

SECTION 14.200 Key Viewing Areas

The following is required for all development that occurs on parcels/lots topographically visible from Key Viewing Areas.

- A. Each development and land use shall be visually subordinate to its setting in the GMA and meet the required scenic standard (visually subordinate or visually not evident) in the SMA as seen from Key Viewing Areas. The extent and type of conditions applied to a proposed development to achieve visual subordination shall be proportionate to its potential visual impacts as seen from Key Viewing Areas.
1. Decisions shall include written findings addressing the factors influencing potential visual impact including but not limited to:
 - a. The number of Key Viewing Areas it is visible from;
 - b. The distance from the building site to the Key Viewing Areas it is visible from;
 - c. The linear distance along the Key Viewing Areas from which the building site is visible (for linear Key Viewing Areas, such as roads and the Columbia River);
 - d. The difference in elevation between the building site and Key Viewing Areas;
 - e. The nature and extent of topographic and vegetative back screening behind the building site as seen from Key Viewing Areas;
 - f. The amount of area of the building site exposed to Key Viewing Areas; and
 - g. The degree of existing vegetation providing screening.
 2. Conditions may be applied to various elements of proposed developments to ensure they are visually subordinate to their setting in the GMA and meet the required scenic standard (visually subordinate or visually not evident) in the SMA as seen from key viewing areas, including but not limited to:
 - a. siting (location of development on the subject property, building orientation, and other elements);
 - c. design (color, reflectivity, size, shape, height, architectural and design details and other elements); and
 - d. new landscaping.

SITING

- B. New development shall be sited to achieve visual subordination from Key Viewing Areas, unless the siting would place such development in a buffer specified for protection of wetlands, riparian corridors, endemic and listed plants, sensitive wildlife sites or conflict with standards to protect cultural resources. In such situations, development shall comply with this standard to the maximum extent practicable. (GMA Only)
- C. New development shall be sited to achieve visual subordination utilizing existing topography, and/or existing vegetation as needed in the GMA and meet the required scenic standard (visually subordinate or visually not evident) in the SMA from Key Viewing Areas.
- D. Driveways and buildings shall be designed and sited to minimize visibility of cut banks and fill slopes from Key Viewing Areas.
- E. The silhouette of new buildings shall remain below the skyline of a bluff, cliff or ridge as seen from Key Viewing Areas. A variance in the General Management Area may be granted according to Chapter 6 if application of the guidelines would leave the owner without a reasonable economic use. The variance shall be the minimum necessary to allow the use and may be applied only after all reasonable efforts to modify the design, building height and site to comply with the criteria have been made.
- F. An alteration to a building built prior to November 17, 1986, which already protrudes above the skyline of a bluff, cliff or ridge as seen from a Key Viewing Area, may itself protrude above the skyline if:
 - 1. The altered building, through use of color, landscaping and/or other mitigation measures, contrasts less with its setting than before the alteration; and
 - 2. There is no practicable alternative means of altering the building without increasing the protrusion.
- G. Except for water-dependent development and for water-related recreation development, development shall be set back 100 feet from the ordinary high water mark of the Columbia River below Bonneville Dam, and 100 feet from the normal pool elevation of the Columbia River above Bonneville Dam, unless the setback would render a property unbuildable. In such cases, variances to this guideline may be authorized according to Chapter 6 of this Ordinance. In the SMA the setbacks described above shall be 200 feet.
- H. New buildings shall not be permitted on lands visible from Key Viewing Areas with

slopes in excess of 30 percent. Variances to this guideline may be authorized according to Chapter 6 of this Ordinance if its application would render a property unbuildable. In determining the slope, the average percent slope of the proposed building site shall be utilized.

Design/Color

- I. Unless expressly exempted by other provisions in this chapter, colors of all exterior surfaces of structures visible from Key Viewing Areas shall be dark earth-tones found at the specific site or in the surrounding landscape. The specific colors or list of acceptable colors shall be included as a condition of approval. The Scenic Resources Implementation Handbook will include a recommended palette of colors.
- J. The exterior of buildings in the GMA and structures in the SMA on lands seen from Key Viewing Areas shall be composed of nonreflective materials or materials with low reflectivity, unless the structure would be fully screened from all key viewing areas by existing topographic features. The Scenic Resources Implementation Handbook will include a list of recommended exterior materials. These recommended materials and other materials may be deemed consistent with this criterion, including those where the specific application meets recommended thresholds in the "Visibility and Reflectivity Matrices" in the Implementation Handbook (once they are created). Continuous surfaces of glass unscreened from Key Viewing Areas shall be limited to ensure visual subordination. Recommended square footage limitations for such surfaces will be provided for guidance in the Implementation Handbook.

