

Mt. Lebanon, PA

Sidewalk Expansion Policy

Final Draft for Adoption by Commission

Adopted 8/26/2013

Amended – 8/22/2023

Amended – 11/11/2025

Background & Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for residents to request support from the municipality to install new sidewalks along municipally maintained streets to enhance Mt. Lebanon's walkability. Mt. Lebanon prides itself on being a walkable community. At the time of the adoption of the 2013 Sidewalk Expansion Policy, only 65% of streets were equipped with sidewalks. That figure today has increased to only 68%. This policy addresses the other 32 percent of the municipally maintained streets without sidewalks by providing a process for adding sidewalks along these streets. This policy aligns with the 2023 Comprehensive Plan which emphasizes the community's walkability and the safety of residents as critical objectives. A complete and safe walking network throughout the community encourages and promotes walkability. This policy seeks to lower the barrier for property owners to install new sidewalks and clarify the process for sidewalk maintenance.

Property owners on municipally maintained streets without sidewalks may petition the municipality for financial support to install new sidewalks. Moreover, the municipality will continue to require sidewalk installation and replacement (at owner expense) in accordance with the provisions of Chapter XV, Streets and Sidewalks, Part 2, Sidewalk Construction, Repair and Maintenance, of the Mt. Lebanon Code and Home Rule Charter. Likewise, property owners may continue to install sidewalks without Municipal support according to current building codes and permitting procedures. Nothing in this policy is a waiver of these provisions.

Priority for new sidewalk installation will be given to streets that:

- 1) Are proximate to public assets and common community destinations including, but not limited to: schools, parks and recreation areas, business districts, places of worship, public transportation stops, hospitals, post offices, or other government facilities; and
- 2) 100 percent of the affected property owners agree to accept the new sidewalks, construction cost sharing, maintenance and replacement. Sidewalks will not normally be installed without 100% participation from the abutting owners. An agreement will normally be required before the Municipality will proceed.

I. Sidewalk Expansion Procedure:

From time to time, at their discretion, the Commission may direct the Municipal Engineer to conduct Type, Size, and Location analyses on certain streets to be considered for the installation of sidewalks. The Engineer's report shall be given to the Mobility Board and the Commission. The Mobility Board shall prioritize the street segments and provide an annual list to the Planning Office in conjunction with the production of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

For Residents on Streets already listed in the CIP: Residents of streets appearing in the most recent Capital Improvement Program prioritization list may submit petitions or add their names/addresses to an existing petition for sidewalk installations on their street.

For Residents on Streets not appearing on the CIP list: Residents on streets that are not listed in the most recent Capital Improvement Program prioritization list who wish to seek Municipal assistance with the installation of a new sidewalk may use the following procedure:

1. A property owner or group of property owners may request an initial project cost assessment for the installation of a sidewalk along their road segment. The group shall consist of at least 25% of the property owners along a given segment.
 - a. The initial request shall be made in writing to the Staff Liaison to the Mobility Board. The request shall include the following information:
 - i. Name, home address, phone number, and email address of the primary contact for the request.
 - ii. Name of street where a sidewalk is requested.
 - iii. House numbers and/or County lot and block numbers on the properties on which a sidewalk is requested.
 - iv. Narrative letter describing the need for a sidewalk on the requested street segment.
 - b. The Mobility Board shall review the request and determine if an engineering study is needed on the street segment. The Board may request the municipal manager authorize an engineering study to determine the best location for installation of a sidewalk on the requested street segment.
 - c. The Mobility Board will keep a running list of streets where studies have been recommended and their rankings according to the Performance Value system in Attachment A. The Board will present this list annually to the Planning Office as part of their Capital Improvement Program submissions.
 - d. The engineer will present the Commission a sidewalk plan for the street segment from nearest intersection to nearest intersection, even if the requested area is smaller than this length. The engineer shall also present a cost estimate which will include the project cost broken down per property or per street segment abutting the proposed sidewalk.

- e. The Commission will authorize the municipality to enter into a contract with property owners in the requested street segment for installation of sidewalks. The Commission may also utilize their powers in Chapter XV to order additional installation of sidewalks in accordance with the Engineer's Plan in order to facilitate greater sidewalk connectivity.

2. Project costs will be determined and divided between municipal and non-municipal sources.

- a. The non-municipal share will be assessed to the property owners abutting the improvements but may be paid by other sources. The Municipality may require the entire amount be paid before the Municipality will proceed with sidewalk installation.

b. The non-municipal share for property owners who sign a cost-sharing agreement will be 10% of the sidewalk construction cost including costs associated with sidewalk installation such as excavation, removal and replacement of driveways within the right-of-way, E&S controls, traffic controls, and mobilization costs. Relocation of private structures or landscaping shall not be considered part of the sidewalk construction cost and are addressed in Section I.2.d.

- c. Engineering and the cost of installing ADA sidewalk facilities will be the sole financial responsibility of the municipality.

- d. The cost of relocation of any existing private structures (such as retaining walls) or private landscaping located within the public right-of-way will be the sole responsibility of the property owner and will be separate from and added on in addition to the costs outlined in Section I.2.b. No damages or compensation will be paid by the Municipality.

