

Sidewalk Repair

*Land Use and
Environment Committee*

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Current Policy Guidance

- Sidewalk cleaning and repair is the responsibility of adjacent property owner (OMC 12.36)
- Code similar to other Washington cities
- Does not relieve the City from potential liability
- Involves many aspects of City government:
 - Public Works
 - Urban Forestry
 - Parks
 - Risk Management
 - Code Enforcement

Current Approach

Locations reported by public
Since 2014, 155 locations tracked

Notify property owner

Send letter explaining code
and providing repair guidance

City Repairs

Fix sidewalks Downtown and on
certain large streets where City
maintains street trees

Notify property owner

Letter and flyer:

- Explain code
- Urban Forestry help
- Types of repair
- Hiring a contractor
- Permit for work



Property Owner's Guide to Sidewalk Repairs

October 2019

Taking Care of Sidewalks

Sidewalks are a valuable part of our neighborhoods and enhance your property's value. When sidewalks lift up, sink, or have large cracks, they pose a trip hazard to pedestrians.

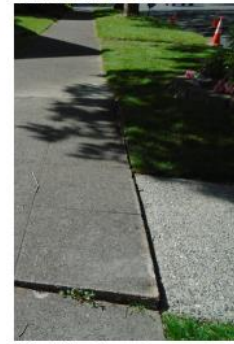
Sidewalk damage typically occurs over time and may be caused by tree roots, the ground settling or from cars parked on the sidewalk.



A sidewalk on San Francisco Avenue.



Cracks can be trip hazards.



Lifted sidewalks can also pose a hazard.

City Code

City code requires **property owners** to repair the sidewalk adjacent to their property (*Olympia Municipal Code 12.36.010- Unfit Sidewalk - Order to Repair*).

The code also states that the planter strip between the sidewalk and the street is the adjacent property owner's responsibility to maintain. (*Engineering Design and Development Standards, 2.040*)

Resources

For questions about the City's code, contact Code Enforcement at 360.753.8487.

Learn more about street trees at the City's Urban Forestry webpage or calling Community Planning and Development at 360.753.8301.

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The City of Olympia is committed to the nondiscriminatory treatment of persons in the employment and the delivery of services and resources.

Sidewalk Repairs (continued)

Property Owner Guide

You may repair your sidewalk by:

- grinding down the section that's lifted, or
- replacing the damaged panels.

Depending on the extent of the damage, you might do the work yourself or you may decide to hire a contractor.

Find a Contractor for Concrete Work

For grinding or replacement repairs, consider contacting three concrete contractors for estimates before you select one. For your protection, use contractors that are insured and bonded.

Address Tree Issues

Many damaged sidewalks are caused by tree roots. Trees in planter strips or in your yard may need to have the roots pruned. An certified arborist can evaluate tree maintenance measures by completing a Level 3 Soil and Vegetation Report. Contact cpdinfo@ci.olympia.wa.us to discuss your situation before you proceed.

Obtain a permit

For public safety, sidewalks must be built to City specifications. A permit is needed to do the tree and sidewalk work, but the permit fees will be waived for the sidewalk repair. Specifications and permits are available through the City's Community Planning & Development Department (CP&D) located on the 2nd floor of City Hall at 601 4th Avenue, 360.753.8314.



A sidewalk that's been repaired by grinding.



