

FUTURE SIDEWALK FACILITIES

BUDGET PLAN

Funding Action Plan

The funding of a complete new system is not a reasonable funding alternative, so only the high priority sidewalk projects were considered for this action plan.

Combining the high priority sidewalk projects results in the following:

Maintenance of Existing Walks	\$4,220,000
Ramps	\$3,135,000
Gaps	\$2,050,000
Missing Segments	\$20,000,000
TOTAL	\$29,405,000

Assuming some inflation in costs, this results in a funding requirement of approximately \$3,200,000 per year for 10 years or \$2,000,000 per year for 20 years to complete the high priority projects.

The City will need to investigate various funding sources to provide adequate funding. Alternatives may include:

1. Existing sidewalk repair program. This has an estimated budget of approximately \$250,000 per year.
2. City general obligation bond funding for sidewalk capital improvement projects is divided into three (3) major budgets. The current City share (excludes assessment amounts) is estimated as follows. It is expected these will change as the program results are evaluated in the future.

The three major proposed budgets are:

- \$250,000/year for suggested, but not required, sidewalk improvements to Paving for Progress projects. These improvements will assist in bringing projects into compliance with the Complete Streets Policy.
- \$100,000/year for the ADA ramp transition plan. These projects are ramp only, stand alone projects to provide new ramps across the City, as provided by the City's Ramp Improvement Plan.
- \$250,000/year for stand alone sidewalk gap and missing segment projects, as prioritized in this Plan.

This results in a total estimated annual budget of \$600,000/year. This budget will need to increase in future years.

3. LOST Paving for Progress funding may be allocated for stand alone pedestrian projects, if approved by City Council action.
4. Most CIP street projects utilizing Federal, State, and local funds incorporate significant sidewalk facilities.
5. Special assessments. Typically a portion of sidewalk projects are assessed to the adjacent property owners. This assessment is typically 50% of the cost of the sidewalk. This policy could be revised or expanded to increase sidewalk funding.

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Capital Improvement Program

Pedestrian projects and enhancements identified in this Sidewalk Master Plan and in future revisions should be included in the Cedar Rapids Capital Improvement Program. This may be accomplished by a combination of funding capital and maintenance efforts, providing matching monies for competitive grants, and/or integrating pedestrian features into larger public projects. Cedar Rapids staff should continue to evaluate pedestrian complaints and make recommendations for improvements. Cedar Rapids should also continue the Sidewalk Repair and Sidewalk Accessible Programs.

Assessment Cost Share Program

The City of Cedar Rapids has a Sidewalk Repair and Reimbursement Policy that details the requirements, process, and reimbursement procedure for sidewalk repair projects. This policy is updated periodically and is available on the City of Cedar Rapids website.

Safe Routes to School Program

Sidewalks can be constructed if they fall within a 2-mile radius of K-8 schools as part of the federally funded Safe Routes to School Program. This program can either partially or fully fund needed sidewalks to improve the safety and pedestrian travel back and forth to school.

The Cedar Rapids Traffic Engineering Division (Public Works Department) is currently inventorying all eligible routes and a comprehensive review for safe routes to elementary and middle schools is underway. This review will assist in the prioritization of City funding and applications to the Iowa Department of Transportation for the Safe Routes to School funding.

Sidewalk Development Fund

A great way to help create a more walkable community is to ensure that pedestrian facilities are included in all future development and redevelopment. In cases where there are no existing sidewalks adjacent to a development, the City of Cedar Rapids may choose to establish a sidewalk fund into which the developers pay their fair share for future walkway installations along the adjacent arterial roadways.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

New Construction

It is important that future development, capital improvement projects, and flood recovery projects incorporate adequate pedestrian facilities. It is much easier to install walks at the time of original construction rather than trying to retro fit them in the future. Deferrals of sidewalk construction should only be granted in very limited circumstances.

New Development

City regulations require sidewalks to be constructed adjacent to streets in new developments. Sidewalks are required on both sides of streets unless a waiver has been granted. These sidewalks are required to be completely accessible with ramps installed where needed. This provision applies when a subdivision of the property or significant new construction occurs. Deferrals are granted for some unique circumstances. In some cases, negotiations for additional developer-constructed features may result in sidewalk deferrals. For example, a bicycle path may be constructed replacing some required sidewalk.

The requirements for sidewalk installation in new developments is governed by current edition of the Sidewalk Installation Policy, last updated in February 2012. This policy is updated periodically and available on the City of Cedar Rapids website.

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Enforcement

The City also should continue to fund the staff member's position whose primary concerns are to ensure that new pedestrian facilities are built to current standards and that existing pedestrian facilities are maintained.

Education and Awareness

Another strategy to create a more walkable community is to employ programs that educate all road users of their rights and responsibilities as pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Additionally, programs that reinforce the benefits of, and provide incentives for, walking may be promoted.

For the Kindergarten through Eighth-grade school level, several programs may be promoted. Participation in International Walk to School Week, visits by police officers, incorporation of material and contests into the education curriculum, and walking school buses can be used to extol the benefits of walking safely. The National Center for Safe Routes to School website has numerous recommendations for communities and schools. <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

The Mobility Education Foundation targets high school students and seeks to reform driver education classes for a more holistic approach to transportation education. Mobility education makes sure that all new drivers understand the experience of people on foot, bike, and transit and works to afford greater respect to those modes. Additionally, topics such as economics and environment are folded into the curriculum. The Mobility Education Foundation website has some useful information at <http://mobilityeducation.org/>.

The City of Cedar Rapids may use its website, public meetings and circulars to remind motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists of their responsibilities as road users. Such information can be based on primary collision factors, typical moving violations and reminders to obey the speed limits. The City may also choose to target information in certain areas, such as where parked vehicles are found in the pedestrian rights-of-way, and to remind residents about keeping walkways clear of snow. Finally, the City may decide to conduct an awareness campaign to inform property owners of their responsibilities for maintaining and repairing sidewalks bordering their property and to ensure that landscaping and foliage does not impede pedestrian circulation.