

Infrastructure Study Session: Answers to Preliminary Study Session Questions

How often are streets scheduled for repair, regular maintenance, and for cleaning?

When streets are overlaid (repaved), Street Maintenance does all prep work and asphalt repair prior to the street being overlaid. This includes repairing all failure areas and sidewalk/ curb and gutter repair. Street Maintenance also oversees and manages installation by contractors of ADA wheelchair ramps and some types of sidewalk/ curb and gutter repairs. Alleys are re-graded approx. every two to three years and brush is cut in alleys every summer at least once. Gravel shoulders are graded as needed, main arterial shoulders are maintained at least once a year. Street Maintenance also repairs all concrete and asphalt areas for the water, stormwater, and waste water sections as well as routine and scheduled street repair, crack sealing and preparation for street overlays.

Sidewalks are repaired by the Street section when any city maintenance crews repair water/storm/ sewer systems and the work affects the sidewalk and or curb and gutter. Sidewalks affected by trees on private property and are the responsibility of the property owner. When possible and as budget allows, some areas are selected on a priority worst case basis to be repaired. See the Walkable Community study materials for more information.

Sweeping occurs approximately every two to two-and-a-half months with extra effort during the fall leaf season. Extra effort is also taken to clean up the sand after snow and ice events. Crews patrol storm drains to clear leaves and prevent flooding during heavy rain fall events. The biggest obstacles to routine street cleaning include: parked vehicles, basket ball hoops placed in the street, and overgrown trees or brush hanging into the streets from private property.

Snow and ice control, sanding, plowing, and de-icing is performed on a priority basis. Main arterials, bridges, hills, bus routes, schools, and the hospital are the initial focus of effort. Work on secondary routes begins once the priority areas are completed. The city is divided into four sections and equal attention is given to each area.

Roadside vegetation is cut and mowed throughout the year and mowed at least twice during the spring/ summer. Areas not accessible by the mower are cut by hand by summer employees. Vegetation in the ROW is weed sprayed throughout the summer months. Tree trimming (and ensuring sight distance) is done throughout the year as needed. As discussed during the Code Enforcement session, property owners are responsible to maintain all areas adjacent and abutting the property to include sidewalks and trees encroaching into the street. Street Maintenance does trim trees for sweeper clearance at the curb to keep from damaging the sweeper or the tree. This also clears the

sidewalk for pedestrian passage. Street Maintenance does remove hazardous trees from the ROW when a major safety situation exists.

The Solid Waste section removes litter from the Right of Way (ROW) through out the City. The crew empties non-Waste Management contracted garbage cans, they also prepare and work all recycle program events.

Street Maintenance responds to vehicle accidents, fuel spills, and various other situations in addition to its regular work, both during regular work and after hours. Emergency situations to which the section responds include, but are not limited to: mud slides, water main breaks, flooding, snow and ice events, earthquake and any situation where property damage and lives area at risk.

Which repairs are scheduled for this community in the next six years?

A number of street and sidewalk repairs are planned as detailed in the Walkable Community study session.

There are no planned water utility infrastructure improvements in the 2007-2013 Water Utility CIP (Capital Improvement Program) budget. Installation and payment for infrastructure improvements to support development/redevelopment projects are typically paid by developers with latecomers' agreement to recoup their costs from future benefitting properties. Developers can request that City Council share some costs for such projects, such as the Harrington Square development has done.

For wastewater (sanitary sewer) we have already completed all necessary capacity improvement projects projected for the Highlands area. However, if very high density development occurs, improvements may be needed to the existing facility on Edmonds Ave. In such a case, it would probably take five years to finance, design, and construct improvements. More long-term (10 to 12-years), the City intends to begin replacement of aging infrastructure. Until then, there may be minor repair projects.

How do people report street repair issues?

Street repair issues can be reported by calling (425) 430-7400 or going to the City of Renton website and typing %Maintenance Service Request+into the search function in the top right corner of the main page.

What is the process for getting additional lighting on streets?

Additional lighting on streets can be requested by contacting the City's transportation division and requesting a traffic study. Contact information is in the Crime and Safety topic.

What would it take to put power lines underground?

Typically, it is a fairly easy process to put power lines underground. A selected area, which can be as small as a single business or residence, asks for the lines

to be put underground. Puget Sound Energy does the design work, and does the work of putting the lines underground. The property owner is responsible for digging all of the necessary trenching and restoring any landscaping or pavement after the project is completed. Time and cost estimates for completing a project vary, based upon the size of the project and the difficulty of the design and engineering work. Puget Sound Energy should be providing some rough estimates of cost and time before the next Task Force meeting.

Often, the biggest impediment to putting power lines underground is cost. Puget Sound Energy has worked with individual customers, who pay the cost of undergrounding the lines, and they have also worked with government agencies. Typically, government agencies do not bear the entire cost of putting power lines underground for a small area or neighborhood. Often there is little justification for all of the tax payers of a jurisdiction to pay for improvements that benefit only a few people. Most often, a government agency will establish the project with Puget Sound Energy and agree to pay for it, but create an LID (limited improvement district). LIDs are special taxing districts, where the area that receives improvements pays a tax that funds the improvements over time. Government could also fund, or partially fund, some of the trenching and restoration work.

Are there grants or other funding to support infrastructure improvements?

For transportation infrastructure there are no grants available for maintenance type activities and repairs. However, some of our larger projects in the Highlands area, such as Duvall Avenue widening and the future 3rd/4th corridor improvements, provide much needed support for street and sidewalk infrastructure. There are no grants available for water system infrastructure improvements to support new development or redevelopment projects. Grants are typically given to projects to protect health and safety, for example to repair failing water or sewer systems, and not for system improvements to promote development or redevelopment. There may be an opportunity to get low interest loans from the Public Works Trust Fund when its time to begin replacement projects.

How does the level of service provided to the Highlands compare to other neighborhoods?

All neighborhoods in the City are on the same cycle for regular maintenance. Repairs occur as needed, typically based upon reports made by residents or requests for service submitted by phone or email. Since the City shops are located just outside the boundary of the Highlands study area, it is in a unique position. Maintenance crews and City personnel drive through the Highlands on a daily basis, coming and going to the City shops. As a result, repair issues are noticed and reported sooner, resulting overall in more repairs being done in this neighborhood.