

## Our City

Adversity has a way of stripping away facades and showing each for who they are at the core. As snow and cold descended upon us last week, I was proud to be a part of our community. Neighbors helping neighbors or others they didn't even know was a common occurrence as I walked and drove around town. Thank you one and all for making the effort. Yes, it is true the City struggled to keep up with snow accumulations last Wednesday; but extra efforts were made to maintain open bus routes as snow continued to fall and the winds picked up. The extreme cold and school closures allowed us to catch up as all streets are now as clear as they can be given the cars that haven't been moved. Personnel across departments pitched in to help; several learning to drive the plow trucks for the first time. At present we remain limited with only three fully equipped plow trucks and four smaller snow removal utilities. But the equipment we have was put to good use nearly around the clock on Wednesday and Thursday of last week. I know things were no easier for our partners at the County Highway District and Idaho Transportation Department. Law enforcement personnel were certainly not exempt as they helped with stuck or wrecked motorists throughout town, the county and on the freeway. To all those who pitched in to make things easier for those less capable, you have my sincere thanks.

More plowing, blowing and shoveling seem to be in order for the coming weeks according to the long range forecasts by the Weather Channel. As of today the median snow water equivalent for the Snake River Basin is at 113% and the water-year-to-date average equals 145% according to the Idaho Snotel Report. It is creating a lot of work for some right now but to date the long term benefits the snow provides for our farmers, industries, recreationalists, fish and wildlife far exceed the costs expended to deal with all the white.

If snow continues to accumulate, please be mindful of a few things. First, if you have the option, don't leave your vehicles on the streets. Second, when you place your garbage or recycle cans out they have to be at street level with no snow obstructions around them; once they have been emptied please move them back off the street, curb and sidewalk. If you can do these two things it will greatly improve our ability to clear the streets in your neighborhood; making travel safer and easier for everybody.

If we receive the rain or freezing rain that is predicted early this week and as temperatures begin to warm above freezing during the days, streets will become slushy and even more difficult to navigate safely. City crews will continue to plow the slush to the sides of the street; if you have a vehicle parked on the street the slush is almost guaranteed to get in and around the wheels and underneath it. When it freezes again it may be extremely difficult to move the vehicle. If the warmer rains that are predicted actually arrive flooding is very possible; the clearer the curbs and gutters remain, the less likely it will be that runoff from the streets will affect private property. Also, if you have a house on an old foundation like mine, you may also want to remove snow from around the house if that is possible in order to prevent water from running straight down the wall and finding a crack in a basement wall. The ground under the snow is frozen; water will find the path of least resistance until the soil thaws, in the past that has been down my foundation and into the basement. Good luck in the coming days.

Until next week...