



Thomas R. Bellegarde  
*Interim Assistant City Manager/Public Works Commissioner*

To: Kevin J. Murphy, City Manager  
From: Thomas R. Bellegarde, Assistant City Manager/Public Works Commissioner  
Date: November 1, 2017  
RE: Council Motion of 10.5 10/24/17 C. Leary

**Req. City Manager Provide A Report Regarding The Number Of Contractors Used To Treat Roads Before, During And After Storms; Report Should Include Use Of GPS/GIS Technology, The Amount Of Product Each Contractor Vehicle Applies On The Roads, The Costs Associated With The Implementation And Recommendations For Saving Costs**

The City of Lowell Department of Public Works Streets Division is responsible for the coordination of the winter operations throughout the City. Over the past several years, the Department processes contracts for nearly 100 vendors to provide plowing services throughout the City. Of those vendors, the City only utilizes 2 vendors to supplement the sanding operation. As part of the contractual requirements, sanding vendors must install the programmable distribution system on their trucks in order to receive their purchase orders. RSG Contracting and Kilmoley Construction were the only two vendors that expressed the interest to equip their vehicles. Last season, Kilmoley slowly transitioned their fleet to focus on plowing and hauling instead of the sanding operation. RSG regularly provided 4 vehicles, representing just less than 15% of the total sanding operations. Costs would be representative of that percentage. The Street Division carefully screens potential sanding contractors and the equipment they are able to provide in order to select whether or not they are viable supplements to the operation.

As part of the operating procedures, outside contractors are assigned specific routes that are established to maximize the coverage and efficiency of the road salting. City staff serve as spotters and report back on the road conditions in their respective assigned areas. As mentioned in a separate motion response, the Cirus system is programmable to minimize waste and in accordance to variable winter conditions, thus maximizing the effectiveness.

Spotters are assigned to specific and strategic locations throughout the City in order to closely monitor the road conditions and performance of the contractors in their area. As part of the responsibilities, they hold the contractors up to the City's standards.

All snow/sanding contractor costs over the past few years were \$1.4M in FY17, \$650k in FY16, \$2.3M in FY15, \$775k in FY14 and \$1.2M in FY13.

Cost savings are similar to those explained in the previous motion, include replacing the Cirus system at the end of its' useful life with more advanced and efficient alternatives, increasing the capacity of the storage facilities at various City properties, and taking advantage of periods to purchase road salt at discounted prices. As part of the 5-year vehicle replacement plan, the DPW would like to explore replacing vehicles with more utility vehicles capable of being outfitted with snow removal equipment and utilizing in-house labor forces vs. relying on outside contractors on smaller streets.

Feel welcome to contact me with any further questions on this matter.