

## ARTICLE 12

### LANDSCAPING, BUFFERING AND SCREENING

#### SECTION 1201 INTENT AND PURPOSE

- A. The intent and purpose of this Article is to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare through the implementation of landscaping, buffering and screening as part of the development process of land by:
1. Minimizing noise, air, and visual pollution by requiring landscaping for each development for which site plan, special land use, site condominium and subdivision plat review is required.
  2. Protecting and preserving the appearance, character, and value of the community and its residential neighborhood areas.
  3. Buffering incompatible land uses, including off-street parking for such uses, so as to minimize the impact of incompatible land uses and to provide clear and distinct separation.
  4. Providing separation between pedestrian and vehicular travel and movement in a development area and well as separating pedestrian and vehicular travel and movement within a development area from abutting public rights-of-way.
  5. Encouraging an appropriate mixture of plant material, such as evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs, to protect against insect and disease infestation and produce aesthetic and cohesive design.
  6. Preventing soil erosion and soil depletion by providing adequate open space for purposes of retention, detention and natural infiltration.
  7. Protecting and preserving the appearance, character, and value of the community and its natural resources by encouraging the integration of existing woodlands and other natural features in landscape plans

#### SECTION 1202 LANDSCAPING PLAN

- A. These requirements shall apply to all uses for which site plan review is required under Article 6 and 7 and any other use or implementation of use so specified in this Ordinance, including petitioned site condominiums and subdivision plats. Subdivision Plats and Site Condominiums shall adhere to the provisions set forth in the City's general ordinance pertaining to development by plat or site condominium and expected standards of development.

- B. A detailed landscape plan shall be required to be submitted as part of a site plan submitted for site plan, special land use, plat or site condominium approval or as a separate plan depending on the situation and the petitioned development. Whether separate, or part of other site plan drawings, the landscape plan shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:
1. Location, spacing, size, and common name for each plant type proposed for use within the required landscape area.
  2. The landscape plan shall be presented in an appropriate scale depending on the size of the proposed development and given what is deemed adequate to convey important information.
  3. On parcels of more than one (1) acre, existing and proposed contours on-site and twenty (20) feet beyond the site boundary at intervals not to exceed two (2) feet.
  4. Typical cross-sections including slope, height, and width of berms exceeding three (3) feet in height, type of ground cover, or height and type of construction of walls.
  5. Significant construction details to resolve specific site conditions, such as tree wells to preserve existing trees or culverts to maintain natural drainage patterns.
  6. Details in either text or drawing form to ensure proper installation and establishment of proposed plant materials.
  7. Identification of existing trees and vegetative cover to be preserved.
  8. Identification of grass and other ground cover and method of planting.
  9. Identification of landscape maintenance program including a statement that all diseased, damaged, or dead materials shall be replaced in accordance with the standards of this Ordinance at the next available planting season.
- C. An approved landscape plan shall be considered a permanent record and integral part of the of a site plan, special land use, site condominium or plat. Unless otherwise approved in accordance with the aforementioned procedures, any revisions to, or removal of plant materials will be viewed as a violation of this Ordinance and the agreed upon terms of the approval of the site plan, special land use, site condominium or plat from which the landscaping plan was approved.
- D. The owner of the property shall be responsible for all maintenance thereon. Landscaping shall be kept in neat and orderly manner, free from debris and refuse.

## SECTION 1203 LANDSCAPING STANDARDS

- A. All landscaping shall be installed in a manner consistent with accepted planting procedures and the approved landscaping plan, including quantity, size, type and location of plantings proposed.
1. Minor deviations from the approved landscaping plan may be permitted by the Zoning Administrator upon determination that the deviation does not substantially impact the overall concept of the landscape plan and the intended development.
  2. If the deviation is determined to be major, the landscaping plan shall be reviewed in its entirety via the approval process permitting the intended use.
- B. In consideration of landscaping material proposed to be implemented as part of a development, the following shall apply:
1. All plant material shall be consistent with the size and description set forth in the current edition of "American Standard for Nursery Stock" sponsored by the American Association of Nurseryman, Inc., and approved by the American National Standards Institute, Inc. as well as:
    - a. Be typical of their species or variety;
    - b. Be of sound health and vigorous in appearance, free from disease, insect pests, eggs or larvae and shall have healthy, well developed root systems; and
    - c. Be chosen according to soil, local climate conditions and environmental factors for the proposed development.
  2. The following plant materials shall not be considered as being of a desirable quality, and therefore are not permitted. This does not preclude the use of existing trees and other vegetation if it can be shown that the removal of the tree would result in a substantial loss of screening and buffering of adjacent lands or public rights-of-way. The following vegetation types are not desirable:
    - a. Acer negundo - Box Elder
    - b. Ulmus varieties - Elm varieties
    - c. Aesculus varieties - Horse Chestnut
    - d. Populus varieties - Poplar Varieties
    - e. Salix varieties - Willow Varieties

