

Frequently Asked Questions

The full list of FAQs can be found online at: cityofsacramento.org/Public-Works/Questions

Maintenance Services

Sidewalks:

Within the City of Sacramento, there are approximately 2,300 miles of sidewalk. Sacramento City Code, section 12.32, and California Streets & Highway Code 5610 requires that the maintenance and repair of public sidewalks be the responsibility of the property owner.

The City maintains all curbs, gutters, and pedestrian curb ramps, as well as any drains that may need reconstruction when the curb and gutter repairs are performed.

Property owners choosing not to have the City do the repairs must follow the City's Sidewalk Repair Specifications, the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control (CA-MUTCD), and the City of Sacramento Sidewalk Closure Policy. The City will not be responsible for any damages resulting directly or indirectly from any repairs performed by the property owner or by any person/contractor hired by the property owner.

For more information on the City of Sacramento residential sidewalk program, please read the Sidewalk Maintenance Program Handbook, as well as the City of Sacramento Temporary Sidewalk Patching Criteria. (Please be advised that temporary patching does not meet the City's Standards and Specifications for an acceptable repair and is only done as a temporary measure until the permanent repair can be completed.)

If a property owner takes it upon themselves to repair the sidewalk without having received a notice to repair the sidewalk from the City, or do any work beyond the scope of the sidewalk repair, they must obtain a Construction Encroachment Permit through our Engineering Services Encroachment office.

If the property owner does not act in one of the above three ways, the City will make repairs under default and the cost will be collected from the property owner. Unpaid collection will ultimately lead to a lien on the property.

Q: Why did I receive a notice to repair the sidewalk? I did not authorize or call for an inspection from the city.

A: Sidewalk inspections are performed when a citizen reports a defective sidewalk, or as part of a request to replace a utility cut. The report may have been associated with the sidewalk in front of your property or in front of a nearby property. Once reported, the City inspects all sidewalks, curbs, and gutters up to 75 feet in both directions from the site of the reported defective sidewalk.

Q: Why wasn't I notified that inspectors were going to be out inspecting the sidewalks?

A: Our inspectors do not proactively canvas neighborhoods looking for defective sidewalks. As in the response above, please understand that the City sends inspectors to locations all over the City where a complaint has been lodged. Additionally, the inspectors will also inspect up to 75 feet in both directions for defective sidewalk, curb and gutter.

Q: What is the City's policy on sidewalk repair?

A: Sacramento City Code, section **12.32.020. Owner's duty to repair defective sidewalk is the City code for Sidewalk repair.**

"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 director may grant permission to cut the root(s) after consulting with the city arborist. (Ord. 2010-010 § 2) Since 1978, the City has required that property owners remove and replace any portion of the defective sidewalk adjacent to their property."

Q: Isn't it the City's responsibility to maintain the sidewalk? Isn't it public property?

A: The sidewalk is in the City's right-of-way. However, California Streets and Highways Code sections 5610 through 5618 allow cities throughout California to require property owners to maintain the sidewalks in front of their property. Sacramento City Code section 12.32 sets forth the City's procedures under these sections. Sacramento is not the only city to require sidewalk repairs to be the property owner's responsibility. However, curb and gutter maintenance is the City's responsibility. As the property owner may bear civil liability for a person suffering personal injury or property damage caused by a defective sidewalk: it is in the property owners' best interest to maintain the sidewalk and reduce the risk of a lawsuit.

Q: The sidewalk was in this condition when we purchased the property, why are we just now getting the notice?

A: Whether you are a new owner, or you have owned the property for several years, if you receive a notice it means that defective sidewalk was recently reported to the City. Complaints require the City to respond promptly to prevent the defect from interfering with public convenience.

Q: Why is my sidewalk considered defective when it has only a few cracks?

