

Chapter 17.61

LANDSCAPE STANDARDS

Sections:

- 17.61.010 Generally
- 17.61.020 Landscaping required
- 17.61.030 Minimum landscape standards
- 17.61.032 Additional Requirements
- 17.61.040 Landscape maintenance
- 17.61.050 Tree preservation and protection
- 17.61.060 Landscape plan requirements

17.61.010 GENERALLY.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the necessary criteria, standards and limits for landscaping. The provisions of this section are intended to provide a transition between and mitigate conflicts which may arise between adjacent land uses, to promote an attractive visual harmony between the landscape and development, reduce air, noise and visual pollution, produce a healthy, vibrant, sustainable urban forest, decrease temperatures, increase comfort, and promote commerce and socialization, while promoting water use efficiency.

17.61.020 LANDSCAPING REQUIRED.

- A. All projects for which site plan approval is required, shall install and maintain landscaping in accordance with the requirements of this chapter; provided however, these landscape requirements shall not apply to projects where a current use is expanded but the valuation of the building permit is less than 50% of the replacement value of the existing improvements. If the existing uses are to be expanded greater than 50% of their replacement value, the Planning Director shall determine the amount and placement of landscaping needed to comply with this section.
- B. Occupancy of a use subject to these standards shall not be permitted until the approved landscaping and irrigation has been installed, or if permitted by the Planning Director, an agreement and/or surety bond or cash deposit sufficient to cover the cost of installation which amount has been determined to complete the work plus administration costs by the city, and such has been provided to the city specifying completion of installation within a time specified by the Planning Director.

17.61.030 MINIMUM LANDSCAPE STANDARDS.

- A. Installation of landscape materials and irrigation equipment shall be in accordance with commonly accepted methods of installation as approved by the City.
- B. Trees shall be a minimum 15 gallon container size or larger and shall be vigorous and healthy when planted. The minimum diameter of the tree trunk, as measured at a point 4 feet up the trunk from ground level, shall be 1" for a 15 gallon container tree, 2" for a 24-inch box container tree, and 3" for a 36-inch box container tree. These trunk diameters shall apply throughout this chapter where tree container sizes are specified.

- C. Shrubs shall be a minimum 5 gallon container size or larger and shall be vigorous and healthy when planted. Mass shrub planting for area coverage may be a 1 gallon container size with an average spacing of 18 inches on center. Flats may be used for ground covers with an average spacing of 8 inches on center.
- D. Shrubs and/or ground cover, including turf, shall cover no less than 75% of the required landscaped area within 4 years of planting.
- E. A landscaped area 10 feet in width on arterial streets and 8 feet in width on collector and local streets as measured from the right-of-way line, shall be installed along said street. The width of the landscape strip may be reduced when, in the opinion of the Planning Director, the following conditions are met:
1. The total square footage of required landscaped area remains constant.
 2. The reduction in the required width is consistent with the purposes of the landscape regulations of this chapter.
 3. In the central district (C-B and C-C zone districts) this reduction may include the planting of street trees only to allow adequate pedestrian access consistent with adjacent development.
- F. Along street frontages, a tree shall be planted at a ratio of 1 tree per 30 lineal feet, or portion thereof. Trees may be clustered or grouped to not conflict with required fire lanes, public entrances/exits, and signs provided the minimum tree to frontage ratio is satisfied. A species mix of 30% evergreen and 70% deciduous shall be maintained.
- G. Trees shall be required to be planted within parking lots at a minimum ratio of 1 tree for each 6 parking spaces, but shall be sufficient to achieve the minimum shading required in paragraph H. of this section. The maximum spacing between trees shall not exceed 65 feet.
- H. Trees shall be installed and thereafter maintained throughout the parking area to ensure that it will be shaded based on calculating the canopy area of each tree at 15 years from a master tree list approved by the Planning Director. The landscape plan required by Section 17.08.080 shall be drawn to show that the tree canopy will have the potential to attain shading over 40% of the total area of all uncovered parking stalls, loading areas, drive aisles and maneuvering areas. The property owner or the preparer of the plans shall show all shading calculations on the plan. Truck loading docks in front of overhead doors, truck maneuvering and parking areas unconnected

to and exclusive of any required vehicle parking areas, freight yards, and surfaced areas for automobile sales, lumber yards, and vehicle storage are not subject to this shading requirement.

