

# Snow & Ice POLICY



Adopted Nov. 1996  
Updated Sept. 2024

CITY OF CHANHASSEN



## 1. PURPOSE

The city shall provide snow and ice management of public streets, trails/walks, parking lots and other public facilities in a safe and cost effective manner to support routine travel and emergency response services. Snow and ice management services shall be performed while prioritizing the safety of employees and the public, adhering to annual budget, observance of private property and being cognizant of environmental concerns.

## 2. POLICY

The Public Works and Parks & Recreation Departments will maintain system maps showing the publically maintained streets, trails/walks and parking lots that show routes and priorities. These routes and priorities shall be reviewed annually to correspond with up to date budgetary, equipment and personnel resources.

The prioritization of streets, trails/walks and parking lots shall be based on the city function, relative traffic volumes, geometrics, and safety considerations. Priorities are designated as A, B or C as shown on the attached maps, with *Priority A* routes being treated first. *Priority A* are routes that consistently see high traffic volumes, connect major sections of the city, and/or provide access to schools, commercial businesses, public buildings and access for emergency fire, police and medical services. Second tier *Priority B* routes consist of lower volume residential streets and neighborhood and off-corridor trails/walks. The last priority, *Priority C*, include cul-de-sacs, public facility hardscapes and non-critical parking lots.

Overtime Labor Restrictions are typically defined as 12-hour maximum daily shifts and/or working on weekends or Holidays. The Superintendents or Directors shall approve deviation from these labor restrictions.

## 3. COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS

The Public Works and Parks & Recreation Department staff, with the assistance of Carver County Sheriff deputy's, monitor conditions across the city after snow and ice precipitation events to determine the timing and the number of personnel and equipment needed to provide a response that meets the goals of this policy. Typically, the Superintendents will call in staff to start plowing in the early AM hours to stay ahead of the AM rush hour commute. Plowing operations greatly depend on the duration of a snow and ice precipitation event, along with amount, temperature and form of precipitation. No two storms are the same, so plowing operations shall be adjusted accordingly.

## 4. ROUTE OPERATIONS

The following are the city's general guidelines when determining the snow and ice management plan:

- A. With snow accumulations less than 1 inch, only *Priority A* routes will be plowed and/or treated. If a weather system produces, or is forecasting freezing rain or ice, additional areas may be treated per Superintendent discretion. Typically, all work shall be done without the need for overtime labor.
- B. With snow accumulation between 1 to 2 inches, all routes shall be maintained, beginning with *Priority A* routes. The management/plowing plan may be dependent on temperature and time of year as early or late season events may allow for ambient temperature to actively melt much of the accumulation. Streets shall be treated/plowed curb to curb with snow pushed onto the boulevard storage area; however, cul-de-sacs shall only be treated/plowed by one pass along the curb to provide an outlet for the driveways, with snow storage in the middle of the cul-de-

sac. Trails that connect arterial streets may need to be plowed several times due to the street plows pushing snow from the street onto boulevards and trails. After completing *Priority A* trails, they will move onto the neighborhood trails. Once *Priority A and B* trails/walks are completed, staff can then move onto *Priority C* areas including parking lots and public building hardscapes. Overtime labor restrictions shall be utilized for *Priority B and C* routes.

- C. With snow accumulation of more than 2 inches, depending on the rate of accumulation and other weather factors, *Priority A* streets, trails, and parking lots may be treated/plowed repeatedly during the duration of the storm to keep travel lanes open. Cul-de-sacs will only be treated/plowed with one pass along the curb to provide an outlet for driveways. Once the snowfall has ceased, a complete curb-to-curb service will start wherein all streets, trails, and parking lots are treated/plowed starting with *Priority A*. In these types of events after the snow has stopped it may take up to 10 hours to clear *Priority A, B, and C* city streets, trails, and parking lots. Overtime Labor Restrictions shall be utilized for *Priority C* routes only.

