City of Commerce City *Rev. 10/07*

Integrated Citywide Emergency Snow Operations Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this plan is to bring any needed City resources to bear during a major snow event, in order to maintain public safety access to every citizen in the city.

Authority:

This Integrated Citywide Emergency Snow Operations Plan shall be considered the Snow Emergency Immediate Action Plan in accordance with Section 23-3(c) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Commerce City.

This section operates with the authority of the City Emergency Operations Ordinance, and is an Attachment to the City Emergency Operations Ordinance in accordance with Section 23-3(c) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Commerce City.

Implementation:

This plan may be implemented under any of the following circumstances:

1. Twelve inches or more of actual or projected snow.
2. Issuance of a Blizzard Warning by the National Weather Service.
3. At the discretion of the:
    a. City Manager
    b. Chief of Police
    c. Emergency Manager
    d. Street Maintenance Manager
    e. Street Operations Supervisor
    f. Police Department Watch Commander
    g. Snow Operations Crew Chief.

Strategy:

Management and Coordination

To bring any required City or partner agency resources to bear by:

1. Utilizing a unified management plan which allows the City to:
    a. Marshal and coordinate any needed resources.
    b. Prioritize efforts to maintain critical roadways.
    c. Maintain timely coordination with partner agencies.
    d. Fulfill, in a timely fashion, any life-safety requests for support.
2. Rapidly issuing any needed Disaster Declarations, travel restrictions, and emergency tow orders.
3. Keeping citizens apprised of the situation, including such declarations, travel restrictions, and tow orders.
4. Utilizing non-public-safety personnel for logistics and support operations.

Snow Removal

To maintain emergency access to all citizens by:

1. Identifying routes which must be passable in order to allow emergency vehicles access to within a reasonable distance of every residence in the City.
2. Identifying routine snow routes which may be abandoned, in order to free resources to meet this goal.
3. Monitoring conditions, then adjusting and re-prioritizing resources to meet conditions.
4. Rapidly fulfill emergency snow removal requests from public safety agencies.

Law Enforcement Operations:

To maintain the ability to respond to public safety emergencies, rescue citizens, and maintain order by:

1. Utilizing four-wheel-drive vehicles available from other City departments.
2. Coordinating efforts with Snow Operations to gain access to emergency scenes.
3. Remove vehicles interfering with emergency plow operations, or with emergency vehicle access.
4. Report road conditions and road closures to the Emergency Operations Center.

Sheltering and Rescues:

1. To prepare for rescuing stranded motorists and citizens, as well any citizens displaced by the storm by:
2. Identifying potential shelter sites.
3. Working and preplanning with partner agencies to plan for rescue shelters.

Management and Coordination:

Management and Coordination of Emergency Snow Operations:

All operations will be conducted in accordance with the City Emergency Operations Plan (Chapter 23 of the Commerce City Code of Municipal Ordinances), which requires use of the National Incident Management System to manage emergencies in the City.

Management of snow operations during activation of the Emergency Snow Operations Plan will include the following:

1. A Snow Operations Crew Chief will be on duty each shift, in an appropriate vehicle.

   The Snow Operations Crew Chief's duties will include:

   a. Overseeing Snow Operations and supervising the on-duty crew.
   b. Patrolling the various sections of the City and monitoring actual street conditions in real time.
   c. Reallocating resources to meet current conditions, accounting for variations in conditions in different parts of the City.
   d. Keeping the Street Operations Supervisor on duty aware of conditions and changes in conditions and changes in deployment of resources.
   e. Recommend to the Street Operations Supervisor any changes in operational priorities, route prioritization, or any other operational issues.

2. A Street Operations Supervisor (or designee) will be on duty in the Emergency Operations Center 24 hours a day for the duration of the emergency.

   The Street Operations Supervisor's duties will include:

   a. Filling the role of Snow Operations Branch Leader in accordance with the National Incident Management System.
   b. Overseeing Snow Operations, and supervising the on-duty Crew Chief.
   c. Maintaining information flows between the Emergency Operations Center and the Snow Operations crew.

d. Monitoring the reports of road conditions and deployment of resources by the Crew Chief.

e. Inform the Incident Commander of significant status changes.

f. Recommend changes of routes to be cleared or deployment of resources to the Incident Commander and/or Policy Group.

g. Prioritize service requests in collaboration with the Incident Commander.

h. Track completion of service requests.

3. A designated Incident Commander will be on duty in the Emergency Operations Center 24 hours a day for the duration of the emergency.

   The Incident Commander's duties will include:

   a. Filling the role of the Incident Commander in accordance with the National Incident Management System and the Chapter 23 of City Ordinance.

   b. Overseeing all operations by all City agencies as they relate to emergency snow removal and public safety operations.

   c. Prioritization of operations and determining when changes in operating level or road priorities are required.

   d. Prioritization of service requests from citizens, City departments, and partner agencies.

   e. Ordering the removal of vehicles interfering with emergency snow removal and public safety operations.

   f. Maintenance and issuance of regular situation reports to City leaders, policy makers, and partner agencies.

   g. Coordinating closely with City Administration, and:

      i. When appropriate, recommending the issuance of a local Declaration of Disaster Emergency.

      ii. When appropriate, recommending the issuance of an Order of Travel Restriction.

   h. Coordinating closely with the Department of Marketing and Public Relations, in relation to their duties listed below.

