



*Maintaining a
Walkable Mt
Shasta:*

SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Well-maintained sidewalks and curb ramps provide safe and desirable paths for pedestrians and others to enjoy neighborhoods, commercial centers, and other areas of our city. Where sidewalks are good, the neighborhood becomes a more desirable place to live. Maintaining our sidewalks requires the efforts of residents, property owners, and the City.

Removing obstacles enhances accessibility

Did you know improperly parked cars, garbage cans, tree branches, and even basketball hoops can be dangerous obstacles? It's important to remember to keep our sidewalks clear to ensure accessibility for all pedestrians. Mt Shasta City Code requires that brush, shrubs, and debris on a property must be maintained to prevent obstructing the right-of-way and visibility of traffic signs. Sidewalks serve so many purposes; and encouragement of people to make more use of the most basic form of transportation – walking.



Quality maintenance and repair of sidewalks also improves safety and encourages walking.

Broken or damaged sidewalks are not only an eyesore and an inconvenience; cracks spacing, and grade displacements in the sidewalk also can impede public access and cause serious accidents for passers-by. To combat these problems, The Mt Shasta Police Department's job is to ensure that all sidewalks in the City are safe and accessible for all pedestrians.

In Mt. Shasta, like most communities across the country, the property owner is responsible for the maintenance of the sidewalk abutting their property California Streets and Sidewalk Code Sections 5610-5630. California state law allows this practice on the basis that property owners receive the most benefit from a well-maintained sidewalk because it is available for their use, and it enhances their property value. In most cases, property owners are responsible for making repairs.

Sidewalk Inspections

The sidewalk inspection program is a request only program. The City inspects sidewalk conditions when there has been a request to do so by a property owner or by a concerned citizen over the condition of the sidewalk, or through the daily on-site work activities of the inspector. When responding to a request for inspection, the City will evaluate the entire site (*the general rule is that the inspector will look at the area identified as defective and 50 to 75 feet in either direction, or to the corner if closer*) noting all concrete and sidewalk deficiencies at the site and the neighboring properties.

The aim of the program is to identify sidewalk defects. The owner is responsible for the repairs. The City will look for defects, such as holes, spalled or chipped areas, wide cracks, deterioration, and areas that are damaged by tree roots.



Inspectors follow general guidelines that apply to the city right-of-way where there are sidewalks to determine whether a hazard exists.

INSPECTION CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES

Generally, a “*Defective Sidewalk*” is a sidewalk where line of grade is altered, displaced, or such other condition exists that interferes with the public convenience in the use of the sidewalk. Some examples of these conditions are:

- a significant vertical or horizontal displacement of ½” or greater;
- an area of sidewalk that has spacing with a width of ½” or greater;
- settlement of sidewalk causing water to pond and creating a slipping condition to pedestrians;
- excessive cross slopes caused by tree roots;
- chipped and spalled sidewalk surfaces creating a defective condition;
- an area of sidewalk that is off grade (and adjacent to the curb and gutter) to the point where the curb and gutter has a significant displacement between the curb, gutter and sidewalk; and
- any other conditions judged by the inspector as defective or that may pose an inconvenience to the pedestrian path of travel.

What is the resident's responsibility?

State Street Highway Code, states that property owners are responsible for the cost of the maintenance and repair of the sidewalk adjacent to their property. The California Streets and Highways Code, Section 5610-5630, provide the City of Mt Shasta the ability to require that the cost of maintenance and repair of public sidewalks be borne by the adjoining property owner.

Sidewalk complaint procedures and property owner notification process

When the City receives a complaint for a defective sidewalk, Code Enforcement is dispatched to evaluate the site. If a defect is identified, the inspector will determine the scope of work and create an estimate for the repairs. If needed, the inspector may employ a temporary sidewalk patch to maintain accessibility while the sidewalk notification process is completed and the work is scheduled.



Using County tax records and other resources, the City identifies the owner of the property that is fronting the defective sidewalk. Once the property owner is identified, the City sends the property owner a Sidewalk Repair Notice with an estimate for the cost of the repairs and their options for making the repairs. If the property owner does not respond within the 30 days, a second notice is sent providing them with an additional 30 days. After the second 30 days has elapsed and the property owner has not completed the work, the city will repair the sidewalk by default and send the bill to the property owner for the repairs.

Getting the work done

If you are notified by the City that your sidewalk needs to be repaired, to complete the work. Hire a licensed contractor (please contact your inspector prior to commencing work, your notification serves as your permit).

What about tree roots?

If tree roots are the cause of the damaged sidewalk and you elect to hire your own contractor, please contact a certified arborist. An arborist can make a recommendation as to how best to cut the tree roots.

Please note that regardless of who the tree belongs to, it is still the owner's responsibility to pay for the sidewalks when they are damaged by roots accordingly . An owner shall maintain and repair any defective sidewalk fronting such owner's lot, lots, or portion of a lot where a defective sidewalk is caused in whole or in part by a tree root or roots, the owner shall nevertheless have the duty to repair the sidewalk. The City has instituted an appeals process for property owners that believe that the City is responsible for a portion of the damage and can be found in the City's Municipal Code.