

ARTICLE XXIII

LANDSCAPING STANDARDS

SECTION 2300 INTENT

The intent of this Article is to establish minimum standards for the design, installation and maintenance of landscaping along public streets, as buffer areas between uses, on the interior of a site, within parking lots and adjacent to buildings. Landscaping is viewed as a critical element contributing to the aesthetics, development quality, stability of property values and the overall character in the City. The standards of this Article area also intended to provide incentives to preserve quality mature trees, screen headlights to reduce glare, integrate various elements of a site, help ensure compatibility between land uses, assist in directing safe and efficient traffic flow at driveways and within parking lots, and minimize negative impacts of stormwater runoff and salt spray.

The landscape standards of this section are considered the minimum necessary to achieve the intent. In several instances, the standards are intentionally flexible to encourage flexibility and creative design. Applicants are encouraged to provide additional landscaping to improve the function, appearance and value of their property.

SECTION 2301 REQUIREMENTS AND TIMING OF LANDSCAPING

Landscaping shall be illustrated on any site plan, sketch plan or plot plan reviewed by the City. The landscape plan shall clearly describe the location, type, size and spacing of all plant materials. Wherever the Zoning Ordinance requires landscaping or plant materials, it shall be planted within six (6) months from the date of issuance of a certificate of occupancy and shall thereafter be reasonably maintained with permanent plant materials which may be supplemented with other plantings. The Building and Zoning Administrator may require a performance guarantee to cover the cost of landscaping prior to issuing a Certificate of Occupancy,

SECTION 2302 SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR EXISTING SITES

Special provision is made for applying these standards to developed sites which existed prior to the City adopting landscaping requirements. Therefore, when an existing site is undergoing improvement, a change in use or expansion, the objective of these standards is to gradually bring the existing site into compliance with the minimum standards of this Article in relation to the extent of expansion or change on a site.

When reviewing plans for a change in use or expansion which requires site plan or sketch plan review, the Building and Zoning Administrator or body reviewing the plan shall require an upgrade in landscaping, using the following as guidelines:

- a. Each building expansion of one percent (1%) of gross floor area should include at least four percent (4%) of the landscaping required for new developments.
- b. The estimated cost of landscaping added should generally be equal to at least 5% of the estimated value of the new construction.
- c. Landscaping along the street and as a buffer between adjacent land uses should take priority over parking lot and site landscaping, particularly where there is no excess parking over that required by Article XXII. Where parking lot landscaping can not be provided, additional landscaping along the street or in the buffer areas should be considered.

SECTION 2303 REQUIRED LANDSCAPING ALONG PUBLIC STREETS

One of the following street landscaping options is required on land abutting City street rights-of-way or where otherwise referenced.

a. **Greenbelt:** A greenbelt meeting the following standards:

1. Minimum width of ten (10) feet; all required landscaping shall be within the required setback.(amended 2/14/96)
2. At least one (1) deciduous tree (minimum 2.5 inch caliper) and two (2) minimum eighteen inch (18") high shrubs per each thirty (30) lineal feet of street frontage. Location of the trees and shrubbery along the length of the greenbelt is discretionary (refer to Section 2308). The body or individual with authority to approve the plan may approve evergreens at least five foot (5') high as a substitute for some of all or the canopy trees.
3. The greenbelt area shall contain grass, ground cover, six-inch (6") deep wood chips, or six-inch (6") deep crushed stone and curbed or edged as necessary. Black edging shall be used for any planting beds.
4. Where headlights from parked vehicles will shine into the roadway, the City may require use of a totally obscuring hedge.

b. **Berms:** A combination of a raised earth berm and plantings meeting the following standards:

1. Minimum height of two (2) feet with a crest at least three (3) feet in width. The height of the berm may meander if the intent of this Article is met.
2. The exterior face of the berm shall be constructed as an earthen slope, with a slope not to exceed one (1) foot of vertical rise to three (3) feet of horizontal distance (1:3). The interior face of the berm may be constructed as an earthen slope or retained by means of a wall, terrace or other means acceptable to the Building and Zoning Administrator.
3. At least one (1) deciduous tree (minimum 2.5 inch caliper) shall be provided for each thirty (30) lineal street berm length.
4. At least one (1) minimum eighteen inch (18") high shrub shall be provided for each one hundred (100) square feet of berm surface area (calculated from a plan view).
5. Berm slopes shall be protected from erosion by sodding or seeding. If slopes are seeded, they shall be protected, until the seed germinates and a permanent lawn is established by a straw mulch, hydromulching or netting specifically designed to control erosion.
6. The base of any signs placed within the berm shall be at, or below, the average grade along the berm.

c. **Buffer Strip:** A buffer strip may be required, particularly where the uses across the street are less intense than the use of the subject site. The intent of the buffer strip is to have a minimum five (5) foot high obscuring area. A buffer strip shall meet the following requirements:

1. Minimum width of ten (10) feet.
2. All trees shall be evergreens a minimum five (5) feet high at planting.
3. The buffer planting area shall contain grass, ground cover, six-inch (6") deep wood chips, or six-inch (6") deep crushed stone and curbed or edged as necessary.

