

MEMORANDUM



TO: WALKABLE NOVI COMMITTEE
FROM: REBECCA RUNKEL, PROJECT ENGINEER
SUBJECT: MEADOWBROOK GLENS PILOT SIDEWALK PROGRAM
DATE: APRIL 20, 2023

In 2020, City Council formed a goal to establish a neighborhood sidewalk repair program that would repair or replace damaged sidewalk panels that pose a risk to public safety, in particular, trip hazards. A pilot program was initiated in 2021, with a budget of \$200,000 for sidewalk repairs and \$200,000 for tree-related expenses. The Department of Public Works estimates that as many as 50% of damaged sidewalk panels are the result of tree root growth adjacent to or under sidewalks.

The Meadowbrook Glens subdivision was selected as the pilot neighborhood due to its age, amount of damaged sidewalk and impact from large street trees. Initially, the program was set up to have the City bear 100% of the cost for repair of panels with a 2-inch deflection or greater, and to incentivize property owners to repair panels with 0.75 to 2-inch deflections by splitting the costs 50/50 with the City. Of the 475 homes in Meadowbrook Glens, 371 properties were found to have damaged sidewalks meeting the criteria for the incentive program. City staff sat down with the Homeowner's Association, held a public meeting, and mailed out letters to all Meadowbrook Glens residents. Initially, 136 property owners returned signed agreements. After meeting with HOA members a second time, utilizing social media, marking panels and leaving door hangers, a total of 211 of the eligible property owners returned signed agreements for repair. A detailed summary of the public feedback and participation can be found in the attached March 31, 2022 memo.

Ultimately, it was decided that the City would bear the costs for all sidewalk repairs on sidewalk panels with 0.75-inch or greater deflections. City Council approved a change order to a contract with Merlo Construction on April 25, 2022 for the Meadowbrook Glens Sidewalk Repair Program in the amount of \$343,778.50. Tree removals began this past winter, and sidewalk removal/replacement started this spring and is nearly complete. Restoration will follow immediately after all sidewalk repairs are done. The total cost of the pilot program thus far is approximately \$500,000, due to additional repairs and tree removals identified during construction.

Now that the pilot program is nearly complete, City staff have the following reflections on the overall program implementation:

- Meadowbrook Glens subdivision represented the 'worst-case scenario', being the largest and oldest subdivision considered for the program.

- Despite the comprehensive communication efforts made by the City (meetings, letters, notices, door hangers) hundreds of calls and emails from residents were fielded by City staff throughout the program.
- Staff encountered a general lack of understanding regarding public rights-of-ways, ownership of sidewalk, etc.
- Staff time required to implement the program was greater than anticipated.
- Additional contingency funds should be included in the project budget to cover issues that come up in the field, such as irrigation, invisible dog fence, landscaping, etc.
- Most residents were in favor of tree removals, though many of those that opted out of the program did so because they did not want a tree removed.
- Trees and sidewalks should not be marked until construction is ready to begin – the initial markings confused homeowners and actually had some residents doing their own markings.
- The program must be followed up by the City Forester to be successful (monitoring remaining trees for damage, working with residents on replacements).
- The repairs made in the subdivision to date are not a permanent solution. Sidewalks will still need to be monitored in the future for heaving due to tree roots.
- City Council's backing of the program was helpful in getting support from residents.

City staff would like the Walkable Novi Committee to provide feedback on continuation of the program. Potential candidates for the next program include Willowbrook Farm, Bristol Corners, and Chase Farm subdivisions. Alternatively, the program could shift to higher traffic sidewalks and pathways along boundaries of neighborhoods.





MEADOWBROOK GLENS SIDEWALK REPAIR PROGRAM UPDATE

January 13, 2023

CITY COUNCIL

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City Engineer
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Valued Resident,

In 2022, we communicated with you about the Sidewalk Repair Program in your neighborhood. Unfortunately, due to staffing and other project delays, in August we shared the project was rescheduled to this spring.

You are receiving this letter as one or more of your street trees have been identified as absolutely necessary for removal prior to sidewalk replacement. The contractor will begin removing trees later this month or in early February. Trees identified for removal will be marked with an "X."

Sidewalk replacement will begin in the spring as soon as weather allows.

Residents who have called and wanted trees removed not identified as part of the program remain on the list and those trees will be removed following sidewalk completion, under a separate contract.

