



**City of Columbia**  
**Planning Department**  
701 E. Broadway, Columbia, MO  
(573) 874-7239 [planning@gocolumbiamo.com](mailto:planning@gocolumbiamo.com)

## **Sidewalk Variance Worksheet** **(for sidewalks along unimproved streets)**

For office use:

Case #:	Submission Date:	Planner Assigned:
---------	------------------	-------------------

### **Please answer the following questions<sup>1</sup>:**

1. What is the cost of constructing the sidewalk, relative to the cost of the proposed development?
2. Is the terrain such that sidewalks or walkways are physically feasible?
3. Would the sidewalk be located in a developed area, on a low traffic volume local street without sidewalks?
4. Are there any current or future parks, schools or other pedestrian generators near the development for which a sidewalk or walkway would provide access?

**If an alternative walkway is being proposed, please describe how the alternative would deviate from standard sidewalk requirements.**

**If applicable, please attach a map showing the proposed alternative walkway alignment.**

---

<sup>1</sup> Based on factors for determining sidewalk need, identified in Council Policy Resolution PR 48-06A

## Policy Statements from Council Policy Resolution PR 48-06A:

The City Council shall review each request for a sidewalk variance along an unimproved street in the context that there must be a reasonable relationship between the proposed activity of a landowner and the requirement that the landowner construct a sidewalk and in the context that the public safety and welfare make it desirable to encourage pedestrian movement by providing safe walkways and sidewalks away from traffic lanes of streets.

The City Council shall grant the requested variance without conditions only if it determines that the sidewalk is not needed or that the impact of the proposed development does not justify the requirement that the sidewalk be constructed.

If the City Council finds that the proposed use of the land would justify the requirement that a sidewalk be constructed and that in the interest of public safety and welfare there is an immediate or near future need for a sidewalk or walkway at the location of the variance request, the City Council will approve the variance request only if an alternative walkway is provided or if the property owner pays the City for future construction of the sidewalk, or if some other equitable arrangement for construction of a sidewalk or other pedestrian infrastructure improvement is made.

Alternative walkways are defined as all-weather pedestrian facilities constructed in accordance with plans and specifications approved by the Public Works Department. Alternative walkways may deviate in vertical and horizontal separation from the roadway in order to take advantage of natural contours and minimize the disturbance to trees and natural areas but must meet all requirements for handicap accessibility. Alternative walkways must be located on public easements but a walkway easement may be conditioned that if walkways are no longer needed for a public purpose, the walkway easements will be vacated.

When alternative walkways are permitted, plans, specifications and easements must be submitted prior to approval of the final plat abutting the unimproved street and construction must occur prior to the first certificate of occupancy within the platted area.

If the City Council determines that the public safety and welfare would not be jeopardized, the Council may allow the property owner, in lieu of constructing an alternative walkway, to pay the City the equivalent cost of construction of a conventional sidewalk. The equivalent cost of construction of a conventional sidewalk shall be defined as the City's average cost of constructing Portland cement concrete sidewalks by public bid during the two (2) calendar years prior to the year in which the variance request is submitted. Payment of the equivalent cost of a conventional sidewalk shall occur:

- a. Prior to approval of the first final plat when the variance is approved in connection with a preliminary plat
- b. Prior to issuance of the first building permit when approved with a final plat or planned development where no variance request has been made with the preliminary plat; or
- c. Prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy when variance requests are approved on individual lots where final plats have been approved without variance request.

Each payment made under this section shall be used to construct a sidewalk along the unimproved street adjacent to the property for which the payment was made. The sidewalk shall be constructed when the street is constructed to City standards.

In all cases, when alternative walkways or payments are approved as fulfilling the subdivision requirements for construction of sidewalks, the action of Council shall be noted on a final plat of the properties affected. In cases where final plats have been previously approved, replatting may be required.

The grant of a variance to the subdivision regulations requirement for construction of a sidewalk shall not affect the power of the City Council to later install a sidewalk adjacent to the property and levy a special assessment against the property for construction of the sidewalk.