

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

Date 10/19/2020

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL POLICY1.0 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish goals for the City of Blaine regarding snow and ice control. This policy provides necessary direction for these operations and guidelines for employees and residents based on available resources.

Appropriate snow and ice control is necessary for emergency services as well as routine travel. Providing this service in a cost-effective manner is a discretionary decision of the City Council. It's not to be construed to create any duty to any individual, person or entity. This policy does not provide any special protection or service to any particular individual or group of individuals. No additional rights shall be granted any individual or entity simply by adoption and enforcement of this policy. This policy may be affected in total or in part, as a result of acts of God, strikes, equipment breakdown, weather conditions, inadequacy of equipment, state or federal regulations, shortage of personnel, and any other unforeseen, uncontrolled or unanticipated acts.

2.0 AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The City of Blaine has approximately 268 centerline miles or 558 lane miles of streets, 359 Cul-de-Sacs, 22 dead end streets, 104 additional medians or parking bump-outs, 99 miles of sidewalks and 63 miles of trails under its jurisdiction. The City maintains 10 outdoor ice skating sheets plus 5 outdoor hockey rinks in the winter. Public works staff clear parking lots at City Hall, the MaryAnn Young Center, Fire Stations, the Police Department, and 23 Parks.

In addition, Anoka County has jurisdiction over several miles of collector and arterial roads within the City. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) also has jurisdiction over several miles of highway within the City boundaries. This policy is intended to provide guidelines for snow and ice control operations for streets under the City's jurisdiction only. At this time, the City of Blaine does not have any contracts for service with either Anoka County or MnDOT, although the City will assist these agencies in emergency conditions, if requested.

3.0 PROCEDURE:

GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 The City of Blaine Public Works Department utilizes the practices presented in the Minnesota Snow and Ice Control Field Handbook for Snowplow Operators – Second Edition, September 2012 Published by the Minnesota Local Road Research Board and MnDOT Office of Maintenance. This handbook describes best practices for snow and ice control including progressive practices to limit environmental impacts while meeting the safety and mobility needs of roadway users.

COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS

- 3.2 Snow and/or ice control operations shall commence under the direction of the Public Works Streets Supervisor. In his absence, the Public Works Streets Foreman will determine when and what operations to begin.
- 3.3 The Supervisor shall determine the time to start and the extent of operations. The basis of dispatch calling the standby person to start operations shall be as follows:
- Snow accumulation of 2” with continuing snowfall warrants commencement of plowing operations.
 - Drifting of snow may warrant commencement of partial or full operations dependent on conditions.
 - Icing of pavements may warrant partial or full operations dependent on extent and conditions.
- 3.4 The Supervisor shall prepare crew assignments and shift assignments for all personnel involved in Snow and Ice control including streets, parks and utility personnel. Due to the fact that all available personnel are required for full operations, a storm forecast for late afternoon or evening hours might be the basis for the Supervisor splitting a shift and sending crew(s) home for call out later in the evening. Morning storms likewise may be the basis for requesting crew(s) to report at later or earlier than normal hours.
- 3.5 Emergency Snow and Ice Conditions can change and occur after normal working hours. Coordination of these calls and conditions will be the responsibility of the Public Works Supervisor and the Police Department Duty Supervisor.

SUSPENSION OF OPERATIONS

- 3.6 Operations shall continue until all roads are passable. Widening and clean up operations may continue immediately or the following working day, dependent on

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conditions. Operations may also be suspended during periods of limited or zero visibility or during periods of high traffic. Any decision to suspend operations shall be made by the Supervisor on duty and shall be based on conditions of the storm.

EQUIPMENT

- 3.7 The Public Works Department uses a mix of heavy and light equipment for snow and ice control operations. Heavy equipment includes 4 tandem axle trucks, 12 single axle trucks, and 4 loaders or tractors. Light equipment includes 13 one ton or one and a half ton trucks, and 8 compact utility vehicles. This equipment has a variety of front plows, wing plows, underbody plows, and de-icing equipment to effectively manage the operations.

