

# Work Session

<b>Agenda Item #</b>	4
<b>Meeting Date</b>	January 5, 2015
<b>Prepared By</b>	Suzanne Ludlow Deputy City Manager
<b>Approved By</b>	Brian T. Kenner City Manager

<b>Discussion Item</b>	Follow-up Discussion of Planning for Snow Removal and Snow Emergencies
<b>Background</b>	<p>The Council discussed snow removal plans and policies on October 13, 2014. Staff was directed to come back with draft proposals on policy changes and on plans for the current winter. Council made the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove the designation of Maple Avenue as a Snow Emergency Route</li> <li>• Change the City’s sidewalk clearing law to one that is easier to communicate (although there was not consensus as to what the new language should be, other than that there should not be separate provisions for commercial property owners and other property owners)</li> <li>• Change the City’s sidewalk clearing law to not always require a sidewalk to be cleared for the full width of the sidewalk; a minimum three-foot wide cleared path could be sufficient</li> <li>• Consider a lower fine for non-compliance of the sidewalk clearing law and a high fine for large-scale deposition of snow that blocks a sidewalk or travel lane (Note: Section 1.04.130 identifies a Class C fine as \$200; the lowest fine, \$25 is a Class G fine)</li> <li>• Change Code to refer to “City Manager or his or her designee” rather than identifying responsibilities of specific staff</li> <li>• Council could set criteria for which vehicular or pedestrian routes have higher priority for clearing; staff should bring suggestions and a map for discussion</li> <li>• Council may consider criteria for conditions (eg, depth of snow) or streets where alternate side parking may be appropriate</li> <li>• Identify a way to organize volunteers to help those residents who are physically unable to clear snow</li> </ul> <p>For this discussion, staff will provide information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• draft Code changes that, if supported by Council, can be formatted for consideration at a future meeting</li> <li>• a new program coordinated by Lifelong Takoma Manager Karen Maricheau to connect volunteers to those residents who are unable to clear snow</li> <li>• approaches the Department of Public Works is planning to use to address snow and ice for this winter</li> </ul>
<b>Policy</b>	The City Council is interested in the protection of the public health, safety and welfare in the event of an emergency.
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	n/a

<b>Attachments</b>	Draft Code changes Information on program to assist those unable to clear snow Public Works approach for 2014-2015 winter
<b>Recommendation</b>	Give direction to staff
<b>Special Consideration</b>	

**DRAFT CODE CHANGES RELATED TO SNOW EMERGENCIES  
AND SNOW REMOVAL  
January 5, 2015**

Code Section	Existing Code Language	Proposed Changes in Red
11.20.010 Casting snow or ice on streets prohibited – Removal.	<p>A. No person shall throw, cast or deposit in or upon any street, avenue, alley, highway, footway or sidewalk any snow which may have fallen upon, or ice which may have accumulated on, the roof of any building or other structure.</p> <p>B. If it necessary to remove snow or ice from the roof of any building or structure for reasons of public safety and it is impracticable to do so without violating the above prohibition, the prohibition may be waived. The person offending shall immediately remove from any street, avenue, alley, highway, footway or sidewalk the snow or ice thrown, cast or deposited thereon.</p> <p>C. A violation of this section is a Class C offense.</p>	<b>DELETE SECTION.</b>
11.20.020 Sidewalks to be kept free of ice and snow.	Every owner and occupant, jointly, of every parcel of real estate adjoining a public sidewalk shall keep the sidewalk adjoining the property free from snow and ice and for the full paved width of the sidewalk. A violation of this section is a Class C offense.	Every owner and occupant, jointly, of every parcel of real estate adjoining a public sidewalk shall keep the sidewalk adjoining the property free from snow and ice <b>for, at minimum, a continuous three foot wide path of the paved</b> [and for the full paved width of the] sidewalk. A violation of this section is a <b>Class C</b> offense.
11.20.030 Hours of snow and ice removal from sidewalks.	Snow and ice shall be removed from sidewalks described in Section 11.20.020 by 7:00 p.m. of the day on which it has fallen or accumulated, or by the end of 4 hours of daylight after the fall or accumulation, whichever is later. Sidewalks in front of commercial establishments shall be kept free of snow and ice at all times	Snow and ice shall be removed from sidewalks described in Section 11.20.020 by <b>9:00 a.m. after a night in</b> [7:00 p.m. of the day on] which it has fallen or accumulated, or by <b>9:00 p.m. on the day in which it has fallen or accumulated.</b> [the end of 4 hours of daylight after the fall or accumulation, whichever is later.

