

Bloomington Common Council Agenda and Notice: Deliberation Session

Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

Council Chambers (Room #115), City Hall

401 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, IN 47404

This meeting may also be accessed [remotely](#).¹

Agenda:

1. Roll Call
2. Agenda Summation
3. Identifying Opportunities to Improve Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility Following Snow Events
 - a. Review of relevant city goals and policies
 - b. Discussion of constituent feedback
 - i. Public comment: Residents' lived experience
 - c. Discussion of departmental feedback
 - d. Potential interventions: policy, budgetary, operational
 - e. Workshopping specific issues—potential interventions and measuring success:
 - i. Network accessibility
 1. Monolithic sidewalks
 2. Sidewalk clearance gaps
 3. High injury network (SS4A)
 - ii. Intersections and transit access
 1. Inaccessible bus stops
 2. Snowbanks at intersections
 - iii. Enforcement
 1. Complaint-based system
 2. Frequency of fines for violations
 3. Efficacy of fines
 - iv. Operations
 1. City-owned properties
 2. Unclear responsibility zones
 3. Resident education

¹ <https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/83919591100?pwd=pmBfb5iu1BF1JYlqxmLYtOQKizslXb.1>

Meeting ID: 83919591100; Passcode: 874724

- v. Other
- f. Prioritization of next steps
- 4. Public Comment
- 5. Adjournment

Bloomington City Council meetings can be watched on the following websites:

- [Community Access Television Services \(CATS\)](#)²
- [City of Bloomington's YouTube Channel](#)³

Materials for this meeting are available on [Council's website](#).⁴

The City is committed to providing equal access to information. If you encounter difficulties accessing material in this packet, please contact the Bloomington Common Council Office at council@bloomington.in.gov or 812-349-3409 and provide your name, contact information, and a link to or description of the document or web page with which you are having problem.

² <https://catstv.net/>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/@citybloomington>

⁴ <https://bloomington.in.gov/council/meetings/2026>

CITY POLICY

Bloomington Municipal Code Chapter 6.07 - SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL

6.07.010 - Snow and ice removal—Duty of abutting property owner.

(a) It shall be the duty of every owner of any premises abutting a sidewalk in all parts of the city to remove, or cause to be removed, all snow and ice from the sidewalk to allow safe and reasonable travel on said sidewalk within twenty-four hours after snow or ice has ceased to fall or in any way accumulate.

(b) In the downtown snow removal area, the minimum clear width of the path shall be the lesser of fifty-four inches or the full-paved width of the sidewalk, while in the remainder of the city the minimum clear width of the path shall be thirty-six inches.

(c) For purposes of this section, the downtown snow removal area is defined as:

- (1) College Avenue and Walnut Street from 3rd Street to 10th Street;
- (2) Gentry Street from 4th Street to 5th Street;
- (3) Morton Street from 5th Street to 10th Street;
- (4) 3rd Street between Walnut Street and College Avenue;
- (5) 4th Street between Walnut Street and Gentry Avenue;
- (6) Segments of 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Streets from Walnut Street to Morton Street; and
- (7) Kirkwood Avenue from Indiana Avenue to Rogers Street.

(d) Where the ownership of the premises abutting a sidewalk is being transferred by means of a sales contract that has been recorded in the office of the Monroe County Recorder, the duty to remove snow and ice shall be on the purchaser of the premises, who shall be considered the owner for the purposes of this section.

(Ord. No. 14-11, § 55, 7-2-2014)

6.07.020 - Enforcement procedure and appeal.

(a) If the director of HAND, the assistant director, any neighborhood compliance officer, or any other designee of the director (collectively referred to as "staff") determines that there is a violation of this chapter, that person shall issue a notice of violation (NOV) to the property owner.

(b) The NOV shall be in writing and shall be served on the property owner in one or more of the following manners: delivery in person; by first class mail; and/or by placement in a conspicuous place on the property where a violation occurs. The NOV shall state:

- (1) The location of the violation;
- (2) The nature of the violation;
- (3) The fine assessed for the violation;

- (4) That the fine is to be paid at HAND;
 - (5) That the fine may be contested in the Monroe County circuit courts; and
 - (6) That the NOV may be appealed to the board of public works, provided the appeal is in writing and filed with the board of public works no later than seven days from the date of the NOV.
- (c) Schedule of Fines. The initial penalty or fine for all violations of this chapter shall be fifty dollars. A second violation of this chapter in any twelve-month period shall be subject to a penalty or fine of one hundred dollars. A third and all subsequent violations of this chapter in any twelve-month period shall be subject to a penalty or fine of one hundred fifty dollars. The twelve-month period described above shall begin on August 1 of each year and end on July 31 of the following year.
- (d) If the property owner fails to pay any accumulated fines, the city legal department may collect said fines in any manner authorized by law.
- (Ord. No. 14-11, § 55, 7-2-2014)

DEPARTMENTAL FEEDBACK

Parks Department (Director Tim Street)

From the Parks Department perspective: With respect to pedestrian safety and access after snow events, what do you think is going well? What do you see as our most significant challenges? What do you think are opportunities for improvement?

Parks is responsible for snow removal at all parks, facilities, and trails. Our first priorities are safe facility access and the B-Line Trail, followed by secondary trails and then internal park paths, sidewalks, etc. Overall, I think this prioritization is going well. We routinely hear from residents that having trails open during significant snow events provides people with an option to get outside and safely recreate – or to get where they need to go. We prioritize the B-Line Trail because it provides an important transportation artery that can be cleared separately and free from the impacts of road snow removal, which necessarily pushes snow onto sidewalks. The most significant challenge to snow removal is the unpredictable nature of our winters – while the last two winters have each had a massive snow event, that isn't always the norm.

