



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Howard S. Lazarus, City Administrator
DATE: November 27, 2019
SUBJECT: Sidewalk Gap Prioritization Update

This memorandum is to update Council on recent staff efforts to update the criteria for prioritizing sidewalks gap filling projects. Staff drafted an update to the sidewalk gap prioritization system to incorporate some of the feedback received and create projects that are more successful and impactful. The changes include scoring and weighting that: favors strong community support or usage; more heavily weights safety; differentiates for a total lack of sidewalks on either side of the road as opposed to on just one side; and other modifications as described below.

Background

The City of Ann Arbor has approximately 435 miles of existing sidewalk, and 148 miles of gaps (as defined by any location in the public right-of-way adjacent to a street that does not have sidewalks). Staff has estimated that the cost to fill all of these gaps would be in the range of \$150 to \$220 million, in 2019 dollars.

Based on this volume of needs, staff recognized the need to prioritize the sidewalk gaps in the system. A prioritization system was developed by staff in 2017, and was based on the system used by the Capital Improvements Plan process. This system was eventually included as part of the Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force recommendations.

Initial Prioritization System

To standardize the effort and minimize subjectivity, it was decided that the prioritization system would be developed using criteria that would be as “automated” as possible. The system was drafted to use the existing wealth of data contained within the City’s Geographical Information System (GIS) and consequently cut down the amount of manual effort required by City staff for this massive task.

A group of City staff was convened, and developed a series of criteria that factored in the relative importance of constructing sidewalk at every gap in the City. These criteria included such factors as distance from various pedestrian generators, access to transit, citizen requests, pedestrian/

automobile incidents, and road classification. Understanding that not all these criteria are of equal importance, different weights were assigned to each criteria as well. The results of this effort can be found in Attachment A. A “heat map” of priority areas based on this initial scoring system is also attached (Attachment B).

Update of the Priority System

After using this priority system for a couple of years, more recent experience and feedback led staff to explore the need to update the criteria. This effort was undertaken in the summer/fall of 2019. The goal was to incorporate some of the feedback received and create projects that are more successful and impactful. After discussing possible changes, staff developed some recommendations. The major changes are summarized below:

- The “Requests” criteria was changed to “Evidence of Community Support”, and added a scoring factor to account for evidence of existing pedestrian usage (desire lines).
- “Classification of Adjacent Road” added a scoring factor to award more points to locations where there is no sidewalk on either side of a road.
- The “Pedestrian/Auto Crashes” category was modified to include a manual review and give points to locations where crashes were deemed to be related to the lack of a sidewalk.

The full version of the proposed criteria can be found in Attachment C. Staff also felt it was important to incorporate feedback by reevaluating the relative weights of the criteria. A comparison of the weighting of the old criteria with the proposed can be seen in the following table:

CRITERIA ITEM	Revised Weight	Previous Weight
Evidence of Community Support	100	40
Proximity to Schools	90	100
Pedestrian/Auto Crashes	80	30
Proximity to Transit	75	90
Proximity to Affordable Housing	60	60
Proximity to a Library, Govt. Office, Major Commercial Attractor, or Park	60	80
Classification of Adjacent Road	60	55
Near Term Opportunity in City's Non-Motorized Plan	40	30
City-Owned Parcels	40	35
Gap Length	30	35

Feedback & Next Steps

Staff sought feedback from the Transportation Commission on the proposed changes to the criteria at their October meeting, resulting in a couple of minor changes. Feedback is now being sought from City Council via this Memo. If you have any feedback or questions, please provide them to Sara Higgins by no later than Wednesday, Dec. 18. Thank you in advance for your feedback.

