

Chapter 19.5 LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS

Sec. 19.5-1. Intent

The intent of the landscaping requirements stated herein are as follows:

- (a) To aid in stabilizing the environment's ecological balance by contribution to the processes of air movement, air purification, oxygen regeneration, groundwater recharge, and stormwater runoff control; while at the same time aiding in noise, glare, heat, and dust abatement;
- (b) To provide visual buffering between land uses of differing character;
- (c) To enhance the beautification and quality of life of the metropolitan area;
- (d) To protect the public health, safety, and general welfare;
- (e) To safeguard and enhance property values and to protect public and private investment;
- (f) To assist in providing adequate light, and air and in preventing overcrowding of land;
- (g) To encourage innovation and quality in landscape and architectural design; and
- (h) To enhance the pedestrian character of the city streetscape.

(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-2. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this division, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Buffer planting area: The unpaved area of land located between the property line and building or vehicular use area, designated for the preservation and placement of plant materials.

Caliper: The diameter of a tree trunk measured six (6) inches above ground level. If a tree is of a multitrunk variety, the caliper of the tree is the average caliper of all its trunks.

Canopy tree: A species of a tree which normally bears crown foliage no lower than six (6) feet above ground level upon maturity.

Ground cover: Natural mulch or plants of species which normally reach a height of less than three (3) feet upon maturity, installed in such a manner so as to form a continuous cover over the ground.

Large tree: A tree of a species which normally reaches a height of thirty (30) feet or more upon maturity.

Nonpermeable coverage: Coverage with nonpermeable pavement or any surface lacking the ability for air and water to pass through to the root zone of plants.

Permeable coverage: Any surface with the ability for air and water to pass through to the root zone of plants.

Sight safety triangle: The triangle at either side of an accessway or public right-of-way with sides of a specific length each along the public right-of-way and/or accessway. Refer to section 19.5-7(c) for specific lengths.

Small tree: A tree of a species which normally reaches a height of less than thirty (30) feet upon maturity.

Temporary certificate of occupancy: This certificate allows for a structure to be used and occupied for a specified time period until a certificate of occupancy is officially approved.

Visibility at intersections: On a corner building site in any district in which a front yard is required, no fence, wall, hedge, or other structure or plant more than three (3) feet in height shall be erected, placed or maintained within the triangular area formed by the intersecting street rights-of-way (property lines) and a straight line connecting such street rights-of-way (property lines) at point twenty (20) feet from the point of intersection measured along such street rights-of-way (property lines).

(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-3. Administration.

- (a) The provisions of this chapter shall apply to any real property having street frontage with zoning classifications designated by the Monroe-Ouachita Regional Planning Commission which involve any new construction of commercial, governmental, industrial, multifamily of three (3) or more units, religious, educational and conditional uses as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Monroe-Ouachita Regional Planning Commission.
- (b) Single-family and two-family residences shall be exempt from these requirements.
- (c) The requirements of this chapter shall not apply to the development of lots on property subdivided before Chapter 19.5, Landscaping, came into effect where the minimum requirements of this chapter cannot be met due to property size or configuration. The unbuilt site area must be fully utilized, if possible, for landscape purposes to satisfy the intent of this chapter.

(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-4. Existing developed areas.

- (a) Unless otherwise noted, all property designated in section 19.5-3 with existing paved ground surface areas on the effective date of this ordinance shall not be required to conform with the requirements of this chapter, unless construction or expansion of improvements on the property requiring a building permit is undertaken that:
 - (1) Increases the number of stories in a building on the property;
 - (2) Increases by more than twenty (20) per cent or twenty thousand (20,000) square feet, whichever is less, the combined floor areas of all buildings on the property; or
 - (3) Increases the nonpermeable coverage on the property by more than three thousand (3,000) square feet or ten (10) parking spaces.

- (b) No structure shall be required to be altered or moved, except during construction, to meet the requirements of this chapter.
- (c) Existing developed areas designated section 19.5-3 which are not undergoing construction or expansion activities are encouraged, although not legally obligated, to meet the landscaping requirements as stated in this chapter.
(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-5. Landscape plan submission.

