

Frequently Asked Questions



Public Works Department

2026 Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Repair and Replacement Project

Where can I find a map of the proposed locations?

Please visit the project website or reach out to engineering@lakestevenswa.gov.

What is the project timeline?

The sidewalk contract work is planned for October – December 2026. Tree replanting will be completed separately by city crews.

What can I expect for construction impacts?

Parking lanes, individual travel lanes, and sidewalk sections will be temporarily closed as needed. The contractor will provide access to residences and pedestrian detour routes. Driveway access will be maintained as the project does not include any driveway reconstruction, only sidewalk panels outside of driveway areas.

Who is performing the construction work (Lake Stevens Public Works crews, or a contractor)? Can I have them do additional work such as driveway repair or tree removal?

The city will post the awarded contractor upon execution of the contract. Property owners would need to coordinate directly with the contractor. This would not be done by the city.

Is this a new program/project? What is the budget?

Yes – since the launch of the ADA Transition Plan (2023), the city has dedicated \$100,000 annually to upgrade existing non-compliant pedestrian facilities considered “barriers” under the ADA. Examples include sidewalks with missing curb ramps, incorrect slopes or surface issues (such cracks or lifts), and non-compliant signal push buttons.

This year’s project is also partially funded by Streets Sidewalk Maintenance/Construction funds, historically used for a variety of sidewalk treatments such as grinding, ramping lifted panels, or lifting and re-setting concrete panels that are still structurally sound.

The total project budget is approximately \$245,000.

Why was this location selected?

Recently, our Streets and Engineering divisions have focused on a triage of sidewalk locations with vertical lifts greater than 4". These two locations were selected based on need (severity of lifting/cracking) and value (how much sidewalk can be repaired with the current budget).

Why are sidewalk panels lifting or cracking?

While cracks and lifts can have many causes (freeze/thaw cycles, heavy vehicle loading, normal infrastructure aging), tree roots are one of the main culprits. In some cases, street trees may have been planted incorrectly decades ago, or without root barrier. Proper root barrier installation is critical when planting street trees to ensure that tree root systems grow downwards to a certain depth (usually 2 feet minimum) before spreading outwards to avoid disturbing sidewalks and pavement.

Why are trees being removed? Can they be preserved, and the sidewalk ramped or relocated around the roots?

Generally, the city's goal is to preserve healthy trees, and the Public Works department will be testing different alternatives to work around tree roots when feasible. The trees designated for removal are exhibiting signs of decline related to planting conditions, maintenance limitations, or natural stressors. It is important to resolve these underlying issues prior to replacing the sidewalk panels.

Will trees be re-planted in the landscape strip? If so, when?

Yes. New trees will be selected from an approved street tree list being mindful of mature size, growth habits, maintenance requirements, compatibility with surrounding species, and aesthetics. The trees will be planted sometime in late fall – early spring, either this year or next.

What is the future of this program?

There is a need to synchronize our sidewalk maintenance program with a street tree maintenance program to ensure the long-term success and efficiency of both sidewalks and street trees.

Going forward, we plan to roll out a broader program that will:

- Outline a long-range work plan with project locations that are prioritized based on established criteria/scoring to balance need, value, and equity
- Pilot different sidewalk treatments to preserve healthy trees while maintaining ADA compliance
- Include early outreach to residents and other stakeholders
- Update and clarify landscape maintenance requirements for frontage improvements within the city