	between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. A violation of this section is a Class C offense.	Sidewalks in front of commercial establishments shall be kept free of snow and ice at all times between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.] A violation of this section is a <b>Class C</b> offense.
11.20.040 Conditions precluding snow and ice removal.	In case snow and ice on any sidewalk shall be frozen so hard that it cannot be removed without injury to the sidewalk, it shall, within the time specified in Section 11.020.030, be strewn and kept strewn with ashes, sand, sawdust or other suitable material, so as to be no longer dangerous to life and limb. As soon as practicable thereafter the sidewalk shall be completely cleared of snow, ice and other material strewn thereon as provided in this chapter. A violation of this section is a Class C offense.	<b>KEEP – should it remain a Class C offense?</b>
11.20.050 Sidewalk inspection by Chief of Police Officer – Notice of violation.	The Chief Police Officer shall ascertain whether the public sidewalks have been cleared of snow and ice as provided in this chapter. The Chief Police Officer shall promptly notify the Director of Public Works of all parcels with respect to which the provisions of this chapter have not been complied with.	<b>DELETE SECTION.</b>
11.20.060 Removal of snow and ice by Director of Public Works.	The Director of Public Works shall direct the removal or treatment of snow and ice, as provided in this chapter, from the portions of the public sidewalk with respect to which this chapter has not been complied with. The Director of Public Works shall notify the Clerk of the expense incurred determined by the amount of labor and materials used.	<b>DELETE SECTION.</b>
11.20.070 Assessment of removal costs to owner.	The Clerk shall promptly present to the owner of each parcel a bill for the removal or treatment of snow and ice, as certified by the Director of Public Works, with respect to the sidewalk adjacent to the owner's property.	<b>DELETE SECTION.</b>
11.20.080	Snow and ice shall in all cases be	<b>KEEP – Should it remain a Class C</b>

Manner of snow and ice removal.	removed from public sidewalks in a way so as not to obstruct the free passageway of any street, avenue or roadway. A violation of this section is a Class C offense.	offense?
11.20.090 Manner of removal – Use of salt.	No person shall dump, pour or spill salt or salt water or other deleterious matter upon any tree or tree space in any public place, or keep or maintain within 10’ of any such tree or tree space any receptacle from which salt water leaks or drips, or dump, pour or spill salt or salt water into any parking or unconcreted gutter so as to injure any tree or grass occupying public space. A violation of this section is a Class C offense.	<p>A. No person shall use rock salt on any public sidewalk.</p> <p>B. No person shall dump, pour or spill salt or salt water or other deleterious matter upon any tree or tree space in any public place, or keep or maintain within 10’ of any such tree or tree space any receptacle from which salt water leaks or drips, or dump, pour or spill salt or salt water into any parking or unconcreted gutter so as to injure any tree or grass occupying public space. A violation of this section is a Class C offense.</p>
13.24.040 Snow emergencies – Impounding of vehicles.	<p>A. During periods of snow or ice accumulation, the City Administrator or his or her designee and the Chief of Police are authorized and empowered to prohibit or restrict parking or to prohibit vehicular traffic on any streets and areas within the City for the purpose of facilitating snow removal and for the purpose of public safety.</p> <p>B. When a snow emergency is declared by the Superintendent of State Police or his or her designee or by other authorized officials for Montgomery County, Maryland, parking of vehicles shall be prohibited at any time during the snow emergency period on the streets designated in subsection (C) of this section.</p>	<p>A. During periods of snow or ice accumulation, the City Manager [Administrator] or his or her designee [and the Chief of Police are] is authorized and empowered to prohibit or restrict parking or to prohibit vehicular traffic on any streets and areas within the City for the purpose of facilitating snow removal and for the purpose of public safety.</p> <p>B. When a snow emergency is declared by the Superintendent of State Police or his or her designee or by other authorized officials for Montgomery County, Maryland, parking of vehicles shall be prohibited at any time during the snow emergency period on any [the] streets designated and signed as snow</p>