A: A few cracks may not appear to be significant on the surface, but they can cause water to pool and/or seep beneath the existing concrete and cause further damage. The surface may also become uneven, slippery or other defects may appear. A **"Defective Sidewalk"** means a sidewalk where, in the judgment of the inspector, the vertical or horizontal line of grade is altered or displaced, or such other condition exists that interferes with the public convenience in the use of the sidewalk. Below are the criteria

City inspectors use to determine when a sidewalk is defective. 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 significant displacement between the curb, gutter, and sidewalk; and
- any conditions identified by the inspector as defective or pose an inconvenience to the pedestrian path of travel.

Q: If the tree is causing damage to my sidewalk is it an option to have my tree removed?

A: The City of Sacramento has policies, procedures and guidelines that are used to determine whether the recommendation is given to remove trees within the City of Sacramento. Tree removal is usually a last resort. A City Arborist will inspect the tree and the scope of the project to determine the correct course of action for each site. If for example, is the tree

- dead or dying?
- causing an obstruction that is impossible to correct through pruning?
- crowding and causing harm to other, more desirable trees?

Q: Why do I have to pay to repair the sidewalk when the damage was caused by a City tree?

A: City ordinance requires property owners to take responsibility for sidewalk repairs, regardless of whether the tree's roots causing damage is City owned. Sacramento City Ordinance 2010-010 § 2 states, "***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 director may grant permission to cut the root(s) after consulting with the city arborist.***"

Q: What is the cost of sidewalk repair and how do I pay for it?

A: The City sends the property owner an itemized list of labor, materials and costs based on the square footage of the segment in need of repair. If the property owner has the City do the work, they may qualify to make interest free installments on the amount through the City's Revenue Division. Revenue makes the determination on case-by-case basis. For more information, please call the Revenue Department at (916) 808-5527.

Curbs & Gutters:

Curb and gutter maintenance are the responsibility of the City.

Street Maintenance:

Q: How do I get a pothole fixed?

A: Dial 311 or use the 311-mobile app. Please be prepared to give size and location details. Generally, repairs are completed within two to three days depending on the severity of the damage.

Q: How do I get cracked asphalt on my street fixed?

A: Dial 311 or use the 311-mobile app. Please provide detailed location and problem. A district supervisor will inspect and arrange for necessary repairs.

Q: When is my street scheduled to be resurfaced?

A: Both from an industry standpoint and from an internal planning standpoint, the goal is to resurface every street in the City every ten to twelve years. However, because of current funding constraints, this goal is not being met. The City develops a Pavement Condition Report every two years which documents the funding issues and helps educate the public on the challenges we face maintaining the City's pavement infrastructure. The Department's primary focus is on the most heavily traveled roads with very limited attention to the residential areas. We will continue to explore options for additional funding and are developing a prioritization process with the Transportation Priorities Plan which can be found on the City's website.

Q: What are all the ugly squiggly lines on my street for?

A: Water is the number one enemy of a street and combating or reducing the opportunity for water to penetrate our streets is an important mission. When streets begin to crack, it is important to seal those cracks with a material that halts the ability for water to penetrate the street. Usually crack sealing is done one to three years prior to a more significant level of maintenance or resurfacing job. Although some residents oppose crack sealing for aesthetic reasons, the importance and value of crack sealing streets is enormous.

Q: A crew was on my street last year paving, why are you resurfacing it again this year?

A: Streets that are scheduled to be resurfaced generally need significant prep work provided first. In some cases, the amount of prep work is extensive and residents on occasion don't realize that it is only prep work. The final product however may be a slurry seal or cape seal applied one year following the prep work.

Q: Can we have speed humps installed when you resurface my street since you're already out here?

A: The City's Speed Lump (Hump) Program is separate from our Resurfacing Program. All requests for speed humps are investigated and prioritized by our Transportation Division and speed humps are only included during our resurfacing projects if they existed already along a segment of roadway. See Transportation for frequently asked questions regarding speed lumps.

Q: Why is my street getting resurfaced now, it does not look that bad?

A: There are various levels of resurfacing needs. The industry standard is to slurry seal a street approximately seven years after it is constructed. The purpose is to seal the street against water and further extend the life of the asphalt. Clearly the budget we use does not allow for us to routinely seal streets within seven years of construction, but on occasion we do find the funding for this level of preventive maintenance although the street may look just fine to the residents.

