

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA, BY AMENDING CHAPTER 29 ARTICLE 2, SECTION 29.201 (228)(229)(230), CHAPTER 29 ARTICLE 4 SECTION 29.403, 29.406, 29.407, 29.408, CHAPTER 29 ARTICLE 8 SECTION 29.801(3), 802(3), 804(3), 805(3), 806(3), 807(3), 808(3), 809(3), (810)(3)(6)(D)(7)(A), CHAPTER 29, ARTICLE 9 SECTION 29.901(3), (902)(3), 903(3), CHAPTER 29 ARTICLE 10 SECTION 29.1001(5) (A)(B), 29.1003(3), CHAPTER 29 ARTICLE 11 SECTION 29.1104(2)(D), 29.1107(4)(A)(B), 29.1110(5)(A)(B), 29.1112(6)(F)(G), (8)(D), (9)(B), CHAPTER 29 ARTICLE 12 SECTION 1202(6), AND CHAPTER 29 SECTION 13 SECTION 29.1303(1) THEREOF, FOR THE PURPOSE OF REVISING AND ESTABLISHING LANDSCAPING STANDARDS; REPEALING ANY AND ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT TO THE EXTENT OF SUCH CONFLICT; PROVIDING A PENALTY; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ENACTED, by the City Council for the City of Ames, Iowa, that:

Section One. The Municipal Code of the City of Ames, Iowa shall be and the same is hereby amended by repealing the old and enacting new Chapter 29 Article 2 subsections as follows:

“CHAPTER 29 ARTICLE 2

Sec. 29.201. DEFINITIONS.

...  
(228) **Tree, Landscape** means deciduous or coniferous tree. Deciduous trees at the time of planting must be fully branched, have a minimum diameter of 1-1/2 inches, measured 4 feet above the ground when planted, and be a minimum height of 6 feet. Coniferous trees at the time of planting must be a minimum height of 4 feet.

(229) **Tree, Ornamental** means an understory deciduous tree, 25 feet or less tall at maturity, planted primarily for its ornamental value or screening purposes. Ornamental trees shall be at least 6 feet tall when planted.  
(Ord. No. 3591, 10-10-00)

(230) **Tree, Over-story** means an over-story deciduous, greater than 25 feet tall at maturity, planted primarily for its high crown of foliage or overhead canopy. Shade trees shall be at least 6 feet tall when planted.  
(Ord. No. 3591, 10-10-00)

Section Two. The Municipal Code of the City of Ames, Iowa shall be and the same is hereby amended by repealing the old and enacting new Chapter 29 Article 4 subsections as follows:

CHAPTER 29 ARTICLE 4

**29.403 Landscaping Standards**

The purpose of this section is to protect and promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the City by requiring landscaping in relation to development of property in such a manner to ameliorate effects of wind, heat, and glare; to act as a valuable component of natural drainage systems, to incorporate native and existing vegetation, to improve storm water runoff quality, to help clean and refresh air by returning oxygen to the atmosphere, to conserve and stabilize property values through screening of incompatible uses and activities, and to promote a healthy and aesthetically interesting natural environment so as to create an attractive and desirable community for the City's many visitors, residents, and employees.

(1) **Non-Residential Landscaping Standards**

Non-residential landscaping standards are designed to be applied on commercial, industrial or other non-residential sites. The minimum areas required to be landscaped are listed in the Zone Development Standards Tables for Base Zones. In the case of Special Purpose Districts and Overlay Zones, landscaping, screening and buffer standards are set forth in the applicable Article. Required landscaping and screening of Article IV must meet the standards

referenced in each applicable Zone Development Standards Table, supplemental standards, and general development standards of Chapter 29.

**(A) Front Yard Landscaping**

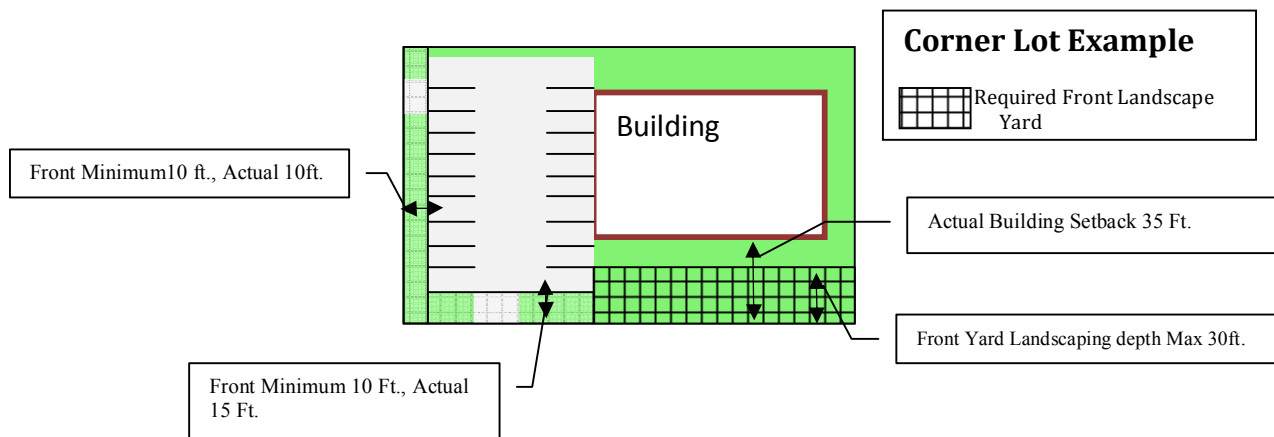
Front yard landscaping standards are designed to provide decorative and well thought out landscaping between streets and parking lots and between streets and buildings. These landscape standards are a combination of low height decorative plantings and significant trees arranged in a manner that complements and enhances the general site layout. The front yard, for the purposes of calculating front yard landscaping, is the area between any abutting street and any building, parking lot or loading area. (see figure below)

**(i) Front Yard Planting Requirements**

(a) The landscaped front yard for parking lots shall be a minimum of 10 feet in depth from the property line to the first edge of paving unless the base zone specifies a greater setback. The maximum depth of a landscaped front yard for the purpose of calculating landscaping is 30 feet.

