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Monday, Sept. 9, 2024

# City of San Diego's Safe Sidewalks Program to Hit Milestone After First Year

## PROGRAM ELIMINATES FEES FOR PROPERTY OWNERS; ON TRACK TO MAKE REPAIRS AT 100 LOCATIONS

SAN DIEGO – Almost one year since its launch, the City of San Diego's Safe Sidewalks Program is marking a significant milestone with nearly 100 projects approved, saving thousands of dollars for property owners and expediting the process to repair damaged sidewalks. The Safe Sidewalks Program waives costly permit fees and allows for self-certification to speed up repairs, saving private property owners more than \$2,100 per project.

Under state law, property owners are responsible for maintenance of sidewalks fronting their private property. Sidewalk damage can create safety hazards and legal liability. Last year, the City began notifying property owners at approximately 5,000 locations that were identified as potential sidewalk repair issues.

**"The Safe Sidewalks Program is a game-changer that will help us get more sidewalks fixed," said Mayor Todd Gloria. "By eliminating fees and streamlining the process, we're making it easier to repair damaged sidewalks in front of private properties. Coupled with all the work the City is doing to improve sidewalks in the public right of way, this program will make pedestrians safer and improve their experience across all of our neighborhoods."**

Property owners may incur civil liability if a person suffers personal injury or property damage due to a sidewalk issue. Over the past 10 years, the average claim for sidewalk-related injuries in San Diego was \$46,000.

San Diego's City Council Policy 200-12 identifies certain conditions where maintenance of sidewalks will be performed at City expense, but many sidewalk issues remain the private property owner's responsibility, including damage caused by private trees and tree roots, deteriorating concrete and cracking, weather conditions, and normal wear and tear.

Under the Safe Sidewalks Program, fees have been waived for the permits to complete repair work. The program also allows property owners to save more time and money through a self-certification process

where they can submit certification and photos of the completed sidewalk repair to the Transportation Department attesting that a licensed contractor performed the work in conformance with City construction standards.

**“Our team continues to focus on improving streets and sidewalks across the city, and we now see that the Safe Sidewalks Program is making it as easy as possible for the City and property owners to complete these needed repairs,” said Bethany Bezak, Director of the City’s Transportation Department.**

Additionally, as part of the Safe Sidewalks program, the City allocates \$300,000 per year to cover the costs of sidewalk repair projects for property owners in underserved areas, defined in Council Policy 800-14 as Structurally Excluded Communities. Less than a year since launching the Safe Sidewalk Program, the Transportation Department’s in-house sidewalk repair and replacement team has completed repairs at 30 sidewalk locations in these designated communities, part of a total of more than 240 new repairs and installations citywide.

This allocation will cover only a small portion of known locations in need of repair. With limited funding and crews, this approach will allow the City to quickly repair the highest priority locations while eliminating barriers for other private property owners to make repairs that will keep their sidewalks safe and accessible for all users.

The City of San Diego has 4,550 miles of sidewalks, and many of them were built during the rapid construction of the City’s roadway system from the start of World War II through the 1970s. The sidewalk system also includes much older sidewalks with some dating to the early part of the last century. The typical useful life of a sidewalk is 50 to 70 years, depending on site conditions.

Learn more about the Safe Sidewalks Program by visiting [sandiego.gov/safesidewalks](https://sandiego.gov/safesidewalks).



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