



City Council Memorandum

To: Mayor Fasbender & City Council Members
From: Ryan Stempski – Public Works Director/City Engineer
Date: November 6, 2023
Item: Approve Updated Snow Plowing and Ice Control Policy

Council Action Requested:

The Council is requested to approve the attached Snow Plowing and Ice Control Policy.

Background Information:

The City's snow removal policy was last updated in 2011. Public Works reviewed and updated the policy to be current. The existing document was based on the League of Minnesota Cities model policy. No significant changes are proposed to current practices, policies, and operations. The Snow Removal Operations Plan was updated to reflect the current snow removal equipment and their impact on operations.

The Operations Committee was provided the updated policy and did not have any comments or concerns on the minor changes to make the policy current.

Financial Impact:

Neutral budgetary impact

Attachments:

- Snow Plowing and Ice Control Policy

Snow Plowing and Ice Control Policy

2023

1. Purpose of the Policy

The City of Hastings Public Works Department assumes basic responsibility for snow and ice control on city-owned streets. The City of Hastings does not maintain or do snow removal on State or County Roads. (Hwy's 61, 316, 55, 47, 42/2nd St. West of Eddy). The City also does not maintain or do snow removal on private roads. Public Works will use City employees, equipment, and materials to provide this service. At times, and with the approval of senior staff, services may be contracted out on an as-need basis. The City will attempt to provide such services while keeping safety, budget, personnel, and environmental concerns in mind. This policy does not relieve operators of private vehicles, pedestrians, property owners, residents, and all others using public streets, of their responsibility to act in a prudent manner, given the conditions.

2. Policy and Procedures

A. When the City will begin Snow or Ice Control

The Public Works Superintendent or designee will decide when to begin snow or ice control. There are many contributing factors that may warrant snow/ice control to begin, including but not limited to:

- Snow accumulation or drifting.
- Icy conditions which seriously affect travel.

- Time of snow in relation to heavy use of streets

In an event where there is freezing rain, ice, or trace amounts of snow, Public Works staff will make the determination if salting/plowing is needed, and the amount of personnel and equipment.

B. How Snow will be Plowed

Snow will be plowed in a manner that minimizes traffic obstructions. The center of the road will be plowed first, with the snow being pushed left to right until full width, or as close to full width as conditions allow. The exceptions to this are:

- Downtown Area- Driving lanes are cleared and snow is windrowed to the center, and hauled out at a later time.
- One-Way Streets and Center Islands- Snow may be pushed in either direction.
- Snow in cul-de-sacs will normally be plowed to boulevards (yards), except where a center island exists. When a cul-de-sac contains a center island, snow will be plowed towards both the center island and boulevard areas.

In times of extreme snowfall, streets will not always be completely cleared of snow. Public Works is not responsible for mailbox access.

C. Snow Removal

The Downtown area center windrows will be removed the next normal work day following snow removal operations. Public Works Staff will determine if and when snow will be removed

from all other areas. Such snow removal will occur in areas where accumulated snow creates a hazardous condition. Snow removal operations will not commence until all other snowplowing operations have been completed. Snow removal operations may be delayed depending on weather conditions, personnel, and budget availability. The snow will be removed and hauled to one of the City's designated snow storage areas.

D. Priorities and Schedule of Streets to be Plowed

Priority streets within our six plow routes are designated "Primaries". Streets with this designation have been selected based on street function, traffic counts, and importance to the welfare of the community. The second priority streets are the remaining lower volume streets (neighborhoods). The third priority streets are cul-de-sacs and alleys.

During snow events plowing of all other streets may be stopped, with personnel and equipment being shifted to priority routes.

E. Work Schedule for Snowplow Operators

Snowplow operators will be expected to work eight to twelve-hour shifts. No operator will be required to work a continuous shift greater than twelve hours, which shall include breaks.

