
CHAPTER 25. LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

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9-25-1 Purpose.

Landscaping and screening requirements are established to foster aesthetically pleasing developments that will protect and preserve the appearance, character, health, safety and welfare of the community. Specifically, these regulations are intended to increase the compatibility of adjacent land uses requiring a buffer or screen between uses, to minimize the harmful impact of noise, dust, debris, motor vehicle headlight glare, or other artificial light intrusions, and other objectionable activities or impacts conducted or created by an adjoining or nearby use.

9-25-2 General Requirements.

In addition to the specific landscape standards established elsewhere in this Chapter, all development sites shall meet the following requirements:

- A. *Finished sites.* All pervious land areas shall be brought to finished grade and planted in sod, native grasses, or other appropriate ground covers. Undisturbed areas containing existing viable natural vegetation may be left in their natural state, but shall be kept free of litter, debris, and noxious and unsightly weeds.
- B. *Sodding/Seeding Requirements.* Sod shall be required between the curb and property line, and within front and side yards which have been disturbed. Seeding or other acceptable ground cover may be permitted in front, rear, and side yards provided that adequate cover is provided within one (1) growing season to prevent erosion or disruption.
- C. *Relationship to Tree Preservation Title.* The tree planting requirements of this Chapter shall be in addition to, and shall not count towards, any tree replacement that is required by the Tree Preservation Title, Section 4-3 of the Savage City Code.

9-25-3 Landscape and Screening Plan Required.

All plans submitted in support of a site plan review, conditional use, or other development proposal shall include a landscape and screening plan demonstrating compliance with the provisions of this Chapter. All development plans that require approval by the City Council and have a construction cost of over \$500,000 shall require that such plans be prepared by a licensed landscape architect. The landscape and screening plan shall include the following information:

- A. A planting schedule indicating symbols, quantities, common and botanical names, sizes of plant material, and special planting instructions.
- B. Location, type, and size of all existing significant trees to be removed or preserved.
- C. Planting detail, showing all species to scale at normal mature crown diameter or spread for local hardiness zone.

- D. Typical sections with details of fences, tie walls, berms, and other site amenities.
- E. Typical sections with details of landscape islands, planter beds, and foundation plantings with identification of materials used.
- F. Note indicating how disturbed soil areas will be restored through the use of seeding, sodding, or other techniques.
- G. Delineation of both sodded and seeded areas.
- H. Where landscape or man-made materials are used to provide screening from adjacent and neighboring properties, a cross-through section shall be provided showing the perspective of the site from the neighboring property at the property line elevation.
- I. Existing or proposed conditions that could potentially affect landscaping and screening of the site.

9-25-4 Landscape Design Requirements.

Landscape design shall serve to provide visually interesting open space, to reduce the potential negative impact of development on adjacent land uses, and to facilitate the preservation and reestablishment of plants native to the region. The following design criteria shall be considered as part of the landscape plan submittal to the City:

- A. The overall composition and location of landscaped areas should complement the scale of the development and its surroundings.
- B. Plant materials should be selected and arranged to prevent blocking or obscuring of required site lighting during all stages of plant growth.
- C. Plantings at intersections or driveway entrances shall be arranged to allow a permanently clear, safe sight distance.
- D. Trees or shrubs shall not be planted under existing or proposed utility lines when their ultimate height may interfere with the lowest lines.
- E. Trees and shrubs shall not be placed over underground drainage and shall maintain adequate distance from storm sewers, sanitary sewers, and water lines to prevent roots from entering such facilities.
- F. Landscaped areas should be of adequate size to promote proper plant growth and to protect plantings from pedestrian traffic, vehicle traffic, and other types of concentrated activity.
- G. Earthen berms and existing topography should, whenever practical, be incorporated into the landscape treatment of a site.
- H. Landscaped areas and plantings should be located in a manner to prevent spread onto adjacent properties or right-of-way, and to allow adequate room for proper maintenance.
- I. A variety of tree and shrub species should be utilized to provide visual, four-season interest. Not more than one-third (1/3) of the required number of trees or shrubs may be comprised of any one (1) species and at least one-third (1/3) of the plantings must be of a coniferous or evergreen species.
- J. Final slopes greater than a three to one (3:1) ratio will not be permitted without special approval or treatment, such as special seed mixtures or reforestation, terracing, or retaining walls.

