

WINTER

CITY OF  
LONGMONT

PUBLIC  
WORKS



# LONGMONT SNOW SAVVY

~~~~~ GUIDE



CITY OF  
**LONGMONT**  
C O L O R A D O

# INTRODUCTION

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The City's Public Works division maintains 340 miles of centerline roadway in Longmont. About half of this (140 miles) is plowed as part of the annual Snow & Ice Control Program.

**340**  
MILES OF ROADWAY

**140**  
MILES ARE PLOWED

MORE Q&A

[bit.ly/snow-faqs](https://bit.ly/snow-faqs)

## Q WHY NOT PLOW EVERYTHING?

**A** It would be very expensive (at least double the cost).

**A** Many residents would end up with an even greater snow removal burden on sidewalks and driveways, etc.

**A** Plowing would often create rows of snow in residential areas blocking driveways, street-parked cars and trash carts – resulting in worse conditions than leaving the road unplowed.



Plowed snow can block driveways, creating shoveling issues for residents.



## YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK:

Snow & Ice Control is funded through the City's Street Fund Sales and Use Tax, 3/4 of a cent on every dollar purchase in Longmont. This voter approved tax must cover a wide range of transportation projects and maintenance needs. About \$750,000 to \$1,000,000 is spent each year on snow and ice operations.

**➔ Learn more at [bit.ly/city-budget](https://bit.ly/city-budget)**



# GOALS

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EACH STORM BRINGS UNIQUE CHALLENGES, SO SNOW AND ICE OPERATIONS ARE OPTIMIZED TO TARGET A FAIRLY WIDE RANGE OF CONDITIONS.

## CORE OBJECTIVES:

1

Provide access to emergency services.



2

Maintain the safest possible flow of commuter traffic through the city during the storm, emphasizing access to bus routes and schools.



3

Restore normal driving conditions as soon as possible after the storm has ended.



### BE SNOW SAVVY

It is not possible to maintain normal driving conditions during and immediately after all storms. Plan your trips wisely using snow routes and minimize travel or – if you can – hold off until the storm has passed and road conditions improve. Only operate vehicles that are safe for the conditions and use chains or other high traction equipment when ice conditions persist. You are the best judge of personal safety.

**SHARE THE ROAD:**  
BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS, AND USE EXTRA CARE WHEN PASSING OR APPROACHING INTERSECTIONS.



Check out tips for winter cycling at

[bit.ly/winter-bike-tips](https://bit.ly/winter-bike-tips)

# HITTING THE STREETS

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## THE DECISION TO BEGIN SNOW OPERATIONS IS BASED ON MANY FACTORS.

These factors include predicted weather conditions, air and ground temperatures, and the potential for consecutive storms occurring in a short time period. Planning for a six inch snow storm will vary significantly depending on the month, forecasts, and existing road conditions.

## TECH TOOLS

We utilize a variety of advanced monitoring systems to gather timely and accurate information for planning and deployment, including:

HOURLY AND DAILY TEMPERATURES



LIVE STREET CAMERAS



SNOW FALL MEASUREMENTS



LOCAL AND LONG TERM FORECASTS



PAVEMENT AND AIR TEMPERATURES



RADAR MAPS



### BE SNOW SAVVY

View the same Street Snow Cameras we use to get a real-time glimpse of street conditions in Longmont at [bit.ly/street-snow-cams](https://bit.ly/street-snow-cams).

## A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH



We strive to make the very best use of dollars available for the Snow & Ice Control Program. Activities we do before, during and after a storm are planned to prevent waste. Sometimes, this includes holding back on work that Mother Nature can best complete for free.



It is also our goal to conduct operations with care for the environment. We use natural salt products for ice control, which leave minimal residue and result in healthier air quality for the city and the region. Additionally, our specialized application techniques reduce the amount of salt needed, help it adhere to the roadway and minimize damage to vegetation located next to the road.

The Snow & Ice Control Program is vital to assure safety and accessibility in our community for all residents.



# ANTI-ICING & PLOWING OPERATIONS

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q** CAN'T YOU PUT SOMETHING ON THE ROAD TO GET RID OF ICE ONCE IT'S THERE?

**A** Deicing chemicals are used during plowing operations to help prevent and control ice build up. Deicing can be very effective, but it takes time and the right temperatures for it to work. If conditions are too cold and/or come on too fast, ice will persist. Once ice bonds to the pavement, removing it is very difficult. Plowing has no effect and scraping it with a blade would damage the roadway. It takes heavy equipment and lots of man hours to remove large ice patches. Sometimes the best approach is patience for warmer temperatures and sunshine.