Streetscapes (Median Landscaping):

Q: How do I report defective water sprinklers in the landscaped median?

A: Please call our customer service number by dialing 311 or by using the 311-mobile app. Please be prepared with details on the exact location. Please note that these sprinkler systems are on timers that turn off automatically after a few minutes and usually stop before serious flooding occurs.

Q: Where do I report problems with landscaping in medians or on public landscaped areas?

A: Please call our customer service number by dialing 311. Please be prepared with details on the exact location and the problem. If the landscaping problem is in a park area, please contact Park Maintenance at 916-808-6305.

Construction Coordination:

Q: What is Right-of-Way Management?

A: Right-of-Way Management minimizes construction impacts to vehicles, pedestrians, businesses and residents through careful review and scheduling of construction activities.

Q: Is all construction within the right-of way scheduled?

A: No, not all. Emergency repairs to various infrastructures within the right-of-way are performed as needed.

Q: How far in advance are specific construction activities scheduled?

A: It varies. Some projects begin scheduling activities a year or two in advance. Most projects begin their review a few months before actual construction begins, but many projects appear just a few weeks before construction must begin.

Tree Maintenance:

Q: How do I report a tree problem, like a fallen branch or fallen tree?

A: Call or email 311 and a call center agent will process your maintenance request. Please provide the following information:

- Address
- Cross Street
- Telephone number (if you are the property owner or resident)

Q: Will the City take care of trees on private property?

A: No, the City only maintains trees on public property. Tree maintenance for private trees should be provided by trained tree care professionals. When choosing a tree care professional, the following should be considered:

- Membership in professional organization such as the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), or the Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA).
- Certification through the ISA's Certified Arborist or Tree Worker programs.
- Proof of Insurance
- Competitive pricing (always get three bids)
- List of references

Tree Pruning:

Q: Can I trim a City street tree in front of my property?

A: You cannot trim a City street tree without a permit. The City will allow you to hire your own licensed contractor. City staff will issue a pruning permit detailing City arborist approved pruning requirements.

Q: Who is responsible if trees are blocking streetlights, traffic and parking signs?

A: The City is responsible for street trees and the property owner is responsible for private trees and shrubs. Call or email 311 if trees are blocking streetlights, traffic, and parking sign. Property owners will be charged if the City prunes private trees that are blocking streetlights, traffic, and parking signs.

Tree Removal:

Q: How can I get a City street tree removed?

A: City street trees are protected by City ordinance and are only removed if they are hazardous.

Q: How do I apply for a permit to prune or remove?

A: Visit our Permits page or call or email 311.

Q: What if I see someone removing or pruning a protected tree?

A: Immediately call a call center agent at 311. It is a misdemeanor to remove or prune a protected tree without a permit.

Tree Planting:

Q: Where can I plant a tree?

A: The City is responsible for all public tree plantings. Residents can plant trees on private property. The Sacramento Municipal Utility District in partnership with the Sacramento Tree Foundation provides free shade trees. Call 916-924-8733 for more information.

Q: Who decides what kind of tree gets planted in the right-of-way in front of my house?

A: The City follows the “right tree in the right place” policy for tree plantings. However, the City does so in partnership with residents. Before a new tree is planted, Urban Forestry staff will contact the property owner and offer them a choice of tree species based on growing space, maintenance requirements, and irrigation needs. If the resident does not have a preference, then the City will select the tree species appropriate for the planter space.

Parking Services

Parking Enforcement:

Q: How do I pay for my parking citation?

A: Citations may be paid for online, by telephone, by mail or in-person at the Revenue Division.

All citations must be paid within 21 calendar days from the issue date on the citation or a penalty will be assessed

Q: How may I contest a parking ticket?

A: First, view photos of the vehicle online. Our aim is to take photos of and post all violations, but there may be exceptions due to unforeseen circumstances. You may contest online at www.Sacpark.org or complete a citation contest form, attach any supporting evidence and mail or bring in-person all paperwork within 21 days of the citation issue date to the Revenue Division. For more information please call 916-808-8500.