Once all the sidewalk is repaired, the City will re-evaluate the neighborhood for street tree replacements with deeper root system trees which are better suited for this type of location. Restoration is anticipated later this year.

We look forward to bringing this program to Meadowbrook Glens and working with you to enhance your neighborhood. If you have any questions, please contact Community Relations at communityrelations@cityofnovi.org or 248.735.5628.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Walsh-Molloy
Director of Communications

Matt Wiktorowski
Field Operations Senior Manager

Department of Public Works
26300 Lee BeGole Drive
Novi, Michigan 48375
248.735.5640
248.735.5659 fax

cityofnovi.org



Dear Resident:

Merlo Construction has been contracted by the City of Novi to perform a sidewalk repair program in the Meadowbrook Glens Subdivision. Owen Tree Service has been hired for tree removal services as necessary to complete the sidewalk work.

The work is scheduled to start in your area over the next few days and we ask that you please not park vehicles near trees that are marked for removal. These trees are identified with pink paint and an aluminum disc nailed to the tree. The tree removal process will require streets to be empty of vehicles in the area of the work to ensure a safe and efficient process.

Your tree(s) are scheduled to be removed on: _____.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the individuals listed below.

Zach Sandwick	Merlo Construction	(248) 640-2147
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Barry Gates	(OHM Advisors (City of Novi Engineering Consultant)	(734) 466-4433
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Novi Community Relations		(248) 735-5628
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MEMORANDUM



TO: JEFFREY HERCZEG, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
FROM: MATT WIKTOROWSKI, FIELD OPERATIONS SENIOR MANAGER
SUBJECT: MEADOWBROOK GLENS SIDEWALK PROGRAM
RECOMMENDATION
DATE: MARCH 31, 2022

In the fall of 2020, the Department of Public Works presented to the Walkable Novi Committee, a report on non-motorized maintenance and proposed criteria for a neighborhood sidewalk repair program, which is a 2020 City Council goal. Following those reports, guidance was summarized to the Committee. (November 17 Memorandum attached).

Meadowbrook Glens Subdivision was selected as the pilot neighborhood and the best candidate to benefit from an incentivized repair program given its age, amount of damaged sidewalk, and impact from large street trees.

On May 28, 2021, DPW and Community Relations staff met with the Meadowbrook Glens Homeowners Association President, Sue Finley, to notify her of the opportunity and to gauge the HOA's support. Following the HOA's endorsement, a public information meeting was held on August 16 at the Civic Center for all Meadowbrook Glens residents. A handout to address frequently asked questions was provided to the approximately 50 residents in attendance.

After receiving positive public input, eligibility letters, participation agreements, and the FAQ sheet (attached) were mailed at the end of August to all Meadowbrook Glens residents. This communication explained the program, the number of damaged panels, and the resident cost share to be placed on a future tax bill, following construction.

Of the 475 homes in Meadowbrook Glens, 371 properties were identified as having damage and were listed as candidates for the cost share incentive. Of those eligible, only 136 (or approximately 37%), property owners signed and returned agreement for repair. Some of the reasons cited for non-participation were as follows:

- Residents were reluctant to lose their trees;
 - Conversely, some residents indicated they wanted their tree removed despite having only minimal damage, not caused by tree roots;
- Damaged panels were not marked, making homeowners question quantities;
- Sidewalks should be the City's responsibility.

Based on feedback from limited participation in the program, it was decided a second attempt be initiated to obtain additional program support. On October 27, 2021, DPW and Community Relations staff again met with the MGHOA members to report initial results and encourage further support through neighborhood social media and simple “word of mouth.” In addition to that meeting, the City initiated enhanced communication efforts in the field by marking individual damaged panels, for quick homeowner reference, and placing doorhangers at each identified home to directly explain the program for those who were unable to attend previous informational meetings.

Following this second, more robust approach, the City received 75 additional agreements yielding an overall cost share total of 211 property owner participants (or approximately 57% of identified parcels with damage). Given the lower than anticipated acceptance totals, we estimate only 40% of the identified damaged panels would be repaired under this incentive program.