- f. Catalpa varieties - Catalpa Varieties
  - g. Ailanthus altissima - Tree of Heaven
  - h. Fraxinus - Ash
3. Minimum sizes of plant material shall be in accordance with the following:
- a. Standard deciduous trees shall have a minimum caliper of two (2) inches four (4) feet from ground level at the time of planting, unless otherwise provided by other Ordinance.
  - b. Small deciduous ornamental trees shall be a minimum of five (5) feet in height from ground level at the time of planting.
  - c. Coniferous trees shall be a minimum of five (5) feet in height from ground level at time of planting.
  - d. Shrubs shall be a minimum of two (2) feet in height from ground level at the time of planting or two (2) feet in spread if plants are low spreading evergreens.
  - e. Vines shall be a minimum of thirty (30) inches in length after one (1) growing season and may be used in conjunction with fences, screens, or walls to meet opacity requirements.
4. Lawn as ground cover shall be planted in species of grass normally grown as permanent lawns in the region. Lawn may be implemented as sod or seeded and mulched. Ground cover types in lieu of lawn in whole or part shall be implemented in such a manner as to present a finished appearance and reasonably complete after one complete growing season.
- C. In consideration of existing plant material that is to be retained as part of a development proposal, the following shall apply:
- 1. Existing plant material that is determined to remain on site to meet minimum landscaping requirements of this Ordinance or required to be retained on site via site plan or special land use approval to protect and preserve natural features, is to be protected by placing fences or barriers around the perimeter of the existing plant material during construction.
  - 2. No vehicle or other construction equipment shall be parked or stored within the drip line of any plant material intended to be retained. Other protective techniques may be used provided such techniques are approved by the appropriate body granting approval for the development.

- D. Landscaping berms used for screening and buffering shall be constructed with slopes not to exceed a one (1) on three (3) gradient with side slopes designed and planted to prevent erosion. Berms shall also be constructed with a top surface of at least three (3) feet, extending the length of the berm, for purposes of maintenance of weeds. Berm slopes shall be protected with sod, seed, shrubs or other form of natural ground cover.
- E. Fencing shall meet the general standards and requirements set forth under Section 408, herein.

## **SECTION 1204 SPECIFIED LANDSCAPING AREAS**

### **A. Screening Between Conflicting Land Uses**

- 1. Between a residential land use and a non-residential or higher-intensity residential land use, whether it be planned, zoned or utilized, there shall be provided and maintained one (1) of the following:
  - a. An obscuring wall, screening fence or landscape barrier having a minimum height of five (5) feet unless a greater height is specified elsewhere in this Ordinance due to the specific nature of the use.
  - b. A buffer zone at least ten (10) feet in width consisting of earthen berms and/or living materials so as to substantially screen the uses from each other.
- 2. Landscape barriers shall maintain a minimum opacity of at least eighty (80%) percent year round. Opacity shall be measured by observation of any two (2) square yard area of landscape screen between one (1) foot above established grade and the highest point of the required screen.
  - a. Opacity shall be achieved within three (3) years of the time of planting. The applicant shall agree, by notation on the final development plan, to install additional plantings after the expiration of three (3) years, in the event that the landscaping has not screened areas as required.

### **B. Parking Lot Landscaping**

- 1. Separate landscape islands shall be required within parking lots of eighteen (18) spaces or greater. No more than sixteen (16) spaces in a row are permitted without a landscape island.
  - a. Landscaping islands shall be no less than eight (8) feet in width and contain one (1) deciduous or coniferous tree. Other plantings, such as

shrubs and flower beds, within landscaping islands may also be provided, but shall not be provided in lieu of a tree.