4. The following species and planting spacings are recommended:

| <u>COMMON NAME</u> | <u>SCIENTIFIC NAME</u> | <u>(FT. ON CENTER)</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| "Burki" Red Cedar | Juniperus in Virginia "B" | 5 |
| Stone Pine | Pinus Cembra | 10 |
| Mugo Pine | Pinus Mugo | 5 |
| American Arborvitea | Thuja Occidentalis | 5 |
| Canadian Hemlock | Tsuga Occidentalis | 12 |
| Serbian Spruce | Picea Omoriac | 10 |
| Irish Juniper | Juniperus Communis | 3 |
| White Fir | Abies Concolor | 8 |
| Japanese Cryptomeria | Cryptomeria Japonica | 8 |
| White Pine | Pinus Strobus | 10 |
| Ketleeri Juniper | Juniperus Chinensis "Ketleeri" | 5 |

SECTION 2304 INTERIOR LANDSCAPING

For every new development, except in the R-1 to R-3 Single Family Districts, the R-T Two Family Residential District and the MH - Mobile Home Park District, there shall be interior landscaping areas exclusive of any other required landscaping consisting of at least five percent (5%) of the total lot area. This landscaped area should be grouped near building entrances, along building foundations, along pedestrian walkways, and along service areas. All interior landscaping shall conform to the following:

- a. One (1) deciduous (minimum 2.5 inch caliper) or ornamental tree (minimum 2.0 inch caliper) or evergreen tree (minimum 5 foot height) shall be provided for every four hundred (400) square feet of required interior landscaping area.
- b. One (1) eighteen inch (18") high shrub shall be provided for every two hundred fifty (250) square feet of required interior landscaping area.
- c. The interior landscaping area shall contain grass, ground cover, six-inch (6") deep wood chips, or six-inch (6") deep crushed stone and shall be curbed or edged as necessary. Black edging shall be used for any planting beds.

SECTION 2305 PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

Within every parking area containing ten (10) or more spaces, at least three percent (3%) of the total parking lot area shall be landscaped, in addition to any other landscaping requirements. This landscaping shall meet the following standards:

- a. Deciduous trees (2.5 inch minimum caliper) and ornamental trees (minimum 2.0 inch caliper if tree form, six foot minimum height if clump form) shall be used with at least one hundred (100) square feet of planting area per tree. The area per tree may be reduced to seventy-five (75) square feet if the landscaped area is irrigated.
- b. Landscaping shall be dispersed throughout the parking lot in order to break up large expanses of pavement and help direct smooth traffic flow within the lot.
- c. Landscaping shall be installed such that, when mature, it does not obscure traffic signs or lighting, obstruct access to fire hydrants nor interfere with adequate motorist sight distance.
- d. All islands shall be curbed. Dimensions of islands shall be shown on the site plan. Minimum island width shall be ten (10) feet; minimum radii shall be ten (10) feet at ends facing main aisles and a

Grand Blanc City Zoning Ordinance

minimum one (1) foot for radii not adjacent to main circulation aisles. The length of the islands shall be two (2) feet shorter than adjacent parking space to improve maneuvering.

SECTION 2306 WASTE RECEPTACLE AND MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT SCREENING

Waste receptacles shall be located and screened in accordance with the standards of Section 314, waste receptacles. Ground mounted mechanical equipment shall be screened with plant materials or a wall, when deemed necessary by the Planning Commission.

