



City of Spokane—Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 13, 2008

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MAYOR VERNER ANNOUNCES PLAN TO IMPROVE STREETS NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE

With more weather-related potholes than usual on Spokane’s city streets, Mayor Mary Verner announced a plan to improve the safety and drivability of Spokane’s streets immediately and for the long-term.

“I have heard our citizens loud and clear,” Mayor Verner says. “Starting today, we have added more resources to address immediate needs, and I will present a plan to the City Council to improve street maintenance this construction season and into the future.”

The Mayor, in consultation with the City Council, directed the Street Department to increase the number of crews filling potholes to address current needs. The City now has seven, two-person crews working on potholes instead of the usual two. The additional people have been moved from other areas within the Street Department.

The Mayor also will present to the City Council a plan to add \$500,000 to the Street Department’s 2008 budget to pay for additional street repair work during the construction season, which gets under way in April. The money will come from the City’s contingent reserve account, which is designed to address “unforeseen circumstances arising after the adoption of the annual budget.”

The repairs will include grinding and paving, crack sealing, and thin overlays. This work will enhance the safety and drivability of Spokane’s streets and extend the life of the pavement.

The final piece of the Mayor’s street plan will come in her proposed 2009 budget. The Mayor says she will include additional money for street maintenance, which will provide more resources for all maintenance activities—from pothole repair and grind-and-patch work to snow removal. The Mayor is hopeful that the City Council will support such a request.

Street Maintenance

The Mayor said she will determine how much money she will add as the City's 2009 budget process moves closer. She has asked the City's Finance and Public Works directors to devise a recommendation that improves the streets and is still affordable.

Street maintenance activities are just one way the City works to preserve and enhance its street system. The citizens in November 2004 approved the 10-Year Street Bond, which will rehabilitate 110 miles of streets, including arterials and residential streets. Since the bond passed, the City has repaired 30 miles of streets.

The City also completes a number of capital street projects every year. Capital projects add traffic capacity or include major safety enhancements.

Citizens can report potholes that need repair by calling the City's Pothole Hotline at 625-7733. Please include as much information as possible about the location of the problem and its approximate size. The City will fill larger potholes on arterials within 48 hours of reporting and will add other potholes to its repair schedule.

City of Spokane

Street Repair Facts



🚧 How do potholes occur?

Every year, Mother Nature stirs up the ingredients to make potholes. Snow, ice, and rain provide ample moisture and severe cold causes pavement cracking that allows water to seep in, expand, and displace paving material. Add some sun, which creates varying temperatures and keeps the damaging freeze/thaw cycle in motion. What do you get? Pavement that crumbles and essentially “pops” out--hence, *Potholes!*

🚧 Who can I call to report a pothole?

The City of Spokane works to repair potholes throughout the year. Citizens can call the City’s Pothole Hotline at 625-7733 to report a pothole. Be sure to leave as much information as possible about the location of the pothole and approximate size, if possible.

🚧 Once I report a pothole, how long does it take to get it fixed?

The City will repair larger potholes on arterials within 48 hours. Others will be repaired as crews schedule their regular work throughout the community.

🚧 How are potholes repaired?

In the winter, City crews clean out the pothole, removing dirt and excess asphalt. They add “cold mix” asphalt and then hand tamp it. During construction season, “hot mix” asphalt is available, which provides for a better seal and, thus a better repair.

🚧 What other maintenance repairs does the City complete?

In places where there are a number of potholes or other problems, once construction season rolls around, the City uses more comprehensive repair, including grinding and paving, cracksealing, and thin overlays. This work enhances the safety and driveability of Spokane’s streets and extends the life of the pavement.

🚧 Is this a long-term fix?

Pothole repairs and other maintenance work are not long-term repairs. They can last several years, and they are intended to improve the drivability of roads and to increase safety. Projects, like those paid for by our 10-year Street Bond, rehabilitate the entire road, including the subgrade, curb to curb and are a long-term solution.

🚧 How much do we spend on road repairs yearly?

The City’s annual Street Department budget is \$20 million and includes money for road repairs, street lighting and traffic signals, parking meters, snow removal, leaf pickup, and more. During the construction season of April through November, the City spends the bulk of that budget.