	<p>C. The Director of Public Works or his or her designee is authorized to place in appropriate locations signs indicating a designation as a “snow emergency route” along certain streets as follows: Maple Avenue: east side from the District of Columbia line to Sligo Creek Parkway.</p> <p>D. A person may not drive or attempt to drive a vehicle during a snow emergency period on any street that is designated and appropriately signposted as a snow emergency route, unless the vehicle is equipped with snow tires or chains on at least one wheel at each end of a driving axle.</p> <p>E. Any person issued a ticket for a violation of this section shall be subject to a fine as set forth in Section 13.40.010 (Schedule of fines and charges).</p> <p>F. Any vehicle parked and left unattended in violation of the provisions of this section or of any snow emergency order or declaration issued by the Superintendent of State Police or his or her designee or by other authorized officials for Montgomery County or Prince George’s County, Maryland, may be towed and impounded as provided in Section 13.24.050.</p>	<p><b>emergency routes. [in subsection (C) of this section.</b></p> <p>C. The Director of Public Works or his or her designee is authorized to place in appropriate locations signs indicating a designation as a “snow emergency route” along certain streets as follows: Maple Avenue: east side from the District of Columbia line to Sligo Creek Parkway.</p> <p>D. A person may not drive or attempt to drive a vehicle during a snow emergency period on any street that is designated and appropriately signposted as a snow emergency route, unless the vehicle is equipped with snow tires or chains on at least one wheel at each end of a driving axle.</p> <p>E. Any person issued a ticket for a violation of this section shall be subject to a fine as set forth in Section 13.40.010 (Schedule of fines and charges).]</p> <p>F. Any vehicle parked and left unattended in violation of the provisions of this section or of any snow emergency order or declaration issued by the Superintendent of State Police or his or her designee or by other authorized officials [for Montgomery County or Prince George’s County, Maryland,] may be towed and impounded as provided in Section 13.24.050.</p>
13.24.050 Towing and	A. Any vehicle parked in violation of this chapter or	<b>KEEP – But change City Administrator to City Manager.</b>

<p>impounding illegally parked vehicles</p>	<p>otherwise parked so as to constitute a hazard to public safety or that is parked, stopped or standing so as to impede or obstruct the normal movement of traffic or pedestrians may be towed or impounded by police officers or other authorized persons designated by the City Administrator.</p> <p>B. In any case involving the towing or impounding of a vehicle pursuant to this section, a service fee as set forth in Section 13.40.010 (Schedule of fines and charges) may be charged to the owner of the vehicle in addition to all outstanding fines and penalties assessed for violations of this chapter, plus any towing or storage charges incurred. All such fines, penalties, service fees and charges shall be paid to the City or its agent before the owner or his or her authorized agent may reclaim or secure the release of the vehicle.</p>	
---	--	--

## **SNOW REMOVAL PILOT PROGRAM**

Through a partnership with Takoma Middle School's Difference Makers student volunteer club and the City's Lifelong Takoma Program, residents who are unable to remove their snow are able to receive shoveling assistance. Sligo Seventh Day Adventist Church and Washington Adventist University have expressed interest in supporting residents year round through community service projects. Their interest may include snow shoveling for this season.

**How will this be done?** Lifelong Takoma Program Manager Karen Maricheau will be collecting a list of names, addresses, phone numbers/emails from residents who express a need for help. There will be no charge for the shoveling, but some thought is being given to an opportunity to accept donations to the program (not directly to the students) if the person receiving the service wishes to do so. The pilot program will be promoted through the Takoma Park Newsletter, community fliers, list serves, the e-newsletter, City TV promos, social media, etc. Residents added to the list by January 31<sup>st</sup> gain priority for assistance. They remain on the snow shoveling list for the whole winter season. The list is reviewed every week and updated on Tuesdays. Any new residents added to the list may need to wait until the following Tuesday in order to get snow shoveled by volunteers. Day of, next day and weekend requests are not able to be supported through this pilot as it takes coordination and advance communication to fulfill requests.

Bryan Goehring is the Takoma Park Middle School club facilitator and contact. He and the club president will promote the volunteer opportunity to club members and student government through their newspaper and school announcements. Mr. Goehring agreed to obtain a list of names, addresses and phone numbers of students who have an interest in volunteering. He and the students will plot out on a map the locations of seniors and nearest students. He will leverage the support of parents and/or other adult volunteers to supervise. (Some additional adult volunteers may come through the Takoma Park newspaper, e-newsletter, fliers, social media and TV public service announcement.)