Q: I lost my parking citation and don't have the issuance number in order to pay it. How can I get the number to pay the citation?

A: To obtain the parking citation issuance number, you may call the Revenue Division Customer Service line at (916) 808-8500 between 9:00 a.m. to noon (Monday – Friday). You will be asked to verify the name on the vehicle's registration, vehicle license plate number and VIN.

Q: What can be done about a car parked illegally on my street?

A: Please call the 311 Service Center at 916-808-5011 or 916-264-5011.

Q: How do I get the Boot removed from my vehicle?

A: Drivers of booted vehicles must call 916-808-7201 between the hours of 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Monday – Friday, excluding holidays) to speak to a representative. The boot will be released upon full payment of all citations owed, with an additional \$100 Boot Removal Fee. If full payment cannot be paid, a payment plan will be set up which will require payment equal to 25% of the total amount of citation fees owed with an additional \$100 Boot Removal Fee and \$30 Payment Plan fee.

Al Fresco Dining:

Local restaurants may request to construct an expanded service area in specific parts of the public right-of-way through the City of Sacramento Al Fresco Dining Program. A convenient online request form provides engineered layouts, customizable design options, and a streamlined permitting process. Additional information and online interest form is available at Sacpark.org.

Transportation

Shared-Rideables

<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Public-Works/Transportation/Planning-Projects/Shared-Rideables>

Speed Lumps:

Q: How does my street qualify for speed lumps? How do I get speed lumps on my street?

A: Below are the qualifying criteria for the City's Speed Lump Program:

1A: The segment must be a minimum of 750 feet in length between traffic controls, four-way intersections, and/or curves with less than a 250-foot radius,

1B: or, the street is comprised of contiguous segments with no stop controls between the segments and all side streets entering at four-way intersection are stop controlled. The total length the contiguous segments must be at least 750' in length.

2: The street has only one travel lane in each direction (Two-Way-Left-Turn lanes are acceptable).

3: The length is measured from the nearest flow line from the ends of the segment or continuous segments.

4: Posted speed limit must be 30 mph or less on local streets (moderate volume collectors must be posted 25 – 35 mph).

5: Street frontage of subject street segment must be at least 75% developed residential.

6: A speed survey shall indicate that the 85th percentile speed is at least 5 or more mph over the posted speed limit.

7: Street must be approved by Regional Transit and the Fire Department.

Q: How do I find out more information?

A: For additional information please visit The City of Sacramento Speed Lump Program webpage at: <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Public-Works/Transportation/Programs-and-Services/Traffic-Calming/Speed-Lumps>

Q: Who can I contact if I would like to initiate this process?

A: If you have any questions regarding the qualifying criteria or would like to initiate this process please dial 311 or use 311 mobile app. Please provide your NAME, PREFERRED CONTACT, STREET NAME, AND CLOSEST INTERSECTION and the assigned Traffic Investigator for your area will contact you shortly. A Speed Lump petition must be signed by at least 10 residents from separate households. Visit the Speed Lump Program webpage to learn about how a street qualifies and download a petition.

Traffic Investigations

Q: How do I get information regarding the City's Red Light Running Program?

A: The City's network of red light cameras are managed by the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department. Information related to locations and concerns can be reported to the [Sacramento Metropolitan Red Light Photo Enforcement Program](#)

2101 Hurley Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

916-876-6643 General Information
916-875-7800 Court Information

Public hours of operation:
8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Monday – Friday, except holidays

Q: How do I report a concern regarding school safety, speeding, crosswalks, stop signs, traffic operations, traffic signals, and traffic signs and markings?

A: Please report problems by dialing 311 or by using the 311-mobile app. Please give the exact location of the concern and the Traffic Investigator assigned to that area of the City will review and discuss.

