

Port Townsend City Code allows property owners to install 'minor landscaping' in the right of way in front of their house without a permit, so long as it meets certain requirements. The intent of this brochure is to share information about what is (and what is not) permitted in the public right of way (ROW), and when a permit is required.

Permits are Required For:

Rain Garden Installation



Grading in the ROW and Developing in Parking Areas



Maintenance of Landscaping

Property owners are required to keep vegetation controlled in the ROW, it is also the responsibility of the adjoining property owner to maintain landscaping to prevent encroachment into sidewalks, roads and site triangles. Trees must be limbed 7' above walking path and 14' above roadways.



Permits & Departures

A minor improvement permit (MIP) is required for improvements within the right of way that go beyond 'minor landscaping' as defined in PTMC 12.040.075C. For example, an MIP with a site plan is required for roadside grading, landscape walls and for rain garden installation, and hardscaping (rocks, bricks...)

Departures to 'what is not allowed' may be granted on a case-by-case basis by the Public Works Director under limited circumstances, for example for retaining walls in the ROW when the slope of the land requires it.

For tree planting, a no fee permit is required. Please visit our website for more details about trees in the ROW. www.cityofpt.us



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Landscaping in the Right of Way



What is allowed in the City right of way (ROW) and when a permit is required.

What is Allowed?

The City encourages beautification of the right of way; A permit is not required for 'minor landscaping' if:

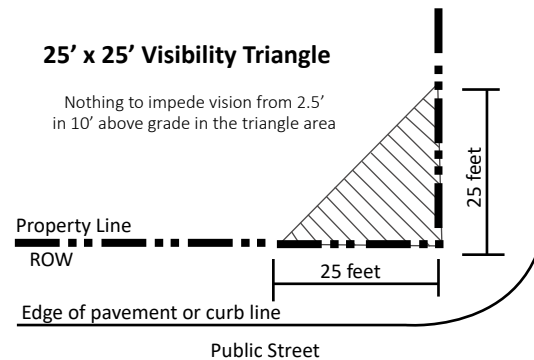
- The plantings do not interfere with parking pedestrian use or roadside drainage.
- Where there is not a street curb, plantings are 8 feet back from the edge of the paved street; this parking/walking area may be planted with low grass or ground cover (City ROW is typically 60' wide).
- Landscaping generally consists of low plantings, spaced to provide an open look (solid hedges are not allowed in the ROW).
- Plantings shall not overhang on a sidewalk or pathway.



Landscape pavers, wood, or small rocks may be used to define the edge of the plantings, or as features in the landscape.



Plantings must not interfere with 'sight lines' at intersections; within the "sight triangle," landscaping must be kept under 30 inches.



Open Look - No Hedges in ROW



Maintain Sight Distance at Corners



Private Structures are not allowed

Private structures within the right of way are prohibited.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Fences and privacy hedges
- Retaining walls
- Garages and sheds
- Propane tanks and storage containers
- Wood piles
- Private 'No Parking' signs

Temporary fencing

While permanent fences are prohibited in the right of way and must be located on the property, temporary protective fences may be used, for example, around small trees and landscaping to keep deer out until plants are established.



Temporary fencing around fruit trees in the ROW

More detailed requirements may be found in PTMC12.04.075 section C.