SECTION 2307 PLANT MATERIALS AND MINIMUM SPACING

All plant material shall be hardy to the area, free of disease and insects, and conform to the American Standard for Nursery Stock of the American Association of Nurserymen. The overall landscape plan shall not contain more than 33% of any one plant species. The use of trees native to the area and Southeast Michigan, and mixture of trees from the same species association, is encouraged.

a. Recommended Trees and Shrubs for Parking Areas

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| London Plane Tree | Snowdrift Crabapple |
| Sweetgum | Marshal Green Ash |
| Linden Tree | Hardy Rubber Tree |
| Junipers | Hibiscus |
| Hawthorns | Scotch Pine |
| Dwarf Callery Pear | |

b. Recommended Trees and Shrubs for Greenbelt and Interior Landscape Areas

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Amur Maple | Sweetgum | Goldenrain Tree |
| Hackberry | London Plane Tree | Scarlet Oak |
| Hawthorns | Pin Oak | European Linden |
| White Ash (seedless) | Russian Olive | Littlelf Linden |
| Honeylocust | Zelkova | Japanese Tree |
| Lilac Scotch Pine | Border Privet | Buckthorn |
| Henry St. Johnswort | Junipers | Gingko |
| Mugo Pine | Serbian Spruce | Bristly Locust |
| Mockorange | Evonymus | Eastern Ninebark |
| Beauty Bush | Smoke Tree | Cottoneaster |
| Snowdrift Crabapple | Hedge Maple | Dwarf Callery Pear |
| Hardy Rubber Tree | Bayberry | European Hornbean |

c. Recommended Salt Resistant Trees and Shrubs

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------|----------|
| Pinus Nigra | Sweetgum | Tamarix |
| Russian Olive | Black Locust | Hibiscus |
| Adnorra Juniper | Honey Locust | |

d. Recommended Trees and Shrubs for Shady Areas

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Evonymus | Honey Locust | Arborviteas |
| Mabonia Aquifolium | Alpine Currant | Dogwoods |
| Amelanchier | Mountain Laurel | Viburnums |
| Crownvetch | Cottoneasters | |

e. Trees not Permitted (except where they are considered appropriate for the ecosystem, such as in a wetland environment not in proximity to any existing or proposed buildings or structures)

1. Box Elder
2. Soft Maples (Red-Silver)
3. Elms
4. Poplars
5. Willows
6. Horse Chestnut (nut bearing)
7. Tree of Heaven
8. Catalpa

Grand Blanc City Zoning Ordinance

- f. **Plant Material Spacing:** Plant materials shall not be placed closer than four (4) feet from the fence line or property line. Plant materials used together in informal groupings shall meet the following on-center spacing requirements:

| PLANT MATERIAL TYPES | Evergreen | Narrow Evergreen Trees | Large Deciduous Trees | Small Deciduous Trees | Large Shrubs | Small Shrubs |
|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Evergreen Trees | Min. 10' Max. 20' | Min. 12' | Min. 20' | Min. 12' | Min. 6' | Min. 5' |
| Narrow Evergreen Trees | Min. 12' | Min. 5' Max. 10' | Min. 15' | Min. 10' | Min. 5' | Min. 4' |
| Large Deciduous Trees | Min. 20' | Min. 15' | Min. 20' Max. 30' | Min. 15' | Min. 5' | Min. 3' |
| Small Deciduous Trees | Min. 12' | Min. 10' | Min. 15' | Min. 8' Max. 15' | Min. 6' | Min. 3' |
| Large Shrubs | Min. 6' | Min. 5' | Min. 5' | Min. 6' | Min. 4' Max. 6' | Min. 5' |
| Small Shrubs | Min. 5' | Min. 4' | Min. 3' | Min. 3' | Min. 5' | Min. 3' Max. 4' |

SECTION 2308 GENERAL LAYOUT AND DESIGN STANDARDS

- a. Landscaped areas and plant materials required by this Ordinance shall be kept free from refuse and debris. Plant materials, including lawn, shall be maintained in a healthy growing condition, neat and orderly in appearance. If any plant material required by this Ordinance dies or becomes diseased, they shall be replaced within thirty (30) days of written notice from the Township or within an extended time period as specified in said notice.
- b. Tree stakes, guy wires and tree wrap are to be removed after one (1) year.
- c. All landscaped areas shall be provided with a readily available and acceptable water supply, or with at least one (1) outlet located within one hundred (100) feet of all planted material to be maintained.
- d. Landscaping materials and arrangement shall ensure adequate sight visibility for motorists, adequate clearance for pedestrians and vehicles, and accessibility to fire hydrants (see also Section 330, Clear Vision Zone).
- e. Cul-de-sacs, site entrances and boulevard medians shall be landscaped with species tolerant of roadside conditions in southeast Michigan.
- f. Landscape within the site shall be approved in consideration of sight distance, size of planting area, location of sidewalks, maintenance of adequate overhead clearance, accessibility to fire hydrants, visibility to approved signs of adjacent uses, compatibility with the visual character of the surrounding area, maintenance-performance guarantee, curbing around landscape areas.
- g. Plantings within fifteen (15) feet of a fire hydrant shall be no taller than six (6) inches at maturity.

