

City of Corvallis



Frequently asked questions on the...

Sidewalk Maintenance Fee

What is the fee?

The fee is a monthly charge to City of Corvallis utility customers to generate revenue to pay for repairs to structural defects on public sidewalks. The money raised from this fee is dedicated to this purpose and can not be used for any other purpose.

Who pays the fee?

Corvallis utility customers—residences, businesses, and industry—on the monthly City Services bill.

How much is the fee?

The Sidewalk Maintenance Fee is \$0.80 per month.

How is it determined?

The fee was calculated by taking the average yearly cost to repair defective sidewalks in the Annual Sidewalk Safety Program (\$150,000) divided by the number of utility customers (14,951) divided by 12 (to get a monthly amount).

$$\$150,000 \div 14,951 \div 12 = \$0.836 \quad (\text{rounded to } \$0.80)$$

Will the fee go up in the future?

There is no automatic increase to the fee. In order to change the amount, the City Council would need to take an action authorizing the change.

Why is the fee on my water bill?

By putting charges for multiple City services on one bill, the City is able to reduce the administrative costs of processing and printing invoices over what it would cost to have each charge on a separate bill.

How much revenue will the fee generate?

City staff estimates the fee will generate about \$150,000 a year.

How does this new fee benefit me?

In the past, the property owner paid for repairs to sidewalks in the public right-of-way along their property. Now, the City will use the money raised by the new fee to pay for repairs to defects on public sidewalks.

Will the City pay to fix all sidewalk problems?

The City will pay to fix structural problems that meet a set of criteria established for public safety, on sidewalks in the public right-of-way, up to the amount of funding available for that year. Other problems, including bushes or trees obstructing the pathway or debris on the sidewalk, must be taken care of by the property owner. The City will not repair sidewalks on private property. Sidewalk damage determined to be caused by misuse, such as driving heavy equipment over the sidewalk, will need to be paid for by the person responsible for the misuse.

Will the City remove snow, ice, leaves and/or debris on my sidewalk?

No, the property owner is responsible for keeping the sidewalk clean and free of debris.



What do I do if I think my sidewalk needs to be repaired?

Contact the Public Works Department at 541-766-6916 or public.works@ci.corvallis.or.us. A staff member will inspect the sidewalk to determine if it meets the City's criteria for repairs and will let you know what they find.



How will the City determine which problems will be fixed?

Each sidewalk problem will be evaluated against a set of criteria established by the City to see if the conditions qualify for a repair. The criteria include things like a vertical separation between sidewalk panels of more than one inch or a crack with a horizontal separation wider than one inch. The full guidelines are available on the City's web site (www.ci.corvallis.or.us/sidewalksafety). If the situation meets the criteria, the City will prioritize the repair on the basis of the risk to public safety. The prioritized repair work will be contracted out, up to the amount of funding available in that year.

If I disagree with the City's decision, is there an appeal process?

Yes. An appeal of the City's decision needs to be in writing, to include the specific objection the property owner has with the decision, and to be received by the City Manager's Office within 10 days after the City notifies the property owner of the decision.

If the City determines my sidewalk problem does not qualify for a repair and someone trips and gets hurt, who is liable?

This program only changes the method for a property owner to pay for needed repairs. It does not change existing property owner's liability.

If the City decides my sidewalk problem does qualify, but the repair hasn't been made yet and someone trips and gets hurt, who is liable?

This program only changes the method for a property owner to pay for needed repairs. It does not change existing property owner's liability.

After the City decides a defective sidewalk needs to be repaired, how long will it take to fix it?

The City will contract out the sidewalk repair work once a year, up to the limit of the funding available. Most likely this work will be done in the summer when the weather conditions are right for doing concrete work. If the City determines a problem is severe enough that it needs to be addressed before summer, staff may take measures to lessen the impact of the problem, such as doing a temporary repair or closing that section of sidewalk.

What if I have more questions?

Call the Corvallis Public Works Department at 541-766-6916 or send an email to public.works@ci.corvallis.or.us.

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