

V. WINTER MAINTENANCE POLICY

- Adopted October 7, 2002
- Revised November 3, 2003
- Revised December 20, 2004
- Revised September 19, 2005
- Revised October 16, 2006
- Revised September 17, 2007
- Revised October 20, 2008
- Revised December 7, 2009
- Revised November 1, 2010
- Revised November 7, 2011
- Revised November 13, 2012
- Revised November 12, 2013
- Revised October 27, 2014
- Revised November 9, 2015
- Revised October 10, 2016
- Revised November 6, 2017
- Revised November 5, 2018
- Revised October 7, 2019
- Revised November 2, 2020

This policy supersedes all previously written or unwritten policies of the City regarding snow and ice removal. Public Works staff will review this policy periodically and will amend it as needed.

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to define and outline snow and ice control objectives and procedures as established by the City of Prior Lake.

The City of Prior Lake believes it is in the best interest of the residents for the City to assume basic responsibility for snow and ice control on City streets. Effective ice and snow control is necessary for routine travel and emergency services. The City will attempt to provide such control in a safe and cost-effective manner, keeping in mind safety, budget, personnel, and environmental concerns. The City will use City employees, City-owned or rented equipment, and/or private contractors to provide the following level of service:

STREETS			
Snow accumulation amount	1-2 inches	3-6 inches	6+ inches
Avg completion time*	8 hours	11-13 hours	13+ hours

* Avg completion time is the time necessary to remove snow from all City streets at least one time

PARKS, TRAILS, SIDEWALKS, PARKING LOTS			
Snow accumulation amount	1-3 inches	4-12 inches	12+ inches
Avg completion time	10 hours	1-2 days	2-4 days

It should be noted that every winter storm has different temperatures and intensities that can affect the amount of time crews spend with snow and ice control.

WHEN WILL CITY START SNOW OR ICE CONTROL OPERATIONS?

The Maintenance Superintendent or his/her designee will decide when to begin anti-icing, snow removal, or ice control operations. The criteria for that decision are:

1. Air and pavement temperatures
2. Anti-icing operations may occur 48 hours in advance of an approaching storm or anticipated frost, or prior to weekends in which forecasts call for some form of precipitation
3. Drifting or accumulation of snow that causes problems for travel
4. Icy conditions which seriously affect travel
5. Time of snowfall in relationship to heavy use of streets

Snow and ice control operations are expensive and involve the use of limited personnel and equipment. To remain cost-effective, the Public Works Department will utilize a variety of ice control products and continually monitor the effectiveness, environmental impact and costs of each product applied. The Maintenance Superintendent or his/her designee will determine the appropriate combination of chemicals to effectively control ice in the given weather conditions. Effects on the environment are of the highest priority in selection of ice control products.

To ensure completion of priority areas, snow removal may be conducted on a 24-hour basis, which may result in snow removal equipment being operated in residential areas during the evening, night, and early morning hours.

ANTI-ICING

This is a common practice of being proactive to an impending snowfall or frost event. This practice prevents the snow or frost from bonding or compacting to the pavement surface at a much lower cost than applying dry salt products. The product most often used is salt brine, which is chloride diluted to a 23% solution with water (one gallon of brine contains 2 pounds of salt).

HOW SNOW WILL BE PLOWED

Snow will be plowed in a manner that minimizes any traffic obstructions. Generally, the center of the roadway will be plowed first. The snow shall then be pushed from left to right. The discharge shall go onto the boulevard area of the street. In times of extreme snowfall, the process of clearing the streets of snow may be delayed, and it may not be reasonably possible to completely clear the streets of all snow.

Generally, operations shall continue until all roads are passable. Widening and clean-up operations may continue immediately, or on the following working day depending upon conditions and circumstances. Due to safety concerns for the plow operators and the public, operations may be suspended after 10-12 hours to allow personnel adequate time for rest.

