

CHAPTER 5. MINIMUM LANDSCAPE STANDARDS

Section 5.1. Purpose.

This intent of this chapter is to establish minimum standards for landscaping and screening; promote safety, privacy, and public well-being; protect and preserves the appearance, character, and value of property and surrounding properties.

Section 5.2. Applicability of Standards.

This chapter applies to all new and Re-developed Commercial and Industrial Structures and parking lots, including Multi-Family. This chapter does not apply to single family, duplex, triplex or quadraplex uses and structures.

Additional standards shall apply to Industrial Development and Redevelopment as enumerated in Section 5.4.

Section 5.3. Standards.

- (1) Trees, shrubs and grass shall be the primary landscape materials that provide a landscape buffer in the parking Setback Lines between (1) the Primary Road or Secondary Road right-of-way lines and (2) the Commercial or Industrial Development or Redevelopment.
- (2) Only those trees listed in Exhibit D under the category of "Large Trees" shall be planted to satisfy the tree-related requirements of this chapter, with the exception of Section 5.3(6)(b) below, which requires Live Oak trees.
- (3) Trees planted under power lines shall comply with any applicable height requirements imposed by CenterPoint Energy.
- (4) All parking setback areas shall have grass, shrubs and trees as the primary landscape materials.
 - (a) Grass ground cover shall be sodded or hydro-mulched on a graded surface that provides adequate drainage.
 - (i) Weeds and underbrush shall be removed and topsoil provided to allow for a healthy stand of grass.
 - (ii) If Winter Rye is planted during the winter months, Bermuda seed shall be added to provide for growth during warmer temperatures.
 - (iii) All grass turf and other landscaping shall be irrigated with an automatic sprinkler system.

- (b) Single trunk, sixty-five (65) gallon trees, three and one-half inch (3.5") caliper, twelve feet (12') to fourteen feet (14') in height, shall be planted with trees spaced on thirty foot (30') to forty foot (40') centers.
 - (i) Trees shall be randomly spaced along the entire frontage of the Primary Roads and Secondary Roads.
 - (ii) The total minimum number of trees required shall be determined by a formula that takes the linear front footage along the frontage and divides it by 30. If, for example, a property owner has six hundred linear feet of frontage, they would be required to install a minimum of twenty trees ($600/30 = 20$).
 - (iii) All trees shall be adequately irrigated with an automated drip system.
- (5) All side property lines shall have shrub hedges and trees installed the greater of the back of the building or 200 feet (200').
 - (a) A double row of five (5) gallon or larger Wax Leaf Ligustrums or Wax Myrtles shall be installed in a triangular spacing of eighteen inches (18") along all side property lines.
 - (b) Single trunk, sixty-five (65) gallon trees, three and one-half inch (3.5") caliper, twelve feet (12') to fourteen feet (14') in height, shall also be installed along all side property lines, spaced at forty feet (40') on center.
 - (c) If there is an adjoining site to the side property line, the first owner to develop the property will provide the trees and the other property owner will provide the shrubs.
- (6) Parking lots must be properly screened from public streets and adjacent properties with the use of shrub hedges and trees. The intent of this screening requirement is to break up the view of the lower portion of cars with the use of high density shrubs. Trees shall be used to provide shade and soften large expanses of concrete.
 - (a) Planting islands shall be required at the end of all parking bays.
 - (i) Two trees shall be planted within each end of the parking bays, ten feet (10') from the edge of the bay planter as shown on Exhibit B. The trees shall be single trunk, sixty-five (65) gallon, three and one-half inch (3.5") caliper, twelve feet (12') to fourteen feet (14') in height.

- (b) For parking lots with two or more rows of cars, in every other row every fourth space shall contain a six foot (6') curbed planter diamond.
 - (i) Live Oak trees shall be planted in each diamond planter. See Exhibit C. The trees shall be single trunk, sixty-five (65) gallon, three and one-half inch (3.5") caliper, twelve feet (12') to fourteen feet (14') in height.
 - (c) The outside border of all parking lots shall be bordered with five (5) gallon or larger Wax Leaf Ligustrum or Wax Myrtle hedges planted in a double row, triangularly spaced on eighteen inch (18") centers and four feet (4') in height.
- (7) Drive-thru lanes for fast food restaurants, financial institutions, pharmacies, or any other use requiring a drive-thru lane shall require a minimum of two (2) double rows of landscaping to completely screen vehicles from public view.
- (a) The row of landscaping closest to the drive-thru lane shall be five (5) gallon or larger Wax Myrtles or Wax Leaf Ligustrums planted eighteen inches (18") on center in a triangular pattern in a double row to create a hedge that is six feet (6') in height.
 - (b) The second row shall be five (5) gallon or larger Dwarf Wax Myrtles or Ligustrums planted eighteen inches (18") on center in a double row and three feet (3') in height.
- (8) Dry-bottom detention areas shall be screened by hedges or an earth berm so that they are screened from public view.

Section 5.4. Additional Standards for Industrial Development and Redevelopment.

This section only applies to Industrial Development and Redevelopment. Industrial Development and Redevelopment, shall be subject to all Standards, including the following additional Industrial Standards. To the extent that any Industrial Standard conflicts with any other provision in these Standards, the Industrial Standard shall govern.

- (1) Landscaping should be used to define areas by helping to focus on entrances to buildings, parking lots, and loading areas; defining the edges of various land use; providing transition between neighboring properties (buffering); and providing screening for outdoor storage, loading and equipment areas.
- (2) Landscaping should be in scale with adjacent buildings and be of appropriate size at maturity to accomplish its intended goals. The use of native, disease-resistant, drought-resistant varieties of plant materials is strongly encouraged.

Please refer to Exhibit D for a list of recommended landscaping plants, shrubs and trees.

- (3) Landscaping around the base of buildings is recommended to soften the edge between the parking lot and the structure. These should be accented at entrances to provide focus.
- (4) Trees should be located throughout the parking lot and not simply at the ends of parking aisles.
- (5) Landscaping should be protected from vehicular and pedestrian encroachment by raised planting surfaces, depressed walks, or the use of curbs.
- (6) Berming in conjunction with landscaping can be used at the building edge to reduce structure mass and height along facades.
- (7) All landscaping shall be irrigated with an automatic system.