More information and resources related to these questions at

[longmontcolorado.gov/snow](http://longmontcolorado.gov/snow)

**Q** WHY DOES THE CITY SPRAY LIQUID ON DRY STREETS BEFORE A STORM?

**A** Anti-icing is the process of spraying material onto the road before a storm that lowers the temperature at which ice will form on it. It is typically sprayed far enough ahead of a storm so that it will dry and reactivate when snow falls. The material only works under certain conditions, so you will not see crews conduct anti-icing in extremely cold temperatures.

### BE SNOW SAVVY

Make certain that your vehicle is ready for winter driving conditions long before a storm rolls into town. Being prepared means that your vehicle has decent tires (snow tires or chains are smart investments, especially if your vehicle is without all-wheel drive or 4x4), good wiper blades, a working defroster and an ice scraper.

**Q** WHY DON'T YOU PLOW TO THE PAVEMENT?

**A** Snow plowing is intended to reduce the depth of snow accumulation on roads and improve traction. It is not intended to immediately expose the paved surface, nor does it maintain normal levels of surface traction. Accumulated ice and snow may remain on roads for days and even weeks when weather conditions inhibit thawing. Normal road speeds and stopping distances can be impaired for considerable lengths of time in snow climates.

**Q** WHY WON'T YOU PUSH SNOW TO THE CENTER OF THE STREET INSTEAD OF THE SIDE?

**A** Roads are slightly crowned in the middle to facilitate drainage to the road edge where storm drains carry snow melt and rain water away from the road surface. If snow were plowed to the center of the road, Mother Nature's freeze and thaw cycles would cause ice to continually build on the travel lanes, resulting in even worse traction. Our roadways, drainage systems and snow plow equipment are all designed to work best when snow is moved to the side.

Crowned roads facilitate drainage of snow melt to the road edge



WHEN IT COMES TO FIGHTING SNOW AND ICE, THERE ARE TRADE-OFFS. EACH ACTION HAS AN EFFECT AND SOME SHORT-TERM NUISANCES ARE AN INEVITABLE RESULT.

Dealing with snow inconveniences is a small price we pay to enjoy the beauty and adventure of life in the great state of Colorado.



# SNOW ROUTES

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LONGMONT'S DESIGNATED SNOW ROUTES ARE DESIGNED TO CREATE AN EFFICIENT NETWORK FOR ACCESSIBILITY THROUGHOUT TOWN.



## ARTERIAL

Arterial roads provide access to destinations across town (east-west or north-south) or to transportation networks outside of town.

## COLLECTOR

Collector roads move traffic in/out of neighborhoods and provide access to schools, hospitals, and other local destinations. Collectors also funnel traffic to arterial roadways.

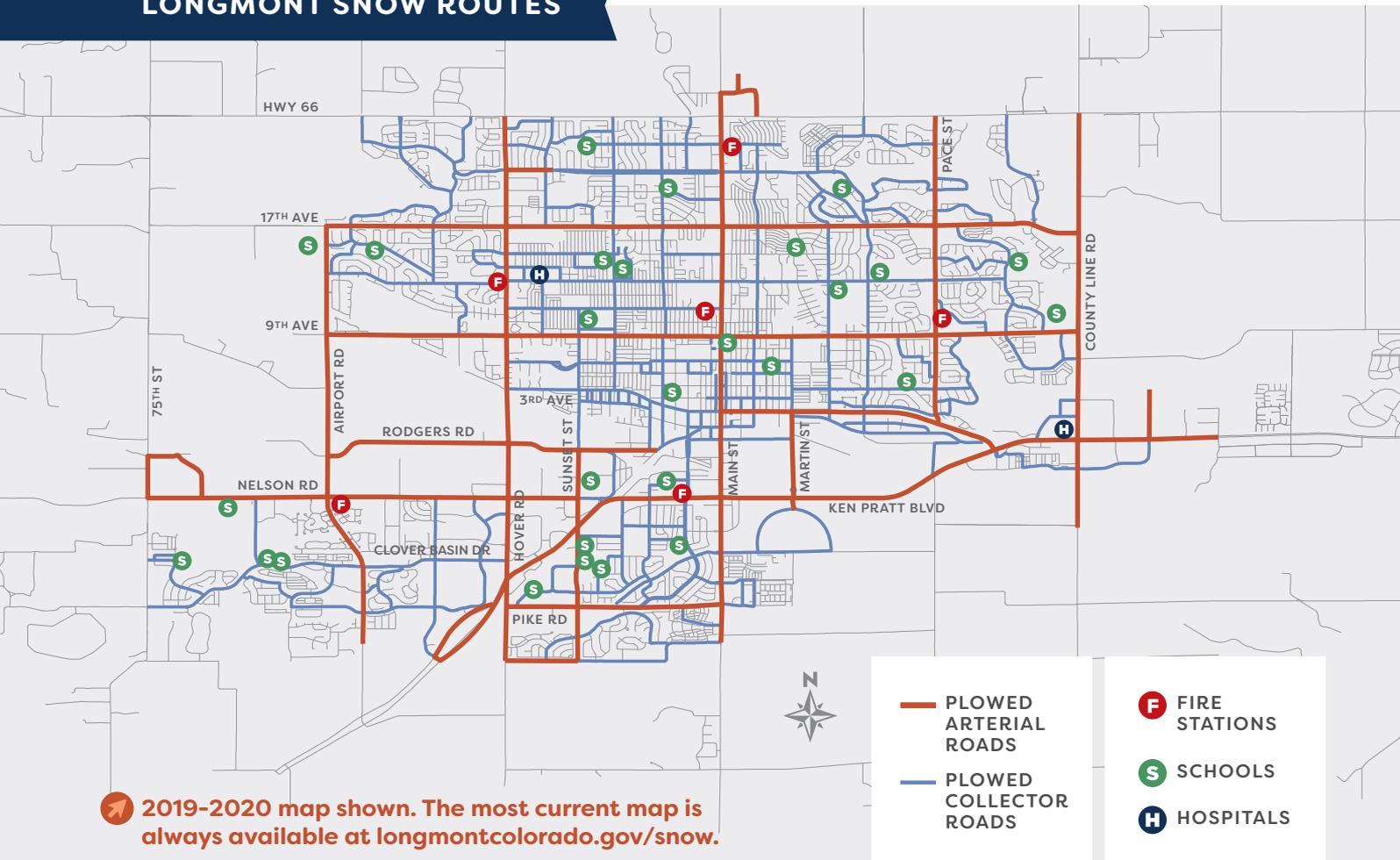


### BE SNOW SAVVY

If you have to travel during or after a storm, plan your trip using snow routes as much as possible for the best conditions.

