

## ARTICLE EIGHT LANDSCAPING

### **40-800      PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of this Article is to establish minimum standards for certain landscaped areas in the City; and to require certain landscaped areas to protect the general health, safety and welfare of citizens of the community. It is further the intent of this Article to minimize noise and site impact between adjacent districts. This Article recognizes that the proper management and use of trees, plants and other types of vegetation will improve the appearance, value, character and quality of life in the City and promote resourceful site planning and creative design.

### **40-801      GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

- A. All required yards shall be landscaped with living vegetative materials.
- B. An underground irrigation system is required for non-residential uses and multiple-family dwellings. An acceptable alternative water supply may be approved where the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission finds that such supply would ensure the adequate coverage of landscaped areas.
- C. Where this Article requires landscaping for any given amount of feet along a property or other line, and an applicant's property is a fraction of the given measurement, then the property's measurement shall be rounded up to comply with the minimum standards herein.
- D. Where a parkway exists, street trees shall be planted within the parkway along major streets and along local and private streets in all development requiring site plan approval. Trees shall be deciduous trees capable of achieving a mature canopy diameter of at least twenty-five (25) feet and shall comply with the requirements of **Section 40-805.01, B** and the City of Grand Haven list of approved street trees species and caliper.
- E. Utility structures such as electrical transformers, air conditioners and similar features shall be screened from view by landscaping.
- F. The Planning Commission may lessen the requirements of this Article if site conditions make the strict application of these regulations unreasonable, or may impose additional requirements on landscaping, if such modification would further the intent of this ordinance, provide for sufficient buffering between dissimilar uses and between expanses of parking and rights-of-way, if any existing landscaping meets the intent of the ordinance or if native, drought tolerant plant materials are used.

### **40-802      BUFFER AREAS**

#### **40-802.01      BUFFER AREAS IN ALL DISTRICTS EXCEPT THE B DISTRICT**

Where a proposed non-residential use, mixed use development, or multiple-family dwelling will abut a one-family dwelling or two-family dwelling; and where a proposed non-residential use will abut a multiple-family dwelling, a buffer area is required as follows:

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- A. A buffer area shall be a minimum of five (5) feet in width and shall be provided along the common property line. A buffer area is not in addition to a required yard area.
  - B. A minimum of one (1) deciduous tree, two (2) flowering landscape trees, and three (3) evergreen trees shall be provided within the buffer area per every fifty (50) linear feet measured along the property line, as well as any additional combination of flowers and shrubs.
  - C. The buffer area shall be dedicated solely to landscaping and no buildings, pavement, parking, or outside storage is permitted within that area. However, a brick or stone screen wall four (4) feet in height may be provided, or a berm may be provided, in combination with the required plantings. If a wall is provided, it shall be constructed of face-brick, brick or stone on the side that faces the adjacent property; the opposite side shall be a similar non-porous masonry material, except cinder or plain concrete block may not be used.

#### **40-802.02 BUFFER AREAS IN THE B DISTRICT**

- A. Where a rear or side yard in the B District abuts a property used for residential purposes or within the E, MDR, SFR, or OS District, an obscuring wall not less than four (4) feet nor more than six (6) feet in height shall be provided in such a manner to buffer the adjacent use from the use in the B District. Such a wall may also be required in any other circumstance where the Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator finds that the wall will further the intent of this Article. The obscuring wall shall meet the following requirements:
  - 1. The wall shall be constructed along the property line.
  - 2. The wall shall be continuous, unless an opening is required by the Building Inspector or Department of Public Safety.
  - 3. The wall shall be constructed of face-brick, brick or stone on the side that faces the adjacent property; the opposite side shall be a similar non-porous masonry material, except cinder or plain concrete block.
  - 4. The wall shall include a proper cap to assure effective drainage.
- B. In lieu of an obscuring wall, a property owner or applicant may install an evergreen landscape screen where the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission approves the alternative. The screen shall meet the following requirements:
  - 1. The screen shall be a minimum of six (6) feet in height at time of planting.
  - 2. Plantings are limited to arborvitae; unless the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission approves another similar evergreen species that will provide full screening year-round.
  - 3. Plantings shall be arranged to provide full screening at time of planting, such as in staggered rows.

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**40-803      PARKING AREAS****40-803.01      REQUIRED TREES IN OFF-STREET PARKING AREAS**

- A. Trees are required within off-street parking areas to provide shade and relieve adverse visual impact of large expanses of pavement and parked cars. Quantity and distribution of trees shall be as follows, for any parking area with six (6) or more parking spaces:
1. A minimum of one (1) tree is required per each fifteen (15) spaces, or fraction thereof.
  2. No parking space shall be more than one hundred (100) feet from a tree.
  3. The minimum size of tree planters or islands within off-street parking areas shall be thirty-six (36) square feet per tree. Tree planters or islands shall be covered with living vegetative materials, such as grasses, vines, spreading shrubs, or flowers.
  4. At least seventy-five (75) percent of the required parking area trees shall be deciduous trees.
- B. Commercial parking facilities, when constructed as a multi-story building, shall be exempt from these requirements.

