

# SECTION 14. LANDSCAPING & SCREENING

- 14.1 PURPOSE
  - 14.2 ENFORCEMENT OF LANDSCAPE PROVISIONS
  - 14.3 LANDSCAPE PLAN
  - 14.4 SELECTION, INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PLANT MATERIALS
  - 14.5 LANDSCAPE DESIGN STANDARDS
  - 14.6 ON-LOT LANDSCAPING
  - 14.7 BUILDING FOUNDATION LANDSCAPING
  - 14.8 PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING
  - 14.9 PARKING LOT PERIMETER LANDSCAPE YARD
  - 14.10 INTERIOR PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING
  - 14.11 BUFFER YARDS
  - 14.12 REQUIRED LANDSCAPING ILLUSTRATION
  - 14.13 SCREENING REQUIREMENTS
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## 14.1 PURPOSE

The landscaping and screening requirements established by this Section are intended to preserve and enhance the appearance, public health, safety, convenience, comfort and general welfare of the Village by fostering an aesthetically pleasing development. Proper landscaping contributes to the Village in many ways: enhancing its character and scenic beauty, providing clean air, reducing noise, preventing erosion of topsoil, reducing the rate of stormwater runoff, providing nesting areas for birds and habitat for other wildlife, conserving energy, and providing shade and windbreaks. These regulations are also intended to increase the compatibility of adjacent uses, and minimize the adverse impact of noise, dust, motor vehicle headlight glare or other artificial light intrusions, and other objectionable activities or impacts conducted on, or created by, adjoining or neighboring uses.

## 14.2 ENFORCEMENT OF LANDSCAPE PROVISIONS

- A. No building permit or occupancy permit shall be issued for any lot or use subject to the requirements of this Section unless all the requirements of this Section have been fulfilled. Failure to implement the landscape plan, or to maintain the lot or use in substantial conformance with the landscape plan, shall be cause for revocation of the occupancy permit and/or the application of fines and penalties, as established in this Code. In addition, all landscaping is subject to periodic inspection.
- B. If weather prohibits the installation of landscaping at the time an occupancy permit is applied for, the applicant shall provide the Village with a letter of credit, on forms provided by the Village, or cash in the amount required to complete landscaping installation in order to receive an occupancy permit, which shall be returned upon completion of required landscaping.

## 14.3 LANDSCAPE PLAN

### A. Landscape Plan Required

A detailed landscape plan shall be submitted to the Village as part of any planned unit development or site plan review application for townhouse, multi-family, non-residential or mixed-use development, and must be approved prior to the issuance of a building permit.

## **B. Content of Landscape Plan**

1. The location and dimensions of all existing and proposed structures, property lines, easements, parking lots and drives, roadways and rights-of-way, sidewalks, signs, refuse disposal and recycling areas, sidewalks, bicycle paths and parking facilities, fences, electrical equipment, recreational facilities, drainage facilities, and other freestanding structures, as determined necessary by the Zoning Administrator.
2. The location, quantity, size, name and condition, both botanical and common, of all existing plant materials, including trees and other material in the right-of-way, and indicating plant material to be retained and removed.
3. The location, quantity, size and name, both botanical and common, of all proposed plant material including, but not limited to, shade and evergreen trees, shrubs, groundcover, annuals/perennials and turf.
4. The existing and proposed grading of the site indicating contours at one (1) foot intervals. Proposed berming shall be indicated using one (1) foot contour intervals.
5. Elevations of all proposed fences, steps, stairs, retaining walls both fixed (cast concrete, unitized walls) and any natural rock outcroppings on the site.
6. Elevations, cross-sections, and other details as determined necessary by the Zoning Administrator.

## **C. Minor Changes to Approved Landscape Plans**

Minor changes to the landscape plan that do not result in a reduction in the net amount of plant material as specified on the approved landscape plan shall be approved by the Zoning Administrator. Changes to the size and amount of plant materials of an approved landscape plan shall not be considered a minor change. Major changes shall be approved by the body granting approval of the landscape plan initially.

