

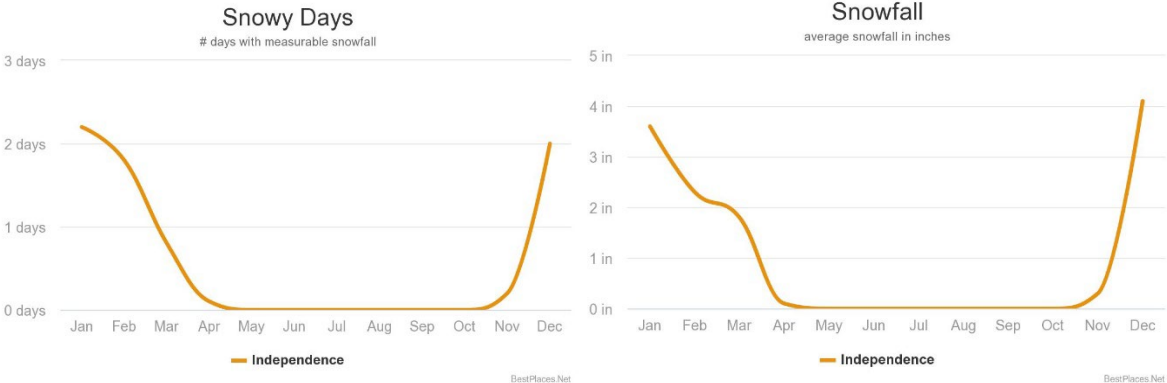
# City Of Independence Snow Plan

## Snow and Ice Control Operations

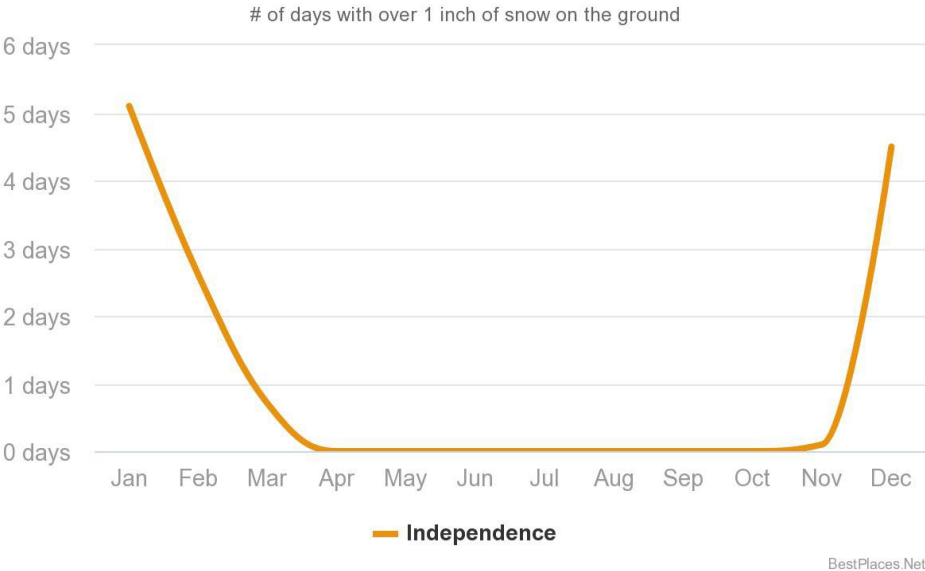
The goal of the City’s snow plan is to establish a system of priorities that facilitate keeping winter traffic moving as safely as possible. This summary of the City’s snow plan is to inform the public on strategies and procedures developed to meet this goal. With over 200 lane miles of streets in our City, not all roadways can be given immediate attention. Accordingly, a prioritized system of roadway plowing has been established. Also included in this snow plan summary are some tips on how best to deal with snow and ice more effectively.

## Level of Service

One of the primary objectives of the City’s Street Department is to provide a plan for the safe and orderly movement of emergency equipment, vehicle traffic, and pedestrians through the City. A snow plan has been developed that is updated each year to facilitate this objective as it relates to street maintenance during adverse weather conditions. The procedures presented in this plan serve to outline how Street Department crews manage the challenge of snow control.