- **Speeding - We'll investigate!**
Depending on the situation we can suggest speed limit signs and legends, speed radar boards, police enforcement, or speed Lumps. Speed radar trailers are useful for educating motorists on the posted speed limit and their actual speed. Speed lumps are another effective speed control tool.
- **Crosswalks – Concerned with crossing the street? We'll investigate.**
Under the California Vehicle Code, crosswalks exist at all intersections unless otherwise prohibited with signs. Crosswalks may be marked or unmarked. The City typically uses two types of marked crosswalks including standard (two white lines) at controlled locations and triple-four crosswalks at uncontrolled locations. After careful evaluation, crosswalks may be installed based on pedestrian usage, the need to identify a safe crossing, or to reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicular traffic.
- **Stop Signs – Concerned with vehicle right of way? No traffic controls at an intersection? We'll Investigate!** We consider traffic volume, collision history, pedestrian traffic, vehicle speed, intersection visibility, land use and adjacent traffic controls. After careful consideration and an engineering study, a STOP sign may be installed to enhance traffic safety and assign right of way at the intersection.
- **Concerned about a Signalized Intersection? - We'll Investigate!** An investigation will determine if an intersection qualifies for a traffic signal or if an existing traffic signal needs to be modified to address traffic congestion or safety.

- **Traffic Signs and Markings - We'll suggest signs and markings to enhance safety.**

Do you think you need a sign to solve your traffic woes? Traffic and pedestrian safety concerns can sometimes be addressed with proper signs or markings. Traffic investigators will collect information from you and research the site to determine if signs or pavement markings can help. Marked crosswalks, bike lane striping and bike route legends may be installed as a result of a traffic investigation.

Streetlights:

Q: My streetlight is not functioning. What should I do?

A: Please dial 311 or use the 311 app and be prepared with the address that the light is closest to and the number on the street light pole. Please notice if there is a single light is out or if several are out. Our mission is to replace burned out streetlights within 30 days of receiving the call except on weekends. If the problem is greater than just a burned-out bulb, a technician will be assigned to repair the light within four weeks.

Traffic Signals:

Q: What happens when a traffic signal malfunctions?

A: The traffic signal controller is monitored by a device called the Malfunction Management Unit (MMU). This device monitors specific problems that would result in an unsafe condition. For example, if the controller tries to display green lights in conflicting directions at the same time, the MMU would place the intersection into flashing mode. The MMU monitors many other things as well, such as the power voltage and the length of time that a yellow light is displayed. Dial 311 or use the 311 app to report a malfunctioning traffic signal.

Q: Why are there cameras at some intersections?

A: Cameras can serve many purposes at an intersection. Several years ago, the City made the move to reduce the amount of hardware installed in pavement. To achieve this, the City has deployed video detection camera systems that use a machine vision processor and can detect vehicles in the camera's field of view. This system sends the signal to the traffic signal controller that a vehicle is there and needs service. CCTV cameras are also located at some intersections. These cameras are used to provide information to the City's Traffic Operation Center that operators use to verify traffic conditions and traffic signal timing.

Q: How do I get a red light camera at an intersection?

A: The red light camera program is managed by the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office. The locations are recommended by the City based on volume, collision history, etc. At this time, the County will not be installing any new red light cameras.

Q: What are the blue blinking light on cameras at some traffic signals?

A: The blue cameras are Police Observation Devices (PODS). Those are installed and managed by the Police Department.

Traffic Signs and Markings:

Q: How do I report a street sign that is knocked down or bent?

A: Please report street sign problems by dialing 311 or by using the 311-mobile app. Please give the exact location of the sign.

Q: Who do I contact if the painted marks on the street or curb are no longer visible or are in poor condition?

A: Contact customer service by dialing 311. We will need to know what the paint marks are and the location.

Q: Who do I contact if I think we need a stop sign on our street?

A: All new signs and markings must be investigated and approved by the City's Transportation Division. Contact your area's Traffic Investigator by dialing 311 or by using the 311 mobile app or email TransportationDivision@cityofsacramento.org.

Q: People speed on my street; I want something done.

A: Complaints of speeding or concerning errant driver behavior need to be reported to City of Sacramento Police Department through the non-emergency traffic enforcement line by calling 916-808-3777.

Carshare:

Q: How long can free-floating car share vehicles park in front of my house/business?

