

## **SECTION 9A : LANDSCAPING**

### **Subdivision 1: INTENT/PURPOSE**

The landscaping and screening regulations are intended to improve the physical appearance of the community; to improve the environmental performance of new development by contributing to the abatement of heat, glare, and noise and by promoting natural percolation of storm water; reducing the visual impact of parking lots, unsightly equipment, or materials from the view of persons on the public streets or adjoining properties and buffering from uncomplimentary land uses and by improving the quality of air, to buffer potentially incompatible land uses from one another and to conserve the value of property and neighborhoods within the City.

The scale and nature of landscaping materials shall be appropriate to the size of the structures and the available space. Materials shall be located to avoid interference with overhead or underground utilities and utility easements or vehicular and pedestrian movement and visibility. Growth characteristics should be considered.

### **Subdivision 2: APPLICABILITY**

- A. Landscaping and Buffering Standards shall apply to development within all commercial and industrial Districts. In addition the following standards shall apply to all residential lots to which urban utility service (either/both sanitary sewer, drinking water) is available.
- B. Exemptions: Unless specifically noted agricultural property is exempt from this requirement.
- C. The landscaping and screening requirements standards shall apply to:
  - 1. New development, including principle and accessory structures on property located with the Districts listed in this Section.
  - 2. Expansion and reconstruction of parking lots with fifty (50) or more parking spaces.
  - 3. Expansion and major renovation of an existing building that includes significant site modification where the proposed modifications exceed thirty (30) percent of the floor area of said structure or ten-thousand (10,000) square feet, whichever is less.
- D. The landscaping and screening requirements include a number of design elements as identified in this Section. These elements will have varying applicability depending on the Zoning District and adjoining land uses.

<u>Design Element</u>	<u>Applicable Districts</u>
Street Front Landscaping	Multiple family, general commercial and industrial districts.
Native Landscaped Buffer	Commercial and industrial lots abutting T.H. 23
Buffer yards	All nonresidential uses adjacent to areas guided for residential use within the Comprehensive Plan, except nonresidential uses within the central business district.
Areas of Low Visual Interest	Multiple family, general commercial and industrial districts.

### **Subdivision 3: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

Landscaping and Screening requirements shall be subject to the following general requirements:

- A. Landscaping shall be provided as part of the site plan review process. It shall be conceived in a total pattern throughout the site, integrating the various elements of site design, preserving and enhancing the particular identity of the site, and creating a pleasing site character.
- B. To enable the City to conduct a thorough yet expedient review the required landscaping plan shall include the following:
  1. Names and addresses of the applicant and owner.
  2. The street address and legal description of the property.
  3. Zoning classification of site and all adjoining property(ies).
  4. Footprints and dimensions of all lot lines, structures, parking/driveway surfaces, easements, drainage ways/surface water controls and rights-of-way.
  5. Location and description of existing plant materials and designation of all vegetation to remain and/or be removed.
  6. Proposed landscaped planting by location and scientific name and common name.
  7. Other information or documentation as the Zoning Administrator may deem necessary to allow a full and proper consideration and disposition of the particular plan.
- C. Placement of trees and shrubs shall be designated to meet City requirements regarding minimum sight lines from driveways and

intersections, proximity to utility lines and utility easements. These factors shall be addressed as part of the landscaping plan review.

- D. Existing appropriate mature trees and vegetation may be incorporated into overall site design and shall be considered in meeting the requirements of this Ordinance. The extent that such existing vegetation meets the requirements of these standards shall be reviewed and approved by the City.
- E. Buffer yards between various types of land use and residential areas, both existing and planned shall include design elements in a combination to provide effective buffering with consideration of existing topography and site conditions. Buffer yards shall employ plant materials and/or screening materials so as to lessen the view of land uses between said lots. Buffer yards are subject to review/approval by the Zoning Administrator and Planning Commission.
- F. Installation. All landscaping required by this section shall be installed prior to occupancy or commencement of a use. If the landscaping cannot be installed prior to occupancy or commencement of a use because of climatic conditions, the building inspector may issue a temporary certificate of occupancy and grant a delay of landscaping installation until the calendar date of June 1 immediately following the date of said temporary certificate of occupancy.
- G. Maintenance of Required Landscaping. Trees and vegetation, irrigation systems, fences, wall and other landscaping elements shall be considered as elements of the project in the same manner as parking, building materials and other site details. The applicant, landowner or successors in interest shall be responsible for the regular Maintenance of all landscaping elements in good condition. All landscaping shall be maintained free from disease; pests, weeds and litter, and all landscape structures such as fences and walls shall be repaired and replaced periodically to maintain a structurally sound condition in order to maintain the required landscaping of the site.
- H. Rights-Of-Way, Easements, and Drainage. Required landscaping shall not disturb drainage systems or be placed upon easements of rights-of-way.
- I. Changes to Approved Landscape Plan. The landscaping shall be installed and maintained according to the approved landscape plan except where authorized changes are permitted. The approved landscape plan and supporting data shall be binding on the applicants, their successors, and grantees.