## Snow on the Ground



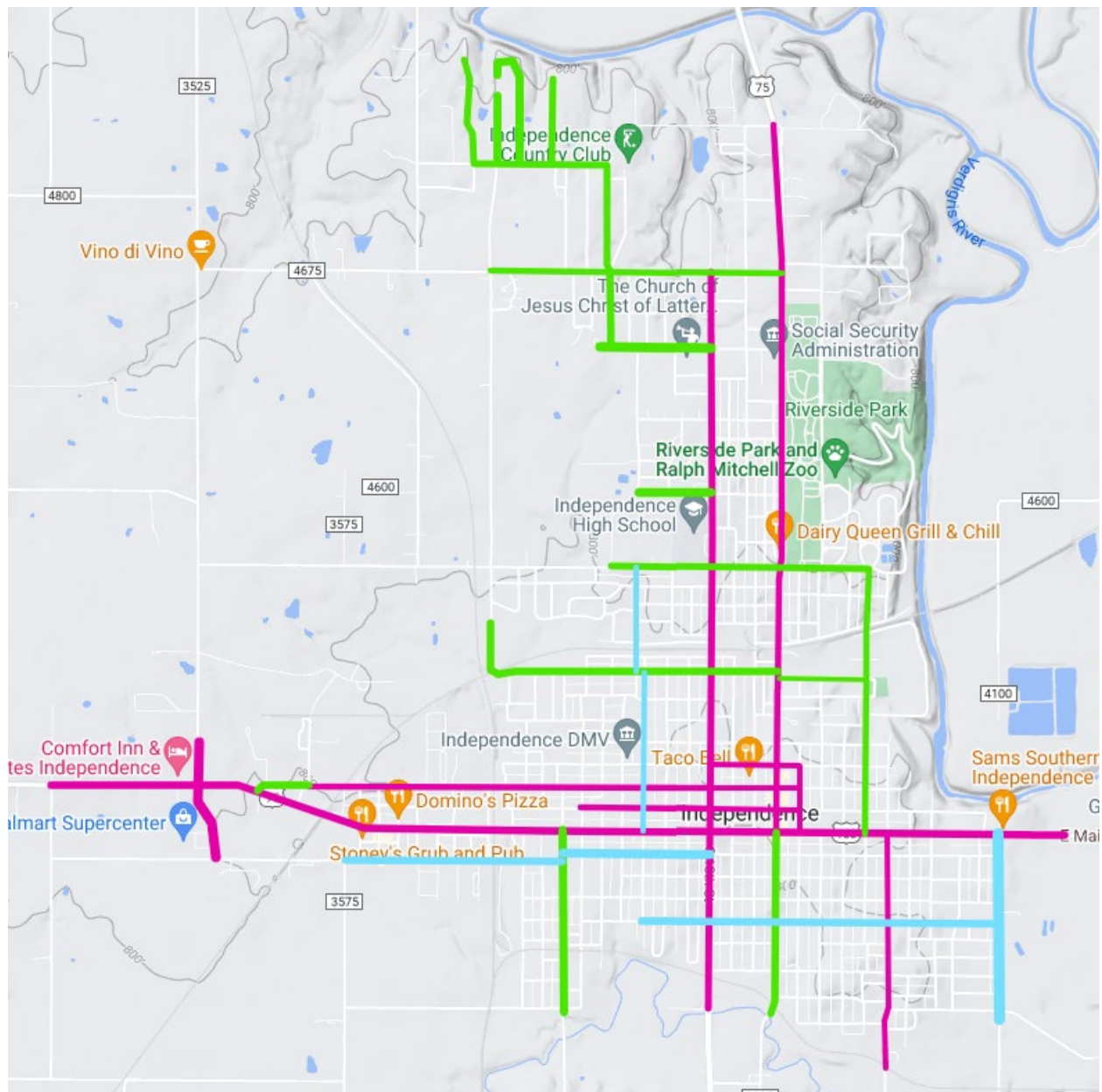
Our snow-fighting challenge is unique – some years the City receives nearly no snow, while others it receives quite a bit, and almost all snow that sticks happens in one or two large storms. The average snowfall is 12 inches per year. Due to limited resources, when major snow storms hit, City crews must maintain a disciplined priority system.

Keeping major streets open is the City's key priority. By focusing first on major streets, emergency routes are maintained to keep essential services functioning after snowfalls that would otherwise paralyze the City. By following this priority system, in the event of an emergency, police and fire personnel can get to within a few blocks of any home by the way of a plowed major street. While focusing our attention first on major streets, emergency equipment keeps moving, gets kids to school and people to work. Please note that sometimes this approach results in a necessary compromise of service to individual residential streets.

## Priority Map

Below is the priority map to open streets within the City. Streets shown in pink below are the primary objective, and all efforts will generally be focused on them at the onset of a heavy snow, and efforts will remain focused on them until they are generally passable by emergency vehicles and low-speed traffic. These routes were selected over a decade ago to provide access to all areas of the City for emergency vehicles.

