



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND CRITERIA FOR THE SIDEWALK PROJECT

Questions & Answers About Sidewalk Replacement

Q. Why has my sidewalk been chosen for replacement?

- A. During a recent inspection, city inspectors may have found certain sections of sidewalk abutting your property to be in need of replacement. This inspection is part of a biennial program created to comply with Chapter 66 of the City Ordinance. We know that you take pride in your property and want to preserve its value. Sidewalk maintenance is important to both appearance and value. Most importantly, it will help create a safe pedestrian walkway.

Q. Why is replacement necessary?

- A. Removal and replacement is necessary to provide a safe and uniform path for you and your neighbors.

Q. How much will this cost?

- A. The price you pay is the exact cost the City pays to the contractor, with no added fees or administrative costs. A detailed itemized list of costs for your lot will be mailed to you once the project is bid out and the prices are set. You will be responsible for 100% of the repair costs for the sidewalk adjacent to your property.

Q. Can I make repairs instead of replacement?

- A. No. Repairs are considered temporary and are not permitted.

Q. How can I replace the sidewalk?

- A. You have three options: 1) Allow the City's contractor to replace the sidewalk as part of this program; or 2) hire your own contractor; or 3) do the work yourself.

If you elect to hire a contractor or do the work yourself, you must obtain a permit from the City's office of Technical and Planning Services, and **you must complete the work before the date indicated in your notice from the City.** If work is not completed by the date indicated, the permit will expire, and the City's contractor will complete the work on your behalf when they are in your area. You will be invoiced for work done. Due to logistical and economic constraints, no time extensions will be allowed. Right-of-way permits are \$90.00.

All work must be completed in accordance with the current standards and specifications of the City of Oak Park.

Copies of the standards and specifications are available at the Office of Technical and Planning Services when you obtain your permit.

If you do nothing, the City's contractor will be in your area and will replace the sidewalk at your expense. You do not have to obtain a permit if the work is done by the City's contractor. The City will send you an invoice, itemizing the charges for work done. In addition to the sidewalk marked for replacement, homeowners may have additional sidewalk replaced by the City's contractor. The City's contract price is substantially less than market price for individual jobs, resulting in a considerable savings to homeowners that choose to have additional work done.

"No person shall permit any sidewalk which adjoins property owned by him to fall into a state of disrepair or to be unsafe."

Oak Park City Code 66-116.

Q. Why is there a grade difference between my service walk and the sidewalk?

- A. Sometimes when the sidewalk is replaced, a grade difference between your service walk and sidewalk may occur. To correct the grade difference, please see the City of Oak Park's letter regarding service walks.

Q. What about damage caused by trees or utility structures?

- A. For ecological reasons, the City does not remove trees from the public right-of-way, except when absolutely necessary and for dead or diseased trees.

Where tree roots have displaced the sidewalk, they will be removed prior to new sidewalk installation. A healthy tree should survive this process.

Homeowners are responsible for replacement of all sidewalks damaged by tree roots whether the tree is on public or private land. The City will pay 100 % of the costs of any sidewalk damaged by manhole covers or water gate wells when they are located in the sidewalk.

Q. May I have private work done by the City contractor?

- A. The contractor is responsible to the City to complete the required amount of work within a specific time and is penalized if he exceeds the time allowed in the contract. However, if the contractor wants to take on additional work, he is free to do so. Any additional work (driveways, approaches, patios, etc.) would be a private agreement between you and the contractor. The City will not become involved in disputes between you and the contractor regarding private work performed. You and the contractor must negotiate the price, timing, restoration and payment terms for all private work.

Q. Will the contractor restore my lawn after the work is completed?

- A. Usually only a few inches of grass adjacent to the replaced sidewalk needs to be restored. This strip will be filled with topsoil and seed.

SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT CRITERIA

1. **Settlement/Raised** – Whether a flag of sidewalk has settled below, or raised above the flag adjacent to it, there shall not be greater than 3/4" vertical separation between two flags of sidewalk.
2. **Cracked Slab** – Cracks shall have no more than a 3/8" horizontal separation in any sidewalk flag. If a sidewalk flag is cracked so that the flag is subdivided into three or more sections, the flag shall be replaced.
3. **Spalling and/or Scaling** – Spalling occurs when weak areas on the surface of the concrete "pop out" leaving holes or indentations on the surface of the concrete. Scaling results from the weathering process. The cement deteriorates on the surface of the concrete, exposing the aggregate. The use of rock salt on concrete as a de-icer accelerates the scaling process. Excessive spalling and/or scaling is determined by placing a one (1) foot square grid on the most damaged area of the flag of sidewalk. If 75% or more of the grid is filled with spalling and/or scaling, the section shall be replaced.
4. **Cross Slope** – If any flag of sidewalk is settled from the outside edge toward the inside edge. The outside edge of the sidewalk being nearest the street.
- 5/6. **Hole/Chip** – Any sidewalk flag that has a hole or chip deeper than 1/4" and/or wider than 2" shall be replaced
7. **Miscellaneous**
 - a. Water Retention - No section of public sidewalk shall retain water, thus creating a slip and fall hazard from ice buildup. If evidence of water retention is found, the flags of sidewalk which are retaining water shall be replaced.
 - b. Slope - If any flag of sidewalk has settled such that the slope of the flag is greater than 1/2" per foot, the flag shall be replaced. At slopes greater than this a potential hazard exists for pedestrians who need the assistance of canes, walkers, crutches or wheelchairs.
 - c. Other - If any flag of sidewalk is determined by the City Engineer to be a hazard to pedestrian traffic, it shall be replaced.
8. **City Responsibility** - Any flags that meet any of the above criteria where the damage is caused by a City utility structure shall be replaced at the expense of the City. The City also replaces the handicapped ramps , key flags and the flags at City properties.



For more information Call:

Construction and Permitting Questions:
Call the Engineering Department
248-691-7580
Billing and Payment Questions:
Call the Finance Department
248-691-7545