

The Lawrence City Council adopted the following
ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT ON NOVEMBER 5, 2003.

DOCUMENT # 210-2003

ARTICLE XIII: LANDSCAPE REGULATIONS FOR LAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Sec. 29-44. Purpose and Scope

This section is intended to establish minimum standards for the design of landscapes for all land development projects requiring Site Plan Review. The purpose is to improve the community aesthetically, economically and environmentally. This section improves the appearance of the community through the provision of and the preservation of trees in order to better control soil erosion, reduce the hazards of flooding, stabilize the ground water tables, absorb carbon dioxide, supply oxygen, provide shade for cooling, screen noise, dust, glare, and preserve, protect and enhance the natural environment.

Sec. 29-45. Definitions

The following definitions shall apply to the regulation and control of landscaping within this section:

- 1. Caliper:** A standard trunk diameter measurement for nursery grown trees taken six (6) inches above the ground for up to and including four (4) inch caliper size, and twelve (12) inches above the ground for larger sizes.
- 2. Critical Root Zone (CRZ):** A circular region measured outward from a tree trunk representing the essential area of roots that must be maintained in order for the tree's survival. The critical root zone is one foot of radial distance for every inch of tree DBH, with a minimum of eight (8) feet.
- 3. Diameter Breast Height (DBH):** Diameter at breast height is the tree trunk diameter measured in inches at a height of 4.5 feet above the ground.
- 4. Deciduous:** Those plants that annually lose their leaves.
- 5. Drip Line:** A vertical line extending from the outermost edge of the tree canopy or shrub branch to the ground.
- 6. Evergreen:** Those plants that retain foliage throughout the year.
- 7. Evergreen Screen:** A plant growing over six (6) feet in height at maturity that retains foliage year round that is planted to provide a dense vegetative screen for purposes of visual mitigation.

8. Groundcover: A prostrate plant growing less than two (2) feet in height at maturity that is grown for ornamental purposes. Groundcovers are used as an alternative to grass. On slopes, groundcovers control erosion while eliminating the maintenance of mowing on hillsides.

9. Landscaping: The process or product of site development including grading, installation of plant materials, and seeding or sodding of turfgrass or installation of groundcover.

10. Ornamental Tree: A small to medium tree generally growing fifteen (15) to forty (40) feet in height at maturity. Ornamental trees are planted for aesthetic purposes such as colorful flowers, interesting bark, or fall foliage etc.

11. Parking Lot Plantings: Planting areas within and adjacent to parking areas designed to shade and improve the attractiveness of large areas of pavement.

12. Planting Area: The area prepared for the purpose of accommodating the planting of trees, shrubs , and groundcovers.

13. Shade Tree: A large growing tree usually over forty (40) feet in height at maturity, usually deciduous, that is planted to provide canopy cover shade.

14. Shrub, (Large): An upright multi-stemmed plant growing ten (10) to twenty (20) feet in height at maturity that is planted for ornamental or screening purposes.

15. Shrub, (Medium): A multi-stemmed plant growing five (5) to ten (10) feet in height at maturity that is planted for ornamental or screening purposes.

16. Shrub, (Small): A multi-stemmed plant growing less than five (5) feet in height at maturity that is planted for ornamental purposes.

17. Street Tree: A tree planted along a street right of way. Street trees should be tolerant of conditions found in the urban environment.

Sec. 29-46. Standards for Landscaping Land Development Projects

1. All new or expanded parking lots shall be required to comply with this section of the Landscape Regulations.

2. If an existing parking lot (paved or unpaved) is expanded or improved to increase the number of spaces, it shall comply with the parking lot requirements of the Landscape Regulations within the expanded or improved portion.

3. Trees shall be planted at a rate of two (2) shade trees or three (3) ornamental trees for every ten (10) spaces or fraction thereof.
4. Required trees shall be located within or adjacent to parking lots as tree islands, medians, and at the end of parking bays, traffic delineators, or between rows of parking spaces in a manner such that no parking space is located more than sixty (60) feet from a parking lot tree.
5. In addition to the requirements for parking areas, any multi-family development project requiring Site Plan Review shall be required to plant two (2) shade or ornamental trees per unit.
6. Evergreen trees utilized for screening requirements as described by the Zoning Ordinance shall not be counted towards fulfilling the requirements of this section
7. Planting Areas within the parking lots shall provide a minimum of eighty-one (81) square feet per tree, with a minimum inside dimension of nine (9) feet and a minimum prepared depth of eighteen (18) inches.

