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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **More than 90 percent of potholes in Chattanooga have been filled; more paving on the way**

*Upcoming budget includes a third pothole crew and two more pothole inspectors, \$10 million in new paving, as well as asphalt rejuvenation*

**Chattanooga, Tenn. (Tuesday, June 28)** — At the direction of Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly, the city's Department of Public Works has inspected more than 95 percent of all streets and filled in 90 percent of all potholes, according to a report delivered to City Council.

The city has added a third pothole repair crew and two more pothole inspectors in the upcoming budget, and is adding three utility inspectors to ensure that street cuts by local utilities are properly repaired. The city is also requiring local utilities to implement full-lane road patches to begin eliminating the quilt of spot patches that often lead to bumpy, uneven surfaces.

While potholes will continue to occur through heavy traffic and the freeze/thaw cycle, the urgent work of getting caught up and the addition of road crews will allow future potholes to be filled more quickly, Kelly said.

"Transportation is critical to getting to work, going to school, and engaging with our outdoor assets, which is why we've placed a healthy emphasis on addressing our city's aging infrastructure," said Mayor Tim Kelly. "After all, if residents can't trust their local government to take care of potholes, then why would they trust it to address housing, gun violence and job creation?"

Potholes begin to form when rainwater seeps into small cracks caused by heavy traffic. In the Winter, freezing temperatures cause the water to turn into ice, which expands as it cools. That expansion widens cracks and weakens the rock, gravel and sand beneath. Eventually, this cycle of freezing and thawing softens and erodes the underlying roadbed, allowing the surface to break apart and sink into the softened bed below.

Along with filling potholes, Public Works has created work orders for issues that require more than a patch, such as utility trench settlement, base failure, lack of base, and slope failure. And officials are finalizing the paving plan for 2024 and 2025, which should be released in the coming weeks.

The enhanced emphasis on potholes and paving is part of Mayor Tim Kelly's One Chattanooga strategy. One of the seven major priorities under the plan is improving our local infrastructure, including timely, equitable and responsive repairs to potholes and aging roads.

However, there are some roads the city doesn't repair, including state roads, private streets, parking lots and alleys. Examples of roads the city does not maintain would include the Eastgate Town Center loop, U.S. 27, and I-24.

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# *Improve our* **Local Infrastructure**

**WHERE WE BUILD A STRONG  
FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE**

## **ONE CHATTANOOGA**

### **CITY PRIORITIES:**

1. Ensure timely, equitable, and responsive repairs to potholes and aging roads
2. Develop a strategic capital plan that includes long-term maintenance
3. Modernize our transit system and build a multimodal street network
4. Design Chattanooga for inclusive and sustainable growth
5. Expand and connect our local parks, trails, and greenways system
6. Invest in sustainable and resilient infrastructure

# Pothole Program

- What we're doing:
  - All City streets inspected and potholes patched by Fall 2022
    - As of 6/20/2022:
      - 95% of all streets have been inspected
      - 90% of all potholes have been filled
  - Work orders created for issues beyond patching