- I. Buildings with main entrances facing parking lots shall be landscaped with a minimum of 1 tree for each 50 feet of linear building frontage or portion thereof. Said trees shall be adjacent to the building and may also be credited for parking lot trees if they comply with the requirements set forth in paragraphs G. and H. of this section. Trees may be clustered or grouped to not conflict with required fire lanes, public entrances/exits, and signs provided the minimum tree to building ratio is satisfied. The use of vines and large shrubs is encouraged to enhance the tree planting areas next to the building.
- J. Of the total number of trees required in the parking area and for the entire project, a minimum of 30% shall be evergreen species.
- K. In addition to the trees referenced in paragraphs G., H., and I. of this section, trees shall be installed along the property line perimeter, in the required landscape area required by Section 17.58.050 N., of drive aisles, parking lots, loading areas and storage areas as a buffer between office, commercial and industrial uses and property zoned for residential uses. Said trees shall be 100% evergreen species spaced no further apart than 20 feet on center. The minimum tree size shall be a 24-inch box container size if the adjacent residential zoned area is all or partially developed and a 15 gallon container size if the adjacent residential zoned area is undeveloped.
- L. Landscaping and irrigation shall be installed in compliance with any approved site plan or other project approval prior to final inspection or occupancy.
- M. Tree planters within the parking lot shall be a minimum of 5 feet by 5 feet (outside dimension). Vehicles may overhang into these planters no more than 2½ feet provided the tree is protected from damage by a vehicle.
- N. If a drive-thru lane is located adjacent to a public street, an evergreen hedge, a minimum of 3 feet in height, shall be planted for screening purposes. This hedge shall be located between the drive-thru lane and public street along only that portion of the drive-thru lane that is adjacent to the public street. The Planning Director may, at his or her discretion, allow the use of a wall, berm, or other similar screen if physical constraints preclude the installation of a hedge. A taller screen may also be required at the discretion of the Planning Director if such additional height is necessary for adequate screening because of topographic conditions, proximity to residential areas or other factors that would warrant special treatment.

- O. An 8 foot landscape area shall be provided between each building and the drive aisle for multi-family projects using a common drive aisle with shared access. This requirement shall not apply to any lot less than 10,000 square feet and, that is not part of, or adjacent to multi-family subdivisions or other multi-family projects that existed prior to the effective date of this ordinance (#4104, adopted January 15, 2003).
- P. Landscaping shall be designed to minimize overwatering and avoid runoff of irrigation water. Soil type shall be considered in order to reduce runoff and promote healthy plant growth. Plant selection and placement shall match the irrigation provided. If the total landscaping square footage is 2,500 square feet or greater on the project site, the water use for all plants per square foot of landscaping shall be equivalent to a moderate water use plant covering the entire landscaping area (value must equal 2 or less, as determined by the calculations used in Table A of this chapter). Plant water use will be determined using an authoritative publication deemed acceptable by the Planning Director.
- Q. A minimum 2 inch layer of mulch shall be applied on all exposed surfaces of planting areas except in turf areas, creeping or rooting groundcovers, or direct seeding application where mulch cannot be used. Stabilizing mulching products shall be used on slopes. The mulch can be any organic material, including, but not limited to, leaves, bark, straw, or compost; or any inorganic or synthetic material, including, but not limited to, rock, landscape fabric or recycled rubber.

17.61.032 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.

In addition to the minimum standards contained in Section 17.61.030, the following shall apply to those specific geographic areas as identified below:

- A. Central City Area. For the purposes of this subsection, Central City Area is identified as including all lands bounded by 23rd Street to the north, Truxtun Avenue to the south, M Street to the east, and G Street to the west.
 - 1. Street tree species shall be consistent with the Central City Master Street Tree Plan as adopted by City Council Resolution No. 195-92.
- B. Northeast Bakersfield. For the purposes of this subsection, Northeast Bakersfield is identified as including all lands east of Fairfax Road (and any northern extension thereof) and north of the Union Pacific Railroad that parallels Edison Highway.

1. New landscape areas shall consist predominately of native California trees (eg. oaks and sycamores), shrubs and groundcovers mixed with ornamental species. Planting shall occur in non-linear clusters to resemble a natural appearance. Firescape species contained in Table 1 of Chapter 17.66 shall be used along the perimeter of the project site adjacent to native or slope areas if outside the HD zone district.
2. Use of boulder clusters and other native rock combinations shall be installed with vegetation to resemble a natural distribution blending into the surrounding native areas and/or street parkways that may contain similar design elements.
3. Along slopes, plantings should be done with more dense and larger species of trees and shrubs closer to streets with a gradual reduction of plantings that are less dense with smaller species as you move further away from the streets to provide a natural transition between the streetscape and native areas.
4. Design content shall retain the natural flora and site character as much as possible with a subtle landscape transition between maintained and native areas.
5. Xeriscape and/or regional native plant selections shall be used to revegetate any disturbed areas outside the project area, unless city ordinances, resolutions, or conditions of approval state otherwise.
6. New landscape areas along slopes and slope easements may be required to be privately maintained as undeveloped areas of native landscaping, greenbelts, or open space, without fencing or other structures, as determined by the Planning Director, or as may be conditioned by the Planning Commission or City Council.
7. These standards do not apply to residential projects that contain four units or less and that are not part of a larger multiple family subdivision with more than four lots.

