

Walkability Committee

Windsor Heights

Task

- ▶ Update Sidewalk Ordinance based on the comments received from the City Council, Planning & Zoning, and the citizens of Windsor Heights

Concerns Regarding the Ordinance

- ▶ Snow, ice, and accumulation;
- ▶ Annual inspection timeline;
- ▶ Economic Hardship section; and,
- ▶ Who pays for maintenance.

Section 136.01 Purpose

- ▶ The purpose of this ordinance is to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the City of Windsor Heights, and to ensure compliance with the following goals in accordance with the City of Windsor Heights Complete Street Policy passed on July 6, 2015:

Section 136.01 Purpose

- ▶ 1. Promoting the safety of pedestrian access, movement, and protection for the physically able, physically challenged, children or seniors (or variously-abled) within the community;

Section 136.01 Purpose

- ▶ 2. Insuring that the ADA guidelines are met for all sidewalk or pathway installations, existing and proposed;

Section 136.01 Purpose

- ▶ 3. Promoting attractive and well-constructed sidewalks or pathways that correspond to the character, aesthetic qualities, natural, environmental, and historical features of developing or existing neighborhoods;

Section 136.01 Purpose

- ▶ 4. Connecting to existing and projected sidewalks or pathways whenever the opportunity arises to insure an interconnected pedestrian system;

Section 136.01 Purpose

- ▶ 5. Insuring that all development actively implements the building of sidewalks or pathways for new construction, reconstruction, or rehabilitation.

Section 136.01 Definitions

- ▶ Added Definitions for “Pedestrian Friendly” or “Walkability” and “Crosswalks”

Section 136.01 Definitions

- ▶ “Pedestrian Friendly” or “Walkability”
 - ▶ Design features that make an environment safe and attractive to pedestrian

Section 136.01 Definitions

- ▶ Walkable Distances (under $\frac{1}{4}$ mile)
- ▶ Sidewalks, Paths, and walkways
- ▶ Continuous Visual Interest
- ▶ Consumer Uses

Section 136.01 Definitions

- ▶ Defective Sidewalks

- ▶ “Sidewalks not present” changed to “Sidewalk is missing panels”

Section 136.01 Definitions

- ▶ Sidewalk definition updated
 - ▶ Minimum 4 feet (5 feet recommended) in residential areas
 - ▶ 8 feet in commercial areas

Section 136.01 Definitions

- ▶ **Bicycle/Recreational Trail**
 - ▶ Minimum of 10 feet
 - ▶ Preferred width of 12 feet

Section 136.01 Definitions

- ▶ Mature Tree

- ▶ Tree with a diameter at breast height of 10 inches or greater.

Section 136.03 Removal of Snow, Ice, and Accumulations

- ▶ 48-hours from the conclusion of weather event
- ▶ Public works director will provide a 24-hour notice on door
- ▶ More time provided under extreme weather conditions

Section 136.03 Removal of Snow, Ice, and Accumulations

- ▶ Establish a volunteer program for elderly and disabled residents
- ▶ Facilitated by the City and modeled off of other similar program (i.e. Snow Corps in Chicago)

Section 136.04 Property Owner's Responsibility for Maintenance

- ▶ Owners not responsible for cost of ADA compliance
- ▶ This cost is the “economic responsibility” of the City
- ▶ Updated Appendix C to require sod instead of grass seed

Section 136.05 Annual Inspections Zones

- ▶ Inspection Timeline:
 - ▶ August - Sidewalk inspections completed
 - ▶ August 31 - Notifications mailed to property owners
 - ▶ October-April - property owner requests bids and schedules work
 - ▶ May 1 - 75 day timeline initiated
 - ▶ July 15 - deadline to complete work

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ Legal title to parcel
- ▶ Adjusted annual income at or below 80 percent of median income for Des Moines MSA
- ▶ Median income guidelines set by HUD

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ Property owners have 180 days from date of notice to apply for Economic Hardship

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ Adjusted annual income can't exceed the following limits:

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ADJUSTED ANNUAL INCOME
1	\$43,050
2	\$49,200
3	\$55,350
4	\$61,500
5	\$66,450
6	\$71,350
7	\$76,300
8	\$81,200

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ Adjusted annual income = Household income - Adjustments
- ▶ Adjustments include the following:

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ Medical expenses exceeding 7.5 percent of total household income and not covered by insurance

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ Income received from a non-profit child-placing agency for care of one or more children placed in property owner's home

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ The income of household members (other than property owner or spouse) that are under the age of 18, full-time students, or disabled or handicapped

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ The first three hundred dollars (\$300) of spouse's income
- ▶ Three hundred dollars (\$300) for each dependent of the property owner, who lives at this property and meets one of the following criteria:
 - ▶ Under the age of 18
 - ▶ Disabled or handicapped (regardless of age)
 - ▶ Full-time student

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ Non-recurring income, such as an inheritance

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ Five percent (5%) of the household income is deducted if the property owner and/or spouse are under the age of 60.
- ▶ If the property owner and/or spouse are 60 years old or older ten percent (10%) of the household income is deducted.

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ If the property owner meets these requirements the city will cover the cost of the repairs

Section 136.08 Economic Hardship

- ▶ Much less invasive than the previous process
- ▶ Just requires:
 - ▶ Copy of Federal Tax Return
 - ▶ Pension/Social Security benefits
- ▶ City should use an outside source to underwrite the applications

Section 136.09 Sidewalk Construction Ordered

- ▶ Added “Based on Iowa Law...”
- ▶ Reiterated that city is responsible for ADA ramps

Section 136.10 Standard Sidewalk Specifications

- ▶ Changed “Public Works Director” to “City Engineer” shall prepare and complete plans and specifications...

Section 136.16 Determining Location of New Sidewalks

- ▶ Changed “discretion” to “recommendation” of the city engineer...
- ▶ Final approval is made by City Council