

City of Berkeley Street Maintenance and Rehabilitation Policy

Section 1. General Policy

It is the policy of the City of Berkeley to maintain our streets in safe, good condition that protects our environment and to properly maintain the existing investment in City assets. Staff will implement a Citywide road resurfacing plan that will ensure street maintenance and repair in a timely manner, reduce long term-replacement costs, and provide for the safe and efficient use of our streets. The users of the street surface in the public right-of-way include powered vehicles, bicycles, transit, and pedestrians. The right-of-way also provides for storm water conveyance and is the location of many public utilities.

The policy requires that a *5-year Street Rehabilitation Plan* for the entire City be prepared and adopted biannually in line with the City's budget process. Any changes to the *5-year Plan* made in the interim shall be reported to City Council. Streets and their surfacing treatment shall be prioritized using a multi-criteria adaptive planning framework to achieve sustainable, resilient, and integrated solutions for the City's right-of-way and the downstream environments. The criteria shall consider equity, quality of life, safety, opportunities for leadership, resource allocation, environmental impacts, and climate and resilience.

Section 2. Assumptions

This section of the policy defines basic assumptions that inform the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the *5-year plan*.

1. This policy defines the priorities for managing the road surface infrastructure from curb to curb. This policy does not provide guidance on how to prioritize sidewalks or other infrastructure associated with complete streets planning.
2. Streets include arterial, collector, residential, and commercial/industrial streets as defined in Berkeley's General Plan.
3. Consistency with the City's General Plan policy of encouraging use of forms of transportation other than automobiles.
4. Conformance with the Regional Water Quality Control Board's stormwater permit requirements.
5. Support of the City's plans and updates thereto, including the City's Climate Action Plan, Green Infrastructure Plan, Resilience Strategy, Vision Zero Policy and Action Plan, Undergrounding Plan, Complete Streets Policy, Vision 2050 framework, Pedestrian Plan, Transit First Policy, Strategic Transportation Plan, public realm and/or other localized transportation plans, and Bicycle Plan.
6. Poorly maintained streets have a disproportionate impact on certain members of the community:
 - a) Low-income residents are more seriously impacted by higher vehicle repair costs than higher income residents;
 - b) Those with mobility or visual impairments face greater challenges of unequal access and safety compared to those without such challenges;
 - c) Bicyclists and pedestrians face greater danger than those driving; and
 - d) Poorly maintained streets in dense, more populous neighborhoods are detrimental to more users than poorly maintained streets in less dense neighborhoods.

7. Utility trench and pothole repair work shall be done in accordance with permit conditions, standard details, and/or standard operating procedures adopted by the Public Works Department.
8. To the extent practical, the City shall use life cycle cost analysis to evaluate different road surfacing options.
9. Runoff from roadways carry pollutants that negatively impact public health, creeks and streams, and the Bay.
10. Street trees are valuable part of the landscape, as they sequester carbon, soak up stormwater, improve land values, and add greenery.
11. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission requires the use of a Pavement Management Tool (such as StreetSaver). Pavement Management Tools are used to optimize road surface conditions through the use of a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) performance metric.

Section 3. Funding

The *Five-year Street Rehabilitation Plan* shall identify all available funding and the sources used to deliver the proposed road improvement projects. This shall include Federal, State, County and City funding sources. In the event that the planned projects are not able to achieve the City's desired roadway condition level of service, the *Five-year Plan* should identify the level of funding and activities needed to expand roadway improvements to achieve the stated goals of this policy. Bond funds shall strive to be used for long-lasting capital improvements (projects with a useful life that meets or exceeds the duration of the bond repayment schedule) or to accelerate road work that will result in long-term cost savings for ratepayers.

