

**CHAPTER 1111**  
**Environmental and Landscaping Design**  
**and Construction Standards**

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**CROSS REFERENCES**

Landscaping - see P. & Z. Ch. 1167  
 Special flood hazard areas - see BLDG. Ch. 1329

**1111.01 PURPOSE.**

Landscaping shall be provided as part of the site plan and subdivision design for planned unit developments and for commercial, industrial, and medium and high density residential subdivisions. Careful thought shall be given as to how best to preserve existing plant material at the site. Landscaping may include plant materials such as trees, shrubs, ground covers, perennials, and annuals, and other materials such as rocks, water, sculpture, art, walls, fences, paving materials and street furniture.

**1111.02 PUBLIC SITES, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION.**

(a) Where a park, playground, school, public access to water frontage, or other proposed public property, which is shown in the comprehensive plan, is located in whole or in part in a proposed subdivision, the Planning Commission may request the dedication of such area within the subdivision or that provision be made for the acquisition of such area by the proper agency within a period of two (2) years or other mutually acceptable period.

(b) The Planning Commission, in conjunction with City Council, may require that land area totaling three percent (3%) of the land included in the plan of the subdivision be conveyed to the City for park purposes. In lieu of the conveyance for park purposes, the Planning Commission may, in conjunction with City Council, require the subdivider to pay a mutually agreed upon amount of money for the maintenance of a park in the vicinity of the subdivision and likely to be used by the subdivision residents.

(c) Where a large-scale subdivision or planned unit development is proposed, the Planning Commission may require that consideration be given to sites for schools, parks, playgrounds, and other such areas for common use and that provisions be made for such reservation or acquisition by the proper agency.

(d) The Planning Commission may reserve the right to deny approval to a subdivision if such subdivision disregards the preservation of natural features such as wooded areas, water courses, beaches, areas of natural or historical significance and similar irreplaceable assets which add value to residential development and the community.

#### **1111.03 FLOOD AREAS AND STORM DRAINAGE DITCHES.**

(a) All subdivisions shall comply with current floodplain regulations on file in the City. Appropriate measures shall be taken to elevate buildings to required levels. A proposed subdivision may be denied if access to the subdivision is periodically blocked by flood waters.

- (b) Flood control or storm drainage facilities shall be provided as follows:
- (1) Access to flood control or storm drainage ditches and channels shall be provided by easements of not less than twenty (20) feet in width, located on one side of the flood control or drainage ditch, channel or similar facilities.
  - (2) Flood control or storm drainage easements containing underground facilities shall have a minimum width of twenty (20) feet.

#### **1111.04 SOIL EROSION REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) In the development of a subdivision, the developer shall not cause or allow earth-disturbing activities that can pollute a public or private surface ditch, subsurface drainage, stream, river or lake. The developer shall also, to the greatest extent possible, take steps so that sediment will not be deposited on to an adjoining property. Adequate control of soil erosion and sedimentation, through the use of best management practices with both temporary and permanent measures, shall be used during all phases of clearing, grading, and construction to conserve soil resources and to maintain existing water quality. Sediment control shall follow the most current standards and specifications in Hamilton County's Rules and Regulations Governing the Construction, Operation and Maintenance of the Hamilton County Storm Water Drainage System.

(b) When a proposed development area consists of five (5) or more acres of earth-disturbing activities, the owner of record shall develop and submit to the City Engineer for review and approval, a soil erosion and sedimentation control plan. Such a plan shall contain sufficient information, drawings, and notes to describe how soil erosion and off-site sedimentation will be kept to a minimum, both during and after construction.

(c) When a proposed development area involves less than five acres, it is not necessary to submit a soil erosion and sedimentation control plan; however, the developer shall comply with the most current standards and specifications in Hamilton County's Rules and Regulations Governing the Construction, Operation and Maintenance of the Hamilton County Storm Water Drainage System. Upon request, submittal of specific soil erosion and sedimentation prevention measures to be or being implemented may be required to determine compliance.

(d) Soil erosion and sedimentation control plans shall be certified by a professional engineer registered in the State of Ohio before being submitted to the Planning Commission for review and approval.

**1111.05 LANDSCAPE PLAN.**

A landscape plan shall be submitted with each site plan application for planned developments, commercial, industrial, and/or high density residential subdivisions, unless an exception is granted by the Planning Commission pursuant to these regulations. The landscape plan shall identify existing and proposed trees, shrubs, and ground covers; natural features such as rock outcropping, and other landscaping elements. Where existing plants are to be retained, the applicant shall include in the plans proposed methods of protecting them during construction.

**1111.06 SITE PROTECTION AND GENERAL PLANTING REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) Topsoil Preservation. Topsoil shall be temporarily stored and later redistributed on all regraded surfaces so as to provide at least (4) inches of even cover to all disturbed areas of the development and shall be stabilized by seeding or planting.

(b) Removal of Debris. All stumps and other tree parts, litter, brush, weeds, excess, or scrap building materials or other debris shall be removed from the site and disposed of in accordance with the law. No tree stumps or portions of tree trunks or limbs shall be buried anywhere in the development. If trees and limbs are reduced to chips, they may be used as mulch in landscaped areas, subject to approval by the Planning Commission.

(c) Protection of Existing Planting. Maximum effort should be made to save fine or exceptional plant specimens. No material or temporary soil deposits shall be placed within four (4) feet of shrubs or ten (10) feet of trees designated on the landscape plan to be retained. Protective barriers or tree-wells shall be installed around each remaining on the site. Barriers shall not be supported by the plants they are protecting, but shall be self-supporting. They shall be a minimum of four (4) feet high and constructed of a durable material that will last until construction is completed. Snow fences and silt fences are examples of acceptable barriers.