A landscape plan must be submitted, in conjunction with the required site plan, to the planning and zoning division or the Monroe-Ouachita Regional Planning Commission with the application for a building permit for work on the property. In addition, a landscape plan must be submitted as part of the required site plan review by the Monroe-Ouachita Regional Planning Commission. The landscape plan can either be a separate print or be included on the required site plan print. The minimum information required on the landscape plan shall include:

- (a) Locations and dimensions of the proposed landscaping strips adjacent to the public right-of-way including a description and location of the trees and plant materials to be placed within the landscaping strip;
- (b) Locations and dimensions of the proposed landscape areas within the parking area including a description and location of the trees and plant materials to be placed within the landscape areas;
- (c) Locations and calipers of existing healthy trees to be retained and counted as part of the landscaping requirements;
- (d) An indication of how existing healthy trees proposed to be retained will be protected from damage during construction; and
- (e) Compliance with visibility at intersections requirements.
(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-6. Alternative compliance.

A landscape plan which is alternative to strict compliance with the various landscaping requirements of this chapter may be reviewed by the planning and zoning division and approved by the Monroe City Council if this plan achieves the intent and general landscaped open space ratio of this chapter.
(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-7. Street frontage requirements.

- (a) For all land under the jurisdiction of this section, there shall be a minimum of a five-foot landscaping strip abutting the public right-of-way running parallel with the street line, exclusive of driveways and access ways at points of ingress and egress to and from the property. Where the acreage falls within twenty (20) and fifty (50) acres, a ten-foot

landscaping strip shall be required. Where the acreage exceeds fifty (50) acres, a fifteen-foot landscaping strip shall be required.

- (b) The minimum width of a nonresidential accessway to an off-street parking or other vehicular use area shall be twenty (20) feet for two-way vehicular movement and twelve (12) feet for one-way movement. The maximum width for an accessway shall be thirty (30) feet for two-way vehicular movement except along major traffic routes of which the maximum width shall be thirty-five (35) feet and twenty-four (24) feet for one-way movement. The minimum width of a multifamily residential accessway shall be fifteen (15) feet and the maximum width shall be twenty-four (24) feet. For street frontage up to seventy-five (75) feet no more than two (2) one-way or one two-way accessways will be permitted. For each additional seventy-five (75) feet of frontage, two (2) additional one-way or one additional two-way accessways may be permitted.
- (c) The line of sight safety triangle at either side of an accessway intersecting with a public street shall be not less than ten (10) feet in length along the accessway and public street right-of-way. The line of sight safety triangle at the junction of two (2) public streets shall be not less than twenty (20) along each public street right-of-way. This line of sight safety triangle must be essentially clear of obstructions above the height of three (3) feet above grade to allow for vehicular visibility.
- (d) Landscaping shall consist of a combination of plant materials from each of the following categories:
 - (1) Grasses/ground covers/vines.
 - (2) Shrubs/hedges.
 - (3) Trees.

Grasses and ground covers alone shall not constitute adequate landscaping.

- (e) There shall be at least one large tree for every sixty (60) lineal feet of the required landscaping strip, or one small tree for every thirty (30) lineal feet of the required landscaping strip.
- (f) As part of the trees required, any existing tree with a twelve-inch or greater caliper that is retained within the required front yard as defined by zoning ordinances or landscape strip shall be counted as two (2) trees in satisfying the above requirement.
- (g) The requirements for trees in the front yard shall be waived, on a tree-for-tree basis, if the adjacent public right-of-way, excluding medians, contains existing street trees.
- (h) Landscaping the adjacent right-of-way shall be permitted subject to approval by the city engineer. Credit for up to fifty (50) per cent of the minimum street frontage landscaping area requirements shall be allotted for landscaping the public right-of-way. The preceding statement shall apply only to those areas where the five-foot landscaping strip is required. (Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-8. Off-street surface parking facility requirements.

