BACKGROUND

Since the 1980s, College Township’s requirements for sidewalks have been described in Sections 180-16 and 180-16.1 of the Subdivision Ordinance; and, the construction standards have been described in Section 177-23 of the Streets and Sidewalks Ordinance. In 2006, maintenance and repair standards were added to these regulations. Snow removal requirements were added at the same time. As of March 2017, College Township has not actively enforced maintenance requiring adjacent property owners to repair damaged sidewalks. The Township also has not been actively enforcing snow removal, except on rare occasions. However, most property owners have been shoveling their sidewalks.

During the development of the Street Tree Root Damage Policy A-014 in 2016, Council recommended that College Township should begin a program to require sidewalk repairs, similar to what is done in State College Borough and Ferguson Township. After investigating each of those programs, the Township Engineer suggested that a program similar to Ferguson Township’s would be better suited for College Township.

This policy is regulated by College Township Code Sections 177-23 and 180-16. Sidewalks need to be repaired when there are horizontal separations or vertical alignments greater than one inch, where a sidewalk square has 25% or more of the surface area deteriorated, or when a 4-inch by 4-inch hole has developed.

GENERAL POLICY

Annual Inspection and Notice. In mid-April of each year, the Township Engineer or designated employee will conduct an inspection of public sidewalks in a portion of College Township and will mark out areas needed for repair or replacement. The portion of the Township to be inspected is based upon a rotating schedule, entitled Sidewalk Inspection Schedule, but may also include areas outside of that schedule for specific problems.

By May 1st of each year, a notice will be sent to affected property owners describing the repair needed and giving them 90 days to complete the repair. They will also be given the option to wait for the Township to make this repair at the property owner’s cost.

If the property owner chooses to complete the repair personally or with a private contractor, they must contact the Township Engineer when the work is being performed so that it may be inspected. The Township will not require a permit or fee for this work. All work must comply with the construction standards described below.
Bidding and Billing. On or about August 1st of each year, after the affected property owners have had 90 days to complete the repairs, the Township Engineer or designated employee will determine which sidewalk defects have been sufficiently repaired. The Township will then obtain price quotes for the remaining deficiencies, whether it is replacement, patching, or grinding. Normally, the Township will use replacement as the repair method. Note: It is assumed that the value of the work will be less than the thresholds for both formal bidding and prevailing wage, thus keeping the construction costs lower. The price quoted will include unit pricing so that the cost to each property owner can be determined. A small administrative fee will be added for the cost of bidding and inspection. All work will be completed by October 31st.

Each property owner will then receive an invoice for the costs associated with their property. Payment for invoices will be due within 30 days. Follow up collection or liens will be used, if necessary.

Construction Standards. All work performed must comply with College Township Code Section 177-23, Sidewalks, with the following exceptions.

For concrete sidewalk replacement less than one cubic yard (about 15 feet by 5 feet of sidewalk), the property owner may use a Sakcrete or Quickcrete type of product specifically produced for sidewalks and driveways, in accordance with the manufacturer’s specifications for mixing and placement.

Property owners must remove and dispose of the damaged walk. The block must be at least four inches (4") thick in residential areas and at least six inches (6") thick for driveway areas. Surface edges shall have a one-quarter inch (¼") radius. The finished surface should be made slip resistant by coarse brooming in a direction perpendicular to the street. Joint should be placed no greater than six (6) feet apart, and the width of the sidewalk block should be at least five (5) feet, unless the Township Engineer has granted an exception. A curing compound should be placed on the new concrete after brooming the finish. When having two or more blocks poured continuously, the contractor should create a saw cut or tooled joint at least six (6) feet apart and to a depth of two inches (2"). An application of boiled linseed oil should be placed 45-60 days after the pour to seal the concrete, which will reduce future salt damage.

When the Township Engineer determines that patching is acceptable, the repairs may be made using a half-and-half mixture of Portland cement and sand, or with a commercial two-part epoxy-type concrete patch material. The minimum thickness for a patch is one inch (1"). Prior to patching, the deteriorated material should be removed to expose sound concrete. The surface should be prepared with a bonding material or epoxy material, as prescribed by the patch material manufacturer.

When the Township Engineer determines that grinding is an acceptable repair, the edge of a raised block may be shaved off by using a concrete grinder, as long as the height of the raised portion is no more than one and one-half inches (1 and ½") and the slope is no greater than 12:1. After grinding, the area should be smooth in texture and level with the adjacent block. Chipping or chiseling of the raised portion is not acceptable.
Tree Root and Sidewalk Conflicts. If the sidewalk damage is a result of street tree roots, the Township Engineer may allow for strategies that would minimize the recurrence of this situation. The property owner must receive permission from the Township Engineer, in accordance with the methods described in Street Tree Root Damage Policy A-014.

DULLY APPROVED AND ENACTED this 6th day of April, 2017.

ATTEST:  

[Signature]

Adam T. Brumbaugh, Township Mgr./Secretary

COLLEGE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL:

[Signature]

D. Richard Francke, Chair

1st Revision_____

2nd Revision_____