

From: tmailhot@frontier.com
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Sidewalk Prioritization Plan
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I've been reviewing the Scorecard the City uses to assign a priority to each sidewalk segment in their sidewalk plan. One critical thing that is missing is any measure of actual use. It seems to me that a substandard or dangerous sidewalk that has heavy (or maybe even moderate) use should get priority over other areas where people do not walk today because there is no sidewalk. I agree that putting a sidewalk in an area where none exists may cause more usage, but to me that's a future benefit that should not score higher than protecting existing pedestrians who are using an existing unsafe sidewalk.

Some other thoughts about the scorecard:

- In the Safety area, the questions about speed limit and street classification are somewhat duplicative since it's normal for the speed limit to increase as the classification goes from Collector to Minor to Principal.
- In the Equity area I can see why all the questions are there, but in practice many of these attributes overlap each other. One way to handle this is to leave all 6 questions there but limit the point total to only 4 points. Sidewalk sections in different communities could earn the 4 points through different combinations of positive answers to the 6 questions.
- In the Proximity area I can't understand why being on the suggested route to schools map is only worth 1 point. These are sections that are almost guaranteed to have existing pedestrian traffic (of young kids!!). That should be worth at least 2 and probably 3 points.
- In the Proximity area, being within 1/4 mile of a park should only earn a point if the missing section either connects to the park or completes a connection to the park (connects to an existing sidewalk that connects to the park). I think a new section of sidewalk near a park that doesn't allow a pedestrian to walk all the way to the park isn't all that useful. That sort of duplicates the Connectivity area so maybe these two areas should be combined.
- In the Proximity area I could make the same argument about segments near transit stops that I made for segments around parks. I think segments that extend or fill gaps should be scored higher than free standing segments that happen to be near transit stops.
- In the Proximity area it's not clear to me if a segment within 1/4 mile of a light rail station (1 point) could get an additional point for being within 1/4 mile of a bus stop (since the light rail station will have a bus stop) and possibly yet an additional point for being along a street with transit stops. It's not clear if those conditions are cumulative or mutually exclusive. I think they should be mutually exclusive, that is,

any one sidewalk segment can score at most one total point if it fits some or all of these three conditions.

- In the Proximity area it would make sense to give a higher score to segments near heavily used bus stops compared to segments near lightly used stops (back to my original point about weighing existing use more than future use).

I think the City can do better.

Tom Mailhot