



Q: Why do I have to pay for the sidewalk repairs?

A: In accordance with the City's Code of Ordinances (Sec. 54-4b), the sidewalk maintenance and repairs costs are the responsibility of the property owner.

Q: So if someone trips and falls on the sidewalk, could they sue me?

A: The property owners, by City ordinance, are responsible for accidents or claims resulting from the condition of the sidewalk.

Q: Why did the City mark that section of sidewalk?

A: The City is responsible to implement a program for annual inspection for sidewalk maintenance and repair. If the resulting inspection finds a vertical gap of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch or more between sidewalk panels, it is considered a tripping hazard. Once a trip hazard is found, City staff will mark the sidewalk with paint to delineate the location of the repair and notify property owners by letter for the necessary repairs.

Q: What if the boulevard tree roots are pushing up the sidewalk panel?

A: The beautiful tree-lined boulevards are a valuable South St. Paul amenity. However, one of the results of this amenity is tree roots can push up sidewalk panels and create tripping hazards. The City may make panels smaller (but not less than 4' in width) around the tree in order to accommodate the tree roots. When the sidewalk panel is removed, the contractor will cut and grind up the tree roots under the panel before pouring the replacement sidewalk panel. The City Policy recognizes that the tree roots may push up the panel again, and if it happens within 6 years of the sidewalk repair, the City will pay 80% of that repair.

Q: Would the City cut down the boulevard tree?

A: The City will not remove a boulevard tree unless it is dead or dying. A tree will be replaced if the boulevard is of sufficient width to limit future damages to City infrastructure and if the replacement tree can be located in an area that will support tree growth.

Q: Who will be doing the repairs?

A: The property owner has a choice to contract privately for the necessary repair work or have the City's contractor complete the work. The City competitively bids or quotes the sidewalk improvement project each year. The City awards the project to the lowest responsible, licensed and bonded, bidder and City staff will perform the construction administration. If you choose to contract the necessary repair work privately, the contractor must be licensed and bonded by the City and written notice provided to the City Engineer's office along with a completed permit application to complete the work.

Q: How do I pay for this?

A: The City will send you an invoice for the work when the contractor has completed all the repairs. You will have 30 days to pay the invoice in full without interest. Whatever portion you do not pay will go onto the property taxes over 5 years with a relatively modest interest rate.

Q: Why is my invoice more than was originally estimated?

A: Sometimes more work is encountered when replacing the sidewalk panel than originally estimated. The final invoice is for the actual costs to replace the sidewalk.