4. Chief Executive (as defined under Chapter 23, Section 23-2(b) of City Ordinance):

   The Chief Executive is responsible for:

   a. When deemed necessary, issuing Declarations of Disaster Emergency.

      This authority may not be delegated, but in the absence of the City Manager, his designee may issue this Declaration.

b. When deemed necessary, issuing Orders of Travel Restriction.

   This authority may, at the discretion of the Chief Executive, be delegated to the Incident Commander or the Chief of Police.

c. Setting the operational guidelines within which the Incident Commander operates.

d. Determining any closures of City facilities.

5. Marketing and Public Relations Department

   a. Maintain pre-designed information releases regarding:

      i. Snow removal operations.

      ii. Maintaining clear roadways in residential areas, so as not to impede plow operations.

      iii. Declarations of Disaster Emergency.

      iv. Travel Restrictions.

      v. Emergency towing of vehicles abandoned in the roadway, and instructions for citizens to recover their vehicles.

   b. Maintain an information hotline for citizens and employees to find the status of the City and current operations.

   c. Work closely with Information Technology to maintain current information on the City website.

6. Neighborhood Services Department

   a. Provide enforcement support for private snow removal operators and citizens pushing snow into public rights of way.

   b. Assist with identifying vehicles to be removed under the Emergency Tow Plan.

      NOTE: Because under the Emergency Tow Plan the vehicle owner is not cited for a violation of law, no additional authority is required for Neighborhood Services Inspectors to order a vehicle removed.

   c. Provide logistical, transportation, and operational support, at the discretion of the Incident Commander, freeing up public safety responders.

Snow Removal:

Emergency Snow Routes:

The attached maps show Emergency Snow Routes. These routes are broken into four priorities, designated A (highest) through D (lowest).

In order to maintain emergency vehicle access to all citizens, routes A through D must be opened. In the event that snow accumulations, drifting, loss of snow removal equipment, or other factors prevent Snow Operations staff from keeping all these routes open, then they will be kept open in priority order.

Priority A Routes:
Selected major arterials needed to maintain a minimum level of access Citywide.

Priority A streets contain some Fire Stations, City Hall, and are a minimum grid of streets the City can keep open under any foreseeable conditions. The goal of the Priority A streets are to keep at least minimum access open to all sections of the City, and prevent losing access to major portions of the population.

In the aftermath of a catastrophic storm, the Priority A routes give Snow Operations a basic grid of streets from which to work outward.

Priority B Routes:
Additional major arterials which open further access to areas of city, as well as other main roads beyond the minimum grid.

Priority B Routes also maintain access to additional fire stations, support facilities (such as Adams County Communications), and healthcare facilities.

Priority C Routes:
Collector roads and selected surface streets in all parts of the City.

Priority C Routes are intended to begin opening access into residential neighborhoods, allowing access closer to citizens' homes.

Priority D Routes:
Priority D Routes are additional collector and residential streets, opened with the goal of obtaining access to all neighborhoods, and maintaining emergency access to within a reasonable distance of every residence in the City.

Law Enforcement Operations:

Alternative Vehicles during Snow Emergencies:

During snow emergencies, typical police patrol vehicles are insufficient. Rear-wheel drive sedans are limited to relatively small accumulations of snow, and do not operate well once snow has become packed and icy.

If, in order to maintain operational capability, patrol operations must transition into four wheel drive vehicles then the Incident Commander may assign vehicles from other City departments.

Emergency Plow Requests

All requests for emergency plow assistance will be routed through the Emergency Operations Center, either via the Watch Commander or directly via radio (as determined by the Police Department).

Emergency Tow Plan

Once determined by the Incident Commander, the Police Department will begin the Emergency Tow Plan where abandoned vehicles blocking emergency snow routes are towed and stored at a designated location.

Road Condition Reports

Reports of impassible roads, deteriorating road conditions, blocked or closed roads must be sent to the Emergency Operations Center as soon as practical. Up-to-date road condition information is crucial to management and coordination of this type of event. Additionally, adjacent public safety agencies need up-to-date road status information.

Rescues and Sheltering:

Rescuing Stranded Motorists:

During an extreme snow event motorists are likely to be stranded in the City. While those who live in the City can be transported home, some will have to be sheltered.

The Police Department and Fire Department should inform the Emergency Operations Center of any rescues, the number of people rescued, and the disposition of the rescued persons (returned home, taken to shelter, taken to hotel, etc.)

Shelter Plans:

In addition, a major snowstorm brings the potential for wide area power outages, water line breaks, and other events which may place citizens in need of shelter.

Shelter requests will be coordinated through Adams County Emergency Management, with a request for a shelter in the City. Preferences for shelters are as follows:

1. A county designated shelter, staffed and managed by Red Cross or Salvation Army personnel.
2. In the event such a shelter is not immediately available, temporary shelter may be provided in the Commerce City Council Chambers until a regular shelter is available.
3. As a shelter of last resort, in the event no assistance is forthcoming from the County or charitable agencies, the Commerce City Recreation Center may be used as a temporary emergency shelter.