

## City Program Can Assist With Cost of Sidewalk Repair or Replacement

Anyone who wants to repair a sidewalk in the City of Huntington can get some help paying for the repairs through the city's sidewalk replacement program.

The program is open to anyone who wants to repair a sidewalk in the city — a homeowner, a business owner, or even a renter.

All they need to do is apply, and the city will fund part of the bill for the work.

The city will pay \$4.75 per square foot, which is roughly half the going rate for sidewalk replacement, and the sidewalk owner will pay the rest, explains Adam Cuttriss, assistant director of the city's public works and engineering services department.

The 2019 amount, which was set by the Board of Public Works and Safety, was arrived at by surveying prices charged by area contractors for a standard 4-inch-thick concrete walk, then dividing the average price in half, he says.

To be eligible for the program, a sidewalk must have some sort of defect such as a crack, a trip hazard, or tree roots — “pretty much any kind of damage or defect to the sidewalk,” Cuttriss says. “If you apply we're probably going to approve it, unless it's in pristine shape.”

Replacement can be limited to just the portion of the sidewalk that is damaged.

Those who want to dig up and re-lay brick sidewalks to smooth them out can also qualify for the help, although the \$4.75 per square foot the city will pay won't come close to half the cost of that project.

“The money doesn't go really as far to re-lay a brick sidewalk because there's so much labor,” Cuttriss says.

The program covers only sidewalks that run parallel to the street, not walks that lead from the street to the sidewalk or from the sidewalk to the house. However, it will cover sidewalks that run across driveways.

And if the sidewalk is on a corner, the city will pay 100 percent of the cost of installing a handicap ramp, Cuttriss notes.

Anyone who wants to participate in the sidewalk replacement program must complete an application, which is available on the engineering department's page on the city website, [www.huntington.in.us](http://www.huntington.in.us), or in the engineering office on the second floor of the City Building, 300 Cherry St. Applications will be accepted as long as the weather is good for construction, probably until November or so, Cuttriss says.

After being approved for the program, the resident will obtain quotes, select a contractor, and have the sidewalk replaced. The contractor will send one bill to the city for its portion of the cost, and the bill for the remaining costs goes to the sidewalk owner.

The city has offered financial help for replacing sidewalks since 2004 and the current program has been in place since 2013, Cuttriss says. Between 20 and 25 sidewalk projects have been funded each year, but Cuttriss says there's money for more.

“The program's open as long as we have money available,” he says. “We have leftover money every year. We could do more than 20 or 25, depending on the length of the sidewalks ... There's a lot of sidewalks around town that we would like to see replaced.”

For 2019, the city has set aside \$38,500 for the sidewalk replacement program.

The goal of the program is to improve the quality of sidewalks as well as to bring sidewalks into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

“Seventy-five percent are not ADA compliant,” Cuttriss says. “The slope is too steep, there are trip hazards above a quarter of an inch, things like that.”

Anyone who has questions about the sidewalk replacement program can contact Cuttriss at 356-1400, extension 2021, or [adam.cuttriss@huntington.in.us](mailto:adam.cuttriss@huntington.in.us).



City residents and business owners can get some financial help from the City of Huntington to replace damaged sidewalks with new, smooth walks.