- e. Property owners may avail themselves of a three (3) year payment option through the municipality. If a property is sold with an outstanding balance owed to the municipality, the remainder of the payment must be paid to the municipality at the time of sale. A lien will be placed on the property if this option is selected, which will remain until paid off in its entirety.

3. Based on anticipated project costs, property owners will indicate whether they wish to participate in the installation of the new sidewalk, along with the agreement to:

- a. The cost sharing arrangement identified above
- b. The ongoing maintenance of the sidewalk (I.e., snow removal)

- c. Provisions for maintenance and replacement of existing sidewalks in accordance with the Sidewalk Assessment Program.
 - d. Waive damage claims and claims for compensation, including those based on removal of items from the project.
 - e. Grant permanent or temporary easements.
4. Projects will be ranked by the Mobility Board in the order as defined by the attached scoring criteria and as set forth in Attachment A. The Commission, in designating funds through the Capital Improvement and Budget processes, may choose at their discretion which segments to complete on an annual basis.

II. Sidewalk Standards:

Sidewalk Details: Refer to Detail #7 of Appendix 5 of Chapter XVI, Subdivision and Land Development, in the Mt Lebanon Code and Home Rule Charter (attached). In general all sidewalks will be constructed of concrete, four inches thick over three inches of aggregate base. Sidewalk slabs placed over driveways will be wire reinforced concrete, six inches thick over three inches of aggregate base. Concrete slabs should measure four feet in width and five feet in lengths. The municipality does not install exposed aggregate, terrazzo, paver or stamped concrete finishes. All concrete sidewalks will be broom finished and the finish will be uniform with other sidewalks in surrounding area. The municipal engineer, when conducting the field assessment of each street will recommend the type, size, and location of the sidewalk installation. Depending on existing conditions, the engineer may recommend a type, size, or location that differs from the typical sidewalk detail provided in Chapter XVI.

Retaining walls: Retaining walls if required will be constructed of concrete split faced block materials of a style and color selected by the municipality with input from the property owner- but the new walls will be uniform along the right of way. Any retaining walls constructed by the municipality as part of the sidewalk installation will be the responsibility of the property owner to maintain, and an agreement must be recorded if the Municipality so desires.

III. Scope of Policy:

The purpose of this Policy is to assist the Commission in evaluating, selecting, and implementing options relative to sidewalks by outlining the underlying philosophies and processes to be followed by the Commission. It is intended that this Policy provide a meaningful framework to accomplish these objectives while remaining flexible to allow the Commission to be responsive to future changes in the economic environment, budgets, overall direction and the competing needs of residents, the community and the Municipality. Accordingly, the Commission may adjust or disregard one or more of the provisions listed herein, or employ other considerations not listed

herein, where the Commission has determined that such action is desirable in its discretion. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the Commission may require additional consents, easements, and funding regardless of anything contained herein to the contrary. The decision to proceed or not to proceed with any sidewalk program is always within the discretion of the Commission, is subject to any conditions the Commission may choose to attach to any decision, and no decision to proceed with one program will serve as precedent for any other program. This Policy may be discontinued at any time and for any reason, and remains subject at all times to having available funds, which the Commission is under no obligation to provide or to allocate to any particular project.

ATTACHMENT A

Scoring Methodology Attachment

Based on the Mt. Lebanon Street Performance Study (SPS)

1993 Sidewalk Task Force Report amended by ESB and Staff 2023

The SPS matrix was developed to quantify, numerically, certain evaluation criteria which will enable streets to be prioritized as to their possible need for sidewalks. An updated, simplified criteria has been developed which includes the following factors:

1. ROAD TYPE

Arterial – streets which carry traffic between communities or large neighborhoods.

Collectors – streets which distribute traffic between Local streets and Arteries or to serve as neighborhood access corridors.

Local – streets which provide access to abutting land use.

2. ROAD SPEED

Based on posted speed limit

3. SIDEWALK COMPLETION POST-PROJECT

4. PUBLIC FACILITY DISTANCE FACTOR

Each criterion was assigned a value. Each street or segment of a street was evaluated and assigned a value for each of the criteria included in the study. Values could then be multiplied together to view an overall performance value for a street or a segment of a street. Streets with the largest numerical totals would be at the highest priority for consideration of sidewalks.