## **14.4 SELECTION, INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PLANT MATERIALS**

### **A. Selection**

All planting materials used shall be of good quality and meet American Association of Nurserymen (ANNS) standards for minimum acceptable form, quality and size for species selected, and capable to withstand the seasonal temperature variations of northeastern Illinois, as well as the individual site microclimates. The use of species native to northeastern Illinois shall be encouraged. Size and density of plant material, both at the time of planting and at maturity, are additional criteria that shall be considered when selecting plant material. Where appropriate, the use of drought and salt tolerant plant material is preferred.

### **B. Installation**

All landscaping materials shall be installed in accordance with the current planting procedures established by the AANS. All plant materials shall be free of disease and shall be installed so that soil of sufficient volume, composition and nutrient balance are available to sustain healthy growth.

**C. Required Element**

Landscape materials depicted on landscape plans approved by the Village shall be considered to be required site plan elements in the same manner as buildings, parking and other improvements. As such, the owner of record, or in some instances the homeowner's association, shall be responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement of all landscape materials, and fences, steps, retaining walls and similar landscaping elements over the entire life of the development.

**D. Maintenance**

All landscaping materials shall be maintained in good condition, shall present a healthy, neat and orderly appearance, and shall be kept free of refuse and debris. Any dead, unhealthy or missing plants shall be replaced within six (6) months of notification by the Village or the next reasonable available growing/planting season. All fences, steps, retaining walls and similar landscaping elements required within the landscaping plan shall be maintained in good repair. The owner of the premises shall be responsible for the maintenance, repair, and replacement of all landscape materials, fences, steps, retaining walls and similar landscaping elements, and refuse disposal areas. Irrigation systems, when provided, shall be maintained in good operating condition to promote the health of the plant material and the conservation of water.

**14.5 LANDSCAPE DESIGN STANDARDS**

Landscape plans, as described above, shall be prepared by a licensed Landscape Architect, registered in the State of Illinois, and evaluated and approved based on the following design criteria.

**A. Scale and Nature of Landscape Material**

The scale and nature of landscape materials shall be appropriate to the size of the site and related structures.

**B. Selection of Plant Material**

Plant material shall be selected for its form, texture, color, pattern of growth and suitability to local conditions.

**C. Shade Trees**

All deciduous shade trees shall have a minimum trunk size of two (2) inches in caliper at planting, unless otherwise specified.

**D. Evergreen Trees**

Evergreens trees shall have a minimum height of six (6) feet at planting and shall be incorporated into the landscape treatment of a site, particularly in those areas where year-round screening and buffering is required.

**E. Ornamental Trees**

Single stem ornamental trees shall have a minimum trunk size of three (3) inches in caliper at planting, unless otherwise specified. Multiple stem ornamental trees shall have a minimum height of eight (8) feet at planting, unless otherwise specified.

## **F. Shrubs**

Unless otherwise specified, all large deciduous and evergreen shrubs shall have minimum height of three (3) feet at installation, and all small deciduous and evergreen shrubs shall have a minimum height of eighteen (18) inches at installation.

Large shrubs shall be considered to be those shrubs that reach five (5) or more feet in height at maturity. Small shrubs shall be considered to be those shrubs that can grow up to five (5) feet in height if left unmaintained, but are generally kept at heights of eighteen (18) to thirty (30) inches.

## **G. Softening of Walls and Fences**

Plant material shall be placed intermittently against long expanses of building walls, fences and other barriers to create a softening effect and to help break up long expanses of blank walls with little architectural detail.

## **H. Planting Beds**

Planting beds may be mulched with shredded hardwood, granite mulch, river rock, feather rocks or similar materials. Lava rock is not permitted.

## **I. Irrigation**

Landscape design pursuant to the requirements of this Section shall recognize the need for irrigation and water conservation. Sprinkler irrigation systems may be required for certain landscaped areas, as determined by a landscape architect. The need for sprinkler irrigation systems shall be determined by the type of plant material and the condition/growing medium that they are installed in. For instance, whether there is a permanent means available to water plant material, such as hose bibs, shall be a consideration. All irrigation systems shall be designed to minimize the use of water.

