

2022 Utility Reconstruction Neighborhood Information Packet

This packet includes information and frequently asked questions city staff have received over the years related to street and utility reconstruction projects. The city has also produced a number of YouTube videos on some of these topics available on the city website at www.crystalmn.gov. Click on “Our City,” then scroll down and look for “Public Works Projects” on the left and click on that link.

I. Construction Schedule

Construction begins in May 2022 and should be substantially complete by mid-November 2022. Substantial completion includes first layer of asphalt paving, driveway and boulevard restoration. Final completion is expected in spring/early summer 2023 (or as early as the fall of 2022) and includes paving of a final layer of asphalt, final site cleanup and restoration.

II. Project funding

The Utility Reconstruction Program is paid for primarily from water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer utility funds, which are maintained through the utility bills paid by residents and businesses. The other major source of funding is from the street maintenance fund, which is maintained primarily by property taxes, as well as State Aid funding. The Council’s goal is to be transparent with how infrastructure projects are funded, and they have the goal of not borrowing money, special assessing, nor using other funding mechanisms, such as franchise fees, to fund the Utility Reconstruction Program.

III. CenterPoint Energy

CenterPoint Energy may take advantage of utility reconstruction activities to replace portions of their existing gas main pipes with new pipes under the streets. In some cases, they will also update the gas service from the main to the house.

CenterPoint Energy will coordinate the gas service pipe work with property owners directly. This work generally takes place in advance of the City’s utility reconstruction project.

IV. Water Service Repair

Each home with a water service connected to the water main within the project area will be replaced from the main up to and including the shutoff valve (labeled E in the graphic below). By installing a temporary water main, water service to impacted homes will be maintained through the majority of construction. The temporary water main consists of a temporary PVC pipe that is served from a fire hydrant. After the water in the temporary water main passes a bacteria test to ensure it is safe for drinking and cooking, the temporary main is connected to each home at an exterior hose spigot. Brief losses of water service will occur when transferring the home from the existing water main to the temporary water main and when transferring the home from the temporary water main back to the new main. Because the temporary water main is placed above ground, the water is frequently warmer than it otherwise would be when coming from the underground, permanent water main.

V. Sanitary Sewer Service Repair (from the sewer main in the street to your home)

As part of the Utility Reconstruction Project, there is an optional sanitary sewer service lining program available. According to city ordinance, property owners own, and are responsible for, the sanitary sewer service pipe running from inside their home to the sewer main pipe in the center (generally) of the street. This service pipe is labeled C and D on the graphic shown. When problems arise, property owners are responsible for repair or replacement of that pipe including any costs for required street or boulevard patching.

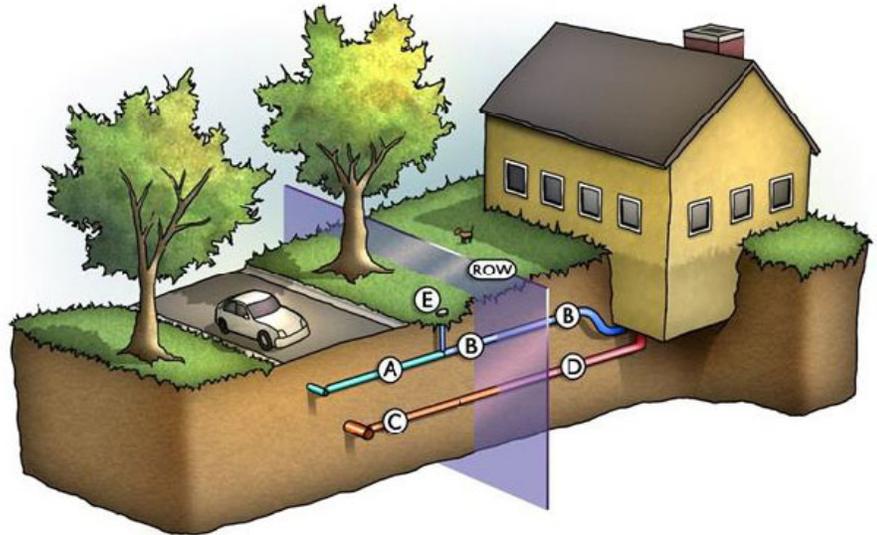


Figure 1: Figure of utility services to a home

The city is offering an optional sewer service repair program for property owners to install a liner within their existing sewer service from this connection point near the curb and extending the remaining distance to the home.