Sec. 29-47. Tree Preservation and Care During Construction.

1. Existing trees must be preserved whenever possible.
2. When selecting which trees to preserve, the following shall be considered: existing and proposed grading; age, condition, and type of tree; and location of site improvements and utility connections.
3. Should any tree designated for preservation, die at any time after approval of the plan or issuance of Certificate of Occupancy, the owner shall replace it within one hundred eighty (180) days. The replacement tree shall be a minimum of two (2) inches in caliper for a shade tree, or eight (8) feet in height for an ornamental tree (eight (8) feet from the top of the root ball to the top of the tree) at the time of planting.

Sec. 29-48. Site Plan Submittal Requirements (Landscaping Plan Requirements)

In order for a site plan to be reviewed, a landscaping plan containing the following information must be submitted.

1. General location, type, and quantity of existing plant materials.
2. Existing plant materials and areas to be left in a natural state.

3. Methods and details for protecting existing plant materials during construction and the approved erosion control plan, if required.
4. Locations, size, and labels for ALL proposed plants.
5. Plant lists with botanical name, common name, quantity, and size of ALL proposed landscape material at the time of planting.
6. Location and description of other landscape improvements, such as earth berms, walls, fences, screens, sculptures, fountains, street furniture, lights, and courtyards or paved areas.
7. Planting and installation details as necessary to ensure conformance with all required standards.

Sec. 29-49. Landscape Standards and Specifications

1. The developer shall furnish and install ALL plant materials listed on the approved landscaping plan.
2. Plant materials shall conform to the requirements described in the latest edition of *American Standard for Nursery Stock*, which is published by the American Association of Nurserymen.
3. Selected plant materials must be approved by the Director of Planning and Development and/or the Land Use Planner for the Department of Planning and Development.
4. Shade trees must be a minimum of two (2) inches in caliper. Ornamental trees must be a minimum of eight (8) feet at the time of planting. (Eight (8) feet from the top of the root ball to the top of the tree.
5. No tree or shrub may be planted within 20 feet (20') of the intersection of any two or more public streets as described in Lawrence Municipal Ordinances.
6. Do not use staking materials unless absolutely necessary. If staking is necessary, then the developer/property owner must remove the staking materials after one full growing season.
7. Property owners ensure the survival and health of required trees in perpetuity. If any plant material dies, the property owner must replace it within one hundred eighty (180) days.

8. All planting areas and beds shall be edged and cultivated to the lines shown on the approved plans. The areas around isolated plants shall be edged and cultivated to the full diameter of the drip line at the time of planting.

9. ALL planting areas shall be mulched with a three (3) to four (4) inch layer of bark mulch or other similar material to cover the complete planting area.

Sec. 29-50. Alternative Methods of Compliance

1. Alternate Landscaping Plans, plant materials, or planting methods may be used where unreasonable or impractical situations would result from application of landscaping requirements, or where necessary to protect existing vegetation. Such situations may result from streams, natural rock formations, topography, or other physical conditions; or from lot configuration, utility easements, or unusual site conditions. It does not pertain to self-created design issues that prove no hardship to those items listed above.

2. The Director of Planning and Development and/or the Land Use Planner of the Department of Planning and Development may approve an alternate plan which proposes different plant materials or methods provided that quality, effectiveness, durability, and performance are equivalent to that required by this ordinance.

Sec. 29-51. Plant Substitution

Due to seasonal planting problems and lack of plant availability, approved Landscape Plans may require minor revisions. The Director of Planning and Development and/or the Land Use Planner of the Department of Planning and Development may approve minor revisions to the planting plans if:

1. There is no reduction in the quantity of plant material.
2. There is no significant change in size or location of plant materials.
3. Then new plants are of the same general category (i.e., Shade Tree, Ornamental Tree, Evergreen, or Shrub) and have the same general design characteristics and growth habits (mature height, crown spread) as the materials being replaced.

All provisions of the Revised Zoning Ordinance of the City of Lawrence, as amended, which are consistent with this Amendment, shall continue in effect, but all provisions of said Revised Zoning Ordinance inconsistent herewith are repealed.

This Ordinance shall -take effect immediately upon its passage in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 43 and Chapter 44 of Massachusetts General Laws.