

# Proposed Amendments

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Chapter 40 Sidewalk Network Ordinance  
October 2024



PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT

# Amendment Process Timeline

## Feedback from Constituents

Over the last year Planning Commission, City Council, stakeholders and the public have requested changes to the existing sidewalk rules

## Planning Commission & Planning Department Collaboration

The last several weeks have been spent working on amendments to respond to the feedback provided

## Presentation of draft revisions

- Planning Commission to open public comment period
- Establish public hearing date on November 14

## Public meetings to present draft revisions

Oct. 22 – Nov. 2 (in-person and virtual)

## Planning Commission Consideration

Nov. 14

## City Council Quality of Life Committee

Dec. 2

## City Council Consideration

Dec. 11

# Sidewalks are Typically Required

In general, Sidewalks are required where a permit for construction or land development is required.

The City's goal is to provide a safe, comfortable, and accessible sidewalk network for all residents.

# The Importance of Sidewalks

The City of Houston requires sidewalks to enhance the walkability of our city and improve safety and accessibility for all Houstonians.

# A Brief History

- 1990s** Public Works begins enforcing sidewalk requirements
- 2020** Planning & Development begins reviewing sidewalks
- 2023** Amendment to incorporate fee-in-lieu of sidewalk construction
- 2024** Considered updates to the existing sidewalk ordinance

# 2024 Proposed Sidewalk Amendments

## The overarching goals of the redraft were to:

- Simplify the ordinance to eliminate confusion and redundancy
- Streamline the application process for applicants and staff
- Expand the sidewalk construction exemption criteria for single-family resident construction to address items such as:
  - Unconnected sidewalk segments in neighborhoods
  - Locations where construction of sidewalks is infeasible
  - Neighborhoods with pedestrian trails
  - Lots one acre or larger

# What Triggers Sidewalk Requirements

(no proposed changes)

- New single-family residential home (SFR)
- New commercial development
- Repairing or replacing 20+ feet of sidewalk
- New sidewalk permits

- New parking lots
- Pedestrian route for off-site parking
- New, expansion or reconstruction of existing roadway
- Removal of existing sidewalk

# Exception Criteria

# Sidewalk Construction Exceptions

## Single-family Residential Only

### Existing Exceptions

- Area has approved pedestrian trails
  - Kingwood (approved)
  - 4th Ward (exempt)

### New Exceptions

- Deed restrictions prohibit sidewalks
- Lot is 1 acre or larger
- No sidewalks on block face and across street (except near schools, libraries, community centers)
- Ditches make sidewalks infeasible

# Sidewalk Construction Exceptions

## All Projects – Commercial and Residential

### Existing Exceptions

- Site has existing sidewalk that meets minimum width
- Street is grade-separated freeway
- Street is undeveloped
- Cost is disproportional

### Modifications

- Projects that require sidewalk modification
- Existing obstruction

# Sidewalk Fund

## FY 2023

March – June 2023

- No ordinance change \$237,711
- With ordinance change \$74,059 (31%)

## FY 2024

July 2023 – June 2024

- No ordinance change \$1,023,150
- With ordinance change \$358,103 (35%)



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# Learn more about the Sidewalk Amendments

Visit the Sidewalk Amendment page at  
**[bit.ly/SW-amend-10-24](https://bit.ly/SW-amend-10-24)**

Email us at **[planningdepartment@houstontx.gov](mailto:planningdepartment@houstontx.gov)**

Or call us at **832-393-6600**

# Thank You



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