If there are additional youth volunteers through the Community Center (through MANUP, individual contacts or other initiatives), names will be forwarded to Mr. Goehring if the teen would like to volunteer alongside the school students. They could be funneled through the school for coordination and dispatch if they are interested. Otherwise the students through the Community Center can work independently or together as an additional group. Procedures on how to manage this are still being discussed.

Washington Adventist University and the Sligo Seventh Day Adventist Church may also have some college students and youth ministry members who have an interest in volunteering. Ross Patterson will be the contact and group coordinator. All snow shoveling street routes, for the different youth groups, will be emailed. Each group leader will communicate with the students and parents. Coordinators will disperse the addresses and work with leaders to deploy the students who are responsible for each route. Communication by cell phone will occur between group leaders and coordinators on the day of to ensure that all addresses on the master list have been shoveled.

Karen Maricheau can be reached at [lifelong@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:lifelong@takomaparkmd.gov) or 301-891-7232





The City Of

Maryland

[Home](#) [News](#) [About Takoma Park](#) [Services](#) [Departments](#) [Calendar](#)

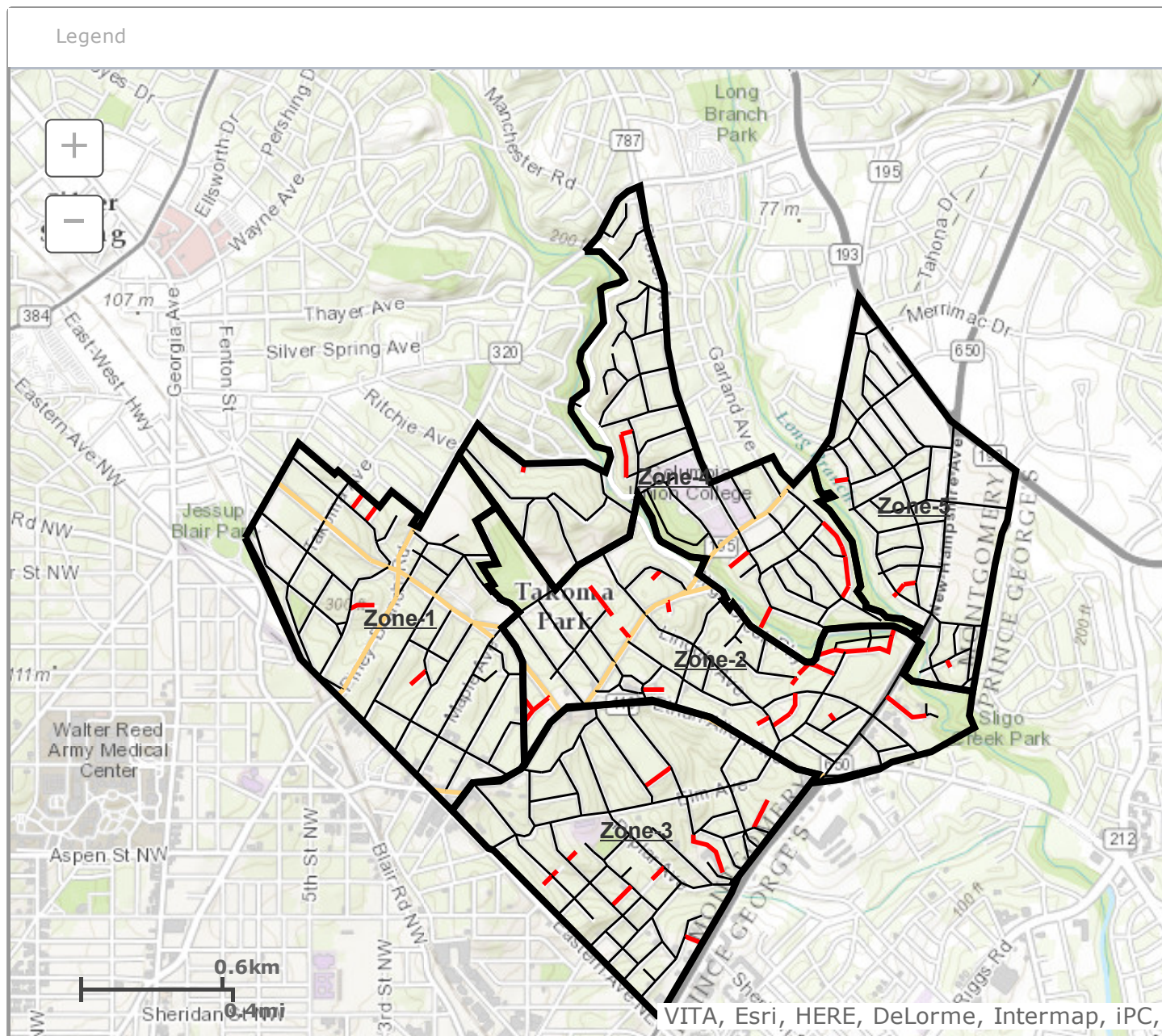
## Snow Removal Information

### Snow Response 101

The City's Public Works staff is prepared to work hard this winter to clear snow from 34 miles of City-maintained roads, as well as walkways and sidewalks around City parks and public buildings. City staff track potential storms and prepare to respond as soon as the snow starts to fall. City plow crews start operations when one inch of snow is on the ground and are prepared to work 12 hour shifts. The City relies on the Public Works Right of Way staff to be the first shift of plow drivers. The Sanitation drivers provide the second shift. When significant snowfall occurs, City trash and recycling collection may be canceled to enable the sanitation drivers to assist with road clearing. The City's Garden Division staffs provide clearing of public sidewalks during daylight hours and are assisted as needed by temporary laborers.

The department encourages businesses and residents to do their part to clear snow and ice from the sidewalks adjoining their property.

The Public Works Department has a winter weather response plan which divides the City into five (5) snow removal zones. Each of these zones has an assigned response vehicle. Within each zone the streets are identified as primary or secondary streets. Primary streets are those that have most traffic and connect neighborhoods. Secondary streets are the shorter streets with fewer homes and include courts, alleys and dead ends. City crews first clear primary streets and once that is achieved, proceed to the secondary streets. The map below delineates the boundary of each snow zone and highlights the secondary streets in red.



