



ENGINEERING DIVISION
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING PATHWAYS

Q: When did the City make the decision to provide pathways on arterial roads in Brookfield?

A: The City of Brookfield first evaluated the need for pedestrian and bicycle facilities in 1986 and adopted a plan to provide these facilities on all arterial roads in Brookfield in 1987. This decision was reconfirmed in 2000 while developing the City's 2020 Master Plan. The decision was again confirmed in 2010 as part of the City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan. The City's Five Year Capital Improvement Plan has continued to include pathways.

Q: How has the City been implementing this plan?

A: At first this plan was administered piecemeal. As development occurred the City required developers to construct pathways in front of their development. This led to a segmented pathway system that was not continuous, making use of it difficult. Since the early 2000's following adoption of the 2020 Master Plan, the City began constructing pathways in longer segments, linking segments with one another to make a more continuous system.

Q: Who favors these paths?

A: The City has conducted vision sessions as part of the aforementioned planning processes and bike paths and sidewalks were identified as being desirable in the community. City surveys in 2007, 2012, and 2022 have also confirmed the general desire for and favorable rating of pathways.

Q: Why are pathways needed?

A: Pathways along arterial roads are needed for several reasons:

- Pedestrians and other non-motorized vehicle users are safer using pathways than roadways, allowing these modes of transportation to be separate from vehicles
- Federal law requires pathways along roadways that are reconstructed using federal funds
- Pathways are key to promoting walkable communities which improves
 - quality of life
 - sustainability, resource responsibility and environmental stewardship
 - physical fitness, health and wellness
 - recreational activity and social interaction

Q: How does the City decide where to construct these pathways?

A: The City uses several criteria for prioritizing the location of pathways.

- Link schools, parks, commercial centers to neighborhoods
- Fill in gaps of existing pathways
- Include paths with major road projects
- Respond to requests from citizens

Q: Who pays for the pathway construction?

A: The City pays for pathways using developer fees and city taxes. When it can, the City seeks federal and state grant funds to offset local costs. A portion of the pathways, the Greenway Corridor, is funded from revenue obtained from cell tower leases.

Pathways Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who is responsible for maintenance of the pathway?

A: The City is responsible for maintenance of the pathways. The City currently constructs the pathways, repairs and replaces them when needed, and plows snow.

It should be noted that property owners adjacent to the pathway still need to maintain the turf to the edge of the road as they were required to do so before the pathway was constructed. It is not sufficient just to cut grass to the edge of the pathway.

Q: What uses are allowed on the pathway?

A: Pathways in Brookfield are multi-purpose and can essentially be used for all purposes except motorized vehicles. They can be used by pedestrians, bicycles, skateboarders, roller skaters, in-line skaters, people pushing strollers, etc. It is recommended that avid cyclists use the edge of the road and most will since they prefer that space anyway.

Q: What considerations go into the design of the pathway?

A: The City evaluates a number of factors relating to the design of the pathway. The first consideration is the type of land use adjacent to the pathway. If it is commercial, the city generally will install concrete walks. If it is residential, the City may install asphalt. Exceptions to this exist based on historic construction of pathways. The City will also try to use concrete when adjacent to urban cross section streets (curb and gutter) and asphalt when adjacent to rural cross section roadways (ditches). Again, there are exceptions to this “rule”.

The City also considers mature specimen trees that may be impacted by the pathway. Where possible, the path will meander to minimize impacts on this landscaping. This is not always possible since there are many other factors that affect the placement of the pathway. Other factors include providing proper drainage, cross slope of the pathway, and proximity to the road, utility poles, utility boxes, hydrants and other obstacles in the right of way.

Q: Will the City preserve objects placed in the right of way that are under private ownership?

A: There are things in the right of way that are privately owned that have been placed there without a permit such as fences, landscaping, retaining walls, underground lawn sprinkler systems, invisible dog fences, lamp posts, etc. These objects are considered encroachments in the right of way and are subject to being removed. If the City is aware of these objects, you will be informed to move them if you would like to save them. Pathways are not designed around these encroachments.

Q: Will construction of the pathway adjacent to my property affect its value?

A: There is no evidence to suggest that placement of a pathway adjacent to your property increases or decreases the value of your property. It is purely an issue of preference, and as stated above it appears more people favor pathways along arterial roadways than oppose them.

Q: Who can I speak with about pathways if I have further questions?

A: Please contact the City’s Engineering Division for questions about planning, design or construction of the pathways. Maintenance of the pathways is provided by the Park, Recreation and Forestry department.