
Joint Statement on Sidewalk Gap Implementation Work Group

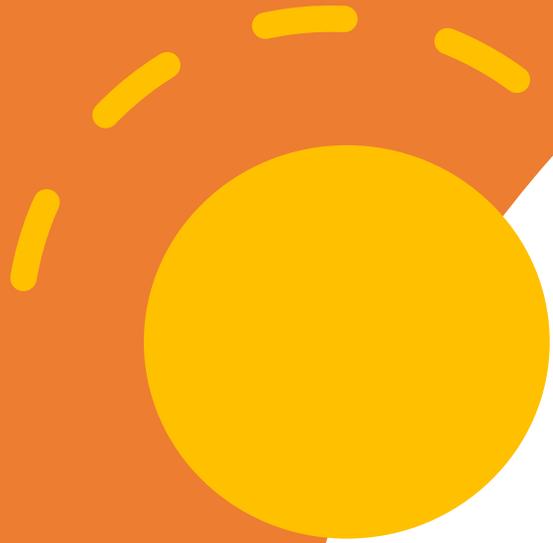
March 10, 2026



Agenda

- Background
- Workgroup Structure
- Problems/Opportunities Addressed
- Major themes
- Outcomes





Background

Purpose of Workgroup

- Respond to community concerns
 - Address public concerns about impacts to the urban tree canopy from sidewalk gap filling projects
- Explain the city's approach
 - Provide clear information on how the city balances transportation safety, mobility, and environmental stewardship when designing sidewalks
- Identify improvements
 - Highlight opportunities to strengthen communication, transparency, and procedures related to tree protection while advancing an all-ages-and-abilities sidewalk network.

Work Group Goals

- **Deliverable.** Create a joint statement of support in collaboration with the Transportation Commission as to how the City approaches environmental considerations for sidewalk projects.
 - Public engagement tool to help advance an all-ages-and-abilities transportation network that promotes non-vehicle travel.
- **Critical Success Factor.** A shared understanding of the trade-offs in implementing key city initiatives.





Workgroup Structure

Work Group Structure

City staff

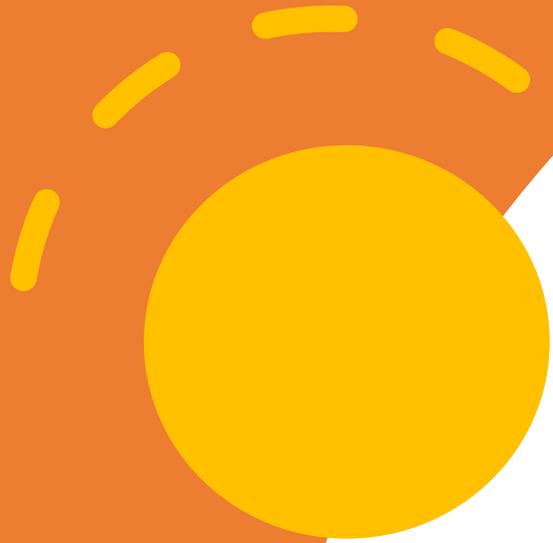
- Ariana Lapine, Transportation Commission Liaison
- Nick Hutchinson, City Engineer
- Nick Jacobs, Urban and Community Forester
- Jasmine Isaac-Ofori, Community Engagement Specialist
- Co-Chair: Erin Donnelly, Environmental Services Manager

Sustainability Commission

- Co-Chair: Rita Mitchell
- Brooks Curtis
- Chris Graham

Transportation Commission

- Peter Houk
- Bret Hautama



Major Themes Discussed

Major Themes

- Focus was primarily on Vision Zero non-motorized transportation requirements, per the Transportation Commission
- Multidisciplinary assessment by Engineering and Forestry.
- Discussed developing designs that retain existing mature trees and improve non-motorized transportation.
 - Change of sidewalk route
 - Easement on private property
 - Change of curb location
 - Removal of trees
- Communication with adjacent residents about project goals and designs.
- Documentation of trees removed and retained and associated mitigation funds transferred to forestry for trees removed.
- Restoration/replacement where trees are removed.



Work Group Outcomes

Joint Statement

- We are aiming to highlight:
 - Shared values: accessibility, sustainability, equity
 - Concerns: balance public safety/mobility and environmental stewardship
 - City's approach
- Joint commitments to:
 - Enhance public education
 - Improve internal processes
 - Integrate environmental considerations into transportation policies



Staff Commitments

- **Strengthen public education** – create fact sheet for residents
 - An effort to increase transparency in project design decisions and trade offs
 - Make a stronger connection between sidewalk gap filling and A²ZERO goals
- We want to highlight:
 - cross departmental collaboration
 - the type of tree evaluations that are conducted
 - the types of strategies that can be deployed to avoid tree removal
 - when trees need to be removed, how those impacts are mitigated
 - the degree to which we integrate public concerns/comments
- *Fact sheet was finalized in March and will be shared with city staff for use in future projects*

Staff Commitments

- **Improve internal processes**

- Update interdepartmental workflows to clearly document tree evaluation and removal decisions, including better tracking of canopy loss fees and metrics.
- *Timeline to be determined following approval of joint statement*

- **Review transportation policies**

- Explore ways to further integrate environmental considerations into transportation policy
- *Timeline to be determined following approval of joint statement*



Questions