



Staff Report

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Date: 5/10/2021

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TO: Mayor and City Council
THROUGH: Steve Powers, City Manager
FROM: Peter Fernandez, PE, Public Works Director

SUBJECT:

February Ice Storm Response and Recovery Update.

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Result Area(s): Good Governance; Natural Environment Stewardship; Safe Community; Safe, Reliable and Efficient Infrastructure; Strong and Diverse Economy; Welcoming and Livable Community.

ISSUE:

February Ice Storm Response and Recovery Update.

RECOMMENDATION:

Information only.

SUMMARY:

The City of Salem experienced a severe ice storm from February 11 through February 13, 2021, resulting in significant damage and adverse impact to the community. The City and local contractor have removed damaged trees and debris and repaired damaged infrastructure throughout the community. The total estimated cost to the City for response and recovery efforts is \$4.6 million. Expenses of approximately \$1.3 million have been incurred as of April 21, 2021. A significant portion of these expenditures is anticipated to be reimbursed through insurance or federal funds.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

1. As of April 21, a total of \$1.3 million has been expended on response and recovery efforts. An additional \$3.2 million is anticipated to be expended in the coming months, for a total of nearly \$4.6 million. The breakdown by fund:

Fund Name	Expended 4/21/21	Projected	Total
General - Parks	\$275,829	\$2,733,056	\$3,008,885
Transportation	\$432,690	\$358,757	\$791,447
Streetlight	0	\$30,000	\$30,000
Utility	\$627,826	\$109,827	\$737,653
Total	\$1,336,345	\$3,231,640	\$4,567,985

Expenditures incurred by the Transportation, Streetlight, and Utility Funds will be absorbed within authorized spending limits. The impact to Parks Operations in the General Fund cannot be absorbed within the adopted budget. Agenda item 21-178 is a request for Council to approve a supplemental budget of \$1.4 million for unanticipated expenditures related to the ice storm response and recovery effort.

2. A substantial portion of the total ice storm expenditures will be eligible for reimbursement through insurance or from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), upon declaration of disaster at the federal level. The City has insurance of up to \$1,750,000 with a \$500,000 deductible related to trees in the rights-of-way, landscaping, and other property damage.
3. The City has hired a consultant, as provided by the insurance policy, to assist with documentation supporting the insurance claim and potential FEMA claim for eligible expenses. The consultant has prepared the first substantial claim submittal in the amount of approximately \$1.2 million. The expenditures include approximately \$800,000 in labor and \$400,000 in invoices that have been reviewed in detail and validated for submission. This pre-validation for insurance claims creates excellent documentation for potential future submission to FEMA.
4. The City coordinated with Marion County on a community-wide debris management plan and a potential disaster declaration through the State of Oregon and FEMA. The City Manager signed a Declaration of a State of Emergency related to the storm, the first step in potentially securing federal disaster assistance from FEMA. The State of Oregon requested a federal disaster declaration on April 7, 2021, from FEMA for the ice storm occurring February 11 to 13, 2021.
5. Recovery efforts will continue well into the future. To date, the City's Urban Forestry staff have completed 4,115 tree assessments and have addressed roughly half of the service requests generated from the assessments. In addition, a large number of stumps will require grinding and removal. A replacement tree planting program is being designed to replenish the City's tree canopy. The City's insurance claim reimbursement will include the implementation of a tree replanting program.

BACKGROUND:

Storm Event

The City of Salem experienced a severe ice storm from Thursday, February 11, 2021, through Saturday, February 13, 2021. The weight of an inch of accumulated ice caused downed trees, limbs,

and debris that blocked roadways, sidewalks, park paths, and waterways; caused downed power lines creating outages throughout the City affecting 86 traffic signals and multiple City pump stations; damaged City facilities, parks, and private property; and created hazards such as hanging branches, downed power lines, and icy streets. Street Maintenance crews applied 400 tons of sanding rock to improve traction on streets during the storm event.

Emergency Response

From February 11 to 16, 2021, multiple Public Works Department crews from Parks Operations, Street Maintenance, Stormwater Maintenance, and private tree service contractors worked with electric and communication utilities to clear fallen trees and tree limbs and utility lines from travel lanes of streets, with priority going to state highways, and city arterial and collector streets. Public Works Utility Operations staff shuttled portable generators between several sewer pump stations that lack backup generators. Public Works Dispatch received 1,192 calls for service during the initial seven days of storm emergency response. The Public Works Department activated its emergency Department Operating Center in the early morning hours of Saturday, February 13, 2021. The Center coordinated emergency response activities citywide through both the emergency response and recovery phases of the storm event.

Recovery Efforts

On Wednesday, February 17, 2021, conditions improved to the point where the City switched from an emergency response posture to initiating comprehensive recovery efforts. Recovery efforts focused on five major areas:

- Removing damaged trees and associated limbs and debris from City streets
- Clearing streams, creeks, and drainageways of downed trees and debris
- Providing Community Woody Debris Collection Sites for private property owners
- Clearing City parks of damaged trees, downed limbs, and woody debris
- Repairing City infrastructure damaged by the storm, such as sidewalks, fences, handrails, structures, and streetlights

Four Community Woody Debris Collection Sites operated over the span of 26 straight days, from February 17 through March 14, 2021. These sites were located at Woodmansee Park, Wallace Marine Park, Geer Community Park, and McKay Park, and were operated by Public Works Utility Operations and Street Maintenance personnel. A total of 20,600 vehicle/trailer loads of woody debris were brought to the sites by the public, totaling an estimated 31,000 cubic yards of debris. The debris was hauled to Marion County's Construction Debris Site where it was ground and chipped.

Public Works Parks Operations tree crews and Street and Stormwater Maintenance ground crews, augmented by up to ten private tree contractor crews, have worked to remove damaged City-owned trees, trim hanging branches, and cut and chip limbs and debris from streets and parks. From February 17 through April 23, 2021, a total of 6,040 tons (12.1 million pounds) of woodchips and 214 tons (428,000 pounds) of logs/timber have been created through these combined tree cutting/chipping efforts. Free woodchips are still available to the public at two self-service

distribution sites: Bush's Pasture Park Mission Street SE Parking Lot, and at the southwest corner of the intersection of 17th Street and Silverton Road NE. These locations are restocked on a regular basis.

The Public Works emergency Department Operating Center deactivated on Friday, April 2, 2021. However, efforts continue through Parks Operations and tree service contractors to mitigate damaged trees and remove downed limbs and debris on City street rights-of-ways and in parks. In addition, Stormwater Maintenance personnel continue to remove and clear streams and creeks of trees and debris in order to reduce the chance of flooding during spring rains. Street Maintenance staff continue to work to repair the various locations where sidewalks, fences, handrails, and streetlights were damaged by downed trees and debris.

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Attachments:
None