



Modular Sidewalks

“The most amazing thing is that we went back to the sidewalks next to certain trees every six or seven years because the concrete was severely uplifted – more than eight inches at steep angles. Now I look at those same areas after we installed modular sidewalks and they have been flat for the last seven years with only minor maintenance of some small roots.”

- Robin Jarrett, Street Maintenance Supervisor, City of Santa Monica

Locations: throughout the City of Santa Monica



Vendor: Terrecon, Inc.

California tires diverted from landfills: For every 100 square feet of modular recycled tire sidewalk, 89 recycled tires were used.

Overview: In the 1970s, Santa Monica started planting ficus trees because of the trees' dense shade canopy and hardiness. Within a decade, the ficus tree roots, struggling for air and water, began pushing up concrete sidewalks throughout Santa Monica. By early 1990s, the City maintenance staff began performing between 70 and 200 sidewalk repairs each year due to ficus, magnolia and liquid amber tree roots. The number of damaged sidewalks that needed repair continued to escalate over the years.

Santa Monica began testing modular sidewalk pavers made from recycled tire rubber in 1998. They found that air and water moved through the seams between the modular pavers and tree roots did not uplift the pavers as much as the concrete. When recycled tire sidewalks did need repair, City maintenance staff could remove the pavers from the base, trim back roots and put the pavers back in place. Once concrete uplifts and breaks severely, replacement is needed.

Years installed: 1998 to 2007