## **5. ICE SKATING RINKS**

Clearing rinks from a snow event will not begin until after the completion of *Priority A* duties and shall be done using Overtime Labor Restrictions. Daily sweeping and flooding of rinks, other than Sundays and Holidays, shall be performed while not exceeding 12-hour labor shifts. More information concerning Ice Skating Rinks can be found on the City's webpage at this location:

<https://www.ci.chanhassen.mn.us/289/Ice-Skating-Rinks>

## **6. SNOW STORAGE**

Typical snow and ice control efforts require the use of city-owned right-of-way and easements for storage of plowed snow. Depending upon the volume of snow, available storage within right-of-way can become limited and/or create sight obstacles. Since it is infeasible to remove snow from all boulevards and intersection corners, the Superintendent may direct operations to "wing plow" snow banks along the right-of-way. This "wing plow" operation results in snow being pushed back further onto the right-of-way area and thus creates more snow storage in the boulevard for the next plowing event.

Where space does not allow for a "wing plow" operation, such as in the downtown area, snow will be removed as needed and hauled to available city property for storage. Timing of such hauling will be at the discretion of the Superintendent.

## **7. USE OF SALT**

The City shall be conscientious about the detrimental effects of salt on the environment and will therefore be diligent in its use. The City shall strategically utilize either straight salt or a treated combination to calibrate the application to the lowest effective amount per lane mile. The goal of this strategy is to provide sufficient traction for vehicles but is not intended to provide a completely bare/dry pavement. Application of salt is generally limited to *Priority A* routes and other steep grades where a greater need for vehicular traction is warranted. The City shall not be held responsible for damage to private property caused by the use of salt, and therefore will not make repairs or compensate property owners for salt damage to areas in the public right-of-way.

## **8. SUSPENSION OF OPERATIONS**

Generally, operations shall continue until applicable route priorities are passable. Widening and clean-up operations may continue immediately or on the following working day depending upon conditions and circumstances. Safety of the staff and public is of primary importance, and therefore

operations may be terminated by the Superintendent or Director to allow personnel adequate time for rest or in response to unsafe conditions. Any suspension of operations shall be weighed against the need to provide access for emergency fire, police and medical services during a major snow or ice storm.

## 9. PROPERTY DAMAGE

Snow and ice control operations can cause property damage even under the best of circumstances and care on the part of the operators. The primary area of potential damage typically relates to private improvements made within public right-of-way. It is the city's preference to provide reimbursement for damages rather than allocating staff for repairs.

- A. **Mailboxes** – Mailboxes shall be constructed sturdily enough to withstand snow rolling off a plow or wing. While the installation of mailboxes in the public right-of-way is permitted, the mailbox owner assumes all risk of damage except when a mailbox is damaged through direct contact by a plow blade, wing, or other piece of snow removal equipment. If the city determines a plow hit the mailbox, the city will replace the mailbox and post with a standard size non-decorative metal box and 4" x 4" decay resistant wood support post. Alternatively, the city will reimburse the mailbox owner for the replacement of the damaged mailbox and post. The maximum amount the city will reimburse will be determined by the current Fee Schedule. All replacement mailboxes and posts, whether installed by the city or property owner must be installed per the city's standard detail as shown on the Mailbox ABC's exhibit. Plow operators make every effort to plow as close to the curb line as possible to provide mail carriers access to mailboxes. However, it is not possible to align the plow perfectly with the curb while attempting to minimize damage to mailboxes from indirect contact given the size of equipment, visibility and amount of snow pushed into the boulevard. Thus, the final cleaning adjacent to mailbox is the responsibility of each resident and subject to the delivery requirements of USPS and other carriers.
- B. **Landscaping** – The property owner assumes all risk of damage to landscaping, including nursery and inanimate materials that are installed or encroach into the public right-of-way. The exception are lawns that are scraped or gouged by snow removal equipment. Under this scenario, the area will be repaired by top dressing with topsoil and seeding during the following growing season. Property owners are required to water the areas that are repaired during establishment period.
- C. **Irrigation systems** – Given the proper location for irrigation sprinkler heads necessitates that they typically be installed adjacent to the curb line, the city will reimburse the property owner up to \$35 per sprinkler head for damage resulting from direct contact with snow removal equipment. Irrigation heads must be positioned at or below grade. If irrigation heads are above grade and damaged, the city shall not be responsible for repair or reimbursement. The property owner for reimbursement must provide documentation of costs incurred.
- D. **Other Private installations** - The city will assume no responsibility for exterior lighting systems, underground electronic dog fences or any other non-permitted private property installed in the public right-of-way.
- E. **Timeframe for claims** - The city will assume no responsibility for property damage if a claim is not received by the city by May 1 of any calendar year.

