



## Charter, Code and Policies

### City of Portland

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## TRN-1.11 - Sidewalk Maintenance Program Policy and Operating Guidelines

[edit content](#)

### SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM POLICY AND OPERATING GUIDELINES

Administrative Rule Adopted by Portland Bureau of Transportation Pursuant to Rule-Making Authority

ARB-TRN-1.11

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[Link to Full Text of Administrative Rules](#) (PDF Document, 929 kb). What follows is the Table of Contents and an excerpt from the administrative rules:

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1. OVERVIEW

History

The City of Portland was established many years ago as a frontier settlement on a muddy riverbank. One of the first priorities was to construct a system of sidewalks as the townspeople wanted to walk from one place to another without wading through mud, tripping over rocks and roots, or dodging horses and wagons.

The earliest sidewalks were rough-sawn wooden planks - low in cost, but requiring continual replacement due to wear and weather. When permanent concrete walks replaced the wooden ones, they were hailed as a major milestone in Portland's emergence as a city.

Legal Authority

Today, the City Charter, adopted by a vote of the people, establishes basic guidelines for sidewalks and curbs. The City Code, adopted by ordinance of the City Council, sets specific requirements for sidewalks, driveways and curbs. Both the Charter and Code sections pertaining to sidewalks, driveways, and curbs, are included in Appendix A and B.

## 2. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The City Charter and Code delegates the oversight of the sidewalk system to the City Engineer and/or the PBOT Director. The City Engineer is responsible for developing and maintaining sidewalk construction and repair standards and that the sidewalk system is maintained to those standards.

Title 17 of the City Code identifies property owners as responsible for the construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of the sidewalk system abutting their property.

The general division of responsibilities between the City and property owners related to the sidewalk system is detailed below:

### City of Portland

The City of Portland, through the authority granted to the City Engineer and/or PBOT Director via the City Council, is responsible for the following:

- Inspecting the City's sidewalk system via complaint driven basis to keep the sidewalk system in good repair.
- Maintaining standards that govern how sidewalks are to be constructed and maintained.
- Providing means for citizens to report hazardous conditions.
- Notifying property owners when defects are found via a Sidewalk Inspector.
- Inspecting sidewalk repairs according to approved standards and determining the extent of repairs.
- Repairing sidewalk defects that are not addressed and/or improperly constructed by the property owner within specified time frames.
- Assessing, billing, collecting, and if necessary, imposing liens for sidewalk repair work completed by City crews or contractors hired by the City in the event the property owner does not properly complete the specified sidewalk repair work.

### Property Owners

Property owners are responsible and liable for maintaining sidewalks, driveways, and curb in combination with sidewalks that abut their property. This includes:

- Constructing, reconstructing, and maintaining sidewalks, driveways, and curb in combination with sidewalks. This includes repairing damage from ornamental trees.
- Obtaining related permits necessary for constructing, reconstructing, or maintaining sidewalks, driveways, and curb in combination with sidewalks.
- Paying for identified sidewalk repair work completed by City crews or contractors hired by the city on their behalf.
- Maintaining tree wells/grates, vault doors/lids, and planting strips.
- Removing snow and ice.
- Keeping sidewalks clean from branches, leaves, flowers, fruit, and other organic matter.

[Link to Full Text of Administrative Rules](#) (PDF Document, 929 kb).

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## HISTORY

Policy amended by Director of Portland Bureau of Transportation December 23, 2014.

New policy adopted by Director of Portland Bureau of Transportation November 27, 2013 and filed for inclusion in PPD December 2, 2013.

Policy rescinded by Division Manager of PBOT Bureau of Maintenance April 1, 2011.  
Revised document filed for inclusion in PPD November 7, 2005. Document dated January 2005.  
Filed for inclusion in PPD November 14, 2003.

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