What infrastructure is Parks responsible for clearing of snow? Are there any ambiguities (re: responsibility) or gaps you're aware of?

See above. We occasionally find a gap – especially when snow sticks around for a long time and residents let us know – but then work to adjust our staff responsibilities for the next event.

How much does Parks budget and spend on snow removal annually?

This is a difficult question. It might be easier to approach from a perspective of how much a day of snow removal costs. For us, that usually involves around 20 staff devoting their whole day (or beyond, into overtime) to snow removal, as well as many other staff members contributing. Some "napkin math" (20 union staff x ~\$40/hr incl. benefits x 10 hrs, plus other staff contributions) would suggest a daily labor cost of around \$10,000. Snow equipment purchases (plows, blades, etc.) don't occur annually and may also be "hidden" in the cost of a new truck, UTV, etc. that is also used for other purposes. That said, in 2025 we spent \$19,500 on new plows and blade attachments. If I had to add that all up for an estimate for last winter, I'd say we spent in the \$90-100k range on snow removal.

Planning & Transportation Department (Director David Hittle)

With respect to pedestrian safety and access after snow events, what do you think is going well?

DPW worked with P&T to prioritize pedestrian routes to clear in the downtown area immediately after snow storms, and DPW is referring to the SS4A priority network when prioritizing which pedestrian routes to clear outside of the downtown.

What do you see as our most significant challenges?

Monolithic sidewalks create particular challenges. Even if the adjacent property owners clear the sidewalks, snow plows may come subsequently and shift plowed snow back over them.

What do you think are opportunities for improvement?

There are logistical and cost constraints. Snow clearance is expensive, service providers are scarce, and episodes of need are unpredictable and ephemeral.

Housing and Neighborhood Development Department (Director Anna Killion-Hanson)

With respect to pedestrian safety and access after snow events, what do you think is going well? What do you see as our most significant challenges? What do you think are opportunities for improvement?

Snow events continue to present significant operational challenges for the HAND Department. The same staff responsible for snow-related enforcement are also responsible for inspections and enforcement under Title 16. Since the inception of the Title 16 Rental Program, the Department has added only one additional inspector despite the addition of thousands of rental units to the community. As a result, compliance officers are routinely booked several months in advance, limiting the Department's flexibility and response capacity during weather events.

Enforcement timing also presents challenges. Storm systems can be difficult to predict in terms of timing, duration, and accumulation. Under the current code, enforcement cannot begin until 24 hours after the final snowfall. In practice, this often means that by the time officers are

authorized to begin ticketing, the Department has already received numerous uReports and complaints from frustrated residents regarding inaccessible sidewalks and perceived inaction.

The enforcement process itself is also resource-intensive. HAND's current approach involves issuing an initial warning followed by citations with progressive fines for continued noncompliance. However, issuing citations does not necessarily result in immediate snow removal. In many cases, property owners may be elderly, physically unable to shovel, or reliant on third-party contractors who have not yet been able to reach the property.

Administrative and software limitations further complicate enforcement efforts. Last year, HAND transitioned from paper citations to electronic citations through the EPL system. Officers were equipped with printers in vehicles to issue citations in the field; however, the time required to research parcel and ownership information for each property significantly reduced enforcement efficiency. During this past winter's storms, the Department reverted temporarily to paper ticketing to improve field response times, with officers later entering parcel and ownership information into the EPL system from the office. Both systems have operational drawbacks, as snow citations require verification of ownership and occupancy information. In rental properties, responsibility for snow removal may shift to tenants if lease documentation assigns maintenance obligations accordingly.

Despite these challenges, the Department has implemented operational improvements in recent years. HAND has begun proactively monitoring forecasted storm systems and, when possible, rescheduling inspections in advance to preserve staff capacity for snow enforcement activities. HAND also started proactively distributing messaging about snow removal responsibilities in advance of forecasted snow events.

Opportunities for improvement include modernization of ticketing software, increased enforcement staffing capacity, and operational or policy changes that would allow for more timely and effective enforcement responses during snow events.

This past winter, how many uReports were submitted documenting inaccessible pedestrian infrastructure? How many of these led to citations?

During this past winter season, HAND received approximately 275 uReports related to snow-covered sidewalks and issued approximately 370 citations associated with snow enforcement activities.

Do you believe the current system for ensuring snow is cleared from pedestrian infrastructure – namely code requirements, resident complaints to identify noncompliance, followed by investigation and potential citation – is meeting our goals? If not, are there any specific policy or operational improvements you believe could help?

The current system presents significant enforcement and operational challenges and does not consistently achieve timely compliance. While the complaint-based enforcement structure allows residents to report issues, the Department does not currently have sufficient staffing capacity to immediately address every uReport, although staff make every effort to respond within approximately 24 hours.

Additionally, the current code structure limits enforcement effectiveness. Because citations can only escalate over time, snow and ice conditions are often resolved naturally through melting before maximum penalties can be pursued. The Department has also received consistent feedback from residents who indicate that sidewalks they previously cleared are frequently re-covered by snow pushed back onto sidewalks by passing plows.

Potential improvements could include increased enforcement staffing, modernization of enforcement software systems, and evaluation of policy changes that would provide greater flexibility for timely enforcement and compliance during significant snow events.