(b) The Planning Director may approve a minimum 7-foot front yard depth in certain circumstances in order that a site may achieve dimensional requirements of parking stalls for required parking. When a reduction in depth is approved, the minimum landscaped area plantings shall be calculated by the original 10-foot requirement.

(c) The minimum landscaped front yard for buildings shall conform to the dimensional setback requirements of the base zone. The maximum depth of landscaped front yard for the purpose of calculating landscaping is 30 feet.



(d) The front yard landscaped area requires minimum base plantings of 1 overstory tree per 50 lineal feet of street frontage or part thereof, and for the planting of 8 shrubs and 12 ornamental grasses per 1,000 square feet of front yard area. The front yard area is calculated across the entire frontage of a site regardless of interruptions, such as walkways, encroachments, or driveways.

(1) In some circumstances where screening of residential properties are a priority for the front yard, the Planning Director may require denser planting of materials and for larger planting materials to provide a taller and denser screen of site activities and parking.

(2) Additionally, if overhead utilities are in place, the Planning Director may approve overstory trees to be substituted with alternative locations for planting of trees or for the planting of smaller trees.

**(B) Alternative Front Yard Plantings**

In order to promote design interest and diversity, a property owner may propose substitution of landscaping to enhance the front yard area in accordance with this Section. Substitutions that promote sustainability, color, and texture are desirable. If arrangement of plantings and use of substitution landscaping diminishes any necessary parking lot and loading area the screening will not be approved.

(1) Front yard plantings must contain a minimum of 4 overstory trees within the front yard(s) of a site before allowing for substitutions. For sites that exceed 200 linear feet of frontage, ornamental trees may be substituted at a rate of 2 for every 1 overstory tree for every required tree after the first 4 trees. No more than 50% of the total trees planted to meet 1 per 50 linear foot standard shall be ornamental. For example, a 300-foot frontage

would require either 6 overstory trees or as few as 4 overstory trees with 4 ornamental trees. A 500-foot frontage would require 10 overstory trees or as few as 7 overstory trees with 6 ornamental trees.

(a) Coniferous trees may be used in place of ornamental trees. No more than 30% of the total required trees shall be coniferous trees unless specifically required to assist in screening of a site.

**(2) Storm Water Treatment Features**

When a site includes a landscaped based stormwater treatment feature, e.g. bio-cell, rain garden, or bio-swale, an alternative configuration of ground cover and shrubs and grasses may be approved by the Planning Director when the landscape design provides for storm water quality treatment and includes plantings with visual interest within and along the feature.

**(3) Shrub/Grass Substitutions**

(a) Large landscaped undulations or berms may be incorporated into the landscape design with an allowance for up to a 35% reduction in required plantings of shrubs and grasses.

(b) Additional ornamental grasses may be substituted for 50% of required shrubs at a rate of 3 grasses for 1 shrub.

(c) Additional shrubs may be substituted for ornamental grasses at a rate of 1 shrub for 3 grasses.

(d) Decorative ground covers, flower beds, or similar plantings with interesting color and textures may be substituted at a rate of 60 square feet for 2 shrubs or 6 ornamental grasses for up to 50% of required shrubs and ornamental grasses.

**(4) Design and Configuration**

(a) Required front yard landscaping is encouraged to take on a variety of configurations including clustering, layered rows, alternating patterns or other designs. Front yard plantings are to be arranged in a manner that is well dispersed throughout the yard area, but may be clustered for interest and needed parking lot screening. Although clustering and creating areas of interest is encouraged, some landscaping shall be dispersed throughout a yard and not all materials may be shifted or concentrated to one area of the yard.

(b) Plantings may be provided in any area between a building or a parking lot and the street when the landscaping is primarily arranged to be publicly visible from the street or upon immediate entry to a site.

(c) In circumstances where there is a constraint on plantings due to space, the Planning Director may authorize front yard landscaping to be placed in areas near side property lines, wrapped around buildings, or placed within parking lot islands closest to the front yard.

(C). **Front yards** shall be maintained with landscaping however, walkways, plazas, ornamental features, are permitted within the front yard, but they do not allow for a reduction in the calculated front yard landscaping.

**(D) Diversity Requirements**

Required front yard landscaping must contain a mix of tree, shrub, and grass species based upon the overall area and number of plantings. A mix of species would not exceed more than approximately 50% of any one species of trees, shrubs, and grasses.

**(E) Landscaping Requirements for Surface Parking and Loading Areas.**

Parking lot landscaping standards are designed to provide an aesthetically pleasing parking lot design combined with the support and encouragement of sustainability through increased shading from trees and allowing for stormwater treatment design within parking lots.

**(i) Surface Parking Lot Landscaped Area**

(a) Parking lots must contain landscaped area equal to 10% of the total gross parking lot and loading areas. The gross area of a parking lot is defined as the area of the paved surface measured from the back of the curb or edge of paving when there is not a curb, excepting landscaped islands and medians. Driveways within the front yard landscape area are excluded from the gross area of a parking lot.