SECTION 2309 INCENTIVES TO PRESERVE EXISTING TREES

The City encourages the preservation of quality and mature trees by providing credits toward the required trees for greenbelts, buffer strips, interior landscaping and within parking lots. Trees intended to be preserved shall be indicated with a special symbol on the site plan and be protected during construction through use of a fence around the drip line. To obtain credit the preserved trees shall be of a high quality

Grand Blanc City Zoning Ordinance

and at least two and one half inches (2 ½") caliper. Trees to be preserved shall be counted for credit only if they are located on the developed portion of the site as determined by the review body or individual.

The credit for preserved trees shall be as follows. Any preserved trees receiving credit which are lost within two (2) years after construction shall be replaced by the land owner with trees otherwise required.

| <u>Caliper of Preserved Tree (in inches)</u> | <u>Numbers of Trees Credited</u> |
|--|----------------------------------|
| over 12 inches | 3 |
| 8" - 11.9" | 2 |
| 2.5" - 7.9" | 1 |

Note: Caliper measurement for existing trees is the diameter at a height of four and one-half (4.5) feet above the natural grade. (Diameter at Breast Height, D.B.H.)

SECTION 2310 WALLS AND BUFFER STRIPS BETWEEN LAND USES

In those instances where the following conditions occur, the need for the wall or berm or similar type of landscaped buffer strip shall be determined by the Planning Commission, City Council or the Building and Zoning Administrator, as appropriate.

- a. For those Use Districts and uses listed below, there shall be provided and maintained on those sides abutting or adjacent to a residential district an obscuring wall as required below (except as otherwise required).

| <u>Use</u> | <u>Requirements</u> |
|---|--|
| 1. P-1 Vehicular Parking District | 5 foot high wall |
| 2. Off-street Parking area (other than P-1 Districts) | 5 foot high wall |
| 3. B-1, B-2, B-3 and OS-1 Districts | 5 foot high wall |
| 4. I-1, I-2 and R-P Districts - open storage areas, loading or unloading areas, service areas | 5 foot to 8 foot high wall or fence plus buffer strip. |
| 5. Auto Wash, Drive-in Restaurants | 6 foot high wall |
| 6. Hospital - ambulance and delivery areas | 6 foot high wall |
| 7. Utility buildings, stations and/or substations | 6 foot high wall |

- b. Required walls shall be located on the lot line except where underground utilities interfere and except in instances where this Ordinance requires conformance with front yard setback lines in abutting Residential Districts where there is an established wall height and material acceptable to the City, the wall shall be continued on the subject site.
- c. Such walls and screening barrier shall have no openings for vehicular traffic or other purposes, except as otherwise provided in this Ordinance and except such openings as may be approved by the Zoning and Building Administrator. All walls herein required shall be constructed of materials

approved by the Building and Zoning Administrator to be durable, weather resistant, rustproof and easily maintained; and, wood or wood products shall be specifically excluded.

Masonry walls may be constructed with openings which do not in any square section (height and width) exceed twenty (20%) percent of the surface. Where walls are so pierced, the openings shall be so spaced as to maintain the obscuring character required, and shall not reduce the minimum height requirement. The arrangement of the openings shall be reviewed and approved by the Building and Zoning Administrator.

- d. The City may approve a three (3) to four (4) foot high heavily landscaped berm as an alternative to a wall upon finding the landscaped berm will provide a similar screening effect.

SECTION 2311 WAIVER OR MODIFICATION OF STANDARDS FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS

The Planning Commission, City Council or Building and Zoning Administrator may determine existing landscaping or screening intended to be preserved, or a different landscape design, would provide all or part of the required landscaping and screening. In making such a determination to waive or reduce the landscape and screening requirements of this Article, the following may be considered.

- a. Extent that existing natural vegetation provides desired screening.
- b. There is a steep change in topography which would limit the benefits of required landscaping.
- c. The presence of existing wetlands.
- d. Existing and proposed building placement.
- e. The abutting or adjacent land is developed or planned by the City for a use other than residential.
- f. Building heights and views.
- g. The adjacent residential district is over 200 feet away from the subject site.
- h. Similar conditions to the above exist such that no good purpose would be served by providing the landscaping or screening required.