

SNOW EMERGENCY WORKSESSION 12/6/23

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- www.muni.org



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. MOA employees responded to a record-setting snowfall event according to plan and precedent.
2. A record-breaking snowfall event should not determine the staffing and operation level of street maintenance.
3. Managing expectations during a record-setting snowfall can be improved.
4. Coordination between the MOA and SOA, and communicating coordination to the public, can be improved.

MOA SNOW & ICE REMOVAL PLAN

2+ inches of snow and continuing to fall

- 30 graders and 4-6 sand trucks on main streets
- 10 hours to complete mains
- Continue plowing mains if snow continues
- Move teams into residential areas as mains are cleared

Residential plow-out begins when mains complete

- 84-hour goal for 'typical' snowfall

MOA SNOW & ICE REMOVAL PLAN

Plow plans

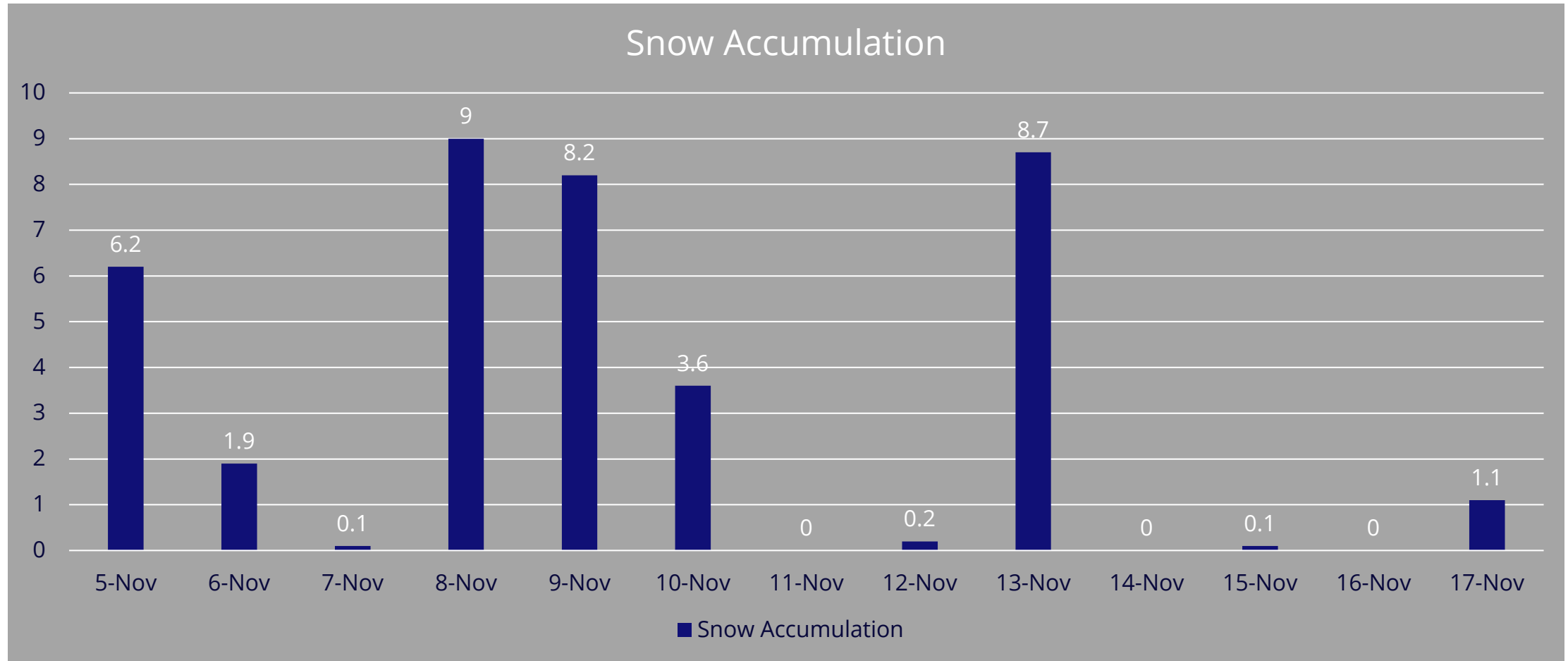
- Goal is 84-hour plow-out after all mains complete
- Extreme snow events challenging
- Two plans: A and B
- Factors affecting plow plans:
 - Trash collection days – postpone until next day
 - Hauling downtown/Central Business District
 - Industrial areas cannot be plowed during day
 - Varying snow depths across town
 - Parked cars

MOA SNOW & ICE REMOVAL PLAN

Post plow out activities

- Widen main streets by hauling, winging, or blowing back
- Widen residential streets by hauling, winging, or blowing back
- Clean cul-de-sac by stacking or hauling

PRINCIPAL SNOWFALL DATES AND DEPTHS





TIMELINE

TIMELINE - OFFSEASON

August 28, 2023 - Snow Removal Roundtable

The Mayor and Municipal Manager convene a meeting to hear suggestions from department heads on how to improve snow removal. The team decides to return to an older model of operation, and updates the overall plan accordingly.



