

The Parkway – What You Need To Know

The “parkway” is often an area of concern for residents and the City. Many people however, may not know what it is, or understand exactly who is responsible for maintaining it. So, we will provide a simple definition, show some examples, and list the important maintenance facts.

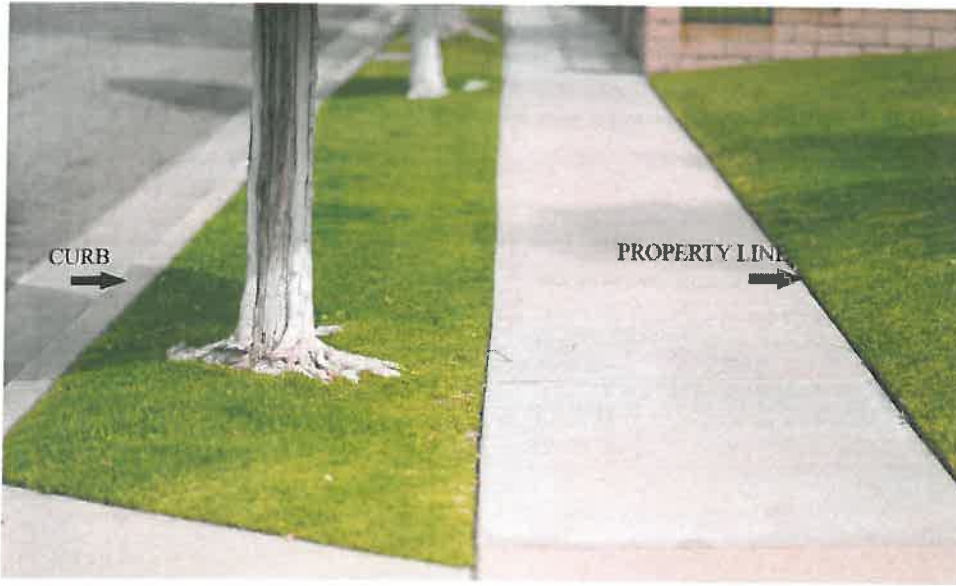
In the City of Commerce Municipal Code the “parkway” is simply defined as the public area from the street or highway curb to the private property line. The main three variants of parkways in the City are illustrated in the following photos:



Landscape / ground cover from the curb to the private property line - The landscape is usually a continuation of the private property landscape



Sidewalk from the curb to the private property line



A strip of landscape area and sidewalk between the curb and the private property line

Let's move on to the important maintenance facts summarized from City of Commerce Municipal Code:

- The parkway is a public right-of-way that shall be kept free of any obstacles or obstructions. Private trees on private property abutting the parkway shall be kept from overhanging onto the public right-of-way and kept trimmed to maintain clearance.
- Property owners shall maintain any parkway planting strip abutting their property. Such maintenance includes watering, mowing, edging, clearing of weeds, but excludes routine maintenance of city-owned trees.
- Artificial turf is not allowed to be planted in parkways or lawns. These areas must be landscaped with planting materials. The Commerce Municipal Code defines landscaping as areas devoted to, or developed and maintained predominantly with, native or exotic plant materials including lawn, ground cover, trees, shrubs, and other plant materials. On private properties, landscaping may also include small amounts of accessory decorative outdoor landscape elements (i.e. hardscape) such as pools, fountains, and paved or decorated surfaces, all of which are suitably designed, selected, installed, and maintained to enhance a site.
- Property owners may have to bear the cost of replacement of any city-owned tree abutting their property which dies as the result of insufficient watering.
- No person shall plant, trim, or remove any tree or shrub on the parkway without approval or permit by the City of Commerce Department of Public Services.
- Any act of cutting, breaking, defacing or damaging city-owned trees is prohibited.

Again, it is important to note that in ALL cases the Commerce Municipal Code requires that property owners be responsible for maintaining the parkway in front of their property in good condition. Plus, ALL landscaping to be planted in a parkway must be approved by the City prior to installation. Also, since the Municipal Code requires these areas to be covered in planting materials, removal of existing landscaping is not allowed. In the coming months, City staff will be working on an update to the existing parkway standards. More information on this update will be provided in different ways including this publication and the City's website.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the parkways, please contact the City of Commerce Code Enforcement Division at (323) 722-4805, extension 2293, or the City of Commerce Public Works Division at (323) 722-4805, extension 2230 or 4451.