

## Sidewalk Repair Frequently Asked Questions

- **Why was the sidewalk painted with pink paint?**

The City Engineering Department inspects sidewalks for safety defects in response to citizen complaint, reported falls, or scheduled inspection areas of the city.

- **What does the paint marking on the sidewalk mean?**

The edges of tripping hazards are painted to visually alert pedestrians to the defect and reduce the chance for a fall. The sidewalk panel(s) will be marked for repair with dots on the opposing corners of the panel or with arrows used to mark the limits of replacement for multipanel replacement areas.

- **At a street intersection, if the corner panel or pedestrian ramp are marked, who will pay for that?**

The pedestrian ramps, including the corner panel at a street intersection are the responsibility of the City. The City will repair the pedestrian ramp area at no cost to the property owner.

- **Can the cost of the sidewalk repair be added to the property taxes?**

If the City completes the sidewalk repair, the property owner will receive an invoice after the work is done and the contract has been completed. If the invoice is not paid within 30-days, the amount will be assessed to the property and interest will be added to the total. Once a year, normally in October or November, all unpaid invoices are referred to the City Council for collection through property tax assessment. For sidewalk replacement, the period of time that this assessment will run on the property taxes is five years.

- **How much will it cost if the City does the work?**

Property owners can call (605) 743-5872 for a square foot estimate of the sidewalk repair.

- **How does the City cost compare with private contractors?**

The City would rather the sidewalk replacement work be completed by private contractors and recommends that property owners use the private contractors whenever possible. However, It has not always been economical for property owners to attract private contractors to small sidewalk replacement jobs. Because the City's rates are set based on the area of the sidewalk replacement, the property owner can usually obtain a lower price from a private contractor if the job is larger. The City rate could be lower than the private contractor rate for small jobs. The job size at which the private contractors will charge less is dependent on several factors including 'how busy the sidewalk contractor is'.

- **Will the City contractor replace sidewalk that was not marked?**

The City Sidewalk Replacement Contract will only replace the sidewalk panels that were marked as a safety hazard and typically will not replace additional sidewalk panels, (unless it is deemed necessary by the sidewalk inspector at the time of contract to do more) driveway aprons, service walk, or concrete on private property. The property owner must have this type of work completed by the private contractors.

- **Who can do the sidewalk repair work?**

The property owner can replace the sidewalk. Property owners that consider completing their own sidewalk should be aware that concrete work is difficult to complete properly and the City holds the property owner's workmanship to the same quality standards to which contractors are held. The property owner can hire a bonded and insured sidewalk contractor. The property owner can have the City do the work. Any individuals paid by the property owner for sidewalk replacement are contractors and therefore must be bonded and insured with the City.

- **How do I find a contractor?**

The Yellow Pages can be used as a resource in contacting 'Concrete Contractors'. Ask for references. Ask friends and acquaintances for recommendations (Note: The City will not specifically recommend a contractor).

- **Who gets the permit?**

The person/contractor doing the work obtains the permit. If a contractor is hired, they must obtain the permit. If the property owner will do the work themselves, they must obtain the permit. Permits are obtained at City Office - 301 E Willow Street. There is a nominal fee for the permit. All that is needed is the address of the property, the name of the person or contractor conducting the sidewalk replacement, and the approximate lineal foot of sidewalk to be repaired. Permits will normally be issued while you wait.

- **What if a tree root lifted the sidewalk?**

The following summary applies to most situations:

The sidewalk replacement process requires the cutting and grinding of the tree roots to a depth of 12" below the bottom of the sidewalk to allow for new root growth.

The property owner is responsible for the sidewalk replacement for sidewalks raised by trees roots.

- **Is mud jacking permitted?**

Mud jacking is not recommended as a sidewalk replacement/repair process by the City if the damage is being caused by a tree root. However, the city does not prohibit the practice with the following limitations:

- Only panels that are settled may be lifted by mud jacking.
- Mud jacking is at the property owner's risk. If unsuccessful, the sidewalk must be replaced.
- **Permits** are needed for mud jacking, and, the property owner must receive an inspection by the City Engineers Office to comply with the sidewalk replacement notice/order.

- **Is grinding permitted?**

Grinding is not recommended as a sidewalk replacement/repair process by the city, if the damage is being caused by a tree root.. However, the city does not prohibit the practice with the following limitations:

- Only panels that are raised may be ground and the vertical limit of grinding is a maximum of 1-1/4".
  - Grinding is at the property owner's risk. If unsuccessful, the sidewalk must be replaced.
  - **Permits** are needed for grinding, and, the property owner must receive an inspection by the City Engineers Office to comply with the sidewalk replacement notice/order.
  - The City standard for sidewalk grinding is as follows: for every 1/4" the panel is raised, the panel shall be ground back a minimum of 3" from the vertical edge. (example: a panel which is raised 1"; the grinding shall extend 12" onto the raised panel). The City Engineer's Office shall have authority to accept or reject the grinding repair. (Grinding requirement revised 5/04/07)
- **Can the property owners mix their own concrete?**  
No. Only City-approved ready-mix may be used for sidewalk replacement. Ready mix concrete is required to assure that adequate strength and durability is achieved.