*Potholes will continue to occur with the freeze/thaw cycle*

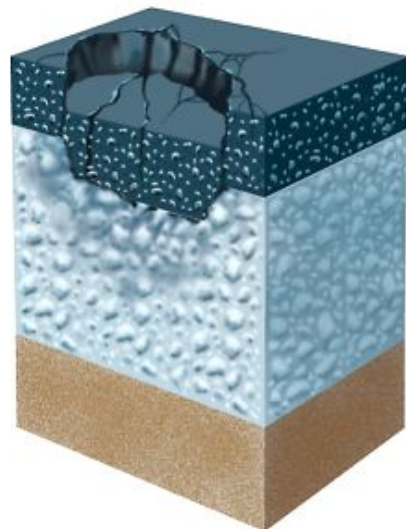
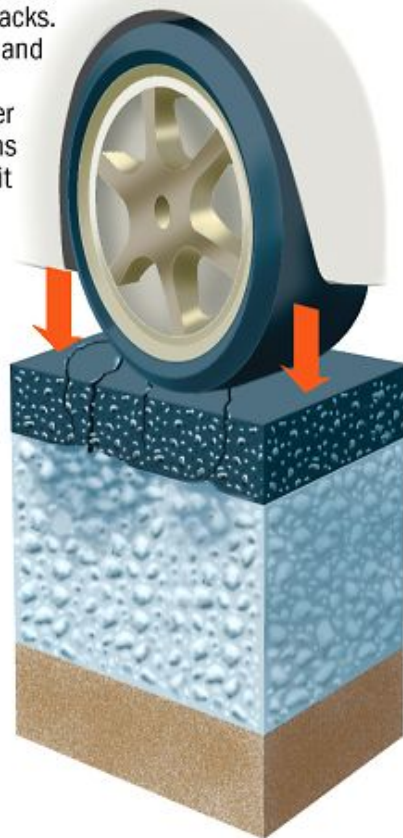
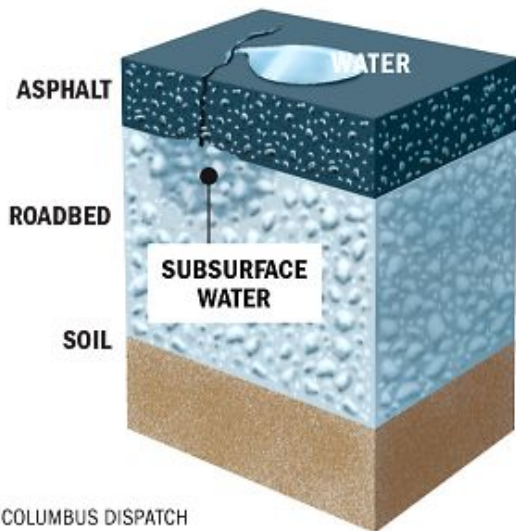
- What we're going to do:
  - Hiring a 3rd pothole crew with the FY23 budget
  - Hiring 2 more inspectors with the FY23 budget
  - Pave \$10M a year with local funds
  - Apply rejuvenator to 3 to 4 year old paving projects
  - Maintain a rebuild list to apply for Build Back Better funds

## How potholes form

**1** Rainwater seeps into cracks caused by heavy traffic. Low temperatures make the water freeze, expanding and deepening the cracks, and creating more fissures. The water also seeps into the rock, gravel and sand that make up the roadbed, softening it.

**2** Passing vehicles create more cracks. Rain and melted snow continue to seep into the cracks. When it freezes and expands, the subsurface water lifts and weakens the road; when it melts and contracts, it leaves a cavity.

**3** The roadbed continues to soften and erode, weakening the base support. Small chunks of the road break off, and more small cracks appear. Eventually, with the continued passage of vehicles, the surface breaks apart and is pushed down into the soft roadbed. The pothole is formed.







## **The City's full-time Pothole Inspector, Dredrick Brown.**

This new position reviews roadway problems for efficient repair by a patch truck, creates work orders to address underlying issues, and will routinely monitor Chattanooga's roads to proactively preserve a state of good repair.

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## **Daily patching with three crews**

- Reassigned speed hump installation and maintenance crew using trailer
- New crew and patch truck in FY23