(b) Overstory shade trees must be planted at a rate of 1 tree for every 200 square feet of the required 10% landscape area. Trees must be dispersed across the entire parking lot area and not overly concentrated to any one area of the parking lot.

(c) Perimeter side and rear yard planters abutting a parking lot that are 5 feet in depth or greater may count towards the 10% area requirements. Note that to meet the dispersal requirement for the parking lot, a site may need to exceed 10% landscaped area. If parking lot landscaping is placed in perimeter planting areas the landscaping must be located within 10 feet of the edge of paving to count towards the required 10% area. No area of the front yard landscaping shall count toward parking lot landscaping.

(d) Parking lot required tree planters and islands must be a minimum of 150 square feet and 7 feet in depth in all directions.

(e) In single drive aisle double loaded parking lots with three or fewer required trees, the trees may all be placed on one side of the parking lot.

(f) The Planning Director may approve a reduction of up to three required parking stalls to accommodate a vehicular cross-access route to an adjoining property.

**(F) Perimeter Parking Lot Planters and Bufferyards**

(i) Side and rear perimeter bufferyard landscaping is required for screening of the parking lot and use of a site when it abuts a dissimilar principal use.

(a) When abutting a residential zone a high screen must be installed. In some circumstances the base zone or overlay may require additional width or a greater level of buffering.

(b) During Site Development Plan review the City may require additional bufferyard depth and plantings when a commercially zoned or industrially zoned lot is used for a dissimilar use.

(ii) When a perimeter bufferyard is not required, parking lots must be setback a minimum of three feet from all side and rear property lines. Parking lot planters less than 5 feet that are not landscaped do not count towards base zone requirements. Planting areas less than 5 feet in width shall not include turf or lawn, but may have other low maintenance ground cover or ornamental plantings.

**(G) Parking Lot Landscape Medians**

In addition to the 10% parking lot landscaped area requirement, a landscaped median is required for every 3 contiguous double loaded parking drive aisles.

(i) A required median must be a minimum of 15 feet wide with a minimum length equal to the average drive aisle length of the contiguous double loaded aisles.

(ii) A landscaped median must include 1 overstory shade tree for every 50 linear feet of median. The trees must be located within a landscaped area that is a minimum of 7 feet in any one direction and totals 150 sq. ft. of area.

(iii) Landscaped medians must include a minimum of 30% of the area landscaped with ornamental or decorative landscaping that does not include lawn or turf.

(iv) The median may include a walkway when it does not encroach upon the placement of trees or the 30% decorative landscape requirement.

**(v) Alternative Median Configurations**

Landscape medians may be configured into oversized landscape islands with a minimum size of 400 square feet for each island. The total area of all oversized islands must equal the calculated required area of the median. The oversized islands must be located within the parking lot and may not be configured along the perimeter of a parking lot.

**(H) Stormwater Treatment Credit in Parking Lots**

If treating stormwater within a parking lot landscaped area, the required parking lot landscaping in this ordinance may be substituted by up to 20%. To be eligible for this reduction, the storm water treatment features must treat at least 30% of total site storm water volume needed to meet storm water quality standards of Chapter 5b. The storm water measures must be within or abutting the parking lot as part of a bio-swale, rain garden or other bio-retention treatment process. Detention and retention ponds are not eligible features for reducing landscaping.

**(I) Loading Areas**

A loading area shall require landscaping equal to 10% of the loading area. The required landscape area shall be provided adjacent to or within the impervious space where the loading area is located. A loading area is defined as an impervious area used for maneuvering vehicles principally for the purposes of loading or unloading trucks but are not considered parking lots. Loading areas for businesses within the DSC and CSC Zoning Districts or businesses relying upon an alley for maneuvering of trucks are exempt from this requirement.

**2. Landscaping Requirements for Residential Uses.**

Residential landscaping standards are designed to provide decorative and well thought out landscaping between streets and parking lots and between streets and buildings. These landscape standards are a combination of low level decorative plantings and significant trees arranged in a manner that complements and enhances the general site appearance. The front yard, for the purposes of calculating front yard landscaping, is defined as the area between the building and any abutting street and the area between the street and a parking area.

**(A) Front Yard Planting Requirements**

(i) The minimum landscaped front yard setback for buildings shall conform to the requirements of the base zone for principal buildings.

(ii) The landscaped front yard for parking lots shall be a minimum depth equal to the building setback requirement measured from the property line to the first edge of paving.

(iii) The minimum front yard landscaped area requires base plantings of 1 overstory tree per 50 lineal feet of street frontage. Up to 50% of required overstory trees may be substituted with ornamental or coniferous trees at a 2 for 1 ratio:

(iv) Front yards between the street and parking lot require a planting density that provides for a moderate level of screening with 12 shrubs per 50 linear feet of street frontage associated with the parking lot.

(a) A pro rata share of plantings may be substituted with ornamental grasses at a 3 to 1 ratio of grasses to shrubs if the layout provides for enhanced visual interest and a sufficient level of screening. No more than 75% of required shrub plantings may be substituted with ornamental grasses.

(v) Front yards in all areas not between parking lots and streets require the planting of shrubs with a mix of deciduous and coniferous at a rate of 9 shrubs or every 50 linear feet. Ornamental grasses may be substituted for shrubs at a rate of 3 grasses for 1 shrub. No more than 75% of required front yard landscaping may be ornamental grasses.

(vi) Large landscaped undulations or berms may be incorporated into the landscape design with an allowance for up to a 35% reduction in required plantings of shrubs.

