



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR EMANUEL LAUNCHES "ADOPT-A-SIDEWALK" CITYWIDE SHOVELING INITIATIVE**

*As Residents Prepare for Snow, City Launches New Initiative at [www.ChicagoShovels.org](http://www.ChicagoShovels.org)*

As Chicagoans prepare for today's expected snowfall, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced the official launch of "Adopt-A-Sidewalk," a citywide online shoveling initiative at [www.ChicagoShovels.org](http://www.ChicagoShovels.org).

"Winter preparedness and looking out for one another is everyone's responsibility," said Mayor Emanuel. "Today, with the "Adopt-A-Sidewalk" initiative, we are leveraging new technologies to bring neighbors together like never before. We all saw how this City came together during last year's blizzard. Neighbors, businesses and organizations helped one another to get through the snow and inclement weather. The spirit and goodwill we saw last year is something we want to continue and spread. Chicago is the city of big shoulders, so I am confident that it can lift some big shovels."

Launched earlier this month, [www.ChicagoShovels.org](http://www.ChicagoShovels.org) brings together various City and public resources to help navigate winter and snow-related issues. The public will be able to learn more about winter snow operations, access City resources, organize themselves around neighborhood-level activities and leverage new tools to navigate the Chicago winter.

The "Adopt-A-Sidewalk" web app feature allows neighbors to connect with each other to help shovel sidewalks and offers a platform for sharing resources. Neighbors "adopt-a-sidewalk" near their home by "claiming" it on an interactive map and will be able to see at-a-glance which sidewalks are claimed and have the option to connect with their neighbors to help keep their sidewalks clear. One section is powered by [www.OhSoWe.com](http://www.OhSoWe.com), which allows neighbors to share shovels and snow blowers.



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This is the first time the City has created a sidewalk dataset, which is used to visualize sidewalks on the map. Users of “Adopt-a-Sidewalk” can help improve this data by reporting addresses on the map that appear to be missing or incorrect.

In addition to “Adopt-A-Sidewalk,” the [ChicagoShovels.org](#) portal features several other elements:

- **Real-time Snow Plow Tracker:** During major snow cleanup efforts, the City will activate the real-time Plow Tracker map, allowing the public to see the locations of snow plows. This tool will be activated during snow events and is part of City efforts to improve public transparency around City services.
- **Volunteer “Snow Corps”:** Chicago Snow Corps is a new program that connects volunteers with residents in need of snow removal – such as seniors and residents with disabilities. Groups and individuals can volunteer to help those in need by contacting the City’s Chief Service Officer whose team will connect them with nearby shoveling requests from the Department of Family and Support Services and the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities. People who would like to request help can call 3-1-1.
- **New Winter Readiness Apps:** Chicago web and app developers have leveraged Chicago open data to build apps that help people better navigate Chicago this winter. [Twoinch.es](#) informs and alerts drivers of winter parking bans. [WasMyCarTowed.com](#) uses the City’s towed and relocated vehicle data to help people locate their towed vehicles. Other apps were developed as part of the AppsforMetro Chicago contest.
- **City Resource Links:** The public is one click away from submitting an online 311 request, viewing related press releases, finding answers to frequently asked questions, signing up for Notify Chicago alerts, watching educational videos and following the Mayor’s Office on Twitter.

The City is making the final code for “Adopt-A-Sidewalk” and [ChicagoShovels.org](#) available to other cities and municipalities interested in building on the technology for their own winter preparedness efforts.

The Department of Streets and Sanitation’s Snow Command will be carefully monitoring weather forecasts and data, the incoming weather system and our roadways during the overnight and early



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morning hours. Snow Trucks have been preloaded with salt, and drivers are ready to be deployed as necessary.

City officials are also reminding Chicagoans that by ordinance they are responsible for keeping the sidewalks near their property clean of snow and ice. In addition to online access to winter-related City services through [ChicagoShovels.org](http://ChicagoShovels.org), residents can also find additional information and make requests for services through 311, the City's service call center.

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