

The following policies and procedures, which supplement landscaping and screening standards in Section 19.52 of the Bloomington City Code, set forward landscape plan submittal requirements, establish landscape bond rates and procedures, and offer material and design recommendations. In the event of a conflict between the policies and procedures and the City Code, the provisions of the City Code shall prevail.

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## **LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING PLAN SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

When a landscape plan is required by City Code Section 19.52 (b) (1), the following information must be included:

### **A. General Project Information.**

1. Name of project, owner and developer
2. Street address of project
3. Name, address, phone number of plan preparer and, if applicable, Minnesota license/certification number of the Landscape Architect or Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional (CNLP)
4. The square feet of "Developable Landscaping Area" (see City Code Section 19.52 (c) (2))
5. The number of retained existing trees for which credit is requested (see City Code Section 19.52 (c) (2) (D))
6. The total number of trees and shrubs required (see City Code Section 19.52 (c) (2)) and provided
7. A design narrative that includes text and/or graphics that provide detail on the design concept employed and key features of the landscaping design. The narrative should address but not be limited to the relationship of the pattern and species of plants to buildings and other structures on the site, the relationship of the proposed design with surrounding properties, a description of special purpose plantings such as screening, erosion control, etc., and methods of attaining year-round seasonal interest.
8. The anticipated schedule for installation of landscaping features.

### **B. Plan Features.**

1. Scale (not less than one inch = 30 feet) and north arrow
2. Locations of existing and proposed buildings and all other structures
3. Location and height of lighting fixtures
4. Above and below ground utilities and easements
5. All existing and proposed property lines
6. Parking, driveways and sidewalks
7. Locations of existing and planned widened right-of-way lines plus curb lines
8. Location, height and materials of any screening
9. Locations of exterior special use areas, trash enclosures and any outside storage areas
10. Final grades with contour lines at no less than two foot intervals
11. Location, identification and sizes of existing trees, shrubs and other vegetation that are to be retained as part of the landscaping
12. Proposed and retained existing plant material labeled and shown on the plan at the normal mature spread for this hardiness zone or existing spread if already mature
13. Irrigation system plan, if appropriate
14. Typical sections and details of fences, walls, planter boxes, and landscaped islands
15. Location, width and height of all earth berms and retaining walls
16. Areas planned for snow storage
17. Portions of the site not counted as "Developable Landscaping Area" (see City Code Section 19.52 (c) (2))
18. Soil mix and depth for parking lot islands
19. Seed mixes for turf, long grass and native prairie areas
20. Any other existing or proposed features that relate to or affect site finish and landscaping.

C. **Planting Schedule.** Provide separate planting schedules for proposed and retained existing plant material.

1. Plant key (if used)
2. Botanical and common plant names
3. Quantity of plants for each species. Include separate schedule totals for both trees and shrubs.
4. Sizes or height of plants at time of planting and anticipated heights and spread at maturity
5. Root specifications
6. Any other relevant information

## **LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING PLAN REVIEW PROCESS**

- Prior to application, review the City Code requirements (Section 19.52) and discuss landscaping and screening issues with the planner assigned to the project.
- Prepare a landscape plan to be submitted as part of a complete application package.
- The landscape plan will be reviewed in conjunction with other required plans (site plan, utilities plan, grading plan, etc.). There may be conditions of approval that apply specifically to the landscape plan. Approvals will include a standard condition that the final landscape plan be approved by the Planning Manager prior to issuance of a building permit.
- After zoning approvals have been granted, prepare a final landscape plan to submit in conjunction with the building permit application. The final landscape plan must be based on the approved development plans, must respond to any changes made to the development plans during the approvals process and must incorporate any conditions of approval related to landscaping. The planner assigned to the project should discuss with the plan preparer any needed landscaping or screening modifications prior to preparation of the final landscaping plan. Submit **five sets** of the landscape plan to the Planning Division.
- The planner assigned to the project will review the final landscape plan and work with the applicant to resolve any issues. Once the landscape plan is approved by the Planning Manager, two stamped, approved landscape plans will be given to the applicant (one as part of the complete building permit field set and one for the landscape contractor). One stamped, approved landscape plan will be placed in the Planning Division's project case file, one will be placed in a landscape plan file, and one will be attached to the City's copy of the complete building permit set. Building permits will not be issued until a final landscape plan is approved.
- For any landscaping proposed in the public right of way in conjunction with an adopted City streetscape plan, apply for appropriate right of way permits through the Public Works Department.