Patches installed to last

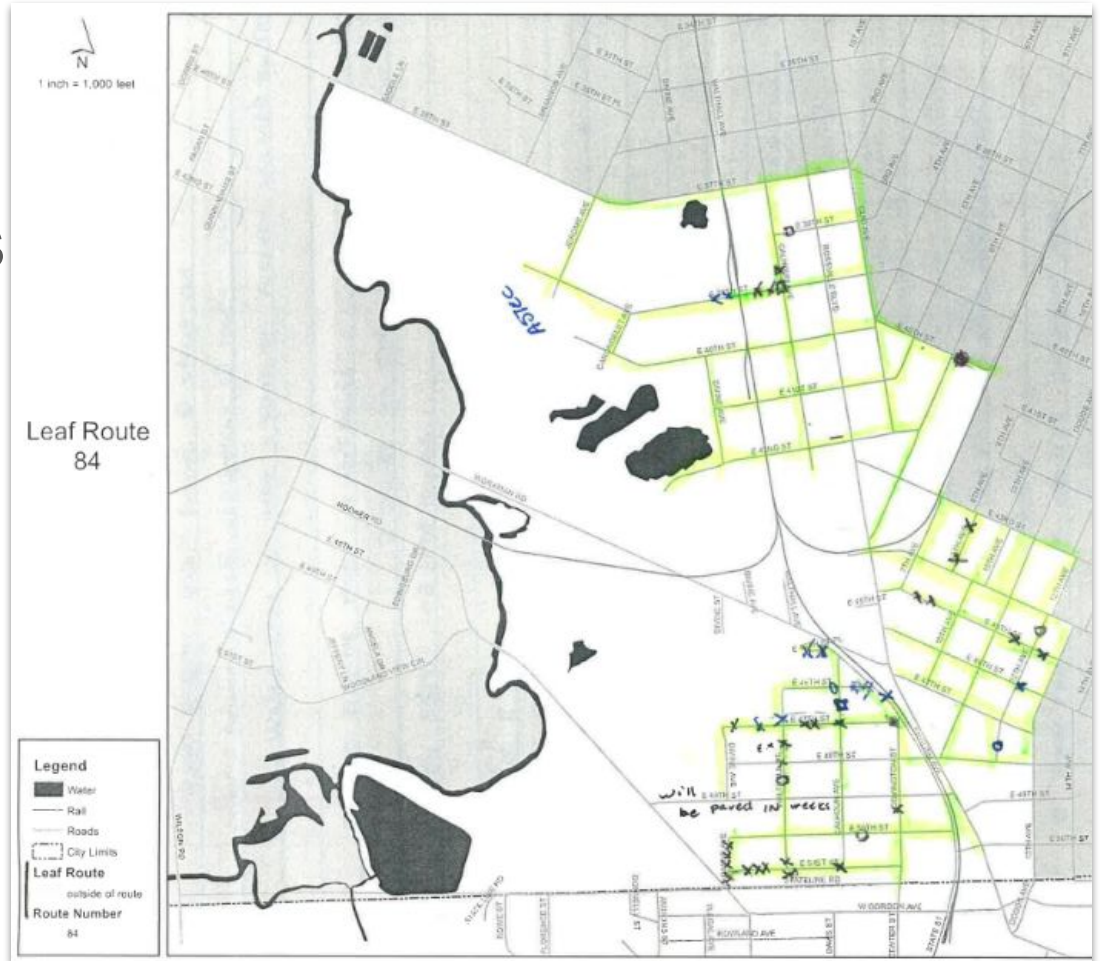
Clean - Emulsion - Hot mix - Tamp

(Warm weather work as if requires the asphalt plants to be open)



