

**MEMORANDUM**

September 14, 2022

TO: Transportation and Environment Committee

FROM: Glenn Orlin, Senior Analyst

SUBJECT: Sidewalk Program<sup>1</sup>

PURPOSE: Briefing

Councilmember Glass has requested a review of the programs that construct new sidewalks in Montgomery County. Department of Transportation (DOT) staff will lead the briefing; its PowerPoint is on ©1-20.

Staff anticipated to attend this worksession include:

Tim Cupples, Acting Deputy Director for Transportation Policy, DOT

Bob Gonzales, Manager, Sidewalk Program, DOT

Derek Gunn, Acting District Engineer, District 3, SHA (Mr. Gunn may have a designee attend in his stead)

The main project for funding new sidewalks is Sidewalk Program – Minor Projects, for which the Council has programmed \$21,958,000 in the Approved CIP. However, there are a host of other projects that fund sidewalks as part of their scope:

Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area Improvements

Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area Improvements: Purple Line

Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area Improvements: Veirs Mill/Randolph

Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area Improvements: Wheaton CBD

Franklin Avenue Sidewalk

Goldsboro Road Sidewalk and Bikeway

Oak Drive/MD 27 Sidewalk

Pedestrian Safety Program (including sidewalks built under Safe Routes to Schools)

Seven Locks Bikeway and Safety Improvements

Transportation Improvements for Schools

Tuckerman Lane Sidewalk

US 29 Pedestrian and Bikeway Improvements

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<sup>1</sup> Key word: #sidewalks

There are also shared use paths (a.k.a. sidepaths) which, by definition, are bikeways that double as sidewalks or walkways. CIP projects that fund shared use paths include:

Bikeway Program – Minor Projects

Bowie Mill Road Bikeway

Bradley Boulevard (MD 191) Improvements (which includes a shared use path and a sidewalk)

Capital Crescent Trail

Dale Drive Shared Use Path and Safety Improvements

Falls Road Bikeway and Pedestrian Facility

Good Hope Road Shared Use Path

Life Science Center Loop Trail

MacArthur Boulevard Bikeway Improvements

MD 355-Clarksburg Shared Use Path

Metropolitan Branch Trail

Norwood Road Shared Use Path

Sandy Spring Bikeway

Silver Spring Green Trail

Finally, there are road projects which have new sidewalks as part of their scope, including:

Burtonsville Access Road

East Gude Drive Roadway Improvements

Maryland/Dawson Extended

North High Street Extended

Observation Drive Extended

Summit Avenue Extended

White Flint West Workaround

State Highway Administration (SHA) staff will speak briefly about its program to construct new sidewalks along State highways in the County. The Draft FY23-28 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) includes funds for sidewalks or shared use paths along Forest Glen Road, Scott-Veirs Drive, and North Stonestreet Avenue, as well as contributions to the County's MD 355-Clarksburg Shared Use Path and Falls Road Bikeway and Pedestrian Facility projects.

***Council staff comments.*** DOT has well summarized the current program and processes by which new sidewalk projects are generated and prioritized. The key takeaway is that the demand for neighborhoods sidewalks far outstrips the resources available to fund them. DOT notes that of 337 requests in 2021, only 28 were met. DOT is about to introduce several process improvements to shorten the time from the initial request to the start of construction, which will deliver a funded sidewalk more quickly. But without more funding, DOT will not be able to build more sidewalks than it does now.

There is a concern about the proposed prioritization scheme. Slide 9 (©9) in the presentation states that requests will get a point score depending upon the distance from a major pedestrian generator (e.g., schools, transit stops, other pedestrian facilities) and the location of pedestrian accidents. Some further explication is required. For example, given the information on ©9, it can be interpreted that if a request is from an Equity Emphasis Area, then it would trump any other request, regardless of the distance to the aforementioned pedestrian generators and accidents.