9-25-5 Landscaping Requirements, Single and Two-Family Residential Uses.

Construction of new single-family and two-family housing units shall require the following:

- A. The planting of two (2) trees per dwelling unit, one of which must be a deciduous shade tree.
- B. When two (2) or more healthy, significant trees are present per dwelling unit, no trees are required to be planted. For the purpose of this Section, a significant tree shall be any healthy deciduous

shade tree (except Russian Olive, Cottonwood, Boxelder, Mulberry, and Elm) that measures six inches (6) or more in diameter, or any healthy coniferous (evergreen) tree that measures four inches (4) or more in diameter.

- C. Trees shall be planted only on private property, within a front, side, or rear yard, and shall not be planted in utility or drainage easements.
- D. A cash escrow specifically for the planting of required trees shall be part of a combined final turf, grade, and tree escrow. The escrow amount shall be established by the City Council and shall be refunded when all of the following are completed:
 - 1. Required trees are installed.
 - 2. Final grade requirements are completed.
 - 3. Ground cover requirements are completed.

9-25-6 Landscaping Requirements, All Other Uses.

With the exception of single-family and two-family residential uses, park/open space uses, and properties within the Hamilton Overlay District and I-2, Floodplain Limited Industrial District, all uses of land shall provide landscaping as follows:

- A. *Foundation plantings.* At least fifty (50) percent of each principal structure shall be sodded or landscaped with approved ground cover and shrubbery within an area of no less than three (3) feet in width.
- B. *Interior landscaping of parking lots.* In all parking areas, including those for the sale and display of autos, trucks, and other types of vehicles, that contain more than fifty (50) parking spaces, planting islands must be provided to occupy a minimum of three (3) percent of the parking area, subject to the following:
 - 1. The interior dimensions of any planting area or landscaped islands shall be a minimum of one-hundred fifty (150) square feet in area.
 - 2. Each planting island shall contain at least one (1) tree that provides shade or is capable of providing shade upon maturity. The remainder of the landscaped area shall be covered with turf grass, native grasses, ground cover, or other perennial flowering plants, vines, shrubs, or trees. If landscape rock or bark is to be utilized, provision should be made to prevent material from spilling into the parking area.
 - 3. Each landscaped island shall be protected by vertical curbs or similar structures and shall be designed and grouped into a parking area to create defined aisles and entrances for on-site traffic circulation.
 - 4. Landscape aisles or strips between parallel parking rows shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet in width. When incorporating pedestrian walkways, such strips shall be increased to at least twenty (20) feet in width to accommodate vehicle overhangs, walkways, light posts, and other appurtenances. Landscape aisles and strips shall include medium to large deciduous trees at a minimum of one (1) tree every thirty (30) linear feet, in addition to other parking lot landscape requirements.
- C. *Perimeter landscape requirements.*
 - 1. Within the front and corner side yards where a street right-of-way separates a non-residential use from property zoned for residential use, a continuous fifteen (15) foot landscape area shall be provided with landscaping at a rate of one (1) deciduous shade or coniferous/evergreen tree for every thirty (30) feet of linear street frontage and one (1) deciduous ornamental tree for every three (3) required deciduous shade or evergreen trees. Screening shall be provided through berming and shrub plantings across one-hundred (100) percent of the street frontage to a minimum height of three (3) feet, as measured from the grade of the parking lot or adjacent street curb, whichever is the higher elevation.