PLOW ROUTES AND SEQUENCING

- 3.8 The Public Works Supervisor has the responsibility of determining plow routes and sequencing of operations. The Supervisor shall retain latitude to adjust sequencing or route assignments based on storm conditions, equipment and personnel availability and/or other conditions warranting changes.
- 3.9 Operations include the following route designations:
- 16 primary plow routes cleared using heavy equipment.
 - 13 cul-de-sac routes cleared using light equipment.
 - 4 sidewalk routes cleared using compact utility vehicles.
 - 2 trail routes cleared using compact utility vehicles.
 - 2 front end loaders clearing parking lots.
- 3.10 The following attachments are included with this Policy:
- Attachment 1 - Snow Plow and Salting Routes 2020
 - Attachment 2 - Anti Icing Routes 2020
 - Attachment 3 - Cul-De-Sac Plowing 2020
 - Attachment 4 - Sidewalks and Trails 2020

LEVEL OF SERVICE

- 3.11 The intention of this policy is to provide safe winter driving conditions appropriate for the type of travel necessary on the City's streets. The level of service described herein shall be considered a guideline with the understanding that during and immediately after a storm, the level of service provided may be less than described herein and may vary across the City dependent on storm conditions.

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- 3.12 All City streets will be assigned to a route. Streets shall be plowed and/or include the application of de-icing materials to provide intermittent bare pavement on streets sections, bare pavement intersection approaches and curves. Cul-de-sacs and dead end streets may have few, if any, bare pavement spots. Gravel and dirt road surfaces shall be plowed to provide a hard pack surface and may include the application of sand or gravel chips as necessary for traction.
- 3.13 During light to normal snowfalls, streets will be plowed full width on the initial pass. During heavier snowfalls, streets shall be plowed as wide as possible initially and widened as the storm intensity lessens. The Public Works Supervisor shall determine if this practice is warranted. After the storm passes, clean up operations shall begin to clear intersections and snow storage areas along corners and boulevards. It is the City's intent to complete initial plowing and widening operations within 12 hours of the cessation of the storm. Clean up operations should be complete within 24 hours for light snowfalls, and within 48 hours for heavy snowfalls. Major blizzards may require additional time.
- 3.14 Snow will be plowed in a manner so as to minimize traffic obstructions. The center of the roadway will be plowed first. The snow shall then be pushed from left to right on two-way streets. On one-way streets or where there is a center boulevard, snow may be pushed in either direction. The discharge shall go onto the boulevard area of the street. Snow on cul-de-sacs will be plowed to the boulevard areas and not to the center. When a plow goes on a bridge, the driver shall slow down so snow does not go over the bridge, if possible. In times of extreme snowfall, streets will not always immediately be able to be completely cleared of snow.
- 3.15 Efforts will be made to clear City parking lots and Fire Stations in advance of opening hours in order to best maintain service to the community. Ice rinks shall also be cleared after street routes have been completed and in most cases after the snowfall has ended. In cases of severe storms, ice rinks may not be cleared until the next morning following the end of the storm.

SIDEWALKS AND TRAILS

- 3.16 The City of Blaine sidewalks and trails system connect the pedestrian and bicycle users throughout the community. Trails are identified on the City Park and Recreation trail map and are also included on the Anoka County Regional Trail system. These bituminous trails transverse through neighborhood parks and are adjacent to many City and County collector streets. The neighborhood trails provide a means for residents and school children to walk to school in areas that do not have sidewalks.

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These trails and the sidewalks that are traveled regularly by school children will receive a higher level of service than outlying trails that receive lesser or recreational use by the public. Sidewalks along the collector streets and sidewalks, serving public facilities, and shall be cleared by City forces in conjunction with normal operations with consideration of personnel available, starting time of operations and duration of the storm. There may be times during the winter when some lower priority trails will remain snow and ice covered. During the winter, periods of freeze / thaw and winter rain events, trails and sidewalks may become ice coated. Thawing snow and rain will sheet drain across the surface and will freeze since it cannot drain through the snow banks on both sides. The City does not apply deicers or abrasives on the trails and sidewalks, as it is cost prohibitive and would cause damage to the landscapes.

Pedestrians should use caution when walking on trails and sidewalks under these conditions. If the duration of a storm or several consecutive storms prevents completion of snow removal operations of all infrastructures, highest priority trails and sidewalks will receive service prior to the lower priority ones which may be in lower populated areas.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESIDENTS AND RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENTS:

Residents are partners with the City in managing snow and ice. Individual properties are equally affected during storm events and residents are expected to exercise a level of care in managing the areas in front of their properties along the streets.

