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MAYOR EMANUEL ADDS FUNDS TO SHARED-COST SIDEWALK PROGRAM

Due to overwhelming interest in the City's shared-cost sidewalk program, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced today an additional \$500,000 will be added to the \$2 million program to replace more sidewalks in 2013.

"Residents across the city take advantage of this program and share the cost of sidewalk repairs with the City, offering an outstanding value for homeowners and their neighbors," Mayor Emanuel said. "Because we reached our capacity so quickly this year, we will add additional funds in an effort to fix more sidewalks in 2013."

Within 72 hours of the program application window opening on January 1, the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) received more than 1,800 requests for sidewalk condition surveys, which is the first step in the program. Since that time, CDOT has received an additional 600 requests from Chicagoans for sidewalk condition surveys, more than half of which included an expression of interest in participating in the shared cost program.

"Every year, residents express their disappointment after discovering the demand for this program far outweighs the funding, and I'm pleased that Mayor Emanuel is increasing the budget to allow more homeowners to participate," said Tom Tunney, Alderman of the 44th Ward. "Many people are happy to pay a portion of the cost to repair the public right-of-way in front of their homes."

After CDOT engineers conduct sidewalk surveys, they calculate the proposed costs to the property owner and send them a proposed invoice. At a flat rate of \$3 per square-foot, the property owners' invoices average about \$1,000 for the typical sidewalk in front of a city lot. Property owners then have 60 days to agree to the fees and participate in the program. Last year, about 40 percent of the property owners whose sidewalks were approved for the program agreed to participate.

Before the increased funding, CDOT had expected to complete work on about 720 sidewalks in 2013. With the additional funds, the department now expects to complete nearly 1,000 shared cost sidewalk program projects this year.

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