➔ Use our interactive map at [longmontcolorado.gov/snow](https://longmontcolorado.gov/snow)

## LONGMONT SNOW ROUTES



# SHOVELING SIDEWALKS

**SAFE, CLEAR  
SIDEWALKS  
ARE ESSENTIAL  
TO MOBILITY.**

Many people use sidewalks daily in order to travel through the city (even when it snows). Longmont Municipal Code states that you have 24 hours after snow or ice stops falling to clear your sidewalks.

➔ **Find all the details by viewing the complete code at [bit.ly/longmont-snow-code](https://bit.ly/longmont-snow-code)**

**24**  
HOURS

## BE SNOW SAVVY

When snow fall is predicted to be low or moderate, consider waiting until the storm has ended and snow plow operations have finished before clearing your sidewalks. If you have sidewalks along a plowed street, shovel sidewalk snow onto your property instead of into the street; this will help minimize any additional snow that may inadvertently get pushed onto the sidewalk by plows. It's impossible to completely avoid conflicts between snow removal on sidewalks and streets, so we have to work together and timing is key.

**Q** AFTER A LARGE STORM, HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO REMOVE ALL THIS HEAVY SNOW?

**A** When significant snow accumulates, there are a few ways to handle the increased challenge of clearing sidewalks:

- Shovel multiple times during the storm to minimize build up
- Organize a neighborhood shoveling team
- Invest in a snow blowing machine
- Hire a contractor



## DOWNTOWN & CITY FACILITIES, PARKS & TRAILS

The Snow & Ice Control Program also includes activities at City facilities, Downtown areas, parks, greenway trails and select arterial street sidewalks.



Depending on weather conditions, designated street sidewalks, greenway trails and park sidewalks may not be plowed until the snow event has ended and priority areas at City facilities and Downtown have been adequately managed. Despite snowy weather, best efforts are made to keep City facilities open to provide community services and ensure Downtown businesses are able to continue thriving.



# SNOW ROUTES

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The severity of storm conditions in Longmont results from a mix of factors such as snow accumulation, wind speeds, moisture content of snow, amount of leaves on trees, and so forth.

Response to conditions is variable and can range from advising Longmont residents to stay off roads to declaring an emergency. Residents should always be prepared.

 Find storm preparedness tips from the Public Safety department at [bit.ly/storm-prep-tips](https://bit.ly/storm-prep-tips)



BE SNOW SAVVY

## NEWS & UPDATES

DURING WINTER WEATHER EVENTS

### NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE:

Weather Conditions and Alerts

 Online at [weather.gov](https://weather.gov)

 By telephone 303-494-4221

 NOAA Weather Radio frequency 162.475 MHz

### CITY OF LONGMONT:

City services and operations



 Visit [longmontcolorado.gov/news](https://longmontcolorado.gov/news)

 Call 303-651-8416 Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

 Follow City of Longmont on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)

 Sign Up for City Emergency Alert emails at [bit.ly/longmont-email-notice](https://bit.ly/longmont-email-notice)

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O LLAMAR AL 303-651-8416

## REPORTING PROBLEMS

Storms require significant involvement from staff across Public Works, so requests are logged, prioritized and responded to according to urgency. We appreciate your patience during such times as we work to handle a wide variety of needs.



ONLINE:  
[ServiceWorks.LongmontColorado.gov](https://ServiceWorks.LongmontColorado.gov)



CALL:  
303-651-8416