

SECTION B(1) – 5 – OTHER DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

A. CLEAR ZONE (i.e. Setback for non-breakaway fixed objects)

Except as may be authorized by land use permit, the right of way along public streets and highways maintained by VDOT must remain clear of all obstacles that are not designed to break away under impact. For the purposes of this section, breakaway structures are defined as a single 4"x4" square or 4" diameter wooden post or a standard strength, metal pipe post no greater than a 2" diameter. When curbing is used, the clear zone is measured from the face of the curb, except where a bike lane or parking lane exists between the curb and the traveled way. In such a case, clear zone may be measured from the edge of the traveled way. For shoulder and ditch sections, clear zone is measured from the edge of travel way.

Traffic volume, operational or design speed of the street, and the typical cross section of the street determines the required clear zone. The geometric design Tables 1, 2 and 3 in Section B-3-Roadway Geometric Design Criteria provide clear zone requirements for subdivision streets. Any structures or landscaping, including fences, stone or brick mailbox posts, columns or walls that do not meet breakaway requirements may not be located within the clear zone and will require review by the District Engineer/Administrator's Designee to be placed on the right of way. If approved by the District Engineer/Administrator's Designee, a land use permit must be issued for any such obstacle. However, no obstacles, even if they meet breakaway requirements, shall be placed within the 3-foot clear zone of a shared use path. For curb and gutter streets with parking lanes, the clear zone is accommodated within the parking lane. However, VDOT has established a 3' minimum setback requirement behind the curb for the placement of signs in accordance with the MUTCD, Part 2. See Note 2 on Table 1 in Section B(1)-3-Roadway Geometric Design Criteria.