



**From the Desk of  
Steven R. Buck  
City Manager**



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## Memo

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To: City Council  
Subject: Sanford Manager's Report for February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017  
Date: February 21, 2017

### **Winter Storm Events:**

I would like to convey recognition to the Department of Public Works for their dedicated and exceptional response to this winter's storm events. In reviewing the NOAA records I totaled 48" just within the past two weeks. Given the type, number, depth, and severity of the cumulative impacts of these last storms, the Department of Public Works and our Contractors have done an exceptional job in clearing our streets, sidewalks, and parking lots. Thank you.

I have received a few calls with concerns about the timing of the clearing of sidewalks and parking lots. No calls on the Streets. There is a hierarchy as the Department mobilizes our Crew and Equipment to deal with the storm events. First and foremost the Crews and Contractors are mobilized to clear and maintain the City Streets. The major arterial roads down to the shortest and least populated side streets are plowed by a combination of City Employees and Equipment and with two Private Contractors, one on the East side and one on the West side of Town. These Plow Routes can be viewed on the City's GIS Website at [www.axisgis.com/sanfordme](http://www.axisgis.com/sanfordme) and use the Layers on the left side bar and select and check Public Works, then Snow Plow Routes.

The Combinations of these Routes as assigned to the mix of Crews and Equipment are over two hours in duration to complete during an average storm event, longer for the more severe storm events. During heavy snow falls of 2 inches or more per hour there is quite an accumulation between trips by the plows. The Crews are also dispatched into service in relation to the timing of the storm, the anticipated severity and duration of the storm, and these factors also dictate how much and when treatment products are applied. Nothing about the combination of all these factors is a perfect science, but the decades of experience within the Crew and especially the Supervisors dictate our best possible outcomes. It is difficult to field criticism based upon hindsight rather than focus on the dedicated and learned response of the City's Crews. There is only so much in Staff, Equipment, and fiscal resources with which to respond. The City seeks to constantly define the balance in Departmental Staff and Equipment in combination of using Private Contractors to create the ability to respond to the overwhelming majority of storm events in a safe and efficient manner. There will always be the most severe of storms that will begin to overwhelm these combined resources, but largely the City can and does respond timely and efficiently.

In reviewing the NOAA records for just the past two weeks, I observed the Public Works Department has responded to not less than four major storm events with a duration period of approximately 10 out the last 14 days with snow accumulations of 48 inches. Crews spend tireless hours working throughout the day and night hours in response to the length of these storms. The

length of the storm can be as impacting as the total snow fall of the storm as the roads must continuously be cleared and or treated until the storm ends and the streets are cleared. Please be respectful of the Crews and cognizant of the hours they work during such events.

During the street clearing time the Crews also work to clear the City owned and maintained parking lots for the municipal facilities, downtown parking lots, and schools. Once streets and lots have been cleared and a portion of the Crew (3 -4 people) have rested, the sidewalk clearing begins. The Department makes every effort to clear the assigned sidewalks prior to the start of the School Day with priorities closest to the schools themselves.

Once the storm ends and the streets, parking lots, and sidewalks have been cleared AND after the Crews have had the opportunity to sleep, the Fleet is converted for snow hauling. This means that plow gear and sanders are demounted, blowers are mounted and loaders readied and the Crews report in by 3:00AM to begin clearing and hauling snow from parking lots and sidewalks. The Downtown is given highest priority and then the Crews work outwards to clear intersections, sidewalks, and storm drains to prevent street flooding should a subsequent melt occur. These are the same Departmental Staff and Contractors that have been working tirelessly on the Streets during the storms and the same equipment that has now been transformed for double duty. Please remain aware of this when observing how and when these areas are cleared in the future. If funds were not a limiting factor, there would be more crew, more equipment, and more contracts towards handling winter events. The City constantly monitors the timing and response to balance the results against fiscal constraints (Taxes).

Again I extend recognition to the Department of Public Works and to each of our Private Contractors for the exceptional response to this winter's severe storm events. As a Manager I thank you for the seamless execution and the response. We do not take your response for granted.

**SanfordNet Fiber:**

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017 the City Council approved Tilson Technology for an A/E Contract for Services as mandated under the EDA funding criteria. The final Scope of Services and Not to Exceed pricing for services has been finalized to include assistance with negotiating and obtaining the required Pole Permits from both FairPoint and CMP. This selection has been reviewed with the EDA Project Engineer and the City is now drafting the A/E Contract with the assistance of our Legal Counsel. The A/E Contract should be completed and reviewed by EDA by February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017. This will keep the City on pace for the Project Timeline as anticipated with the Project to be complete and operational by May of 2018.