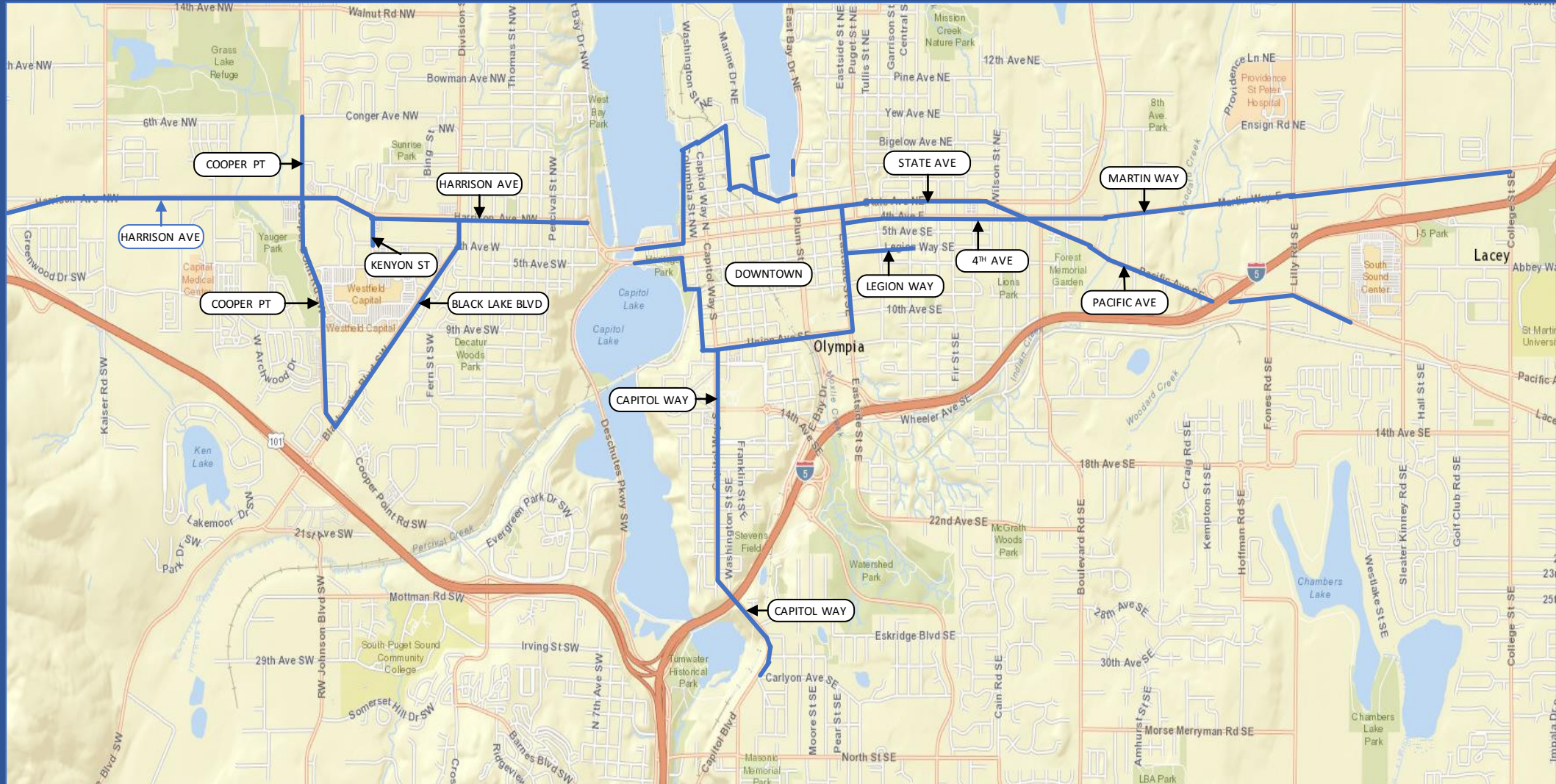
Sidewalk replacement work completed by a contractor, hired by homeowner.

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City Repairs

Sidewalk repair done by City:
Downtown and designated arterials
based on Street Tree Master Plan



Funding for repairs made by City

- Public Works Street Operations
- \$11,000 annually, some grants
- 3 to 6 repairs each year



Urban Forestry

- Many repairs involve street trees
- Tree removal or root pruning makes repair work more complex
- Standards for street tree planting improved, reduces future issues



Other cases of sidewalk repair

- Homeowners' associations make repairs
- Can be required by property owner's insurance
- Rebuilt sidewalks when redevelopment occurs



Conclusion

- Approach results in strategic repairs by City
- Limited repairs by property owners as a result of City letter
- Topic of concern for residents
- Sidewalk repair is in TMP “Future Policy Considerations”
- Last City Council discussion in 2005

