

Main Street Sidewalk

Nominating Agency: City of Aspen

Innovation: City of Aspen took an innovative approach to becoming "green" through the use of recycled rubber sidewalks along Main Street. Residents are now able to enjoy a stroll along Main Street between 5th and 7th streets without tripping over cracked and buckled pavement with the 1800 sf installation of Rubber-sidewalks. Through the use of this sidewalk material the City was able to preserve 13 trees and was able to install sidewalk on the two remaining blocks on Main Street. Through the use of this material, the City diverted 1800 passenger tires that would have ended up in a landfill.

Achievement: The goal of the project was to install 360 lf of sidewalk through a narrow ROW that is shared with existing cottonwoods and a historic ditch – both of which needed to be preserved with the installation of the sidewalk. The ditch was preserved through most of the project and after a year from the installation, the trees are doing well. Additionally the side-



walk material has been able to withstand the winter season of a mountain town without any evidence of heaving.

Transferable: Through the success of the installation of rubber sidewalks along Main Street, City of Aspen will continue the use of this material in areas where trees must be preserved. Due to the cost of this material (\$32/sf) it becomes economical to use when considering the negative impacts to trees from traditional sidewalk material.

Cooperation: This project coordinated with the City's historic preservation committee in order to maintain the historic character of the street

by preserving the historic ditch. This project also coordinated with the City's Parks Department to ensure minimal impact to the cottonwood trees. The project also coordinated with the City's Water Department to ensure the appropriate flows would be delivered through the historic ditch.

Summary: Along the 14 blocks of Main Street, the only two blocks that did not have sidewalk were between 5th and 7th streets. These two blocks did not have sidewalk for a reason: there are several mature cottonwood trees and an historic ditch, both of which needed to be preserved. Using traditional materials (i.e., concrete) the trees would have been severely impacted during installation. Additionally traditional materials do not allow tree root systems to "breathe" beneath them. With the use of rubber sidewalks, not only is the installation a low impact to the trees but during the life of the trees their root system will be able to move and "breathe" beneath the sidewalk. Through this installation of sidewalk the City has made this area safer for pedestrians and has maintained the historic character of Main street. ●



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