

METROPOLITAN CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION GARAGE PROJECT UPDATE

October 7, 2025

What Is Happening?

As of this writing, the Board is working with a qualified engineering firm to prepare construction bid documents to obtain multiple quotes to undertake a major repair to our parking garage structure.

Quick History and Synopsis

Our building was constructed in 1985 and occupied in 1986. Common construction practices at the time did not include sealing of parking garage surfaces. That technology was developed in ensuing years, and in 2013 we surface-sealed the parking pads throughout the garage to slow the damage being caused to the garage structural concrete by water, ice, road salt, ice-melt compounds, auto chemicals, oils, etc. The garage has been visually inspected after each winter season since then, and isolated surface areas and support columns have been spot-repaired each year. The number of areas needing repairs has grown exponentially in recent years, indicating accelerating deterioration of the structure. After the 2024-25 winter season, the Board researched a number of qualified engineering firms with specialties in parking structures, and hired ZS, LLC Engineering Services to conduct a thorough evaluation of the garage structure for safety, stability and longevity. That evaluation work was undertaken and completed in 2025, and we received the engineer's report and recommendations in late September 2025. That report was discussed at the September 30 Board Meeting and posted to The Met's website for owners to review. The engineering company recommends a substantial repair of the existing garage structure, and estimates that the cost for the needed structural repairs to be approximately \$5.33 million. Additional work needs to be done to repair the garage to bring it up to current Chicago building code standards. That work includes electrical, plumbing, garage roof replacement, and fire suppression system replacement. The Board is also investigating the feasibility and expense of wiring the entire garage for eventual EV charging station access in every parking stall. ZS, LLC Engineering Services works with a number of contractors who specialize in each of those areas and is seeking initial cost estimates from companies who can perform that work. Once we receive the initial estimates for all requested components, the Board will evaluate and determine how best to proceed.

Why Didn't We Get Multiple Evaluations?

Cable-tensioned concrete structural evaluation is a specialty field, and there are a limited number of engineering firms who are qualified and experienced to do such an evaluation. The Board investigated several engineering firms to perform our evaluation, and ultimately selected ZS based on several factors including ZS's ability to do a staged evaluation with associated costs, significant experience with similar structures in Chicago and the Midwest, and a project-specific menu of individualized evaluation services. We were also able to get the evaluation done more quickly than with the other firms initially investigated. The time and expense to do such a structural evaluation is not small, and the Board chose to work with one company to perform the evaluation. When we get to the bid stage, multiple construction companies will be invited to submit proposals for the repair project.

Why Can't We Continue to Spot-Repair the Garage?

Based on our annual visual inspection, it is clear that our garage structure is deteriorating more quickly now – which is not uncommon for a cable-tensioned concrete structure that is 40+ years old in a four-season climate. That observation was confirmed in the engineer's report. Significant structural repairs are now needed to ensure the stability, safety and longevity of our garage, and failure to do so will likely mean teardown and replacement of the entire garage in between 5 to 7 years, based on the evaluation from ZS, LLC Engineering Services. Initial rough estimates to tear down and replace the garage are over \$20 million at today's prices.

Can We Stage the Repairs over Multiple Years or Individual Floors?

No. No general contractor or subcontractor will assume liability or responsibility for partial repairs in a structure needing significant work. Based on the current structural evaluation, ZS, LLC Engineering Services believes that the repair work needed can be done over one construction season (April – October) – assuming we commence the work in the next two years. Delays in beginning the repairs will likely mean additional deterioration of the structure, additional repair work needed, additional expense, and a longer construction timeline.

How Much Will This Cost?

As of this writing, we have only a cost estimate for the structural repairs needed (approximately \$5.33 million). We are in the process of obtaining estimates for the other project components as outlined above. Once we have initial proposals for each project component, we will be able to provide a round-figure overall project expense. The actual costs will be determined once we bid each piece and sign contracts for the work to be done.

Why Do We Need a Special Assessment for This? Can't We Just Budget for It?

The Metropolitan Condominium Association's annual operating budget is \$2.2 million. That covers the annual operation and general maintenance expenses for the building. A project expense of this magnitude cannot be covered by operational or cap ex reserve funds.

"I don't own a parking stall. Why do I have to pay?"

Per Met Condo Association governing documents, all Met owners own and are responsible for a proportionate percentage of the entire building (in addition to the individual owned assets within). As with the elevator project we completed a few years ago, all Met owners will be responsible for their own proportionate percentage of the garage repairs, as the garage is a structural asset of the building.