(d) Slope Planting. Landscaping of all cuts and fills and/or terraces shall be sufficient to prevent erosion, and all roadway slopes steeper than one (1) foot vertically to three (3) feet horizontally shall be planted with ground cover appropriate for the purpose and for soil conditions, water availability, and environment.

(e) Additional Landscaping. In residential developments, besides the screening and street trees required, additional planting or landscaping elements may be required throughout the subdivision where necessary for climate control, privacy, or other reasons in accordance with the landscape plan approved by the Planning Commission taking cost constraints into consideration. In nonresidential developments, all areas of the site not occupied by buildings and required improvements shall be landscaped by the planting of grass or other ground cover, shrubs, and trees as part of the landscape plan approved by the Planning Commission.

(f) Planting Specifications. Deciduous trees shall have at least a two-inch caliper at planting. Size of evergreens and shrubs shall be allowed to vary depending on setting and type of shrub. All trees, shrubs, and ground covers shall be planted according to accepted horticultural standards. Dead and dying plants shall be replaced by the developer during the following planting season.

(g) Plant Species. The plant species selected shall be hardy for the climate and appropriate in terms of function and size.

**1111.07 SHADE TREES.**

(a) Shade trees shall be installed on both sides of all streets in accordance with the approved landscape plan. When trees are planted at predetermined intervals along streets, spacing shall depend on tree size (at maturity), as shown in Table 6-1.

TREE HEIGHT (feet)	PLANTING INTERVAL (feet)
Large Trees (40+)	50-70
Medium Trees (30-40)	40-50
Small Trees (to 30)	30-40

(b) When the spacing interval exceeds 40 feet, small ornamental trees can be placed between the larger trees. If a street canopy effect is desired, trees may be planted closer together, following the recommendations of a registered landscape architect. The planting of trees shall be coordinated with utilities, roadways, sidewalks, site easements, or streetlights. Tree location, landscaping design, and tree spacing shall be approved by the Planning Commission as part of the landscape plan.

**1111.08 BUFFERING.**

Buffering is the provision of an area between different land uses that attempts to minimize negative environmental impacts from one to the other. Buffers shall provide a year-round visual screen in order to minimize adverse impacts. They may consist of fencing, evergreens, berms, rocks, boulders, mounds, or combinations thereof to achieve the same objectives. Every developer shall provide sufficient buffering when topographical or other barriers do not provide reasonable screening and when the Planning Commission determines that there is a need to shield neighboring properties from any adverse external effects of a development; or the development from negative impacts of adjacent uses such as streets or railroads. In high-density developments, when building design and siting do not provide privacy, the Planning Commission may require landscaping, fences, or to screen dwelling units for privacy. Buffers shall be measured from side and rear property lines, excluding driveways. Plant materials shall be sufficiently large and planted in such a fashion that a year-round screen at least eight (8) feet in height shall be produced within three (3) growing seasons. All plantings shall be installed according to accepted horticultural standards.

Parking lots, garbage collection, utility areas; and loading and unloading areas	5 feet width minimum
All other land uses	25 feet width minimum

**1111.09 MAINTENANCE.**

Plantings shall be watered regularly and in a manner appropriate for the specific plant species through the first growing season, and dead and dying plants shall be replaced by the applicant during the next planting season. No buildings, structures, storage of materials, or parking shall be permitted within any buffer area. Buffer areas shall be maintained and kept free of all debris, rubbish, weeds, and tall grass.

**1111.10 PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING.**

(a) In parking lots, at least five percent (5%) of the interior parking area shall be landscaped with plantings, and one (1) deciduous tree shall be planted for every three thousand square feet of parking space. Parking lot street frontage screening and perimeter screening shall be a minimum of five (5) feet wide. Planting required within the parking lot is exclusive of other planting requirements, such as shade trees planted along the street.

(b) Landscaping should be located in protected areas, such as along walkways, in center islands, at the ends of bays, or between parking stalls. All landscaping in parking areas and on the street frontage shall be placed so that it will not obstruct sight distance. Plantings in parking areas and on streets shall pay particular attention to sun position during the summer months so that maximum cooling effects can be gained from well-placed trees.

(c) A mixture of hardy flowering and/or decorative evergreen and deciduous trees may be planted. The evergreens should be used along the perimeter of the lot for screening, and the deciduous trees for shade within the lot. The area between trees shall be mulched or planted with shrubs or ground cover. Any area that will be under the overhang of vehicles shall be mulched or covered with paving material.

**1111.11 PAVING MATERIALS.**

Design and choice of paving materials used in pedestrian areas shall consider such factors as function, climate, characteristics of users, availability, cost, maintenance, glare, drainage, noise, appearance, and compatibility with surroundings. Acceptable materials shall include, but are not limited to, concrete, brick, cement pavers, asphalt, and stone.

**1111.12 WALLS AND FENCES.**

Walls and fences shall be erected where required for privacy, screening, separation, security, erosion control, or to serve other necessary and reasonable functions. The design and materials used shall be functional and compatible with existing and proposed site architecture. No fence or wall shall be so constructed or installed as to constitute a hazard to traffic or safety.

**1111.13 STREET FURNITURE.**

Street furniture such as trash receptacles and benches, shall be located and sized in accordance with their function. The different street furniture components shall be compatible in form, material, and finish. Design and materials shall be coordinated with existing and proposed site architecture. Selection of street furniture shall take into consideration functionality and durability.