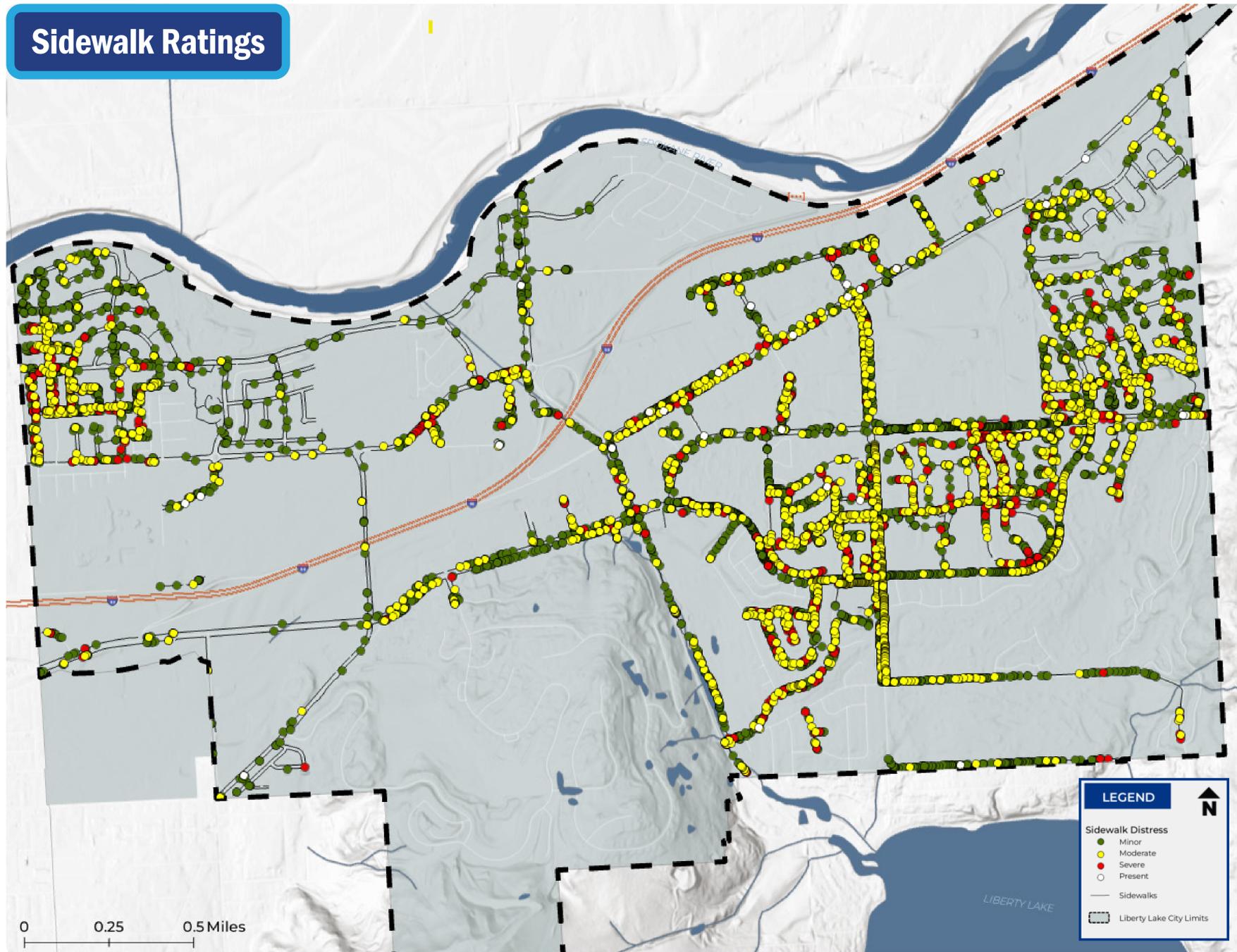


Current Sidewalk Conditions & Challenges

Sidewalk Ratings



Maintaining safe, accessible sidewalks is a key responsibility for the City of Liberty Lake. As the community grows, aging sidewalks, tree root damage, and weather-related wear pose increasing challenges. Ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and minimizing liability risks require a proactive approach to sidewalk maintenance.

Current Challenges in Sidewalk Maintenance

Sidewalk Damage

- ◆ **Tree Roots:** Some of Liberty Lake's mature trees are damaging sidewalks by lifting concrete slabs. This can be caused by inherently shallow roots and/or by insufficient watering, causing the tree roots to remain on the surface instead of growing deeper into the ground.
- ◆ **Weather Conditions:** Freeze-thaw cycles cause cracks and heaving, especially in winter.
- ◆ **Aging Infrastructure:** Some sidewalk sections in older neighborhoods are reaching the end of their lifespan.
- ◆ **New Development and Settling:** Rapid growth and new developments can lead to soil shifting, creating uneven sidewalks.

Liability and Compliance

- ◆ **ADA non-compliance** due to sidewalk tripping hazards.
- ◆ **Property Owner Responsibility:** Liberty Lake City Ordinance No. 123 puts the burden of maintaining and repairing sidewalks on the abutting property owner. It can be challenging to get the property owner to act in a timely manner. If the property owner does not complete the repairs, the city has limited options for enforcement.
- ◆ **City Liability** due to neglected repairs resulting in injuries.

Risk Management

- ◆ **Increased Litigation:** Washington Cities Insurance Authority (WCIA) has recently reported an 84% rise in claims and rising settlement amounts related to sidewalk hazards.