

## Chapter 3.2 — Landscaping, Street Trees, Fences and Walls

### Sections:

**3.2.100 - Purpose**

**3.2.200 - New Landscaping**

**3.2.300 - Street Trees**

**3.2.400 - Fences and Walls**

### 3.2.100 Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to promote community health, safety, and welfare by protecting natural vegetation, and setting development standards for landscaping, street trees, fences and walls. Together, these elements of the natural and built environment contribute to the visual quality, environmental health, and character of the community. Trees provide climate control through shading during summer months and wind screening during winter. Trees and other plants can also buffer pedestrians from traffic. Walls, fences, trees, and other landscape materials also provide vital screening and buffering between land uses. Landscaped areas help to control surface water drainage and can improve water quality, as compared to paved or built surfaces.

The chapter is organized into the following sections:

**Section 3.2.200 New Landscaping** sets standards for and requires landscaping of all development sites that require Site Design Review. This section also requires buffering for parking and maneuvering areas, and between different land use districts. Note that other landscaping standards are provided in Chapter 2 - Land Use Districts, for specific types of development.

**Section 3.2.300 Street Trees** sets standards for and requires planting of trees along all streets for shading, comfort, and aesthetic purposes.

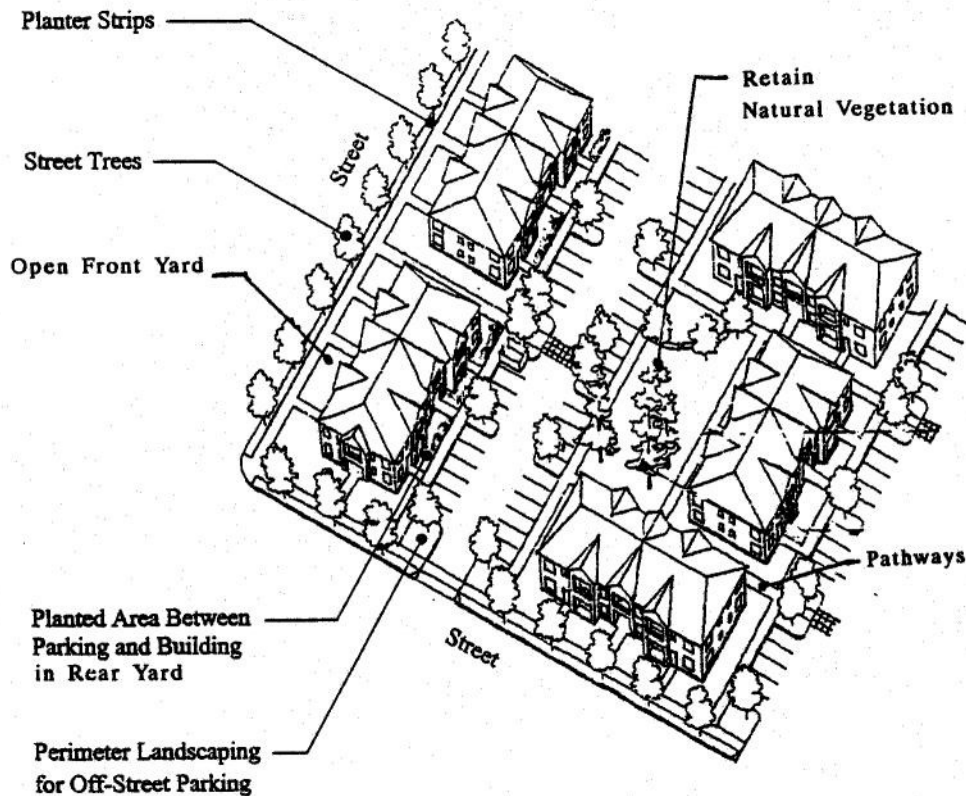
**Section 3.2.400 Fences and Walls** sets standards for new fences and walls, including maximum allowable height and materials, to promote security, personal safety, privacy, and aesthetics.

### 3.2.200 New Landscaping.

- A. Applicability.** This Section shall apply to all developments requiring Site Design Review, and other developments with required landscaping.
- B. Landscaping Plan Required.** A landscape plan is required. All landscape plans shall conform to the requirements in Section 4.2.500.B (Landscape Plans).
- C. Landscape Area Standards.** The minimum percentage of required landscaping equals:
  - 1. Residential Districts. 20 percent of the site.
  - 2. Downtown District. 10 percent of the site.

