



SNOWPLOWING POLICY

1. Introduction

The City of Bemidji believes it is in the best interest of the residents for the city to provide control of snow and ice on city streets. Reasonable ice and snow control is necessary for routine travel and emergency services. The city will provide such control in a safe and cost effective manner, within the limits of budget, personnel, and environmental concerns. The city will use city employees and equipment, and/or private contractors to provide this service.

2. When will city start snow or ice control operations?

The Street Superintendent and Public Works Director will decide when to begin snow or ice control operations. The general criteria for that decision are:

- A. Snow accumulation of 2 inches or more;
- B. Drifting of snow that causes problems for travel;
- C. Icy conditions which seriously affect travel; and
- D. Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy traffic times.

Snow and ice control operations are expensive and involve the use of limited personnel and equipment. Consequently snowplowing operations will not generally be conducted for snowfall of less than 2 inches.

3. How snow will be plowed

Snow will be plowed in a manner so as to minimize any traffic obstructions. The center of the roadway will be plowed first. The discharge shall go onto the boulevard area of the street. 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.

4. Snow removal

The Street Superintendent will determine when snow will be removed from the area by truck. Such snow removal will occur in areas where there is no room on the boulevard for snow storage and in areas where accumulated piles of snow create a hazardous condition. Snow removal operations generally will not commence until other snowplowing operations have been completed. Snow removal operations may also be delayed depending on weather conditions, personnel, and budget constraints. The snow will be removed and hauled to a snow storage area. The snow storage area will be located so as to minimize environmental

impact.

5. **Priorities and schedule for which streets will be plowed**

The city has classified city streets based on the street function, traffic volume, and importance to the welfare of the community. Those streets classified as “Snow Plow Routes” will be plowed first. These are high volume routes, which connect major sections of the city and provide access for emergency fire, police, medical services, and schools.

The second priority streets are those streets providing access to commercial businesses. The third priority streets are low volume residential streets. The fourth priority areas are alleys and city parking lots.

6. **Work schedule for snowplow operators**

Snowplow operators will be expected to work eight-hour shifts. In severe snow emergencies, operators may work in excess of eight-hour shifts. However, because of budget and safety concerns, no operator shall work more than a twelve-hour shift in any twenty-four hour period. Operators will take a fifteen-minute break every two hours with a half-hour meal break after four hours. After a twelve-hour day, the operators will be replaced if additional qualified personnel are available.

7. **Weather conditions**

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

8. **Use of sand, salt, and other chemicals**

The city will use sand, salt, and other chemicals when there are hazardous ice or slippery conditions. The city is concerned about the effect of such chemicals on the environment and will limit its use for that reason.

9. **Sidewalks**

The city removes snow from sidewalks that are adjacent to city-owned property. The list of those sidewalks is attached.

Generally the adjoining property owner is responsible for the snow and ice control of sidewalks.

10. **Authority**

The Street Superintendent, under the direction of the Public Works Director, shall be responsible for the City's snow removal and shall use their best judgement in directing snow and ice control operations. The decisions shall be based on the best interest of the City with due regard for the safety of the operators, traveling public, capabilities of the equipment, and budget constraints.

March 22, 2005

Approved _____
City Manager