October 4-6, 2023 - Snow Operations Plan Meetings

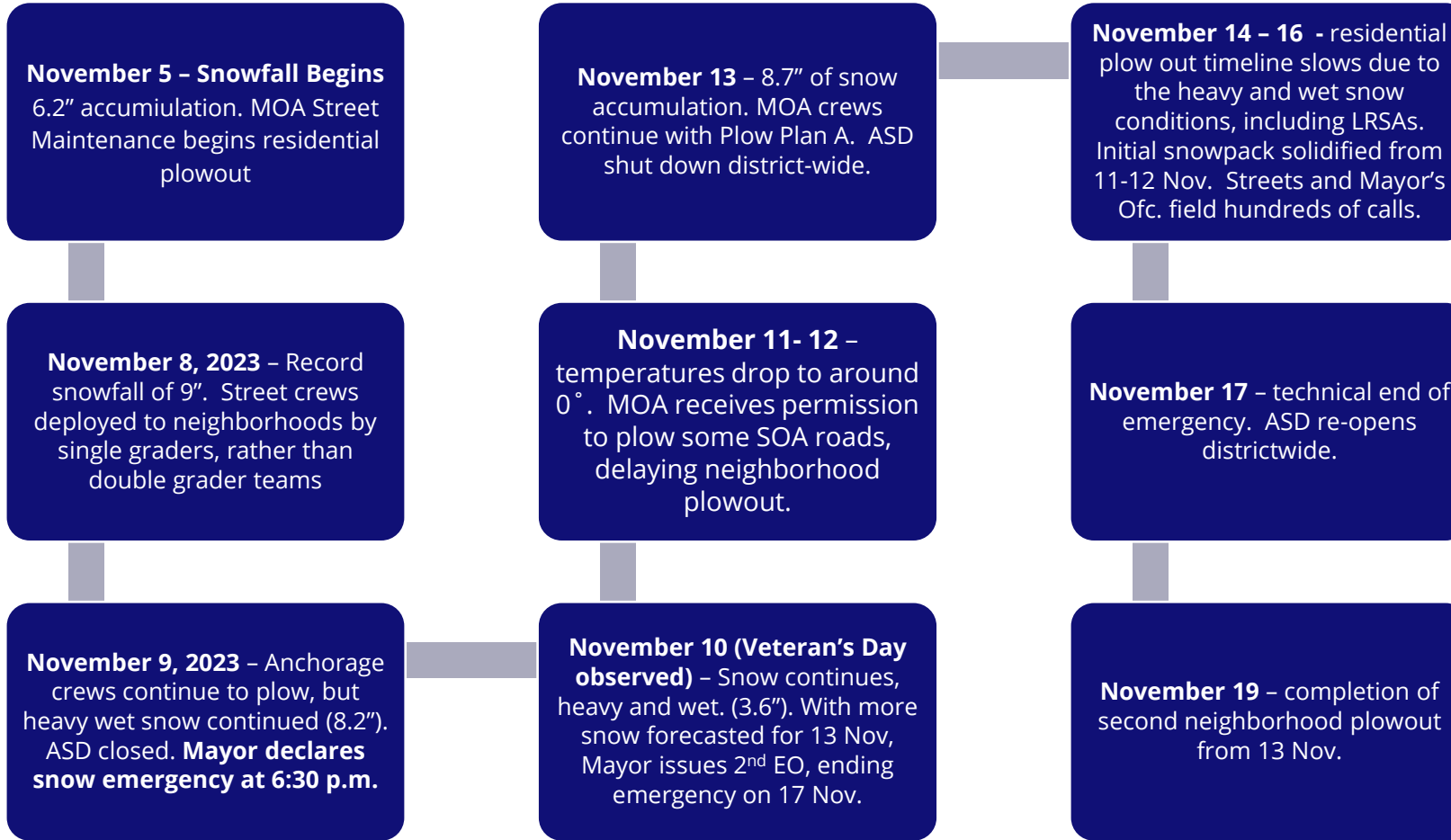
The Mayor and Municipal Manager convene a series of internal meetings, reporting on the draft Snow and Ice Control Plan, and reviewing and testing with relevant departments.



October 13, 2023 - Snow and Ice Control Plan Published

The Mayor publishes the [Snow and Ice Control Plan](#) and [Snow Removal](#) webpage on the Mayor's website.

TIMELINE – SNOW EMERGENCY



TIMELINE – POST EMERGENCY

November 21, 2023 –
MOA and SOA – DOT
confirm details of
MOU, discuss
continuing issues such
as bus stops.



