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INFORMATION REQUEST (IR) - Downtown Sidewalks

Requested by: Councillor Korotash

Date of Request: June 16, 2026

Date Response Due: July 16, 2026

Confidential Response: No

QUESTION

Can Administration please provide an update with respect to downtown sidewalk deficiencies, specifically:

1. What is the current service level expectation for the various spot repairs required;
2. Are downtown sidewalks currently included in our RMR sidewalk repair / replacement program; and
3. Whether additional resources or capital charter are required to make the necessary current and ongoing repairs.

RESPONSE

The following information serves as a response to the questions asked above.

1. What is the current service level expectation for the various spot repairs required?

Downtown sidewalks are primarily constructed with paving stones (brick). Public Operations receives sidewalk deficiency requests through phone calls, email, and SeeClickFix. Each request is reviewed, inspected, and prioritized based on safety risk, including trip hazards, surface displacement, accessibility concerns, severity of deterioration, and operational considerations.

Minor defects and localized trip hazards are typically addressed through routine maintenance and the annual sidewalk spot repair program. More complex repairs may be required where the base supporting the paving stones has deteriorated, resulting in subsidence or heaving, or recurring surface failures.

Public Operations, in collaboration with Engineering Services, has identified priority downtown locations requiring repairs beyond normal maintenance activities. Quotes have been requested, and administration is finalizing the required scope of work so repairs can proceed this year.

When paving stone sections are opened for repair, additional issues may be identified, including voids in the base material or paving stones that have deteriorated and require replacement. The original type and color of paving stone are no longer available, and Administration has only a limited reserve of salvaged stones from other locations, therefore repairs may be completed using different colors of bricks.

2. Are downtown sidewalks currently included in our RMR sidewalk repair / replacement program?

Currently, there is no dedicated RMR charter and associated funding to support the renewal or upgrade of the brick sidewalks in our downtown. We do have a dedicated Concrete Sidewalk RMR charter (ENGS-007) to address City wide renewal programs.

While there is no specific RMR charter for downtown brick sidewalks, conditions assessments were completed in 2019 and in 2022, with investigations focused on high severity defects that impacted safety and functionality. While overall performance indicators suggest that current condition of downtown brick sidewalks is within the Fair to Good (60-80%) category, the brick infrastructure is reaching the end of its service life. Issues with subgrade support and failing bricks are becoming more frequent and severe.

Administration is currently evaluating unfunded Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan (DARP) Projects for bridging gaps in resources and funding for the downtown sidewalk replacement in congruence with upcoming Downtown Renewal Program (2026-2031). Meanwhile, required localized brick maintenance will be conducted under the service level provided by Public Operations.

3. Whether additional resources or capital charter are required to make the necessary current and ongoing repairs?

At this time, Public Operations expects that isolated spot repairs can be managed through existing operating and sidewalk repair budgets, subject to annual prioritization and available funding. As the brick infrastructure is reaching the end of its service life, administration is currently evaluating unfunded DARP Projects for potential opportunity to fund and complete any downtown sidewalk RMR in congruence with the upcoming Downtown Renewal Program (2026-2031). The functionality of the brick will be evaluated, and potential alternative sidewalk treatments may be considered as part of the planned work.

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