Next Steps: The A/E Contract will start with a Preliminary Plan Review of the network and design already made. Pole Attachment Agreements will be applied for and sought during this period. Final engineering on the Network will begin as well as agreements for street, bridge, and highway crossings, environmental review, and negotiation of make ready costs. All of these elements will be concurrent and will seek to keep the Project as fast paced as possible.

The A/E Contract will ultimately produce an RFP bid package for construction of SanfordNet Fiber meeting all EDA mandated requirements. The A/E will provide construction management oversight, EDA compliant reporting, and finally Testing and Compliance Acceptance post construction.

The City is also working with GWI the named Network Operator on the Operations Agreement to manage and operate SanfordNet Fiber for both dark and lit services. The Council will have review

and input prior to the final draft and will subsequently be requested to authorize the final Contract for Operations. The Contract will not be exclusive as the Network is being built as an Open Access Non-Discriminatory Network to allow for other providers to utilize the Network to provide a diversity of services and or business offerings via SanfordNet Fiber.

### **Community Development and Housing:**

Community Development Director Ian Houseal presented the first draft elements of a Housing Program focused on addressing life safety and code compliancy within Sanford's aged housing stock. The first meeting was productive and produced a consensus to explore the creation of a Rental Registration and Inspection Program as implemented in other municipalities having similar housing infrastructure associated with an extensive historic mill district. There are numerous common characteristics associated with this early century housing that has been converted largely from single family residences to now multi-family residences with and without sufficient improvements or maintenance overtime. As the Program is further developed, the City will seek input from with the Community as to final development. Administration will continue to report our progress as further developed.

### **Budget Committee:**

City and School Administration continue on the development of the Fiscal Year 17-18 Budgets. This year is no exceptions as to the difficulties in addressing increased costs to maintain operations and equipment coupled with less than predictable non-property tax revenues such as those distributed by the State through Revenue Sharing and or Essential Programs and Services.

The Budget Committee will meet and start the review and development of the FY 17-18 Budget on March 2, 2107 at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers. I encourage the residents of Sanford to watch the Budget Meetings and or attend to gain insight into how the Budget is developed, what the major impacts are, and what priorities and compromises are sought to balance the delivery of services against property taxes.

### **Parks and Recreation Master Plan:**

The City solicited by competitive bid a Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan in late 2016. The Master Plan Study was conducted by Milone & MacBroom and the Final Draft was presented to the Administrative Team that worked on the Plan on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Once represented to the City Council Property Subcommittee, the Master Plan will be posted to the City Website for the public to view. The premise of the Study and Plan was to consider Sanford's outdoor parks and recreation facilities within the context of the Community they serve and how well these facilities meet the needs of Sanford's Residents. The planning process included an inventory of the physical conditions of the parks and recreation facilities. The assessment identifies immediate needs to address deferred maintenance, short and long term improvements to meet the future needs. The planning process further examined the typical allocations of resources to the parks and recreation facilities for operations and maintenance, capital improvements, and alternate funding sources, such as bonds. Lastly, the Plan included comparisons of facilities and resource allocations to similar sized communities within New England. The Plan summarizes all of these elements and organizes them into a multi-year Plan complete with engineered costs and allocations.

To: SANFORD HOMEOWNERS

From: SANFORD ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Date: 11/30/2017

Re: **Property Tax Exemptions for Fiscal Year 17/18**

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If you own a home, sold your home, or purchased a new home before April 1, 2017 you may be eligible for the following tax exemptions:

|                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <u>Homestead Exemption</u>      | \$20,000* (Increased for 2017) |
| Veteran Exemption               | \$6,000*                       |
| Widow/Widower Veteran Exemption | \$ 6,000*                      |
| Paraplegic Veteran Exemption    | \$ 50,000*                     |

Blind Exemption

\$ 4,000\*

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

You must notify the Assessing office in writing and complete an application, for any of the above exemptions by April.

It is important to remember that the homestead exemption benefit does not automatically transfer to a new residence or owner. A new application is required if you move or if you change the manner in which title is held on your existing homestead . All exemptions are removed per sale each year on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

\* For information or questions, contact the Assessor's office at 324-9115 to qualify for any of the above exemptions, as there is a certain criteria for each exemption.