

Landscaping guidelines

Where can I find landscaping requirements?

This handout provides guidelines to the city's landscaping policies and procedures and offers material and design recommendations. For more detailed requirements, refer to the landscape ordinance, Chapter 36-364 of the city code, which can be found on the city's website at www.stlouisparkmn.gov. In the event of a conflict between this handout and the city code, the provisions of the city code shall prevail.

Other sections of the city code may contain additional landscaping requirements, such as the specific zoning districts, floodplain ordinance and subdivision ordinance.

When is landscaping required?

Landscaping is required for all new development and additions or modification to an existing development that affects landscaping.

Is a landscape plan required?

A landscape plan is required to show:

- Building and parking locations
- Existing topography and proposed grades
- Size and location of existing trees and shrubs
- Proposed landscaping details
- Location and details of irrigation
- Details and cross sections required screening
- Tree protection and site restoration details
- Planting schedule and installation details

What are some of the requirements of a landscape plan?

Plant material minimums:

- Single and two-family — One tree per lot in the boulevard
- Multifamily — One tree per unit
- Nonresidential— greater of:
 - One tree per 1,000 square feet gross floor area, or
 - One tree per 50 lineal feet site perimeter
- Shrubs — greater of:
 - Six per 1,000 square feet gross floor area, or
 - Six per 50 lineal feet site perimeter (single and two-family dwellings exempt)

All open areas must be landscaped with trees, shrubs, flowers, sod, ground cover or other site design features.

Screening

The following must be visually screened from adjacent property:

- Buildings and accessory structures adjacent to residential uses
- Drive-through uses adjacent to residential
- Off-street parking within 30 feet of residential
- Off-street parking within 30 feet of right of ways
- Loading and service areas
- Outside storage and refuse handling
- Mechanical and ancillary equipment

- Utility service and maintenance structures

The screening should consist of vegetation, fences, walls, berms, hedges, landscape materials or a combination of those. All walls and fences must match the architecture of the buildings. Single-family and two-family dwellings are exempt.

Parking lots

Off-street parking areas with over 25 stalls must have landscape islands at the end of each row of cars or every 15 stalls, whichever is less. At least two trees and additional shrubs or ornamental grasses must be provided in each island.

Plant materials and installation

Minimum size of planting:

- Deciduous tree — 2.5-inch caliper
- Ornamental tree — 1.5-inch caliper
- Evergreen tree — 3-inch caliper
- Shrubs — 5-gallon pots

The complement of trees required for this section shall be at least 25 percent deciduous and 25 percent coniferous. No more than 30 percent may be one species.

Evergreen shrubs shall be planted in clusters in order to maximize survival.

Underground irrigation is required.

All trees and shrubs must be wood mulched to preserve soil moisture.

No landscaping or design features shall be selected or located in a manner which results in the creation of a safety or visibility hazard.

Landscaping surety

Cash escrow is required in an amount equal to 125 percent of the estimated cost necessary to furnish and plant the required landscaping. This surety will be released one year after all landscaping is installed per the landscape plans.

Can landscaping requirements be modified?

The city encourages the use of special design features such as xeriscaping, rain gardens/bioswales, rooftop gardens, native landscapes, integrated pedestrian facilities and public art. A degree of flexibility may be granted by the zoning administrator in unique situations to encourage these features. Alternative ways to meet landscape standards may be provided if certain conditions are met.

Can trees be removed from my property?

Public land

Trees may be removed from public land, including right of ways, if authorized by the city. These trees must be replaced on a caliper inch for caliper inch basis in a location approved by the city.

Private land

Trees may be removed from private property if authorized by the city; however, significant trees are required to be replaced. Before removing trees, a tree removal plan is required that includes tree protection plans, grade changes, site plan, and type, size, number and location of trees required to be replaced. The amount of trees to be replaced is based upon a formula provided in the code.

Single-family and two-family dwellings do not require city approval to remove trees from their exiting property.

How should trees be protected during construction?

Trees to be saved must be physically protected from harm or destruction by the following specifications:

- Before any construction or grading activity occurs, an orange safety fence that is 4 feet high must be placed around the drip line border of trees to be saved.
- Nothing may be stored within the drip line.
- Changes in soil chemistry must be prevented.
- Drainage patterns may not change the soil moisture content of trees to be saved.
- Pruning of oak and elm trees must not take place from May 1 through July 31.

Tree protection specifications:

Figure 1: One common method used to define a tree's protected root zone (PRZ) is to consider it to be the part of the roots that lie directly below its branches within an area known as the dripline.

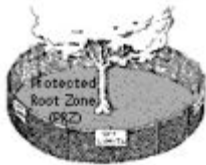
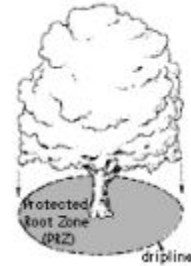
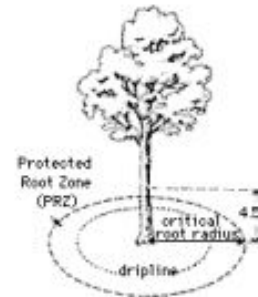


Figure 2: Put up fences and signs around trees you want to save to alert construction workers of damage potential.

Figure 3: Approximate a tree's protected root zone by calculating the critical root radius (crr). First, measure the tree diameter in inches at breast height (dbh). Then, multiply that number by 1.5 or 1. Use 1.5 for older, unhealthy or sensitive trees Use 1.0 for younger, healthy or tolerant trees. Express the result in feet. Example (dbh = 8 inches): $8 \times 1.5 = 12$ crr or 12 feet.



General guidelines or design recommendations

- Landscaping should add visual interest through color and materials year round.
- The city recommends trees be placed 5 feet from all property lines.
- Emphasis should be given to site boundaries, structure perimeters, parking areas and areas to be screened.
- The city encourages the use of native plant materials.

Gopher State One Call

Protect yourselves and your property against underground utility damage. Find out where the underground utility lines might be buried before you dig! This is a free service. Call Gopher State One Call at 800.252.1166 or 651.454.0002.

Significant tree

Any tree, with the exception of salix (willow), boxelder, Siberian elm and black locust is considered to be significant under the landscaping section of the zoning ordinance if it is at least 5 caliper inches for deciduous trees and 6 caliper inches for conifers. Aspen, cottonwood or silver maple is considered significant if it is at least 12 inches in diameter at breast height (dbh).

Caliper inch

Caliper inch means a unit of measurement describing the diameter of a tree measured 1 foot above the finished grade level. To convert the height of existing evergreen trees to caliper inches the following formula should be used: $0.415 \text{ caliper inches} = 1 \text{ foot evergreen height}$.

Diameter at breast height

Diameter at breast height (dbh) means the diameter of a tree measured at a height of 4.5 feet from the ground level.