

# Repair and Funding Approaches



## Repair Approaches

### Property Owner-Led

RCW (35.68) allows the City to place the burden of repairing and replacing damaged sidewalks on the abutting property owner.

- ◆ **PROS:**
  - ◇ Schedule flexibility for the property owner.
  - ◇ May hire their preferred contractor and combine the job with home repairs.
- ◆ **CONS:**
  - ◇ Current City code has no mechanism for enforcing the repair of the sidewalk.
  - ◇ Sidewalk repair can be costly for homeowners.
  - ◇ May have difficulty finding a contractor willing to do the work for 1 or 2 panels.
  - ◇ May need to address tree roots and/or replace trees. (All)



### City-Led

The City repairs the sidewalk in-house or hires an outside contractor to make the repairs, and then bills the abutting property owner.

- ◆ **PROS:**
  - ◇ Offers economy of scale.
  - ◇ May be a timelier way to address the most deficient sidewalk panels.
  - ◇ City could prioritize areas based on scope of damage or routes to school and spread out over several years.
- ◆ **CONS:**
  - ◇ City staff would need to develop, implement, and track the program.
  - ◇ May require more staff if work is done in-house.
  - ◇ Hiring an outside contractor requires a Request For Bids (RFB).
  - ◇ May involve billing and attempting to collect funds from property owners.
  - ◇ May have to lien or write-off unpaid bills.

### Partnership Model

The property owner obtains an agreement with the City; the City repairs the sidewalk and bills the property owner at a reduced cost.

- ◆ **PROS:**
  - ◇ Reduced direct cost for the property owner.
  - ◇ Reduced burden for the property owner.
- ◆ **CONS:**
  - ◇ City staff would need to develop, implement, and track the program.
  - ◇ May involve billing and attempting to collect funds from the property owners
  - ◇ May have to lien or write-off unpaid bills

**Example from Sedro-Woolley:** Property owner obtains a no-cost permit & signs a contract with the City for the repairs. City removes damaged panels at no cost and hires a 3rd party contractor to install new sidewalk panels. City sends an invoice to the property owner for the installation of the new panels, due in 30 days.



## Potential Funding Approaches

### City Funding Options

- ◆ **General Fund Allocations:** Dedicated sidewalk maintenance funding in budget.
- ◆ **Transportation Benefit District (TBD) Revenues:** If a TBD is established, sidewalk repairs could be a funded priority.
- ◆ **Real Estate Excise Taxes (REET):** Can be allocated for infrastructure improvements, including sidewalks.
- ◆ **Voter-Approved Tax Levy:** An example is the City of Bothell, which passed Proposition 1: Levy for Safe Streets and Sidewalks, a 9-year levy that was partially used to repair or replace sidewalks.
- ◆ **Washington State Grants:** Programs like the Safe Routes to School grants can provide funding for pedestrian safety projects.
- ◆ **Sales and Use Tax**
- ◆ **Vehicle Licensing Fees:** Shoreline created a Transportation Benefit District (TBD). In 2018 authorized an additional \$20 in vehicle license fees to fund sidewalk repair and maintenance.
- ◆ **Bonds**
- ◆ **Impact Fees**

### Cost Sharing w/ Property Owners

- ◆ **Local Improvement Districts (LIDs):** Property owners collectively contribute to sidewalk improvements in designated areas.
- ◆ **City-Subsidized Repair Programs:**
  - ◇ The city provides the labor and materials for the repair, then bills the abutting property owner for the total cost of the repairs, typically at a lower cost than if the property owner had to hire their own contractor.
  - ◇ The city provides the labor for the sidewalk repairs at no cost, with the understanding that the abutting property owner would pay for the supplies.
  - ◇ The City provides a rebate or grant after the property owner completes the repairs.

