

NEW YORK POST

NEW NIGHTMARE ON 14th ST.: SHODDY SIDEWALKS

By PAUL SCHWARTZMAN

The problem-plagued renovation of 14th Street has hit yet another snag.

Renovation on the sidewalks along the street is so shoddy that the contractor will have to make an estimated \$1 million in repairs, a city engineer has found.

The engineer, from the office of Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger, discovered cracked sidewalks, potholes and uneven surfaces that drain water into stores instead of the street.

In a Nov. 24 memo to Messinger, engineer Rich Herschlag wrote that few property owners along the street will want to pay the

A city engineer found numerous cracks, potholes and surfaces that drain water into stores.

city for the sidewalk work — "and frankly we can't blame them."

"What I found was an incredibly high incidence of defects, well below the standards for recently

completed work," wrote Herschlag, who inspected the street Oct. 27.

Joe DePlasco, spokesman for the city Department of Transportation, said property owners won't

have to pay for problems caused by the contractor, Perez Interborough Asphalt. DOT is already withholding \$2.5 million from Perez for poor work.

DePlasco said many of the problems flagged by Herschlag had already been noted by DOT officials, who have instructed Perez to make the repairs.

The contractor was ordered to make repairs to 13,600 of the thoroughfare's

270,000 square feet — most of which has been done.

"They found what we found — and we took steps to correct it," DePlasco said. "The contractor has just gotten to it. The job is coming to an end."

Messinger, whose office monitors the project, charged that the DOT isn't doing enough to get the contractor to make the repairs.

"They should be out there pursuing it with a ven-

geance," Messinger said. "The work was so badly done that it could damage peoples' capacity to do business."

The \$24 million renovation project, which covers 14th Street from river to river, has been plagued by problems since it began in June 1990.

It has caused a traffic nightmare along the thoroughfare.

NY POST NOV. 27, 1992

Nov. 27, 1992