



Staff Reports

File #: 216-2020, **Version:** 1

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council

From: Julie Lucido, Public Works Director

Prepared By: Kristen Hoy, Assistant Engineer

TITLE:

Sidewalk Cost Share Program

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager and Public Works Director to establish administrative regulations to implement the City's Sidewalk Cost Share Program, and determining that the actions authorized by this resolution are exempt from CEQA.

DISCUSSION:

The City's sidewalk cost share program was initiated in the 1990s and was intended to assist residents in the repair of displaced and deteriorating sidewalks throughout the City. The program provided residents the option of completing the repair work in front of their properties and having the City reimburse up to 50% of the cost. Additional funding was allocated for the removal of trees.

In 1994, at the start of the program, residents were reimbursed up to \$3.00 per square foot of sidewalk and \$10.00 per linear foot of curb and gutter, or 50% of each item, whichever was less. Additionally, the tree removal or root trimming related to the sidewalk reconstruction was included in the program with reimbursement up to 100% for approved tree work. The reimbursement on tree removal ranged from up to \$350 for small trees to up to \$2,500 for large trees. Reimbursement rates have remained the same since the 1990's, with the exception of the sidewalk replacement which was increased to \$4.00 per square foot in the late 1990's.

Construction costs have increased significantly since the start of the program and property owners are rarely being reimbursed at or near 50% of their costs. Sidewalk replacement is running an average of \$15.00 per square foot and driveway approaches (located within the street right of way) are at a higher price, \$18.75 per square foot, because of increased concrete thickness required for compliance with the City's Standard Plans. Curb and gutter construction is averaging \$40.00 per linear foot, three times higher than the current reimbursement rate.

In review of the records from the Cost Share Program over the last 20 years, the participation level has declined significantly. The highest level of participation was in fiscal year 2000/2001 with 148 property owners reimbursed. The numbers dropped to below 100 property owners participating annually after 2005, and over the last three years the average number of participants per year is less than 25. Property owners initially interested in the program frequently do not complete the process because their costs are higher than anticipated under the existing reimbursement rates.

The City has increased investments in sidewalk repair over the last several years. The City's concrete crew is primarily focused on repairing sidewalks at a neighborhood scale and eventually working through all the residential neighborhoods in the City. As part of the neighborhood streets and sidewalk program, sidewalks along multiple blocks in an area are assessed and repaired as a project. In addition, the City invests in a sidewalk shaving program to repair vertical sidewalk displacements under 2-inches, and there are additional efforts to repair locations in high volume pedestrian areas, with a goal of completing at least 50 priority locations per year.

All repair work completed as part of the Sidewalk Cost Share Program advances the City's goal to improve sidewalk conditions citywide. With the view that this repair work augments other City efforts, staff is proposing to increase the City's proportion of the work and reimburse up to 60% of the property owner's costs for concrete work to incentivize more participation. As part of this proposal, staff recommends maintaining the maximum \$5,000 reimbursement for non-residential properties. The reason for the proposed maximum for these properties is to prioritize limited funding for homeowners. Public Works staff will document the number of applications, reimbursement totals, and trends within the program.

If the recommended Program is approved by City Council, the Public Works Director will establish updated unit costs for reimbursements to property owners based on industry standards. The following table identifies the Existing unit costs compared to the Proposed unit costs:

	Existing	Proposed
Sidewalk (4" concrete thickness)	Up to \$4.00/SF	Up to \$9.00/SF
Driveway Approach (6" concrete thickness)	Up to \$4.00/SF	Up to \$11.25/SF
Curb and Gutter	Up to \$10.00/LF	Up to \$24.00/SF
Concrete Removal (planter strip area only)	Up to \$1.50/SF	Up to \$2.40/SF

Increases to tree removal costs will not be proposed at this time. These costs are reimbursed at 100% to the property owners, and there is no indication that these reimbursement rates do not cover the typical tree work associated with sidewalk repairs. Should that change, tree removal rates will be further evaluated for proposed adjustment.

As part of the recommended action, the City Manager will be authorized to establish administrative regulations to implement the Program consistent with the following parameters:

- The City will reimburse private property owners for a portion of the costs of repairing damaged sidewalks that are adjacent to their private property and removing trees within the public right-of-way that have caused damage, or are likely to cause damage, to sidewalks.
- A total of \$150,000 per fiscal year shall be appropriated to the Program.
- The maximum reimbursement limit for non-residential properties shall be \$5,000 (plus costs of ADA ramps) per fiscal year.
- The City will reimburse the property owner for actual costs, not to exceed 60% for concrete work (except 100% for ADA ramps) and 100% for tree removals, and not to exceed unit prices

based on industry standards that are approved in writing by the Public Works Director and updated annually based on the percentage change in the Engineering News Record (ENR) Construction Cost Index (CCI) for the San Francisco Bay Area.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

There are sufficient funds within the Sidewalk Improvement Program's budget to accommodate the Sidewalk Cost Share Program for this fiscal year. The Sidewalk Improvement Program is budgeted with Gas Tax, SB1 and General Fund monies. The current fiscal year's budget, FY 2020/21, for the total program is \$1,942,200 with a portion of it attributed directly to the Sidewalk Cost Share Program based on prior trends. The prior 3-year annual trend averages around \$69,000. If demand is greater than the budgeted trend, the overall program budget is shifted to accommodate the requests without the need for additional funding. Completed cost share applications are approved on a first-come, first-served basis. The Sidewalk Cost Share Program will be capped at \$150,000, and once expended, the program will be discontinued until the next fiscal year or until additional funding is appropriated.

CEQA:

City staff recommends that the City Council determine that the Recommended Action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c), which exempts the repair or minor alteration of existing streets, sidewalks, gutters, and similar facilities.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

ATCH 1 - Resolution

NOTIFICATION:

None.