

City of Hyattsville Sidewalk Policy

The City of Hyattsville seeks to balance accessibility and neighborhood appeal for City residents and visitors. This policy aims to ensure that all pedestrians can traverse the City safely and efficiently while also incorporating public input into the design and re-design of sidewalks.

1. Continuous pedestrian sidewalks in the public right-of-way should ordinarily be installed and maintained on at least one side of the street of every City-owned block.
2. Except as specifically authorized by the City Council, all new installation of sidewalks or redesign of existing sidewalks in the public right-of-way shall be paid for with general City revenues and not by special assessment of adjacent property owners. In the event that the City Council levies a special assessment for sidewalks, the City shall follow the procedures in Article VIII of the City Charter and Code. In all other instances, Article VII of the City Charter and Code shall apply.
3. The classification of the road shall be considered to determine whether a particular street segment will receive a sidewalk.
4. New and reconstructed sidewalks shall be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations and other applicable state and federal requirements.
5. The City shall endeavor to remove or minimize obstacles within new or existing sidewalks to the fullest extent possible without incurring significant additional costs.
6. The City shall make every reasonable effort to find creative solutions to problem areas before deciding to forego installation of a sidewalk.
7. The appearance or aesthetics of a neighborhood may be a consideration in design planning.
8. The City may decide to forego installation of a sidewalk in a particular location based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:
 - a. There is insufficient existing public right of way or easement available for installation of a sidewalk and it is not feasible to either voluntarily acquire the necessary easement or to incorporate part of the existing roadway for the sidewalk.
 - b. The block is not on a through street.
 - c. Construction of a sidewalk would present inordinate engineering challenges or costs.
 - d. Construction of a sidewalk would entail the loss of significant existing tree canopy.
 - e. Construction of a sidewalk would impact stormwater management.
 - f. Construction of a sidewalk would impact the placement and/or construction of a hiker/biker trail.
9. The width of sidewalks will be determined by the appropriate standard detail for the classification of the road, and will utilize proper standard road geometry for the given classification.
10. On blocks where sidewalks are present on both sides of the street, a sidewalk may be removed by the City. Reasons for removal may include, but are not limited to the following: public safety or hazardous conditions, stormwater management, incorrect road geometry, installation of bike lane/trail, appropriate engineering judgement or study, the sidewalk is not of service or beyond repair, or the input of the residents/owners.
11. Maintenance of the sidewalk will be carried out as outlined in the City Code and Charter immediately after the sidewalk project is complete and accepted by the City.

The following procedure will be followed for the new installation of sidewalks or the redesign of an existing sidewalk. Such new installation or redesign shall not include either small installations (one hundred linear feet or less) or repair or replacement in kind of existing sidewalk(s).

1. Prior to beginning to design, the City shall conduct a public hearing before the City Administrator or his/her designee to receive input from the impacted properties and from the public on the City's intent to construct or redesign sidewalks in a specific area.
2. After the design is substantially complete, as defined in relevant project contract documents, and before the City Council approves the proposed plan, the City shall conduct an additional public hearing.
3. The City may schedule additional public hearings during the design process.

Residents have the right to present a petition to the City concerning their preferences as it relates to sidewalk installation, maintenance and/or removal. The preferences may be addressed by either a petition or testimony at a public hearing by the owners of property abutting the proposed sidewalk. A majority of the title-holders of properties on the block(s) may attest by their signatures on a petition to be received by the City Clerk on or before, the time of the public meeting, that they are opposed to the installation of a sidewalk on their block. The following procedures shall be utilized to present a petition.

1. Any petition shall be submitted to the City Clerk.
2. The petition shall conform to the procedures and requirements for a petition in section 114-8(A)&(B) of the City Code except as follows:
 - a. An eligible signature shall be that of any person over 18 years of age, who is a title holder to a dwelling unit on the block or section of the block that is the subject of the petition.
 - b. The area for each petition shall be no more than one full block.
 - c. The signatures of a simple majority of the property owners in the block (or section) shall be sufficient for the clerk to validate the petition.
 - d. A petition that is not validated solely because of the lack of a majority of eligible signatures shall nevertheless be submitted to the City Council accompanied by a statement explaining it was not validated due to the lack of majority.
 - e. A hearing on a petition can only be scheduled by an act of City Council.
3. Any petition presented to City Council shall become part of the record of the public hearings held on the project.
4. The City will not accept petitions on the project after the public hearing that concludes project design and precedes Council approval (see paragraph two in the section of this policy concerning public hearings).