

## 185.142 OFF-STREET PARKING AREA LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS.

Wherever in any zoning district, off-street parking areas in excess of one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet, or five (5) spaces, exist, such parking areas and land shall conform to the minimum landscaping requirements set forth in this section; except, that single- and two-family residential uses on individually platted lots and multilevel parking structures shall be exempt from such requirements. All landscaped areas shall be protected from vehicular encroachment by curbs, wheel stops or other similar devices. Existing trees may be used to meet the requirements of this section.

### (A) *Plant material.*

(1) Existing vegetation. The preservation and maintenance of existing native vegetation is strongly encouraged. Wax myrtles, cabbage palms, mangroves, saw palmetto or other native species having a trunk height of at least four (4) feet or having a caliper of at least two (2) inches may substitute for the tree planting requirements stated in this section. Existing vegetation may also substitute for buffer requirements along interior lot lines if such vegetation creates an opaque screen and has a caliper of at least two (2) inches. The following species, however, are not to be used as substitutes for the requirements in this section nor shall they be planted:

***Botanical name (common names)***

*Casuarina* (Australian pine, beefwood)

*Melaleuca* (cajeput, punk tree, paperbark tree)

*Eucalyptus* (gum tree)

*Schinus terebinthifolius* (Brazilian pepper)

*Ricinus cummunis* (castor bean)

*Melia azedarach* (chinaberry)

*Enterolobium cyclocarpum* (ear tree)

*Cinnamomum camphora* (camphor tree)

(2) Drought tolerant vegetation. A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of total cumulative landscape plant material used to meet the provision of this section shall be drought tolerant as classified in the most recent edition of the *St. Johns Water Management District Xeriscape Plant Guide*, or other comparable publications approved by the Planning Division. Existing vegetation may be used to fulfill the requirements of this section.

(3) Trees. All trees shall be species having an average mature spread or crown spread of fifteen (15) feet or greater in area and having trunks which can be maintained in a clean condition over six (6) feet of clear wood measured from the ground. Trees having an average mature spread or crown less than fifteen (15) feet may be substituted by grouping the same so as to create the equivalent of a fifteen (15) foot crown spread. Tree species shall be a minimum of six (6) feet overall height immediately after planting. Trees of species whose roots are known to cause damage to public road ways or other public works shall not be planted closer than twelve (12) feet to such public works, unless the tree root system is completely contained within a barrier for which the minimum interior dimensions shall five (5) feet square and five (5) feet deep, and for which construction requirements shall be four (4) inch thick concrete reinforced with No. 6 load mesh (6×6×6) or equivalent.

(4) Palms. Palm trees may be utilized as a part of a landscaping plan; however, palms shall not be utilized in fulfilling more than thirty percent (30%) of the requirements of this section. Existing native palms on site should be utilized and can substitute if the palms have a trunk height of at least eight (8) feet or a caliper of at least eight (8) inches.

(5) Shrubs and hedges. Shrubs shall be a minimum of two (2) feet overall in height when measured at planting. Hedges, where required, shall be planted and maintained so as to form a continuous, unbroken, solid visual screen within one (1) year after time of planting.

(6) Ground covers. Ground covers used in lieu of grasses shall be planted so as to present a finished appearance. The use of marl, crushed shell, coquina, or other road base material as a ground cover is unacceptable. Railroad ties, wood, bricks, stones, and synthetic materials can be used to separate landscape areas, but cannot be used in place of required ground cover.

(7) Lawn grass. Lawn grasses shall be planted in grass species normally grown as permanent lawns in the county such as, but not limited to bahia, St. Augustine, and Bermuda species. All landscape areas to contain lawn grass shall be completely covered with solid sod. Solid sod shall be used in swales or other areas subject to erosion. Grass sod shall be clean and reasonably free of weeds, noxious pests or disease.

(8) Artificial plant material. Artificial plant material or artificial lawns or plants cannot be used.

(9) Conformance with state standards. All plant material used shall conform to the standards for Florida No. 1, or better, as given in *Grades and Standards for Nursery Plants, Part One, 1963*, and *Part Two*, State of Florida, Department of Agriculture.

(10) Mulch. All areas of required landscaping shall be mulched unless completely covered with grass or other approved ground cover.

(11) Vines. Plants which require support to reach mature form. Vines shall be planted no further apart than three (3) feet from each other when utilized to meet the requirements of division (B)(3)(g) below.

