

The Mar Vista Community Council strongly supports the transition of parkways from traditional turf to low water and/or edible. The current permitting system creates an unnecessary bureaucracy in its attempt to micromanage parkways and, because it is seen as capriciously enforced, encourages a distain for government regulation. The ability to plant edibles in low income areas with limited access to fresh produce without the need to obtain expensive permits, is especially important.

Given that the vast majority of “nontraditional” parkway plantings are unpermitted, and that gardens are living, changing things (summer tomatoes give way to winter greens) and not permanent structures, the MVCC recommends that the Department of Public Works and the Los Angeles City Council

1. Eliminate the requirement to obtain one or more permits for “nontraditional” (i.e., non turf) parkways.
2. Establish clear guidelines for parkway landscaping that, without specifying allowed plants and materials, ensure that parkway landscaping
 - Provides sufficient and safe access between curb and sidewalk;
 - Does not block visibility at corners or driveways;
 - Does not block visibility of fire hydrants;
 - Allows access to public utilities, such as meters and utility poles, located on the parkway;
 - Does not, through lack of maintenance or choice of plant or hardscape materials, create a hazard for pedestrians, motorist, or parked cars;
 - Is predominately low profile and does not include plants that fully block sight line between sidewalk and curb;
 - If it has an irrigation system, does not spray water on the sidewalk or into the street.
3. Establish an enforcement mechanism that provides warnings and guidance before issuing tickets.
4. Encourage parkways that are primarily low water or edible.