3. General Industrial District. 10 percent of the site.
  4. Light Industrial District. 20 percent of the site.
- D. Landscape Materials.** Landscape materials include trees, shrubs, ground cover plants, non-plant ground covers, and outdoor hardscape features, as described below:
1. Natural Vegetation. Natural vegetation shall be preserved or planted where practicable.
  2. Plant Selection. A combination of deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs and ground covers shall be used for all planted areas, the selection of which shall be based on local climate, exposure, water availability, and drainage conditions. As necessary, soils shall be amended to allow for healthy plant growth.
  3. “Non-native, invasive” plants shall be prohibited.
  4. Hardscape features (i.e., patios, decks, plazas, etc.) may cover up to 15% percent of the required landscape area; except in the Downtown and Main Street District where hardscape features may cover up to 25% percent of the landscape area. Swimming pools, sports courts and similar active recreation facilities may not be counted toward fulfilling the landscape requirement.
  5. Non-plant Ground Covers. Bark dust, chips, aggregate or other non-plant ground covers may be used but shall cover no more than 50 percent of the area to be landscaped. “Coverage” is measured based on the size of plants at maturity or after 2 years of growth, whichever comes sooner.
  6. Tree Size. Trees shall have a minimum caliper size of 2 inches or greater at time of planting.
  7. Shrub Size. Shrubs shall be planted from 1-gallon containers or larger.
  8. Storm Water Facilities. Storm water facilities (e.g., detention/retention ponds and swales) shall be landscaped with water tolerant, native plants.
- E. Landscape Design Standards.** All yards, parking lots and required street tree planter strips shall be landscaped in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter. Landscaping shall be installed with development to provide erosion control, visual interest, buffering, privacy, open space and pathway identification, shading, and wind buffering, based on the following standards:
1. Yard Setback Landscaping. Landscaping shall satisfy the following criteria:
    - a. Provide visual screening and privacy within side and rear yards; while leaving front yards and building entrances mostly visible for security purposes;
    - b. Define pedestrian pathways and open space areas with landscape materials;
    - c. Provide focal points within a development, such as signature trees (i.e., large or unique trees), hedges and flowering plants;

**Figure 3.2.300 – Landscape Areas in a Multiple Family Development (Typical)**



- d. Use trees to provide summer shading within common open space areas, and within front yards when street trees cannot be provided;
  - e. Use landscaping to screen outdoor storage and mechanical equipment areas, and to enhance graded areas such as berms, swales, and detention/retention ponds.
2. **Parking areas.** A minimum of 5 percent of the combined area of all parking areas, as measured around the perimeter of all parking spaces and maneuvering areas, shall be landscaped. Such landscaping shall consist of an evenly distributed mix of shade trees with shrubs and/or ground cover plants. "Evenly distributed" means that the trees and other plants are distributed around the parking lot perimeter and between parking bays to provide a partial canopy. At a minimum, one tree per 10 parking spaces total shall be planted to create a partial tree canopy over and around the parking area. All parking areas with more than 30 spaces shall include landscape islands with trees to break up the parking area into rows of not more than 15 contiguous parking spaces. All landscaped areas shall have minimum dimensions of 4 feet by 4 feet to ensure adequate soil, water, and space for healthy plant growth.
  3. **Buffering and Screening Required** - Buffering and screening are required under the following conditions:

- a. Parking/Maneuvering Area Adjacent to Building. Where a parking or maneuvering area, or driveway, is adjacent to a building, the area shall be separated from the building by a raised pathway, plaza, or landscaped buffer. Raised curbs, bollards, wheel stops, or other design features shall be used to protect buildings from being damaged by vehicles. When parking areas are located adjacent to residential ground-floor living space, a landscape buffer is required to fulfill this requirement.
  - b. Screening of Mechanical Equipment, Outdoor Storage, Service and Delivery Areas. All mechanical equipment, outdoor storage and manufacturing, and service and delivery areas shall be screened from view from all public streets and residential districts. Screening shall be provided by one or more of the following: decorative wall (i.e., masonry or similar quality material), evergreen hedge, sight obscuring fence, or a similar feature that provides a non-see-through barrier. Walls, fences, and hedges shall comply with the vision clearance requirements and provide for pedestrian circulation, in accordance with Chapter 3.1 - Access and Circulation. (See Section 3.2.500 for standards related to fences and walls.)
- F. Maintenance and Irrigation.** The use of drought-tolerant plant species is encouraged and may be required when irrigation is not available. Irrigation shall be provided for plants that are not drought tolerant. If the plantings fail to survive, the property owner shall replace them with an equivalent specimen (i.e., evergreen shrub replaces evergreen shrub, deciduous tree replaces deciduous tree, etc.). All other landscape features required by this Code shall be maintained in good condition, or otherwise replaced by the owner.
- G. Additional Requirements.** Additional buffering and screening may be required for specific land uses, as identified by Chapter 2, and the City may require additional landscaping through the Conditional Use Permit process (Chapter 4.4).