During a normal event ten PW Operators, and ten pieces of equipment are used. (6 Trucks, 3 Tractor/loader, 1- One Ton)

An additional operator is required to complete utility checks at the Hydro plant, wells, and lift stations, along with any utility emergencies. In the absence of one or more operators, Public Works will utilize any remaining operators, Engineering Technicians with appropriate training, and Parks operators (in that order) to fill vacancies.

F. Traffic Regulations

The City recognizes that municipal snowplow drivers are exempt from traffic regulations set forth in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 169 while actively engaged in work on streets, except for regulations related to driving while impaired and safety of school children. <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/169>

G. Weather Conditions

Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of the snowplow operator and equipment. Factors that may delay operations include: severe cold, significant winds, and limited visibility.

H. Materials Used

The City uses two varieties of treated salt when there are hazardous ice or slippery conditions. Due to environmental concerns the City limits the use of such chemicals, and does not use sand for road treatment.

I. Sidewalks

With the exception of the Downtown area, the City will conduct snow removal on sidewalks abutting City property and those sidewalks immediately adjacent to the curbs. All other maintenance of sidewalks is the responsibility of abutting property owner.

The City Parks Department will remove snow from sidewalks abutting City property within 48 hours after the snowfall has stopped. Public works crews will remove snow from sidewalks immediately adjacent to curbs, only after all street plowing and post storm street cleanup is completed, and the windrowed snow in the Downtown area is removed.

J. Mailboxes

Mailboxes may be impacted by snow removal operations. The City's goal of "curb to curb" is not always attainable given conditions. This can impact the US Postal Services access, and may impede their ability to deliver mail. The City will not be responsible for mailbox accessibility issues.

Only mailboxes directly hit by a plow blade will be the responsibility of City to repair. The City will not be responsible for damage to mailboxes or support posts caused by snow or ice (wake from plow) coming into contact with the mailbox.

The City will conduct a review of each mailbox incident to determine where the responsibility lies.

If it is determined the City is responsible for repairs, the City at its discretion, offers two options:

1. At the owner's request, replace the mailbox with a standard size, non-decorative metal mailbox and replace post with a 4x4 decay resistant wood post, if necessary. Mailbox to be installed per USPS requirements.
2. Provide the mailbox owner reimbursement of \$75 to do repairs on their own.

K. Repair of Boulevard Turf Damage

During snow removal operations, the City or its contractors may cause damage to turf adjacent to streets and/or sidewalks. When Public Works notices or is notified of such damage, the location is noted and inspected once conditions allow. If repairs are deemed necessary, Public Works will seed and topsoil spots in the spring.

L. Irrigation, Lighting, Trees, Fences, Etc.

The City assumes no responsibility for damage to irrigation systems, private lighting, trees, shrubs, specialty grasses, rocks, landscaping or structural improvements around mailboxes and fences, or similar landscaping installed in City right-of-way or easements.

M. Trash Containers

The City assumes no responsibility for damage to trash containers. Trash containers must remain behind curb to achieve full width plowing.

N. Accidents

In the event snow removal equipment is involved in an accident with a pedestrian, moving or parked vehicle, or structure, the operator must immediately notify the Police Department and then their direct Supervisor. Based on provisions in the Employee Handbook, Chapter 11 Drug-Free Workplace, the employee involved in the accident may be subject to drug and alcohol testing as soon as possible after the accident has occurred.

Specific details of the incident will need to be documented for insurance purposes, including photos of the scene and damage to equipment or property. Documentation must be provided as soon as is safe to provide and in accordance with established procedures.

Appendix A

Snow Removal Operations Plan

Snow Event-Day #1

Streets

Equipment Used:

- 4- Single axle dump trucks with plows and spreaders
- 2- Tandem axle dump trucks with plows and spreaders
- 1- One-ton truck with plow and sander

The six dump trucks have assigned routes (see map) in which priority streets get plowed first. (denoted in red on map) Once the operator has completed the priority streets, they will then start on remaining streets. At any time, Public works may pull off of secondary streets and shift resources to priority ones.