Based on participation it is estimated residents would be responsible for only \$64,000 of the overall estimated pilot program expenditure of **\$224,000 (approximately \$160,000 City cost plus \$64,000 resident cost share)**. Resident costs are based solely on existing concrete removal and replacement. An estimate received by the Merlo Construction Company was used to determine unit costs. As part of the program, it is anticipated approximately 80 mature trees will be removed. These trees, some of which have been requested be removed by homeowners, are damaging additional assets such as storm drains, sanitary sewer conveyance systems, roadway surfaces, and private sump lines. The tree removal and replacement costs account for about 25% (~\$55,000) of the total project.

Staff estimates the total cost to replace all panels, tree removal, etc. for the entire subdivision (including the resident addresses not participating) is **~\$325-350K** (under the budgeted \$400K). The unit prices are based on this overall estimate (100% of panels) and reducing the scope to 40% will likely increase the unit cost. With participation and overall cost share value nominal (compared to effort), staff recommends completing the whole project with cost share participation (if any) at the discretion of City Council.

Options are as follows with pros and cons:

Option 1 – do program with opt in only residents and shared costs

- Pros
 - Residents aggregable and willing to share costs
 - Cost savings for City of ~\$64K
- Cons
 - Only addresses 40% of all panel replacements

Option 2 – do entire program with city covering all cost

- Pros
 - Addresses all sidewalk panel replacement in the subdivision and provides a network free of hazards
 - Lower overall unit cost

- Cons
 - City covers all cost (no resident agreements)
 - Residents may oppose additional tree removals

Staff would like to execute a change order agreement with the contractor currently working on the Safe Routes to School project at the April 28th City Council Meeting. Construction on the Meadowbrook Glens project would begin later this spring or early summer.

MEMORANDUM



TO: JULIE MADAY, WALKABLE NOVI COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON
FROM: MEGAN MIKUS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
SUBJECT: NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK REPAIR PROGRAM-
WALKABLE NOVI COMMITTEE FEEDBACK
DATE: NOVEMBER 17, 2020

On October 22, and November 5, 2020, DPW presented to the Walkable Novi Committee a report on non-motorized maintenance and proposed criteria for a neighborhood sidewalk repair program, which is a 2020 City Council goal.

The Walkable Novi Committee provided the following feedback regarding a neighborhood sidewalk repair program:

- Continue to have the City bear 100% of the costs for repair of reported sidewalk panels with a deflection of 2 inches or more.
 - o The current responsibility of sidewalk maintenance is the property owners per the [City's Code of Ordinances](#). The City addresses deflections of 2-inches or more that are reported to limit the City's liabilities under [2016 PA 419](#).
- Incentivize property owners to repair sidewalk panels with a 1-inch to 2-inch deflection by splitting the costs 50/50 with the City.
 - o DPW recommends the lower differential be 0.75-inch which is closer to ADA tolerances.

To opt for the incentive, the property owner would be required to use the City's contractor. A property owner may repair panels abutting their property at any time by obtaining a right-of-way permit through DPW; however, this incentive program would provide a less expensive repair option to property owners as there would be reduced costs due to economies of scale. The City would upfront the costs of the work on panels with deflections between 0.75 and 2 inches and 50% of the repair costs would be recuperated on the following winter tax bill.

The committee's feedback is to start a pilot program in 2021. DPW has requested in the FY 2021-22 Budget \$400K be appropriated for this pilot incentive program. Since many of the deflections are caused by city right-of-way trees, using funding in the Tree Fund to supplement the program is recommended. Once funding is appropriated by City Council, DPW would select a neighborhood with a high volume of existing deflections and introduce a program. Some subdivisions which would meet the criteria are Cedarspring Estates, Country Place Condos, Meadowbrook Glens, Westridge Downs, and Whispering Meadows.

As a comparison of the estimates provided in the July 2020 memo, DPW predicts below the costs for an incentive program in the Meadowbrook Glens Subdivision, one of the City's oldest subdivisions with a sidewalk network in poor condition:

Meadowbrook Glens				
Deflections 0.75" to 2"	# of Panels	Resident (50%)	City (50%)	Total (Estimate)
Not Impacted by Street Tree Roots	216	\$39,960	\$39,960	\$79,920
Impacted by Street Tree Roots	143	\$39,683	\$39,683	\$79,366
Deflections >=2"	# of Panels	Resident (0%)	City (100%)	Total (Estimate)
Not Impacted by Street Tree Roots	9	\$0	\$3,330	\$3,330
Impacted by Street Tree Roots	29	\$0	\$16,095	\$16,095
Contingency				
Several adjacent panels may to be repaired to level the segment	344	\$0	\$190,920	\$190,920
Grand Total (Estimate)		\$79,643	\$289,988	\$369,631

The City's cost of ~\$300K for the example above could be funded 50/50 with Tree Fund and Municipal Road Fund, leaving ~\$100K to expand the program and/or address other replacement requests for panels 2" or greater in the same fiscal year.

