

Commerce City Public Works Department

2025-2026 Snow Response Plan Annex



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2025-2026 Snow Response Plan Annex

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Purpose:

Commerce City's Snow Response Plan is designed to provide an effective and efficient response for the community during winter storm events while conserving materials and equipment. Staff members from Street Maintenance, Fleet Maintenance, and Park Maintenance Divisions are integrated into this plan to maximize resources while minimizing waste. Through proper management, our efforts will translate into more responsive action, cost savings for the public, and a healthier/safer city in which to live, work, and drive.

The primary goal is to provide operationally effective and fiscally responsible service during snow and ice events that support the safety and mobility of our transportation system by removing or displacing snow and ice from all designated priority streets, parking areas, trails, and city-maintained sidewalks as safely and expeditiously as possible.

Unified Response Time Objective:

Parks and Streets Crews will be engaged in snow and ice removal operations on designated priority areas within one hour after being activated for snow and/or ice control. The activation of crews can be derived by a call for service from the Police Department or from supervisory staff within either the Parks or Streets divisions.

Authority:

The Snow Response Plan Annex shall be considered the Immediate Action Plan in accordance with the City of Commerce City Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

The Director of Public Works, Deputy Director of Public Works, Street Operations Manager, Parks Operations Manager or their designees, have the authority to activate this operations plan annex.

Ordinances and Regulations:

Residents also have responsibilities for snow removal based on ordinances and regulations determined by City Council.

- Section 6-2013(b). *Snow and ice*. It shall be unlawful for the owner or occupant of any building, property or lot in the city to fail to remove the accumulation of snow, sleet, hail or ice from the sidewalks adjacent to such property, including those on public rights-of-way, within twenty-four (24) hours from the last accumulation of such snow, sleet, hail or ice. It shall further be unlawful for any person, other than an employee or agent of the city, to deposit, any snow, sleet, hail or ice against any fire hydrant, official traffic control device or other appurtenance, or onto any public or private property that is not owned by, occupied by or otherwise under the legal control of the person without the express consent of the owner or occupant of the property.
- Severe winter weather such as blizzards will be managed in accordance with the Severe Winter Weather/Extreme Cold Operations Plan Annex.

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Priority Street Designations:

- **Priority #1 Streets:** Major arterials considered to be the minimum network, which must be kept open to provide a transportation system connecting hospitals, fire stations, police stations, and other emergency units.
- **Priority #2 Streets:** All remaining arterials and selected collector's streets completing the network covering the major traffic volume streets or providing access to schools.
- **Priority #3 Streets:** All remaining collector's streets, bus routes, and hilly areas.
- **Priority #4 Streets:** Streets primarily located in residential areas. Priority #4 streets are plowed only when snow accumulation completely blocks traffic movement.

Priority Parking Areas, Trails, and Sidewalks:

- **Priority #1:** Civic Center, Derby parking areas, Municipal Services Center, Recreation Centers, Center Community Center, and the Police Substation.
- **Priority #2:** City owned/maintained properties such as perimeter sidewalks, parking areas, and paved trails.

Storm Classifications:

- There are three levels of response to snow and ice removal, depending on the severity of the storm. The following classifications are intended to serve as a guide to establish effective snow removal strategies for different types of winter storms. A Class #3 Storm is the most severe:
- **Class #1 Storm:** A storm predicted to last for less than 12 hours with anticipated snow accumulations of 4 inches or less.
 - Under this storm classification, maintenance teams will perform snow removal on Priority #1, Priority #2, and Priority #3 streets. Every attempt will be made to clear snow from all travel lanes of Priority #1 and Priority #2 streets and provide at least one treated travel lane on Priority #3 streets.
- **Class #2 Storm:** A storm predicted to last for more than 12 hours with anticipated snow accumulations of between 4 and 8 inches.
 - Under this storm classification, maintenance teams will concentrate on removing snow and ice from Priority #1 and Priority #2 streets. After the storm has subsided, or when sufficient clearing of Priority #1 and Priority #2 streets has occurred, then maintenance teams will plow and de-ice Priority #3 streets.
- **Class #3 Storm:** A storm predicted to be extreme in nature with snow accumulations on road surfaces at depths greater than 8 inches, accompanied by strong or gusting winds that create drifting and expected to last for 24 hours or more.
 - Under this storm classification, snowfall may be so heavy that only Priority #1 streets can be maintained in a passable condition until the storm subsides. After sufficient clearing of Priority #1 streets, then maintenance teams will plow and sand all Priority #2 streets and then proceed to Priority #3 streets.

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Street Plowing and Treatment Objectives:

- Each snowstorm presents unique conditions and challenges that warrant different approaches to snow and ice control. Factors such as wind, moisture content of the snow, pavement temperature, ice build-up on road surfaces, and projected snow accumulations all influence snow fighting strategies.
- Normal operating procedures involve plowing and spreading de-icing materials to roads. Plowing will begin when sufficient snow accumulations occur on the road surface.
- Subsequent crews will adjust techniques to meet conditions. De-icing adjustments are made in the field based on current and forecasted conditions. Field adjustments may include applying additional de-icing materials to the entire road surface or limiting them to icy spots, intersections, stop signs, hills, and bridges. The Maintenance Supervisor on duty, will recommend techniques to be deployed based on storm conditions and duration to achieve optimal results and ensure the safety of motorists.

Priority of Parking Lots, Sidewalks, and Trail Systems:

- **Class #1 Storms:** Parking lots designated as Priority #1 will receive immediate attention, followed by all remaining areas designated as Priority #2.
- **Class #2 Storms:** Parking lots designated as Priority #1 will receive immediate attention, followed by all remaining areas designated as Priority #2. During such storms, service to parking lots, sidewalks, and trails designated as Priority #2 may be delayed.
- **Class #3 Storms:** Parking lots designated as Priority #1 will receive the greatest concentration of snow removal effort to facilitate the dispatching of emergency response units and/or law enforcement personnel. During such storms, service to parking lots, sidewalks, and trails designated as Priority #2 will be delayed.
 - Once the storm has subsided to the point that “re-stacking” (or continued accumulation) is no longer a factor, Priority #2 areas will be effectively attended to. In extreme cases perimeter sidewalks may not be cleared within 24 hours of the storm’s culmination, but all efforts will be made to clear these areas as soon as possible.

Materials:

Ice-slicer will be used as a de-icing agent to melt snow and ice. Application rates will be based upon specific weather and road conditions, as well as the Streets Operations Manager’s recommendations. The Street Division’s goal is to achieve maximum melting of snow and ice in a cost effective and environmentally responsible manner.

Snow- Trooper:

During all Class #1, #2, and #3 Storms, Commerce City residents and the traveling public can access [“Snow-Trooper”](https://snowtrooper.c3gov.com/) on Commerce City’s website. Snow-Trooper is activated during storms, and tracks snow response progress on Priority #1, #2, and #3 and #4 streets during snow events. <https://snowtrooper.c3gov.com/>

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Annual Review:

The Streets Operations Manager, Parks Operations Manager, and Emergency Manager will meet annually in September/October to review this annex and make any updates as needed.