Secondary streets are shown in green, and third priority streets are shown in blue.



## Commencement of Snow Removal

In accordance with this Snow Plan, plowing does not typically commence unless there are **3 or more inches of snow accumulated on the roadway**, or 2 inches accumulated with forecasts of more snowfall, or as road hazards develop. Unlike KDOT or Montgomery County snow removal, the City does not plow all the way to the road surface. The reason for that is, unlike major highways, there is substantial infrastructure buried underneath the roadway, and this infrastructure (manholes for sewer, valve caps for water) can project far enough above the roadway that either they or the snowplow can be damaged by plowing too close to the road surface.

## Citywide Plowing Completion Goal:

The adopted Snow Plan sets the goal of completion of a citywide plowing operation on major routes after a major snow storm has ended, at no more than 48 hours. This will vary based on ambient temperature after the storm, amount of snowfall,

## Equipment and Personnel:

The City maintains three snow plows that are also fitted with the ability to spread sand, salt, or a mixture of the two. The City maintains a stockpile of mixed salt and sand. Depending on the level of snow, the City has three backhoes and several dump trucks that also may be used for snow removal. In general, and especially at the onset of a snow emergency, these plows will run around the clock for the duration of the emergency, the Street Department will be the primary group tasked with responding to the snow emergency. Other City personnel may be tasked with assisting, but experience has shown that (for instance) a snow emergency will often be combined with low temperatures which will cause water lines to freeze and break, so the resources from other City crews are simply not available. Outside contracted personnel and equipment may be brought in to assist, depending on storm duration and volume.

## Plowing Priorities:

The City's staff will direct snow removal and ice control operations to established priorities outlined in the snow plan and the map, which focuses on the priorities previously listed:

1. Emergency routes
2. Major thoroughfares and dangerous hills and curves
3. Arterials
4. Residential streets

Residential streets are a lower priority and we do not typically plow them unless there is more than **4 to 5 inches of accumulation**, and this would be after the primary routes are open.

**Sidewalks.** Snowplows need to go a minimum speed in order to throw snow off the side of streets. We ask our equipment operators not to throw the snow any further than necessary. In some cases, however, the sidewalks are too close to the curb to avoid getting snow on them. It is the responsibility of the owner or tenant of adjoining sidewalks to remove all snow and ice from such sidewalks as soon as possible, but in any event the morning following a storm.

**Snow Deposits at Driveways & Mailboxes.** The City does not have the specialized equipment and resources to prevent accumulations of snow from becoming deposited in driveways or in front of mailboxes. Citizens should plan for this inevitable occurrence.

**Residential Plowing.** A frequently asked question is "When will you get around to plowing my street?" We will get there as soon as possible, but remember, **emergency routes and major streets** are our priority. City operators are very experienced, most with over 13 years of experience and know how to best accomplish their assigned routes. They are a dedicated group that works non-stop, 24 hours a day, during storms to clear streets. Many times there are "storms within a storm" that requires repeat plowing of arterials before residential streets can be plowed.

**"Buried" Cars.** Remember, snowstorms are considered emergency situations. The streets must be plowed and sometimes a parked car will get "buried" by the snow moved by the snowplows. We

ask that residents anticipate plowing operations. Whenever practical, move cars off the street ahead of plowing.

**For Citizens, Winter Do and Don'ts:**

***Do:***

- Give snow-fighting crews the right of way to finish their important job.
- Drive with extra caution during winter months.
- Clean off your sidewalk as required by City ordinance.
- Allow plenty of room between you and snow equipment.
- Remember to brake slowly.
- Be patient, drive at reduced speeds and allow extra travel time to reach your destination.
- Help City crews by not parking cars along major snow routes whenever possible. This will prevent your car from being "buried" by snowplows.
- Take it easy shoveling - it is hard work and has been linked to heart attacks.
- Help one another... remember, we are all in this thing together. Help a neighbor remove a driveway or mailbox berm who may not be able to do so themselves.
- Wave to show support to snowplows operators as they pass by – these folks often give up their holidays and weekends and work extra hard in winter.

***Don't:***

- Throw snow into the street when shoveling your driveway. Not only does it defeat the purpose of plowing, it is illegal.
- Forget to plan ahead for winter. Have your shovels ready, winterize your car and prepare for winter driving with the right tires.

The City of Independence is actively working to build a volunteer list of community members interested in providing assistance to those who may need help with shoveling driveways, sidewalks, or clearing fire hydrants. Please check back here in the future for more information.