

SIGHT DISTANCE – A CLEAR VIEW



ROADS & TRANSPORTATION

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Phone Number: (805) 654-2049

<https://publicworks.venturacounty.gov>

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 referred to as the landscape or parkway strip, is County Road right-of-way.

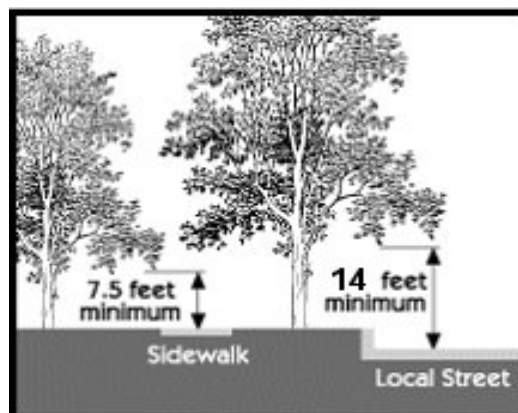
The County's road right-of-way is a public easement, not fee ownership of the land. The adjacent property owner retains underlying property ownership. County of Ventura codes and policies identify trees and other vegetation as encroachments (Board Resolution, May 1968). Trees and other vegetation in this strip are classified as encroachments.

Adjacent property owners are required to maintain vegetation so that all roadway users including motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians have unobstructed and safe passage. Tree branches and vegetation must be trimmed to provide a clear view of traffic control devices (traffic signals/signs), pedestrians, bicyclists, and oncoming/turning vehicles.

ENCROACHMENT AND TREE PROTECTION PERMITS

Before planting, pruning, or removing trees, an encroachment permit must be obtained. If the trees are "protected" (Oaks, Sycamores, etc.), you must consult with the Ventura County Resource Management Agency (VCRMA) – 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.



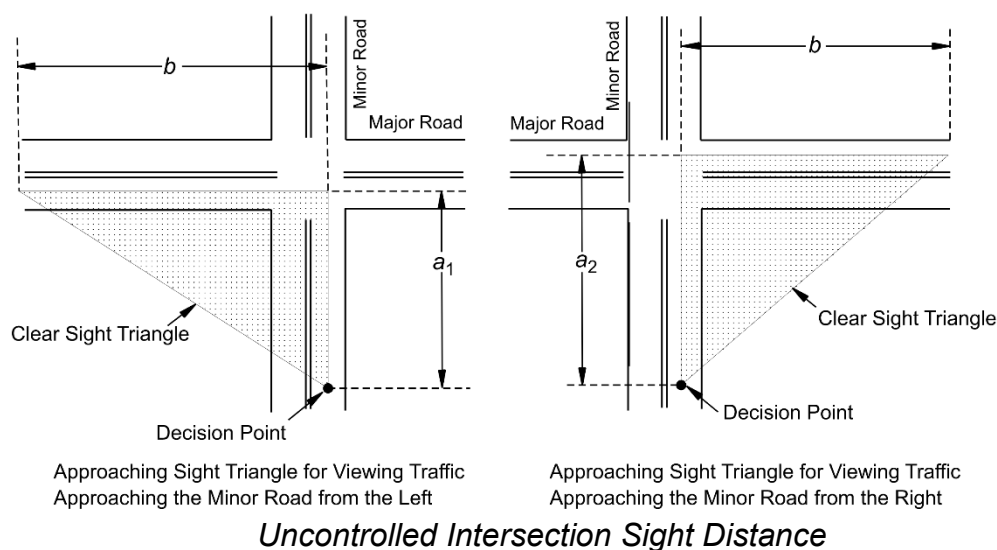
SIGHT TRIANGLES, MAKING OUR ROADS SAFER

Overgrown vegetation and physical structures block driver's line of sight, putting road users at risk of collisions. Each quadrant of an intersection must maintain an approach or departure sight triangle, meaning an unobstructed area that allows motorists to identify potential conflicts and react safely.

1. UNCONTROLLED INTERSECTIONS

An uncontrolled intersection is an intersection where no traffic control devices (stop sign, yield sign or traffic signal) are present to assign right-of-way.

The Ventura County Zoning Ordinance requires 40-foot clear sight triangles at uncontrolled intersections. Distances “a” and “b” are 40 feet.

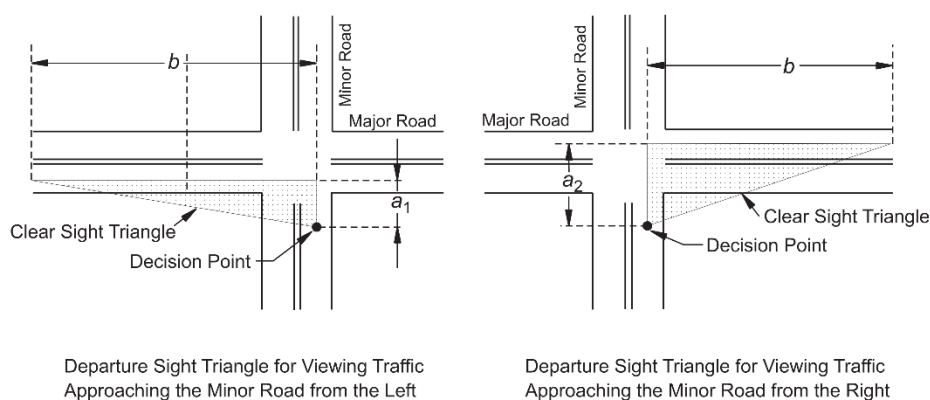


2. CONTROLLED INTERSECTIONS

At intersections controlled by stop or yield signs on the minor road, a departure sight triangle is required. This provides sufficient sight distance for a stopped motorist on the minor approach to perceive approaching major street vehicles, enter or cross the intersection and maneuver safely.

Distances “a” and “b” vary with the design speed of the major road and vehicle types (passenger vehicles vs. heavy trucks) expected on the roadway.

Contact the Ventura County Public Works Agency – Roads and Transportation Department (VCPWA-RT) for specifics and requirements at your location.



Controlled Intersection Sight Distance

3. SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

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 VCRMA – 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 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 VCPWA-RT at: **(805) 654-2063** or by an email through the “Report a Concern” link at:

[VCPWA Connect \(https://publicworks.venturacounty.gov/report-a-concern/\)](https://publicworks.venturacounty.gov/report-a-concern/)