Section 4. Specific Policy

The Street Rehabilitation Program shall be based on the following objectives:

1. Planning

- a) The *5-year Street Rehabilitation Plan* shall be supported by a 30-year road surfacing projection, where roadway improvement projects are forecast over a long-term planning period. The first five years of the projection will become the first draft of the *5-year Plan*.
- b) To the extent financially practical, implementation of the paving plan shall advance plans identified in section 2.5.
- c) Rehabilitation of contiguous sections of roadway, rather than one block at a time, shall be preferred, when feasible.
- d) Tree removals shall only be permitted as a last resort consistent with BMC 12.44.020, with the approval of both the Director of Parks and Waterfront and Director of Public Works. If tree removal is necessary, replacement trees shall be planted where and when feasible in accordance with BMC 12.44.010.

2. Equity

- a) The benefits of good infrastructure shall be distributed equitably throughout the entire community regardless of the income, political influence, or demographic characteristics of the

residents in each area. Equity means that disadvantaged residents with more pressing needs experience benefits sooner than others, as defined by the City within the adopted *5-Year Plan*.

- b) A new *Equity Zone* shall be established. This Zone shall be prioritized to meet an average PCI of 70 sooner than the remainder of the City. This Zone contains historically underserved neighborhoods that have experienced decades of underinvestment, and the residents in this zone experience more pressing needs and receive benefits sooner.
- c) Over the longer term, road surfacing activities shall be planned within Pavement Analysis Zones. A Pavement Analysis Zone shall consist of a logical set of street segments, excluding the arterials, collectors, bus routes, bicycle boulevards and non-representative demonstration projects.
 - a. The department may revise the pavement analysis zone boundaries from time to time, consistent with the other goals of this policy. Any changes to pavement analysis units shall be proposed within the biannually updated *5-year Street Rehabilitation Plan* submitted to City Council.
 - b. It shall be the goal of the City to seek parity of street condition between pavement analysis zones, except in regards to the *Equity Zone*.

3. Performance Metrics

- a) The City will strive to maintain all roads within the primary transportation network at a standard no less than the following PCI targets for any stretch of roadway¹:
 - a. Arterial - 70,
 - b. Collector - 70,
 - c. Bus Routes - 70,
 - d. Existing and proposed low-stress bikeway network - 70.
 - i. Bikeways shall be surfaced with a treatment that emphasizes smoothness of the road surface.
 - e. Equity Zone- 70.
- b) Funding should be prioritized towards maintenance activities to achieve the goals of item 4.2a.
- c) The biannually updated *5-year plan* shall report on these performance metrics, PCI measurements for each street segment in the City, and percent of overall funding dedicated to each of the following: arterials, collectors, bus routes, existing and proposed low-stress bikeway network, equity zone, and residential streets.

4. Dig Once

- a. Street rehabilitation shall conform with a dig once approach. This includes coordinating with sewer, water, electrical, telecom, undergrounding and other activities to minimize the cost and maintain the quality of the street surface.
- b. In order to protect the City's investment on street improvements, the City shall place a moratorium on recently paved streets that prohibits digging through them for up to five years, excluding emergency work².

5. Demonstration Projects and Use of New Technologies

- a. To the extent practical, the City shall evaluate the use of permeable pavement, concrete pavement, and other street surface technologies using life cycle cost analysis.

¹ PCI of 70 is the lower threshold of what is considered "Good." Streets that fall below a "good" condition require much more expensive repair process.

² As cited in Berkeley Municipal Code 16.12.030 and documented on the City [website](#)

- b. The use of new technologies that provide enhanced durability, lower cost, and more environmentally beneficial impacts shall be evaluated and reviewed in the biannually adopted *5 Year Street Rehabilitation Plan*.

Section 5. Plan and Policy Development and Update

The plan and policy development shall be as follows:

1. Every two years, in line with the City's budgeting process, the *5-year Street Rehabilitation Plan* adopted by City Council shall include a funding sufficiency analysis based on the existing deferred maintenance at that point to determine what level of funding is required to maintain our streets in safe, good condition that protects our environment and properly maintains the existing investment in City assets.
2. Identify new funding sources such as:
 - a. Heavy vehicles, which have a disproportionate impact on the degradation of paved assets, and
 - b. Transportation Network Company (TNC) vehicles.
3. At a minimum, this *Street Maintenance and Rehabilitation Policy* shall be reviewed and adopted by the City Council every five years, with advice of the Public Works and Transportation Commission.