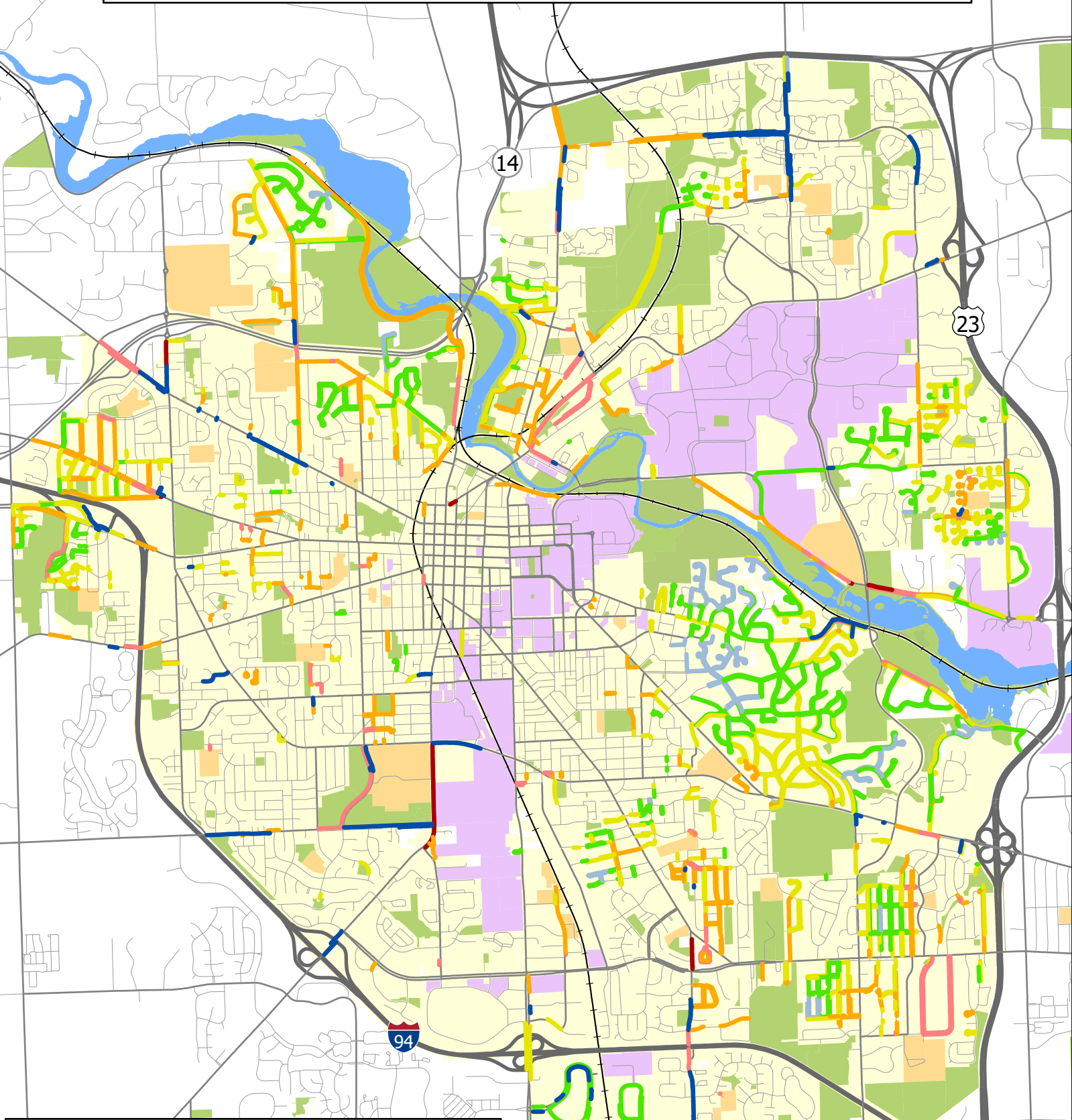
It should be noted that some of the proposed criteria revisions will require more manual effort than the old criteria. Once feedback is received, staff will adjust the prioritization criteria as needed, and update the model to reflect the revisions. A new map will be generated based on the updated prioritization, and this information will be used to help create projects for the 2022-2027 Capital Improvements Plan.