## **J. Energy Conservation**

Plant material placement should be designed to reduce the energy consumption needs of the development. In addition, landscaping designs shall take into account and make an effort to implement LEED policy and design standards, where appropriate.

1. Deciduous trees should be placed on the south and west sides of buildings to provide shade from the summer sun.
2. Evergreens and other plant materials should be concentrated on the north and west sides of buildings to dissipate the effect of winter winds.

## **K. Species Diversity**

Diversity among required plant material is required not only for visual interest, but to reduce the risk of losing a large population of plants due to disease. Table 13: Diversity Requirements indicates the percentage of diversity required based on the total quantity of species being used. For instance, if a development requires forty-five (45) shade trees, no more than eighteen (18) trees nor less than five (5) trees can be of one (1) species, and there must be a minimum of five (5) different species within the forty-five (45) trees.

TABLE 14-1: DIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS			
TOTAL NUMBER OF PLANTS PER PLANT TYPE	DIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS		MINIMUM NUMBER OF SPECIES
	MAXIMUM OF ANY SPECIES	MINIMUM OF ANY SPECIES	
1-4	100%	Not Applicable	1
5-10	60%	40%	2
11-15	45%	20%	3
16-75	40%	10%	5
76-500	25%	5%	8
500-1,000	30%	5%	10
1,000+	15%	4%	15

**L. Berming**

Earthen berms and existing topographic features shall be incorporated into the landscape treatment of a site where there is sufficient space and, in particular, when berms and existing topographic features can be combined with plant material to facilitate effective screening. Minimum unretained berm side slopes shall be maintained at no less than a 4:1 slope ratio to prevent erosion and be properly and safely maintained. Retained slopes may be implemented with the appropriate terracing necessary to reduce the need for safety railing.

**14.6 ON-LOT LANDSCAPING**

**A. Turf Required**

All areas within yards that are unpaved shall be landscaped primarily with turf (seed or sod) or live groundcover. Artificial turf is prohibited.

**B. Required Trees**

Shade trees shall be provided on all zoning lots at a minimum of:

1. Two (2) shade trees per multi-family development.
2. Four (4) shade trees per non-residential development in the C-2, M-1 and I Districts.

Existing trees shall be counted toward this required minimum number. Utility uses are not required to plant shade trees,

**14.7 BUILDING FOUNDATION LANDSCAPING**

- A.** If a multi-family residential, mixed-use or non-residential development within the R-4, C-1, C-2, M-1 and I Districts maintains a front and corner side setback of ten (10) feet or more, building foundation landscaping is required.
- B.** Foundation plantings shall work in concert with buffer yard plantings to frame important views, while visually softening long expanses of walls, particularly those that lack windows and/or other architectural details. Foundation plantings shall respond to the materials and the form of a building.

- C. Foundation plantings shall be installed across sixty percent (60%) of the length of the façade of the building, except where walkways and driveways are located.
- D. Foundation plantings may consist of a mix of trees, shrubs and perennials.

## **14.8 PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING**

### **A. Parking Lot Landscaping Design Guidelines**

All parking lots of ten (10) or more spaces are subject to site plan review and a landscape plan as a condition of obtaining a building permit. Perimeter landscaping is required for all parking lots and shall be established along the edge of the parking lot that abuts the public right-of-way, excluding alleys. Interior parking lot landscaping is required for those lots of ten (10) or more spaces. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prevent the applicant's voluntary installation of additional interior parking lot landscaping, so long as parking space requirements and parking lot design requirements are complied with.

### **B. Existing Parking Lots**

1. For existing parking lots that currently do not comply with the required parking lot landscaping, such landscaping shall be provided when:
  - a. A new principal building or building addition is constructed, or exterior remodeling of the principal building occurs.
  - b. Over fifty percent (50%) of the total area of an existing parking lot is reconstructed. Resealing or re-striping of an existing parking lot, which does not entail paving or resurfacing by replacement of the asphalt or concrete, shall not be subject to this requirement.
  - c. When an existing parking lot under ten thousand (10,000) square feet in area is expanded by fifty percent (50%) or more in total surface area.
  - d. When an existing parking lot over ten thousand (10,000) square feet in area is expanded by twenty-five percent (25%) or more in total surface area.
2. When an existing parking lot is required by Paragraph 1 above to provide landscaping, which would result in creating a parking area that no longer conforms to the parking regulations of the Article and this Code, such existing parking lot shall not be required to install all or a portion of the required landscaping. The applicant shall be required to show that landscaping cannot be accommodated on the site. If only certain requirements are able to be accommodated on the site, those elements shall be required. The Zoning Administrator shall make the determination that all or a portion of required landscaping does not have to be installed.

