

To: **Charter Commission**
From: **Ryan Schroeder, City Manager**
Date: **October 19, 2020**

Update on Sidewalk Assessment Policy

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Charter Commission had requested an update of the sidewalk assessment policy. Between 2012 (and perhaps prior) and April 2018, the policy was a 50/50 cost share on sidewalk replacement with a 100% assessment for new sidewalk. In April 2018, the following policy was adopted which essentially provided that, for replacement sidewalk, the assessment would be the same as for the rest of the public improvement (street project).

Policy Adopted April 2018

Concrete Sidewalks

New Construction

New sidewalks will be installed adjacent to City streets by the developer of the abutting properties if planned as part of a development project.

For the installation of new sidewalks, the benefited properties shall be assessed 100% of the Assessable Cost, whether the sidewalk is located on the benefited property or is on the opposite side of the street.

Replacement

All costs for replacement sidewalks installed as part of a street reconstruction project will be included in the overall Project Costs for the Improvement.

7. Bituminous Trails

The construction, replacement and maintenance of bituminous trails will not be assessed.

On May 24, 2019, the City Engineer provided an estimate of \$15 million plus right-of-way cost to complete the identified sidewalk gaps. On October 14, 2019, the above policy was amended to eliminate the 100% assessment for new sidewalk. The 100% in the above was changed to 0%. At the same time, Council directed that the levy in 2021 include an allocation toward completion of sidewalk gaps that had been identified in the 2011 Bike/Ped plan. These sidewalk gaps are interpreted to exclude those walkways (trails) that are specifically recreational in nature (such as a park trail). Capital Improvement Plan revisions since October 2019 have included a sidewalk chapter. The preliminary budget and CIP adopted by Council in September 2020 includes a tax levy allocation of \$500,000 toward completion of sidewalk gaps beginning in 2021.

Enclosed is an exhibit denoting how the tax levy is planned to be allocated over the next ten year period. Additionally, over the past several years, the City has consistently sought grant funding toward completion of the Bike/Ped Plan. Federal funding has recently been gained to complete the trails on Marie, east of Robert and on Oakdale between Southview/Mendota Road and Wentworth, in addition to State Bond funds toward completion of the R2R Robert Street tunnel. Dakota County also funded a portion of the Oakdale trail and is proposing to gain funding to ensure the Garlough Marthaler trails meet regional requirements.

The City is currently in queue to gain a Safe Routes to School allocation for the future walkway on Bidwell (2022/2023) and to complete the Oakdale trail from Wentworth to Butler in 2023/24. We are currently in discussions with Dakota County for a trailway on Thompson Avenue east of Robert (proposed for 2023) and, as noted in the enclosed exhibit, sidewalk is proposed on Moreland in 2021.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

No Action Required; information only.