



# Landscape Requirements and Policies

## *Landscape Ordinance Requirements and Policies for Non-Residential Properties*

### Introduction

The City of Richardson takes great pride in both the natural and built environment of our community. The long-range vision for the city established in the Comprehensive Planning Guide identifies aesthetics and amenities as vital ingredients in creating cultural identity and economic value for the community. Landscaping is a vital component of the built environment, and one that City staff, the City Plan Commission, and the City Council take very seriously.

The *Subdivision and Development Ordinance* requires the City Plan Commission to approve a landscape plan for all non-residential and multi-family properties. Commission consideration of a landscape plan includes conformance with the *Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance*, *Subdivision and Development Ordinance*, City policies, the adequacy of the proposed landscaping, and any other aspect deemed necessary to consider in the interest of providing for the public health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the community.

To that end, this document is intended to provide a *general* overview of the City of Richardson's landscaping ordinance requirements and policies for non-residential properties. These policies are not intended to impede creative and unique design solutions, but rather to promote consistent, quality design. Please note that opportunities and constraints vary greatly between individual properties, and not all situations can be addressed within this document. The City's Development and Engineering staff will work closely with property owners and consultants to develop an appropriate landscape design sensitive to the unique circumstances of each site. Applicants should also refer to the City's *Developer's Checklist* for information regarding the appropriate format and content for landscape plans submitted to the City.

### Landscaping Ordinance Summary

The following are ordinance requirements related to landscaping on non-residential properties. Deviation from these ordinance regulations requires City Council approval of a variance, upon recommendation by the City Plan Commission.

#### ***Minimum Landscape Area Requirements:***

- 7% of gross land area for non-residential properties with a building or buildings totaling less than 75,000 square feet;
- 10% of gross land area for non-residential properties with a building or buildings totaling 75,000 or more square feet; for properties in a residential district having a principal or accessory parking lot; and for all properties zoned under the Town of Buckingham *Zoning Ordinance*;
- Of the required minimum landscaped area, 20% must be provided internal to parking areas (landscaped islands, etc.).
- Area within the 100-year floodway cannot be counted toward meeting the minimum landscape area requirement.
- For multi-family residential projects, refer to the appropriate zoning district and development regulations for open space, recreational amenity and screening/fencing requirements.

### ***Screening of Ground Level Equipment:***

- All ground level equipment, including fans, vents, air conditioning units, cooling towers, fuel tanks and generators should be screened from the view of streets and adjoining properties by means of a masonry wall or living screen not less than the height of the tallest element of the equipment.

### ***Maintenance and Irrigation of Landscaped Areas:***

- The property owner is responsible for maintaining the landscape in accordance with the approved landscape plan.
- Dying plant material, as determined by the City, shall be replaced in accordance with the approved landscape plan.
- All landscape material must be irrigated by a mechanical underground system with operating rain and freeze sensors.

## **US75 and PGBH Design Guidelines**

Properties adjacent to US 75 (Central Expressway) or the President George Bush Highway/Turnpike (SH 190) should refer to the *US 75 Amenities Planning Guidelines* or the *President George Bush Highway Design Guidelines* established by the City. Contact the Development and Engineering Department for copies of the appropriate Guidelines.

## **Landscaping Policy Summary**

To assist property owners, developers, and consultants in the preparation of landscape plans for City Plan Commission review, the following general policies have been established:

### ***Landscape Buffers Adjacent to Streets and Major Private Drives***

- Provide a minimum 10' wide landscape buffer between public or private streets (or private drives having a minimum width of 50 feet) and any adjacent parking areas. The buffer shall be on private property and be exclusive of any adjacent right-of-way. No impervious surface except sidewalks and drive approaches may encroach upon the landscape buffer.
- Within the landscape buffer, provide a minimum of one canopy tree and one ornamental tree for each 50 lineal feet of street frontage. Trees are not required to be placed on 50' centers; this is merely a quantity guideline. Trees may be planted in "natural" groupings to provide view corridors into the development.
- Accent drives into the development with ornamental trees, evergreen shrubs, ground covers, seasonal color beds, etc.