**(B) Design and Configuration**

(i) Required front yard landscaping is encouraged to take on a variety of configurations including clustering, layered rows, alternating patterns or other designs. However, some landscaping shall be dispersed throughout a yard and not all materials may be shifted or concentrated to one area of the yard. In circumstances where there is a constraint on plantings due to space, the front yard landscaping may be placed in areas near side property lines, wrapped around buildings, or placed within parking lot islands closest to the front yard.

(ii) Uniform spacing along the foundation with a single row of plantings is discouraged. Grouping in designated planter areas is preferred for the building front yard landscaping. The majority of the building façade length shall have plantings within approximately 15 feet of the building.

(iii) The Planning Director may approve an alternative front yard planting scheme in place of shrubs that includes larger shrub species and ornamental trees in lieu of low growing shrubs. The Planning Director may also approve decorative planter beds in lieu of some of the required shrub plantings.

(iv) If overhead utilities exist and are not planned to be placed underground, the Planning Director may approve overstory trees to be substituted with alternative locations for planting of trees or for the planting of smaller trees.

(v) Required front yard trees may be placed within the public right-of-way if there is adequate space along the street frontage and there are no street trees located along the frontage of the site and no overhead utilities are in place. The Planning Director in consultation with the Streets and Maintenance Manager, or designee, must approve the proposed tree species as appropriate to the City's street tree standards and its placement.

(vi) When a site includes a landscaped based stormwater treatment feature of a bio-cell, rain garden, or bio-swale, an alternative configuration of ground cover and shrubs and grasses may be approved by the Planning Director when the design provides for storm water quality treatment and includes plantings with visual interest within and along the feature.

**(C) Diversity requirements**

Required front yard landscaping must contain a mix of tree, shrub, and grass species based upon the overall area and number of plantings. A mix of species will not exceed more than approximately 50% of any one species of trees, shrubs, and grasses.

**(D) Landscaping Requirements For Surface Parking Lots.**

Parking lot landscaping standards are designed to provide an aesthetically pleasing parking lot design combined with the support and encouragement of sustainability through increased shading from trees and allowing for stormwater treatment design within parking lots. Increased parking lot separation is required along the boundaries of properties with one and two-family homes.

**(E) Surface Parking Lot Landscaped Area**

(i) Parking lots must contain landscaped area equal to 10% of the total gross parking lot. The total gross area of a parking lot is defined as the gross area of the paved surface measured from the back of the curb or edge of paving excepting landscaped islands or medians.

(ii) Perimeter side and rear yard planters abutting a parking lot that are 5 feet in depth or greater may count towards the 10% area requirements.

(iii) If parking lot landscaping is placed in perimeter planting areas the landscaping must be located within 10 feet of the edge of paving to count towards the required 10% area. No area of the front yard landscaping shall not count toward parking lot landscaping.

(iv) Overstory shade trees must be planted at a rate of 1 tree for every 200 square feet of the required 10% landscape area. Note that to meet the dispersal requirement for the parking lot, a site may need to exceed 10% landscaped area.

- (a) Trees must be dispersed across the entire parking lot area and not overly concentrated to any one area of the parking lot.
- (b) Parking lots with less than 3 required trees may place all trees on one side of the parking lot.
- (c) Parking lot required tree planters and islands must be a minimum of 150 square feet and 7 feet in depth in all directions.

**(F) Perimeter Parking Lot Landscaping and Bufferyards**

Side and rear yards abutting a parking lot excepting front yard driveways; require a High Screen adjacent to residential zoning.

- (i) Buffers yards adjacent to one and two-family homes must be 10 feet in width and may be reduced to 5 feet in width with installation of a 6 foot solid fence.
- (ii) Parking lots located adjacent to outlots of a subdivision may qualify for reduced landscape screening based upon the spacing and use of the adjacent outlot and the properties abutting the opposite property line of the outlot. Use of lower growing shrubs or substitution of other equivalent materials or a greater spacing of plantings may be permitted by approval of the Planning Director.

**(G) Parking Lot Landscape Medians**

In addition to the 10% parking lot landscaped area requirement, a landscaped median is required for every 3 contiguous double loaded parking drive aisles.

- (i) A required median must be a minimum of 15 feet wide with a minimum length equal to the average drive aisle length of the contiguous double loaded aisles.
- (ii) A landscaped median must include 1 overstory shade tree for every 50 linear feet of median. The trees must be located within a landscaped area that is a minimum of 7 feet in any one direction and totals 150 sq. ft. of area.
- (iii) Landscaped medians must include a minimum of 30% of the area landscaped with ornamental or decorative landscaping that does not include lawn or turf.
- (iv) The median may include a walkway when it does not encroach upon the placement of trees or the 30% decorative landscape requirement.
- (v) Alternative Median Configurations

Landscape medians may be configured into oversized landscape islands with a minimum size of 400 square feet for each island. The total area of all oversized islands must equal the calculated required area of the median. The oversized islands must be located within the parking lot and may not be configured along the perimeter of a parking lot.

**(H) Stormwater Treatment Credit in Parking Lots**

If treating stormwater within a parking lot landscaped area, the required parking lot landscaping in this ordinance may be substituted by up to 20%. To be eligible for this reduction, the storm water treatment features must treat at least 30% of total site storm water volume needed to meet storm water quality standards of Chapter 5b. The storm water measures must be within or abutting the parking lot as part of a bio-swale, rain garden or other bio-retention treatment process. Detention and retention ponds are not eligible features for reducing landscaping.