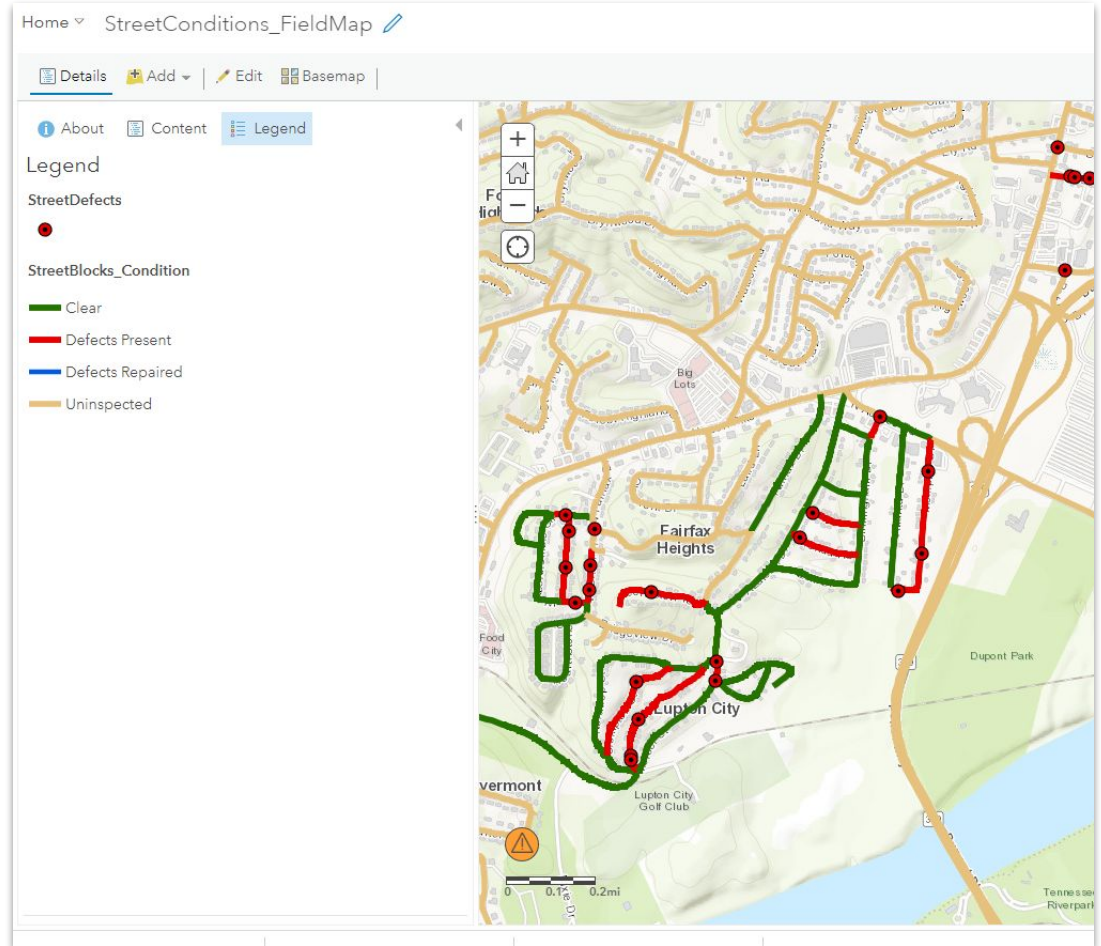


# Street by street review and repair following route maps





# Now tracking street review and repairs with the Street Condition map



## Pothole and Patch







Utility  
Trench  
Settlement



Slope  
failure







Base  
failure



Lack  
of base



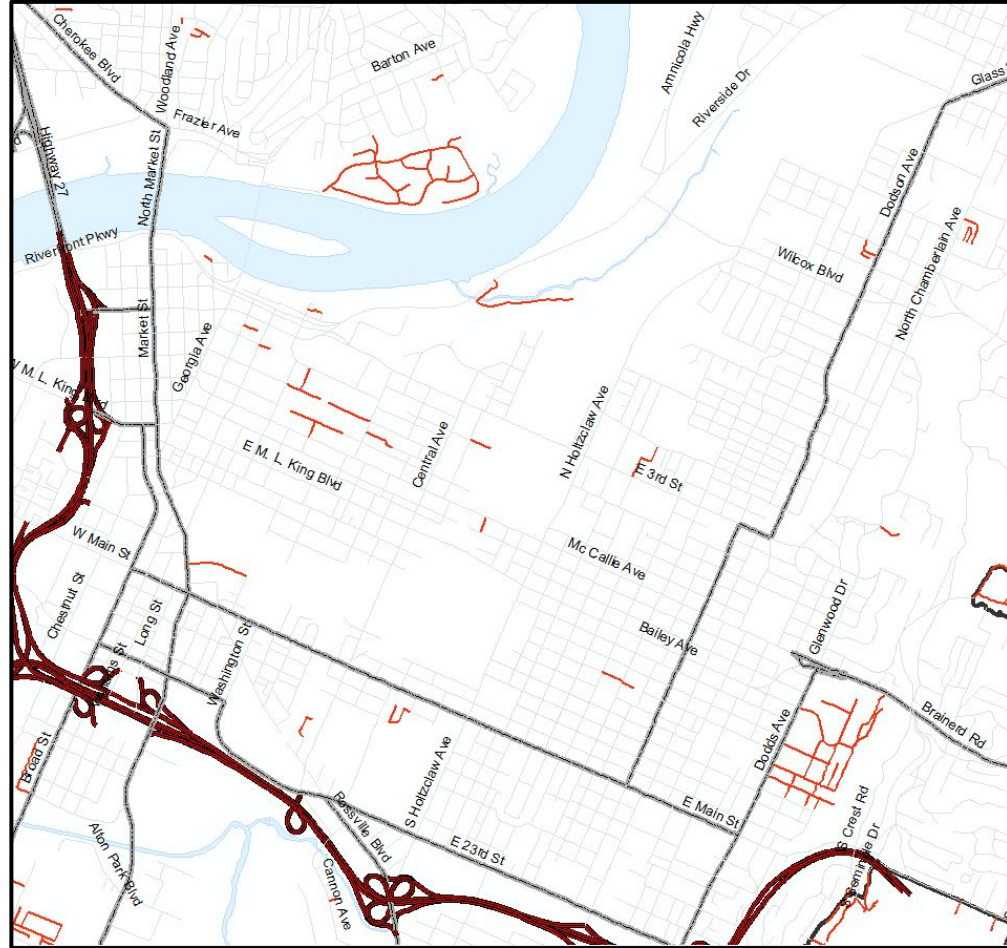


# City crew street repair

- 83 Sewer trench repairs
  - City forces repair about 10 a year
- 257 Roadway repairs
  - City forces repair about 30 a year
- More with the use of grant money

## Not City streets:

- State roads
- Private streets
- Parking lots
- Alleys





Utility  
valves

Plated  
trench



Utility  
cut

Milled  
flowable  
fill





## Utility work oversight

Going from one inspector to four (audit recommendation):

- Two staff reassignments
- Adding two inspectors FY23
- Permit process changes to cut office work by 40%







Old utility patches

New full lane  
utility patch

# Patching to Paving





## Paving



- Pothole inspection and repair now proactive, not complaint-only based
- 90% of pothole patched
- \$10 Million a year going to resurfacing
- Utility patches are full lane repairs
- Permit warranty inspections

