

**Department of Public Works**

City Hall  
730 Washington Avenue  
Racine, WI 53403  
262.636.9121 – Public Works  
262.636.9191 - Engineering



John C. Rooney, P.E.  
Commissioner of Public Works/City Engineer

Thomas M. Eeg, P.E.  
Asst. Comm. of Public Works/Operations

To: Ald. Natalia Taft  
Finance & Personnel Committee

From: John Rooney  
Commissioner of Public Works

Date: December 2, 2020

Dear Ald. Taft,

DPW & Parks met the week of November 16, 2020 to discuss contingency planning for 2020-21 snow & ice operations. Due to FFCRA leave associated with COVID-19, sick days being used indiscriminately by employees, unfilled frozen positions from 2020, and impending retirements in January due to benefit cuts, DPW & Parks may be in the most untenable situation to respond to snow & ice since the Groundhog Day blizzard of 2011.

Unlike that unusual 24-hour blizzard from almost 10 years ago, this may be an issue resulting from any measurable snowfall that requires significant labor to perform pretreatment, plowing, push-backs and removal, if necessary. That said, the City will have to use contractors to remove snow from all city-owned parking lots and ramps. This includes not only the facilities under the purview of DPW, but Parks as well. If there is a shortage of labor to provide these operations due to circumstances described, all personnel from DPW and Parks will be deployed to snow & ice operations under the direction of the Superintendent of Public Works.

DPW & Parks will operate in the following manner for 2020-21:

1. Alley plowing, traditionally maintained by Parks Department, will be performed after **all** city streets are cleared by the combined efforts of DPW & Parks. DPW/Parks will focus on bare pavements, next residential districts, and then switch to alley operations.
2. As described, parking lots to city facilities and Parking System customers will be cleared of snow & ice by contractors hired to perform the work.
3. Clearing of city sidewalks under the purview of DPW and Parks will be done per normal operations, as by ordinance, they must be cleared of snow & ice within 24 hours.

We estimate the costs associated with snow removal of City-owned off-street facilities to be \$150,000 for the 2020-21 season. This is based on service rates provided to the City by contractors, the number of hours needed to perform the work, and an average of 16 operations per season. This work will be performed at 33 locations (25 Parking System facilities, 5 Community Centers, and 3 City Lots).

Staff estimates the following accounts need to be funded accordingly:

Parking System – Contracted Services	60383 – 52200	\$115,000
DPW Street Maintenance – Contracted Services	14010 – 52200	\$ 10,000
Parks Department – Contracted Services	15003 – 52200	\$ 25,000

We propose this to ensure the citizenry we can provide other essential services in the winter such as; solid waste and recycling collection, Christmas tree pick-up, pothole patching, de-icing sump-pump discharges, snow marker/barrels/fencing maintenance, etc.

If the committee agrees with the recommendation, then the appropriate action would be twofold:

1. To authorize the Finance Director to transfer funding in the amount of \$75,000 from the Contingency Fund to the aforementioned accounts as needed. If additional funding is needed later in 2021, the Commissioner of Public works will return to this committee to request authorization for additional allocations.
2. To authorize and direct the Purchasing Agent to negotiate and hire the contractors needed to remove snow from City owned off street facilities if necessary.

Thank you,

John C. Rooney, P.E.  
Commissioner of Public Works