Property owners can avoid the street and boulevard repair costs by coordinating the sewer repair/replacement with the city's project. This repair is optional and is paid by the property owner. If you think you have a sanitary sewer service problem, we strongly encourage repairing it during utility reconstruction activities. Additionally, the cost of the repair can be assessed against your property and repaid over five years with interest.

A. What specifically is being offered?

The base project includes replacement of sanitary sewer services extending from the city's sewer main in the center of the street to a point approximately five (5) feet beyond the street curb, where the contractor will connect to your existing sewer service pipe. The city is offering an optional sewer service repair program for property owners to install a liner within their existing sewer service from this connection point near the curb and extending the remaining distance to the home.

Installation of a sewer service liner can assist in preventing future pipe leaks and root intrusion, which can cause sewer backups. Sewer linings help to repair pipes without having to excavate a trench to completely replace your sewer line. After the sewer service pipe is cleaned, the contractor would install the liner within the existing pipe and cure it with steam or ultraviolet light to mold the liner to the interior of the existing pipe.

B. How much will it cost me?

The estimated cost for lining residential sewer service will be based on the price the overall project contractor bid the item. With the lining being included as part of the larger project, the hope is to

have better pricing than individual homeowners get. Residents will be made aware of the price prior to committing to have the work done.

C. ***What do I do if I'm interested?***

Contact Crystal Utilities Superintendent Pat Sele at patrick.sele@crystalmn.gov or 763-531-1166 to schedule a no-cost inspection of your sanitary sewer service line. Again, there is no cost for this inspection. Please note that in order to inspect the pipe, staff will need to enter your home and the sewer cleanout will need to be readily accessible. If staff are not able to easily access the sewer cleanout, they will have to reschedule the appointment after the area has been cleared and the cleanout is accessible.

D. ***How will I pay for this work?***

The city will pay the contractor for the work at the time it occurs. The city will then assess that cost to your property relating to the sanitary sewer work in a manner similar to a street assessment back during the Street Reconstruction Program. You will have the option to prepay the full or partial amount before incurring interest cost. The deadline for payment without interest will be about Nov. 15, 2022.

E. ***Am I required to have this work done?***

Absolutely not. This is a completely optional program.

F. ***Do I have to use the city's contractor to do the work?***

It is not required to use the city's contractor; however, a separate contractor would have to closely coordinate with the city's contractor and fit their schedule. Also, you would not be able to use the special assessment option to pay for the work if it is done privately.

G. ***Are there grants available?***

You may qualify for a Crystal Economic Development Authority grant for 40% of the sewer lining cost. The income limit is 110% of metro area median income. That means most Crystal households qualify. Look for more information in the project kick-off letter after the contract is awarded in the spring. The decision to have the lining completed does not need to be made until later this spring, so we would encourage interested residents to go ahead and schedule a sanitary sewer service inspection. Due to project timelines, it is essential that properties have the inspection completed by the deadlines.

VI. **Boulevard and driveway impacts**

In order to blend some driveways and/or city-owned boulevard into the new street it is sometimes necessary to slope outside of the city's right-of-way and onto private property.

During the design process, staff checks the existing conditions of boulevard drainage and existing driveway slopes at the street relative to the new street grade. Typically, the city needs to regrade back a minimum of five to six feet on boulevards so that there is adequate drainage and the slope can be maintained. On driveways, the city desires to provide adequate drainage and ensure that driveways are not so steep that vehicle bumpers scrape when entering or exiting.

Driveways will be restored with the same type of material that the majority of the driveway is currently surfaced with (i.e., asphalt, concrete) and boulevard sloping will be restored with. All costs to restore the driveway and boulevard will be included in the project cost at no additional cost to the property owner.

