

Winnipeg's IronWolf Profiler – The solution for unique road challenges

by Keith Ellis

Creating and maintaining a competitive advantage is a key component for running a successful business. Navigating through the dynamic economic, political, and climatic conditions adds to the challenge; however, today's companies have access to new information and resources that can provide ideas and alternatives to stay ahead of the game.

For the City of Winnipeg, each year presents new projects as the cold winters and warm summers viscously contract and expand the local streets producing new cracks and potholes. In response,

a rock cutting attachment mounted to a wheel loader. The unique attachment was designed to crush rock, asphalt, and concrete, appeared more than qualified for the application in Winnipeg, and prompted Pelletier to have his head inspector, Darrell Pugh, and public works supervisor, Mike Wiggins, contact the manufacturer, IronWolf, based in Noble, Oklahoma.

Wiggins described his needs to IronWolf's Canadian sales manager, David Griffis, and learned that the company had created a variety of surface mining and land clearing attachments mounted

machine, titled the IronWolf Profiler. The grader's blade was removed and fitted with an eight-foot wide cutting assembly containing a milling drum and adjustable hydraulic skis for depth control. The cab was outfitted with a control panel allowing an operator to precisely adjust the cutting depth from zero to eight inches. At the front of the grader, mounting hardware was installed to mount a 400 litre tank used to supply water to the cutting assembly for dust control. An auxiliary engine package containing a 540 hp Caterpillar C-15 engine was mounted to the rear of the grader used to power the cutter head hydraulically. The completed machine was transported to Winnipeg prior to the fall freeze.

The IronWolf Profiler is now navigating the streets of Winnipeg constantly working on large resurfacing projects from the spring to the fall. On a typical repair job, the Profiler leads the process by milling asphalt followed by a force feed loader where the reclaimed material is deposited into a haul truck. Once the site is cleaned, the repair section is paved with fresh asphalt. The Profiler averages 60 feet per minute cutting two to three inches deep, allowing the City of Winnipeg to keep up with road maintenance.

The mobility and speed of the Profiler allows the city to close a lane, repair a damaged section while maintaining the flow of traffic, and then reopen the road

in record time. "The machine is still an awesome sight when people see it and we get comments all the time," said Pugh. The teamwork between WFMA and IronWolf helped the City of Winnipeg regain an advantage and the results add real value for the taxpayers.

The successful Profiler project with the WFMA is one of many that IronWolf plans to continue in the future. IronWolf started in the 1990s working with local contractors in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska trying to improve the arduous task of ripping the Alaskan permafrost. Beller's hard work and persistence led to the development of the IronWolf Crusher which successfully created a new and accepted process to make roadbeds. As the capabilities of the Crusher expanded, IronWolf received new requests from contractors and distributors for land clearing and soil separation equipment. This led to the development of the IronWolf Slasher which is used throughout western Canada for site preparation and surface mining applications. Today, the IronWolf Profiler in Winnipeg is generating new requests for motor grader attachments designed for soil separation of A and B horizons on oil leases and pipeline right-of-ways. As for tomorrow, IronWolf waits for the next phone call that may open the door to more opportunities and new applications.

IronWolf

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the city sends out a fleet of equipment each spring to remove the damaged sections of road and replace it with fresh asphalt before the fall freeze. During the 1980s, the city hired a manufacturer to custom fit a grader with a purpose built milling head to mill the damaged asphalt. The machine enabled the city to repair damaged sections and was easily transported to the next site. The retrofitted grader cut up to two inches deep at a rate of 20 feet per minute. After 20 years of service, the maintenance expenses were outweighing the benefits and it was time for the Winnipeg Fleet Management Agency (WFMA) to seek a new alternative.

As the LCCM coordinator for WFMA, Réal Pelletier was tasked to find a mobile solution suitable for a municipal environment. Traditional reclaimers and milling machines require trucking from site to site and the numerous road repairs in Winnipeg demand a mobile machine able to mill a small patch of road and then quickly travel to the next job site 15 blocks down the street. Pelletier researched equipment across the market, reviewed dozens of magazines, searched the Internet, and stumbled upon

to wheel loaders, dozers, and motor graders. To verify the capabilities and claims of IronWolf's equipment, Pugh and Wiggins traveled to Northern Arizona and Southern Oklahoma where they observed a grader mount IronWolf Crusher remove asphalt from a parking lot and reclaim a county road. The demonstrations provided sufficient results for the WFMA team to negotiate a contract with IronWolf to build a custom machine for the City of Winnipeg.

Initially, IronWolf and WFMA outlined the design parameters and specified the performance requirements for an asphalt milling head mounted on a motor grader. WFMA wanted a machine that could mill up to eight inches deep, provide on-the-fly cutting depth control, and suppress cutting dust. Prior to final design release, Larry Beller, IronWolf's founder, traveled to Winnipeg and assessed WFMA's graders suitable for the new design. Beller and Pugh agreed that the Volvo G976 grader had all of the features required for the design and would provide excellent mobility.

The motor grader was transported to IronWolf's headquarters where it was outfitted with the custom built milling

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