EXPLANATION OF EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR PERFORMANCE VALUE

#1 Road Type – the road type classification is based on an expansion of a nationwide agreement of three basic functional classifications for streets in urban areas. The basic functional classifications are for streets in urban areas. Road types are maintained by the Public Works Department and are listed annually in the Capital Improvement Plan. The values for these evaluation criteria are as follows:

- a. Arterial = 3
- b. Collector = 2
- c. Local = 1
- d. Cul-de-sac or dead end = 0.5

#2 2. Road Speed: In addition to the type of road, the posted speed plays a significant role in walkability. The values for these evaluation criteria are as follows:

- a. > 26 miles per hour = 2
- b. < 25 miles per hour = 1

#3 Complete Sidewalks: Uninterrupted sidewalks provide a continuous pedestrian path, maximum effect for minimum expenditure, and balanced aesthetics. The values will be based on the percentage of road segment that will have completed sidewalk post-project. This will boost the priority projects that will cover the majority of a street that currently does not have sidewalks installed, as well as completing existing sidewalks with missing segments. The values for these evaluation criteria are as follows:

- a. 0 - 25% existing sidewalk installed = 1
- b. 26-50% existing sidewalk installed = 2
- c. 51-75% existing sidewalk installed = 4
- d. 76+% existing sidewalk installed = 5

- #4 Public Facility Distance Factor – from a public facility* a value has been assigned in 200 foot intervals. These ranges are measured along the street center line to the center of a street segment establishing the length of that segment. The value shall be determined by the nearest endpoint of the newly installed sidewalk to the nearest public facility. The values for these evaluation criteria are as follows:

<u>Distance Range</u>	<u>Value</u>
0' - 200'	= 10
201' - 400'	= 9
401' - 600'	= 8
601' - 800'	= 7
801' - 1000'	= 6
1001' - 1200'	= 5
1201' - 1400'	= 4
1401' - 1600'	= 3
1601' - 1800'	= 2
1801' - above	= 1

*The following public facilities should be considered in the evaluation:

Schools (including public, private, elementary, and high schools), Post Offices, St. Clair Hospital, Business districts (any property zoned commercial or with the Mixed Use or Office Boutique Overlay), Places of Worship and Parks and Recreation areas as defined in the 2022 Parks Master Plan.

EXAMPLE:

The following are examples of how a street performance value is determined:

Street A is a collector road with no existing sidewalk and has a posted speed limit of 25 mph. The road is not a dead end or cul-de-sac and is 500' from the nearest public facility. 4 of 10 property owners have agreed to project installation.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

DESCRIPTION	VALUE
#1. Road type: Collector	= x2
#2. Road Speed: 25mph	= x1
#3. Complete Sidewalks: 40% post-project completion	= x2
#4. Public Facility Distance Factor (500')	= x8
Total performance value (multiply each value together)	= 32

Street B is a collector road with 60% completed sidewalk. There is a posted speed limit of 35 mph. The road is not a dead end or cul-de-sac and is 1500' from the nearest public facility, and the 4 property owners to reach 100% completion have agreed to project installation.

DESCRIPTION

#1 Road Type: Collector	= x2
#2 Road Speed 35mph	= x2
#3 Complete Sidewalk: 100% completion	= x5
#4 Public Facility Distance Factor (1500')	= x3
Total performance value	= 60

Street C is a local road with no existing sidewalk. The posted speed limit is 25 mph, and is a dead end and the nearest public facility is 2500' away. Property owners for 60% of the road length have agreed to installation.

DESCRIPTION

#1 Road Type: Local	= x1
#2 Road Speed 25 mph	= x1
#3 Interrupted Sidewalk: 60% completion	= x4
#4 Public Facility Distance Factor (2500')	= x1
Total performance value	= 4

¹ \$9.50 per square foot based on 2023 figures. The cost per square foot will be adjusted annually based on the construction segment of the local CPI.

AGREEMENT

TO THE COMMISSION OF MT. LEBANON, PENNSYLVANIA:

We, the undersigned, being all the owners of record of the property located at (*add Street Address*) (the “Property”), and intending to be legally bound, do hereby agree to the following:

1. We agree to the installation of sidewalks within the street right-of-way or on sidewalk easements along or abutting the Property (the “Project”), and hereby accept the same.
2. We understand that we may be asked to dedicate a permanent sidewalk easement to Mt. Lebanon for its use in constructing the Project, and that the Project will not go forward without such an easement.
3. We agree that this document serves as a temporary construction license to Mt. Lebanon to enter onto and use the Property in constructing the Project if the Project goes forward.
4. We agree that Mt. Lebanon may trim or remove any tree, shrub or other obstruction that is on or near the route of the Project without compensation. We waive any right we have to damages as a result of the Project.
5. We further understand that the location of the Project will be determined by Mt. Lebanon at its discretion.
6. We understand that if the Project occurs and a sidewalk is constructed, we will be solely responsible for the sidewalk. This responsibility includes: prompt snow and ice removal; repair and replacement thereof at our cost; the obligation to keep the sidewalk clear of obstructions including hedges; and compliance with construction standards for private driveways that are reconstructed through areas which have existing sidewalks. The entire responsibility for the Project once installed will be ours notwithstanding fact that Mt. Lebanon constructs, pays for, or contributes to the payment for the Project.

7. We understand that a lien may be placed against the Property for a share of the required non-municipal portion of the cost of the Project unless the non-municipal portion has been fully funded.
8. Finally, we understand that Mt. Lebanon reserves the right to proceed or not to proceed with the Project, in its sole discretion.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have duly executed this Agreement this ____ day of _____. 20__.

WITNESS

PROPERTY OWNER

WITNESS

PROPERTY OWNER