## **14.9 PARKING LOT PERIMETER LANDSCAPE YARD**

Perimeter parking lot landscaping provides for the enhancement and screening of parking lots by requiring a scheme of pedestrian walls and/or landscaping along public streets. Perimeter landscaping is required for all parking lots and shall be established along the edge of the parking lot that abuts the public right-of-way, excluding alleys. The landscape treatment shall run the full length of the parking lot and shall be located between the property line and the edge of the parking lot. All perimeter parking lot screening areas shall be protected with raised concrete curbs. Landscaped areas outside of shrub and tree masses shall be planted in turf or other groundcover. The landscaped area shall be improved as follows:

1. One (1) shrub, measuring a minimum of eighteen (18) inches at planting and not to exceed three and one-half (3½) feet at maturity, shall be planted for every three (3) feet of landscaped area length, spaced linearly to adequately screen vehicle bumpers. Alternatively, a low pedestrian wall the height of which provides effective screening to a maximum height of three (3) feet may be used instead of shrubs. Where feasible, plant materials shall be installed between the sidewalk and the wall to provide a softening effect on the fence or wall.
2. The perimeter parking lot landscaping area shall be at least ten (10) feet in width, as measured from the lot line to the back of curb, in order to accommodate vehicle bumper overhang and ensure planting areas that are adequate in size.

#### **14.10 INTERIOR PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING**

For parking lots consisting of ten (10) or more spaces, interior parking lot landscaping shall be required.

##### **A. Amount**

One (1) parking lot island shall be provided between every ten (10) to fifteen (15) contiguous parking spaces. As part of the landscape plan approval, parking lot island locations may be varied based on specific site requirements or design scheme, but the total number of islands shall be no less than the amount required one (1) island for every ten (10) spaces. However, all rows of parking spaces shall be terminated by a parking lot island or landscaped area.

##### **B. Size of Parking Lot Islands**

Parking lot islands shall be the same dimension as the parking stall. Double rows of parking shall provide parking lot islands that are the same dimension as the double row.

##### **C. Design of Planting Areas**

Parking lot islands or landscaped areas shall be at least one-hundred forty-four (144) square feet in area and at least six (6) inches above the surface of the parking lot and protected with concrete curbing, except where designed specifically for the absorption of stormwater. Such islands and landscaped areas shall be properly drained and irrigated as appropriate to the site conditions to ensure survivability.

##### **D. Type of Landscape Material**

Shade trees shall be the primary plant materials used in parking lot islands and landscaped areas. Ornamental trees, shrubs, hedges and other plant materials may be used to supplement the shade tree plantings but shall not create visibility concerns for automobiles and pedestrians.

##### **E. Quantity of Landscape Material**

A minimum of one (1) shade tree shall be provided for every parking lot island or landscaped area. If the island extends the width of a double row, then two (2) shade trees shall be provided.

##### **F. Groundcover**

A minimum of seventy-five percent (75%) of every parking lot island shall be planted in turf or other live groundcover, perennials or ornamental grasses.

## 14.11 BUFFER YARDS

- A. This section establishes standards for the dimensions and improvement requirements of buffer yards between land uses and/or zoning districts within the rear or interior side yard. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prevent the applicant's voluntary installation of buffer yards to these design specifications where they are not required.
- B. Buffer yards are required in the following situations:
1. Where a R-4 District abuts a R-1A, R-1, R-2 or R-3 District.
  2. Where a commercial, manufacturing or institutional district abuts a residential district.
  3. Where a non-residential use is located within a residential district.

However, a buffer yard is not required where the rear wall of a commercial building is located on the rear property line or where an alley is located between a commercial use and a residential use.

