
Sec. 94-445. - Plant material standards and specifications.

All plant and nonplant material shall meet or exceed the standards and specifications of this section.

1. *Maintenance free material.* To the extent practicable, all nonplant material shall be durable and maintenance-free.
2. *Plant quality.* Plant materials used pursuant to the provisions of this article shall be equal to or better than Florida Department of Agriculture Number 1 Nursery Grade Standard.
3. *Nonorganic plant materials prohibited.* Plastic or other nonorganic plant materials, with the exception of artificial turf, shall be prohibited from use and shall not be in compliance with the spirit or intent of this section. Artificial turf shall be subject to the requirements of section 94-451.
4. *Required plant material specifications.*
 - a. *Shade and flowering trees.* Shade and flowering trees planted pursuant to the provisions of this article shall be a minimum of 12 feet in height. Up to ten percent of required trees may be reduced in size to a minimum of ten feet in height based upon species and availability. Native trees may be reduced in height to a minimum of six feet based on species and availability, if the sum of the height of the trees provided is equal to or greater to the sum of the height of the required trees. All instances of limited availability must be verified and certified by the landscape architect.
 - b. *Palm trees.* Palm species shall be a minimum of eight feet clear wood as defined in Florida grades and standards.
 - c. *Natural grass.* All natural lawn areas shall be planted with species suitable as permanent lawns in the city. Effective erosion control is mandatory in swales, rights-of-way, or other areas subject to erosion. The primary types of natural grasses used for residential, commercial, and industrial areas in South Florida are St. Augustine and Bahia cultivars. The selection of natural grass types shall be made while considering the long term economic and aesthetic effects of possible drought conditions upon the lawn areas. The following shall serve as a guide and is not meant to negate the use of other appropriate grass types for their specific site uses.
 1. *St. Augustine grass.* St. Augustine grass should be used adjacent to areas that accommodate significant pedestrian traffic or where the aesthetics of the immediate area are considered an important factor.
 2. *Bahia grass.* Bahia grass should be used in large, nonmanicured, turf areas such as open fields, recreation areas, road rights-of-way or other areas that are generally viewed from a distance or from a moving automobile
 - d. *Shrubs.* Shrubs for general landscape purposes planted pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be a minimum plant container size of three gallons. Container sizes for woody or herbaceous plant material, when utilized for ground cover, may vary.
 - e. *Hedges.* Hedges shall be planted at a minimum of 24 inches in height and a maximum spacing of two-foot on center. The hedge shall reach a maturity height of at least 36 inches within two years of planting in the form of a solid continuous visual screen. Exceptions and substitutions from this provision may be approved by the planning and zoning administrator in order to promote the use of slow growing or native plant materials or specification of larger size plants at installation.
 - f. *Root systems.* Plant materials shall be selected to minimize potential root system damage or interference with public utilities. Fruit and debris, other than leaves from installed plant materials, shall not constitute a nuisance within public rights-of-way or to abutting property owners.
 - g. *Irrigation systems.* Irrigation systems can be beneficial in efficiently adding water to cultivated landscape. The following guidelines shall be implemented for developing and maintaining irrigation systems.
 1. *Irrigation of existing native noninvasive plant communities.* Existing native noninvasive plant communities and ecosystems maintained in a natural state may not require any additional irrigation water.
 2. *Reestablished or newly installed native noninvasive plant area.* Native noninvasive plant areas that are supplements to an existing plant community or newly installed by the developer may initially require

additional water to become established. Where newly planted native noninvasive areas have been installed in soils appropriate to the proposed native system, additional irrigation water after the period of establishment may not be necessary.

3. **Cultivated landscape areas.** Automatic irrigation systems shall be used for the cultivated landscape areas for all properties. Application of water through a properly maintained and regulated irrigation system can be the most efficient method of watering the landscape.
 - i. **Irrigation systems.** When irrigated, cultivated areas shall be irrigated by the use of an automatic irrigation system with controllers set to apply water as noted in this section. Irrigation controllers shall be switched to manual operation during periods of increased rainfall. Rainfall or moisture sensing devices are strongly encouraged to be used to avoid operation of the system during periods of increased rainfall.
 - ii. **Coverage requirements.** In all areas that are to be planted in a cultivated landscape, irrigation systems shall be designed to have 100 percent coverage and eliminate water overthrow onto nonpervious areas.
4. **Zoning of irrigation systems.** Wherever feasible, sprinkler heads irrigating lawns or other high water demand landscape areas shall be circuited so that they are on a separate zone or zones from those irrigating trees, shrubbery or other reduced water requirement areas.
5. **Sod areas.** Bahia sod areas are not required to have permanent irrigation after establishment.
- h. **Berm specifications.** All berms shall be landscaped with trees, shrubs, ground cover, grass or hedges. Berms shall be installed subject to approval by the city engineer.
- i. **Prohibited trees.** The following tree species are considered invasive and will overtake other plant habitats. The following tree species are therefore considered unacceptable for use as landscape trees and shall not be planted within the city and shall be removed as required for maintenance and development:
 1. Casuarina species (Australian pine tree)
 2. Schinus terebinthifolius (Brazilian pepper tree)
 3. Melaleuca quinquenervia (Melaleuca tree)
 4. Bischofia javanica (Bishopwood)
 5. Acacia auriculaeformis (Earleaf Acacia).
 6. Schefflera actinophylla (Schefflera).
 7. Albizia lebeck (Woman's Tongue).
 8. Cupianopsis anacardioides (Carrotwood).
 9. Plants listed in Rule 5B-57.007 F.A.C, noxious weed list from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as revised from time to time.
- j. **Limited use trees and plant materials.** Plant materials characterized by large fleshy fruit, surface or buttress roots, poisonous properties, or possible interruption of visibility shall not be planted in any parkway area, in any landscaped strip, or buffer adjacent to a public right-of-way. Trees that may cause injurious harm or toxic reactions should also be of limited use.
- k. **Use of Ficus species.** Ficus species may be planted as individual trees provided that they are no closer than 15 feet of any structure or utility. Ficus species planted within 15 feet of any structure or utility shall be permitted only if they are contained in a planter or maintained as a hedge which is constantly cultivated and does not exceed the height limitations as provided in section [94-302](#).
- l. **Plant species.** A minimum of 60 percent of plant material added shall be Florida native or drought tolerant species selected from the city list or the list of species in the most recent edition of South Florida Water Management District Waterwise South Florida Landscapes.

(Code 1979, § 33-164; Ord. 3898-05, § 2, 8-29-2005; Ord. No. 4420-12, § 3, 6-11-2012; Ord. No. 4689-16, § 5, 4-11-2017; Ord. No. 4756-17, § 4, 2-12-2018)