



## November 1, 2019 Department of Public Services

The following items are designed to present information on Public Services Department work items recently completed, those expected to occur during the upcoming month, and other items of potential interest to the public. Information is subject to change at any time due to staff availability, weather events or other emergency situations, or numerous other factors. Items are not necessarily in order of importance, and may not be repeated in their entirety from month to month unless there is a need for continued reporting.

1. Citizen Request Module (CRM) items - The City uses the "My Monroe on the Go" application to track citizen requests. During the month of October, a total of 61 service requests were entered requiring action from this department, down from 68 the previous month. The largest two (2) categories by far were 32 forestry concerns and 14 pothole or road hazard complaints. The remaining categories were five (5) signs concerns, three (3) street light outages, three (3) garbage concerns, two (2) construction-related complaints, one (1) graffiti concern and one (1) concern about lighting at the North Dixie Highway underpass.
2. Forestry Activities - in the month of October, the Forestry work group completed 15 tree removals, trimmed 19 trees, and removed 4 stumps. Staff has planted 175 new trees on our fall program, and will continue until frost precludes planting. Most of the new trees planned on Maywood Avenue between Macomb and Hollywood to replace 17 trees that were in decline and / or had been damaged heavily by power line clearance have been installed, in particular.
3. Street Sweeping - we have been running one sweeper for our maintenance level since June. However, normally around late October, DPS begins to intensify our on-street leaf collection activities, as even those leaves that fall directly into the street from City trees and those that blow around from adjacent property terraces can easily become excessive. For a period of about four to six weeks (depending on the weather), we run two or three (if all of our older units are operable) sweepers along with two to four dump trucks in a rotating convoy to avoid having to continuously return the sweepers to dump leaves themselves each time the hopper unit is full. We have found this is the most efficient method, but residents should be advised that it does still normally take a full month to make a City-wide cycle, and all work is often not completed until the end of November or early December, depending on weather conditions and final leaf drop. This also unfortunately can tie up nearly half of our available personnel during this time, so our ability to respond to discretionary tasks is very limited. Obviously, removal of as many leaves as possible before the first major snowfall is a high priority to avoid plowing these back into the terrace, which makes for a larger mess in the spring depending on the quantity. We will be delivering our composted leaves to Snow's Nursery, who has agreed to process roughly 1,600 cubic yards for \$6 per cubic yard on our behalf. Leaf collection, like regular street sweeping activities, is charged to the City's Refuse Fund millage.

4. Vactor Truck / Storm Cleaning – staff is continuing to utilize the vactor truck on a regular basis to begin to address the latent backlog in storm sewer cleaning activities. It is hoped that this will yield long-term benefits in storm sewer and street maintenance versus a more intense sweeping program. As always, we will respond to any acute issues that are brought to our attention. We typically will operate the vactor regularly until freezing temperatures preclude its operation, though with increased sweeper and truck operation it is difficult to keep a regular crew on full-time during November and sometimes December until leaves are collected.
5. Cold Patching – this continues to be a primary work activity throughout the year. Citizens should feel free to contact Public Services staff via the citizen request module, phone, or email to report potholes, and we will do our best to handle complaints as quickly as possible. We try to address any complaints within 48 hours, except during late winter and early spring when requests can overwhelm the system due to frost leaving the ground.
6. Yard Waste Collection – yard waste collection continues and is scheduled to continue through the first full week of December (December 2-6). Guidelines for yard waste collection are listed on the City’s Refuse Reference document on the City’s web page. Residents may continue to use the City-supplied yard waste bags, as well as those purchased from area vendors, along with re-usable cans with yard waste stickers, available free at City Hall.
7. Leaf Bag Distribution – the City will complete its distribution of 70,000 leaf bags on November 4. Bags were distributed the first two Saturdays in October from 8 A.M. to noon (10/5 and 10/12), and on most Tuesdays through Thursdays from October 8 through October 30 from 2:30 to 5:30 P.M. Bags were limited to 50 per person for City residents only, and staff will loaded them directly into vehicles for the citizens, which seemed to be well received again this year.
8. Grass Contract – Ron Noel Lawn Service is continuing as the City’s grass contractor through the 2021 season, and work activities for Woodland Cemetery, Memorial Place, and the Ordinance Mowing that were held by a previous vendor from 2014-18 were added to Noel’s contract at the April 1 City Council meeting. The month of November generally designated for leaf clean-up and final cutting as needed under the contract, and once all this work is completed, the contractor can cease activities for the season.
9. Parks staffing – As with past seasons, one (1) DPS Maintenance Worker was transferred under the Parks Maintenance Supervisor again this year. The temporary assignment began March 31 and ran through October 26 this year as per the adopted budget and approved organizational structure. Should the Parks Supervisor require additional assistance or for heavy projects, DPS staff will assist as able at their request, otherwise full responsibility for all parks items other than forestry issues, the grass cutting contract, and contracted capital projects will again fall under the Parks and Recreation Department.
10. Roadway Flooding – earlier in the spring and summer, Monroe County was dealing with some of the most severe flooding in the last several decades, as higher lake levels coupled with easterly winds repeatedly pushed the elevation of Lake Erie several feet higher than normal for 24-48 hours at a time on multiple occasions this past spring. In fact, both May and, in turn, June set records for the monthly average mean lake level for any month since recording began in 1918. While the City is fortunate in that our effects are limited to backwaters from the River Raisin and Plum Creek Bay rather than wave action and significant damage to homes and structure, nonetheless there are impacts on our residents. At various times this year, even the standing water elevation of the lake

