

The City of Farmington Hills Neighborhood Street Maintenance and Reconstruction Program

The City of Farmington Hills is responsible for the operation and maintenance of approximately 250 miles of neighborhood streets. These streets have a life cycle, just like any other part of the City's infrastructure (the physical structures needed to operate the City such as roads, sewers, and utility systems). When a street reaches the end of its life cycle, it needs to be reconstructed to protect the health and safety of residents.

The Department of Public Services assesses pavement conditions on a two-year cycle. This Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) evaluates streets on a ten-point scale, with "10" being a new street and "1" being a street in need of complete rehabilitation. The City's Pavement Management Plan takes into consideration not only pavement conditions, but also maintenance treatments that have been undertaken and available funding.

Street Maintenance

Neighborhood street maintenance is provided by the City's Department of Public Services as part of the normal course of business. Under the City's Pavement Management Plan, maintenance practices such as patching or crack and joint sealing are used when needed to maximize the life of the pavement in a cost-effective manner.

Street Reconstruction

Reconstruction is necessary when pavement has reached the end of its useful life. City Council has adopted a policy stating that streets with an average PASER rating of 2.75 need to be reconstructed. To keep these streets as safe as possible, the Department of Public Services will continue to provide temporary patching when needed. However, these streets in poor condition will become a priority in the City's Local Street Capital Improvement Plan (LSCIP) and will then be scheduled for reconstruction.

Chapter 25, section 25-2 of the City Charter specifically states, "The whole or any part of the cost or expense of any local street improvement shall be defrayed by special assessments upon the property especially benefited by the project." In addition, the City Charter states, "The cost of a neighborhood street reconstruction project may be borne by up to 20% by the city at large." In short, the cost of a neighborhood street reconstruction project shall be borne by the property owners who benefit from the project, and the City may only contribute up to 20% per City Charter.

Implementation of Local Street Reconstruction Directed Special Assessment Districts (SADs)

There are two options for implementing a local street reconstruction Directed Special Assessment.

Option 1

Property owners within a neighborhood having a PASER rating above 2.75 can circulate a petition and request that the streets be reconstructed. These petitions are then presented to City Council for review on an advisory basis. After evaluating these petitions along with additional project information, the City Council will make the decision whether to move forward with the reconstruction project.

Option 2

Property owners within a neighborhood having a PASER rating of 2.75 or lower are automatically moved into the City's Local Street Capital Improvement Plan (LSCIP) and scheduled for reconstruction. As stated in the City Charter, both options are paid for by the benefitting properties within the district, with the city at large paying for up to 20% of the project cost.

Financial Planning

The City Council understands that paying for local street reconstruction can be financially burdensome. For this reason, the City spreads the cost of these projects out over several years, depending on the overall project cost, with assessments placed annually on the tax bill. In addition, property owners can review the LSCIP on the City's website to see if their neighborhood is on the priority list and when reconstruction is scheduled. This enables property owners to become aware of the cost for the street reconstruction, often allowing several years of financial planning in advance to prepare for the assessment being levied.