## Landscape Requirements and Policies (cont'd)

- Sidewalks located adjacent to public or private streets are encouraged to meander from the public right-of-way into the landscape buffer in a flowing manner (requires pedestrian easement when sidewalk is located on private property). Refer to *Subdivision and Development Ordinance* for required sidewalk widths.

### **Parking, Loading, and Storage Areas**

Site features such as surface parking, loading and outdoor storage areas, and utility accessories are necessary components of a development; however, additional effort must be taken to reduce their visual impact by locating these elements at the rear of the structure(s) and screening them from adjoining properties and public rights-of-way. Additional ordinance regulations for screening of parking areas for churches located in residential districts can be found in Section 21-47(a) of the *Subdivision and Development Ordinance*.

- Screen parking, loading or storage areas, and utility accessories with evergreen hedges, berms, decorative masonry or stone walls, or a combination thereof. Screening for parking areas should be opaque, with a minimum height of 30" above the grade of the parking lot. Screening for loading, storage, and utility areas should be at least the height of the elements being screened.
- Berms shall vary in height and be teardrop in form for a natural look, with a maximum slope of 3:1. A straight-line "levee" effect shall be avoided. Shrubs and/or low walls must be provided in those areas where berms are less than 30 inches in height to fully screen the parking areas.
- Decorative or retaining walls must be approved structurally by the City's Development Engineer and aesthetically by the City Plan Commission.
- A concrete, pavestone, or mulch strip the width of the vehicle overhang two feet (2') is required for parking spaces adjacent to a landscape buffer. This strip shall be measured from the face of curb to the edge of the landscaped bed.
- Landscaped islands are required at the ends of each row of parking spaces, to incorporate canopy trees, ground covers, and a two foot (2') wide paved strip adjacent to the parking stall.

### **Sight Visibility Triangles**

- Visibility triangles shall be maintained at all street, alley, or private drive intersections in accordance with the City's sight triangle guidelines. Nothing in these policies shall be construed as permitting any obstruction to view; and no person shall locate a structure or plant material in a manner which will create a traffic hazard.
- Within the required visibility triangle, no obstruction shall exceed 30 inches in height, measured from the driving surface; however trees are permitted within the visibility triangle provided that the lowest limbs are trimmed to a minimum height of seven (7) feet, measured from the top of the curb.

### **Foundation Planting**

- Provide foundation plantings adjacent to the buildings and/or other structures on the site. Accent building entrances with ornamental plants.

## Landscape Requirements and Policies *(cont'd)*

### **Perimeter Screening**

- When adjacent to residential uses, refer to the *Subdivision and Development Ordinance* for screening requirements. Additional landscape buffering shall be provided in addition to any required screening wall.
- The sides and rear of the property shall be screened from adjacent non-residential properties.

### **Existing Trees:**

- Designers must be sensitive to existing trees on the site. Attempts should be made to minimize the removal of existing trees, and to incorporate them into the proposed design.
- Existing trees 6" or greater diameter at breast height must be inventoried and indicated on the landscape plans submitted for review by the City. Any trees to be removed must be indicated both graphically and in tabular format on the landscape plan, with the reason for removal clearly indicated.

### **Suggested Plant Material List**

The following is a list of suggested plant materials, with corresponding size requirements. Materials not on this list may be specified, subject to approval by the City Plan Commission.