If the Walkable Novi Committee and City Council approve of the recommendations as presented, DPW could implement the pilot program in spring 2021 and start construction after July 1, 2021.

Sidewalk Repair Program

Meadowbrook Glens Program Participants



Map Author: Keri Blough
Date: February 2, 2022
Project: Sidewalk Repair Pilot Program
Version #: 1.1

Amended By:
Date:
Department:

MAP INTERPRETATION NOTICE

Map information depicted is not intended to replace or substitute for any official or primary source. This map was intended to meet National Map Accuracy Standards and use the most recent, accurate sources available to the people of the City of Novi.
Boundary measurements and area calculations are approximate and should not be construed as survey measurements performed by a licensed Michigan Surveyor as defined in Michigan Public Act 132 of 1970 as amended. Please contact the City GIS Manager to confirm source and accuracy information related to this map.

- Sidewalks
- Program Participant**
 - Yes (210)
 - No (156)
 - Repair Not Needed (113)



City of Novi
Department of Public Works
Field Operations Division
26300 Lee BeGole Drive
Novi, MI 48375
cityofnovi.org

Feet
0 70 140 280 420
1 inch = 350 feet





Monday, August 30, 2021

CITY COUNCIL

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City Engineer

Ben Croy, P.E.

Property Owner
PROPERTY OWNER STREET ADDRESS
PROPERTY OWNER CITY, STATE ZIP CODE

Neighborhood Sidewalk Repair Program Cost-Sharing Incentive

RE: {PROPERTY STREET ADDRESS}

Dear Property Owner,

The City of Novi has adopted a pilot program to incentivize property owners to repair sidewalk panels with a 0.75-inch to 2-inch deflection, extensive cracking, and/or scaling by splitting the costs 50/50 with the City. Your subdivision, Meadowbrook Glens, has been selected as the first neighborhood for the pilot program.

To opt into the incentive program, you are required to use the City's contractor. Although you may repair panels abutting your property at any time by obtaining a right-of-way permit through the Department of Public Works, the incentive program provides a less expensive repair option since costs are reduced as a result of bulk pricing. The City will initially pay the costs of the work on panels matching the criteria listed above and will collect 50% of the repair costs from you on your 2022 winter tax bill in the form of a user fee.

If you would like to participate in the cost-sharing incentive program, please sign the included agreement document and return it in the enclosed pre-stamped and addressed envelope by September 17, 2021.

The work is anticipated to be completed by June 30, 2022, pending City Council approval. Additional work such as tree root pruning, tree removals, and tree replacements will be completed throughout the subdivision as part of this program. On the back of this letter are answers to frequently asked questions about this program.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Department of Public Works at 248-735-5640.

Sincerely,

Matthew T. Wiktorowski

Matthew T. Wiktorowski
Field Operations Sr. Manager

Department of Public Works

26300 Lee BeGole Drive

Novi, Michigan 48375

248.735.5640

248.735.5659 fax

cityofnovi.org



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NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK REPAIR PROGRAM COST-SHARING INCENTIVE
Participation is voluntary. Please discard if you choose not to participate.

By signing below, all owners of {PROPERTY STREET ADDRESS} agree to
pay {####.##} for the repair of {#} sidewalk panels
adjacent to the property listed above.

ALL TAXPAYERS LISTED ON RECORD MUST SIGN THE AGREEMENT.

Print Name Taxpayer 1

Taxpayer 1 Signature

Date

Print Name Taxpayer 2

Taxpayer 2 Signature

Date

INSTRUCTIONS: Return this signed document in the pre-stamped and addressed envelope no later than
September 17, 2021.



Monday, August 30, 2021

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City Engineer

Ben Croy, P.E.