**40-803.02      REQUIRED PARKING AREA SCREENING**

- A. A screening area not less than five (5) feet in width shall be required to buffer off-street parking areas and maneuvering lanes from front, side and rear property lines. Provided that in the case of a shared parking lot, such screening shall not be required along the common property line. Driveways connecting to adjacent land or to a right-of-way may cross a screening area with appropriate clear vision corners. Parking shall be prohibited within the screening area. Specific requirements are as follows:
1. Landscaping provided within adjacent right-of-way shall not be counted towards the requirements of this Section. Street trees required per **Section 40-801, D** shall not be counted towards the requirements of this Section.
  2. Side and rear yard parking screening areas are not in addition to the requirements of **Section 40-802**.
  3. For every fifty (50) linear feet of screening area, as measured along the property line, a minimum of one (1) deciduous tree, two (2) flowering landscape trees, and three (3) evergreen trees shall be provided, as well as any additional combination of flowers and shrubs, within the screening area. The ground area shall be covered with living vegetative materials, such as grasses, vines, spreading shrubs, or flowering plants; or with properly maintained ground cover material such as shredded bark, bark chips or landscape stone.
- B. In the C, CC, B, OS, S, E, OT, NMU and TI districts and where an off-street parking area is located within the front yard, a brick or stone screening wall not less than three (3) feet nor more than (4) feet, six (6) inches in height, may be provided in lieu of the landscaped screening area. In the alternative, a three (3) foot tall berm may be employed in any district to supplement front yard parking screening, but the use of a berm shall not relieve the applicant from the required landscape planting requirements and ground cover.

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**40-804      APPLICATION AND MAINTENANCE**

- A. Where landscaping is required, a landscaping plan is required for review by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission. The landscaping plan at a minimum shall include the following information:
1. A scale drawing of the site and proposed development thereon, including the date, name and address of the preparer, parcel lines and parcel area.
  2. The scale of the drawing and north arrow which shall be not less than 1" = 200' nor greater than 1" = 20'.
  3. Proposed man-made features, including proposed buildings, structures and parking areas.
  4. Setback lines and their dimensions.
  5. Location of existing and proposed driveways and curb cuts, if any.
  6. Location of existing public and private rights-of-way and easements contiguous to and on the property.
  7. Natural features, including trees with a diameter at breast height of three inches or more, water bodies and wetlands, high-risk erosion areas, beach, sand dunes, slopes in excess of twenty five (25) percent, drainage and similar features; and an indication of which features would be preserved.
  8. Proposed location of plantings, spacing between plantings, height and size at time of planting, type of plantings, and other elements to illustrate compliance with the standards of this Article.
    1. Identification of the individual(s) or business(es) who will be responsible for continued maintenance of the landscaping.
    2. Indication of irrigation system or water connection within fifty (50) feet from each planting area.
  11. Any other information as may be required by the Zoning Administrator to aid in the review of the Site Plan.
- B. The plantings and features of the landscaping plan shall be installed prior to a certificate of occupancy being issued by the City; provided, that if a certificate of occupancy is issued between October and March, landscaping shall be installed by the following May 31<sup>st</sup>.
- C. The Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission may require a performance guarantee per **Section 40-115.05, I Action on Application and Site Plans.**
- D. Landscaping shall be installed and maintained in a healthy, neat, and orderly appearance, free from refuse and debris. All unhealthy and dead plant material shall be replaced in the next appropriate planting period.

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**40-805      REQUIRED CONDITIONS FOR PLANTINGS AND EARTH BERMS****40-805.01      SIZE AND PLACEMENT OF PLANTINGS**

- A. Plant material shall meet or exceed current American Association of Nurserymen Standards.
- B. Deciduous trees shall have a minimum of two and one half (2½) inch caliper at time of planting, measured at four (4) feet from grade. Deciduous trees shall be spaced no more than twenty (20) feet apart.
- C. Deciduous shrubs shall be at least thirty (30) inches in height at time of planting with a minimum spread of twenty-four (24) inches.
- D. Spreading Evergreen shrubs shall have a minimum spread of thirty (30) inches and a height of twenty-four (24) inches.
- E. Evergreen trees shall be a minimum of six (6) feet in height at time of planting and shall be spaced no less than ten (10) feet on center. Evergreen trees may be planted in staggered rows to provide space for spreading and growth.
- F. Flowering landscape trees shall have a minimum two (2) inch caliper at time of planting, measured at four (4) feet from grade.
- G. All landscape plantings shall be spaced a minimum of fifteen (15) feet from any fire hydrant.

**40-805.02      PLANT MATERIALS**

- A. The following materials shall not be counted toward the requirements of this Article:
  - 1. Ailanthus (Tree of Heaven)
  - 2. Fraxinus (Ash)
  - 3. Populus Deltoids (Eastern Cottonwood)
  - 4. Morus Alba (Mulberry)
  - 5. Acer Saccharinum (Silver Maple)
  - 6. Catalpa spp. (Catalpa species)
- B. The Zoning Administrator shall approve other species of conifer and deciduous trees, shrubs and perennial plantings if they are demonstrated to be tolerant of the West Michigan climate and disease resistant. The Zoning Administrator may require alternative species in those locations where leaf or seed litter or fruit/berries may create hazardous or unsightly conditions.

**40-805.03      EARTH BERMS**

- A. Where earth berms are provided, such berms shall provide a maximum slope ratio of three (3) feet horizontal to one (1) foot vertical.
- B. Earth berms shall have a nearly flat horizontal area at their crests of at least two (2) feet in width for plantings.
- C. Earth berms shall be covered with living vegetative materials, such as grasses, vines, spreading shrubs, or flowering plants; or with properly maintained ground cover material such as shredded bark, bark chips or landscape stone.