## **LANDSCAPE SURETY AMOUNT AND PROCEDURES**

The City Code requires a landscape surety to be submitted prior to issuance of building permits (see City Code Section 19.52 (h) (5)). The purpose of the surety is to ensure that landscaping and screening is installed as proposed and survives through at least one full growing season. The typical amount of the surety is determined by multiplying the Developable Landscaping Area (see City Code Section 19.52 (c) (2) (C) for a definition) by the current Landscape Surety Rate. The Landscape Surety Rate, which reflects average market rates for providing, installing and warranting typical landscaping and screening materials in Bloomington, is currently **\$0.50/square foot** of Developable Landscaping Area. The surety must use the City's standard wording (see attached model).

The Planning Manager may reduce the required surety amount for smaller development projects that are not required to install a significant amount of plant material, as required by Code. The reduced surety amount must be a minimum of 125% of the estimated cost of the required landscape material, including installation, as determined by a professional landscape contractor. The cost estimate submitted by the contractor must be reviewed by the City for accuracy. The Planning Manager has the sole discretion to determine whether a reduced surety amount is acceptable based on the scope of the project.

## **Continued: Landscape Surety Amounts and Procedures**

Once the landscaping and screening has been in place through one full growing season, staff will review the landscaping on site. If site conditions match the approved landscape plan and all material is healthy, the surety will be released. If landscaping or screening is missing or incorrectly placed or some material is not in a healthy condition, the owner will be contacted and given an opportunity to correct these issues. The surety amount may be reduced commensurate with the level of outstanding issues. Once the issues are resolved, the landscape surety will be released. If landscaping and screening issues are not resolved, the surety may be called and the proceeds used for installation of approved landscaping and screening materials.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION AND REVIEW OF LANDSCAPE PLANS**

The following guidelines are intended to assist in the plan preparation and review process, both by the project designer and by City staff in conducting plan reviews:

- Planting plans should consider the location of underground utilities, particularly water, sewer and storm sewer lines. Trees should generally not be placed in utility easements.
- Planting areas should be large enough for specified plantings in order to avoid overhang problems. Plantings adjacent to sidewalks need to be located such that they don't obstruct pedestrian movement or sidewalk maintenance.
- Planting locations should be coordinated with the location of irrigation controls, utility boxes, electrical hand holes, and similar obstructions. Where possible, locate such above ground obstructions in planting beds rather than turf areas in order to avoid trip points.
- Accommodate vehicle overhang (2½ - 3 feet) in the placement of plants around parking areas.
- Coordinate planting plans with lighting plans to avoid conflicts.
- Maintain adequate vehicular and pedestrian sight lines. Shrub and perennial plantings should be maintained below driver eye level. Massed tree plantings should not obstruct sight lines nor interfere with required clear sight triangles (see City Code Section 17.31).
- Accommodate adequate snow storage for areas that will be cleared. Avoid planting shrubs and trees in snow storage areas. Instead, perennials and Grasses may be suitable for these areas.
- Select plant materials based on site conditions. Consider susceptibility to salt damage, drought tolerance, shade tolerance, soil types, winter wind exposure, moisture tolerance, etc.

## **LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Along the Site Perimeter**

- Landscaping should add visual interest.
- Landscaping should contribute to visual quality and continuity within and between sites.
- Landscaping should provide a transitional area between different uses and help define the property boundary.
- Limit evergreens to 25 percent of trees provided.
- Limit ornamental trees to 25 percent of trees provided.

