Alternative Sidewalk Solutions

The University of Texas at Austin Engineering Professionalism Course

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- Issues at site:
 - Sidewalk does not meet code with regard to critical root zone of trees
 - ► Austin City Code Subchapter E and Environmental Criteria Manual
 - Sidewalk cracking due to tree root growth
 - ► Requires maintenance and repair
- Objective:
 - Propose new sidewalk design and/or materials that
 - Protect trees
 - Maintain Sidewalk
 - Aesthetically pleasing



Overview of Code Criteria

Austin City Code (Ch.25 Subchapter E):

- Core Transit Corridors: Sidewalks and Building Placement
 - no sidewalk shall be less than 15 feet in width
 - two zones: a planting zone, and a clear zone
- Planting zone
 - ► The planting zone shall have a minimum width of eight feet (from face of curb)
- Clear Zone
 - The clear zone shall be a minimum width of seven feet

Environmental Criteria Manual:

- A minimum of 50 percent of the CRZ must be preserved at natural grade
- No cut or fill greater than four 4 inches will be located closer to the tree trunk than ½ the CRZ radius distance.
- No cut or fill within the distance from the tree which is three 3 times the trunk diameter (¼ CRZ)

Alternative 1: Moving the sidewalk

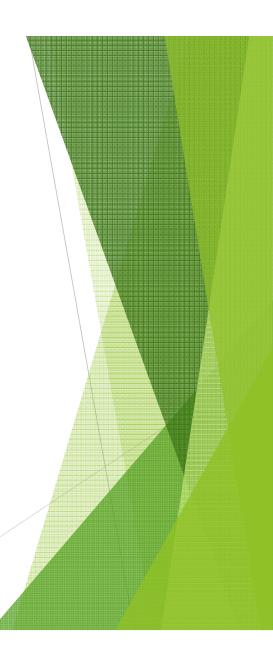
Advantages

- Durable
- Easy to place
 - ► Familiarity for the contractors
- Pedestrian friendly
- Keeps continuity of sidewalk

Disadvantages

- Inefficient use of space
 - ▶ Must be placed outside the ½ CRZ
- Impermeable
- Not flexible
- Costly repairs/frequent damage

Cost: \$5 per sq ft



Alternative 2: Wooden Decking

Advantages

- Low to med impact on roots
 - ► Can be placed within ½ CRZ
 - =<4 in cut/fill</pre>
- Aesthetics

Disadvantages

- Susceptible to weather damage
 - ► Rotting due to rain water
- Not continuous
- Not smooth for bicycles and wheel chairs

Cost: \$8 per sq ft



http://marcy-twss.blogspot.com/2014/02/muir-woods-and-mt-tam.html

Alternative 3: Rubber Panels

Advantages

- ▶ Can be within ½ CRZ
- Flexibility
- Permeable
- Meets ADA friction standards
- Relatively low cost for panel replacement

Cost: \$9 per sq ft

Disadvantages

- ► Lower lifecycle than expected
- Discontinuity of sidewalk
- ► Target for vandalism



http:\\greatergreaterwashington.org\

Alternative 4: Porous Flexible Pavement

Advantages

- Permeable
- Flexible
- Close tree proximity
 - Minimal digging
 - ► Can place within ½ CRZ
- Slip Resistant
- Strong
 - 2" can handle light vehicle traffic

Cost: \$9 per sq ft

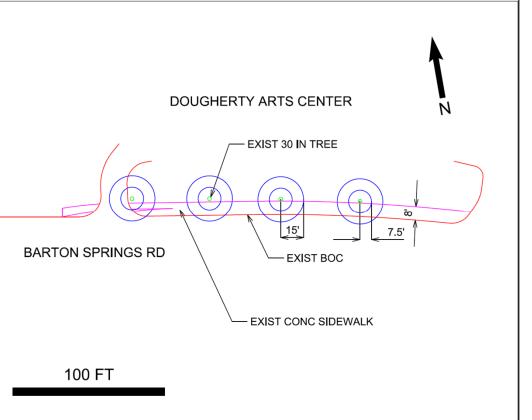
Disadvantages

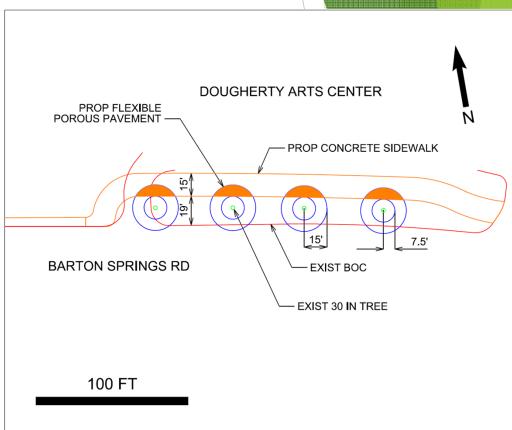
- Pores tend to clog
 - Reduces permeability
 - ► Requires maintenance
- New installation procedure
- Aesthetics



http://greatergreaterwashington.org/post/19401/new-sidewalk-uses-porous-flexible-pavement/

Geometric Sketches





Recommendation:

Test Phase of Porous Flexible Pavement

- Accommodates tree root growth
- ► Can be placed within ½ CRZ
- ► Can be used in conjunction with concrete
- Durable
- Comparable cost to concrete

http://www.easypaveinc.com/wpcontent/uploads/Porous-Pave-Brochure.pdf



- http://www.homewyse.com/services/cost_to_install_wood_decking.html
- http://www.citylab.com/tech/2014/05/the-sidewalk-of-the-future-is-not-so-concrete/371377/
- http://greatergreaterwashington.org/post/19401/new-sidewalk-uses-porous-flexible-pavement/
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