Cul-de-sacs will be plowed with one pass along the curb to provide an outlet for the driveways, with snow being piled in the middle of the cul-de-sac where possible. Crews will clean up the cul-de-sac later that day or the following workday as time permits. Snow removal will only occur when no storage space is available in the cul-de-sac area.

DOWNTOWN SNOW REMOVAL

The downtown area will be plowed from right-of-way to right-of-way (generally storefront to storefront) with the snow pushed into piles where feasible. Crews will remove the snow piles during

non-business hours on the day of the event if possible. Snow removal operations may be delayed depending on weather conditions, time of day, personnel, and equipment availability.

SNOW REMOVAL

The Maintenance Superintendent or his/her designee will determine when snow will be removed by truck from an area. Such snow removal will occur in areas where there is no room on the boulevard for snow storage, and in areas where piles of snow have been created by City crews. Snow removal operations will not commence until other snowplowing operations have been completed. Snow removal operations may also be delayed depending on weather conditions, personnel, and equipment availability. The snow will be removed and hauled to a snow storage area.

PRIORITIES AND SCHEDULE FOR SNOW REMOVAL

The City has categorized City streets, facilities, trails, sidewalks, and recreational facilities based on the function, use volume, and importance to the welfare of the community.

Streets

Priority Plow Routes: These are high volume streets that connect major sections of the City and provide access for emergency fire, police, and medical services.

Daytime Snow Emergency Routes: These are high volume streets that are critical to general traffic flow and access for the City.

School and Commercial Routes: These are high to medium volume streets that provide access to key areas in the City.

Medium Volume Residential Streets: These are medium volume streets that provide access to multiple properties.

Low Volume Residential Streets: These are low volume streets providing access to a limited number of properties. These routes include cul-de-sacs and alleys.

Non-Street Facilities

Non-street facilities are categorized according to the following three priorities:

High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority
Safety	High-use recreation	Community trails
Emergency	Hockey rinks	Pleasure rinks
School access		
Public building access		

Timetables for snow removal are based upon the priority of the trail, sidewalk, parking lot, skating rink, or access as set forth below.

Priority 1 - Those streets classified as "Priority Plow Routes" will be plowed first. These are high volume streets, which connect major sections of the City and provide access for emergency fire, police, and medical services. Exhibit A illustrates the "Priority Plow Routes" and the "Daytime Snow Emergency Routes." Non-street facilities classified as "High Priority" include the Fire Halls, downtown area, and pedestrian routes for schools and public safety.

Priority 2 - Streets providing access to schools and commercial businesses

Priority 3 - Low volume residential streets and alleys

Priority 4 - Medium priority non-street facilities

Priority 5 - Low priority non-street facilities

PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Refer to City Code 901.207 Winter Parking Restrictions for full details.

WORK SCHEDULE FOR SNOW AND ICE CONTROL EQUIPMENT OPERATORS

Equipment operators will be expected to work 8-10 hour shifts on a regular basis. In severe snow emergencies, operators sometimes work more than 10 consecutive hours. After a 12-hour shift, the operators will be replaced if additional qualified personnel are available.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Snow and ice control operations will normally be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of City employees and equipment. Factors that may delay snow and ice control operations include severe cold, significant winds and/or limited visibility.

USE OF SALT AND OTHER CHEMICALS

The City will use salt and other chemicals when there is hazardous ice or slippery conditions. The City is concerned about the cost and the effect of such chemicals on the environment and may limit its use for that reason.