### **3.2.300 Street Trees.**

Street trees shall be planted for all developments that are subject to Land Division or Site Design Review. Requirements for street tree planting strips are provided in Section 3.4.100 - Transportation Standards. Planting of unimproved streets shall be deferred until the construction of curbs and sidewalks. Street trees shall conform to the following standards and guidelines:

- A. Growth Characteristics.** Trees shall be selected based on growth characteristics and site conditions, including available space, overhead clearance, soil conditions, exposure, and desired color and appearance. The following should guide tree selection:
  - 1. Provide a broad canopy where shade is desired.
  - 2. Use low-growing trees for spaces under utility wires.
  - 3. Select trees that can be “limbed-up” where vision clearance is a concern.
  - 4. Use narrow or “columnar” trees where awnings or other building features limit growth, or where greater visibility is desired between buildings and the street.

5. Use species with similar growth characteristics on the same block for design continuity.
  6. Avoid using trees that are susceptible to insect damage and avoid using trees that produce excessive seeds or fruit.
  7. Select trees that are well adapted to the environment, including soil, wind, sun exposure, and exhaust. Drought-resistant trees should be used in areas with sandy or rocky soil.
  8. Select trees for their seasonal color, as desired.
  9. Use deciduous trees for summer shade and winter sun.
- B. Caliper Size.** The minimum caliper size at planting shall be 2 inches at four feet high.
- C. Spacing and Location.** Street trees shall be planted within existing and proposed planting strips, and in sidewalk tree wells on streets without planting strips. Street tree spacing shall be based upon the type of tree(s) selected and the canopy size at maturity. In general, trees shall be spaced no more than 30 feet apart, except where planting a tree would conflict with existing trees, retaining walls, utilities, and similar physical barriers.
- D. Soil Preparation, Planting and Care.** The Developer shall be responsible for planting street trees, including soil preparation, ground cover material, staking, and temporary irrigation for two years after planting. The developer shall also be responsible for tree care (pruning, watering, fertilization, and replacement as necessary) during the first two years after planting.
- E. Assurances.** At the time of building permit application submittal the developer shall be responsible for installation of the Street Trees. They shall be replaced if they fail to thrive in the first two years. After the first two years the adjoining landowner becomes responsible for the maintenance of the Street Trees.

### **3.2.400 Fences and Walls.**

The following standards shall apply to all fences and walls:

- A. General Requirements.** All fences and walls shall comply with the standards of this Section. The City may require installation of walls and/or fences as a condition of development approval, in accordance with Chapter 4.2 - Conditional Use Permits or Chapter 4.4 - Site Design Review. Walls built for required landscape buffers shall comply with Section 3.2.300.
- B. Dimensions.**
1. The maximum allowable height of fences and walls is 6 feet, as measured from the lowest grade at the base of the wall or fence, except that retaining walls and terraced walls may exceed 6 feet when permitted as part of a site development approval, or as necessary to construct streets and sidewalks. A building permit is required for walls exceeding 6 feet in height and for certain retaining walls, in conformance with the Uniform Building Code.
  2. The height of fences and walls within a front yard setback shall not exceed 4 feet (except decorative arbors, gates, etc.), as measured from the grade closest to the street right-of-way.

For large lots or residential uses with a front yard setback deeper than 30 feet fences can be 6 feet in height outside of the vision clearance area.

3. Walls and fences to be built for required buffers shall comply with Section 3.2.300.
4. Fences and walls shall comply with the vision clearance standards of Section 3.1.200.

**C. Materials.**

1. Fences may consist of wood, metal, bricks, decorative masonry or blocks, decorative concrete panels, other permanent material, or natural growth when maintained.
  - a. Prohibited materials include concrete building blocks, straw bales, and landscaped hedges greater than 6 feet in height. Barbed or razor wire is prohibited in residential areas, with the exception for residences with a livestock permit, with its use in Commercial or Industrial areas subject to review and approval.
  - b. Fence material shall not include materials inappropriate for fencing, such as scrap lumber, scrap metal, or similar materials.
  - c. Fences constructed of decorative bricks, masonry, or concrete over 3½ feet tall shall be approved by the City Engineer and may require a building permit.

**D. Maintenance.** For safety and for compliance with the purpose of this Chapter, walls and fences required as a condition of approval shall be maintained in good condition, or otherwise replaced by the owner.