

SIGHT DISTANCE A CLEAR VIEW VEGETATION, WALLS, AND FENCES

**Public Works Agency
Transportation Department**
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009-1620

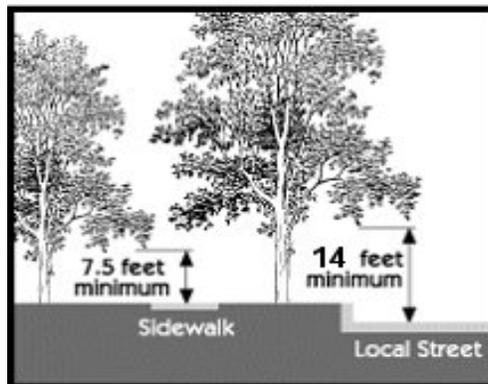


ROADS AND VEGETATION

The area between the road right-of-way line (property line) and the back of curb/berm (or edge of pavement, where no curb/berm exists), often called the landscape or parkway strip, is County road right-of-way. The County's road right-of-way is an easement right and not fee ownership of the land. The adjacent property owner is the owner of the underlying property. County of Ventura codes and policies identify trees and other vegetation as encroachments (Board Resolution, May 1968). The adjacent property owner is obligated to maintain all plants and trees, including vegetation within roadside shoulders, so that traffic, bicyclists, and pedestrians have unobstructed use of the road right-of-way. Tree branches and vegetation must be trimmed to provide a clear view of traffic signals, traffic signs, pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vehicles.

Before a tree is planted, pruned, or removed, an encroachment permit must be obtained. If the trees are "protected" (Oaks, Sycamores, etc.), you must check with the Resource Management Agency (RMA) – Planning Department at **(805) 654-3136**.

To ensure safe passage for everyone, tree limbs over streets and sidewalks (or pedestrian paths) must meet the standards below.



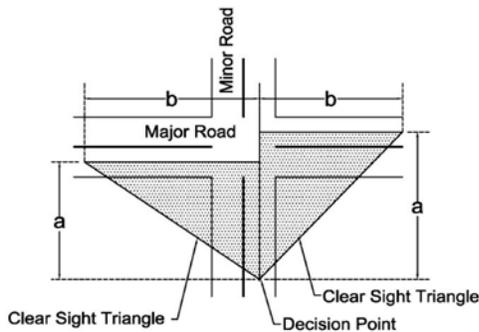
A WAY TO MAKE OUR ROADS SAFER

Overgrown vegetation impedes the safe flow of traffic when it blocks our view of traffic signs, traffic signals, pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vehicles. If vegetation is blocking visibility in the street or an intersection, or creating obstructions for bicyclists or pedestrians, it is the property owner's responsibility to trim the vegetation.

Each quadrant of an intersection should provide an approach sight triangle, free of obstructions that might block the approaching driver's view of potentially conflicting vehicles.

At uncontrolled intersections, the leg lengths of this triangular area along both intersecting roadways should be such that drivers can see any approaching vehicles in sufficient time to slow or stop before colliding within the intersection. The Ventura County Zoning Ordinance requires 40-foot sight triangles at intersections with no stop signs or traffic signals. Distances “a” and “b” are 40 feet.

Uncontrolled Intersection Diagram

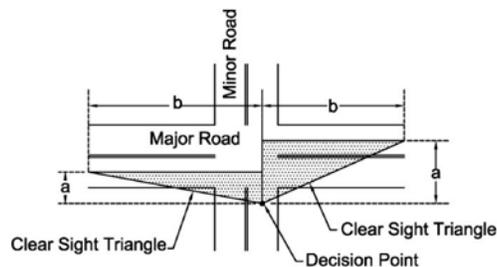


At a stop–sign–controlled intersection, a second type of clear sight–distance triangle provides sight distance for a stopped driver on a minor road approach to depart from the intersection and enter or cross the major road.

Departure sight triangles should be provided in each quadrant of the intersection approach controlled by stop or yield signs.

Distances “a” and “b” vary with the speed limit of the major road and whether trucks will use the intersection. The Transportation Department should be contacted to determine these distances.

Stop–Sign–Controlled Intersection Diagram



A clear sight triangle for viewing traffic approaching from the left should also be provided at signalized intersections where traffic is permitted to turn right on red so that drivers can clearly see traffic approaching from the left before entering the intersection to complete a right-turn maneuver.

WALLS AND FENCES

Walls and fences in front yards frequently are the cause of sight-distance obstructions. The Zoning Ordinance prohibits structures, walls, fences, and hedges 20 feet in front of virtually all lots unless they are less than three feet in height. Depending on the size of the lot and its zoning, taller fences may be allowed if

they are 50% open, such as chain link fences. You are urged to contact the RMA – Planning Department at **(805) 654-2488** to discuss exceptions to the three-foot height limit for fences.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PROPERTY OWNERS

If the County is notified that there might be a visibility problem within your property, you will be contacted and requested to trim or remove the vegetation or other obstructions such as walls and fences causing the sight distance restrictions. The letter also notifies you that should a traffic collision occur due to lack of maintenance of this vegetation, you may be subject to legal action.

If the trees and shrubs are not trimmed in a timely manner, the County may trim the vegetation and bill you for the cost incurred.

REQUESTS AND INQUIRES

If you have questions, requests or suggestions concerning sight distance, please call the Transportation Department at: **(805) 654-2063** or through the “Contact Us” link at: <http://www.countyofventura.org>