SIDEWALKS/TRAILS/PARKING LOTS

The City plows certain sidewalks and trails as illustrated in Exhibit B. The following standards are adopted for providing winter maintenance to designated trails, sidewalks, parking lots, and winter lake access:

1. Sidewalks and trails which abut private property shall not normally be cleared of snow by the City unless designated within this Policy. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to keep sidewalks clear of snow or ice in accordance with City Code 701.100. If notice has been sent to owner/occupant and snow has not been removed, the City may choose to remove the snow and ice and charge the cost of removal to the property owner in accordance with the current Fee Schedule. Exceptions to this standard are as follows:
 - a. Sidewalk/trail immediately adjacent to curb or with less than 3 feet of boulevard between sidewalk/trail and curb.
 - b. Sidewalk/trail along school routes (non-bus zone).
 - c. Sidewalk/trail adjacent to City property.
 - d. Sidewalk/trail located in high use recreational areas.
2. The designated sidewalks, trails, parking lots, accesses, and rinks are normally plowed, blown, or swept. The method of snow removal depends on the amount and type of snowfall.
3. Designated trails and sidewalks will be cleared as thoroughly as possible but need not be cleared of all ice and snow, nor maintained to bare pavement.
4. As time permits, City facilities and downtown sidewalks will be treated by City staff with salt or other chemical to reduce ice. Other sidewalks and trails throughout the City will not be salted or treated with chemicals.

SKATING RINKS

The following standards are adopted for providing winter maintenance to hockey and pleasure skating rinks:

1. All rinks with warming houses will be swept and flooded Monday through Friday, as needed.
2. If rinks become rough or uneven due to weather conditions (i.e. warm weather, frost boils, or freezing rain) rinks will be shaved as time allows during normal working hours.
3. In the event of snow:
 - a. No rink will be maintained until snow fall ceases.
 - b. Maintenance crews will generally maintain rinks during normal working hours. The Maintenance Superintendent or Parks Foreman may decide to call in a crew on weekends or holidays to maintain rinks if snow fall exceeds 2" **and** it provides efficiency to remove snow (i.e. freezing conditions).
 - c. Hockey rinks are considered a medium priority and therefore will not be maintained until high priority winter operations are completed.
 - d. Pleasure rinks with warming houses are considered a low priority and therefore will not be maintained until high and medium winter operations are completed.
4. If the condition of the ice becomes a safety concern, rinks may be closed at the discretion of the Maintenance Superintendent or his/her designee.
5. For safety reasons, the City has a weather policy which determines rink closing. The warming house and rinks will be closed if the actual air temperature is -5 degrees Fahrenheit or colder, or the wind chill is -25 degrees Fahrenheit or colder. The weather cancellation hotline is 952-447-9825.

RIGHT-OF-WAY USE

The intent of the right-of-way is to provide room for snow storage, public and private utilities, sidewalks, streetlights, traffic signs and other City uses. However, certain private improvements such as mailboxes are permitted within this area. Other private improvements (such as irrigation system components, fences, landscaping, or other fixtures) are not permitted.

MAILBOXES

Mailboxes must be installed in such a manner as to provide access by Post Office personnel or other parcel carriers, and to allow for Public Works equipment to maintain the streets. Newspaper boxes installed under mailboxes in most cases do not provide enough room for snow equipment to pass under and can cause an indirect hit to the mailbox. A drawing showing the proper details for mailbox placement is attached as Exhibit C. Mailboxes and posts should be constructed securely enough to withstand the force of snow rolling off a plow or wing. Any posts that are rotten or too weak to withstand winter weather will not be repaired by the City.

Each incident of mailbox damage will be reviewed by Public Works staff to determine whether the mailbox damage was from plow impact or snow load. Staff will then contact the resident with their findings. If it is determined that the plow hit the mailbox, the City will make temporary repairs, if necessary, to ensure the resident can continue to receive mail until conditions allow for replacement in the spring. The City will provide \$75 to the property owner to make their own repairs according to the City specifications detailed in Exhibit C. A secondary option is to have the City repair the post and/or mailbox with a standard size, non-decorative type.

Damage resulting from the force of the snow is the responsibility of the property owner/resident. Removing snow from the mailbox and maintaining access to the mailbox is the responsibility of the property owner.

A property owner assumes all risk and responsibilities for replacement of mailboxes and supports that are constructed of materials such as, but not limited to, brick and mortar, stone aggregate, ornamental railings, or antique type support.

