

Snowmarket Launches Platform to Let Cities Crowdsource Sidewalk Snow Removal

Cities post bounties on uncleared blocks, residents shovel and submit photos, and AI verifies the work — targeting 75% cost savings

MINNEAPOLIS, MN, UNITED STATES, March 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Snowmarket](#) today announced the launch of its crowdsourced sidewalk snow removal platform for municipal governments. The platform lets cities post bounties on sidewalk segments, community members claim and clear them via mobile app, and AI verifies the work before triggering instant payment. The platform replaces the fixed-cost fleet model that has priced cities out of clear sidewalks.

Every winter, cities face the same impossible math. Minneapolis spent \$230,000 on a sidewalk clearing pilot that generated strong public support, then shelved the program when the full rollout came back at \$40.6 million per year. Chicago's City Council voted 49-1 to fund a sidewalk plowing pilot in 2023, then cut it from the 2025 budget when a \$1.15 billion deficit made even \$1.1 million feel unaffordable. New York City pays 1,800 emergency shovelers \$30-45 per hour during storms while issuing 4,500+ violation summonses per winter.

The alternative, fining residents and hoping for compliance, has produced 142 ADA lawsuits against local governments, including a \$113 million settlement in Portland and \$44 million in Baltimore.

Snowmarket eliminates these fixed costs with a variable-cost, pay-per-block model. Cities set bounty rates by zone, street, or individual block. Community members claim blocks via mobile app and clear sidewalks with their own equipment. AI verification confirms the work through liveness detection, GPS spoofing checks, clearance quality assessment, and ADA compliance verification. Verified completions trigger instant payment via Stripe or other payment provider.

The platform targets 75% cost reduction, delivering citywide coverage at roughly \$10 million per year where Minneapolis estimated \$40.6 million.

No other platform combines municipal contracts, crowdsourced labor, and AI-powered verification. Consumer apps serve homeowners, not cities. Fleet management tools track plows but don't clear sidewalks. 311 systems intake complaints but provide no fulfillment. The AI verification pipeline represents the platform's deepest technical moat. The current industry

standard for verifying snow removal is a timestamped photo.

Snowmarket is in active outreach with five cities where political demand exists but affordability has blocked action: Minneapolis, where a \$230K pilot proved demand and a \$600K council allocation was recently reinstated; Chicago, with 49-1 political support stalled by budget constraints; Somerville, Massachusetts, home to the longest-running municipal sidewalk clearing pilot in the country; Boston, where an \$18.7 million snow budget ballooned to \$37 million in actual spending; and New York City, where 1,800 emergency shovelers already work at scale.

Three federal grant applications are in progress: Safe Streets for All (up to \$25 million), NSF Smart and Connected Communities (up to \$2.5 million), and DOT SBIR (up to \$1.5 million).

"Cities aren't choosing between clear sidewalks and unclear sidewalks. They're choosing between a \$40 million program they can't afford and a fine-based system that punishes the people they're supposed to serve," said Dan Fischer, founder of Snowmarket. "Community earning instead of community fines."

The U.S. snow and ice removal market exceeds \$4 billion annually, with the global market projected to reach \$109.69 billion by 2029. Over 40% of snow removal contractors face workforce shortages during peak months.

Snowmarket is available for pilot partnerships for winter 2026-2027. Programs typically cover 20-50 block segments at \$50,000 to \$200,000 depending on scope. Grant-funded deployments are available through CDBG, SS4A, and ADA compliance budgets. Contact dan@[snowmarket.app](mailto:dan@snowmarket.app) or visit snowmarket.app.

About Snowmarket

Snowmarket is the first platform for crowdsourced municipal sidewalk snow removal. Cities set bounty rates, community members claim and clear sidewalk segments via mobile app, AI verifies every job for quality and ADA compliance, and verified completions trigger instant payment. The platform targets 75% cost reduction by replacing fixed fleet infrastructure with a variable-cost model that scales with actual snowfall. Learn more at snowmarket.app

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