## 10. DRIVEWAYS

The city recognizes that one of the most frequent and irritable problems for homeowners resulting from plowing snow off public street, trails, sidewalks, is snow deposited in driveways. The operators make every attempt to minimize the amount of snow deposited in driveways; however, due to the inherent design of the plow equipment, the amount can still be significant. Due to established



priorities and staffing levels, city personnel do not provide driveway plowing. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Superintendent or if snow accumulation affects emergency services or situations.

#### **11. GARBAGE/RECYCLING CONTAINERS**

The container(s) should be set back 3 feet behind the curb line and not placed in the street. Containers will not be repaired or replaced by the City if damaged during snow removal operations.

#### **12. PARKING**

Per City Code Sec. 12-16, on-street parking is prohibited between November 1 and April 1 between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m, and also prohibited when there is 2 inches or more of snow on a street until the street has been plowed curb to curb. Representatives of the Carver County Sheriff's Department, Minnesota State Patrol, and Community Service Officers shall have the authority to impound vehicles in violation of this section.

#### **13. CLEARING AROUND FIRE HYDRANTS**

Property owners or occupants are highly encouraged to keep fire hydrants clear of snow to assist the fire department with emergency response. It is not necessary to clear all the way to the edge of the street, but it is important to shovel approximately 3 to 4 feet around the hydrant down to the area where the fire hoses are connected.

#### **14. SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL FROM SIDEWALKS**

Per City Code Sec. 17-50, Snow and ice removal from public sidewalks abutting private property is the responsibility of the property owners or occupants. Removal of snow and ice from such sidewalks shall be completed within 12-hours after the snow and ice has been deposited.

#### **15. COMPLAINTS/INQUIRIES**

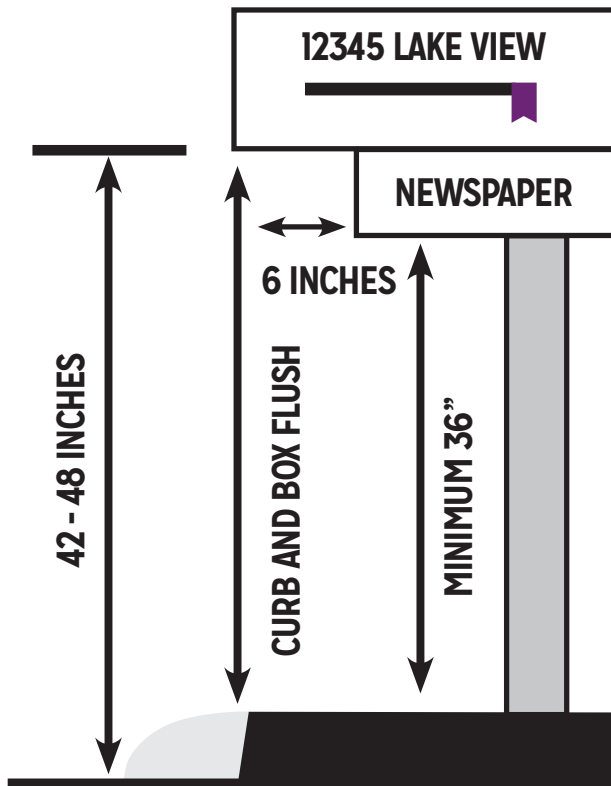
Complaints regarding snow and ice control operations, including damage claims, shall be made to the Public Works Department via phone 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM by calling (952) 227-1301 or via Request Tracker on the city's website. Complaints involving access to property or problems requiring immediate attention shall be handled on a priority basis. Response time should not exceed twenty-four hours from any complaint. It shall be understood that the complaint responses are to ensure that the provision of this policy has been fulfilled and that all residents of the city have been treated uniformly.

