



City of Seattle
Seattle Department of Transportation

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 2, 2011
To: Users of SDOT Pavement Opening and Restoration Rule 5-2009
From: SDOT Pavement Engineering and Management
Subject: PORR Revision
ADA Curb Ramp Installation Requirements

Background

The current 5-2009 version of the SDOT Pavement Opening and Restoration Rule (PORR) contains an error in Section 8.6.8, which addresses curb ramps. The published language is outdated. In the case of curb ramps, the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements override any local guidelines. This memorandum corrects the error and describes restoration work that will trigger the installation of new curb ramps.

ADA Curb Ramp Installation Thresholds

SDOT's Traffic and Roadway Design engineers have advised that any alterations to the pedestrian pathway (curb ramps, sidewalk, landing, marked or unmarked crosswalk, et al) will require installation of accessible curb ramps compliant with current ADA guidelines. In general, replacement or retrofit of curb ramps will be necessary whenever a restoration:

- involves any removal or construction activities within the crosswalk area;
- impacts curb ramps, sidewalks, landings, or curbs within the crosswalk or intersection area; and/or
- affects access to or use of a public facility.

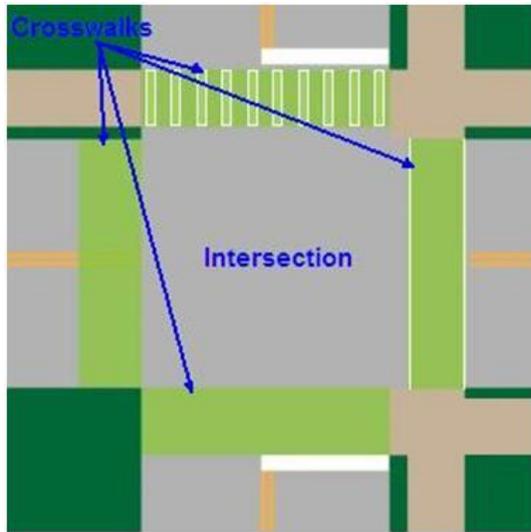
The City of Seattle's Standard Specifications and Standard Plans for Road, Bridge and Municipal Construction are representative of the current ADA requirements. Reference Standard Plan Numbers 420 and 422 and Standard Specifications Section 8-14. Curb ramps must be addressed in pairs; if one ramp is built to current standard, its companion ramp must also be upgraded.

The crosswalk portion of the pedestrian pathway is defined in the Seattle Municipal Code and shown in Figure 1 below, along with the intersection area. Figure 2 shows the areas where a pavement opening would trigger curb ramp upgrades based on the ADA guidelines and the defined pedestrian pathway.

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Figure 1. Crosswalks and Intersections as defined by Seattle Municipal Code



SMC 11.14.135 Crosswalk.