## Snow and Ice Response Plan Goals

The goal of the City's snow and ice response plan is to have two (2) travelable lanes on each primary street within a 12- hour shift, if the snow fall is six (6) inches or less. If the snow fall is six (6) inches or more, the expectation is to have one (1) travelable lane over a 12 hour period. Snow removal equipment remains in service around the clock until all the roads are cleared. Often, when severe weather is on the way, the City begins anti-icing procedures by applying a sand salt mixture or liquid de-icing chemicals to the street surface. Plowing begins once snowfall has accumulated to an inch on the street. If the storm produces only sleet and ice, the City treats roadways with sand and salt.

Snow and ice response on some streets located within Takoma Park is performed by others. The State

Highway Administration is responsible for clearing Carroll Avenue, Ethan Allen Avenue, New Hampshire Avenue, Philadelphia Avenue and Piney Branch Road. Sligo Creek Parkway is a Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission roadway and snow and ice response is performed by Montgomery County. However, City plows will assist with snow removal on these streets in the course of their work to clear City streets.

## Helpful Snow Event Tips

The Public Works Department has developed a few helpful tips for residents to follow during a snow event. They are:

### Stay Connected!

Weather emergencies will be announced through Takoma Park Alert, local media, and via the City's website, Facebook, and Twitter. The following restrictions go into effect during a declared snow emergency:

- Cars should not park on the east (odd-numbered) side of Maple Avenue, as it is a Snow Emergency Route
- Residents are strongly encouraged to park vehicles in their driveways whenever possible. Fewer cars on the street make it easier to clear the roads more quickly and safely.
- If you must park on the street, make sure to park your car as close to the curb as possible, and maintain a distance of at least 25 feet from an intersection

### Clear Sidewalks

Residents are responsible for clearing snow from the public sidewalks adjacent to their property. When possible, keep sidewalks clear of snow and ice by regularly shoveling accumulated snow during and after a snow event. Please DO NOT shovel large amounts of snow into the street when clearing your driveway or sidewalk. The best place to pile snow is on the lawn or grassy areas. Piles of snow shoveled out into the street can cause problems for passing vehicles.

### Help a Neighbor in Need!

Reach out and ask neighbors if they need assistance with keeping their sidewalk clear. Many residents are physically unable to shovel snow and ice and are hesitant to request help from neighbors or friends. Your thoughtfulness can make a big difference to someone who might otherwise be unable to cope.

If you have any questions before or during a winter event, please contact the Public Works Department at 301-891-7633.

## Search Our Site