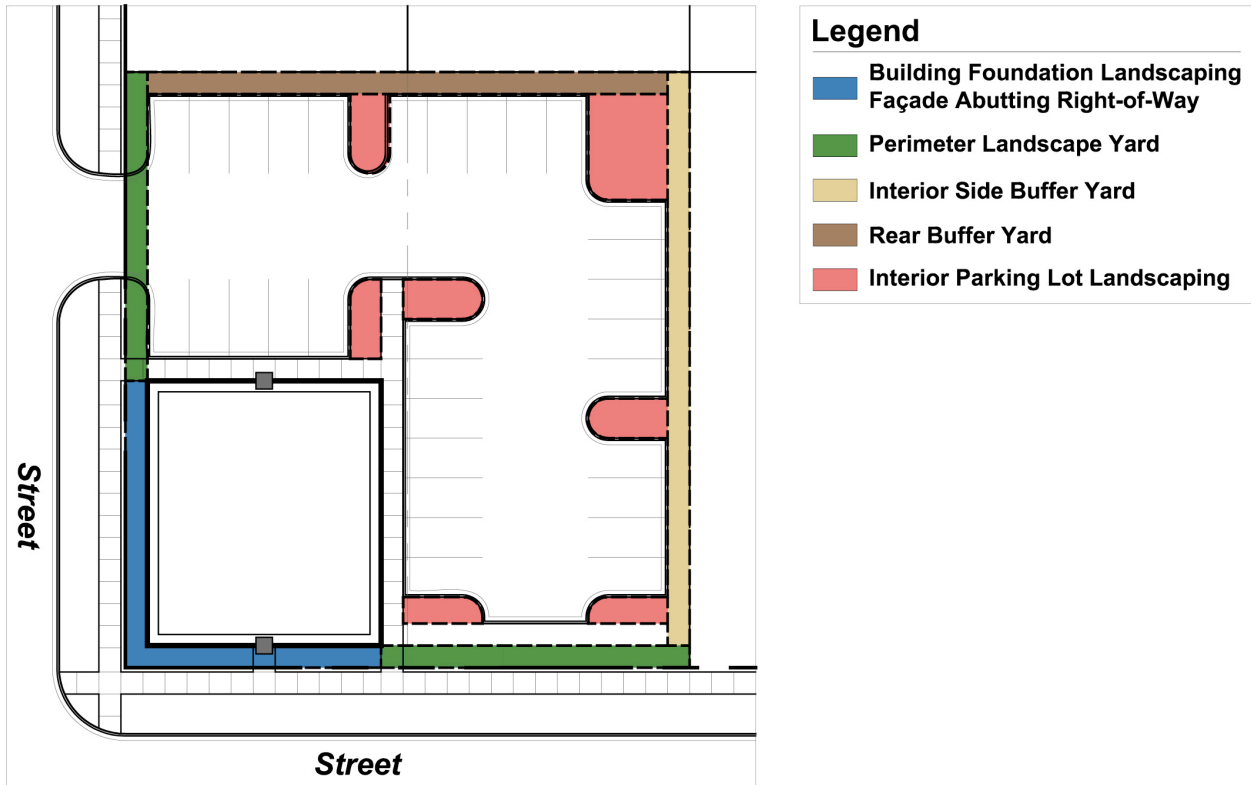
- C. Buffer yards shall be provided in interior side and rear yards. Buffer yards may be located within required setbacks, and shall be reserved for the planting of material and installation of screening as required by this section. No parking, driveways, sidewalks, accessory buildings or other impervious surfaces are permitted within the buffer yard area.
- D. All plantings in the buffer yard shall be in accordance with the design standards of this Section. The minimum size and improvement of buffer yards shall be as follows:
1. A buffer yard within shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet in width.
  2. Shade trees shall be planted on an average of one (1) tree for every twenty-five (25) linear feet of yard length. As part of the landscape plan approval, trees may be spaced at various intervals based on specific site requirements or design scheme, but the total number of trees planted will be no less than the amount required by a linear planting spaced twenty-five (25) feet apart.
  3. An opaque masonry wall (stone, stucco or brick), solid screen fence or dense evergreen hedge, at least six (6) feet in height, shall be erected along one hundred percent (100%) of the yard length.
  4. Shrubs shall be planted on an average of one (1) shrub for every three (3) feet of yard length. As part of the landscape plan approval, shrubs may be spaced at various intervals based on specific site requirements or design scheme, but the total number of shrubs planted will be no less than the amount required by a linear planting spaced three (3) feet apart.
  5. Areas not planted with trees or shrubs shall be maintained as turf or other groundcover.