Landscaping

- K. The following criteria shall apply to new landscaping used to screen development from Key Viewing Areas:
 1. New landscaping (including new earth berms) shall be required only when application of all other available guidelines in this chapter is not sufficient to make the development visually subordinate in the GMA and meet the required scenic standard (visually subordinate or visually not evident) in the SMA from Key Viewing Areas. Alternate sites shall be considered prior to using new landscaping to achieve visual subordination. Development shall be sited to avoid the need for new landscaping wherever possible.
 2. If new landscaping is required to make a proposed development visually subordinate in the GMA and meet the required scenic standard (visually subordinate or visually not evident) in the SMA from Key Viewing Areas, existing on-site vegetative screening and other visibility factors shall be analyzed to determine the extent of new landscaping, and the size of new trees needed to achieve the standard. Any vegetation planted pursuant to this criterion shall be sized to provide sufficient screening to make the development visually

subordinate within five years or less from the commencement of construction.

3. Unless as specified otherwise by provisions in this chapter, landscaping shall be installed as soon as practicable, and prior to project completion.
4. Conditions regarding new landscaping or retention of existing vegetation for new developments shall meet both scenic guidelines and the fuel break guidelines listed in the fire protection standards for each zone.

MISCELLANEOUS

- L. Determination of potential visual effects and compliance with visual subordination policies shall include consideration of the cumulative effects of proposed developments.
- M. New main lines on lands visible from Key Viewing Areas for the transmission of electricity, gas, oil, other fuels, or communications, except for connections to individual users or small clusters of individual users, shall be built in existing transmission corridors unless it can be demonstrated that use of existing corridors is not practicable. Such new lines shall be underground as a first preference unless it can be demonstrated to be impracticable.
- N. New communication facilities (antennae, dishes, etc.) on lands visible from Key Viewing Areas, which require an open and unobstructed site shall be built upon existing facilities unless it can be demonstrated that use of existing facilities is not practicable.
- O. New communications facilities may protrude above a skyline visible from a Key Viewing Area only upon demonstration that:
 1. The facility is necessary for public service;
 2. The break in the skyline is seen only in the background; and
 3. The break in the skyline is the minimum necessary to provide the service.
- P. Overpasses, safety and directional signs and other road and highway facilities may protrude above a skyline visible from a Key Viewing Area only upon a demonstration that:
 1. The facility is necessary for public service;
 2. The break in the skyline is the minimum necessary to provide the service.
- Q. In addition to all applicable criteria above, all Mineral and Aggregate related uses

on lands visible from Key Viewing Areas shall meet all applicable criteria in Chapter 10.

R. In addition to the GMA standards, the following will be required in the SMA.

1. In all landscape settings, scenic standards in Table below shall be met by blending new development with the adjacent natural landscape elements rather than with existing development.

REQUIRED SMA SCENIC STANDARDS		
LANDSCAPE SETTING	LAND USE DESIGNATION	SCENIC STANDARD
Coniferous Woodland, Oak-Pine Woodland	Forest (National Forest Lands), Open Space	Not Visually Evident
River Bottomlands	Open Space	Not Visually Evident
Gorge Walls, Canyonlands, Wildlands	Forest, Agriculture, Public Recreation, Open Space	Not Visually Evident
Coniferous Woodland, Oak-Pine Woodland	Forest, Agriculture, Residential, Public Recreation	Visually Subordinate
Residential	Residential	Visually Subordinate
Pastoral	Forest, Agriculture, Public Recreation, Open Space	Visually Subordinate
River Bottomlands	Forest, Agriculture, Public Recreation	Visually Subordinate

2. Structure height shall remain below the average tree canopy height of the natural vegetation adjacent to the structure, except if it has been demonstrated that meeting this criterion is not feasible considering the function of the structure.
3. Seasonal lighting displays shall be permitted on a temporary basis, not to exceed 3 months.
4. Proposed developments or land uses shall be sited to achieve the applicable scenic standard. Development shall be designed to fit the natural topography, to take advantage of landform and vegetation screening, and to minimize visible grading or other modifications of landforms, vegetation cover, and natural characteristics. When screening of development is needed to meet the scenic standard from key viewing areas, use of existing topography and vegetation shall be given priority over other means of achieving the scenic standard such

as planting new vegetation or using artificial berms.

S. The following are not required to meet scenic standards:

1. Uses and activities in Developed Settings as specified in 14.400(J), Landscape Settings.
2. Rehabilitation of or modification of significant historic structures, carried out in compliance with the National Register of Historic Places guidelines (SMA)/National Parks Service regulations for such structures (GMA). To be eligible for such exemption, the structure must be included in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or be in the process of applying for a determination of significance pursuant to such regulations. Rehabilitation of or modifications to structures meeting this guideline shall be consistent with National Park Service regulations for such structures.
3. Shoreline developments, uses and activities on the mainstream of the Columbia River that are adjoining Urban Areas.