In order to provide the best project possible, the city may request permission to extend the slope on your property. This “Right of Entry License” will allow the city to best blend the reconstructed street and boulevard onto the private property. Again, the cost to do this work is part of the construction project and will not be an additional expense for the property owner.

VII. Tree removals

As a result of the water and sewer utility work (including service replacements), trees may need to be removed due to their close proximity to utility services. Utility service work requires larger holes to be dug to replace the pipes. Trees that are close to these excavations may have a significant portion of their tree root systems impacted which can severely compromise the health of the tree.

Unfortunately, the utility reconstruction project does not offer a one for one replacement for trees that require removal. In fact, some properties may be offered a tree where no tree had previously existed. Only properties with adequate room for a new tree (the location of the home’s sewer and water services are considered) and where there is an opportunity to enhance the city’s urban forest are offered a tree. New trees must be planted on private property (not within city right-of-way). Eligible property owners will be contacted in the fall of the project year and provided information on what their options are for replacement trees on their property. If an eligible property owner opts in, the tree is planted free of charge.

VIII. Boulevard landscaping features

If you have private landscaping features in the city-owned boulevard (up to approximately 15 feet beyond the edge of the street) that are of value to you, and their location conflicts with proposed street and utility reconstruction activities, please relocate them out of the boulevard before street reconstruction begins this spring.

These landscaping features include, but are not limited to, mulch, plastic and brick garden edging, decorative stones, planters, statues, invisible fences, and plants or bushes.

If you choose not to relocate your particular landscaping feature before street reconstruction begins in front of your home, the street contractor will remove and dispose of the landscaping feature for you as part of their work. The street contractor will not replace any landscaping features that they remove.

If you have any questions about whether utility reconstruction activities may disturb your particular landscaping feature, please contact the project staff.

IX. Underground pet containment and lawn irrigation systems

Some residents have installed these systems not only in their yard, but also in the city-owned boulevard (up to approximately 15 feet beyond the edge of the street). If you have not yet told us that one of these systems exists in the city-owned boulevard in front of your home, please tell us now.

Utility reconstruction will likely impact the portion of these systems that are located within the city-owned boulevard. Because these are private systems that homeowners choose to install, all costs

associated with protecting and adjusting the location of these systems out of the way of street and utility reconstruction and repairing these systems after the utility and street construction has been completed are the property owner's responsibility.

Please watch for more information in the project newsletters for when to remove the systems before construction begins and when you may reinstall them.

X. New sod placement

Many locations in the project area will need to be restored with new sod. If new sod is placed on your property, or in the boulevard in front of your property, you need to care for that new sod. Information regarding the care of new sod is included at the end of this packet. Once the sod has become initially established after installation, it will not be replaced if it subsequently dies after care is turned over to the property owner.

XI. Driveway access

Throughout construction, efforts will be made to maintain access to each driveway; however, there will be times when this is not possible. Examples include when the water and sewer main in the street right in front of your home are dug up; preparation and pouring of curb and gutter, and briefly while paving is occurring. Impacted residents will be notified via door hanger the day before restrictions go into effect. Make sure to routinely check your main door for door hanger updates during the entire construction process.

XII. Driveway aprons

As part of the utility reconstruction project, asphalt driveways that have a small apron (concrete section) at the street will have that section removed and replaced with asphalt. This is to make the whole driveway of uniform materials.



Figure 2. Aprons like this will be replaced with asphalt behind the curb

The reasons for this approach are:

- 1) To make the driveway more uniform in appearance.
- 2) To make the driveway easier to maintain as the same maintenance approach can be used for the entire driveway.
- 3) To save money during driveway replaced in the very distant future. The cost of removing concrete is considerably higher than asphalt.
- 4) To save steps during driveway restoration. Reinstalling a concrete apron adds an additional step (potentially multiple steps) and vehicles will not be able to use the driveway for longer periods of time while the curb is poured and dries.
- 5) To provide a uniform appearance for all driveways along the street.

XIII. Non-conforming driveways

City Code defines allowable driveway and curb cut widths. There are specific requirements based on whether a residential property has a single or multi-car garage. There are also special criteria that affect the rule. Residents with no garage or a single car garage are allowed a maximum 16-foot wide curb cut. Residents with multi-car garages are allowed a maximum 22-foot wide curb cut.

