

CITY OF OSSEO SIDEWALK INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

1. Introduction

The City of Osseo, Minnesota has an extensive network of public sidewalks. Public sidewalks may vary in age and in quality of condition. Not every inequality or irregularity in the surface rises to the level of a defect. The city recognizes that some sidewalk conditions can create unreasonable hazards for pedestrians and other sidewalk users.

The city does not have unlimited employee or financial resources and cannot reasonably replace all sidewalks needing replacement or repair within the same year the sidewalk is identified as needing replacement or repair. Sidewalk replacement and repair can be costly. Comprehensive sidewalk surveys are expensive and require the use of limited city personnel and other resources. Under appropriate circumstances, some or all of the cost of sidewalk replacement may be absorbed by the city. However, it is not the city's practice to routinely absorb the cost of sidewalk repair and replacement. Under Osseo City Code, it is the duty of abutting property owners to keep sidewalks in good repair and safe for pedestrians.

Accordingly, the city and its Public Services Department must exercise both discretion and professional judgment in determining whether and when sidewalks need to be replaced or repaired. The city expects that its agents, employees, and city officials will exercise discretion in identifying conditions requiring replacement and repair, in the scheduling of replacement and repair, and in establishing priorities for replacement and repair.

2. Sidewalk Inspection Procedures

The Public Services Director shall establish procedures for regular sidewalk inspection. Those procedures will include:

- A. Conducting routine sidewalk inspections on a regular basis that involves dividing the city into inspection zones such that all sidewalks within the city are inspected once every three years. Sidewalk Inspection Zones shall be delineated and inspected as follows:
 1. Zone A: All properties north of 3rd Streets NW & NE and within the City of Osseo.
 2. Zone B: All properties located north of Broadway Street E & W and south of 3rd Streets NW and NE and within the City of Osseo.

3. Zone C: All properties south of Broadway Street E & W and within the City of Osseo.
- B. Establishing criteria for determining whether a particular sidewalk condition is in need of replacement or repair. Those criteria will include, but not necessarily be limited to, a deviation or difference in elevation greater than ½ inch, as determined at the time of inspection. The criteria will also take into consideration and weigh the following factors:
1. Proximity of sidewalk needing replacement or repair to streets needing replacement or repair (i.e., future street projects); repairs to sidewalks along identified sites for future street repairs may be postponed until street reconstruction occurs.
 2. Proximity of sidewalk needing replacement or repair to other sidewalks also needing replacement or repair.
 3. Sidewalk location and amount of pedestrian traffic.
 4. The nature and severity of the condition needing replacement or repair.
 5. The city's budget for replacement or repair of sidewalks.
 6. Whether, or to what extent, the cost of repair can be recovered from adjacent property owners.
 7. Availability of employees, equipment, and other resources for sidewalk replacement or repair.
 8. Public safety.
 9. History of prior accidents or complaints.
 10. Schedules of independent contractors and work necessary to prepare bids and bid specifications if work is to be performed by independent contractors.

3. Sidewalk Replacement and Repair

The City Engineer shall establish a replacement and repair schedule based on the results of the sidewalk inspection program. This schedule is subject to modification based both on sidewalk conditions and the availability of resources for sidewalk replacement and repair.

4. Pedestrian and Bikeway Transportation Plan

Sidewalks shall be maintained in place(s) according to the City of Osseo Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan, as detailed in the city's current Comprehensive Plan.

5. Sidewalk Maintenance – Ice and Snow Removal

City employees will be responsible for removing snow from the sidewalks that abut city-owned buildings or parking lots. Adjacent property owners, including other public entities, are responsible for removing snow and ice from sidewalks that abut their property (see City Code). The city may, as a public service and for reasons of public

safety, remove snow and ice from sidewalks and charges for current service may be passed on to property owners (see City Code). The Public Services Director will identify sidewalks from which the city will remove ice and snow.

6. Sidewalk Construction and Repair Standards

- A. **Minimum Depth:** 4 inches
- B. **Minimum Depth at Driveways & Alley Crossings:** 6 inches
- C. **Width:** A minimum of 48 inches or larger to match existing adjacent pavement adjacent to either side of the replaced section. Newly-installed multi-property sections of sidewalks (i.e., not individual sections being repaired or replaced) must be a minimum of 60 inches wide, as appropriate.
- D. **Materials:** shall meet relevant MnDOT specifications for Concrete Walks current as of the permit application date.
- E. **Existing Tree Roots:** May be pruned only under direction of City of Osseo's Public Services Director, who consult a certified arborist. Otherwise, trees may need to be removed to prevent sidewalk buckling. The city will bear the cost of necessary tree removal. Trees to be placed or replaced will be sited according to City Code and relevant city policies.
- F. **Material life expectancy:** Shall not be less than 25 years, at time of installation. This requirement will ensure quality sidewalk surfaces in the city and will limit the amount of city resources devoted to inspecting sidewalks and notifying residents of repair requirements.
- G. **Inspection:** Repairs/installation can be performed by property owners, provided **all** specifications are met. Public Services staff will perform initial inspections while forms are set and before concrete is poured or pavement installed. Building inspectors or the City Engineer may perform additional tests as necessary. Inspection of Work shall be performed by Public Services staff, pursuant to a Sidewalk Work in Right of Way permit. Upon City Council approval, permit fee waivers may be issued along with Notice to Repair letters sent to property owners.
- H. **Patching:** In years between repair cycles, Public Services staff **only** may apply an asphalt patch or other interim measure to make safe damaged sections of sidewalk before full repair or replacement can take place. Patching is not otherwise allowed as an alternative to replacing damaged sections of sidewalk.

7. Review and Modification of Policy

The City Council may modify or clarify this policy at any time. Where the City Council has delegated responsibility or authority to a city employee or official for development or

implementation of any portion of this policy, that employee or official shall have full authority to modify that portion of the policy at any time.

8. Review of Policy

The Public Services Director will keep on file comments and complaints received regarding this policy. The policy will be reviewed periodically. Any review will consider comments and complaints since the last review and any other factors affecting the policy or its implementation.

9. Effective Date of Policy

This policy shall be effective as of September 12, 2016. Modifications of the policy shall be effective on the date said modifications are approved by the City Council or the date city employee or official (with authority granted by the City Council) has approved the policy modification or change.