## 14.12 REQUIRED LANDSCAPING ILLUSTRATION

Figure 14-1: Landscaping Requirements illustrates the location of the landscaping requirements in Sections 14.7 (Building Foundation Landscaping), 14.9 (Parking Lot Perimeter Landscape Yard), 14.10 (Interior Parking Lot Landscaping) and 14.11 (Buffer Yards).



**FIGURE 14-1: LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS**



**14.13 SCREENING REQUIREMENTS**

**A. Refuse Disposal Dumpsters and Refuse Storage Areas**

All refuse containers shall be fully enclosed on three (3) sides by a solid wood or simulated wood screen fence, an opaque masonry wall (stone, stucco or brick) or principal structure wall six (6) feet in height and the enclosure shall be gated. The materials used for screening, including the enclosure, shall complement the architecture of the principal structure. An extension of an exterior principal structure wall may be used as one of the screening walls for a refuse container, provided that such wall meets the minimum six (6) foot height requirement and is of the same building materials as the principal structure. Such wall may not be the gated enclosure.

**B. Loading Berths**

Where feasible, loading berths shall be located and oriented so as not be visible from the street and adjacent properties, while still allowing access to the use it is serving. In addition, loading berths in all zoning districts shall be screened as much as possible, unless such screening is determined unnecessary by the body approving the landscape plan. Such screening shall consist of an opaque masonry wall (stone, stucco or brick), a solid wood or simulated wood screen fence, or dense evergreen hedge, at least six (6) feet in height.

## **C. Outdoor Storage and Display Areas**

### **1. Outdoor Storage Areas**

All outdoor storage areas shall be completely screened by an opaque masonry wall (stone, stucco or brick) or a solid wood or simulated wood screen fence no less than six (6) feet in height. Where feasible, plant materials shall be installed along the fence or wall located along the public right-of-way to provide a softening effect. No materials stored outdoors shall be of a greater height than that of the required fence or wall.

### **2. Outdoor Sales and Display Areas**

- a. When the rear or interior side yard of an outdoor display area abuts a residential district, or the rear yard is separated from a residential district by an alley, the outdoor display area shall be effectively screened from view by an opaque masonry wall (stone, stucco or brick), a solid wood or simulated wood screen fence or dense evergreen hedge, at least six (6) feet in height.
- b. All outdoor display areas shall be designed with a landscaped yard along the public right-of-way, excluding alleys, a minimum of ten (10) feet in width and planted with shade or evergreen trees at a rate of one (1) tree per twenty-five (25) feet, and supplemented with shrubs and perennials to enhance the view from the public right-of-way. These screening requirements are not intended to prohibit openings reasonably necessary for access drives and walkways.
- c. Motor vehicle dealerships or rental establishments with outdoor sales and display lots shall be designed with permanent screening along the right-of-way meeting the requirements of Paragraph b above, but such plantings may be clustered. However, the screening may consist of small shrubs and/or a low pedestrian wall of no less than three (3) feet in height, rather than shade or evergreen trees, to optimize the view of motor vehicles for sale.
- d. Growing areas for nursery stock located in the front or corner side yard shall be considered to meet screening requirements.

## **D. Drive-Through Facility**

Drive aisles of drive-through facilities shall be effectively screened from view along the public right-of-way and at the edges of sites adjacent to residential properties in order to minimize the impact of exterior site lighting, headlight glare and any menu intercom displays. Such screening shall be approved during the site plan review process and shall consist of an opaque masonry wall (stone, stucco or brick), a solid wood or simulated wood screen fence or dense evergreen hedge at least six (6) feet in height. Plant materials shall be installed along the fence or wall to provide a softening effect.