

City Sidewalk Policy

As a Vision Zero community, the City of Sun Prairie recognizes the right for all people to travel safely to the places they want and need to go. The City has adopted a Sidewalk Policy to meet the transportation needs of current and future residents, to provide transparency in decision-making, and to actively promote transportation equity while reducing barriers for people of all abilities getting around Sun Prairie.

The primary objective of the policy is to provide a complete, green, and safe pedestrian network by:

- Installing sidewalks on both sides of all new and reconstructed streets.
- Filling in gaps in the network on a case-by-case basis, with priority near schools and other pedestrian destinations.
- Including new street trees as part of the sidewalk retrofit projects.



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Active Transportation Plan (2023)

Vision

Sun Prairie has safe walking, biking, and rolling paths that connect all residents to the places they want and need to go.

Goals of Plan: Increase Walking and Biking, Improve Safety, and Promote Equity

Vision Zero Action Plan (2025)

Vision

Sun Prairie is committed to the goal of zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2035.

Vision Zero Maxim: All people have a right to travel safely around Sun Prairie. The City of Sun Prairie is choosing to prioritize safety for all modes of transportation in every action or decision about infrastructure and land use.

Why Sidewalks?

Understanding why the City is installing sidewalks in your neighborhood.



Benefits to the Community

Improve Safety

Streets with sidewalks are safer for pedestrians than streets without sidewalks. A Federal Highway Administration study found that pedestrian crashes are 88% lower on streets with sidewalks than without. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that in 2021, an estimated 9,257 children were injured in crashes while they were pedestrians and not inside a vehicle.

Promote Equity

30-40% of the Sun Prairie's population cannot or do not drive. This includes children, people who experience disabilities, people who are older, and people who don't have a drivers license. Providing sidewalks on both sides of streets provides a safe pathway for all people to get where they need and want to go.

Increase Walking

Sidewalks provide safe walking options for children going to and from school. Research shows that sidewalks increase activities like running and walking. Increasing the number of people walking benefits residents' health and helps achieve City sustainability goals when residents opt to walk rather than drive places.



The sidewalk policy is outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan. See the full policy at cityofsunprairie.com/sidewalks

Expert Discussion

AARP Livability Fact Sheet (2014)

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Identifies sidewalks as an essential part of livable communities for aging populations. Properties with sidewalks in front typically sell for \$4,000 to \$34,000 more.

National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)

Sidewalks are an essential component of the urban environment and serve as key corridors for people, goods, and commerce. In accordance with ADA accessibility guidelines, sidewalks should be provided on all streets in urban areas.



Sidewalks are a long-term community investment.

Congress for New Urbanism - Social Benefits of Walkable Places (2021)

1. Promotes active living, for longer and better lives
2. Improves happiness and mental health
3. Reduces obesity and chronic disease
4. Fosters social interaction
5. Saves lives on the street
6. Tends to reduce crime
7. Enhances "sense of place" and community identity
8. Broadens universal accessibility and encourages inclusiveness
9. Supports cultural initiatives
10. Promotes a vibrant urban experience

Common Questions

Do I have to pay for the installation of sidewalks?

Unlike many communities, property owners will not be individually assessed for the repair or installation of sidewalks in Sun Prairie.

Will I have to remove snow?

Yes, property owners will be required to remove snow on sidewalks that front or adjoin your property within 24 hours of a snow event. However, if a shared use path is installed, the City will provide snow removal services.

Will trees be taken down to install sidewalks?

The City is committed to maintaining a healthy urban tree canopy and will make every effort to leave trees undisturbed. Some trees and other plants within the right of way may be removed if they inhibit the ability of contractors to install sidewalks. Trees planted close to property boundaries may be removed and replaced if they impede safe installation of sidewalks.

Will sidewalks be installed on my property?

Sidewalks are installed on publicly dedicated land called the public right of way. A right-of-way is dedicated for streets and sidewalks when the neighborhood was originally platted, and developed, to ensure there is sufficient space for transportation infrastructure like roads and sidewalks.

Do Sun Prairie residents want sidewalks?

In a 2018 community survey 55% of respondents said Sun Prairie should install sidewalks as part of all street reconstruction projects. In a 2024 community survey about transportation safety respondents identified a lack of sidewalks and safe crosswalks as two of the top three safety concerns in Sun Prairie.