

Local Road Directed Special Assessment

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is a local road Directed Special Assessment (DSA)?

A local road Directed Special Assessment (DSA) is a special fee levied by the City of Farmington Hills on properties that will benefit from pavement reconstruction on the streets in their neighborhood.

Why is my neighborhood being required to participate in a local road DSA?

The City of Farmington Hills ranks the pavement conditions of neighborhood streets on an ongoing basis. Roads that are rated at or below the City's minimum pavement standards are considered to be past their useful lives. Roads in very poor condition need to be reconstructed before they become a public health and safety risk and a detriment to the community at large.

Why does the City use the DSA process instead of a millage like other communities?

When Farmington Hills was established, most of the community was still rural and had predominantly gravel roads. Many subdivisions did not want paved roads at that time. As a result, the special assessment language was specifically crafted as part of the City Charter to allow residents a fair and equitable process of determining when roads, and other infrastructure components, would be improved. This way, the property owners that directly benefit from the improvement pay for the improvement.

Who rates the pavement condition of the City's roads?

The pavement is rated by members of the City's engineering staff, who are specially trained in evaluating pavement conditions. The City uses the services of an outside civil engineering consultant to review these ratings for quality assurance and quality control.

Is my neighborhood a candidate for a local road DSA?

The City has created a five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for local streets falling at or below the minimum pavement condition. The five-year CIP can be found on the City website at www.fhgov.com. Click on the Government tab, then click on Department of Public Services, then click on Roads. The five-year CIP is a planning document that functions as a guideline; information contained in the CIP can change. The priority level of a project may move up or down based on funding or how fast the pavement is deteriorating.

How are the projects in the five-year CIP prioritized?

Projects are prioritized in the CIP based on a number of considerations. These include pavement conditions, the number of properties within a district, proximity to schools, public interest, an organized homeowner association, and the amount of time and money the City is currently spending to maintain the streets in a specific neighborhood.

How is the pavement type chosen for the new road?

The City consults with an outside geotechnical engineer to get a recommendation on pavement type and design. Core samples of pavement and soil are evaluated to reach a decision on which roads are at the stage where they need to be reconstructed.

I see that my neighborhood is listed in the five- year CIP. Can I get an estimate of the cost for my special assessment?

The City's Engineering Division develops overall cost estimates for each project listed in the five-year CIP. Exact costs for each lot are not calculated, but the Engineering Division can provide a reasonable estimate of cost for a specific lot, if requested. Contact the Engineering Division at 248-871-2560.