was higher than a number of roadway catch basin rims, resulting in constant standing water. The most common locations of heavy roadway flooding and street closures are Front Street from I-75 to DTE and the Orchard East neighborhood. The flooding in front of the Wastewater Plant can impact the ability of the industries east of I-75 to access their facilities when it occurs. The most acute flooding area in Orchard East is Bayview and Glenwood, where standing water can cover the roadway continuously for 100-150 feet on Bayview, often up to 12 inches deep, depending on the strength of the east winds.

The lake has entered into its seasonal decline such that we do not expect major impacts save for strong east winds, but nonetheless flooding impacts could still occur and the situation could recur in spring 2020 as well. Engineering staff is working with the Spicer Group to review potential long-term options, met with them last month, and expects a formal report with options and cost estimates soon, which will then be presented to the City Council.

11. Custer Airport Management - our longtime Airport Manager left City employment at the end of October. While City Administration and City Council review long-term options, the Engineering staff will be supervising the front line staff and performing his duties on a regular basis. Public Services staff will assist, as always, with a variety of maintenance tasks.
12. Roadway Conversion - West Seventh and West Eighth Streets - City Council approved of the conversion of West Seventh and West Eighth Streets from one-way to two-way traffic in July. The Public Services Department will be installing new signs and reversing direction or removing numerous others. This conversion will be taking place likely within the next week, as the Engineering Department needed to complete resurfacing work on West Front Street first so as to avoid additional displaced traffic from potential detour routes complicating the new traffic pattern, as motorists will require some time to properly adjust to the new bi-directional flow. The required parking bays have been completed on Seventh Street.
13. New Ditch / Boom Attachment - we have purchased a new mower attachment that can be mounted on one of our existing tractors and can more easily access riverbanks, ditch banks, and other hard to reach areas. Staff will be utilizing this extensively to address these areas before cold weather sets in.
14. Tree Lighting / Banners - DPS staff will be partnering with volunteers from the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to install decorations ahead of the downtown tree lighting, which is scheduled for Saturday, November 22. As with last year, the DDA volunteers will be decorating any poles and locations that can be reached with ladders, and our staff will be installing the overhead decorations at the three (3) banner locations, the lights on the large tree in front of the courthouse, the light poles on the Monroe Street Bridge, and the lit decorations mounted on various light poles. As per normal, we will be switching out the vertical fall banners with winter banners prior to this time.
15. Winter preparatory work activities - during the month of October, there are a number of items that are handled in anticipation of winter, and these have generally been completed, including shutting off the Lotus Fountain in Loranger Square, removal of the aeration fountain in the Munson Park pond, removal of the boat docks at Hellenberg Field, and removal of the floral display at Memorial Place.

16. Election Set-up and Tear-Down - as with all elections, Public Services staff will be assisting the Clerk-Treasurer's office with setup on the Monday prior and teardown on the Wednesday following the election November 5. Our crews do work in the evening hours as well on Monday due to some facilities being unable to accommodate setup during the daytime hours as they are in use.
17. Winter Operations Policy - shortly, the Department will be issuing our official winter operations policy document, which will likely be similar to, if not identical to, last year's policy. We typically strive for this document to be available by November 15 each year. Also, the Clerk-Treasurer's office advertised the ordinance requiring sidewalk clearance in October as required by the ordinance, so that the City's legal notification is now met. The Parks and Recreation Department will again handle snow removal activities at the various park facilities, including Munson Park and Mark Worrell Trail in particular for more targeted attention to our facilities that remain most heavily-used during winter and snowy conditions. At present, all 14 Teamster personnel are currently budgeted to remain under the supervision of the Public Services Department during winter operations, with Parks retaining one (1) Teamster assigned to their operations and available for winter activities.

*Prepared by: Patrick M. Lewis, P.E., Director of Engineering and Public Services*