### **Within the Parking Lot**

- Landscaping should visually break up large areas of paving.
- Landscaping should provide shade in the summer months.
- Landscaping should help define the parking area.

## **Continued: Recommendation Within the Parking Lot**

- Parking lot islands should include landscaping such as trees, shrubs, perennials and/or ornamental grasses. Turf is discouraged in small parking lot islands but may be appropriate in larger islands.
- Landscaping features in parking lot islands should have a maximum height of 3.5 feet above the adjacent driving surface except for trees, which should have a minimum height of 7.5 feet above the adjacent driving surface to the lowest branches at maturity.
- Parking lot islands should include an 18-inch area clear of trees, shrubs, or perennials along each curb edge.
- Irrigation systems are not required for parking lot islands, but provisions should be made for watering vegetation as needed. City Code Section 19.52 (h) requires replacement of dead landscape materials.
- Soil for parking lot islands should be composed of a 1:1:1 mix of soil, compost and sand. The existing soil should be excavated to a minimum depth of two feet and be replaced with the approved soils mix.

## **Adjacent to the Building**

- Landscaping should visually break up the mass of structures.
- Landscaping should provide shade in the summer months, such as large deciduous trees planted on the west, east, and southwest sides of buildings.
- Landscaping should provide windbreaks, such as evergreens planted to the north and northwest of buildings.
- Landscaping should help define building entrances while not interfering with lighting and CPTED objectives (see below)
- The recommended separation between a tree and building is 12 feet for ornamental trees, 15 feet for over story trees and 20 feet for evergreen trees.
- Fifty percent of the frontage of a building facing a public street should be landscaped with foundation plantings.

## **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

- *Natural Surveillance.* Landscaping should encourage easy observation of surroundings from buildings and sidewalks, thereby placing more “eyes on the street”, a phenomenon that can reduce criminal activity. Landscaping should not obstruct views from doors, windows and sidewalks, should encourage outdoor activity by helping to make walkways pedestrian friendly, and should not obscure appropriate nighttime lighting.
- *Territorial Reinforcement.* Landscaping design and placement should help to convey a sense of territorial control so that potential offenders, perceiving this control, may be discouraged. This concept includes features that define property lines and distinguish private spaces from public spaces using landscape plantings, pavement designs, gateway treatments, signage, and open fences.
- *Natural Access Control.* Landscaping features should be used, where appropriate, to assist in controlling access to potential crime targets and in creating a perception of risk for offenders. Landscaping should help to clearly indicate public routes and discourage access to private areas.
- *Maintenance.* Landscaping should be well maintained in accordance with its intended purpose. Deterioration and blight indicate less concern and control by the intended users of a site and indicate a greater tolerance of disorder. Proper maintenance prevents reduced visibility due to plant overgrowth and obstructed or inoperative lighting, while serving as an additional expression of territoriality and ownership. Inappropriate maintenance, such as over pruning shrubs, can prevent landscape elements from achieving desired CPTED effects. Communication of design intent to maintenance staff is especially important for CPTED related ideas to be effective.
- *Avoid Entrapment Areas.* Landscaping should be placed in a manner that avoids the creation of entrapment areas.

## **Miscellaneous**

- *Berms.* Berms should have a minimum crown width of two feet and should be planted with vegetation. The height, slope, and area of the berm should be appropriate to the prevention of erosion and to facilitate safe maintenance of the berm.