(B) *Development standards.*

(1) Where parking areas are not entirely screened visually by an intervening building or structure from any abutting right-of-way, there shall be provided landscaping between such area and such right-of-way as follows:

(a) A strip of land at least ten (10) feet in depth located between the abutting right-of-way and the off-street parking area or other vehicular use area which is exposed to an abutting right-of-way shall be landscaped to include an average of one (1) tree for each fifty (50) linear feet or fraction thereof. Such trees shall be located between the abutting right-of-way and off-street parking area or other vehicular use area.

(b) In addition, a hedge, wall, berm or other opaque durable landscape barrier of at least two (2) feet in height shall be placed along the entire length of the parking area. If such opaque, durable barrier is of nonliving material, a shrub or vine shall be planted in such a manner as to break up the expanse of the wall. A two (2) foot berm may be used; however, additional landscaping at least one (1) foot in height at time of planting shall be installed. The remainder of the required landscape areas shall be landscaped with grass, ground cover or other landscape treatment.

(2) Required landscaping adjacent to interior property lines:

(a) Where parking areas abut property zoned or, in fact, used primarily for residential or institutional purposes, that portion of such area not entirely screened visually by an intervening structure or existing conforming buffer from an abutting property, there shall be provided a landscaped buffer which should be maintained and replaced as needed. Such landscaped buffer shall consist of plant material, wall or other durable barrier at least six (6) feet in height measured from the median elevation of the parking area closest to the common lot line, and shall be located between the common lot line and the off-street parking area or other vehicular use area exposed to the abutting property. Where the screen is composed of plant material capable of reaching six (6) feet in height, it shall be at least thirty (30) inches in height at time of planting and shall attain opacity within twelve (12) months under normal growing conditions.

(b) In addition, an average of one (1) tree shall be provided for each thirty-five (35) linear feet of such parking area or fractional part thereof. Such trees shall be located between the common lot line and the off-street parking area or other vehicular use area. Each such tree shall be planted in at least twenty-five (25) square feet of planting area with a minimum dimension of at least five (5) feet. Each such planting area shall be landscaped with grass, ground cover or other landscape treatment.

(c) Where such area abuts a dedicated alley or property zoned and, in fact, used for office, commercial or industrial purposes, that portion of area not entirely screened visually by an intervening structure or existing conforming buffer shall comply with the tree provisions only as prescribed in this section.

(d) 1. Where a drainage or utility easement or right-of-way separates the parcel containing the off-street parking area and abutting properties or public rights-of-way, the provisions of this section shall apply unless the easements or rights-of-way contain trees which meet the planting and number requirements of this section. Should these trees be removed or die, the requirements of this section must be met.

2. Where drainage facilities or drainage or utility easements exist along the lot lines within the parcel containing off-street parking areas, the required trees shall not be placed in any drainage facility or easement; however, trees may be located along the edge of drainage facilities.

(3) Required interior parking area landscaping.

(a) All parking areas shall be internally landscaped to provide visual and climatic relief from broad expanses of pavement and to channelize and define logical areas for pedestrian and vehicular circulation. Interior landscaping, excluding required parking setbacks, shall account for ten percent (10%) of the total parking area. Landscape dividing strips, with or without walkways, shall be used to subdivide the parking area into rows with not more than an average of ten (10) spaces, per row except that parking rows adjacent to required landscape row dividers shall only be required such landscape strips at the end of each landscape row divider.

(b) Each separate landscape area shall contain a minimum of one hundred (100) square feet and shall have a minimum dimension of at least ten (10) feet, measured at its narrowest area, except that islands required to be designed with turn radii are permitted to have less than ten (10) feet if approved by the Planning Director and shall include at least one (1) tree, with the remaining area meeting the requirements of this code. The total number of trees shall not be less than one (1) per two hundred (200) square feet or fraction thereof of required interior landscaped area and shall exclude those trees required along the perimeter of the parcel. Such landscaped areas shall be protected from vehicular encroachment by curbs, wheelstops or landscape timbers. Whenever an off-street parking area is designed to provide parking of vehicles in five (5) rows or more, at least one (1) interior landscaped area not less than ten (10) feet in width shall be provided the length of the parking rows, with at least one (1) landscaped row divider required for every five (5) parking rows.

(c) In other parking areas where the strict application of this section will seriously limit the function of such areas, such as off-street loading areas, the required landscaping may be located near the perimeter of the

paved area. Such interior landscaping which is relocated as herein provided shall be in addition to the perimeter landscaping requirements.