17.61.040 LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE.

- A. Landscapes shall be regularly inspected and maintained to ensure water efficiency and keep plants in a healthy condition. Maintenance shall include, but is not limited to, programmed watering, fertilizing and soil amendment applications, weed control, cleaning, pruning, trimming, pest control, replenishing mulch and cultivating. Tree topping shall not be permitted except when necessary for the protection of public safety, property damage or liability.
- B. Landscape structural features shall be maintained in sound structural and attractive condition.
- C. All plant material shall be serviced by a permanently installed, electrically automated irrigation system. Project sites containing 2,500 square feet or more of landscaped area must have a controller that can be programmed to accommodate different landscape hydrozones and the controller shall be equipped with a battery backup to preserve the controller settings in case of an electrical system interruption.
- D. Tree pruning should follow the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) pruning guidelines. This subsection does not apply to utility companies trimming trees for the purpose of providing necessary clearance for power lines.
- E. All plants and irrigation systems shall be maintained as originally approved unless otherwise approved by the City. The City can, at any time, require landscaping and irrigation to be replaced and/or reinstalled in accordance with the approved plans.

17.61.050 TREE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION.

- A. Replacement planting must conform to the original intent of the landscape design.
- B. Trees voluntarily removed from an existing project, except when necessary for the protection of public safety, property damage, or liability, or damage or loss by acts of nature, the willful unlawful acts of persons other than the property owner, or by complying with other federal or state laws or actions, shall be replaced at the average size of what is or was existing not to exceed a 48-inch box container size. Said trees shall be replaced within 120 days of removal. Trees shall be the same species as shown on the project's approved landscape plan or otherwise meet the provisions of this chapter.

17.61.060 LANDSCAPE PLAN REQUIREMENTS.

- A. A workable scale (preferred -- 1 inch equals 20 feet or larger) and north arrow;
- B. Property lines, overhead and underground power easements;
- C. Dimensions;
- D. Location of all trees and shrubs. Mature tree head diameter shall be depicted to scale;
- E. Existing and proposed structures, including anticipated signs (both freestanding and wall);
- F. Existing natural features (note on plan to be removed or retained);
- G. Irrigation system:
 - 1. Diagram showing hydrozone information specified in Columns 1, 2 and 3 of Table A (only project sites containing 2,500 square feet or more of landscape area are required to provide hydrozone information).
 - 2. Irrigation system plan should include, but not be limited to, main and lateral lines, valves, sprinkler heads, any moisture sensing devices, any rain switches, pressure regulators and backflow prevention device(s) and drainage locations.
 - 3. Description of irrigation controller and ability to accommodate different hydrozones within the plan (only project sites containing 2,500 square feet or more of landscape area are required to provide hydrozone information).;
- H. A plant specification list:
 - 1. Keyed to the plan,
 - 2. Estimated sizes at planting and at maturity,
 - 3. Head diameter of trees at 15 years and whether the tree is evergreen or deciduous,
 - 4. Container sizes,

5. Quantity of each,
 6. Percent of parking lot shading which will result from tree landscaping calculated in accordance with this section,
 7. Percent of evergreen trees located in parking lot and percent located along project perimeter,
 8. Botanical and common plant names.
 9. For project sites with a total landscape area of 2,500 square feet or greater, complete Table A to show water use designation for the total landscape area. The result shall not exceed "2", which indicates moderate water use.
- I. For projects that are required to submit Table A, prior to, or at the time of, the final building inspection, written evidence (such as a letter or signed plans) shall be submitted to the Planning Director from the property owner, or the party responsible for the design of the landscape plan, certifying that:
1. The hydrozone settings and the square footage covered by each hydrozone have been installed as proposed in Table A, and in accordance with the approved plans.
 2. The irrigation watering schedule does not overwater any hydrozones.
 3. The irrigation system including, but not limited to, controller(s), valves and nozzles was installed and operates in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
 4. The landscape and irrigation was installed in accordance with the approved plans.
- J. If grading for slopes occurs within the landscaping area, then grading shall be designed to minimize soil erosion, runoff and water waste.
- K. Deviations from these requirements or alternate elements that achieve the equivalent water conservation methods must be approved by the Planning Director.

TABLE A - HYDROZONE INFORMATION TABLE

Please complete the following for each hydrozone. Use as many tables as necessary to provide the water use designation for the total landscaped area.

(1) Hydrozone Designation on Diagram	(2) Hydrozone Water Use Setting	(3) Square Footage of Hydrozone Coverage	(4) % of Total Square Footage	(5) Column 2 multiplied by Column 4
Total Square Footage: →			Total Landscape Area Water Use Designation: →	

Total Landscape Area Water Use Designation calculation:

1. Enter the hydrozone designation used in the landscape plan.
2. Use authoritative publication deemed acceptable by the Planning Director to determine the landscape material water use settings for the dominant plant type in the hydrozone.

<u>Hydrozone Water Use Setting Value:</u>	High Water Use Plants:	3
	Moderate Water Use Plants:	2
	Low Water Use Plants:	1

3. Enter the square footage covered by the hydrozone. Add all rows and enter the total square footage at the bottom row of Column 3.
4. Calculate the “% of Total Square Footage” by dividing each hydrozone square footage listed in Column 3 with the “Total Square Footage” listed at the bottom of Column 3.
5. Multiply the value in Column 2 with the value in Column 4 and place the result in Column 5. This provides the Hydrozone Water Use Setting weighted by the percent of the total landscape area in which it is used.
6. Add all rows together in Column 5 and place the total in the “Total Landscape Area Water Use Designation” (must be 2 or less).