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# THE SIDEWALK PROGRAM

Montgomery County Department of Transportation  
Division of Transportation Engineering





## The County's Sidewalk Funding includes . . .

- **Sidewalk Program** – Projects initiated by resident requests for sidewalk installation. Program follows process of community involvement with a comment period and public hearing. In addition to the review of area Pedestrian Master Plans, comments and testimony are used to guide decisions but do not constitute a vote. (Budget FY22 3.1M, FY23 4.3M, FY24 2.9M)
- **Safe Routes to Schools Program (SRTS)** - Projects are initiated by SRTS review of school walksheds. Public hearing is informational. Construction is facilitated by the Sidewalk Program. (Budget FY22 400K, FY23 900K, FY24 1.4M)
- **Vision Zero** – Projects are generated by review of high incident locations and missing links in existing networks of sidewalk. Construction is performed by the Sidewalk Program. (Budget FY22 1.4M, FY23 500K, FY24 500K)



# THE SIDEWALK PROGRAM

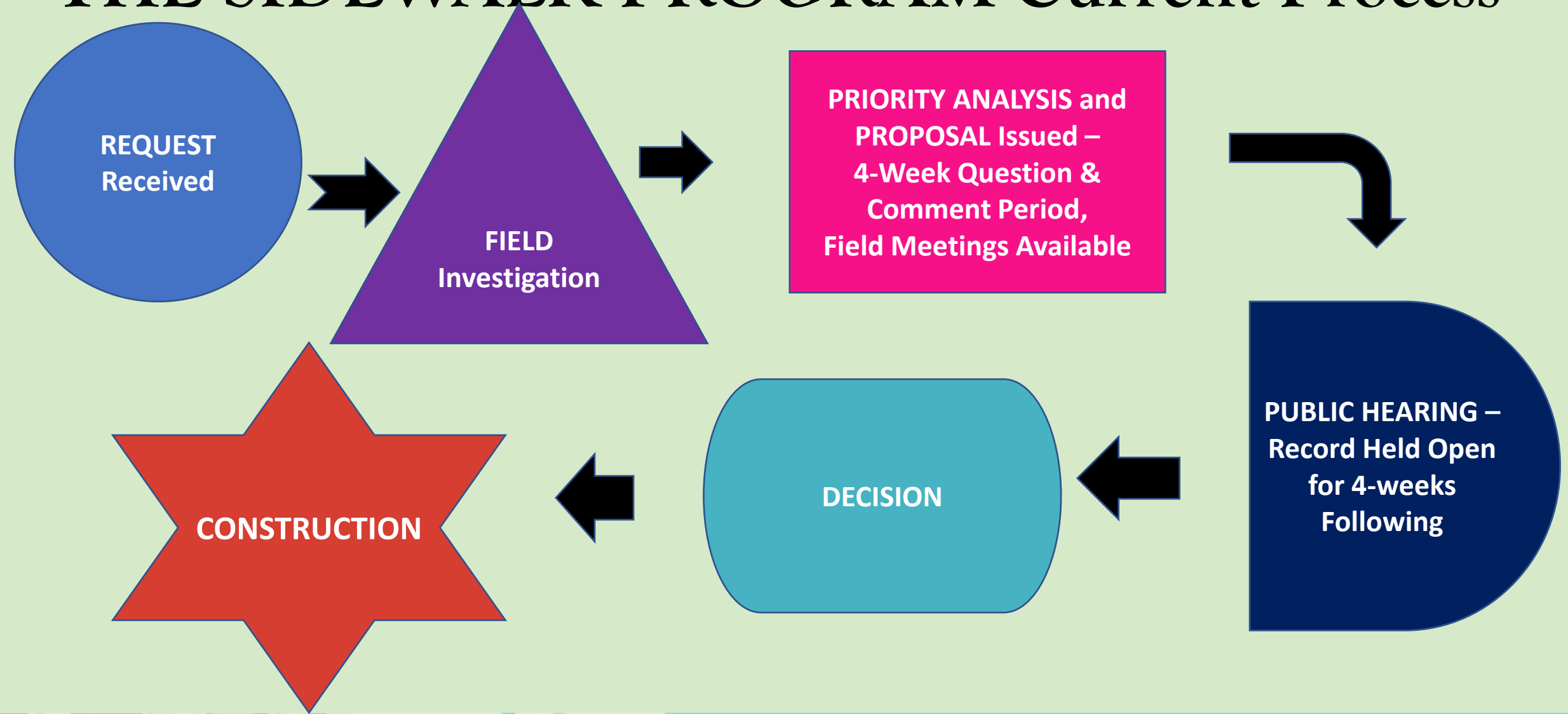
## Purpose & Goal

- Provides safer pedestrian access throughout Montgomery County in an expedient and cost-effective manner.
- Established to construct minor sidewalk projects to fill missing gaps in existing sidewalk networks
- Do not require engineered design plans. Utilize ADA standards.
- Sidewalks are typically installed within 9 to 12 months following the residents' receipt of a proposal.





# THE SIDEWALK PROGRAM Current Process



REQUEST  
Received

The Sidewalk Program is working hard to innovate and streamline our processes to save time and money and install more sidewalks faster.

Currently . . .

- Sidewalk Requests Received via Email & Regular Mail
- Requests Processed by Manually Retyping Request Information into Database & Creating GIS-Maps from scratch
- Residents Emailed Program to Check Status

TO REQUEST A SIDEWALK INSTALLATION PLEASE COMPLETE AND PRINT THIS FORM AND SEND TO:

Division of Transportation Engineering Services  
100 Edison Park Drive, 4th Floor  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878  
Attn: Sidewalks Program

REQUEST FORM FOR SIDEWALK INSTALLATION

Your Name:
Address:
Daytime Phone:
Email Address:
Where do you think a new sidewalk is needed? (Street name)
What are the limits of the new sidewalk? (Street name or a description of the beginning and ending locations)
On which side of the street should the sidewalk be constructed?
Please check any of the following existing roadway conditions which support sidewalk installation
<input type="checkbox"/> provide access to walking schools
<input type="checkbox"/> experience vehicular/pedestrian crashes
<input type="checkbox"/> connect to an existing network of sidewalks
<input type="checkbox"/> provide access for the disabled
<input type="checkbox"/> show evidence of a worn path
<input type="checkbox"/> provide access to pedestrian generators within a half mile radius, such as transit stops, libraries, parks, places of worship
<input type="checkbox"/> are identified in the Area Master Plan for sidewalk installation
Other useful information?

Req Enter/Update  
**Sidewalk** [Print Request Datasheet](#)

REQUEST NO: 9947  
REQUEST DATE: 3/25/2015  
STREET NAME: Colston Drive  
FROM: Grubb Road  
TO: Colston Place  
SIDE: Either  
LENGTH: 2110  
REQUESTOR: Amy Levner

LATITUDE: 38.991999  
LONGITUDE: -77.0541  
COMMENTS: Also requested by Amy Levner:  
- Colston Place  
- Colston Drive  
(logged in separate requests)  
ADDITIONAL Request: Megan Barbero, 2708 Blaine Drive.

CIP PROJ. NO: 506747  
EST. CCST:   
CIP PROGRAM: SIDEWALK  
FINAL COST:

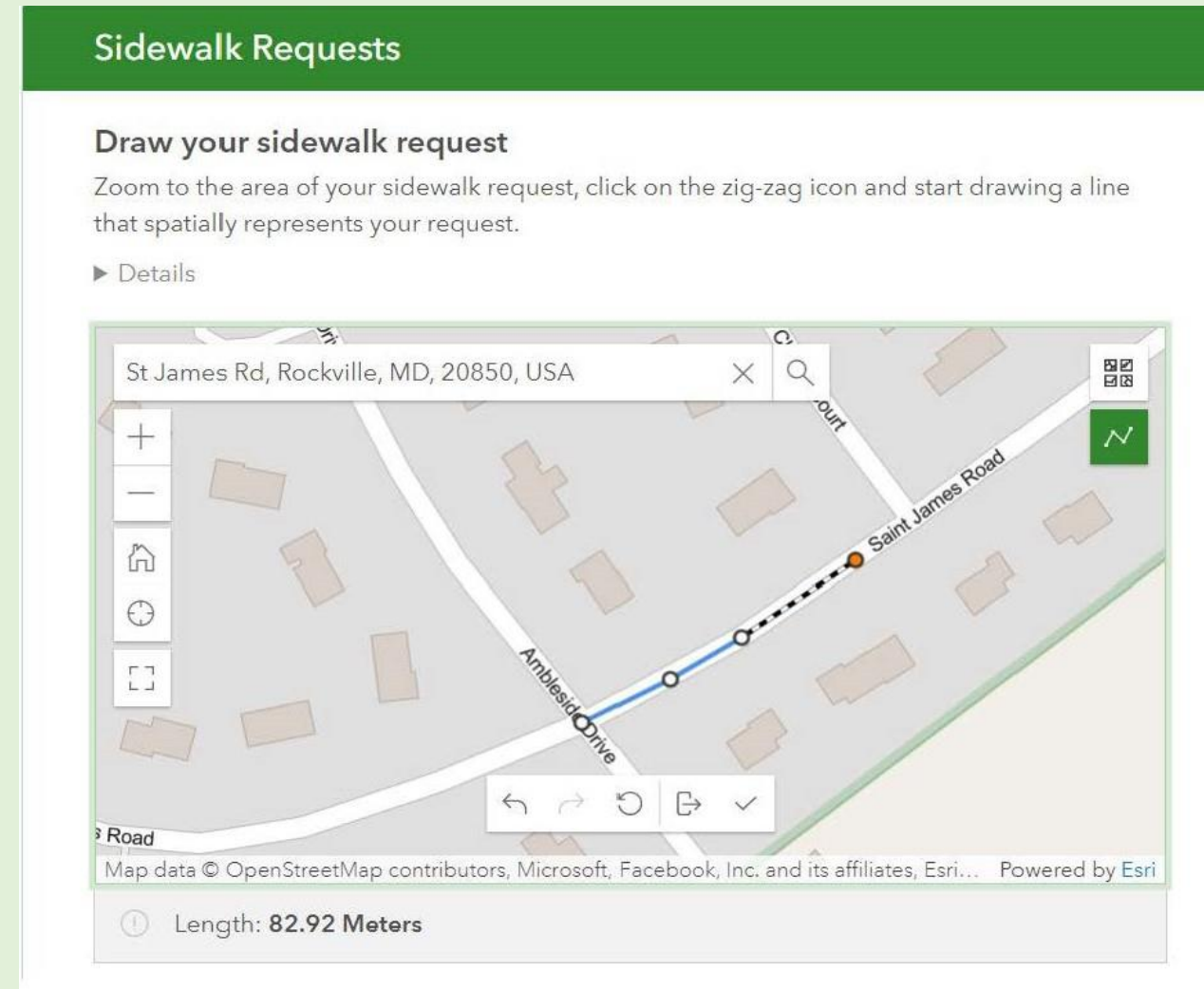
REQ. NO	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
9947	INVESTIGATION	12/15/2015	
9947	INVESTIGATION		
9947	INVESTIGATION		

Record: 1 of 2

Sidewalk Program Request Link: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/forms/sidewalk.html>

# Coming Soon! Introducing our New GIS-Based Web Request Tool!

- Residents Quickly Search Street & Draw Requested Sidewalk on the Map
- Processing Time Saved! Requestor Contact Information & Request Details are Saved with GIS Map & Sidewalk Coordinates Automatically
- Residents Can Upload Photos
- Going Live this Winter 2022!





# Residents Will be able to Click on a Previously Requested Sidewalk to View Status and Support Received or Support an Existing Request

Request a Sidewalk

Request a Curb Ramp

Sidewalk Requests: Main St

From 1st St, To Pennsylvania Ave

Request #	
Side	South
Status	Investigation Complete - In Queue Awaiting Proposal
CIP Program	Sidewalk
CIP Project No.	506747

Zoom to

0.4 km

0.3 mi

City of Gaithersburg, MD, Maxar, Esri Community Maps Contributors, City of Gaithersburg, Maryland, MNCPPC, VGIN, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, ...