#### **16. PLACING SNOW OR ICE IN A PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY**

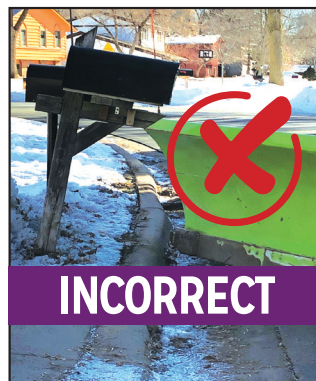
Minnesota Statue 160.27 prohibits plowing, shoveling, blowing or placing snow from private property onto public streets. The act of placing snow onto a public street may subject a person or company to a civil liability if a street hazard such as a slippery area, frozen rut or bump occurs and causes a traffic accident. The civil liability may extend to both the property owner and the person or company who actually placed the snow on the street.

# Mailbox ABC's

Helpful hints to protect your mailbox from the snowplow.



Mailbox shown is at CORRECT height. Snowplow blade CLEARs the mailbox.



Mailbox shown is below the correct height. Snowplow blade hits the mailbox.

**A**

Front of mailbox should be flush with the back of the curb.

**B**

Bottom of mailbox should be 42 - 45 inches to top of the street.

**C**

Newspaper boxes and other containers should be set back a minimum of 6 inches from the back of the curb.



