

Chapter 7.36 - PRIVATE USE OF THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

- **7.36.010 - Scope and intent.**

The provisions of this chapter shall govern use of the public right of way by private parties. The intent of these standards is to allow private use and development of the public right of way with improvements that are functional, attractive and non-obtrusive to the public, consistent with building safety and public works standards, and compatible with public facilities and surrounding developments.

- **7.36.030 - Permit required.**

It shall be a violation of this chapter for any person to construct, create, occupy or use an encroachment in the public right of way without an encroachment permit. To the extent permitted by law the issuance of such a permit shall be discretionary and may be denied or revoked without cause. Application of this chapter shall include, but not be limited to, private improvements, long-term commercial use and commercial sidewalk dining, temporary access for installation of private street improvements and all other intrusions into the public right of way whether temporary or permanent. The City Council may, from time to time, by resolution set fees for issuance of encroachment permits authorized by this chapter.

- **7.36.065 - Required findings.**

The Director of Community Development, in granting approval of an encroachment permit application, shall make the following findings:

- A. The granting of the encroachment permit will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, convenience, and welfare or injurious to property and improvements in the same vicinity and zone in which the property is located;
- B. The granting of the encroachment permit will be in conformity with the policies and goals of the General Plan;
- C. The proposed encroachment will comply with the provisions of this chapter, including any specific condition required;
- D. The proposed encroachment will not encroach into the area of the right of way occupied by an improved paved sidewalk or pedestrian or vehicular access way or stairway, except as expressly provided in this chapter;
- E. The proposed encroachment will not reduce or adversely impact public pedestrian access along the paved and improved portion of the sidewalk, walk street, alley or stairway and does not reduce or adversely impact the vehicular access along the improved alley.
- F. For properties that are located in the coastal zone, the proposed encroachment will be consistent with the public access and recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976, as follows:
 1. The proposed encroachment will not impact public access to the shoreline, adequate public access is provided and shall be maintained in the public right of way adjacent to the subject property (Section 30212 (a)(2)).

2. The present and foreseeable future demand for public or commercial recreational activities that could be accommodated on the property is already adequately provided for in the area (Section 30221).

- **7.36.080 - Appeals.**

Applications which are inconsistent with the "Encroachment Standards" set forth in Section 7.36.150, including right of way frontage improvements required as a condition of approval by the Director of Public Works, must be appealed to and approved by the City Council with a recommendation from the Parking and Public Improvements Commission. A notice shall be sent to the property owners whose lots' front property lines are within three hundred feet (300') of the subject encroachment area site at least ten (10) calendar days prior to each body's consideration of the exception request. The notice will describe the proposed encroachment, make the plans available for review, and set a deadline for registering objections. Upon consideration of such an appeal application, the City Council may approve, modify, or disapprove the application for encroachment. The action of the City Council shall be final.

- **7.36.150 - Encroachment standards.**

A. General Standards:

1. Structures as defined by the City's Building Code or other encroachments are prohibited from encroaching within the public right of way unless in compliance with these standards or approved by the City Council.
2. Landscaping is permitted without an encroachment permit in accordance with an approved landscape plan pursuant to Section 7.32.080(E) of the Municipal Code. Artificial landscape materials, except artificial turf grass approved by the Director of Community Development, are prohibited.
3. Utility obstructions shall be avoided so as to maintain access to underground utilities. A minimum of thirty inches (30") of clearance is required on each side of all water and sewer mains, unless otherwise approved by the Director of Public Works.
4. Drainage from a private collection system that discharges a concentrated flow shall be directed to a vehicular street or alley pursuant to Public Works Department construction standards and shall be prohibited from flowing onto a public pedestrian walkway or sidewalk. A drainage plan shall be provided with an application for an encroachment permit.
5. All encroachments shall be in conformance with Title 5, Chapter 5.84 of the Municipal Code pertaining to storm water pollution control.
6. Obstructions to neighboring resident's scenic views shall be avoided.
7. Steps and Stairs, other than risers between four and seven inches (4" to 7") in height and spaced a minimum of three feet (3') apart, are not permitted in the public right of way.
Exception. One (1) set of steps comprised of three (3) consecutive risers is permitted provided a condition does not result that requires installation of a guardrail or handrail.
8. Existing improvements which do not conform to current standards must be removed or brought into conformance if the related structure on the adjoining property is significantly remodeled or reconstructed or if any new significant construction is proposed in the public right of way. Existing permitted improvements that have been made non-conforming by changes to these standards may otherwise remain provided any nonconforming element is not increased or expanded. The intent is to cause nonconforming encroachments to be brought into conformity concurrent with major alterations or entirely new structures constructed on adjoining private property.

9. Routine maintenance and repair may be performed on a nonconforming encroachment structure or improvement and replacement with a comparable improvement is permitted upon demonstration that the encroachment is deteriorated and creating an unsafe condition.

D. Vehicular Street Standards:

1. Street improvements, including (but not necessarily limited to) sidewalks, curbs, gutters, parking pads and paving may be required by the Public Works Department for the purpose of maintaining or improving conditions related to drainage, visibility, access, maneuverability or public parking, and, if required, shall be constructed in compliance with City standards.
2. Fences and walls are permitted as follows:
 - a. Location. Compliance is required with Public Works Department standards established in MBMC 9.72.015. A minimum set back of two feet (2') is required behind existing or required street improvements.
 - b. Height. Fences and walls may not exceed a maximum height of forty-two inches (42"), measured from the existing public right of way grade at the fence or wall location. Open-design fences or guard rails required by the Building Official to exceed the forty-two inch (42") maximum height are allowed on top of retaining walls if necessary to retain a neighbor's grade at a side property line. Fences and walls located near the intersection of streets or driveways may be subject to lower height requirements to ensure traffic visibility.
3. Ground cover such as pavement (including brick or other decorative surfaces) and landscaping is permitted on the existing right of way grade. Decks or similar structures are prohibited.
4. Street Corner Visibility. To ensure visibility at street corners a thirty-six inch (36") maximum height is applicable to all fences, walls or landscape plantings within a distance of fifteen feet (15') from the street corner as per MBMC 3.40.010 (Traffic Sight Obstructions). A height less than thirty-six inches (36") may be applicable due to unusual slope conditions.
5. Significant alteration of the existing right of way grade is prohibited, unless determined to be necessary to accommodate a required public street improvement.
6. Loose gravel and similar material as determined by the Public Works Department is not permitted.
7. Drainage from a private collection system that discharges a concentrated flow shall be directed to a public vehicular street right of way location via a non-erosive device pursuant to Public Works Department standards subject to review and approval of the City Engineer.
8. Landscaping is permitted subject to approval of a landscape plan pursuant to Chapter 7.32.080(E) and shall be submitted with an encroachment permit.