- *Developable Landscaping Area.* For the purpose of determining Developable Landscaping Area as discussed in City Code Section 19.54 (c) (2) (C), site area devoted to rain gardens, stormwater management ponds and infiltration basins must be counted toward Developable Landscaping Area.
- *Lakescaping.* A minimum ten to 20 foot or greater strip of unmowed native vegetation should be provided around natural water bodies and storm water management ponds for the purpose of minimizing erosion, creating a natural appearance, improving water quality and promoting wildlife habitats.
- *Landscape Edging.* A landscape edging of either black plastic, steel, stone, formed concrete or brick paving units should be provided along the perimeter edges of the planting beds that are immediately adjacent to lawn areas.
- *Lawn Areas.* Designated lawn areas should be sodded and other areas as approved may be seeded with grasses or planted/covered with approved ground covers.
- *Mulch.* All plants except for turf should be mulched. Organic mulch is preferable, but mulch such as loose stones or rocks is allowed. No impermeable material, such as black plastic, should be used over the soil in a landscape plan.
- *Native prairie and long grasses.* To promote water conservation, add visual interest, stabilize steep slopes and provide wildlife habitat, the use of native prairie and long grasses is encouraged in appropriate areas.
- *Ornamental grasses.* The use of ornamental grasses is encouraged as a way to add visual interest to a site.
- *Rain gardens.* To assist in the efficient control and treatment of storm water as well as to promote groundwater recharge, the use of rain gardens is encouraged.
- *Root Specifications.* Required shrubs should be moved onto the site in pots or balled and burlapped. Required trees should be moved onto the site in pots, balled and burlapped or with a tree spade. Other plants may be moved on to the site in any of the above listed methods or may be bare root.
- *Species Diversity.* Landscape plans should promote species diversity within a site and between neighboring sites.
- *Xeriscaping.* To promote water conservation, xeriscaping design strategies are encouraged, including using decorative rock as ground cover, limiting turf areas, selecting low-water-use plants, designing efficient irrigation systems and using mulch.

## **LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING MATERIALS RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is in the interest of the City of Bloomington and private land owners to install landscaping that is suitable for its given environment. Placing appropriate plant materials in appropriate locations minimizes both ongoing maintenance and plant mortality. The following lists of plant materials are offered as guides in the selection of plants for specific situations. The plants contained in these lists have been compiled from a variety of industry sources and references. In including general species and/or specific plants on these lists, the City of Bloomington offers no guarantee as to their actual hardiness or suitability.

### **Trees Placed Near Streets**

Acer rubrum	Red Maple
Acer saccharum	Sugar Maple
Celtis occidentalis	Hackberry
Ginkgo biloba (male trees)	Ginkgo
Gleditsia triacanthos and cultivars	Honeylocust
Malus species	Crabapple (cultivars suitable for street use)
Ostrya virginiana	Ironwood
Quercus bicolor	Swamp White Oak
Tilia americana and cultivars	American Linden
Tilia cordata and cultivars	Littleleaf Linden

## **Salt Tolerant Trees and Shrubs - Moderately Tolerant (MT) to Tolerant (T)**

### **Evergreens:**

Abies species (MT)	Fir
Juniperus species (MT)	Juniper
Picea glauca densata (T)	Black Hills Spruce
Picea pungens (T)	Colorado Spruce
Pinus nigra (T)	Austrian Pine
Thuja occidentalis species (MT)	Arborvitae

### **Deciduous Trees:**

Amelanchier species (T)	Serviceberry
Betula species (MT)	Birch
Celtis occidentalis (MT)	Hackberry
Crataegus species (MT)	Hawthorn
Ginkgo biloba (T)	Ginkgo
Gleditsia triacanthos	Honeylocust
Gymnocladus dioica (T)	Kentucky Coffeetree
Ostrya virginiana (MT)	Ironwood
Populus tremuloides and cultivars (MT)	Aspen
Salix species (MT)	Willow
Ulmus species (MT)	Elm

### **Deciduous Shrubs:**

Amelanchier species (MT)	Serviceberry
Aronia melanocarpa species (T)	Chokeberry
Cotoneaster species (T)	Cotoneaster
Forsythia species (MT)	Forsythia
Hamamelis virginiana (MT)	Witchhazel
Hydrangea species (T)	Hydrangea
Ilex verticillata cultivars (MT)	Winterberry
Philadelphus species (MT)	Mockorange
Potentilla fruticosa (T)	Potentilla
Prunus cistena (T)	Purpleleaf Cherry
Ribes alpinum (T)	Currant
Syringa vulgaris species (MT)	Lilac
Weigela florida cultivars (MT)	Weigela
Sambucus canadensis (T)	Common Elderberry