Snowplow operators make every effort to remove snow as close to the curb line as practical to provide access to mailboxes for the postal department. It is not possible to provide perfect conditions and minimize damage to mailboxes with the size of equipment the City operates. The final cleaning adjacent to mailboxes is the responsibility of each property owner/resident.

TURF REPAIR

All instances of turf damaged by City plows shall be reported by the property owner to the Public Works Department by May 15 for review. The damage will be reviewed by Public Works staff in the spring when the extent of the damage can be verified. Frequently, the damage looks more severe immediately after the occurrence than it does when the snow has melted in the spring. If the turf needs repair as determined by Public Works staff, Public Works staff shall seed the damaged area. The City will determine the appropriate turf repair material based on site conditions, materials, and available City resources. It is the property owner's responsibility to water and maintain the restored area. The City covers the cost of one (1) restoration service per property, per year.

To reduce the likelihood of turf being damaged by City equipment, the City will provide markers free of charge to residents to mark the edge of the road for the equipment operators. Markers can be picked up at the Public Works Maintenance Center (17073 Adelman St SE) beginning October 1, while supplies last. If there is damage to a boulevard area caused by City equipment, the City maintenance crews will give priority to those residents who placed the markers along their property.

IRRIGATION, LIGHTING, TREES, FENCES, ETC.

The City will assume no responsibility for damage to underground irrigation systems, private lighting systems, trees, shrubs, specialty grasses, rocks, fences, underground dog containment wires, retaining walls, basketball hoops or other landscaping installed in City-controlled rights-of-way or easements.

Garbage cans and recycle bins must be placed in the driveway of the residence. Placement of garbage cans and recycle bins in the roadway is prohibited.

DRIVEWAY OR PRIVATE STREET ACCESS

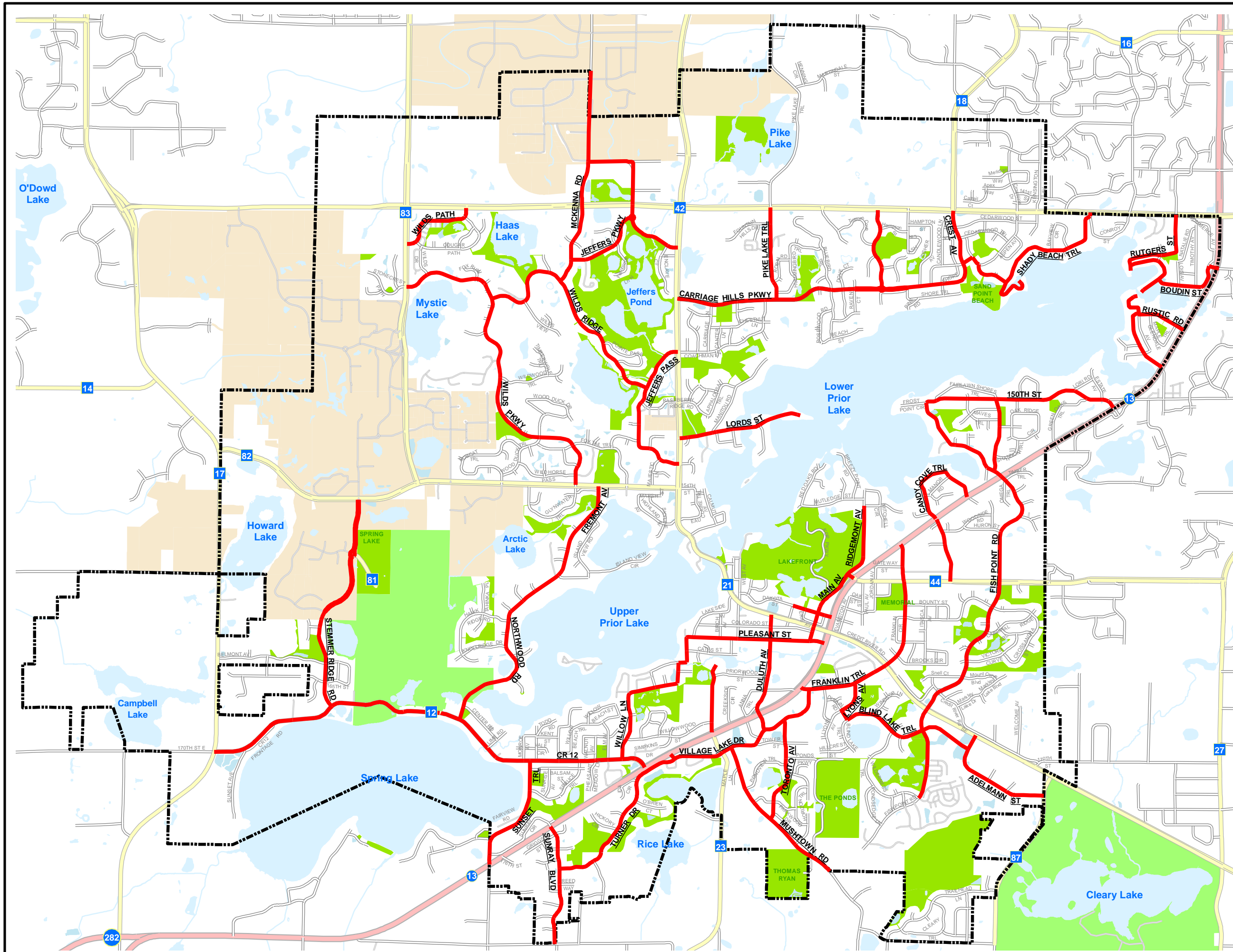
Per Minnesota Statute **160.2715 Right-of-Way Use Restrictions**, it is unlawful to obstruct or deposit snow or ice on a public roadway.

