

Dear Property Owner,

As part of its ongoing street maintenance program, the Department of Public Services regularly reviews the city's unimproved roadways and coordinates routine cape seal treatment. Your street has been identified for inclusion in this year's program.

The following answers some frequently-asked questions and addresses some common concerns.

**What is an 'unimproved' road?**

An unimproved road is a gravel road, with or without curbs, that has been treated with cape seal to provide a relatively smooth and dust-free driving surface.

**What is cape seal treatment?**

Cape seal is a two-stage roadway surface treatment that provides unimproved roads with a moisture-resistant seal and a smoother driving surface. The process involves rolling stone chips into a layer of 200°F asphalt, followed several days later by an application of a slurry micro-surface.

Cape seal is not a permanent solution; average life expectancy is less than 10 years.

**What will the maintenance cost?**

Since 1948, the City policy for assessing street maintenance work on unimproved streets is conducted in accordance with the following:

- Eighty-five percent of the front-foot costs for improvement are assessed on all property fronting on the improvement.
- Twenty-five percent of the side-foot costs for improvement are assessed on all residential property siding on the improvement.
- Eighty-five percent of the side-foot costs for improvement are assessed on improved business property siding on the improvement.
- Twenty-five percent of side-foot costs for improvement are assessed on vacant business property siding on the improvement.

The balance of the cost, 15% and 75%, front footage and side footage respectively, is paid by the City.

Estimated per-foot costs for each property range from \$13.25 - \$21.83, and vary depending on street dimensions and the required treatment. These estimates include the costs associated with a requirement to upgrade crosswalk ramps to new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

**When will the work commence?**

Cape seal work is expected to begin by September 1, 2017 and the entire project is expected to be completed by September 30, 2017. The work on individual roadways should be completed within a week, depending on weather conditions. ADA Crosswalk ramp upgrades will begin in July.

**What parking/traffic disruptions can be expected?**

Residents can expect minimal traffic and parking disruptions during the course of the project.

During both the chip and slurry phases of the project, street-side parking will be prohibited. The work will be performed on one half of the roadway at a time, allowing for ingress and egress of residents' vehicles. Traffic can return to normal immediately following the chip phase; after the final slurry coat, traffic will be restricted for several hours until the surface coat cures.

Residents will be notified in advance of such restrictions via road signs and door flyers.

**The edge isn't straight, and in some places extends too far over roadway edge.**

Uncurbed roads do not run consistently straight. As a result, some areas may initially have chips and slurry that extend past the roadway edge, despite the contractor's efforts to maintain a clean edge. After normal use, however, this excess material tends to break away.

**The new surface doesn't match the profile or extent of my driveway approach.**

On unimproved roads, residents often alter the profile or extent of their property's driveway approach. The contractor will make efforts to match this with the treatment, but is limited by the nature of the process and the equipment involved.

**The slurry coat is brown and has inconsistent coloring.**

The slurry coat, when first applied, appears brown in color. This will change to a grayish-black as it cures. Once cured, there may be some slight inconsistency in color that will fade with time and traffic use.

**What are the limitations of cape seal treatment?**

Unimproved streets are not engineered roadways. Engineered, or *improved* roads are professionally designed by engineering firms to include proper drainage, grade, base construction, and other structural considerations. Because cape seal is only a surface treatment on *unimproved* roads, longevity cannot be guaranteed and the streets remain subject to weather- and traffic-related wear. **Issues related to standing water, drainage, grade, and profile cannot be remedied through cape seal treatment.**

It is important to remember that cape seal is not a fix-all. Bumps and dips (with the exception of potholes) are likely to remain after the project. Further, in some cases, new issues can arise as a result of the treatment.

**What options are available for a better, more permanent road pavement?**

The cost of installing a permanent pavement is substantially more than cape seal. As a result, such projects are only initiated after a petition has been received indicating that over half of the owners on a street are in favor. Visit [www.bhamgov.org/streets](http://www.bhamgov.org/streets) or call the Engineering Department at 248.530.1840 for more details.

**Who can I contact with questions about the cape seal project?**

DPS staff will be assigned to oversee the contractor throughout all phases of the project. They will be available on-site to address general questions and concerns. For other, more specific issues contact Aaron Filipksi, Public Services Manager, at 248.530.1701 or [afilipksi@bhamgov.org](mailto:afilipksi@bhamgov.org).