**(I) Other Residential Site Landscaping Standards**

- (i) When an apartment development consists of multiple buildings, landscaping with trees, grasses, flowers, or shrubs shall be planted in open areas and along foundations or near primary entrances as practicable to the available space.

(ii) Decorative Highway Landscaping. On residential sites abutting Highway 30 or Interstate 35 a landscape buffer consisting of coniferous plantings of 1 coniferous tree per 30 lineal feet of highway frontage must be provided. Plantings are not required to be placed on center. Up to 20% of the required coniferous trees may be substituted with overstory trees.

**(iii) Short Term Lodging (Hotel)**

Short term lodging establishments shall be landscaped in accordance with the non-residential landscaping standards when located within a commercial base zone. If located within a residential base zone, short term lodging shall meet the residential landscaping requirements.

**(iv) Dwelling House, Two-Family, Single-Family or Single-Family Attached Housing**

(a) Development of a residential property that is exempt from the Minor Site Development Plan requirements shall also be exempt from residential landscaping standards of this section.

(b) For Dwelling Houses and Two-Family homes parking lot landscaping shall be provided when a site includes more than four parking stalls configured in a manner to create individual parking

stalls outside of garage spaces or driveways to four or more garage spaces. The impervious area used for parking stalls and drive aisles shall meet landscape buffering setbacks and plantings requirements of a High Screen along the property line adjacent to the improvements.

### **3. General Requirements All Sites.**

The following standards are required on all residential and non-residential sites.

(A) Any required plant materials shall be rounded up to the next whole number when there is a calculated fraction of a plant. Rounding will occur upon calculation of the base standards before approving substitutions.

#### **(B) Required Landscaped Area Conditions.**

(i) Required yard areas, bufferyards or planters must have suitable soil conditions and depth exclusive of retaining walls, fill or other inorganic materials to permit the growth and maturity of the plant.

(ii) Soil located in required planting areas (yard areas, bufferyards, or planters) must be either topsoil from the site (pre-approved by the City) or soil conditioned and tilled into the top 6 inches with at least a 5% organic content. The approved landscape plan must specify the approach to meeting soil quality standards. Certification of the soil conditioning and quality must be provided by a contractor, licensed engineer, or landscape specialist prior to approval of final occupancy certificate for a building.

#### **(C) Existing vegetation**

Existing vegetation within the developed area of a site may be credited towards the corresponding landscape requirement for trees, shrubs, and groundcover. Trees in good condition and of a desirable species that are greater than 8-inches in diameter may count at a 2 to 1 ratio and trees greater than 12-inches in diameter may be count at a 3 to 1 ratio. Retained trees must be protected during construction.

#### **(D) Minimum planting standards.**

(i) Shrubs. Initial planting of shrubs shall be of #2 container class or greater in size or approximately 18 inches in height.

(ii) Screening Height. Any materials planted for the purpose of achieving screening and for bufferyards shall be plant varieties that at installation are a minimum of 4 feet in height or 75% of the height of screened facility with the ability to mature to full screening requirements.

(iii) Bufferyards and Planter Area Slope and Plant Height. Bufferyards and planters must be relatively flat to ensure fences and plant materials grow or stand upright and achieve the intended height. The height of plant materials shall be measured from the average grade of the planter or the top of the curb in a depressed planter or sloped side of a planter.

(iv) Trees. All trees must be planted with a minimum 1.5" caliper tree for deciduous trees and coniferous trees must be a minimum height of 4 feet at the time of planting.

(v) Ornamental grass shall be of a species that in every growing season has a height that exceeds 24 inches. Grasses that are typically less than 24 inches in height and are intended for groundcover are categorized as decorative grasses. Turf or lawn grasses are groundcover and are not classified as decorative grasses. The landscape plan shall specify the size of grasses at the time of installation and shall be of a size to reach their maturity within one growing season.

(vi) Plant materials must be installed to current nursery industry standards. Plant materials must be properly supported to ensure survival. Support devices such as guy wires or stakes must be adequately marked and must not interfere with vehicular or pedestrian movement.

(vii) All required planters, bufferyards, and islands must include living groundcover. Foundation planters may use inorganic or non-living materials for ground cover. Organic mulch may be used in lieu of living ground cover beneath or around shrubs and trees.

#### **(E) Tree Spacing and Placement**

Trees must be planted with recognition of the space needs for eventual growth and maturity. Small to medium trees may be planted no closer than 10 feet to a building. Larger trees require a minimum spacing of 15 feet from a building. Trees are to be located within and along parking lots in a manner that does not include parking lot lights within 15 feet of the tree to the extent practicable. Medium and large trees can be planted as close as 20 feet from another similarly sized tree on the same site. Large and medium sized trees must be planted a minimum distance of 3 feet from edge of paving. All spacing measurements are on center for the tree.

#### **(F) High Screen Dissimilar Use Transition and Parking Screen.**

Generally, the high screen landscape standard provides physical and visual separation between uses and improvements.

(i) Required Landscape Elements. High shrubs shall be installed at a maximum distance of 6 feet on center to form a dense screen with a minimum mature height of 6 feet. In addition, one Landscape Tree is required per 50 lineal feet of landscaped area. Ground cover plants must fully cover the remainder of the landscaped area. The high shrubs must be at least 4 feet in height at the time of installation.

(ii) Alternatively, a 6-foot high fence with the fence posts on the interior side unless the fence is finished on both sides may be substituted for some or all of the high shrubs. When a 6-foot high fence is installed, high shrubs shall be planted at the rate of one shrub or 3 ornamental grasses per 20 lineal feet. In lieu of shrubs, additional ornamental trees may be approved by the Planning Director. An existing fence that is in good condition and repair may be utilized to meet the fence requirement with a condition that replacement or repair of the fence is the obligation of property that requires fence to meet their High Screen requirement.

