
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

January 6, 2025

Ald. Lamont Westmoreland
(414) 286-3870

Public Works Committee to discuss snow plowing inadequacies on Wednesday

Alderman Lamont Westmoreland has introduced a communication file to be heard at this week's Public Works Committee meeting relating to the systemic failure of snow plowing operations during the late December 2024 snow event. The communication file comes on the heels of complaints from residents about the inadequacies of the city's ability to clear four inches of snow that accumulated on December 20, 2024.

"In the days, and in some cases weeks, following our first substantial snow of the season, I was receiving many calls and emails from residents about how long it took for their roads to be plowed, if they were plowed at all, and when they were plowed how it often seemed inadequate," said Alderman Westmoreland. "Moreover, it has felt like in the aftermath of this event the communication I have received from DPW leadership has been nonexistent. It's time to get real and stop blowing smoke about our repeated shortcomings in regards to snow plowing. Residents and elected officials alike deserve a transparent conversation about why leadership seemingly hasn't learned lessons from past years, and moving forward what can actionably be done to ensure residents receive the service they deserve."

In advance of the committee meeting, Alderman Westmoreland has also sent the **attached** letter to department leadership regarding the situation and outlining questions he would like answered as part of Wednesday's conversation.

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Snow Plowing Communication File/ADD ONE

The Public Works Committee meeting will begin at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, January 8 in room 301-B at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St. The meeting will also be streamed live on the City Channel (channel 25 on Spectrum Cable and channel 99 on AT&T U-Verse in the City of Milwaukee) and via streaming video on the city website at city.milwaukee.gov/Channel25.

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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

VICE-CHAIR

- Licenses Committee
- Public Works Committee

MEMBER

- Public Safety & Health Committee

LAMONT WESTMORELAND ALDERMAN, 5TH DISTRICT

January 6, 2026

Mr. Jerrel Kruschke,
Commissioner of Public Works

Ms. Danielle Rodriguez,
Director of Operations, Department of Public Works

To Mr. Kruschke and Ms. Rodriguez:

I haven't been here long, but I am a quick study.

I also pride myself on patience and having a good memory.

You know that I reached out to you both a year ago to share my concerns with the poor job of snow plowing your crews did in the Winter of 2023-24. You know that I asked for very specific changes to correct the issues that I and other council members brought to your attention.

Given this, you must surely have known that my attention would be drawn to the first snow falls of this Winter. How could you not? You must surely have been redoubling your efforts in the 5th District and throughout the City to ensure that the concerns I raised were addressed. And, at a minimum, you must surely have known that, when inevitable problems came up, I and all my colleagues would expect open lines of communication throughout the duration of the operation, addressing not only the broad strokes of the cleanup, but particular, block-by-block concerns.

Being patient and trying to be understanding has clearly slapped me in the face again. Shame on me.

None of this was done. Not a bit of it. Our response to this snow event was shambolic and at times would have seemed ridiculous if this wasn't so important. I have asked Ald. Bauman to schedule a communication for this week's Public Works Committee addressing the matter, and, in the spirit of fair play, I will be asking about all of the following:

- 1) Why were my e-mails not responded to in a timely fashion? If you here wonder to what e-mails I refer, I will provide them. Are you above replying to our constituents? Many of them that it asked you to respond to said they haven't from you.
- 2) Precisely - and publicly - I want to hear which roads are selected for plowing and how they are selected. I gather that weather conditions predicate which roads are selected and which are not, which seems reasonable. What, however, are the criteria used?
- 3) Why do we only clear the center of a street, even when neither side of the street has vehicles parked on it? I can provide examples.

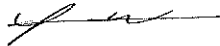
- 4) Do our snow plows now have cameras? If they do, what are they intended to record? If they do, how could one acquire footage from them? If they do not, should they?
- 5) In January of 2024, a communication that is a near duplicate of the one to be heard this week was taken up at Public Works. What was done in the year since to improve snow plowing operations? What worked vs not work?

And I want something to be very clear: I do not here fault the men and women who undertake the difficult task of plowing our streets. Do they make mistakes? Of course, we all do. Nonetheless, I admire and appreciate their dedication to this City. No, this was a failure of management. What happened over the holidays was organizational failure played out before the eyes of thousands. Those responsible ought to be embarrassed.

My days are full enough. I have no wish to micromanage the Department of Public Works or any other. Until this essential public service can be delivered in a way we can all be proud of, however, you will find at least one council member demanding you do better. I suspect a great many of my fellow council members will join me in this.

I look forward to our public conversation.

Sincerely,



Lamont Westmoreland
Alderman, 5th District

Cc:

Mayor Cavalier Johnson
Common Council Members
Nick DeSiato
Amber Danyus