



TO: Dylan Mulfinger, City Administrator
From: Vic Kane, Public Works Superintendent

Reference: City Property, Library

Date: 12/1/21

Dylan,

I know some brief history on this situation. It occurred under Councilman Stewart's time as the Superintendent of the Streets department. He may be able to add more detail. At one point this area was a privately owned, drainage full of trees. The city acquired, cleaned up and planted the property to better showcase the new library. It was noticed this grass area was being used by a private snow removal contractor, without city permission. They were causing damage to the property while pushing snow from private lots into a pile upon it. The city contacted the private contractor informing them they could no longer continue this practice. They were informed to find another area to place snow from these private lots. Since then, the request to use this portion of city property for private snow storage is a recurring one. The city has declined all requests to date.

The current Snow Policy does not allow use of city property for private snow storage. It does spell out a downtown district area. For clarification neither of these businesses are in this district. In the downtown the city removes the privately cleaned sidewalk snow, as it cleans the city streets. This is due to downtown foot traffic issues caused by lack of boulevards or lawn areas to store snow. The downtown private business parking lots are not picked up as the lot itself can be used as storage.

As with every item one must look at the large picture to see any possible ramifications. As for this request I submit the following for consideration if allowing or renting this area for snow storage.

- This is a dirt area and not a hard surface so it can easily be damaged. It will see late ground freezing, intermittent freeze thaw cycles, or early thaw. This will cause damage from plows and tire rutting due to soft ground and the numerous trips involved.
- Can this be repaired yes. However, will we be happy with the appearance of ruts and dirt covered snow piles throughout winter into spring. Then awaiting the dirt work and grass regrowth every spring. Especially on a lot in such a visual location next to the highway heading into the downtown.

The next logical question is can someone haul or push snow to city piles or storage areas for pay?

- First let me state the city has never been in competition to take any work from private businesses including snow removal. We have more than enough work just taking care of the city properties.
- It would be difficult to accurately charge such a varying amount intermixed into city snow piles.
- Would we need a contract? How would we handle other such requests? Do we review them case by case or set up a policy or taking everything through council?

Then there are the small details which ultimately cause more problems than one would believe.

- The where and how delivered, or pushed, that generally cause issues for us. Like the timing of the contractor who will clear lots at lesser snow fall amounts. Causing windrows or rutting issues since they would clear areas, but we would not clear ours?
- In a heavy snowfall year, it will use up storage we may need. It will also definitely cause some delay to city work and use work hours usually allotted for city snow removal use. Basically, you can recoup costs, but one cannot replace hours.

As you can see this is not a simple request when looked at in true detail from a city standpoint. I have looked but the request does little to benefit the city. Thus, the reasoning the request has been denied over the years.

Regards,

Vic Kane

From the Desk of
Public Works Superintendent Victor Kane