- (a) In addition to the street frontage landscaping requirement, a minimum of twenty (20) square feet of landscape area shall be provided for each required off-street parking space. Such landscaping shall be located within the paved portion of the parking lot and/or within twenty (20) feet immediately adjacent to the paved portion of the parking lot or any buffer area.
- (b) Landscaping shall consist of a combination of lawn grasses, ground covers, shrubs, trees, and nonliving durable material such as brick, stone, rocks, pavers, etc. Eighty (80) per cent of such material shall be living. Grasses and ground covers alone shall not constitute adequate landscaping.
- (c) A minimum of one large or small tree for each twelve (12) required parking spaces shall be required in the off-street parking area.
- (d) These landscaped areas shall be, to the extent possible, evenly distributed to effectively relieve the monotony of large paved areas but not interfere with the orderly circulation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Location can be adjusted to accommodate existing trees or other natural features as long as the total off-street parking area landscaping requirements are met.
- (e) All landscaped areas, except grass areas, shall be protected from vehicular encroachment by concrete curbs, wheel stops, or other permanent barriers, and should be raised.
- (f) As part of the tree requirements, any existing tree with a twelve-inch or greater caliper that is retained within the parking lot shall be counted as two (2) trees in satisfying the above requirement, subject to the following: (i) if such existing tree(s) later dies or is removed, two (2) trees shall be required to be planted; and (ii) permeable coverage shall be maintained to the extent of the crown of the existing tree at the original elevation.
- (g) A reduction of two (2) feet, measured from the concrete curb or other permanent barrier, shall be allowed in the computation of the depth of parking spaces contiguous to the perimeter landscaping strips and/or interior planting area. In such event, this reduction shall not be considered as a reduction of the landscaped area.
- (h) Storage areas containing three (3) or more refuse, garbage or rubbish containers or one or more dumpsters shall be screened on all sides with a six (6) foot high seventy (70) per cent sight obscuring screen of living or one hundred (100) per cent sight obscuring screen of nonliving landscape material.
(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-9. Acceptable landscape materials.

- (a) Large trees shall have a minimum caliper of two (2) inches or a minimum height of ten (10) feet at the time of planting, depending on the standard measuring techniques for the species.
- (b) Small trees shall have a minimum height of six (6) feet at the time of planting.
- (c) For the purposes of this section, height is measured from the top of the root ball or if the plant is in a container, from the soil level in the container.
- (d) In satisfying the landscaping requirements of this division, the use of high quality, hardy and drought-tolerant plant materials is recommended and encouraged.
(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-10. Technical assistance.

The staff of the planning and zoning division will provide, when applicable, assistance to property owners in applying the requirements of this chapter to their respective site plans. It is further recommended that property owners consult with landscape nurseries, landscape architects, architects, engineers, etc., regarding the development of landscape plans and appropriate plant materials.

(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-11. Installation and maintenance.

- (a) Tree limbs, shrubs, and other planting shall be installed and maintained in compliance with the Monroe City Code.
- (b) The property owner shall be responsible for watering and maintaining all installed landscaping in a healthy, neat, and orderly condition, replacing plants and trees when necessary, and keeping the area free of refuse and debris. Tree limbs and other planting shall be maintained so as not to create an obstruction to a driver's visibility and/or pedestrian movement.
- (c) Ground covers, including wildflowers, which are used to satisfy the requirements of this division, are not considered grasses and thus shall not be subject to the city's grass height limitation requirements.
(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)

Sec. 19.5-12. Enforcement.

No certificate of occupancy shall be approved before completion of landscaping except as follows: If due to the seasonal nature of plant materials, landscaping has not been completed at the time that a certificate of occupancy could be granted, and such certificate is requested, the planning and zoning division may grant a temporary certificate of occupancy to the owner or his

agent, which will specify an eight-month time limitation for completion of the landscaping requirements of this chapter. Any violation of this section shall result in a fine of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per day until completion of the approved landscaping. All other violations of this chapter shall be subject to the general penalty provisions contained in section 1-11 of this Code.

(Ord. No. 9739, 10-14-97)