## **Trees and Shrubs for Parking Lot Areas**

### **Trees:**

Acer platanoides 'Pond'	
Celtis occidentalis	Hackberry
Crataegus species	Thornless Hawthorn
Gymnoclasus dioica	Kentucky Coffeetree
Gleditsia triacanthos	Honeylocust
Maackia amurensis	Amur Maackia
Malus species	Crabapple
Populus tremuloides	Quaking Aspen
Quercus bicolor	Swamp White Oak
Tilia species	Linden
Ulmus species	Elm

### **Shrubs:**

Rhus aromatica 'Gro-Low'	Gro-Low Fragrant Sumac
Rosa species	Shrub Rose
Spiraea species	Spirea

**\*Also consider perennials, such as Black-eyed Susan, Coneflower, and Daylilies.**

## **Trees and Shrubs for Screening**

### **Trees:**

Juniperus virginiana	Red Cedar
Malus baccata	Siberian Crabapple
Picea glauca densata	Black Hills Spruce
Picea pungens	Colorado Spruce
Pinus ponderosa scopulorum	Ponderosa Pine
Salix pentandra	Laurel Willow
Thuja occidentalis	American Arborvitae

### **Shrubs:**

Cotoneaster lucidus	Hedge Cotoneaster
Forsythia ovata	Early Forsythia
Physocarpus opulifolius	Common Ninebark
Prunus virginiana 'Schubert'	Chokecherry
Syringa chinensis	Chinese Lilac
Syringa vulgaris	Common Lilac
Viburnum dentatum	Arrowwood

## Rain Garden Trees and Shrubs

### Trees:

Serviceberry  
Chokecherry  
American Hazelnut  
Nannyberry  
Tamarack

### Shrubs:

Black Chokeberry  
Dogwood species  
Snowberry  
Red Elderberry  
Highbush Cranberry  
Downy Arrowwood

See University of Minnesota Extension for perennials and additional information.

## Pollinator Trees and Shrubs

### Spring:

Basswood  
Black Chokeberry  
Dogwood species  
Elderberry  
Lowbush Blueberry  
Nannyberry  
Red Maple  
Willow species

### Summer:

Dogwood species  
New Jersey Tea  
Ninebark  
Raspberries/Blackberries  
Smooth Sumac  
Smooth Wild Rose  
Snowberry

### Fall:

see perennial pollinator species recommendations provided by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

## Additional Trees for Environmental Value and Hardiness

Aesculus glabra  
Betula nigra  
Carpinus betulus  
Carpinus caroliniana  
Carya ovata  
Catalpa speciosa  
Celtis occidentalis  
Cercis canadensis  
Cladrastic kentuckea  
Juglans nigra  
Larix laricina  
Liriodendron tulipifera  
Pinus strobus  
Prunus serotina  
Quercus alba  
Quercus macrocarpa  
Quercus rubra  
Tilia americana

Ohio Buckeye  
River Birch  
European Hornbeam  
Blue Beech  
Shagbark Hickory  
Northern Catalpa  
Hackberry  
Eastern Redbud 'Minnesota Strain'  
American Yellowwood  
Black Walnut  
Tamarack  
Tulip Tree  
White Pine  
Black Cherry  
White Oak  
Bur Oak  
Red Oak  
Basswood

## Prohibited Trees

Ginkgo biloba  
Acer negundo  
Populus deltoides  
Populus nigra italica  
Rhamnus Cathartica  
Rhamnus Frangula  
Fraxinus

Ginkgo (maidenhair tree female only)  
Boxelder (ash-leaved maple)  
Eastern cottonwood  
Lombardy poplar  
Buckthorn (common or European)  
Buckthorn (glossy, including all cultivars)  
Ash (all species, varieties and cultivars)

See the State's Prohibited, Controlled, and Specially Regulated species:  
<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants-insects/minnesota-noxious-weed-list>

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