Why Can't The Met Take Out a Loan for This?

The Metropolitan Condominium Association cannot pledge the building as an asset for collateral on a loan, as the association does not own the building. The individual owners own the building. Additionally, without significant assets to pledge, the Met Condo Association may have to take out additional insurance or a bond before any lender would agree to loan the association the funds required for the

project, or any construction company would agree to do the job. The loan interest expenses at today's market rates plus the cost of a potential insurance policy or bond (if we were actually able to obtain them) would add an additional \$1.08 million or more to the project estimate over 3 years, or \$1.44 million or more to the project estimate over 4 years.

Can We Stretch Out the Project Timeline to Make It More Affordable for Owners?

The Board and ZS, LLC Engineering Services evaluated the current state of the garage structure, and it appears that work needs to be done in 2027 before additional deterioration occurs that would significantly impact scope of work, cost and timeline. To meet that timetable, construction bidding documents need to be completed now, and bid out in the next few months – as specialty contractors required to do this work lock in their project schedules a year or more in advance. The Board is investigating whether we can postpone the start time of the project by one year (construction to commence and be completed in 2028). We know that extending the start date by a year will increase work required to fix the garage structure, overall project cost and project completion timeline. Whether that results in a lower/higher per-month expense for all owners or merely a lengthening of owner payments is being determined.

What are the Next Steps?

The Board has instructed ZS, LLC Engineering Services to proceed with drafting project bid documents for the necessary structural repairs, and also obtain project estimates for garage electrical, plumbing, roof, fire suppression and potential EV wiring. We hope to have those component estimates in the next month. The Board and Management Team are investigating alternate parking options in the neighborhood, and will share information once we have it. Parking stall owners will need to obtain their own alternate parking arrangements once we have a confirmed start/end date for the construction. We are hopeful we can negotiate discounted alternate parking options for all vehicle owners at the time that alternative parking is needed. Additionally, the Board and Management Team are investigating more favorable loan options for owners with local banks if we are able to consolidate as many owner loans as possible at a single lending institution. We will share more information on those options once we have them. **Once we have obtained this additional information, there will be a special meeting of all Metropolitan Condominium Association owners (targeting the next month or so --exact date TBD as of this writing) to discuss the project. All Met Owners will be notified of the meeting date/time once scheduled.**

I Have Other Questions: Where Do I Find More Information and Who Do I Talk To?

The ZS, LLC Engineering Services report and the meeting slides from the September 30 Board meeting were posted to the Met's website at www.metcondo.com You can review that information there. Following below are two slides from the meeting.

Contact Met Condo Association Manager David Slack if you have additional questions at this time.

Met Parking Garage Project Summary as of September 2025

- Annual Parking Garage walkthrough inspection completed in March 2025 with staff, board and masonry contractor
- Due to additional deterioration seen on walkthrough inspection, staff and board researched and evaluated specialty engineering firms to provide thorough evaluation of existing structure
- Contracted with ZS Architectural Engineering, Inc. to conduct comprehensive engineering study, March 2025
- ZS Architectural Engineering and Grove Masonry Maintenance, Inc. completed field work on Parking Garage structural integrity, June and July 2025. Grove Masonry completed additional spot repairs at those times.
- ZS Architectural completed engineering evaluation and initial project cost estimates to repair existing garage structure. Report received September 23, 2025
- Board met with ZS Architectural to review report findings and recommendations on September 29, 2025
- **Next Steps:** Board to work with ZS Architectural to secure and provide cost estimates from qualified subcontracting firms for garage lighting, plumbing, fire suppression system, garage electrical, and garage roof (sun deck/tennis courts) refurbishment/replacement. Those estimates will be included in project specifications for presentation to Met Owners at forthcoming special meeting – timing TBD



Met Parking Garage – Some key info:

Our poured-in-place concrete parking garage was built in 1986. The concrete is reinforced with hundreds of tendons, which are essentially thick metal cables wrapped in plastic for protection. The tendons meet at the columns and help support the entire structure.



During the study, the engineer found that a number of tendons are no longer holding tension.

The most important point is that the engineer tells us that our garage is safe for use, but it's time to take action to: 1) replace the tendons that have failed, and 2) prevent more tendons from failing

Examples of failed tendons:

