

This document outlines the public input collected during the Draft Brick Streets and Sidewalks Policy 15-day public comment period from June 11 – June 25, 2024.

31 written responses were received.

Public involvement is a critical component in the transportation planning process and the development of the Brick Streets and Sidewalks Policy. The draft was posted on the project website and shared on the City’s official social media pages & the public was asked to provide feedback on the draft policy.

An Open House was held on June 20th from 5:30-7:30 PM to facilitate education and understanding of the draft Brick Streets and Sidewalks Policy and ask attendees to write down any feedback they wanted to share with staff and the subcommittee. At this meeting a number of people expressed having submitted comments online prior to the open house, but after attending the meeting they felt better about the policy and gained a greater understanding of the background and policy making process. The most frequently asked questions at the Open House were in regard to the Brick Sidewalk Policy Applicability Map and how cost and enforcement would be handled. Staff explained that the area shown on the policy applicability map was a determination made by the subcommittee which utilized the existing boundaries of Historic Districts and Zoning Overlay Districts. However, this map is subject to change pending additional review by the subcommittee, Historic Resources Commission, and City Commission. Additionally, cost and enforcement are proposed to be aligned with the ADA Transition Plan – a poster was created describing this relationship between plans and policies and shared at the open house. [Link to Open House Posters.](#)

Staff also reached out to key neighborhood leaders to schedule meetings with the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association and Old West Lawrence Neighborhood Association during the public comment period. However, due to conflicting schedules and extreme outdoor temperatures these meetings were declined. Notably there is representation from both of these neighborhood groups on the Brick Streets and Sidewalks Policy Subcommittee.

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Staff have reviewed all comments received during the public comment period and separated them into their best fit categories. The themes including: General Support, Accessibility Concerns/ Considerations, Historic Concerns/ Considerations, General Brick Sidewalk Comment, and General Brick Street Comments.

Where a comment included a distinct break in the feedback and discussed various themes, staff broke the comment into its respective category. Personally identifiable information was also removed to protect public commenter’s identity.

- General Support (page 2)
- Accessibility Concerns/ Considerations (pages 2-3)
- Historic Concerns/ Considerations (pages 3-5)
- General Brick Sidewalk Comments (pages 5-7)
- General Brick Street Comments (pages 8-9)

General Support

- After these many years of waiting, it will be very good to have specs for how to properly repair historic brick infrastructure, I think that overall the draft policy is a productive step forward. With one huge and extremely significant problem, the area of applicability of the policy.
- I cannot believe it is 2024 and this proposal is to implement a Brick Streets and Sidewalks policy, and that one has not already been in place. This provides me with the explanation I have been looking for regarding the poor status of the brickwork as it currently exists.
- Please keep the brick! It adds so much charm and character to downtown Lawrence and is part of what makes downtown Lawrence so unique and charming
- Thank you for creating this important policy to protect and preserve Lawrence's unique historic brick streets and sidewalks.

Accessibility Concerns/ Considerations

- As an avid runner and cyclist, the current state of brickwork on sidewalks is impossible to navigate. Bricks are uneven with each other, resulting in uneven footholds and an extremely bumpy ride. Many areas are sunken into the ground, creating large pools of water/mud after rainfall. With already limited access to appropriate bike lanes and pedestrian friendly sidewalks/crosswalks, further implementation will only increase frustrations.
- Brick sidewalks are almost always in a poor state. They fail to meet flatness, levelness and drainage slope required by ADA. Quaintness and any nostalgic reasons will never trump safety, brick was just the most affordable option at the time of placement. The useful life has expired and should be replaced with concrete sidewalks.
- Brick sidewalks present tripping hazards to pedestrians at substantially higher rates (compared to concrete) as they age and fall into disrepair
- Currently, it feels as though half of the brick sidewalks in East Lawrence and surrounding areas are almost unwalkable, which is due partly to bricks not being maintained, missing, impacted by tree roots, and also improperly maintained vegetation. As a result, I often see disabled individuals navigating the roads instead of the sidewalk which is a huge public safety risk.
- I strongly support ensuring that all sidewalks and streets in the city are accessible and accommodate folks who may need to use various mobility assistance devices and individuals needing to transport children in strollers.