Property Owner

PROPERTY OWNER STREET ADDRESS

PROPERTY OWNER CITY, STATE ZIP CODE

Neighborhood Sidewalk Repair Program Cost-Sharing Incentive

Dear Property Owner,

The City of Novi has adopted a pilot program to incentivize property owners to repair sidewalk panels with a 0.75-inch to 2-inch deflection, extensive cracking, and/or scaling by splitting the costs 50/50 with the City. Your subdivision, Meadowbrook Glens, has been selected as the first neighborhood for the pilot program.

However, your address was NOT identified as a location matching the criteria above for repair. If you feel that an error has been made with our evaluation, please contact us as soon as possible at 248-735-5640.

In order to be considered for the program, the inspection of your property would need to be completed by September 15, 2021, and an acceptance agreement signed no later than September 17, 2021.

Sincerely,

Matthew T. Wiktorowski

Matthew T. Wiktorowski

Field Operations Sr. Manager

Department of Public Works

26300 Lee BeGole Drive

Novi, Michigan 48375

248.735.5640

248.735.5659 fax

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FAQs

PILOT NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK REPAIR COST-SHARING PROGRAM



COSTS

What will my cost be to participate in this program?

The cost will differ for each resident based on the inspection data gathered by the third-party consulting firm. The average cost per address is estimated at \$300.

Do I have to participate in this program?

No. The program is strictly voluntary. However, the opportunity to split the cost with the City of Novi is only being offered at this time while your neighborhood sidewalks are under repair.

When will I know what I would be required to pay if I choose to participate?

You will be receiving a letter from the City of Novi that will communicate your cost and ask if you would like to opt in or opt out of the program.

How will I be billed for the program?

The City will advance the cost for all repairs and then assess the property owner 50% of the total cost for repairs on their tax bill. Repair costs will not exceed the amount communicated in your letter.

Can I spread the cost out over time?

No. If you choose to participate, you will be assessed a one-time fee.

What if multiple panels are slated for repair but I don't want to pay to fix all of them?

There is no option to pick and choose the panels to repair.

What if I want to participate but I cannot afford it at this time?

Unfortunately, this is a one-time offer. The large scope of this program has allowed the City to secure an extremely reduced price, far cheaper than what a resident would have to pay if contracting the work on their own.

TIMELINE

When will I receive the letter from the City of Novi asking if I want to opt in or out of the program?

A letter will be mailed by the end of September.

What if I didn't get a letter?

If you did not receive a letter, your sidewalk is not eligible for the program, or you were accidentally missed. Please call 248.735.5640 to confirm your status.

How long will the work take to complete?

Once started, it is anticipated to last approximately five (5) weeks.

IMPACT ON PROPERTY

What impact will this have on my property?

If you choose to participate, the contractor is required to do what is necessary to make repairs. This could include cutting tree roots, complete removal of trees, and damage to lawns or irrigation systems.

Who is responsible for restoration to the area?

The contractor is required to repair damage to any irrigation lines and lawns at the end of the program. This is included in the total cost of the program. Seed and straw will be used as the replanting method.

Why do you have to remove my tree?

If a tree located between the roadway and the sidewalk has contributed to the failure of any sidewalk panel in front of your property, it may be removed to prevent future issues. Trees that are removed will be replaced with a standard 2.5" caliper tree selected by the City at no cost to the homeowner.

What if I do not want my tree removed but I want my sidewalk repaired?

Tree removal is at the discretion of the City. You would have to choose to opt out of the program in its entirety if your tree needed to be removed to complete the work and you did not want it removed.

Will you fix my driveway too?

Only sidewalk panels contained in driveway approaches will be removed and repaired. Entire approaches are not part of this program.

GENERAL FAQs

What if something is found during construction that should have been included?

If additional repairs are needed, it will be solely at the City's discretion and the City will bear the full cost of any additional repairs.

Who is responsible for the sidewalk after repairs?

All sidewalks, walkways, stairs, driveways, parking spaces, and similar areas shall be kept in a proper state of repair and maintained free from hazardous conditions by the homeowner.

How did you decide what is being repaired?

Any panel adjacent to your parcel that encompasses one or more of the items listed below:

- Adjacent sidewalk panels with deflections $>3/4"$ – $<2"$
- Panels with extensive cracking
- Scaling panels
- The City will pay 100% of the cost for all deflections 2" or greater