

# Memorandum

**REPORT TO:** City Commission

**FROM:** Nicholas Ross, Director of Transportation and Engineering

**SUBJECT:** On-Street Parking Management for Winter Maintenance Work Session

**MEETING DATE:** April 22, 2025

**AGENDA ITEM TYPE:** Citizen Advisory Board/Commission

**RECOMMENDATION:** Participate in discussion and provide feedback to staff.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:** 1.1 Outreach: Continue to strengthen and innovate in how we deliver information to the community and our partners.

**BACKGROUND:** In response to significant public comment received during the 2024-2025 snow year, City Staff seeks to improve on-street parking management for the public safety benefit of improved winter maintenance and emergency response.

The city of Bozeman receives an average annual snow accumulation of approximately 90" across more than 50 snow events. The city's Streets Division maintains local streets with a fleet of motor graders equipped with snow gates to reduce blocking of driveways, mailboxes, and curb ramps with a windrow off snow off the blade of a typical plow. Operators require clear access to the curb in order to grade snow and ice outside of the cartway into the boulevard snow storage area. The Streets Division strives to meet a level of service of clearing all local streets within one week when accumulation exceeds 4". This level of service is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve when operators are slowed by the presence of parked cars and reduced width for operations.

The city's Engineering Design Standards require a 35' curb-to-curb width for a typical local street which allows for parking lanes in both directions while providing adequate clear width for emergency services. However, many legacy streets in downtown areas were originally built to between 30'-32' curb-to-curb and parking lanes in both directions have historically been allowed..

International Fire Code standards require a minimum clear width of at least 20' in order to ensure adequate operations. Street widths under 35' that exhibit high utilization of on-street parking in both directions do not allow for the minimum clear width.

Further, other transportation services such as school buses, Gallavan, and delivery vehicles have experienced challenges getting stuck in heavy accumulation on local streets.

The combination of poor conditions and reduced width combine to present a risk to public health and safety.

The city conducted a pilot program of alternate-side parking restrictions in the downtown core south of Main Street in February and March of 2025 as a potential future solution. Staff thanks Kathy Rich, Kathy Powell, Greg Garrigues, and many others for their communication and feedback on the program.

Staff research has indicated that peer cities, those with a population of 50,000 residents and annual snowfall over 50", all require some form of on-street parking management for the purpose of winter maintenance. These practices range from alternate-side parking restrictions to full restriction of on-street parking enforceable by fine and towing after each snow event.

Staff will present the Commission with an overview of lessons learned from the pilot program along with additional options including permanently restricting parking on one side of local streets under 35' in width and expanding overnight (2am-7am) restrictions common in the downtown core. Staff seeks feedback from Commission before formalizing a proposal for implementation prior to the 2025-2026 snow year.

**UNRESOLVED ISSUES:** Manner of parking management for winter operations.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Permanent or seasonal parking restrictions to one side of streets under 35' in width.  
Alternate-side parking restrictions.  
Expansion of overnight parking restrictions.  
As suggested by the Commission.

**FISCAL EFFECTS:** Direction by Commission may have future fiscal impact to labor and materials. Regulatory signage would be required for any parking restriction to be enforceable. Individual signs are anticipated to cost approximately \$15 each and would be installed by the city's Signs & Signals Division. Staff anticipates upwards of 1000 signs will be required depending on the preferred manner of management.

Report compiled on: March 19, 2025