

# Sidewalk Repair FAQ Sheet

**1. Who is responsible for maintaining sidewalks adjacent to a resident's home or other property?**

Iowa State Code and City Ordinance have established that the maintenance and repair of sidewalks is the responsibility of the adjoining property owner. This is detailed in the Iowa Code section 364.12(d) and the City of Windsor Heights Code Book Chapter 136.04 Sidewalk regulations and provides the City of Windsor Heights the ability to require an owner to repair a sidewalk adjacent to their property.

**2. What opportunity does the city's sidewalk program offer to residents?**

By opting into the city's sidewalk program, it offers the property owner a low-cost solution to repair/replace sidewalk panels that are out of compliance with city, state and federal guidelines. The more residents that join the program, the better price the city will receive from a contractor. This will save the property owner time and money by not having to locate and hire individual contractors for their replacement project. Residents can also apply to the City's sidewalk grant program that can help pay half the cost of replacement, up to \$1,000. [www.windsorheights.org/782/Sidewalk-Improvement-Grant](http://www.windsorheights.org/782/Sidewalk-Improvement-Grant)

**3. When will my sidewalks be inspected?**

The city has been divided into five segments and all sidewalks in one of the segments will be inspected each year on a five year rotating schedule. In addition, if a complaint is received on the condition of a sidewalk, an inspection will be made at the time the complaint is received.

**4. What options do I have to get my sidewalks repaired?**

There are a few options for the property owner to repair the sidewalk. Property owners can perform the repair or replacement themselves. They can hire their own contractor to make the necessary repairs or replacement. The property owner can opt into the city's sidewalk program and have the city's contractor repair or replace the deficient sidewalk panels.

**5. How long will I have to complete the sidewalk repairs?**

It would be appreciated if the repairs were completed as soon as possible to provide pedestrians with a safe passageway; however, deadlines are established and given in the notification letter. Typically, sidewalks marked as part of the inspection program are identified with a deadline for completion of repairs. Please note that the repair work must be completed within two weeks after removing the sidewalk.

**6. Is a permit required?**

Yes, a construction permit is required; however, there are no permit fees.

**7. What will happen if I can't find a contractor to do the repair work?**

If the repairs are not completed by the deadline stated in your notification letter, the city will take charge of the repair work and invoice you for the repair costs.

**8. How much will the city charge to repair my sidewalk?**

The Windsor Heights Public Works Department will either complete the repairs or a contractor will be hired each year and the cost will be determined at that time. After the deadline, an inventory of which sidewalks have and have not been repaired will be made. A list will be compiled and a bid will be solicited from contractors to repair those sidewalks. Depending on the lowest responsible bid received, the city will charge the property owner for the costs of making sidewalk repairs on their property. The current anticipated cost per panel of sidewalk ranges from \$350 to \$500. Many factors will determine this cost, such as the size of the project, material and labor costs and contractor availability.

**9. If the city repairs my sidewalk, what method of repair is done?**

The city will only remove and replace sidewalk panels if the city takes charge of the repair work. Therefore, if you desire to utilize a repair option other than removal and replacement, you will need to arrange for the work.

**10. If I have the city repair my sidewalk, will my property be assessed?**

The city will first invoice the property owner for the costs incurred and will work with the property owner in making the payment. Only if the invoice is not paid within 30 days will the property be assessed and added to property taxes.

**11. Do I have to hire a contractor, or can I repair the sidewalk myself?**

If you have the ability to complete the repairs to the city's specifications, you may complete the repair work yourself.

**12. Can the city recommend a contractor?**

The city cannot recommend contractors as we are unable to favor any particular contractor. The city does not require that the contractors be licensed and therefore does not have an approved contractor list.

**13. What are the acceptable methods to repair my sidewalk?**

There are different acceptable methods of repair depending on the repair type marked on the inspection sheet. The sidewalk inspection report details repair types. The recommended method of repair is removal and replacement for all types; however, other options are as follows:

- Types B, D, and F (see attachment) must be removed and replaced. The city recommends doweling the new squares into the adjacent squares to prevent the movement of the new squares.
- Type A and C (see attachment) may be removed and replaced or mud-jacked, not to exceed 5%. Type A may also be corrected if it does not exceed ½" in height it can be beveled with a grinder to meet the city's specifications
- Type E may be sealed with a rigid sealant after the removal of all vegetation/debris.

**14. Can I fix more squares than what is marked?**

Absolutely. The city only marks the minimum number of squares to eliminate hazards. You may have additional squares in marginal condition that you may want to repair, or you may find it in your best interest to replace entire segments of the sidewalk rather than doing spot repairs.

**15. Is there funding available to help pay for the repairs?**

Yes, information on the City's Sidewalk Grant program is available online: <https://windsorheights.org/782/Sidewalk-Improvement-Grant>

**16. What do I do if the squares marked on my inspection form are actually adjacent to my neighbor's property?**

Call Windsor Heights Public Works at 515-645-6825 so we may re-evaluate the location of the marked squares. If the square(s) is adjacent to your neighbor's property, a letter will be sent to your neighbor.

**17. I sold the property; should I call the city?**

Yes, if you recently sold the property, the records may not have been updated at the Polk County Recorder's office yet. By notifying the city of the recent sale, we can notify the correct property owner.

**18. What if I disagree with the squares marked?**

If you believe the squares marked adjacent to your property do not meet the criteria established on the inspection form, or it would be preferable to repair the adjoining square, please call Windsor Heights Public Works at 515-645-6825. A second opinion of the need for repairs may be requested. The city will have a different inspector look at the sidewalk and evaluate it for meeting the criteria.

**19. I have seen other squares worse than mine; why weren't they marked?**

The city tries to be as fair and as consistent as possible when marking sidewalk squares for repair. If you believe we missed a sidewalk needing repair, or there is a sidewalk in another area of your neighborhood that also needs repair work, please call Windsor Heights Public Works at 515-645-6825 with the addresses to initiate inspections of those sidewalks.

**20. Who is responsible for repairing my damaged irrigation system?**

Any irrigation system (lines or heads) that are in the public right-of-way are susceptible to damage and are the responsibility of the homeowner to repair.

**21. Do I need to notify the city when the repairs have been made?**

Notification is not necessary. The city will automatically re-inspect the sidewalks marked for repair after the deadline stated in your notification letter.

**For additional questions or information**, please call Windsor Heights Public Works at 515-645-6825 , or visit our Public Works facility at 6800 School St. south of Colby Park.