Powered by Esri

Placeholding Text

Contact Us

The Annual Sidewalk Program





## **PRIORITY Analysis**

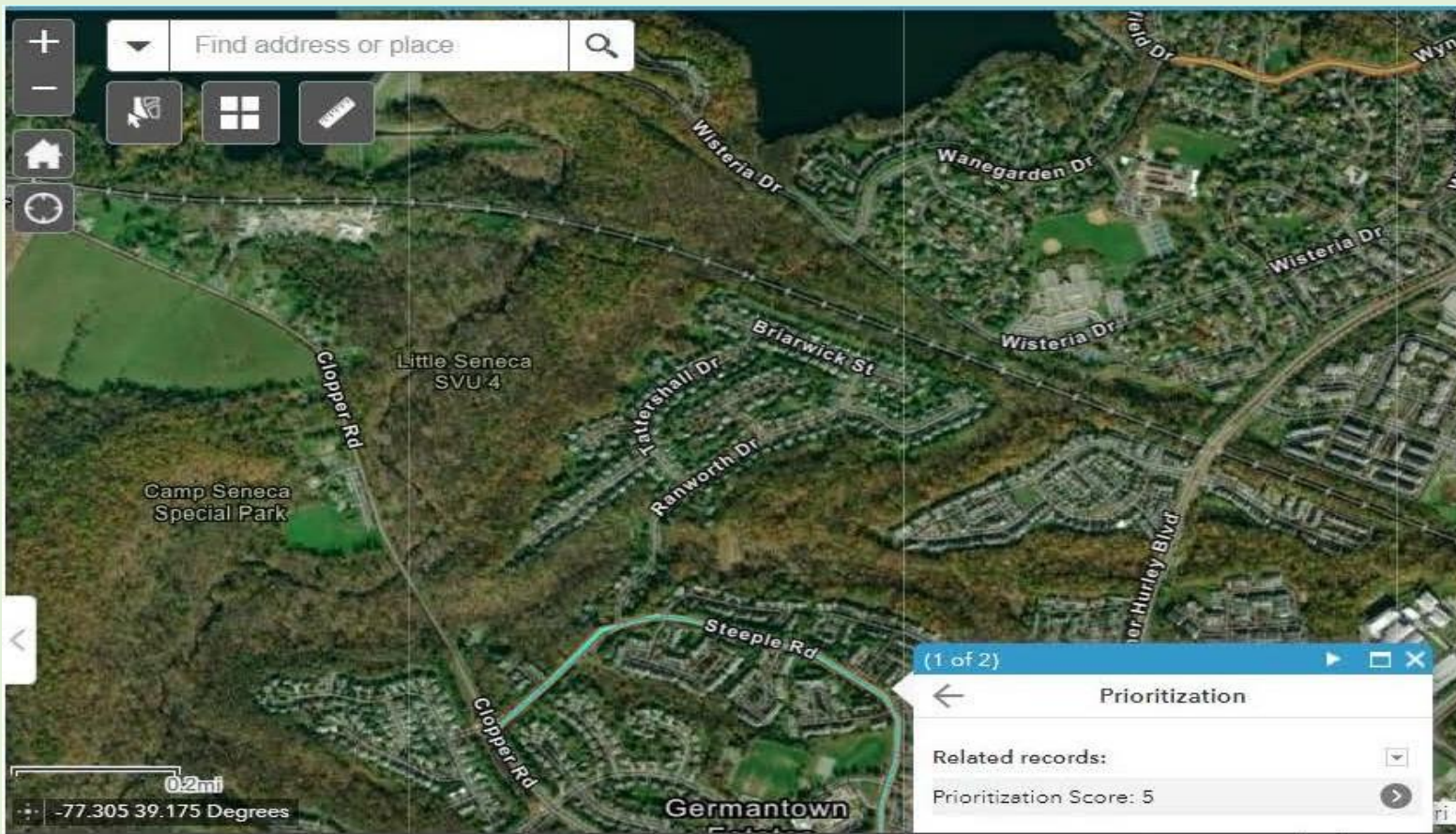
Previously, all requests were placed in a Queue to await selection for a proposal. Priority Analysis was performed manually. Factors of analysis include:

- **Vehicle/Pedestrian Accidents**
- **Schools, Preschools & Daycare Centers**
- **Public Transportation**
- **Pedestrian Generators (Churches, Synagogues, Swimming Pools, Community Centers, Shopping Centers, Restaurants, etc.)**





# With New GIS Request Application, the Request will be Prioritized Instantly!



Requests are prioritized as follows:

- Racial Equity Emphasis Area +5
- Schools, Pedestrian Facilities, Public Transportation Facilities and Pedestrian Accidents are prioritized by proximity to the requested sidewalk:
  - Within ½ Mile +1
  - Within ¼ Mile +2
  - Within 500-feet +3

Sidewalk Requests _Query result	Sidewalk Requests	ADA Curb Ramp Requests	Montgomery County	Prioritization
Options	Filter by map extent	Zoom to	Clear selection	Refresh
Bus/Transit/Metro	Equity Emphasis	Ped Accident	Ped Facility	School
within 1/2 mi radius	not in equity emphasis	within 1/2 mi radius	within 1.2 mi radius	within 1/4 mi radius