There have been far too many sidewalks in popular foot traffic neighborhoods with increasingly worrying brick issues that stand out as causing potential harm to even able-bodied individuals who do not require assistive devices. I'm not sure how our community can claim to be inclusive and equitable if we grant special permission to certain

neighborhoods to have unsafe sidewalks and streets that large portions of the population cannot access or navigate safely. I appreciate the draft plan and think it strikes an appropriate balance between caring for the historical significance and character of these areas and ensuring they do not pose safety or access issues for the public.

- My point is please keep in mind that these brick walk ways need to be maintained, and if they are not, then they prevent people from walking.
- This will make Lawrence more accessible! Thank you!

Historic Concerns/ Considerations

- I don't understand why 9th street is in the overlay and 8th isn't given that James Lane's property was on 8th and Mississippi. How is historic described here? What is historic about 9th st that it is in the overlay?
- If I'm reading the map correctly, it looks like the proposal ends at Connecticut and doesn't extend to much of East Lawrence, which includes many historic homes, streets, hitch posts, etc. It would be sooo great to have this work done further East, where we sometimes feel overlooked. So much potential!
- Indiana north of 6th street has predominantly brick sidewalks. Indiana also connects national historic designated areas north of sixth to the south of sixth. Both historic areas are brick areas. Shouldn't Indiana be an "overlay" designated area?
- It is suggested the purpose of this Policy is to lay the ground work for the inspection and repair of brick sidewalks to continue the sidewalk repair policy that improves walkability throughout the City. This proposed brick policy limits the area that allows brick sidewalks to only formally designated historic districts and other categories of a historic nature. There are other areas of the City that contain brick streets and sidewalks that do not have formal historic designations but have all of the same characteristics of historical significance of those formally recognized areas. The City should recognize this and have this new policy cover all brick installations. The City should not be involved in the active destruction of historic resources. As written it appears the City's policy will cause the number of historic brick streets and sidewalks to decrease, thus losing those historic artifacts. This will erode the continuity and significance of those unrecognized areas. We hope that the City's Historic Resources Division is involved in the formation of these policies and that they will encourage an appropriate level of preservation.

Brick streets and sidewalks are more expensive to build, maintain and repair. But most of them have been around for a century or more of good use, compared to conventional construction methods. Brick resources are showing signs of wear. The City has not had a comprehensive plan for maintenance and repair of sidewalks nor streets. In the last 12-14 years there have been 2 other brick policy initiatives that have failed to produce an adopted policy. Only recently (created for this policy?) have there been specifications for building brick sidewalks. The City has re-built a handful of Brick streets, and by their own admission

they did not hit the “sweet spot” for those streets to last as long as their predecessors. The City built brick sidewalks along 9th street in the last 5 years without clear specifications. They had to stop and re-assess that project before completion because of poor quality workmanship. It is alarming to the adjacent homeowners who are responsible for the maintenance of those City built sidewalks that they were not built properly. The intersection at 9th and New York street needs to be re-built because of a lack of specifications being provided to the contractor. The City should step up it’s brick maintenance game rather than work to get rid of brick resources.

The City should expand the area where brick is allowed in this policy and embrace the use of brick within its historic areas formally recognized or not.

- Restore and preserve brick streets and historic homes, and honor our history.
- The Edward House house, which is on the National Historic register. While I have not looked through the entire 22 page document, the reporting in The Lawrence Journal World seems to suggest that the brick sidewalks in the Barker neighborhood and across the street West of Massachusetts are not to be preserved.

First I have serious concerns about the removal of the brick sidewalks with the 250' environs of this home. The ones that once adorned the street directly outside this piece of history are long gone, but the ones at 17th and New Hampshire can still be saved, along with the rest of this historic neighborhood.

Beyond that, I'm deeply concerned that you stripped away any historic preservation for the bulk of East Lawrence. To suggest that, say, New Jersey street is worthy of preservation, but that individuals living on Pennsylvania are out of luck is rather unfortunate. Of course, if I'm misreading the graphic printed in the paper I do apologize.