Right-of-Way and Boulevards: The Right-of-Way is the full width of the property reserved for the street and utilities. The boulevard is the area between the edge of the street or back of curblin and the front property line of a home or business. The Boulevard is used for underground or overhead utilities and utility structures, traffic control devices and signs, sidewalks, drainage, trees. The boulevard is also reserved for the storage of plowed snow.

Even in the best conditions and despite the best efforts of the operator, snow plowing and ice control operations can cause property damage. The major types of damage are to improvements in the Right-of-Way and landscape damage. It is appropriate to specify when this damage shall be the responsibility of the City and when it shall be the responsibility of the resident

CLEARING DRIVEWAYS AND AROUND MAILBOXES OR HYDRANTS

- 4.1 The residents have the responsibility for clearing their own driveways and private sidewalks, clearing areas for trash cans, clearing areas around mailboxes and/or newspaper delivery tubes, and clearing around fire hydrants adjacent to their

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property. In the case of clearing, the City will consider clearing around fire hydrants for residents not physically able to do so, if and when time permits.

These areas should be cleared without depositing any snow onto the streets. Plowing, blowing or shoveling snow back onto the street or sidewalk can create a hazardous condition for other users and is illegal. Minnesota Statute 169.42, prohibits depositing, placing or dumping upon any street or highway or upon any public or privately owned land adjacent thereto without the owner's consent any snow or ice, etc. There must also be no large piles, which obstruct vision of driveways or walks. Should the City need to clear away tall piles of snow for safe sight distance at driveways or walks, the resident responsible may be billed at overtime rates for this work.

- 4.2 The City will not clear private drives except in emergency situations as determined by the Public Works Director or his designee. Request for service on private roads or driveways will be accommodated in the event of a public safety issue or an emergency condition exists.
- 4.3 Snow plowing operations can cause additional snow to be deposited in driveway approaches and around roadside obstacles. Operators are instructed to attempt to minimize these incidents, but it is not practical to eliminate this situation. Residents should be aware that they might have to clear their driveways a second time after their street has been plowed.

LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS

- 4.4 Improvements in the Right-of-Way may include mailboxes, planter boxes, lighting fixtures, and irrigation systems. These items have been placed in the City's property, in most instances, without notification or permission of the city. Mailboxes and similar objects are quite often obvious and easy to avoid. Low structures and irrigation systems are impossible to identify after a storm. The staking of these obstructions and fixtures is indeed helpful, although the City cannot accept responsibility for any damage.

MARKERS

- 4.5 Marking stakes may be placed in the Right-of-Way with approximately 15 foot spacing along curb lines or next to landscaping improvements such as retaining walls, boulders, planters, sprinkler heads, etc. in an effort to assist the plow drivers in identifying their location during operations. Markers must be of lightweight and/or flexible material so not to damage vehicles or equipment that may come in contact with the stake. Preferred materials are standard 3/8" wood lathe, small diameter fiberglass rods, or aluminum driveway markers. Steel fence

posts are not acceptable as these can cause significant damage to plow equipment when pushing back snow banks to accommodate additional snow storage.

MAILBOXES

- 4.6 Mailboxes should be constructed sturdy enough to withstand snow rolling off a plow or wing. Damage resulting from snow is the responsibility of the resident. The City will accept responsibility for damage if a mailbox is physically struck by a plow and if the mailbox post is considered to be of proper construction in accordance with US Postal guidelines.
- The base of the box should be 48 to 50 inches above street level.
 - The mailbox should be secured to the base and post, and the post in good condition.
 - The post should be 20 inches back from the curb. The face of the mailbox should line up with the curb.
 - The snowplow wing needs the 48 inches height clearance to avoid hitting the box and the 20 inches from the curb to clear the post. The city does not assume liability for mailboxes damaged during plowing operations, unless it is determined the plow made direct contact with a mailbox that is properly installed using the standard 4 x 4 post and metal box requirements.
 - There should not be any plastic newspaper tubes or attachments to the mailbox below the 44 inches minimum height requirement.
- 4.7 The City will repair, replace or reimburse the resident up to \$50.00, in those instances where the City has caused physical damage as a result of direct contact with the mailbox. Installation of a new mailbox and / or post is not included in this policy and will not be performed without authorization from the Public Works Director or his designee. The City will have the choice of whether to repair or replace or reimburse; and will only reimburse the cost of materials. The City will only replace or reimburse the cost of a standard designed mailbox and post. Decorative boxes and posts are the responsibility of the property owner.
- 4.8 The snowplow operators make every effort to remove snow as close to the curb line as practical and to provide access to mailboxes for the Postal Department. However, it is not possible to provide perfect conditions and minimize damage to mailboxes with the size and type of equipment the City operates. Therefore, the final clearing adjacent to mailboxes is the responsibility of each resident.

