Winter Weather 2013 - 2014

What the Map Shows

SDOT's snow routes show the level of service planned for each street, not which streets will be plowed first. We will provide the highest level of service to the most significant streets within the City of Seattle that are maintained by the city. The state maintains I-5 and several bridges in Seattle. These streets were selected because they are the busiest streets that connect Seattle's neighborhoods with downtown and the greater Puget Sound region. They are the streets that are most important for getting to major public institutions such as hospitals and schools, the streets that are most frequently used by police, fire trucks and buses, and streets leading to Seattle's major employers. During a citywide snow storm, SDOT's strategy is to treat streets of both levels of service at the same time to keep traffic moving.

Remember, SDOT does not plow non-arterial streets.

Levels of Service

The map shows the different snow routes in two different colors, gold and emerald.

Gold Snow Routes: These are streets of regional importance for hospitals, buses, large trucks and major employers. SDOT's objective is to provide bare and wet pavement over all travel lanes within 12 hours of a significant lull in the storm.

Emerald Snow Routes: These are streets of citywide importance for hospitals, buses and general traffic. SDOT's objective is to provide bare and wet pavement for one lane in each direction within 12 hours of a significant lull in the storm.

Coordination with the Bus System

SDOT and King County Metro Transit have worked carefully to make sure that SDOT's snow routes meet the needs of the transit–riding public. The snow routes include the streets that Metro buses use when it snows.

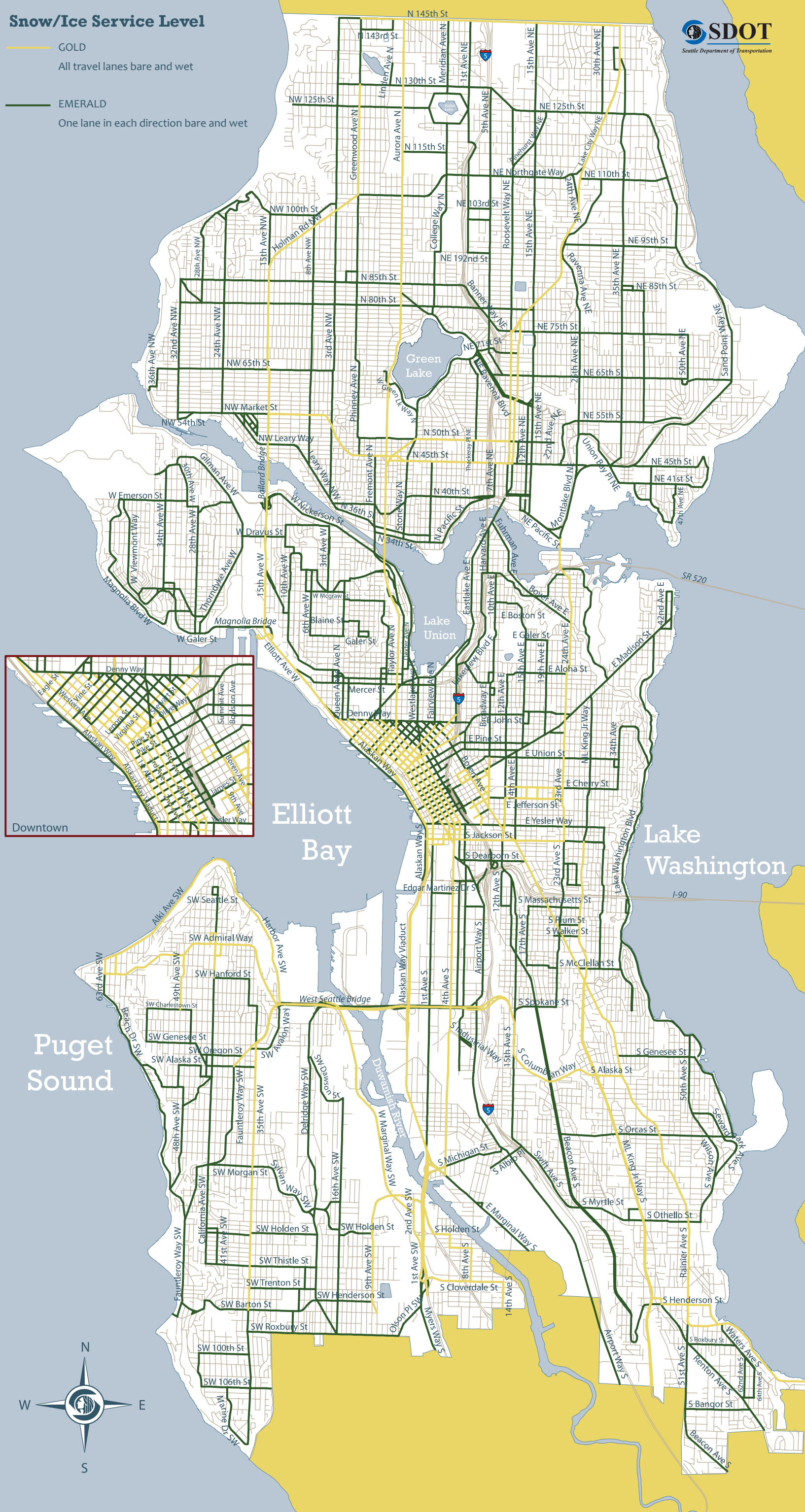
Other Streets

There are some streets that SDOT crews will not be able to plow or treat with salt. These are the lesser traveled streets, and streets on hills that often become unsafe for the public and for SDOT trucks during periods of ice and snow.

Our crews know which steep streets often become unsafe for driving when it snows. The crews store Street Closed signs on the sidewalks at the corners of these streets at the beginning of winter so they will be available when needed to close the streets. When Seattle Police Officers decide a street is unsafe for driving, they move the Street Closed signs into the middle of the road.

For your safety, it is important to obey the Street Closed signs even if a street looks safe to you. There may be ice under the snow, or there may be a trouble spot beyond your view.

Snow/Ice Service Level

GOLD
All travel lanes bare and wet

EMERALD
One lane in each direction bare and wet