- b. Landscape islands shall be curbed or, at the discretion of the Planning Commission, be implemented in a manner whereas vehicle interference or damage to the landscape area, travel lanes or parking area is prevented.
  - c. Where size or configuration of parking lot would prevent maintenance or impede traffic flow as a result of requiring landscaped islands within parking lots, the Planning Commission may approve alternative landscaping along the parking lots perimeter.
2. Landscape strips a minimum of five (5) feet (not including vehicle overhangs that are assumed to be two (2) feet from edge of curb) are required to be provided between paved parking surfaces and property lines.
    - a. For every eight (8) parking spaces proposed there shall be one (1) deciduous or coniferous tree and two (2) shrubs planted in the landscape strip.
    - b. A minimum distance of three (3) feet shall be established between proposed tree or shrub plantings and the backside of the curb or edge of the pavement.

#### C. Greenbelts

1. Within the required front yard setback of the zoning district, a greenbelt shall be provided and landscaped in accordance with the following requirements:
  - a. Excluding that number associated with parking lot perimeter landscaping, a minimum of one (1) deciduous or one (1) coniferous tree, plus three (3) deciduous and/or coniferous shrubs for every forty (40) lineal feet, or fraction thereof, of frontage abutting a public road right-of-way.
  - b. The area of access ways from public rights-of-way through required greenbelts shall not be subtracted from the lineal dimension used to determine the minimum number of trees required.

#### D. Site Landscaping

1. In addition to any landscaping required by this section, twenty (20) percent of the site area, excluding existing right-of-way, shall be landscaped.

2. Areas used for storm drainage purposes, such as unfenced drainage courses or retention areas in front or side yards, may be included as a portion of the required landscaped area not to exceed five (5) percent of the site area.

E. Mechanical Equipment

1. When located outside of a non-residential structure, equipment such as air conditioning and heating devices, water and gas meters, but not including plumbing or exhaust vents or chimneys, are to be screened to the height of the particular piece of equipment, as follows:
  - a. Roof-mounted equipment is to be screened by architectural features from the view of abutting streets and parcels.
  - b. Equipment at grade adjacent to a building, mechanical equipment is to be screened by landscaping, a solid wall or fencing from the view of the street or surrounding properties.

F. Outdoor Storage in Commercial and Industrial districts

1. Outdoor storage of products or equipment in commercial and industrial districts is to be screened on all sides by a solid wall or fencing so as to provide security and limit the visual impact of a active commercial or industrial process from view of the public right-of-way or residential land uses.
2. Outdoor storage of products for sale in a commercial development may not be required to be screened from the public road right-of-way unless there exists a significant number of residences along that right-of-way that would be impacted. All side and rear shall be appropriately screened.

G. Screening of Trash Containers

1. Outside trash disposal containers shall be screened on all sides with a fence or masonry wall and a durable gate at least as high as the container, but no less than four (4) feet in height. The fence or wall shall be constructed of material that is compatible with the architectural materials used in the development of the site.
2. Containers shall be consolidated to minimize the number of collection sites, and located so as to reasonably accommodate the buildings they serve and situated so as not to cause nuisance or offense to occupants of buildings.
3. Containers and enclosures shall be located away from public view insofar as possible.

4. Concrete pads of appropriate size and construction shall be provided for containers or groups of containers having a capacity of six (6) thirty (30) gallon cans or more. Aprons shall be provided for loading of bins with a capacity of one and a half (1-1/2) cubic yards or more.
5. For storage of recyclable materials, the enclosure area and pad size shall be increased to amply accommodate the extra materials and their containers.

**SECTION 1205      MODIFICATION**

- A. The Planning Commission may reduce or modify the foregoing requirements where cause can be shown that no good purpose would be served and that the modification would neither be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood now or in the reasonably anticipated future, nor contrary to the spirit and purpose of this section.
- B. In situations where landscaping requirements are being considered for property where the adjacent property is vacant, the Planning Commission may also defer landscaping until such time adjacent property is petitioned for development.