Exhibit A
Priority Plow Routes

EXHIBIT A



PRIORITY CITY PLOW ROUTES



1:31,500





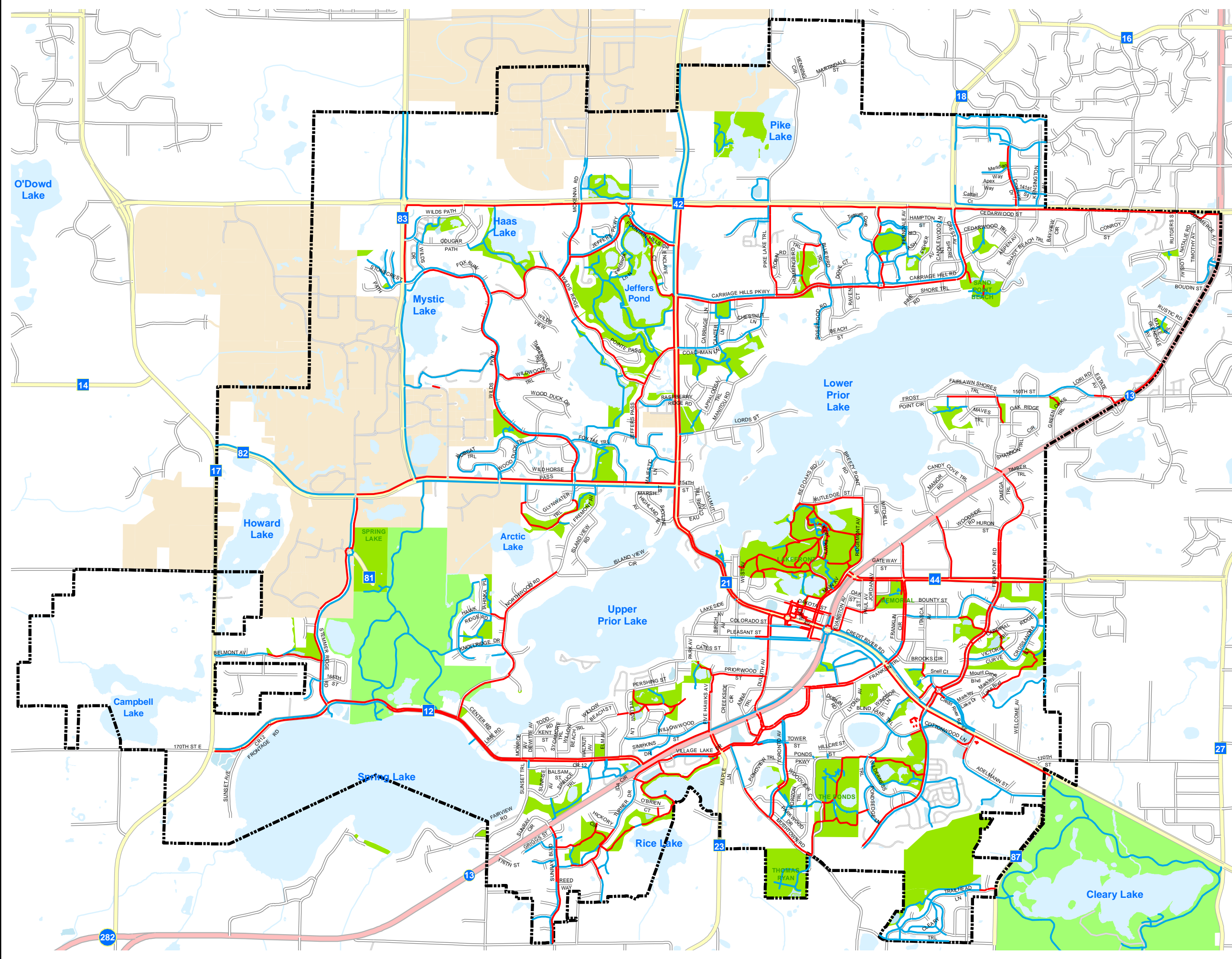
Exhibit B
Trail & Sidewalk Plowing

EXHIBIT B



TRAIL AND SIDEWALK CITY PLOWING

-  Yes
-  No



1:31,500

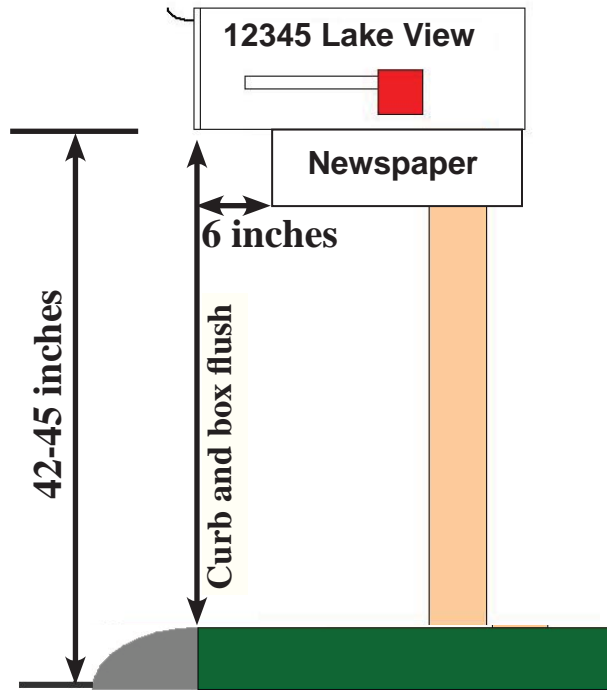


Exhibit C
Mailbox Installation Guidelines

City of Prior Lake

Mailbox **Installation Guidelines**

Helpful hints to protect your mailbox from the snowplow



Mailbox is at the **correct** height.

Snowplow blade clears the mailbox.



Mailbox is **too low**.

Snowplow blade hits the mailbox.

The Prior Lake Public Works Department reminds residents to check their mailboxes to ensure that they meet the following criteria:

A	Front of mailbox should be flush with the back of the curb.
B	Bottom of mail box should be 42-45 inches to the 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 Prior Lake Public Works Department

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