3 Attachments

cc: J. Fournier
C. Hupy
N. Hutchinson
M. Praschan
R. Hess

SCORING		Sidewalk Gap Prioritization			
1	Proximity to Schools (Weight 100)	1 Greater than ½ mile from a school	3 Greater than ¼ mile to ½ mile from a school	6 ⅛ mile to ¼ mile from a school	10 Less than ⅛ mile from a school
2	Proximity to Transit (Weight 90)	1 Greater than ¼ mile from an AAATA or school bus stop or train station	3 Greater than ⅛ mile to ¼ mile from an AAATA or school bus stop or train station	6 300 feet to ⅛ mile from an AAATA or school bus stop or train station	10 Less than 300 feet from an AAATA or school bus stop or train station
3	Proximity to Affordable Housing (Weight 60)	1 Greater than ½ mile from an affordable housing facility	3 Greater than ¼ mile to ½ mile from an affordable housing facility	6 ⅛ mile to ¼ mile from an affordable housing facility	10 Less than ⅛ mile from an affordable housing facility
4	Proximity to a Library, Government Office, Major Commercial Attractor, or Park (Weight 80)	1 Greater than ½ mile from a library, government office, major commercial attractor, or park	3 Greater than ¼ mile to ½ mile from a library, government office, major commercial attractor, or park	6 ⅛ mile to ¼ mile from a library, government office, major commercial attractor, or park	10 Less than ⅛ mile from a library, government office, major commercial attractor, or park
5	Classification of Adjacent Road (Weight 55)	1 Adjacent to a local street	6 Adjacent to an Urban Collector	10 Adjacent to an Arterial Street	
6	Requested By Citizen or Other Group (Weight 40)	0 No request	7 Requested by citizen or general citizen group	10 Requested by an individual or group which represents the barrier-free community	
7	Near-Term Opportunity in City's Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (Weight 30)	1 Not identified in Figure 5.1E. in Plan as a Near-Term Opportunity		10 Identified in Figure 5.1E Plan as a Near-Term Opportunity	
8	Gap Length (Weight 35)	1 Total length created by adjacent gaps is greater than 330 feet	5 Total length created by adjacent gaps is greater than 150 feet and less than 330 feet	10 Total length created by adjacent gaps is less than 150 feet	
9	City-Owned Parcels (Weight 35)	0 Not adjacent to a City-owned parcel	10 Adjacent to a City-owned parcel		
10	Pedestrian/Auto Incidents (Weight 30)	0 No pedestrian/automobile incidents within the past 5 years within 300 feet of gap	5 Within 300 feet of One (1) pedestrian/automobile incident within the past 5 years	10 Within 300 feet of more than 1 pedestrian/automobile Incident within the past 5 years	

Sidewalk Gaps -- Progress and Prioritization



Gap Priority

- Highest
- High
- Mid-High
- Mid-Low
- Low
- Lowest

New Sidewalks 2013-2019
(8.9 miles)

- Parks/Open Space
- Schools
- University



Scoring		Sidewalk Gap Prioritization v2.0				
1	Evidence of Community Support (Weight 100)	0 No requests	2 Single request	5 Petition signed by 25%-49% of affected residents OR a clear desire line	8 Petition signed by 50%-75% of affected residents OR requested by barrier-free group/SRTS committee	10 Petition signed by greater than 75% of affected residents
2	Proximity to Schools (Weight 90)	1 Greater than ½ mile from a school	3 Greater than ¼ mile to ½ mile from a school	6 ⅛ mile to ¼ mile from a school		10 Less than ⅛ mile from a school
3	Pedestrian/ Auto Crashes (Weight 80)	0 Zero to one pedestrian/automobile crashes within the past 5 years within 300 feet of gap			10 More than one pedestrian/automobile crash within the past 5 years within 300 feet of gap	
4	Proximity to Transit (Weight 75)	1 Greater than ¼ mile from an AAATA bus stop	3 Greater than ⅛ mile to ¼ mile from an AAATA bus stop	6 300 feet to ⅛ mile from an AAATA bus stop		10 Less than 300 feet from an AAATA bus stop
5	Proximity to Affordable Housing (Weight 60)	1 Greater than ½ mile from an affordable housing facility	3 Greater than ¼ mile to ½ mile from an affordable housing facility	6 ⅛ mile to ¼ mile from an affordable housing facility		10 Less than ⅛ mile from an affordable housing facility
6	Proximity to a Library, Government Office, Major Commercial Attractor, or Park (Weight 60)	1 Greater than ½ mile from a library, government office, major commercial attractor, or park	3 Greater than ¼ mile to ½ mile from a library, government office, major commercial attractor, or park	6 ⅛ mile to ¼ mile from a library, government office, major commercial attractor, or park		10 Less than ⅛ mile from a library, government office, major commercial attractor, or park
7	Classification of Adjacent Road (Weight 60)	1 Adjacent to a local street	4 Adjacent to an urban collector with existing sidewalk on one side	6 Adjacent to an urban collector with no sidewalk on either side	8 Adjacent to an arterial street with existing sidewalk on one side	10 Adjacent to an arterial street with no sidewalk on either side
8	Near Term Opportunity in City's Non-Motorized Plan (Weight 40)	1 Not identified in Figure 5.1E. in the Plan as a Near-Term Opportunity			10 Identified in Figure 5.1E in the Plan as a Near-Term Opportunity	
9	City-Owned Parcels (Weight 40)	0 Not adjacent to a City-owned parcel			10 Adjacent to a City-owned parcel	
10	Gap Length (Weight 30)	1 Total length of gap between adjacent sidewalks is greater than 330 feet		5 Total length of gap between adjacent sidewalks is greater than 150 feet and less than 330 feet		10 Total length of gap between adjacent sidewalks is less than 150 feet