(G) **Industrial Screen and Wall (Former L4) Screen between Industrial and Residential Areas.**

(i) Generally. The industrial screening standard is intended to be used in special instances where extensive screening of both visual and noise impacts is needed to protect abutting uses in areas where there is little space for separation. These buffers must be designed and installed to separate activity areas of a site from the surroundings. Areas behind buildings with no outdoor activity areas or openings do not require walls unless necessary to enclose other activity areas on the site.

(ii) Required Landscape Elements. The L4 standard requires an 8-foot-high masonry (but not non-decorative concrete block) wall along the interior side of the landscape area. One Landscape Tree is required per 50 lineal feet of wall. In addition, 3 high shrubs or 6 low shrubs are required per 30 lineal feet of wall. Ground cover plants must fully cover the remainder of the landscaped area.

(iii) Alternative Compliance. The L4 standard can be met alternatively for sites that provide a minimum of 30 feet of separation from the property line to the use of the site by providing a berm with a minimum height of 4 feet with coniferous shrubs placed on the slope of the berm with an aesthetically pleasing density and coniferous trees planted within 10 feet of the berm. Landscaped trees shall also be provided at 1 tree per 50 linear feet.

(H) **F1, Partially Sight-Obscuring Fence.**

(i) Generally. The F1 fence standard provides a tall, but not totally blocked, visual separation. The standard is generally applied where a low level of screening is adequate to soften the impact of the use of development or where visibility between areas is more important than a total visual screen. It is generally applied in areas where landscaping is not necessary and where nonresidential uses are involved.

(ii) Construction Standards. Fences must be 6 feet high and at least 50% sight-obscuring. Fences may be made of wood, metal, bricks, masonry or other permanent materials.

(I) **F2, Fully Sight-Obscuring Fence.**

(i) Generally. The F2 fence standard provides a tall and complete visual separation and is primarily intended to be used in special instances where complete screening is needed to protect abutting uses and landscaping is not practical. It is usually applied in nonresidential situations.

(ii) Construction Standards. Fences must be 6 feet high and 100% sight-obscuring. Fences may be made of wood, metal, bricks, masonry or other permanent materials.

(J) **Alternative Design Approvals**

(i) Major Site Development Plan.

A landscape plan prepared by a certified Landscape Architect with alternative design and plantings may be approved under the requirements of a major site development plan after review and approval by the City Council when found to address the purposes of the ordinance and provides for a unique or high quality landscape environment that exceeds the quality of the base standards.

(ii) Zoning districts, such as CSC, DSC, NC, and F-VR, with front yard building setbacks less than 15 feet do not require approval of a variance to tree planting types, tree spacing, or reduced front yard landscaping when approved by the Planning Director. The Planning Director may approve planting of required trees as street trees in these circumstances.

(iii) The Planning Director may approve an alternative landscaping plan for unique conditions related to site constraints and topography that achieve necessary screening and aesthetic purposes of the landscape standards. The Planning Director may not approve reductions in landscaping based solely upon existence of existing vegetation on an adjacent site.

(iv) Upon installation, minor irregularities in planting and spacing may be accepted by the Planning Director.

(K) **Detention Ponds and Landscaped Areas**

Detention ponds must be unfenced and contain decorative landscaping elements such as tiered retaining walls, decorative rock features and plantings to be eligible to be counted toward base zone landscape percentage. On 'wet' detention ponds or retention ponds the area of normal water height may not count towards the base zone landscape percentage.



**(4) CVCN and CGS District Landscaping.**

In addition to (and in conjunction with) the High Screen landscaping requirements specified in Section 29.403, increased landscaping shall be provided around the perimeter of parking lots that serve, or partially serve, Grocery Stores and/or any category of Retail and Shopping Centers as listed in Table 29.406(2), as follows:

(A) For every 1 square foot of grocery store or shopping center gross floor area, 0.28 square feet of landscaping shall be provided.

(B) Landscaping shall be contiguous to parking lot landscaping otherwise required by this Chapter, or in landscaped areas abutting parking lots that are at least 350 square feet in area, and which are no narrower than 10 feet in any dimension.

(D) The area of increased landscaping required under this Section shall conform to the L1, General Landscaping requirements of Section 29.403.

(E) All remaining areas of the site that are not otherwise covered by site improvements such as parking areas, driveways, buildings or parking lot landscaping shall be landscaped under the standards listed in Section 29.403.

*(Ord. No. 3967, 9-9-08; Ord. No. 4029, 4-13-10)*

**(5) Alternate Landscape Standards for Automotive and Marine Craft Trade Uses.**

As an alternative to non-residential landscaping standards found in Section 29.403, the following standards may be applied to sites developed for automotive and marine craft trade as defined in Article 5;

**(A) Landscaped area between parking lot pavement and property lines.**

(i) Minimum Landscape Width – 20 feet along all property lines abutting public right-of-way lines, 10 feet along all other property lines along a zoning boundary, and 5 feet along all other property lines of properties within the same zone, landscaped as follows:

(a) 5 feet of the landscaped setback shall be landscaped with 1 overstory tree every 50 linear feet and with one shrub or a cluster of 3 ornamental grasses planted 4 feet on center, with the balance landscaped according to subsection (d) below; or

(b) Landscaped according to a standard of 9 shrubs per 1,000 sq. ft. of area and with 1 overstory tree every 50 linear feet and up to 50% of the required shrubs which may be substituted with ornamental grasses at a 3 grasses to 1 shrub ratio. The standards, except that required numbers of trees and shrubs may be strategically clustered to allow visual openings into the site. Trees and shrubs must be clustered in regular intervals within required landscaped areas, spaced no greater than 200 feet apart. Each cluster shall include no less than 3 trees spaced no greater than 15 feet apart (center to center) with the trunk of at least 1 tree in the cluster located within 8 feet of the parking lot edge (to ensure some shading of abutting pavement).