A: Like all motor vehicles, free-floating car share vehicles may park up to 72 hours in any legal parking space in accordance with the California Vehicle Code and Sacramento City Code.

Q: What can the City do if issues arise with car share vehicles that impact the neighborhood?

A: Immediate issues, such as cars being parked improperly, can be reported to the City's 311 Center. Car share vehicles are subject to a parking citation if parked outside of

authorized parking authority. In addition, the City will work with car share operators to ensure parking permits for dedicated spaces as well as for free-floating car share must be renewed on an annual basis. Public Works will conduct an evaluation prior to the renewal of any car share permits. Also, car share parking permits can be revoked by the City if an operator violates the terms and conditions of the Car Share Framework.

Recycling & Solid Waste

All service requests should be reported to www.sac311.org or by calling 311 or (916) 264-5011.

- **Collection Calendar and Alerts** - Customers can view, download, and print a service calendar specific to their address. Residents can also get weekly reminders or service change alerts via text or email about collection and street sweeping with the option to customize the time and type of reminder they would like to receive. Sign up for the reminders and alerts either with the free [Sacrecycle App](#) or through our Collection Calendar Reminder at <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Public-Works/RSW/Collection-Services/Collection-Calendar>
- **Container Sizes and Options:** <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Public-Works/RSW/Collection-Services>
- **Curbside container is damaged or stolen:** Replacement is free.
- **Illegal dumping on the public right-of-way:** Citizens can call 311, use www.sac311.org or the sac311 app for iPhone and Android to report an illegal dumping incident. If they witness the dumping or have information that leads to a **citation** or **conviction** of the violator, they may be eligible for a reward.
- **Household Junk Program:** All residential customers can make two (2) appointments per year for the free pickup of acceptable bulky items including yard waste. Household Junk Pickup occurs from February through October. If residents have used both of their appointments and still need removal of additional bulky waste or yard waste, they can call 311 to schedule a fee-paid special collection.
- **E-Waste and Appliances:** In addition to the two Household Junk appointments, all residential customers can schedule two (2) appointments for appliance and e-waste collection in a calendar year. The appliance & e-waste program operates year-round.
- **Free Dump Coupon:** Residents receive one (1) free dump coupon per calendar year to self-haul debris to the Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station. Coupon is mailed in June as part of the Annual Service Guide sent to all customers.
- **Leaf Season:** Takes place November – January. Residential customers can legally place yard waste piles in the street for collection:
- **Claw Schedule:** The claw will make at least seven collections on each street during leaf season. You can use the [SacRecycle Collection Calendar](#) to receive an estimate of the next collection date. In the early part of the season, time between collections may be shorter. As leaf drop volume grows, and if wind and rainstorms occur, it can take crews longer rotate through the entire city.
- **Fill Containers First:** More than 27,000 tons for yard waste is collected during leaf season and over half, 14,000 tons is picked up during weekly container service. Filling containers first helps us remove material faster. Weekly residential yard waste container collection will continue year-round on a customer's usual collection day.
- **Household Hazardous Waste (HHW):** Products, such as paint cleaners, oil, batteries, and pesticides, require special care and should not be thrown in your residential waste containers.

These products may contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable, or reactive ingredients and are considered household hazardous waste. (HHW). It is illegal to dispose of hazardous waste in the garbage, down storm drains, or onto the ground. City residents can take HHW to any of the following locations:

- **Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station (City of Sacramento)**

8491 Fruitridge Rd.

Sacramento CA 95826

For more information visit www.SacRecycle.org or call 311 or (916) 264-5011

- **North Area Recovery Station (County of Sacramento)**

4450 Roseville Rd

North Highlands, CA 95660

For more information contact visit www.sacgreenteam.com or call County

Customer Service at 916-875-5555

- **Special Waste Collection Facility (City of Elk Grove)**

9255 Disposal Lane

Elk Grove, California 95624

For more information visit <http://www.elkgrovecity.org/> or call (916) 627-3232

Additional information on **City of Sacramento Recycling and Solid Waste Division** services can be found at www.SacRecycle.org