

NOTE 5 - LANDSCAPE STANDARDS

All developments requiring site plan or major subdivision approval are required to submit a detailed landscape plan prepared by a professional landscape designer, or other person permitted under N.J.A.C. 13:41-4.3.

1. Landscaping Objectives and Uses of Plants - Landscape design is an important element in designing a development; accordingly, in site design it has a role greater than just screening and aesthetic functions. The following elements are set forth to identify the areas of landscaping design required as part of any development:
  - a. **Architectural Uses** - Plants, singly or in groups, form walks, canopies or floors of varying heights and densities creating walls of privacy, plant canopies, plant floors and screening, guiding vehicular traffic, identifying entries, providing bases for signs and lights, providing breaks in building continuity, etc.
  - b. **Engineering Uses** - Engineers are concerned with such items as glare, traffic, noise control, soil erosion, minimizing access to unauthorized areas, etc.
  - c. **Climate Control Uses** - Shade trees, windbreak trees and snow fence plants are examples of plants used for climate control. Commercial uses include shading for walkways, sitting areas, storefronts, snowdrift control along parking lots, shading of handicap parking spaces, etc.
  - d. **Aesthetic Uses** - Plants can be used to blend together various unrelated elements, such as buildings, utility structures or inharmonious land uses. Landscaping can be very effectively used to improve a building design by complementing a building's design through color, texture, seasonal configurations, highlighting areas of interest, using landscaping creatively with lighting and signage, etc.
  - e. **Water As Landscape** - Water areas can be a handsome and often functional additional to a site design by utilizing detention basins serving engineering purposes as part of the landscaping element. Through creative engineering and good landscape design, such areas can add substantially to the quality of any commercial development by increasing the aesthetic interest, creating of moats for security purposes and recycling water for cooling and refrigeration.

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- f. **Security Uses** - Plant material can be utilized to encourage security by using thorny plants as window bases, along security fences, etc.
- g. **Wildlife Habitat** - Wildlife habitat is not an element of commercial design; thus care must be taken to avoid plant material that may attract wildlife to commercial edges or provide supplemental habitat.

2. Commercial Planting Requirements:

- a. All areas not covered by roadways, pedestrian walkways, parking areas, etc., shall be landscaped with natural materials according to a landscaping plan submitted as part of the site plan application process.
- b. **Canopy Trees** - The development of new commercial structures in the CRO and RC&S Districts or any application for site plan approval in the HC district shall provide at least one (1) canopy tree (two (2) to three (3) inches in caliper measured six (6) inches from the top of the root ball) per thirty five (35) feet of street frontage, excluding canopy trees required in parking areas pursuant to Note 9.
- c. **Shrubs, Ground Cover and Ornamental Plantings** - 75% of all areas not covered by buildings, roadways, pedestrian walkways, parking areas, etc., shall be covered with a combination of evergreen shrubs, ground cover and ornamental planting. The intent, however, is to assure the proper uses of understory plant material along the edges of buildings, walkways, bases of signs and bases of street lights, creation of plant walls, highlighting entranceways, screening trash enclosures, restricting entry by certain areas, basic ornamental planting, etc.
- d. **Special Landscaping Emphasis** - At a minimum, the applicant shall highlight the landscape plan with the projected treatment for the following areas and/or use relationships:
  - (1) **Parking Lots** - All parking lots in commercial developments shall be landscaped as required in Note 9.

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Whenever an off-street parking area exceeds one hundred (100) spaces, the area shall be divided into four (4) sections with each section being separated by a concrete divided strip, a minimum of fifteen (15) feet wide, landscaped with canopy trees as provided in such divider strip to provide adequate and safe lighting for the site. Such divider strip shall also be designed with a pedestrian route similar to a sidewalk which will provide safe access from the off-street parking area to the principal buildings on the site.

- (2) Maintenance, Storage and Refuse Collection Areas - These areas shall be landscaped with buffer and screen planting to provide visual physical separation of such elements from contiguous areas.
- (3) Whenever the rear or side of buildings or sites may be viewed from a residential district or from an adjoining street, then a buffer landscape strip shall be provided pursuant to the standards of Note 1, Buffer Landscaping Requirements.
- (4) The reviewing board may require special landscape treatment to initiate the objectives of Section A of site conditions warrant.

**3. Industrial Landscaping Requirements**

At a minimum, all permitted uses shall landscape industrial sites so that:

- a. Landscaping shall be located to provide for climate control;
- b. Landscaping shall be utilized to complement and accent buildings;
- c. Landscaping shall be provided in public areas, parking areas, recreational sites and adjacent to buildings;
- d. All areas not covered by buildings, roadways, parking areas and pedestrian walkways shall be landscaped with natural materials;

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e. Landscaped buffer areas shall be provided according to the following principles:

- (1) Buffers required at the site or parking perimeter pursuant to Note 1 shall consist of natural vegetation in combination with new deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs. Such buffers shall be of sufficient height and density to minimize headlights or vehicles, noise and light from structures. Deciduous trees shall be a minimum 2 1/2 in. to 3 inch caliper and 12 to 15 feet in height at the time of planting. Evergreen trees shall be 6-8 ft. in height at the time of planting.
- (2) Similar buffers a minimum of 10 ft. shall be developed around garbage collection facilities.
- (3) Landscaped buffers shall make use of berms and mounds as part of the overall landscape design.

