

Clearing Open Space by Adjacent Property Owners Policy

In accordance with policies permission is required to cut or remove any wood, timber, brush or other material from within the boundaries of public parks and open space. Open space is generally left undisturbed with no maintenance activity or responsibility of the City's work force.

Blackberries, weeds, and other noxious plants which grow easily in unmaintained open space provides minimal value as habitat and can become an eyesore and nuisance to adjacent property owners. This policy establishes guidelines for maintenance of public open space by adjacent property owners.

The following are guidelines for maintenance of public open space by adjacent property owners. Permission must be obtained from the Parks and Recreation Department prior to the beginning of any work.

1. Only non-woody and noxious vegetation may be targeted for removal. Removal of hazardous trees and shrubs must be authorized by the Parks and Recreation Department.
2. All exposed ground must be replanted with trees, shrubs, grasses, or other ground cover recommended to control erosion.
3. All plantings shall be indigenous to "Riparian" areas or "Upland" areas depending on the site location. Riparian is defined as the area between a waterway, either intermittent or perennial, and the upland area above it's bank corridor. These plants may include; Ash, Alder, Birch, Nootka Rose, Red-osier Dogwood, Red Elderberry, Serviceberry, Willow, grasses, and sedges. Upland is defined as the area above a waterways corridor. These plants may include; Cedar, Western Larch, Fir, Hemlock, Oregon Grape, Rhododendrons, Salal, and wildflowers.
4. Other properties, views and privacy must be considered when designing planting area.
5. There shall be no change of drainage courses without consent of affected owners and the City of West Linn Staff.
6. Lawn areas must be kept within the boundaries of private property.
7. All debris resulting from any work done in open space areas must be removed from the site.

Other things to keep in mind are:

1. By removing the noxious plants and replanting with indigenous plants, we are enhancing habitat for various animals in the area. However, some plants that may appear to be undesirable, are in fact very good habitat for birds and animals. For example, dead trees or downed tree logs and stumps provide good cover and homes for many animals and should be left on site for this purpose.
2. Blackberries are defined as undesirable growth in the Oregon Weed Control Handbook, and blackberries are of minimal value in control of erosion during the winter when they have lost their foliage.
3. Improved appearance of public open spaces should discourage use of these areas as dumping areas for lawn refuse, trash, etc.

Brush removal, replanting and maintenance of public open space is allowed on a permission basis in conformance of the above guidelines.

The plants listed above are examples of those suitable for these areas, other plants may be used with the approval of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Many other plants are available at local nurseries. However, the Parks and Recreation Department may be able to recommend other sources for those plants difficult to find.