A review will be conducted in the project area to identify non-conforming driveways (driveways that do not meet the current code). The non-conforming portion could be in the boulevard, on private property, or both. Property owners with non-conforming driveways will be notified.

During street reconstruction activities, the city will reconstruct the curb cut and boulevard portion of these non-conforming driveways to meet the current code. This work is typically done at no cost to the property owner. There may be an opportunity to increase the width of the curb cut or boulevard driveway beyond current conditions and still stay within the code. This type of work would typically involve additional cost to the property owner. If you have questions, please contact the project team.

XIV. Private driveway construction

If you are considering the replacement of your entire driveway, let us know. All driveways in the project area will be impacted by the project. The window when private driveway work can be done while the utility reconstruction project is going on is fairly small. Due to the size and impacts of the utility project, accommodations cannot be made to allow private work to happen if it conflicts with utility project progress. The option of replacement of private driveways by the city's contractor is not within the scope of the utility reconstruction project. Please contact the project team for more information.

XV. Mail collection and delivery

Mail delivery and pickup will continue as normal throughout construction.

XVI. Trash and recycling pickup

Trash and recycling pickup will continue throughout construction as normal. When construction is taking place on your street, continue putting receptacles at the end of your driveway. If needed, due to construction activity road closures, the city contractor will pickup the receptacles, place them in a common location outside of the construction limits and return them to the end of each driveway after collection. Each resident should label their receptacles with their address to assist in returning the carts to the right home. When the road is not blocked due to construction activities, trash and recycling pickup will continue and your carts should be placed where they normally are for service.



Caring For Your New Sod

One of the final steps in the street reconstruction process is the installation of the new sod. To help the new sod take root and stay healthy, your assistance is needed. Please follow these guidelines when caring for your new sod.

Sod Responsibility

The contractor is responsible for watering the sod for the first 30 days. City staff will inspect the sod after 30 days and any sod that does not meet contract specifications will be replaced. **After the first 30 days, property owners are responsible for regularly watering and caring for the new sod.** The contractor will assist with watering beyond the first 30 days if there is little rainfall or extended hot temperatures.

Watering

New sod requires around 2 inches of water per week which can be spread out over three to four water applications. Watering the new sod should be done daily if there is little rainfall and hot temperatures. Because the roots are so shallow, the roots dry out faster than mature lawns.

Please note that mature lawns require around a minimum of 1 inch of water per week to be healthy. When watering mature grass, please keep in mind that frequent, lighter waterings are not desirable, as they encourage shallow roots instead of deep roots. Lawns need deep roots to help them withstand periods of little or no rain. The roots of new sod require about a year to reach their full length.

To check if you are watering enough, place a shallow, flat-bottomed container such as a cake pan under the sprinkler spray. Time how long it takes for the pan to fill to the desired water depth (1 inch per week for mature lawns). The time it takes is how long you should generally water your grass per application. Please note that any rainfall received during the week can be included in the weekly watering total.

Please note, if you received a new driveway as part of the driveway program, you are responsible for watering sod placed along the edges of your driveway on your private property as soon as the sod is installed. The contractor will not water sod on your private property.

Sod protection

Please avoid walking on the new sod for the first three weeks.

Mowing

New sod should not be mowed until the sod is well rooted to the soil. Set the mower deck at the highest setting and cut the new sod with this setting for the remainder of the year. our new sod will die if you cut it at the same setting as the one you ordinarily use to cut your mature lawn. A healthy grass height for established lawns is around 3 inches, cutting the grass to a shorter height may result in the grass drying out faster during little rainfall periods or hot temperatures.

Fertilizing

You will not need to fertilize the sod until the Spring of 2023 at the earliest. If you fertilize sooner, you risk killing the sod. When you do fertilize, use a 10-10-10 or similar mixture and follow manufacturer's instructions on application rates. After one year, switch back to a "0" phosphorous fertilizer (the middle number) as required by state law.

Your assistance with the new sod care is appreciated.