## **FIELD Investigation**

- **Does the County have Right of Way?**
- **Can the project be installed without an engineered design?**
- **Do associated costs fall within Program criteria? How much?  
Be able to answer about criteria**







# Why is There a Bottleneck of Requests Awaiting Field Inspection?

## FIELD Investigation

- 8.5 Month Construction Season each Year when Inspectors are Managing Construction
- Inspectors Hand-Write Notes and Type Up Construction Impacts Separately

### Parkvale Road Public Right-of-Way Construction Impacts

Side: West  
Limits: Manorfield Road to Manorvale Court  
Sidewalk Width: 5 Ft  
Sidewalk Material: Concrete  
Road Width: 26-Ft Curb to Curb

ADDRESS	CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS
14308 Parkvale Road	Remove and replace up to 10-feet of existing concrete sidewalk to transition from existing 10-foot greenspace to a 0 to 3-foot-wide variable greenspace. Construct a 5-foot-wide concrete sidewalk with a 0 to 3-foot variable greenspace. Remove and replace concrete driveway apron.
14306 Parkvale Road	Construct a 5-foot-wide concrete sidewalk with a 0 to 3-foot-wide variable greenspace. Remove and replace existing concrete driveway apron. Sidewalk will transition behind the utility pole, # 767457-890940. The utility pole guide wires will need to be relocated to allow for sidewalk installation. Remove one 8-inch in diameter Okame Cherry tree; replacement trees may be planted.
14304 Parkvale Road	Construct a 5-foot-wide concrete sidewalk with a 0 to 3-foot-wide variable greenspace. Remove and replace existing concrete driveway apron.
14302 Parkvale Road	Construct a 5-foot-wide concrete sidewalk with a 0 to 3-foot-wide variable greenspace. Remove and replace existing concrete driveway apron. Sidewalk will transition in-front of the utility pole, #767457-900790.
14300 Parkvale Road	Construct a 5-foot-wide concrete sidewalk with a 0 to 3-foot-wide variable greenspace. Remove and replace existing concrete driveway apron. Remove plants and groundcover landscaping within County's public right of way as needed to allow for sidewalk installation. Remove one 31-inch in diameter Yoshino Cherry tree; replacement trees may be planted.
14212 Parkvale Road	Construct a 5-foot-wide concrete sidewalk with a 0 to 3-foot-wide variable greenspace. Remove and replace existing concrete driveway apron. Sidewalk will transition behind the utility pole, # 767457-930660. Remove one 20-inch in diameter Linden tree; replacement trees may be planted.

☛ The above impacts are based on a preliminary investigation and are subject to change at any time as field conditions warrant.





## FIELD Investigation

# Coming Soon! New Field Maps Field Inspection App Eliminates Busy-Work & Duplicative Typing, Saving Time & Money!

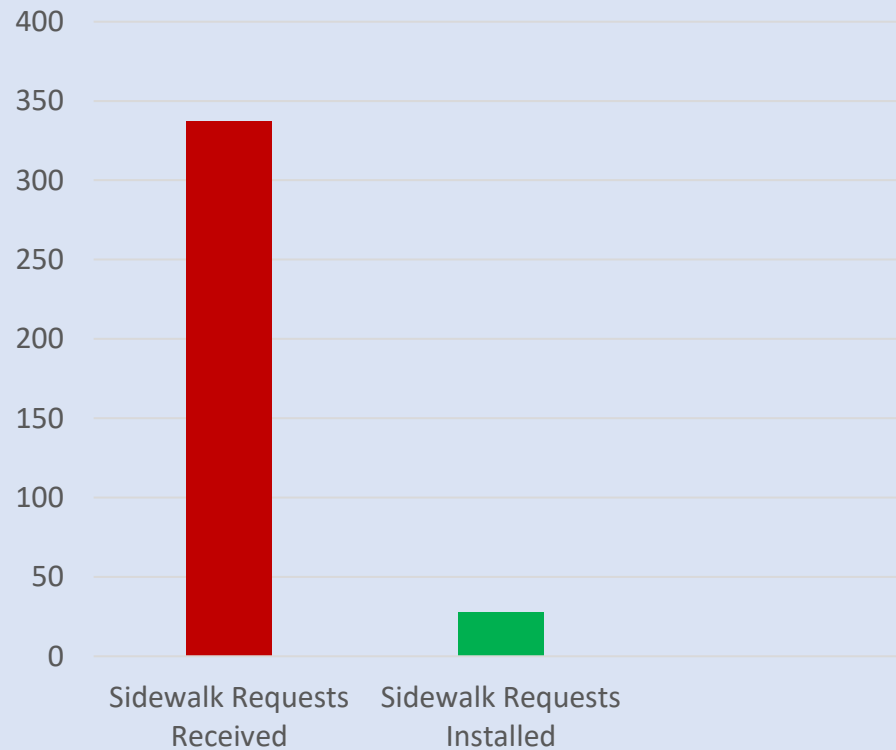
- Requests Drawn on New GIS-Request App Automatically Appear in Field Maps, Eliminating the time it Previously took to Process the New Request and Create Maps
- Input Information Once and Right of Way Construction Impacts Document is Automatically Created
- Once Field Inspection is Completed & Constructability Determined, Status is Automatically Updated on Request Map
- Huge Savings of Time in Processing and Elimination of Duplicative Busy-Work

