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City of Bellingham Municipal Code

Title 20 LAND USE DEVELOPMENT
Chapter 12 GENERAL STANDARDS

20.12.030 - LANDSCAPING

A. Applicability. This section is intended to provide the landscaping requirements for all uses.

B. General Provisions.

1. The provisions of this section shall apply to all new construction and to the remodeling of same when the cost of remodeling exceeds 50% of the assessed valuation of the structure to the extent that there is space available for the landscaping. (Single family homes and individual manufactured homes are exempt from any landscaping requirements.)
2. Prior to issuance of a building permit, a scaled landscape site plan shall be submitted and approved by the Planning Department consistent with the provisions herein. Said plan shall specify specie name, size and location.
3. Landscaping pursuant to the approved site plan shall either be installed or bonded for (in an amount no less than 150% of cost of material and installation) prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy or if no certificate is required prior to final inspection approval.
4. Existing trees which will be saved and which meet the minimum specification herein specified, shall count toward meeting the requirements herein, provided they are an acceptable species as to their location.

C. Requirements.

1. **Street Trees** (For Residential Multi, Commercial, Industrial, and Planned General Use Types).
 - a. One street tree shall be required for every 50' of street frontage abutting the property. Said trees shall be installed adjacent to the right-of-way within the property lines or within the right-of-way subject to the approval of the Public Works and Parks Department.
2. **Yards and Open Spaces**
 - a. All yards required for all uses permitted in the Industrial general use type shall be installed with a

wall of trees.

b. All yards required (except the vision triangle) for all uses permitted in the Commercial general use type shall be screened.

c. For all uses permitted in the Residential Multi general use type a minimum of 25% of the required open space area shall be landscaped.

3. Garbage Receptacle Areas. Garbage receptacle areas for multi family dwelling units shall be screened on at least two sides.

4. Parking

a. For every 10 open parking spaces, one tree shall be installed around the facility perimeter. These trees may be grouped or spread lineally. This provision shall not apply to industrial use type areas.

b. Separation areas as required in Section [20.12.010 D.\(5\)](#); shall be landscaped. This provision shall not apply to industrial general use type areas.

c. Areas between the parking facility and adjacent property as required in Section [20.12.010 D.\(4\)\(b\)](#); shall be landscaped if the adjacent property is of the same general use type. If the adjacent property is of a different general use type, said area shall be screened.

5. Freeway trees (for Residential Multi, Industrial and Planned general use types).

a. One tree shall be required for every 25' of freeway frontage abutting the property and shall be installed along that frontage.

D. Standards

1. Trees

a. Species

i. Street Trees

As recommended in the Bellingham Street Tree Plan and approved by the Parks Department.

ii. Other Required Trees

Species shall be native to the area or recognized as being easily adaptable to the climate.

b. Size (unless otherwise specified)

i. Street trees shall be no less than 10' in height at time of installation with a minimum caliper size of 2-1/2" measured 1' above grade.

ii. Other required trees shall be no less than 6' in height at time of installation with a minimum caliper size of 1" measured 1' above grade.

c. Spacing and Location

i. Street trees shall be spaced and installed as recommended in the Bellingham Street Tree Plan subject to approval of Public Works and Parks Department.

ii. Other required trees may be installed where desired by the applicant within the general constraints of this section.

2. General Planting

a. No landscape bed shall have artificial impervious material placed underneath the surface bed.

****[User information:]**

b. i. Provisions should be taken to insure each landscape bed has proper drainage.

ii. The excavation pocket should be dug 12" below the root ball and 6" larger in circumference around the root ball. The excavation pocket should be filled with an approved planting mix.

iii. Each excavation pocket should take provision to insure proper drainage. If the subsoil is impervious an additional foot of excavation backfilled with gravel to lower the water table should be required or an auger hole sunk down to porous material and the hole sack filled with gravel to the bottom of the planting pocket.

iv. All trees over 8' high should be securely staked or guyed until the roots become established but in no case less than one year. Street trees should be staked according to the staking guidelines of the Street Tree Plan.]

E. Green Factor.

1. The green area factor score for a lot is determined by:
 - a. Multiplying the square feet, or equivalent square footage where applicable, of each of the existing and proposed landscape elements in Chart A by the green area multiplier shown for that element.
 - b. Adding together all the products computed under 1.a. above to determine the total green area factor.
 - c. Divide the total green area factor by the lot area to determine the green area factor score.
2. If multiple landscaping elements occupy an area (for example, groundcover under a tree), the full square footage or equivalent square footage of each element is used to calculate the product for that element.
3. Public right-of-way is not included in parcel size calculation.
4. Landscape elements that are in rights-of-way may be counted to calculate the score if they are contiguous with the parcel.
5. For vegetated walls, use the square footage of the portion of the wall covered by vegetation.
6. For all elements other than trees, large shrubs and vegetated walls, square footage is determined by the area of the portion of a horizontal plane that underlies the element.
7. Permeable paving may not qualify for more than one-third of the green factor numerator for any one site.

CHART A - Green Factor Landscape Elements	
1. Landscaped areas (select one of the following for each area): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Landscaped areas with a soil depth of less than 24" b. Landscaped areas with a soil depth of 24" or greater c. Bioretention facilities 	0.1 0.8 1.0
2. Plantings (credit for plants in landscaped areas above): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mulch, ground covers, or other plants less than 2' tall at maturity b. Plants 2' or taller at maturity, calculated at 16 sq. ft. per plant (typically planted no closer than 18" on center) c. Tree canopy for "small trees" in the Bellingham List of Approved Street Trees or equivalent (canopy spread of 15') calculated at 50 sq. ft. per tree d. Tree canopy for "small/medium trees" in the 	0.2 0.3 0.3 0.3 0.4 0.5

<p>Bellingham List of Approved Street Trees or equivalent (canopy spread of 20' calculated at 100 sq. ft. per tree e. Tree canopy for "medium trees" in the Bellingham List of Approved Street Trees or equivalent (canopy spread of 25') calculated at 150 sq. ft. per tree f. Tree canopy for "large trees" in the Bellingham List of Approved Street Trees or equivalent (canopy spread of 30') calculated at 200 sq. ft. per tree g. Tree canopy for preservation of "exceptional trees" or other large existing trees 6" or greater in diameter, calculated at 15 sq. ft. per inch DBH (diameter 4.5 feet above the ground)</p>	0.8
<p>3. Green Roofs</p> <p>a. Over at least 2" and less than 4" of growth medium b. Over at least 4" of growth medium</p>	0.4 0.7
<p>4. Vegetated Walls</p>	0.7
<p>5. Approved Water Features</p>	0.7
<p>6. Pervious Paving</p> <p>a. Pervious paving over at least 6" and less than 24" of soil or gravel b. Pervious paving over at least 24" of soil or gravel</p>	0.3 0.5
<p>7. Structural Soil Systems</p>	0.4
<p>8. Bonuses</p> <p>a. Drought-tolerant or native plant species b. Landscaped areas where at least 50% of annual irrigation needs are met through the use of harvested rainwater c. Landscaping in food cultivation</p>	0.1 0.2 0.3

[Ord. 2009-08-047; Ord. 2001-04-033 §11; Ord. 9024 (part), 1982]