

Snow Removal Focus Of City Legislation

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Two historic snow storms -- and the continuing cleanup -- were a hot topic of discussion at a Monday night City Council meeting.

Council members are trying to figure out ways to make Baltimore's snow removal process more "user friendly."

Two council members introduced a bill and resolution on several ways to improve snow removal, including GPS on trucks that could be followed online in real time.

"I don't think anybody questions that they tried hard and worked hard," Councilman William Cole IV said of work crews. "The things we need to look at are how to improve those practices."

Cole put forth a resolution that would bring together representatives from all city agencies involved in the storms to figure out what went right and wrong and what needs improvement.

"It was something that we clearly could never properly prepare for," he said. "But we could certainly try to learn from our mistakes from this one, to see what we did well, what we didn't do well and to learn what other jurisdictions who are used to this kind of snowfall do."

Councilman Bill Henry introduced a bill to make sure the city Department of Transportation provides better information for residents online, including a list of city streets and their priority of being cleared, a map of routes assigned to each plow and a map showing streets being plowed in real time.

Henry said, "This law would require that (plows) have to have locators on them, that that information be transmitted back to the snow room, and that information be conveyed onto the city's Web site so we could see in real time what's been done, what hasn't."

The meeting should happen in the next couple of weeks.