

Legislation Text

File #: 15-6708, Version: 1

Charlotte WALKS: Sidewalk Construction Ordinance Revisions

Action:

Adopt an ordinance amending the sidewalk construction requirements in Chapter 19 of the City Code.

Staff Resource(s):

Liz Babson, Transportation
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Explanation

- Charlotte WALKS, Charlotte's first comprehensive pedestrian plan, was unanimously adopted by City Council on February 27, 2017.
- City staff conducted extensive public outreach (30 public input events attended by over 1,000 people) to support the development of that plan.
- Community input revealed that gaps in the sidewalk network and back-of-curb sidewalks (i.e. lacking a buffer between pedestrians and moving cars) are primary concerns of the public. These issues are most problematic on thoroughfares which have higher volumes and speeds of traffic.
- The Charlotte WALKS plan directs city staff to develop amendments to the sidewalk construction requirements in Chapter 19 of the City Code in order to address these two key issues.
- These proposed ordinance revisions were developed in coordination with the City's Development Services Technical Advisory Committee and the Unified Development Ordinance Advisory Committee. These committees are a resource and a liaison between city/county staff, the development community, and neighborhood/advocacy groups.
- The revisions focus specifically on new development activity along thoroughfares, as these are the locations where poor sidewalk infrastructure presents the greatest challenge for pedestrian safety and comfort.
- The Chapter 19 ordinance revision will go into effect upon adoption, and will only apply to newly submitted items.

Public Comment

- On November 13, 2017, City Council received public comments on the proposed amendments. Nine speakers spoke in support of the Charlotte WALKS amendments, and none opposed.

Ordinance Revisions

Revisions to the current sidewalk construction requirements include:

- Implementing new triggers when substandard/back-of-curb sidewalk on thoroughfares will be required to be upgraded to current standards. Those triggers are tailored to:
 - The scale of new development activity, and
 - The width of the existing sidewalk and planting strip.
- A new requirement that anytime a significant portion (>30 feet) of sidewalk is removed or damaged, that portion must be reinstalled according to current standards.

- A new requirement that any new development which removes more than half of its sidewalk along a thoroughfare, shall be required to bring all sidewalk along that thoroughfare into compliance with current city standards.
- New language that prevents applicants from phasing development to avoid the city's sidewalk and drainage requirements.

Attachment(s)

Revised ordinance