<b>Canopy Trees</b>	<b>Min. Ht./Width</b>	<b>Min. Caliper/Ball Size</b>
Live Oak <i>Quercus virginiana</i>	14'/5'	3"/32"
Red Oak <i>Quercus shumardi</i>	14'/5'	3"/32"
Bald Cypress <i>Taxodium distichum</i>	12'/6'	4"/42"
Sweetgum Liquidambar styraciflua	14'/4'	3"/32"
Cedar Elm <i>Ulmus crassifolia</i>	14'/5'	3"/32"
Honeylocust Shademaster <i>Gleditsia triacanthos 'Shademaster'</i>	14'/5'	3"/32"
Golden Raintree <i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i>	10'/4'	3"/32"
Texas Ash Fraxinus velutina 'Rio Grande'	14'/4'	3"/32"
Bur Oak <i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	12'/4'	3"/32"
Chinquapin Oak <i>Quercus muhlenbergii</i>	14'/5'	3"/32"
Escarpment Oak <i>Quercus fusiformis</i>	14'/5'	3"/32"

## Landscape Requirements and Policies (cont'd)

### Ornamental Trees

	<i>Min. Ht./Width</i>	<i>Min. Caliper/Ball Size</i>
Yaupon Holly <i>Ilex vomatoria</i>	8'/3'	4 canes/2'
Crape Myrtle <i>Lagerstromia indica</i>	8'/3'	4 canes/2'
Deciduous Yaupon <i>Ilex decidua</i>	8'/3'	4 canes/2'
Native Hawthorn <i>Crataegus spp.</i>	8'/3'	4 canes/2'
Southern Crabapple <i>Malus app.</i>	8'/3'	2 1/2"/25"
Chinese Pistache <i>Pistacia chinensis</i>	8'/3'	2 1/2"/25"
Mexican Plum <i>Prunus Mexicana</i>	8'/3'	2 1/2"/25"
Wax Myrtle <i>Myrica carifera</i>	6'/3'	4 canes/2'

### Shrubs

	<i>Min. Ht./Width</i>	<i>Min. Container Size</i>
Dwarf Nandina <i>Nandina domestica 'nana'</i>	12"/10"	2 gal.
Dwarf Burford Holly <i>Ilex cornuta 'burfordi nana'</i>	12"/12"	2 gal.
Abelia Grandiflora <i>Abelia grandiflora</i>	12"/12"	2 gal.
Barberry <i>Barberry spp.</i>	18"/15"	2 gal.
Red Yucca <i>Hesperaloe parviflora</i>	15"/18"	5 gal.
Texas Sage <i>Leucophyllum frutescans</i>	15"/15"	5 gal.
Indian Hawthorn <i>Raphiolepis indica</i>	24"/24"	5 gal.
Native Sumac <i>Rhus typhina</i>	30"/48"	10 gal.
Dwarf Crape Myrtle <i>Lagerstromia indica 'nana'</i>	15"/15"	5 gal.

## Landscape Requirements and Policies *(cont'd)*

Photinia <i>Photinia fraseri</i>	36"/24"	5 gal.
Dwarf Yaupon Holly <i>Ilex vomitorria 'nana'</i>	10"/10"	2 gal.
Pampas Grass <i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	30"/24"	5 gal.
<b>Ground Cover/Vines</b>	<b>Min. Ht./Width</b>	<b>Min. Container Size</b>
Asian Jasmine <i>Trachelosperum Asiaticum</i>	4"/12"	1 gal.
Big Blue Liriope <i>Liriope muscari</i>	4"/12"	1 gal.
Mondo grass <i>Ophiopogon japonicus</i>	4"/12"	1 gal.
Purple Winter Creeper <i>Euonymus coloratus</i>	Can full w/6" runners	1 gal.
Santolina <i>Santolina virens</i>	3"/8"	1 gal.
Trumpet Vine <i>Campsis radicans</i>	18" full on stake	1 gal.
Virginia Creeper <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	18" full on stake	1 gal.
Lady Banks Rose <i>Rosa banksiaw lutea</i>	18" full on stake	1 gal.
Wisteria <i>Wisteria sinensis</i>	4' full on stake	5 gal.
Vinca major <i>Vinca major</i>	4"/6"	1 gal.