



## STAFF REPORT

DATE: 6/12/2018

### **DISCUSSION**

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Rob Weldon, Public Works Director

**AGENDA ITEM:** Trail/Sidewalk Snow Removal

**REVIEWED BY:** Kristina Handt, City Administrator

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**BACKGROUND:** In recent years due to community growth and reconstruction of city streets several miles of trails and sidewalks have been added to the landscape of Lake Elmo. While some of these trails and sidewalks transverse across private property the majority lay within public Right-of-Way. Because of the growth and added infrastructure, numerous property owners have raised concern regarding snow removal responsibility related to both trails and sidewalks. Currently City Ordinance 96.03 states that property owners are responsible for the removal of snow on sidewalks that cross their property.

**ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL:** Should the City of Lake Elmo assume responsibility of snow removal on trails and/or sidewalks on city property or within public ROW within the city?

**PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:** In order to carry out walkway snow removal several factors must be considered; staffing, equipment and timeframe for completion.

- **Staffing-** At its current staffing level Public Works cannot take on either additional task. During a snow event, Public Works operates 6 plow trucks, 1 loader and 2 pickups with a staff of 9 including the Director, to clear snow from streets, cul-de-sacs and parking lots. Following a snow event, the current staff conducts maintenance of vehicles, additional plowing and salting for 1-2 days. Along with these activities, there is backlog of utility maintenance items that need to be completed due to entire staff involvement in plowing streets. Therefore, consideration should be given to hiring full or part-time staff, or contracting out the service.
- **Equipment-** The current fleet of Public Works vehicles can accommodate plowing of trails. In order to clear sidewalks additional equipment is needed and is listed on the accompanying attachment.
- **Time frame for removal –** what is an acceptable time frame to complete walkway snow removal? Our current Ordinance states that snow must be removed from sidewalks 12 hours after cessation of snowfall. Other cites vary from 24, 36, 48, to 72 hours after snow fall has stopped.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Sidewalk snow removal equipment – approx. \$74,000

Part-time staff trails – approx. \$6,000 (\$18/hr x 16hrs x 20 events)

Part-time staff sidewalks – approx. \$6,000 (\$18/hr x 16hrs x 20 events)

Full-time Staff – approx. \$75,000 w/benefits

Contract Services – unknown without soliciting quotes

\* It should be noted that full-time position mentioned above will have responsibilities relating to park maintenance in the summer along with plowing trails/sidewalks in the winter. This full-time position will also eliminate the need for a Parks Seasonal position in the summer.

**OPTIONS:**

- Hire part-time or full-time staff to plow trails
- Hire part-time or full-time staff to plow sidewalks and purchase needed equipment
- Obtain quotes for contract services to remove snow from trails and/or sidewalks
- Do nothing and enforce current city Ordinance 96.03

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Supplemental Trail/Sidewalk Info

## **Supplemental Trail/Sidewalk Info**

### **Trails**

To carry out plowing of trails additional staff would be needed. This could come in the form of full-time, part-time or contract services.

No new equipment is needed at this time to plow trails. In the summer of 2017 two pickups were purchased with v-plows installed. These units will be able to plow trails.

### **Sidewalks**

To carry our sidewalk snow removal additional staff will be needed. Again, this could come in the form of full-time, part-time or contract services.

In order to remove snow from sidewalks the following equipment is needed.

- Additional Skid Loader w/2 speed transmission & winter tires \$55,000
- 60" power broom \$ 6,000
- 72" v-plow for Tool Cat/Skid Loader \$4,160.00
- 72" snow blower for Tool Cat/Skid Loader \$ \$7,245.00
- Truck loading chute (if downtown snow removal is desired) \$1,535.00

If trail and sidewalk snow removal is desired the city council should consider amending ordinance 96.03 relating to snow being removed from sidewalks 12 hours after the snow has stopped.

It should also be noted that trails and sidewalks will not be plowed until a snowfall or accumulation of 2" or more has occurred.

### **§ 96.03 PUBLIC NUISANCES AFFECTING PEACE AND SAFETY**

All snow and ice not removed from public sidewalks 12 hours after the snow and ice has stopped precipitating. Snow plowed or shoveled into a public street shall be declared a nuisance.