When a route is completed, the operator will call others to check on the status of their routes. If needed, they will provide help finishing the

other routes. Plow operators should not return to the shop until all routes are completed.

Downtown Area

On an average snow event, the following equipment is assigned to the Downtown area:

- 1-Front end loader with plow
- 2- Bi-Directional tractors with plow
- 1-One-Ton Truck with plow and spreader

Downtown snow clearing operations will generally begin the morning following an event. City staff and equipment will clear downtown streets, and public owned parking lots with the exception of the parking ramp across from The Confluence.

Given the lack of boulevards in the Downtown area, windrowing of snow in the center of the street is necessary in much of the area. In areas that windrowing is not possible, snow may be stockpiled. Upon completion of the Downtown area, the tractors and loader will begin their respective cul-de-sac routes. The one-ton will complete the remaining alleys if needed.

Cul-de-sacs

Equipment Used:

- 1-Front end loader with plow
- 2-Bi-directional tractors

Public works performs snow removal on the City's 100 plus cul-de-sacs. Note: Not all cul-de-sacs are owned/maintained by the City. Typically, a

dump truck may do a pass or turn around in the cul-de-sac, but actual plowing of the cul-de-sac will be performed with one of the pieces equipment listed above. Due to low traffic volumes, cul-de-sacs are typically the last to be plowed. Dead end, no outlet, or areas with an island will be treated as a cul-de-sac.

Snow Event-Day #2

Downtown Area

Typically, the first normal working day following a snow event, the tractors or loader will go Downtown to clean up any snow from the sidewalks, and shape windrows for snow blowing. Once the initial cleanup is complete, staff or contractors will remove windrows of snow from center of street. The snow will then be hauled to one of the City's designated dump areas. Once complete, trucks may go back into routes to check for ice, and snow left from plowing around parked cars.

General Snow Removal Operations

Equipment Used

On a normal snow event the City of Hastings utilizes the following equipment:

- 4- Single axle dump trucks with plows and spreaders
- 2- Tandem axle dump trucks with plows and spreaders
- 2- Bi-directional tractors
- 1-Front end loader with plow
- 1- One-ton truck with plow and spreader

Weather Review & Scheduling

The Public Works Superintendent, Supervisor, or their designee will monitor weather forecasts and storm predictions, and mobilize Public Works snow and ice control as necessary. Timing and extent of mobilization will take into consideration the temperature, duration of storm, predicted accumulation, and available personnel/equipment, to better utilize the City's resources.

Parking Restrictions and Snow Emergency Notification

When two or more inches of snow has fallen at or measured by the Hastings Police Department, parking restrictions automatically go into effect. (City Ordinance 71.07). The Hastings Police Department will inform Public Works when a snow emergency goes into effect. No other notifications will be sent out. When a snow emergency is in effect, parking is prohibited on all City streets, until the streets are plowed to their full width.

Equipment Inspection and Calibration

All snow removal equipment must undergo a complete and thorough inspection each year. These inspections should be completed by October 15th of each year, or prior to the start of the next snow season. At a minimum, these inspections should include:

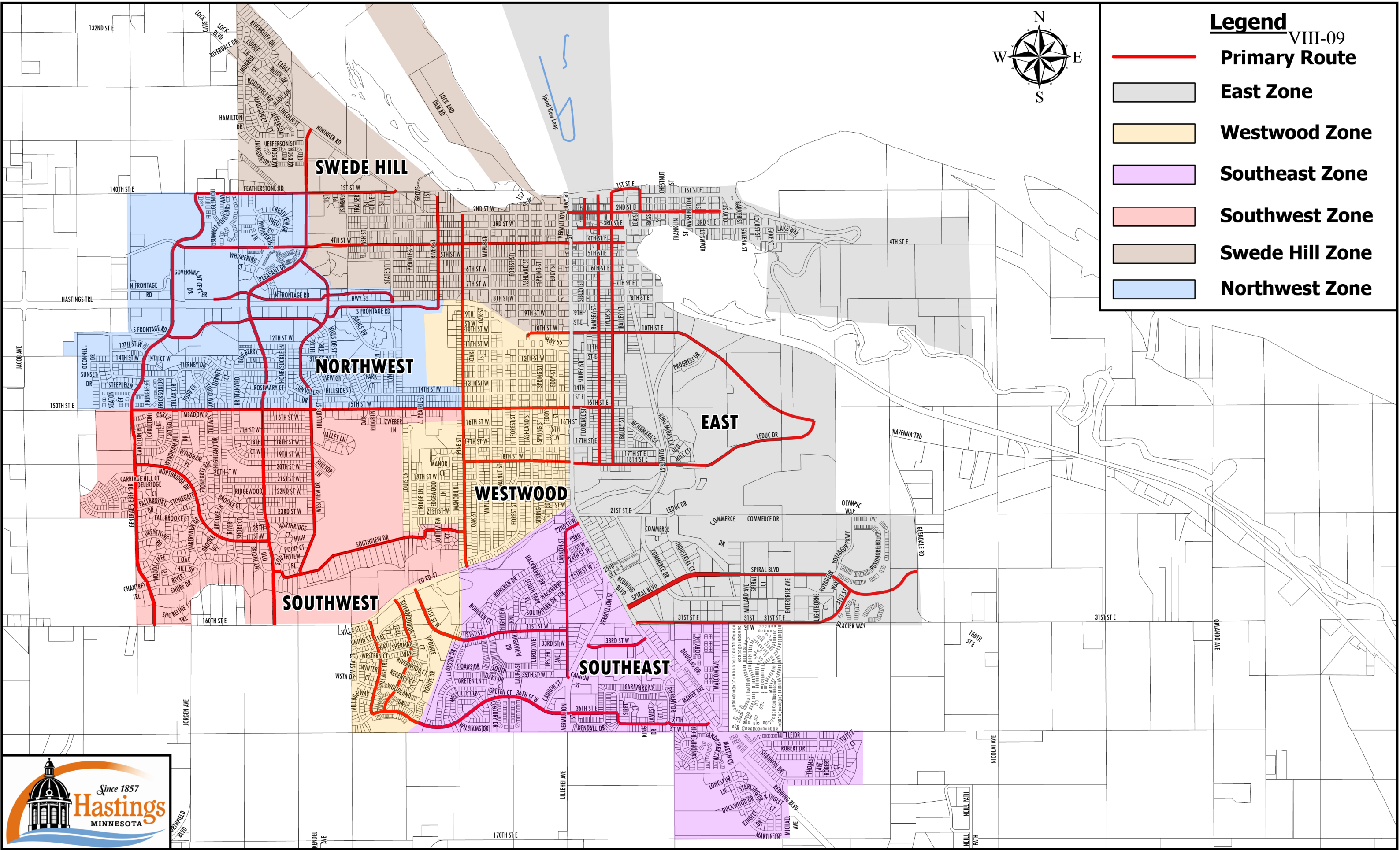
- All trucks must have current DOT inspection.
- Prior to leaving the shop, the driver will complete a daily DOT inspection checkoff, and make needed repairs.
- Check plows for cutting edge wear
- Check for breaks/ cracks in plow frame
- Check for hydraulic leaks

- Check plow for proper operation
- Check spreader for hydraulic leaks
- Check electrical connections
- Confirm proper operation of overall unit

In the fall of each year, every sander should be calibrated. Once the calibration rate is set, the controls are to remain in that position, unless material being applied changes.

Loading Procedures

If operators know they will be starting ice/snow removal early the next day, the trucks should be loaded with salt the night before. Operators should ensure the loaded truck is within state or federal weight regulations. An operator must be trained and qualified to operate the City's front-end loaders, before they are allowed to load City trucks.



2023 Plowing Zones & Primary Routes