- The map regarding brick sidewalks should include the entirety of the Original Townsite at a minimum. In 1896, the Lawrence city council passed an ordinance requiring that new sidewalks be constructed of flagging stone, brick, asphalt, concrete, or artificial stone. In subsequent years, the Lawrence Daily Journal reported on a flurry of petitions to lay new sidewalks in conformance with the ordinance. While my block (the 700 block of New York) does not lie within an officially recognized historic district or historic overlay district (East Lawrence has been promised historic neighborhood design guidelines since at least the 2000 revitalization study), the sidewalk that runs in front of my 150+ year old house is likely 120+ years old. Langston Hughes once lived across the street, and likely walked down our brick sidewalks. Gaining historic district status requires someone(s) with the money, spare time, and/or social standing to navigate the designation process, so attaining that status is not a litmus test for whether or not something is actually "historic." The brick sidewalks in the Rhode Island Street historic district were laid under the exact same context as those on my block--are my bricks truly less "historic" than theirs?
- This is my second feedback. Why is East Lawrence not included in this policy? That's entirely ridiculous. We are a historic neighborhood, our sidewalks and streets are EVERY bit as important as any in Old West Lawrence! I would love to hear the reasoning for this one!

- To me, the town’s originally constructed infrastructure in its originally platted and developed areas is by definition “historic.” Period!
- Whether or not an area is designated as historic is often a matter of cultural bias. The vernacular homes of ethnic minority and working class early residents may not have been as well documented as those of the wealthier class, and even where the information exists, their descendants or subsequent owners may not have had the resources to seek designation. These streetscapes are still an essential part of Lawrence’s history.

Moreover, there are many listed properties such as my home, that are not in a designated “district” that are thereby outside of the applicability area on the map. Once these oversights are corrected, we will have a very workable policy.
- We would like to maintain our brick streets and sidewalks but I'm concerned it appears they aren't part of the official historic district even though our area is definitely historic// Canes state reserve. I don't think we should be required to go through the whole process of being zoned to a historic district.
- Why are the brick streets and sidewalks on New York Street, starting at 6th and going south, not included in the overlay?

General Brick Sidewalk Comments

- As a cyclist, I have no love for the brick streets and wouldn’t be sad to lose them.
- Brick sidewalks are simply more sustainable and, potentially, economical for property owners. Brick sidewalks can be repaired and relaid almost into perpetuity by a property owner with some patience and effort. Concrete sidewalks, on the other hand, also crack and heave due to tree roots and freeze-thaw cycles, but are almost impossible for the average person to repair on their own. Enlarging the map to include all of the historic brick sidewalks, regardless of official designation as such, preserves the option of choice for property owners.
- Current brick sidewalks should be allowed to continue to exist in any neighborhood established before 1950.

Non deflected sedimentary stone panels. or unbroken panels deflected by trees in the ROW should be allowed to exist.

The City should be in contact with professional brick installers as this plan is adopted. Outreach to that community is important.

With the trivial decision resting with homeowners (brick or concrete) and removing brick from sloped areas, the city will lose a substantial number of brick sidewalks

- I am especially concerned with sections 6.5 and 6.6 regarding maintenance and enforcement. Placing the financial burden of implementing and maintaining the brickwork on private homeowners in addition to the costs of maintaining 100+ year old homes is

inappropriate at best. Section 6.6 includes language that reads as forcing homeowners in historic districts to make these expensive changes, a severe bureaucratic overstep.

Much of this proposal seems to focus on the aesthetic value the brick provides, rather than the economic impact of such decisions. I would argue, in its current state, the aesthetic of poorly maintained brick is far lower than it would be otherwise. The city seems to have adopted a patchwork method of implementation to date, with many sidewalks using 20-50m brick sections surrounded by concrete sidewalk. The intersection of New Hampshire and 9th has 2 brick crosswalks and 2 concrete crosswalks. This disorganized approach detracts from the initial appeal of "historic brick" this policy seems insistent on retaining.

In summation, the infrastructure costs alone of this policy are inappropriate considering other more important issues facing the city (affordable housing). The fact it took the city 11 years to even present this policy is indicative of the timeframe we would be looking at for any of these changes to take place. We need to focus on more pressing issues.

