
- ✓ Accessible pathways foster a safer environment that allows older adults and individuals with mobility challenges to access essential amenities, services, and programs.
- ✓ Enabling residents to access essential services and engage with community members can foster a greater sense of belonging and well-being.



**An age-friendly community includes safe, walkable streets, housing and transportation options, access to needed services, and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life.**

## SECTION

# 4

## **IMPACT ON LIVABILITY FOR ALL AGES**

Creating a more accessible, inclusive, and livable community for people of all ages starts with reshaping how we think, feel, and act toward others and ourselves based on age.

With the population of Minnesotans 65 or older expected to increase by 33% between 2021 and 2037, ensuring year-round sidewalk accessibility is even more vital for creating and sustaining a livable community.

Sidewalk snow removal goes beyond ensuring accessibility for older adults and individuals with mobility challenges year-round; it also calls for challenging the misconception that older adults aren't active during the winter.

By collectively keeping sidewalks clear from snow and ice, we can champion change and advocate for a better place to grow up and grow older, regardless of age, ability, or circumstances.



## SECTION 4 - AT A GLANCE

# IMPACT ON LIVABILITY FOR ALL AGES

- ✓ Creating a more welcoming and livable community for all starts with shifting ageist attitudes—including how we feel about ourselves based on age.
- ✓ Combating ageist attitudes also includes challenging the misconception that older adults aren't active during the winter.
- ✓ With Minnesotans 65 or older expected to increase by 33% by 2037, ensuring year-round sidewalk accessibility is even more vital for creating a livable community.
- ✓ Through collaborative efforts to prioritize sidewalk snow removal, we can advocate for a better place to grow up and grow older for all.



## SECTION

# 5

## IMPACT ON LOCAL ECONOMY

Sidewalk snow removal plays a pivotal role in cultivating a thriving local economy. Beyond its immediate impact on safety and accessibility, clear sidewalks ensure residents can participate in our community, support local businesses, and access essential services like public transportation, grocery stores, and healthcare facilities.

When sidewalks are clear of snow and ice, community members and tourists are more likely to visit our city's new stores, restaurants, and other attractions. The increased pedestrian traffic from more visitors directly translates to increased visibility and patronage for local businesses—further contributing to the local economy.

In addition to increased visibility and foot traffic to local businesses, sidewalk accessibility can empower entrepreneurs to invest in opening new storefronts, generating more jobs and stimulating economic growth.



## SECTION 5 - AT A GLANCE

# IMPACT ON LOCAL ECONOMY

- ✓ Sidewalk snow removal is pivotal in cultivating a thriving local economy that ensures residents can safely access businesses and essential services in our community.
- ✓ Community members and tourists are more likely to visit new stores, restaurants, and other local attractions when sidewalks are clear of snow and ice.
- ✓ The increased visibility and foot traffic to stores directly contribute to the local economy.
- ✓ Accessible sidewalks can also help empower new entrepreneurs to invest in storefronts, generating more jobs and stimulating economic growth.

**Sidewalks clear of snow and ice can help protect the integrity and longevity of our infrastructure, serving as vital pathways for all individuals to access a wide range of essential services.**



## SECTION

# 6

## IMPACT ON INFRASTRUCTURE

The importance of sidewalk snow removal extends beyond making Duluth a better place to live today; it's also about strengthening the backbone of our city and laying the groundwork for a more resilient and vibrant Duluth tomorrow.

By collectively prioritizing sidewalk snow removal, we're investing in protecting the integrity and longevity of our city's infrastructure. Clear sidewalks provide vital pathways for everyone to safely navigate and access public transportation, healthcare, essential services, and opportunities for employment, education, and more.

Sidewalk snow removal can also help prevent costly damages from cracks, potholes, and deterioration. As a result, public funds and resources can be reallocated to address other community needs that yield greater benefits for present and future generations.



## SECTION 6 - AT A GLANCE

# IMPACT ON INFRASTRUCTURE

- ✓ Prioritizing sidewalk snow removal can help build a stronger and more resilient city in the future.
- ✓ Clear sidewalks can also help safeguard the integrity and longevity of our city's valuable infrastructure.
- ✓ Keeping sidewalks clear of snow and ice can help prevent costly damages from cracks, potholes, and deterioration.
- ✓ Public funds can be reallocated toward other essential community needs instead of spent on costly damages.



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## **Learn more about Be MinneSNOWta NICE at [beminnesnowtanice.com](https://beminnesnowtanice.com)**

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Be MinneSNOWta NICE, led by the BMN Group, is dedicated to enhancing sidewalk accessibility, safety, and community well-being in Duluth all year long. To discover more about the BMN Group, shoveling tips, related resources, and more, please visit [beminnesnowtanice.com](https://beminnesnowtanice.com).

We also want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone in our community who has contributed to improving year-round sidewalk accessibility. Your dedication is truly appreciated and helps make Duluth a better place to live all year.

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