Because landscaping under these options are less effective at softening impacts of lighting common to parking areas, all outdoor lighting shall conform to the following regulations:

1. Lighting in sales display parking lots is limited to 15 foot candles average, with a maximum 90 foot candles at a point on a 10 X 10 foot grid; except that after 10:00 p.m. lighting shall be reduced to 2 foot candles average with a maximum 6 foot candles at a point on a 10 X 10 foot grid.\*

2. Lighting in non-display parking lots (e.g., customer parking, employee parking, storage areas) is limited to 2 foot candles average with a maximum 6 foot candles at a point on a 10 X 10 foot grid.\*

3. All lighting fixtures shall be shielded in such a manner that the lenses of the fixtures are not visible from public rights-of-way.

\* Photometric layouts to utilize mean lumen output of light source design.

(ii) Setback areas beyond the minimum setbacks shall be fully landscaped applying the landscape element ratios of (b) above at 50% of the required shrubs.

*(Ord. 4137, 1-8-13)*

**(B) Landscaping around perimeter of all principal building facades visible from a public street.**

(i) Minimum landscape area equivalent to 5 feet times the length of each visible facade.

(ii) Building perimeter landscaping may be reduced or eliminated along selected areas of the perimeter if an equivalent amount of landscaped area is added to other areas of the building's perimeter, provided that perimeter areas of increased landscaping are along building facades visible from public rights of way.

(iii) Up to 25% of the required landscaped area may consist of either a brick-paved surface, or a raised sidewalk/pedestrian area consisting of either brick pavers or colored and pattern-stamped concrete.

(iv) Landscaping shall consist of 1 tree per 50 feet of building facade, and 1 shrub for every 6 feet of building facade. Plants and trees may be clustered as desired.

(C) **Landscaped Entry Feature.** A landscaped entry feature shall be provided that consists of either a landscaped sidewalk or driveway extending from the right-of-way providing primary vehicular access to the site, to within 20 feet of at least one principal building on the site. The landscape entry feature shall consist of the following:

(i) A 5 foot wide landscape strip on each side of the sidewalk or driveway. Said landscaping shall extend either:

(a) The full length of the required landscape entry feature; or

(b) At least 50% of the length of the landscape entry feature, provided that the entire length and width of the entry feature consists of a color-contrasted brick paved surface. (Colored and pattern-stamped concrete may be used for walkway areas, but will not suffice in areas of vehicle travel due to its poor color retention over time).

(ii) Landscaping in the entry feature shall consist of 1 shrub or tree for every 40 square feet of landscaped area. Shrubs may be low-lying to maximize visibility through the landscaped area.

(D) **Additional landscaping requirements.** In addition to the minimum landscaping areas and plantings described above, the balance of all setbacks, landscape areas, and other portions of the site not otherwise developed with pavement, buildings, stormwater facilities and/or protected environmentally sensitive areas, shall be landscaped with lawn or groundcover plants (e.g., Sweet Woodruff, Ajuga/Bugleweed, Candytuft, Periwinkle, Vinca, Hosta, Carpet Juniper, prairie wildflower mix, etc.), and additional shrubs, flowers and trees as desired. Ground covers shall be typed, spaced and sized to provide at least 75% coverage within a three-year period. Within this context, Lawn means a managed area of grass forming a continuous turf mowed and maintained at a low and consistent height, and that is generally free of weeds, sedges, and invasive or volunteer plants or grasses.

(E) **Large sites.** For sites 3 acres or larger, all of the above landscape provisions apply. For sites less than 3 acres, the applicant may eliminate either the building perimeter landscaping of subsection (b) above, or the landscaped entry feature of subsection (c) above.

*(Ord. No. 4119, 7-10-12)*

#### **Sec. 29.406. OFF-STREET PARKING.**

(1) **Applicability.** The off-street parking requirements set forth in this Section apply to all off-street parking uses, whether required by this Ordinance or in excess of the requirements of this Ordinance; whether accessory to the principal use of a site, or operated as a commercial enterprise.

(2) **Required Parking Spaces.** Off-street parking spaces must be provided in accordance with the minimum requirements set forth in Table 29.406(2) below, for any new building constructed and for any new use established.

(a) The off-street parking space requirement for a use not specifically mentioned herein is the same as required for a use of similar nature.

(b) Whenever a building or use lawfully existing on the effective date of this Ordinance, May 1, 2000, is enlarged in floor area, number of employees, number of dwelling units, seating capacity, or otherwise to create a need for an increase of 10% or more in the number of required parking spaces, such spaces shall be provided on the basis of such enlargement or change.

(c) The Planning Director may reduce required parking by 10% in order to increase landscape area within parking lots that exceed 30 or more spaces.

...

(4) **Occupancy of Structures Requiring Off-Street Parking.** All required parking and loading areas must be completed and landscaped prior to occupancy of any structure. If landscaping cannot be completed due to weather or time of year, an agreement in a form prescribed by the Department of Planning and Housing shall be signed by the developer, which shall specify the completion date.

...