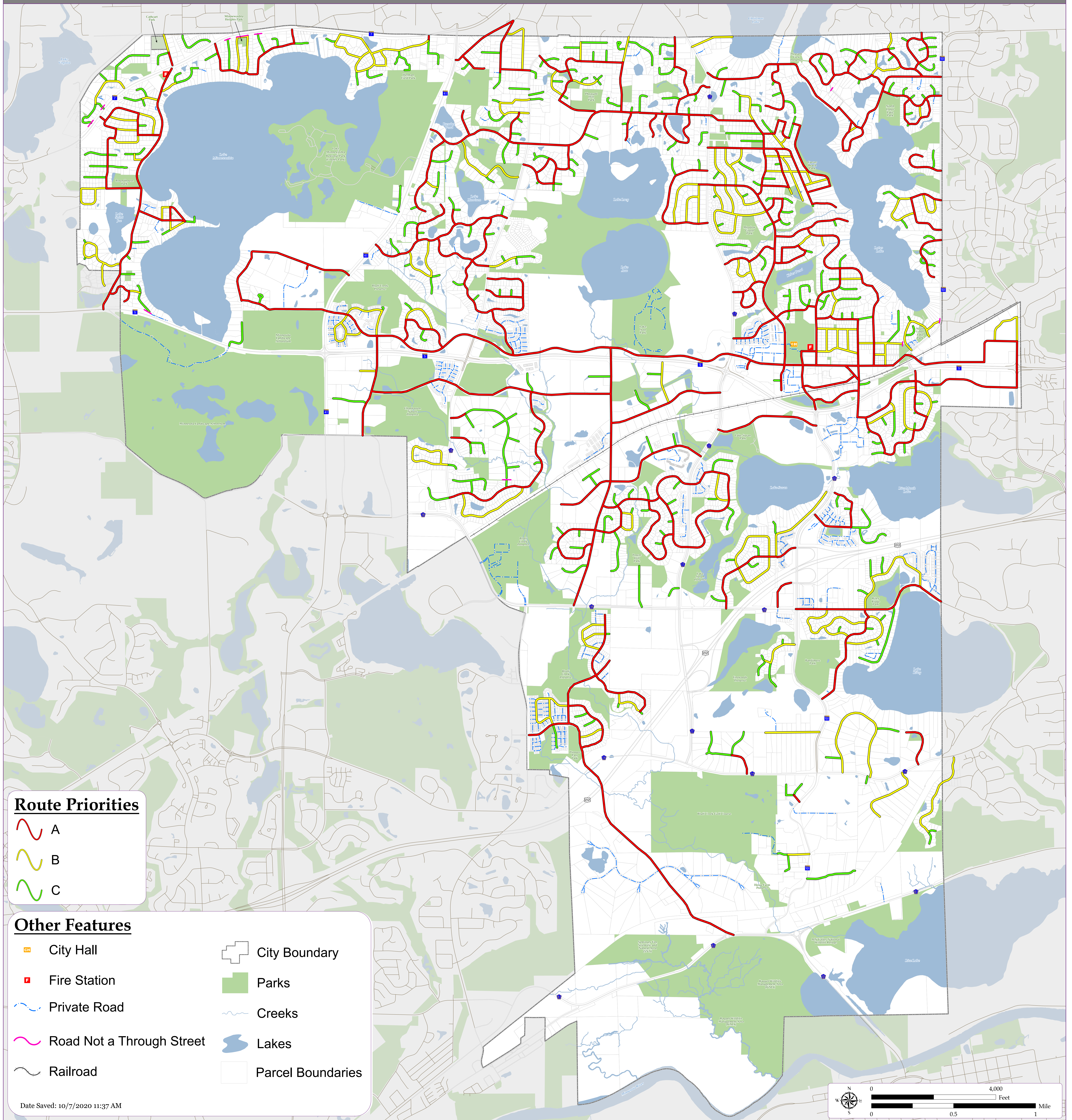
CITY OF CHANHASSEN  
**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
7901 Park Place, Chanhassen, MN 55317  
952.227.1300 [www.ci.chanhassen.mn.us](http://www.ci.chanhassen.mn.us)





# City of Chanhassen

## Snow Plow Routes



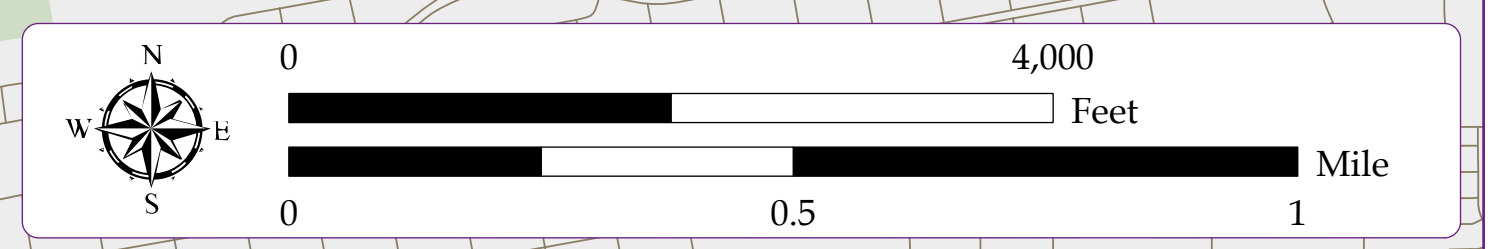
### Route Priorities

- A
- B
- C

### Other Features

- City Hall
- Fire Station
- Private Road
- Road Not a Through Street
- Railroad
- City Boundary
- Parks
- Creeks
- Lakes
- Parcel Boundaries

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# City of Chanhassen

## Parks Snow Plow Routes