#### **Subdivision 4: LANDSCAPING STANDARDS**

1. All lots are subject to the following requirements.
  - a. All exposed ground area surrounding the principal building and accessory buildings which are not driveways, sidewalks or patios shall be landscaped with grass, shrubs, trees or other ornamental landscape material.
  - b. In addition, a minimum of two (2) trees shall be required per lot area covered by buildings, parking lots, and exterior storage. Trees proposed to satisfy buffer requirements and/or landscaping within parking lots, may also be applied toward meeting this requirement but those required for front landscaping shall not be used to satisfy this requirement.
2. Street front landscaping for multiple family, general commercial and industrial districts shall be subject to the following standards.
  - i. All areas adjoining public or private street frontage shall be landscaped to include trees, shrubs, and/or living ground cover.
  - ii. Landscape areas between the public or private street and parking areas are strongly encouraged.
  - iii. Required landscaping based on street frontage.
    - a. Trees: One hearty, native tree per thirty (30) feet of street frontage, or fraction thereof, shall be required within the front setback area. The trees may be arranged in a clustered fashion and need not be placed at even intervals except where such placement would complement existing landscape design patterns for the area. A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the required trees shall be at least two inch (2") diameter shade trees. The remaining trees may be any combination of shade trees, flowering trees and or evergreen trees.
    - b. Shrubs: Six hearty, native (6) shrubs per one hundred feet (100') of street frontage where parking does not adjoin street. Required shrubs may be replaced by ornamental grasses or hardy, perennial flowers at a rate of five (5) such plants per shrub replaced. Where parking adjoins the street sufficient shrubs to provide sixty-six percent (66%) screening to a height of three and one half feet (3.5') where parking adjoins a street.

- c. Street front landscaping shall include all areas along public or private street frontage, public or private street side setbacks, and setbacks along other property lines boarding a public or private side setback, and setbacks along other property lines bordering a public or private street.
  - d. Ground Cover: Living ground cover, such as grass, shall be provided within all required street frontage landscaped areas. Non-living materials (such as walk-on bark, mulch, and ornamental rock) may be used for up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the landscaped area.
  - e. The specific location of trees and landscaping within the required setback area shall be approved by the Planning Commission based on site characteristics.
- 3. Native landscape buffer for commercial and industrial developments abutting T.H. 23. A buffer a minimum of forty (40) feet in width shall be maintained in its natural state adjacent to all property lines abutting T.H. 23. The purpose of the buffer is to maintain a natural viewing corridor adjacent to T.H. 23. Lots with existing and operable commercial/industrial uses at the time of this ordinance shall provide as wide a native landscaped buffer as possible. The native landscape buffer shall remain as much as possible in its natural state however removal of deceased and/or diseased vegetation is allowed. The buffer yard shall be construed to be part of the required yard setback and not an additional setback.
- 4. Buffer yards. Where a nonresidential use is adjacent to property guided to residential use as illustrated on the Future Land Use map contained in the Comprehensive Plan a landscaped buffer shall be provided. It is the objective of the landscaped buffer to lessen, rather than completely eliminate land use conflicts between such uses. It is not expected that landscaped buffers will totally screen such uses. It is expected that the landscaped buffer design elements identified below will provide immediate lessening of land use conflicts and such buffering will be enhanced over time as landscaping matures. Landscaped buffers may include a combination of elements including setback distances as separation, tree and shrubs, solid fencing, and/or berming. It is encouraged that existing topography and vegetation be included in the design of the landscaped buffer as approved by the City. Retention of existing mature trees is strongly encouraged in meeting the requirements of this Section. Rear and side yard landscaped buffers shall have a minimum depth of fifteen feet (15').
- 5. Areas of Low Visual Interest. For all uses except agricultural and single or two family residential, landscaping shall be used to screen areas of low visual interest or visually intrusive site elements (such as trash collection, open storage, HVAC, service areas, loading docks and blank walls) from

off-site view. Such screening shall be established on all sides of such elements except where an opening is required for access. If access is possible only on a side that is visible from a public street, a removable or operable screen shall be required.