(d) The front of a vehicle may encroach upon any interior landscaped area or walkway when the area is at least three and one-half (3½) feet in depth per abutting parking space and protected by motor vehicle stops or curbing. An overhang may be permitted in such landscaped area or walkway.

(e) Interior landscaped areas may be used for retention and detention sites for groundwater recharge.

(f) All garbage/refuse dumpsters shall be screened on at least three (3) sides by concrete block, fencing or other materials at least six (6) feet in height which renders the view of the dumpster opaque.

(g) Landscape vines, shrubs, or a combination of the two, are required to be planted along the outside of subdivision walls and/or any required masonry walls facing canal, road, or other right-of-ways.

(C) *Intersection visibility.* Where an aisle, driveway or other access way intersects a public right-of-way, landscaping shall be used to define the intersection; provided, however, all landscaping within the triangular areas described below shall provide unobstructed cross-visibility at a level between two (2) and six (6) feet. Trees having limbs and foliage trimmed in such a manner that no limbs or foliage extend into cross-visibility shall be allowed, provided they are so located so as not to create a traffic hazard. Landscaping, except grass and ground cover, shall not be located closer than three (3) feet from the edge of any access way pavement. The triangular areas are:

(1) The areas of property on both sides of an aisle, driveway or other access way formed by the intersection of each side of the aisle, driveway or access way and the public right-of-way pavement line with two (2) sides of each triangle being ten (10) feet in length from the point of intersection and the third side being in line connecting the ends of the two (2) other sides.

(2) The area of property located at a corner formed by the intersection of two (2) or more public streets with two (2) sides of the triangular area being measured thirty (30) feet in length along the right-of-way line (or in the case of an arc, the extensions of the right-of-way lines) from their point of intersection, and the third being a line connecting the ends of the other two (2) lines.

(D) *Installation and maintenance.*

(1) All landscaping shall be installed to accepted commercial planting procedures. Soil, free of lime rock, pebbles or other construction debris, shall be provided. The owner of the property shall be responsible for the maintenance of all landscaping in good condition so as to present a neat, healthy and orderly appearance free of refuse and debris. All landscaped areas shall be provided with an irrigation system or available water supply with at least one (1) outlet located within one hundred and fifty (150) feet of the plant material. Where existing vegetation is used to meet the requirement along public rights-of-way or interior lot lines a water supply is not required. In order to reduce irrigation requirements, the following water saving techniques will be encouraged:

(a) The use of reclaimed wastewater where available;

(b) The use of drought tolerant ground cover instead of lawn grass;

(c) Watering schedules for automatic systems to reduce irrigation in the rainy summer and dormant winter seasons;

(d) The commitment to irrigate between sunset and sunrise when evaporation is minimal;

(e) Irrigation systems shall be designed so that, to the greatest extent practical, water being applied to impervious areas is eliminated;

(f) The use of xeric landscaping techniques.

(2) If any living material that is required by this code and shown on the approved site/landscape plan dies or fails to achieve normal growth, it shall be replaced within ninety (90) days of notification from the planning director or his designated representative. Such replacement landscaping shall meet all requirements of this code and the approved site/landscape plan. The failure to maintain the minimum landscape requirements of this section shall constitute a violation of this code.

(E) *Site plan data.* Applicants for building permits shall submit a landscape plan containing the following:

(1) An engineering scale (One (1) inch equals twenty (20) feet preferred).

(2) Property lines.

(3) Dimensions.

(4) Structures.

(5) Accurate parking lot design showing parking spaces, aisles, loading areas, driveways, islands, and the like.

(6) Calculations of total square footage of the parking and landscaped areas as well as indicating the number and location of existing trees to be used and the number of new trees to be planted.

(7) Location of water lines.

(8) Grading plan.

(9) Plant specification list which is keyed to the plan and contains the botanical name, common name, estimated sizes at planting and at maturity (crown spread and height), quantity of each, and how transplanted to the site (container stock, bare root, balled or burlapped).

(F) *Applicability.* The provisions of this section shall apply to all new off-street parking areas. At such time as existing off-street parking or other vehicular use areas are enlarged or expanded, such provisions shall apply to the previous existing areas as well as the new areas. Any appeal from an administrative determination relating to these regulations shall be to the zoning Board of Adjustment. Prior to issuing occupancy permits for new construction, implementation and completion of landscaping requirements in off-street parking areas shall be required.

('74 Code, § 25-193) (Ord. 89-08, passed 4-27-89; Am. Ord. 94-04, passed 2-17-94)