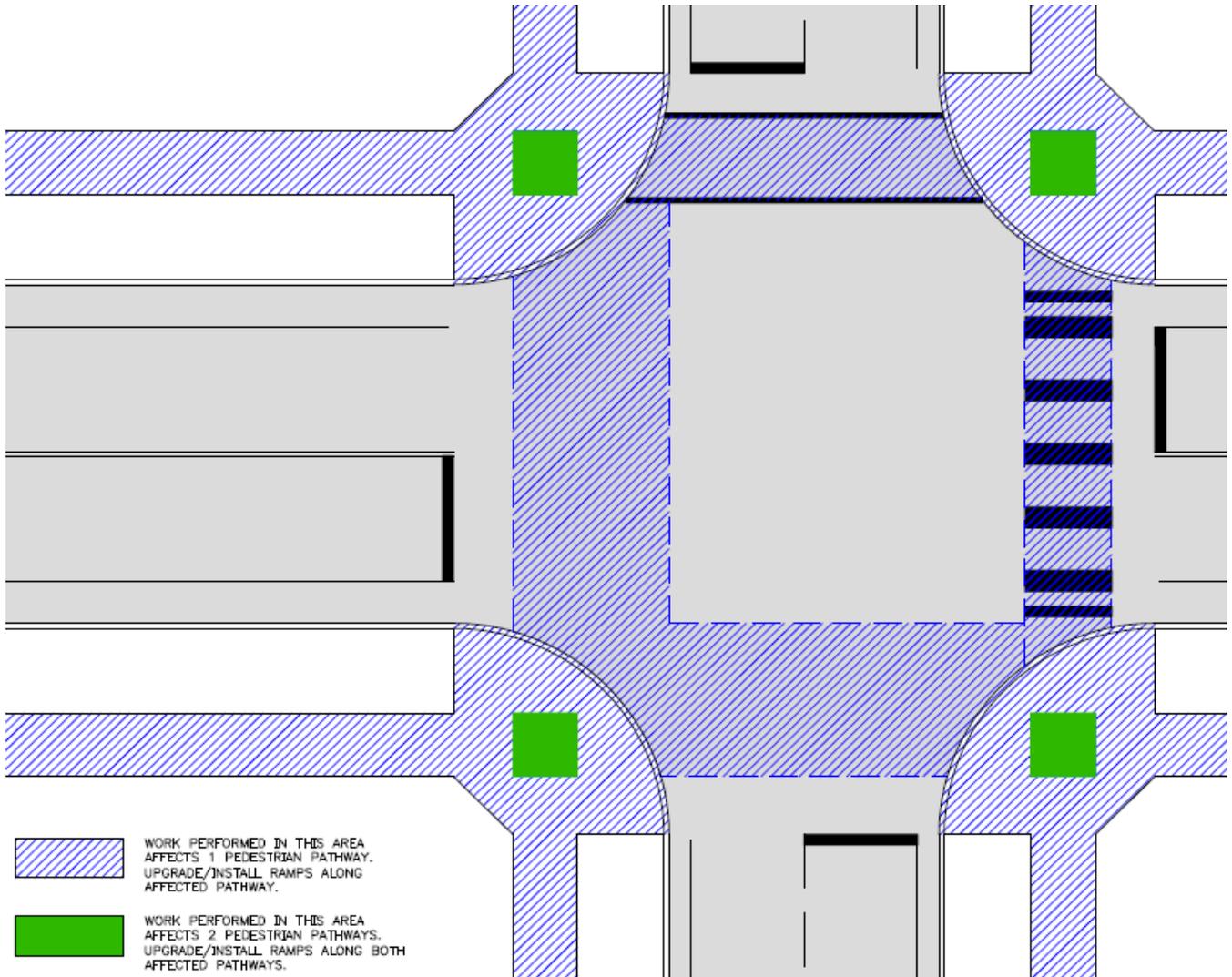
"Crosswalk" means the portion of the roadway between the intersection area and the prolongation or connection of the farthest sidewalk line, or, in the event there are no constructed sidewalks, then between the intersection area and a line ten feet (10') therefrom, except as modified by a marked crosswalk. (RCW 46.04.160)

SMC 11.14.265 Intersection.

A. "Intersection" means the area enclosed within the projection of the lateral curbs, or if no curbs, then the projection of the lateral roadway boundaries of two (2) or more streets which join one another at an angle, whether or not such streets cross each other...

Any time the term "crosswalk" or "intersection" is used in the PORR, the definitions above shall apply. Please note that crosswalks exist regardless of markings.

Figure 2. Pavement Openings Requiring upgrade of ADA Curb Ramps



Other

The dimensions of the latest specification ADA ramps landings and walkways do not always fit neatly within Seattle's limited right-of-way. For example, with a six inch curb and 2% sidewalk, a current standard ADA ramp needs to be almost 8 feet in length to meet the 12:1 slope requirement. If the Standard Plan ramp cannot be constructed within the space available, it may be necessary to consult an engineer trained in accessible design. To ensure ADA compliance, SDOT may require that permittees prepare a curb ramp layout plan prior to making any street openings in a crosswalk.