

**City of Portland
Office of Transportation**

5-Year Moratorium Street Cut Replacement Guidelines

History

In an effort to better manage pavement degradation from the affects of utility cuts, the City of Portland has recently enacted a 5-year moratorium on all new pavement surfaces. This will include overlays, inlays, reconstruction, and new construction of at least a half street or greater. Sawcuts along an existing frontage will not trigger a 5-year moratorium.

Through research of other municipalities throughout the country and from the City's own trench cut inventory, it is clear that trench cuts significantly alter and degrade pavement surfaces adjacent to the actual trench line. The City of Portland Standard Construction Specifications were recently modified to require all trench cuts to be t-cuts, reducing the negative impacts of the trench cut.

Public interest in the integrity, ride-ability and appearance of new street surfaces is significant. Residents don't appreciate new streets being dug up by utility trenches. However, in the event of an emergency or a new development, it will occasionally be necessary to cut into a street that has been paved within the past five years. These guidelines establish the basis and process for determining the level of repair and replacement for utility cuts for newly paved streets.

Definition

The City of Portland requires that anyone applying to cut open the street for utility connections or installations must have an approved street opening permit. Title 17.24.100 outlines the rules regarding the 5-year moratorium.

17.24.100 Street Pavement Preservation

After any street has been constructed, reconstructed, or paved by City forces, under City contract, or under permit, the pavement surface shall not thereafter be cut or opened for a period of 5 years.

The City Engineer may grant exemptions to this prohibition in order to facilitate development on adjacent properties, provide for emergency repairs to subsurface facilities, provide for underground service connections to adjacent properties or allow the upgrading of underground utility facilities.

When granting exceptions to this regulation, the City Engineer may impose conditions determined appropriate to insure the rapid and complete restoration of the street and the surface paving. Repaving may include surface grinding, base and sub-base repairs, or other related work as needed, and may include up to full-width surface paving of the roadway.

In addition to the street opening permit, any person who is required partially or fully repave a street shall obtain a street improvement permit and be responsible for the full cost of plan review, construction inspection, material testing, bonding, and all other City expenses related to the work.

If the City Engineer determines that final repaving of the street is not appropriate at that particular time for reasons relating to weather or other short term problems, the City Engineer may grant a delay until proper conditions allow for repaving.

This language was adopted by the City Council effective July 1, 2002 (Ordinance No. 176408).

Cutting into a Moratorium Street

When it becomes necessary to cut into a moratorium street, the Office of Transportation will make a concerted effort to protect the integrity of the pavement structure, and to ensure a high quality replacement patch or overlay.

Depending on the particular trench cut size, location, and construction duration, conditions will be placed on the permittee to return the street to a similar integrity as prior to the cut occurring. This may require a larger pavement restoration area on each side of the trench, a full-lane-width pavement replacement, or a full curb-to-curb replacement.

Goals

Each situation will be different and will require thoughtful and reasonable evaluation by the Office of Transportation to determine the optimal limits of work to achieve the following goals:

- Minimize pavement degradation
- Maintain structural integrity of street
- Maintain a smooth riding surface for all modes
- Limit visual impact and perceptions

Parameters

Streets are classified according to the City of Portland's Transportation Element. For the purpose of this guideline, the designation of "arterials" will apply to all streets other than "local Service Streets", hereafter referred to as "local streets." Parameters to consider during the analysis to determine the pavement replacement scope include, but are not limited to:

- Street classification – "local" or "arterial"
- Will the trench cut seam be in a wheel well within a travel lane?
- Will the trench cut seam be within a bus stop area or pullout:
- Where are the seams in relationship to a bike lane, parking lane, etc.?

Trench Cut Requirements

The actual trench cut will follow the new standard t-cut, with a minimum 6” overlap on each side of the trench for base replacement. On moratorium streets additional pavement restoration will extend beyond the limits of the trench and t-cut. The permittee will be required to remove the AC and replace to the dimensions outlined below, or as directed by the City Engineer. In most cases, full-width base replacement should not be necessary.

Lateral Cuts – These are generally used to cut into a pre-existing facility to allow for a single connection. This may include full street-width crossings.

Most lateral cut requests on 5-year moratorium streets can be handled through the standard street opening permit process in Street Systems Management.

Follow the City Standard Construction Specifications using a t-cut, but the pavement replacement will vary:

- Arterials – where the lateral impacts a travel lane, replace a minimum of five feet (5’) on each side of the trench.
- Arterials – where the lateral impacts only the parking lane, replace a minimum of (three feet) 3’ on each side of the trench.
- Local streets – replace a minimum of three feet (3’) on each side of the trench.

Extend the patch to the nearest lane line or street centerline.

Longitudinal Cuts – These cuts generally run lengthwise in the roadway.

Most longitudinal cut request on 5-year moratorium streets will require an expended permit process (outlined below), which will be handled through the Permit Engineering section.

The extent of surface pavement replacement width will depend on the location of the longitudinal run in relationship to parking, bike and travel lanes. Generally:

- A single lane that is impacted will have full pavement restoration for the width of the lane.
- If multiple lanes are impacted, the full width of those lanes may have to be restored. Given the location and the extent of the trench repair, consideration may be giving for restoration only to the center of a lane(s).
- Impacted bike lanes will be restored in their entirety.

Construction Methods

There are two basic systems for applying asphalt as a patch or as paving; application by paving machine and application by drag box with hand raking. For large application, the machine paving provides the best AC mix consistency and best uniform thickness. For large pavement patches (especially longitudinal cuts) the permittee may be required to apply the AC using a paving machine. Site specific characteristics (such as truck and bus routes, traffic volumes, etc.) will determine which application methodology will be allowed or required.

Process for Longitudinal Cuts on Moratorium Streets

1. SSM **Identifies 5-yr street**; puts permittee on notification of larger process:
2. SSM notifies PER about the request, and **begins a project number** to track costs.
3. PER organizes a **pre-design conference**, and invites the following staff:
 - SSM utility coordinator
 - CBD coordinator & traffic engineer
 - Project manager from most recent capital or permit job
 - Permittee
4. Permittee develops a **submittal** that meets the needs identified at the pre-design.
5. Formal **utility notification** to all parties, including statement about 5-yr moratorium and encourages joint trenching opportunity.
6. Staff approves submittal upon complete review by interested parties.
7. PER develops a **permit package**, with specs, erosion control, etc. Include final date for completing pavement work (based on time of year permit is initially released).
8. Permittee pays **fees** to obtain permits:
 - Utility Installation Permit fees paid – SSM
 - Performance and Warranty bonds**, and engineering & inspection (cost recovery fees)
 - 100% of estimate is paid – PER
 - Street lane and parking removal fees – CBD
9. **Permits issued** from SSM, PER, and CBD.
10. **Construction** begins:
 - Parking and lane closures
 - Trench work
 - Pavement restoration
 - If pavement work is to be delayed, a “sunset” date is established to ensure that the work is completed by the permittee (utility company, not initial contractor). A separate CBD parking and lane closure permit will have to be established at the time of actual paving operation.
11. **Punchlist**
12. **Certificate of Completion** is initiated
13. Final **Cost Accounting**; refund or amount due.
14. COC and **performance bond** is returned to permittee upon **receipt of final payment or refund**.
15. Project is formally **closed**.