The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for a 'Sidewalk Inspection'. At the top, there's a status bar with the time 4:40 and battery level. Below it are three buttons: 'Cancel', 'Collect', and 'Submit'. The main title is 'Sidewalk Inspection' with a chain-link icon. There are two buttons: 'Take Photo' with a camera icon and 'Attach' with a paperclip icon. Below these are several form fields: 'Inspector Name \*' (empty), 'Request #' (empty), 'Roadway Width (ft)' (empty), 'Sidewalk Material \*' (set to 'Concrete'), 'Sidewalk Width (ft) \*' (set to '5'), 'Available Right of Way \*' (set to 'No Value'), and 'Total Right of Way \*' (empty). The bottom of the screen shows a home indicator bar.



**PROPOSAL Issued –  
4-Week Question &  
Comment Period,  
Field Meetings  
Available**

The Sidewalk Program receives between 250 and 350 sidewalk installation requests annually yet have the resources and employees to propose 9 projects per year. In 2021, the nine projects satisfied 28 sidewalk installation requests out of 337 sidewalk installation requests received.



- **Requests that Pass Field Inspection Await Selection for a Sidewalk Proposal**
- **With the new GIS Request App, Instant Prioritization & Constructability Rating Will Highlight Most Urgent & Constructable Requests.**



# Concerns of Residents who oppose sidewalks . . .

- **Snow Shoveling Responsibilities & Increased Potential Liability**
- **Tree removals, Decreased Shade & Higher Air Conditioning Bills**
- **Less absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions**
- **Climate Change**
- **Addition of Non-porous Surfaces & Exacerbation of Rainwater Drainage Issues**
- **Loss of Available Parking**
- **Increased Pollution & Pet Waste**
- **Loss of the “Rural Feel” of the Community**
- **Preference for Traffic Calming Installations so Pedestrians & Motorists May Share the Road**
- **Lack of Need**





**PUBLIC HEARING –  
Record Held Open  
for 4-weeks After  
Hearing**

**Pursuant to Section 49-53 of the  
Montgomery County Code (2004) as  
amended, a public hearing is required.**

**If one or more residents oppose the  
proposed sidewalks, a public hearing  
must be held.**



## DECISION

- Complete Review of Hearing Record including All Comments & Testimony
- Degree of Community Support
- Will the New Sidewalks Connect to Existing Sidewalks or a Network of Sidewalks?
- Will the New Sidewalks Provide Safer Access to Public Transportation, Schools and Pedestrian Generators?





## CONSTRUCTION

Traditionally, the Sidewalk Program received a budget of 1.2M annually which enabled the installation of approximately 5 miles of sidewalks.

In recent years, the increased budget has enabled the installation of approximately 6 to 7 miles of sidewalk annually.

### Construction Includes:

- Mark Utilities.
- Mark Right of Way
- Post temporary "Sidewalk Construction and "No Parking" Signs.
- Removal Impacted Trees
- Mark sidewalk alignment.
- Excavate and Set Forms
- Pour Concrete
- Apply Sealant





# THE SIDEWALK PROGRAM Prioritization

Before . . .



After . . .



# THE SIDEWALK PROGRAM

Questions?

Thank you!