- I just moved out of the Old West Lawrence neighborhood and really enjoyed the area. One aspect of the neighborhood that I did not enjoy was the brick sidewalks. As a family, we really appreciate our family walks, which require a stroller for our two year old daughter. Many of these brick sidewalks and streets are in really rough shape and impassable with a stroller. I understand that the brick is aesthetically pleasing but it ended up requiring us to walk in the street with car traffic. That or just drive somewhere else to walk or not walk at all.
- In general I agree that policies should be formalized to allow historic infrastructure to be maintained to standards of accessibility. I wonder how practical it is to expect individual property owners to maintain the sidewalk area considering the number of low-income homeowners in the area. Like most other homes which have a significant easement, can the city not take over maintenance of sidewalks so that they're uniformly maintained?
- Lawrence's bad policy of requiring homeowners to maintain sidewalks leads to higher rates of unrepaired sidewalk, further increasing this safety hazard. Brick Roads create greater wear on tires are less pleasant to drive over and more difficult to maintain. Lawrence should seek to limit brick as a paving material for either sidewalks or streets wherever possible throughout the city.
- The ADA standards on deflection is 1/4 inch so why does this draft say 1/8 inch - which is virtually impossible with brick sidewalks, especially if you use historic bricks which naturally can have a variance of 1/8 inch? If the City is setting standards on sidewalks, will the City be financially responsible for maintaining them - or helping to maintain them?
- The brick sidewalks add beauty and utility to East and Old West Lawrence. If a brick sidewalk is in poor repair, the homeowner should be given a chance to correct that. There are whole neighborhoods with NO sidewalks, and concrete sidewalks that are in terrible repair all over town. I don't see the point in singling out brick sidewalks.
- The one concern I have with the brick sidewalk proposal is the responsibility of the property owner to maintain them when trees planted by the city grow roots that cause uneven areas.

Property owners are not consulted when trees are planted, but are required to be responsible for any damage caused by the type planted.

- The sidewalks, in my opinion, could be concrete. Or even better, concrete with historic brick ornamental inlays. Pushing a stroller in my neighborhood is ROUGH, and I feel terrible for our delivery drivers walking through mud because the old brick sidewalk is buried several inches below ground.
- This draft policy is a good first step. I believe property owners with brick sidewalk wait to repair them. I am pleased to see they will soon be asked to do so.

The gorilla in the room is the repair cost of brick sidewalk repair. 2X Concrete costs? 3X concrete costs? Most property owners will struggle to afford such repair costs.

I urge the City to consider partnering with Peaslee Tech to develop a masonry repair program. Such a program could help make brick repair more affordable.

- Use the neighborhoods with brick and include in the map instead of requiring the overlay. What is it accomplishing to have the neighborhood do a plan versus be included.
- We have brick sidewalks & work to keep them in good shape. We want to keep our brick sidewalks.
- While I am in complete agreement with the Scope (#2.0) of this policy, I am concerned that as written it is not feasible to have a brick sidewalk.

I live in Old West Lawrence and currently have a brick sidewalk. My intention had been to restore the brick walk to improve access. Since reading this proposed policy, however, I fear it is no longer economically feasible. This is for two reasons: 1) the high cost of following the specs when the walk is reset; and, 2) the fear of additional expense when the sidewalk moves over time and requires repair. Honestly, it seems I would need to budget to have sections redone every 3-5 years. I believe in the preservation concept that a historic home is a "gift to the street" but there are limits in how much I can afford to keep giving.

1/8 inch deflection between bricks in my opinion is not feasible. While ideal for access, when you are considering hundreds of bricks in a sidewalk, it is not a reasonable standard. I hope you will consider raising the tolerance to a larger number, both for deflection and gaps between bricks (as drafted 1-3 sixteenths). If no changes are made, I feel I will be forced to change to brick, which is a loss to everyone who walks or drives our street.

One last thing. Is a concrete sidewalk dyed red and stamped in a brick pattern a feasible alternative? I'd like to see examples and know if this is worth considering as an alternative.