SOD DAMAGE

- 4.9 Sod damage in the right-of-way during snow removal will be the responsibility of the City. Damage to sprinkler irrigation systems is not included and will not be repair, replaced, or reimbursed by the City. The adjacent property must notify the

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Public Works Department of a damaged area prior to April 15 by contacting the Public Works Department at 763-785-6165. The Public Works Department will then perform an inspection to verify the damaged area after which a claim for the damage can be made. The Public Works Department will repair the area with black dirt and seed. The City will not replace the damaged area with sod.

The property owner has an option for sod damage reimbursement payment on a square foot basis if they prefer to repair it on their own. The property owner must notify the Public Works Department, as described above, prior to repairing to allow for inspection to verify the damage. The property owner requesting damage reimbursement for the area to be repaired with sod, the property owner will be reimbursed at a rate of \$.30 per square foot of the damaged area within the right-of-way. In addition to square footage reimbursement, an additional administrative / replacement fee of \$5.00 will be allocated to the property owners incurring 50 square feet of damage or less, and a fee of \$10.00 will be allocated to those property owners incurring in excess of 50 square feet of damage. This administrative fee is designed to cover expenses involved in obtaining necessary materials to repair the damage. Payment shall be made by a check forwarded from the City Finance Department to the affected property owner.

The City of Blaine will not be responsible for watering of either option.

GARBAGE CANS

- 4.10 Trash cans must not be placed on the street surfaces. Trash cans should be placed in the cleared driveway area or an area cleared to allow for their placement up to two feet behind the curb when waiting for pickup.

5.0 PARKING RESTRICTIONS:

Parking restrictions are regulated by the City of Blaine, MN Code of Ordinances – Part II, Chapter 82 – Traffic and Vehicles, Article IV. – Stopping, Standing, and Parking:

Sec. 82-151. - General time limitation on leaving vehicle in public right-of-way.

- (a) No owner of any vehicle or person in charge of any vehicle shall park or permit such vehicle to stand upon any highway, street, or alley in the city for more than 48 consecutive hours at any time. Any vehicle moved a distance of not more than three-tenths of a mile during this period shall be deemed to have remained stationary.
- (b) From November 1 to April 1, no person shall park or permit to be parked any vehicle on any highway, street, or alley between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. without an emergency parking permit issued by the city police department. Any vehicle parked in violation of this section may be removed as provided by

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section 82-61. The term "highway, street, or alley" shall be construed to mean the entire width of the right-of-way.

(Code 1963, § 3.01; Code 1980, § 19-30; Ord. No. 86-942, 5-1-1986; Ord. No. 87-1009, 2-19-1987; Ord. No. 88-1061, 2-4-1988; Ord. No. 19-2433, 8-19-2019)

Sec. 82-152. - Parking during snowfall.

It shall be unlawful to park or permit to be parked, or to continue to park or permit to stand, any vehicle upon any street after two inches or more of snowfall, until such time as the snow has been plowed from the street, curb to curb.

(Code 1963, § 3.02; Code 1980, § 19-31; Ord. No. 14-2297, 10-16-2014; Ord. No. 19-2433, 8-19-2019)

6.0 COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:

Complaints regarding snow and ice control or damage shall be taken during normal working hours and handled in accordance with the City's normal complaint procedure. High priority complaints (those involving access to property or problems requiring immediate attention) shall be handled on a priority basis. Response time should not exceed 24 hours for any complaint. It should be understood that complaint responses are to insure that the provisions of this policy have been fulfilled and that all residents of the City have been treated uniformly. Complaints regarding the provisions of this policy may not be satisfied with the initial response. It is the City's intention to log all complaints and upgrade this policy as necessary and in consideration of the constraints of our resources.

7.0 ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY:

Improvements in technology, materials and methods may from time to time, lead the City to change or alter its methods of snow and ice control. Any foreseeable changes in operations will not be in conflict with the intent of this policy. These changes may be segregated in areas of the City for evaluation purposes or occur Citywide. It is the City's intent to provide the highest level of service through the personnel, equipment, methods and budget as is possible.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Public Works to enforce this policy and review it as needed.

Michelle A. Wolfe
City Manager