
Sec. 94-446. - Plant material installation and maintenance.

Plant material shall be installed and maintained as provided in this section.

1. *Installation* .

- a. Landscaping shall be installed showing skilled workmanship and according to accepted planting procedures.
- b. Plant materials shall be located and installed to provide proper growing conditions and good drainage of root systems.
- c. Soil in landscaped areas shall be free of debris, including paving base or fill material, and calcareous materials such as shell, lime rock, concrete, plaster, and stucco. Soil in landscaped areas shall consist of sand, peat, muck, and similar materials to produce a plastic and friable state. Such soils shall be at a minimum depth of six inches below the root ball and at least ten inches on all sides of the root ball. Planting areas are to be totally excavated whenever plant materials are installed 24 or less inches apart. Planting areas containing excessive calcareous materials shall be excavated to a minimum depth of two feet.
- d. A minimum of three inches of compacted, sustainably harvested, non-cypress organic mulch shall be placed around all newly installed trees, shrubs and ground cover planting areas. The use of melaleuca mulch is encouraged. Mulch consisting of any exotic invasive species must be certified seed-free by the producer.
- e. The planting of shade, flowering or fruit trees shall be installed in a sound workmanship like manner according to accepted and proper planting procedures. All trees shall be properly guyed and staked at the time of planting. Trees shall be re-staked in the event of blow-overs or other failure of the staking and guying. All guy wire and staking material should be removed as soon as the tree will stand on its own but no more than one year after planting.
- f. Verification required. Written verification of proper landscaping installation by the landscape architect of record shall be provided to the city and shall include the following:
 1. Species, including quality, type, quantity, and any other original plant specifications;
 2. Design or location;
 3. Irrigation; and
 4. All other landscape structures and material used or installed in accordance with the site plan.
- g. Review. The city will inspect and review the project for compliance after the verification has been received from the landscape architect.
- h. Deviation. Any deviation from the approved landscape plan will be relayed to the planning and zoning administrator for further review prior to the issuance of the certificate of occupancy.

2. *Maintenance*. All landscape areas shall be maintained on a regular basis, to include weeding, watering, fertilizing, pruning, mowing, edging, mulching, replacement of dead or missing landscaping, removal of prohibited plants, and other horticultural practices that are needed to keep landscaping in good condition, free from disease, insect pests, weeds, refuse, and debris. Landscape maintenance shall be carried out in a manner that will not disrupt, inconvenience or endanger any member of the public, or pedestrian, or motor vehicles. Landscaping shall be maintained in good condition, shall present a healthy, neat, and orderly appearance, and shall be free from refuse and debris. All unhealthy or dead material shall be replaced within three months. All landscaped areas, excluding reestablished or newly installed native noninvasive plant areas, Bahia sod, and areas of artificial turf installed in accordance with the provisions of section [94-451](#), shall be provided with a permanent automatic irrigation system.

- a. *Mulching*. In order to preserve soil moisture, at least three inches of compacted, clean, weed free, sustainably harvested, non-cypress mulch shall be maintained over all appropriate planting areas at all times.
- b. *Tree trimming*. Standards for trimming shall be performed in accordance with the latest pruning standards for shade trees recommended by the National Arborist Association or other professional arborist association, currently the ANSI A-300 (Part 1) Pruning, a copy of which is on file in the planning, zoning and building department. Trees in the swales and parkways shall be trimmed by the adjacent property owner to prevent impedance or interference with traffic or travel on sidewalk, street, or creating a danger to traffic by impeding or obstructing the view of intersections. Tree trimming on all properties except single family and duplex

homes shall be done under the guidance of a certified arborist. Trees shall only be trimmed in the following manner:

1. All cuts shall be clean, flush with the branch collar and made at junctions, laterals or crotches. For overhead utility lines, the drop crotch trimming method shall be followed.
 2. Removal of dead wood, overlapping branches, weak or insignificant branches and suckers shall be done simultaneously with any crown reduction.
 3. Tree topping or hatracking is prohibited. The severe cutting back of limbs to stub larger than three inches in diameter within the tree's crown to such an extent so as to remove the canopy and disfigure the tree shall not be done on any tree. Trees severely damaged by natural causes or under utility wires or other obstructions where other pruning practices are not possible may be exempted from this ordinance at the determination of the planning and zoning administrator or designee.
 4. Trimming above 13.5 feet for clearance, lions tailing, and shaping or shearing of shade trees into rounded or lollipop shapes is prohibited.
 5. Palm trees shall be pruned to remove seed pods and dead fronds, and live, healthy fronds above horizontal shall not be removed.
- c. **Tree abuse.** Tree abuse shall not be permitted. The following shall be considered tree abuse:
1. Damage inflicted upon any part of a tree including the root system by machinery, storage materials, excavation and chemical application.
 2. Damage inflicted by cutting a tree which permits infection or pest infestation.
 3. Improper cutting of a tree, permanently reducing the function of the tree, or causing it to go into shock; cutting which destroys the natural shape; hatracking; tears and splitting of limb ends or peeling, stripping of the bark.
 4. Girdling a tree with use of wires, weed eaters or mower damage.
 5. Removal of the bark more than one-tenth of the tree.
 6. Improper staking techniques resulting in damage to the tree or the use of nails directly into the trunk.
- d. **Mowing.** Natural grass shall be mowed as required in order to encourage deep root growth and therefore the preservation of irrigation water.
- e. **Edging.** All roadways, curbs and sidewalks shall be edged when necessary in order to prevent encroachment from the adjacent grassed areas. The use of weed-eaters to trim lawn grasses around a tree will be done so as not to remove bark causing the deterioration and eventual death of the tree.
- f. **Watering.** Watering of planted areas should be managed so as to maintain healthy flora, make plant material more drought tolerant, avoid excessive turf growth, minimize fungus growth, stimulate deep root growth, minimize leaching of fertilizer, and minimize cold damage.
1. **Watering of plants and trees.** Watering of plants and trees should always be in a sufficient amount to thoroughly soak the root ball of the plant and the surrounding area, there by promoting deep root growth and drought tolerance.
 2. **Operation of automatic irrigation systems.** Operation of automatic irrigation systems should be in accordance with section 90-93.
 3. **Maintenance of irrigation systems.** Irrigation systems shall be constantly maintained to eliminate waste of water due to loss of heads, broken pipes, misadjusted nozzles or other causes.
- g. **Removal of debris.** Fruit and debris, other than leaves from installed plant materials, shall not constitute a nuisance within public rights-of-way.

(Code 1979, § 33-165; Ord. 3898-05, § 2, 8-29-2005; Ord. No. 4420-12, § 3, 6-11-2012; Ord. No. 4689-16, § 6, 4-11-2017; Ord. No. 4756-17, § 5, 2-12-2018)