General Brick Street Comment

- Brick streets slow traffic in residential areas, a benefit not listed as a desirable trait in the draft proposal.
- I am very much in support of preserving brick side walks and streets in historic areas. And, I would be supportive of restoring brick streets like the city did in the 2100 block of Vermont.

Can the City set up a program to regularly maintain brick streets in historic areas rather than simply replace them when repairs are needed. We heard from a neighbor on Rhode Island that previously the City street department deliberating ground down the brick streets. It has to be a clear goal to maintain these streets - especially if limited to historic areas only.

- I live in East Lawrence near 14th/Pennsylvania and LOVE the brick streets. As someone with a toddler who loves playing with the neighbor kids, I worry about the lack of speed control bumps and appreciate the bricks slowing folks down (somewhat - never enough!).
- It is too bad though that Lawrence's historic arterials are not allowed to be made of brick. Cities and towns all over Europe have main arterials made of brick and cobblestone, and have for centuries. Locally, Baldwin City's two main arterials, High Street and Eighth Street are beautifully maintained brick avenues. Massachusetts Street, Ninth Street and other downtown streets were all historically made of double-coursed locally-made Vitrified bricks with stone curbing and they should be allowed to return so in the future.
- Let's not get started on streets. My street was completely redone on a grant and is in beautiful shape. The ones that are in poor condition are on residential blocks and at least slow down traffic.
- More needs to be done to address how bricks are removed by the city from historic Lawrence streets. The use of backhoes, bulldozers and dump trucks over the years has caused irreparable harm to countless otherwise useful bricks. The streets were carefully built by hand and the handmade old bricks are now a finite resource. Carefully removing, storing and recycling them is imperative if brick streets are to remain a feature of Lawrence's historic districts over the next hundred years.
- Many historically brick streets remain covered with layers of asphalt, as was the case with the once Historic Ninth Street. When milling the asphalt extra care should be taken not to damage the underlying bricks. The old brick streets had a center crown to them to allow for proper drainage on either side. Laying new brick streets flat allows for water to pool underneath and causes the bricks to spall and deteriorate with temperature changes.
- Preservation of the historic old streetcar rail lines should also be considered when repairing or reconstructing brick streets. The streetcar lines were an important feature of the old brick streets and the rails should not be cut up and discarded each time a brick street is repaired or repaved. Perhaps sometime in the future a streetcar line could be a unique feature that returns to Lawrence's Historic Districts.

Historic limestone tunnels should also be preserved under the old brick streets.

Intersections were always done in a herringbone pattern to lock the intersection in place and provide proper traction for turning vehicles. Crosswalks should be made with historic local bricks, not pressed concrete imitation brick.

Perhaps a central square could be created somewhere in the downtown area making use of surplus old Vitrified Lawrence Kansas bricks. It could provide an educational opportunity about Lawrence's brick streets, and serve as an aesthetically attractive outdoor space for visitors and locals alike to enjoy. Maybe the area of the Farmers' Market could be paved with local bricks.

Thank you again for drafting this important policy for the preservation of Lawrence's beautiful, historic and unique brick streets and sidewalks!"

- Repair of secondary brick streets, please no asphalt patching over exposed brick. Repair substrate in affected areas and re-set brick.
- Section 7.5 states "Should stone curbs be disturbed during maintenance, additional standards in Section 6.8 of this policy apply." I don't see a section 6.8.
- The alleyway between Plymouth Church 925 Vermont, is broken brick and misc. surface products with extensive uneven surfaces.
- The existing brick streets are in similarly poor condition. The intersection of Rhode Island and 10th has such large, sunken divots that vehicles cannot adequately drive without potential damage to the undercarriage.
- Utility Cuts. What is meant by "shall be returned to their found location"? Are bricks to be re-laid only to be paved over...? I believe these bricks should be discarded or at the most transported for storage. What about limestone curb? Look to be covered later, but would be good to reference in this section, too.

Stone Curb - Are precast stone-like blocks readily available? Do we have a detail? There are several notes about removing stone curb to preserve it. What is the intent there? Is it to be stored? It seems like it would only ever be reused on a CIP project of an exposed brick street, correct?