4. Residential Landscaping

All areas not covered by roadways, pedestrian walkways, parking areas, etc., shall be landscaped with natural materials according to a landscaping plan submitted as part of the site plan application process. The minimum number of trees planted in lots as buffers or in parking areas shall be as follows:

- a. **Canopy Trees** - There shall be a minimum number of 5 canopy trees per unit in the R-L District and 3 per unit in the R-M District. Canopy trees shall be 2 1/2 to 3 inches in caliper (measured 6 inches from the top of the root ball) and 12 to 15 feet in height at the time of planting. [NOTE: Clump or flowering trees incapable of being measured 6 inches from the top of the root ball shall be at least 12 ft. high at the time of planting.
- b. **Shrubs and Ornamental Plantings** - The minimum number of this type of plant material shall be 20 plants per dwelling unit for townhouses and single-family housing types and 15 plants per unit for garden apartments. The intent, however, is to assure the proper uses of understory plant material along the edges of buildings, walkways, bases of signs, bases of street lights, creation of plant walls, highlighting entranceways, restricting entry to certain areas, basic ornamental planting, etc.

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- c. **Special Landscaping Emphasis** - The following standards shall be supplemental to those requirements of Subsection 4 in cases where the approving authority determines that such requirements have not been met through the minimum standards set forth in Subsection 4.
- (1) **Parking Lots** - All parking lots in a multi-family development shall be landscaped in the following fashion:
    - (a) At a minimum, every tenth parking space shall be interrupted with a canopy tree 2 1/2-3 inches in caliper measured 6 inches from the top of the root ball. Such tree shall be planted at least 4 ft. into an island perpendicular to the curb so that it is clear of vehicle overhang and opening doors. The tree shall be so positioned and the island designated that the landscaping will not interfere with pedestrian circulation.
    - (b) All overhang areas shall be designed with a hard surface from the outside edge of the wheel bumper [head of parking stall to a distance of 3 ft. beyond that point].
  - (2) **Dwelling Unit to Edge of Parking** - The area extending be wall of a dwelling unit to the edge of any parking area shall be landscaped to achieve a visual separation with a combination of hedges, shrubs, bollards or other similar techniques.
  - (3) **Dwelling Unit to Edge of Street** - The area extending between any dwelling unit and street edge shall be landscaped with screen, buffer or ornamental planting as required to provide an appropriate transition between the 2 elements.
  - (4) **Privacy ares.** The patio and similar areas designated for privacy shall be landscaped with screen, canopy and ornamental planting.
  - (5) **Maintenance, Storage and Refuse Collection Areas** -These areas shall be landscaped with buffer and screen plantings to provide visual physical separation of such elements from contiguous areas.

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- (6) Landscaping for Energy Conservation - Landscape planting generally throughout the site shall be utilized to provide buildings with summer shade canopies, maximum winter exposure to sun, windbreaks, etc.
  - (7) Wildlife Habitat - The utilization of landscape planting to promote the creation and/or preservation of wildlife habitat must take form at two levels. The first effort is required in the areas referred to as "developed common open space". These include parks, playgrounds, backyards, walkways, etc., in which plant material selected to satisfy the needs of the human population can also have food and shelter value for bird and small game species. The second effort lies in the protection of the habitat value of the undeveloped open space and augmenting such habitat with plant material that further promotes food and shelter values.
  - (8) Developed Common Open Spaces - The developed open spaces throughout any project area shall be landscaped according to an overall plan incorporating existing plant material and supplementing it.
  - (9) Utility Fixtures - Such as transformers, heat pumps, etc., throughout the site shall be screened with a combination of fencing and landscaping.
5. General Standards Applicable to All Districts
- a. Maintenance of landscaped areas:
    - (1) All landscaped areas shall be maintained in a neat and professional manner throughout the life of the project, to include the replacement of plant material as required.
    - (2) The agency, office or person charged with such responsibility shall be designated. All areas of the site plan to be under a common association responsibility shall be designated on the site plan.
  - b. Retention of Native Plant Material - All efforts shall be made to retain natural plant material. Clearing shall be limited to roadways and buildings sites and areas essential for the development.

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- c. Substitutions of existing plant material for required landscaping. Subsequent to construction of each project phase, the developer may request the reviewing board to verify the acceptability of existing native plant material and its suitability as a substitute for any proposed landscape plan.
- d. Location of Landscape Material - All landscape material shall be so located so as not to obstruct vision in parking areas, along roadways or in other areas accessible to motorized vehicles.