(7) **Locating Parking Spaces in Front Yard.**

(a) Unless a parking lot plan is submitted as part of the development process pursuant to Section 29.1502, a Surface Parking Lot Landscaping Plan to meet the standards of Section 29.403 shall be submitted to and approved by the Director of Planning and Housing (to be evidenced by a document signed by both the property owner or owner's agent and the said Director), prior to any construction, reconstruction, installation, erection, conversion, alteration, addition, enlargement or development of any structure, improvement, feature or aspect of the premises. No Building/Zoning Permit required by Section 29.1501 shall be issued until the plan is submitted and approved.

(i) The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to the use of a front yard for vehicular parking where it is proven by the property owner, by documentary evidence or the testimony of disinterested third parties, that such use was lawfully established prior to the effective date of this Ordinance.

(ii) This Ordinance shall apply to any expansion or increase in the area of the front yard used for parking, even if no other conversion, construction or change to the subject premises occurs. Wherever this subsection applies, the subject parking area shall be so constructed and maintained as to meet the surfacing standards in Section 29.406(11).

*(Ord. No. 3591, 10-10-00, Ord. No. 3660, 4-23-02; Ord. No. 3822, 3-8-05)*

...

(9) **Parking Space and Vehicle Aisle Dimensions.**

(a) All required parking spaces must comply with the minimum dimensions for spaces stated in Figure 29.406(9).

(i) The stall depth dimension for a 90 degree standard parking space may have up to an 18 inch overhang into a landscaped planter area that is at least 7 feet wide.

(b) Smaller parking spaces for small cars are allowed only when the parking lot involved consists of 10 or more off-street parking spaces. These parking spaces shall be at least 8 feet wide and 16 feet long. No more than 20% of the required off-street parking spaces shall be designated for small cars. All small car spaces shall be clearly identified with signs or markings. In computing the number of permitted small car spaces where a fractional number of spaces results, the number of permitted small car spaces shall be rounded to the next lowest number.

(c) If the degree of angle of parking provided is not listed in Figure 29.406(9), the aisle width required shall be the next largest angle of parking shown in Figure 29.406(9). In circumstances where a strict application would result in unnecessary practical difficulties, the Zoning Board of Adjustment may, after notice and hearing, authorize such specific, limited exceptions to the above table of dimensions as it shall find warranted and consistent with:

(i) protecting landscaping features; and  
(ii) adequate space for maneuvering of trucks, vans and full-sized passenger vehicles.

(d) No exceptions shall be allowed for any other feature of these off-street parking rules.

(e) Standard parking stalls that abut a planter area that is at least 7 feet in depth may allow for vehicle overhang of 18 inches with an improved parking stall that is 17 feet 6 inches in length. An overhang allowance is not permitted for compact parking spaces.

(f) The Planning Director may approve a reduction of up to three required parking stalls to accommodate a vehicular cross-access route to an adjoining property.

...

(11) **Improvements of Off-Street Parking Areas.**

...

d. The Planning Director may approve a reduction of up to three required parking stalls to accommodate a vehicular cross-access route to an adjoining property.

...

(14) **Standards for Accessible Parking Spaces.**

...

(v) Accessible Spaces and Passenger Access Aisles must meet parking, setback and minimum landscaped yard requirements.

...

**Sec. 29.407. OFF-STREET LOADING.**

...

(2) **Loading Berth Location.** Required off-street loading berths must be provided on the same or adjacent lot as the structure for which the space is required and must be designed in such a manner that loading activities will not block any required parking area, public right-of-way, public or private access, or sidewalk. Loading areas must contain landscaped area equal to 10% of the total gross loading area. See 29.403. Loading berths shall be designed to minimize visibility of loading berths from sidewalks and streets.

...

**Sec. 29.408. OTHER GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS.**

...

(3) **Garbage Collection Areas.** All outdoor garbage cans in outside collection areas shall be screened from all public rights-of-way other than alleys and from any adjacent properties to the High Screen or F2 standards set forth in Section 29.403. Trash receptacles for pedestrian use are exempt.

(4) **Mechanical Units.**

(a) Screening Required.

(i) For all uses, except for single-family and two-family dwellings, all mechanical units located on the ground shall be screened from ground level view from abutting streets by a sight obscuring fence and/or shrubs that achieve a minimum opacity of approximately 75%. Such shrubs shall be at least

75% the height of the mechanical equipment at the time of installation. Screening shall be at least 6 inches higher than the average height of the mechanical equipment at full growth. Fences shall be equal to the average height of the equipment.

(ii) All mechanical equipment mounted on roofs, or on the walls of buildings, shall be screened from the ground level view from both abutting streets and of any abutting residentially zoned lot with materials that are the same color as the principal siding or trim materials of the exterior of the building. Required screening shall be completely opaque, and shall ensure that at least 75% of the height of the mechanical unit is screened or otherwise unseen.

(b) Screening Exemptions. Screening of mechanical units is not required in the following instances:

(i) Wall-mounted meters and associated panels on a non-street facing side or rear facade, provided they are located beyond the centerline of any façade visible from an abutting street;

(ii) Units mounted on roof surfaces that are at least 3 feet lower than the ground level of the abutting street or property. (Screening is nonetheless required from other non-exempt vantage points):

(iii) Units visible from more than 300 feet beyond the side lot lines that intersect with the street on which the subject site abuts. (Screening is nonetheless required from other non-exempt vantage points)

*(Ord. No. 3610, 4-10-01; Ord. No. 3665, 5-28-02; Ord. No. 3997, 07-14-09; Ord. 4048, 10-26-10)*