

Chapter 16.38

LANDSCAPING, SCREENING AND FENCING

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16.38.010 Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish standards for landscaping, buffering and screening in order to enhance the environment of the city through the use of plant materials as a unifying element and by using trees and other landscaping materials to mitigate the effects of the sun, wind, noise and lack of privacy. (Ord. 415 § 7.96.010, 2002)

16.38.020 Applicability and approval process.

A. Section 16.38.060 shall apply to all properties in the city. All other sections of this chapter shall apply to all development except single-family residences, duplexes and accessory buildings including accessory dwelling units.

B. In residential zones, at least ten (10) percent of the total area shall be landscaped.

C. In the commercial and industrial zones, landscaping shall be as follows:

1. Properties up to twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in size shall have at least fifteen (15) percent of the total lot area landscaped.

2. Properties larger than twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in size shall have at least ten (10) percent of the total lot area landscaped. (Ord. 415 § 7.96.020, 2002)

16.38.030 General provisions.

A. Unless otherwise provided by the lease agreement, the owner, tenant and their agent, if any, shall be jointly and severably responsible for the maintenance of all landscaping which shall be maintained in good condition so as to present a healthy, neat and orderly appearance and shall be kept free from refuse and debris.

B. All plant growth in landscaped areas of developments shall be controlled by pruning, trimming or otherwise so that:

1. Public utilities can be maintained or repaired;

2. Pedestrian or vehicular access is unrestricted;

3. Visual clearance provisions are met. (See Chapter 16.40.)

C. Certificates of occupancy shall not be issued unless the landscaping requirements have been met or a bond has been posted with the city to insure the completion of landscaping requirements.

D. Existing plant materials may be used to meet landscaping requirements if no cutting or filling takes place within the dripline of the plantings.

E. Plant materials are to be watered at intervals sufficient to ensure survival and growth.

F. The use of native plant materials is encouraged to reduce irrigation and maintenance demands. (Ord. 415 § 7.96.030, 2002)

16.38.040 Buffering and screening requirements.

A. Buffering and screening a minimum width of twenty (20) feet shall be required between any nonresidential use in a non-residential zone which abuts a residential use in a residential zone.

B. A buffer shall consist of an area within a required interior setback adjacent to a property line, having a width of ten (10) feet or greater and a length equal to the length of the property line.

C. Occupancy of a buffer area shall be limited to utilities, screening, and landscaping. No buildings, access ways or parking areas shall be allowed in a buffer area.

D. The minimum improvements within a buffer area shall include:

1. One row of trees, or groupings of trees equivalent to one row of trees. At the time of planting, these trees shall not be less than ten (10) feet high for deciduous trees and five feet high for evergreen trees measured from the ground to the top of the tree after planting. Spacing for trees shall be as follows:

a. Small or narrow stature trees, under twenty-five (25) feet tall or less than sixteen (16) feet wide at maturity shall be spaced no further than fifteen (15) feet apart;

b. Medium sized trees between twenty-five (25) feet to forty (40) feet tall and with sixteen (16) feet to thirty-five (35) feet wide branching at maturity shall be spaced no greater than twenty-five (25) feet apart;

c. Large trees, over forty (40) feet tall and with more than thirty-five (35) feet wide branching at maturity, shall be spaced no greater than thirty (30) feet apart.

2. In addition, at least one shrub shall be planted for each one hundred (100) square feet of required buffer area.

3. The remaining area shall be planted in groundcover, or spread with bark mulch.

E. Where screening is required, the following improvements are required in addition to subsection D of this section:

1. A hedge of narrow or broadleaf evergreen shrubs shall be planted which will form a four-foot continuous screen within two years of planting; **or**

2. An earthen berm planted with evergreen plant materials which will form a continuous screen six feet in height within two years. The unplanted portion of the berm shall be planted in lawn, ground cover or bark mulched; or

3. A six-foot fence or wall providing a continuous sight-obscuring screen. Fences and walls shall be constructed of materials commonly used in the construction of fences and walls such as wood or brick, or otherwise acceptable by the planning director. Corrugated metal is not considered to be acceptable fencing material. Chain link fences with slats may qualify as screening when combined with a planting of a continuous evergreen hedge;

F. Buffering and screening provisions shall be superseded by the vision clearance requirements as set forth in Chapter 16.40.

G. When the use to be screened is downhill from the adjoining property, the prescribed heights of required fences, walls or landscape screening shall be measured from the actual grade of the adjoining property. (Ord. 415 § 7.96.040, 2002)

16.38.050 Screening--Special provisions.

A. If four or more off-street parking spaces are required under this title, off-street parking adjacent to a public street shall provide a minimum of four square feet of landscaping for each lineal foot of street frontage. The minimum standard for such landscaping shall consist of shrubbery at least two feet in height located adjacent to the street as much as practical and one tree for each fifty (50) lineal feet of street frontage or fraction thereof.

B. Landscaped parking areas may include special design features which effectively screen the parking lot areas from view. These design features may include the use of landscaped berms, decorative walls, and raised planters. Landscape planters may be used to define or screen the appearance of off-street parking areas from the public right-of-way. Materials to be installed shall achieve a balance between low lying and vertical shrubbery and trees.

C. Screening of loading areas and outside storage is required according to specification in Section 16.38.040(E).

D. Except for one-family and two-family dwellings, any refuse container or disposal area and service facilities such as gas meters and air conditioners which would otherwise be visible from a public street, customer or resident parking area, any public facility or any residential area, shall be screened from view by placement of a solid wood fence, masonry wall or evergreen hedge between five and eight feet in height. All refuse materials shall be contained within the screened area. (Ord. 415 § 7.96.050, 2002)

16.38.060 Fences or walls.

A. Fences or walls up to forty-two (42) ~~feet~~ **inches** in height may be constructed in required front yards. Rear and side yard fences, or berm/fence combinations behind the required front yard setback may be up to six feet in height without any additional permits. Any fence or fence/berm combination greater than six feet in height shall require **variance approval by the** planning commission ~~approval~~ and may require a building permit.

The prescribed heights of required fences, walls or landscaping shall be measured from the lowest of the adjoining levels of finished grade.

C. Fences and walls shall be constructed of any materials commonly used in the construction of fences and walls such as wood or brick, or otherwise acceptable by the planning director. **Chain link fencing shall not be permitted in the required front yard setback. PVC coated chain link fencing may be permitted behind the required front yard setback or rear yards only.** Corrugated metal is not considered to be acceptable fencing material. (Ord. 415 § 7.96.060, 2002)