



CITY OF BISHOP

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Public Works News Release

Bishop Sidewalks

Bishop residents, visitors, businesses, and customers need a safe system of sidewalks. The City of Bishop provides this sidewalk system through construction of new sidewalks, management of existing sidewalks, and by working with owners of property along Bishop streets.

New Sidewalk

New sidewalks in the city are built with outside funds whenever possible. The city has built a lot of new sidewalk recently as a part of street improvement projects funded by the state. Recent examples of these street projects include the Home Street Improvements project and the Mac Iver Street Improvements project. Future street projects are planned to include new sidewalks as well. In addition to this sidewalk paid for with street improvement grant funding, new public sidewalk is also required when new developments are built.

While street projects and developments address some sidewalk in the city, the rest of the sidewalk in the city, much of which has been existing for decades, also needs attention.

Keep Sidewalks Clear

The first thing about existing sidewalks is they need to be kept clear for pedestrian use. In some places in the City of Bishop existing sidewalks are obstructed by parked vehicles or by a variety of things people place or store on the sidewalk. These obstructions make it so pedestrians can't get through on the sidewalk as intended. Even where there are no sidewalks, the part of the street right of way intended for sidewalks should be kept clear so pedestrians can get by. In Bishop, the part of the street right of way intended for sidewalk usually extends 10 feet back from the curb or edge of pavement. Owners, residents, and businesses should make sure they don't obstruct the sidewalk with vehicles or other things.

Sidewalk Repair

Old sidewalks fall apart over time, especially if they are affected by the roots of certain types of trees, over watering of nearby landscaping, or poor construction. Sidewalks that crack, separate, and displace are a particular concern because they can lead to trips and falls. These accidents in turn can lead to lawsuits against the city and against the adjacent property. In the case of an accident, courts may think an old sidewalk was not properly maintained. To avoid trips and falls, it is important that potential trip hazards are repaired as soon as possible. State law makes the adjacent property owner responsible for sidewalk maintenance such as the repair of trip hazards and even for snow removal.

The City of Bishop has a city-wide effort underway to review all existing sidewalk. This review focuses on potential trip hazards and their remedy. Where potential hazards are identified that can be easily taken care of, city crews will address the hazard within a day or so without involving the property owner. Hazards the city crew can handle are usually taken care of with light grinding of the sidewalk. It is important to remember that hazards will recur unless the cause of the problem, intrusive roots, for example, is corrected. Correction of the underlying problem is usually the responsibility of the owner of the adjacent property.

Sidewalk Replacement

When existing sidewalk requires work beyond what city staff can perform, the city will notify the adjacent owner of the work required. The work usually consists of removal and replacement of sidewalk. The owner pays the cost of this work although city staff can help with the removal of sidewalk. As city staff identifies sidewalk that needs to be replaced, owners will be notified by letter of the work they need to get done.

Avoiding Sidewalk Problems

Owners can avoid sidewalk problems to begin with by ensuring that only trees that don't have intrusive roots are planted near the sidewalk, by not over watering their landscaping, and by making sure sidewalk is built properly and to city standards. The City of Bishop has a list of trees that are known not to have intrusive roots. The tree list is on the city's website.

Sidewalks an Asset

A safe and complete sidewalk system is an asset to an active and vibrant city. The City of Bishop builds new sidewalk where it can using outside funds where ever possible. The city works with property owners to repair and replace existing sidewalk that needs help, and establishes standards for trees and sidewalk construction to ensure sidewalks will serve the community for decades.

For more information contact City of Bishop Public Works at publicworks@ca-bishop.us or 760-873-8458. Press releases posted at <http://www.ca-bishop.us/Advertisements/Releases/Releases.htm>