

Miles of Projects

City shares aggressive plans to enhance infrastructure, including roadways, alleys, sidewalks and pathways

The City of Valparaiso is sharing an aggressive schedule of infrastructure projects this season, working strategically to maximize the miles and lifespan for surfaces citywide. “With more than 172 miles of roadways and even more sidewalks and pathways, we’re working smart to enhance roadways, alleys, sidewalks and pathways. The work we see this season will extend the life of surfaces for seasons to come,” said Mayor Matt Murphy.

“Responsible infrastructure maintenance is all about choosing the right treatment at the right time,” said City Engineer Mike Jabo. This year’s ambitious \$5.6 million pavement maintenance program includes a combination of resurfacing, new sidewalks and pathways, as well as roadway extending strategies, such as crack sealing and patching. “This ambitious program is a direct result of public input. We’re grateful to all of the citizens and businesses who have helped to shape these priorities,” he said. The 2022 program includes the following:

Paving Projects

Following up on last year’s projects which resurfaced some of the city’s most traveled roadways of Calumet Avenue, Roosevelt Road and Morgan Boulevard, this year’s program will enhance the surfaces of nearly seven miles throughout the city and neighborhoods. This work, on 14 roadways, will provide structural resurfacing, which extends the life of a roadway. Roads are selected for resurfacing based on a combination of factors, including overall wear, safety and traffic level using a rating scale.

Roadway Rehab

Using crack sealing, an additional eight miles will be treated this season. “Crack sealing is a very effective way to preserve roadways over time. We can do more miles for less money than resurfacing, allowing our funding to go further and extending the lifespans for many roadways,” said Jabo. In addition, 54 locations throughout the city will be patched with a hot mix, providing smoother and safer surfaces.

“This past winter was particularly hard on our roadways with frequent freezing and thawing,” said Jabo. “Strategically patching our road surfaces is much more cost effective and less disruptive to traffic than full surface repaving.”

Alleys

The City has recognized the need for overdue maintenance in alleys throughout the city. This year’s program includes a more aggressive approach to alley maintenance, enhancing more linear feet of alley than any other year in recent history.

Our City...Our Values

Honestly Accountable Surprisingly Responsive Boldly Proactive Creatively Frugal Respectfully Compassionate

Pedestrian-Friendly Sidewalks and Pathways

“We’re always looking to fill missing sidewalk links as well as attend to the pedestrian surfaces we have,” said Jabo. This year the City will be investing \$1.9 million in one of the most aggressive sidewalk/pathway enhancement packages ever undertaken in a single year.

“We’re pleased to include many projects that have been submitted by neighbors themselves,” said Jabo. Some of the most notable pedestrian projects include the addition of three blocks of sidewalks along Center Street, which will make travel to school safer for nearby students, plus initiating a new pathway along Harrison Boulevard from Ogden Gardens west. This pathway is designed ultimately to reach Froberg Road, with construction advancing annually. Many neighborhood sidewalk connections will also be completed this year, including those included in the City’s Neighborhood Improvement Grant program.

Safety Upgrades

The City is always looking for ways to upgrade safety for motorists and pedestrians. This year, the City will add several permanent radar feedback signs to alert motorists to speeding, placing them in locations where speeding has been an ongoing safety concern -- such as Harrison Boulevard, Ransom Road and Joliet Road. In other safety enhancements, the City will add solar-powered flashing beacons to pedestrian crosswalks and traffic calming bump outs at key pedestrian intersections, such as at Chicago and Washington streets.

Down the Road

The City of Valparaiso is currently conducting an analysis of all surfaces to better plan for long-term infrastructure projects and maintenance. “We need to be very smart about where and when we do projects and maximize our road-extending tools like crack sealing in order to provide the best surfaces for the longest term at the most effective cost,” said Jabo. Look for a more complete analysis and future projects to come later this year.

An Online Overview

Led by progressive student interns, the City of Valparaiso has introduced an interactive overview map of City infrastructure projects for the season. To view roadway, sidewalk, pathway and alley enhancements planned for this season, visit <https://tinyurl.com/ValpoWorks>

Photo caption:

The City of Valparaiso is adding miles of roadway and sidewalk enhancements this season, as well as safety upgrades such as radar feedback signs, flashing beacons and traffic-calming bulbouts.