November 29, 2023
The Mayor and
Municipal Manager
convene an internal
after-action meeting,
going over the Good,
the Bad, and the Ugly.



December 6, 2023 –
Assembly Worksession
on Snow Emergency

ASSESSMENT



ASSESSMENT – (Municipal Mgr, M&O, Streets)

MUNICIPAL MANAGER

- Great work by all the snow removal employees. Street Maintenance crews worked back-to-back shifts from November 5 – November 17
- Crews have a great sense of pride and duty to keep the city running. The Mayor went to visit the crew multiple times, including bringing dinner and food, and the crew felt supported and appreciated by the Mayor.

FLEET SERVICES (M&O)

- Excellent job keeping equipment ready and repairing downed equipment quickly.
- Mission critical equipment stayed operational throughout this event.
- Good management of emergency level effort by Street Maintenance leadership. There were lots of moving parts, and the team did excellent work.

STREET MAINTENANCE

- Great performance by crews and leadership
- Good updates from Eric Hodgson (super)
- Heavy, wet snow caused 3-4x longer to finish usual neighborhood plowouts (e.g., cul-de-sac with a 2-grader team usually 3-4 min, but took 12 min)
- Over 10,000 loads of snow hauled in November, 6,000 hauled in an average winter.

ASSESSMENT – (Mgr, M&O, Streets) cont'd

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT

- Public appreciated EasyPark opening garages and parking lots during the snow emergency weekend to encourage people to park off the streets
- Need better coordination with ADP and ACDA for snow removal in downtown district.

STATE OF ALASKA ROADS

- Coordinating to assist with SOA roads was a necessity, not a luxury
- Good communication with DOT
- Can improve communication to public on this issue

OTHER

- Citizens still plowing into streets and ROW, need continued enforcement
- Good operational-level coordination with ASD

ASSESSMENT – Transit

PEOPLE MOVER

- Critical staff at workstations
- Did emergency schedule change per CBA
- Used new technology (mStop) to complement messages to public

SITES

- Snow contractor was also doing AFD/APD, so priority was downgraded
- Some contractors unequipped with chains
- Problems with stops/sidewalks
- Can improve planning with SOA and MOA on this issue

AnchorRIDES

- 11 new all-wheel drive vehicles performed well
- Could not access some neighborhoods for essential trips
- Backlog of non-essential trips to be cleared

ASSESSMENT – Purchasing

EMERGENCY CONTRACTS

- Very responsive and executed contracts quickly
- Not easy to call emergency contracts on short notice, Purchasing team worked together to complete them
- Can improve preparedness with contracts

COORDINATION

- State, School District, Airport and possibly Military: there is a potential to piggyback contracts on shared issues
- Competition among contractors a continuing issue

ASSESSMENT – Mayor and Communications

MAYOR

- Consistent communication within the Administration and to Assembly
- Prepared snow plan in hand
- Snow and ice removal plan does not outline steps for declaring a snow emergency or outline specific departmental roles

COMMUNICATIONS

- Great coordination between Comms and Street Maintenance to keep the public informed
- Daily snowplow and removal updates from Eagle River, Anchorage, Girdwood shared on MOA website and social media
- Increased communication efforts recognized by the public

DATA

- Snow emergency website averaged over 21,000 views a day throughout the snow emergency
- Over 200 calls to Mayor's office, 1700 to street maintenance
- Viewers able to access street maintenance maps, track residential plow-out status, etc.
- Over 8 million potential social media engagements regarding the snow event



RECOMMENDATIONS



COMMUNICATIONS

1. Create snow and ice emergency communications plan.
2. Dedicated PIO at Street Maintenance who will lead website reorganization, website updates during events, media coordination during snow emergency.
3. Create document explaining plow plan A and plow plan B.

RECOMMENDATION #1



MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

1. Educate public on what to expect during plow-out
2. Scale plow-out timeline based on snow accumulation
2. Currently staffed, **MOA cannot move 40" of wet, heavy snow in 84-hours.** If more than 8", 96-hour plow-out; if more than 16", 120 hours...etc.
3. Add a Level 4 response to Snow Plan or revise current Level 3 response to consider plowing without gates and other extreme measures.

RECOMMENDATION #2



TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

1. AnchorRIDES fleet replacement to AWD vehicles as vehicles retire
2. Identify/map clients on life-sustaining trips to request additional snow clearing assistance.
3. Contract with non-emergency transportation providers, TNC's, or cab companies to help augment service to get caught up with backlog.
4. Address sidewalk accessibility issues during snow events so people with limited mobility or those using mobility devices can access bus stops

RECOMMENDATION #3



MAYOR'S OFFICE

1. Work with Office of Emergency Management to create a snow emergency response plan.
2. Plan, train, and conduct exercise of snow emergency response
3. Evaluate capital expenditures for more graders/reconditioned graders.

RECOMMENDATION #4

CONCLUSION

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