2. Within the front and corner side yards where a street right-of-way separates a non-residential use from property zoned for another non-residential use or where a street right-of-way separates a multi-family residential use from property zoned for another residential use, a continuous fifteen (15) foot landscape area shall be provided with landscaping at a rate of one (1) deciduous shade or coniferous/evergreen tree for every fifty (50) feet of linear street frontage and one (1) deciduous ornamental tree for every three (3) required deciduous shade or evergreen trees. Screening shall be provided through berming and shrub plantings across one-hundred (100) percent of all parking and vehicular areas to a minimum height of three (3) feet, as measured from the grade of the parking lot or adjacent street curb, whichever is the higher elevation.
3. Within rear and interior side yards, a landscaped berm or berm/fence combination shall be provided at a minimum height of six (6) feet where a non-residential use abuts a property zoned for residential use. Said area shall require landscaping at a rate of one (1) deciduous shade or coniferous/evergreen tree for every thirty (30) feet of linear property line and one (1) deciduous ornamental tree for every three (3) required deciduous shade or evergreen trees. Such screening and landscaping shall be located within a continuous landscape area at least twenty (20) feet wide. When a fence is to be utilized, it shall be constructed of masonry, brick or wood, shall provide a solid screening effect, and is subject to the requirements for fences as identified in Section 9-4-13. Requirements for such landscape areas, plantings, and screening fences/berms may be modified by the Planning Commission and City Council, where either an increase or decrease is clearly warranted.
4. Within rear and interior side yards where a non-residential use abuts property zoned for non-residential use or where a multi-family use abuts another residential use, a continuous ten (10) foot landscape area shall be provided with landscaping at a rate of one (1) deciduous shade or coniferous/evergreen tree for every fifty (50) feet of linear property and one (1) deciduous ornamental tree for every three (3) required deciduous shade or evergreen trees. Screening shall be provided through berming and shrub plantings across twenty-five (25) percent of all parking and vehicular areas to a minimum height of three (3) feet, as measured from the grade of the parking lot or vehicular area.

9-25-7 Residential Buffer Yards.

- A. *General requirements.* A residential buffer yard shall be required along the rear of all double frontage residential lots that abut a designated collector or arterial street. Whenever a residential subdivision is proposed that includes such lots, a buffer yard plan shall be submitted for approval by the City in conjunction with preliminary plat review. Installation of required plan elements shall be completed by the developer, or, if applicable, by the individual property owners, prior to issuance of a final certificate of occupancy.
- B. *Design standards.* A required residential buffer yard shall be located along the entire width of applicable lots to a minimum depth of twenty (20) feet, and shall meet the following standards:
 1. Plantings within designated buffer yards shall adhere to the following:
 - a. Plant material centers shall be located at least three (3) feet from the fence line or property line and shall not conflict with sidewalks, trails, or other public improvements.
 - b. Landscape screen material shall be planted in two (2) or more staggered rows.
 - c. Deciduous shrubs shall not be planted more than four (4) feet on center and evergreen shrubs shall not be planted more than three (3) feet on center.
 - d. Deciduous trees intended for screening shall not be planted more than forty (40) feet apart and evergreen trees not more than fifteen (15) feet apart.
 2. All walls and fences erected within designated buffer yards shall adhere to the following:
 - a. Only fences and walls formally approved as part of the subdivision and site plan process will be permitted.

- b. At least fifty (50) percent of the street side of a screening fence shall be landscaped with plant materials.
 - c. Exposed fences shall run a maximum length of fifty (50) feet between landscape areas or clusters.
3. Earth berms within designated buffer yards shall adhere to the following:
- a. Except in areas of steep slopes or where other topographic features will not permit, as determined by the City Engineer, an earth berm at least four (4) feet in height shall be installed in all designated buffer yards.
 - b. Earth berms shall contain no less than four (4) inches of topsoil and shall not exceed a three to one (3:1) slope unless approved by the City Engineer.
- C. *Maintenance.* On-going maintenance of the buffer yard, including landscape materials and fencing, shall be the responsibility of the individual property owners, or, if applicable, the homeowner's association. All necessary repairs and replacement shall be completed in conformance with the approved buffer yard design.

9-25-8 Screening Requirements.

Site plans or landscaping plans for all multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use developments shall include details regarding enclosure and screening methods, as required hereunder. For purposes of this Section, the phrase screened from public view means not visible, at any distance, from adjoining properties or any street right-of-way.

- A. *Refuse and recycling receptacles and enclosures.* All waste and recycling receptacles shall be stored within the principal structure or within an accessory enclosure area, subject to the following:
1. The enclosure shall be located in the side or rear yard and comply with setback requirements for accessory structures.
 2. The exterior wall treatment of the enclosure shall be of similar color and materials as the principal structure. Exterior walls shall be at least six (6) feet in height and provide a minimum opacity of ninety (90) percent.
 3. The enclosure must be accessible to waste and recycling collections vehicles.
 4. Landscaping shall be provided surrounding enclosures to screen the structure from view of the public right-of-way or adjacent residential properties.
- B. *Mechanical and other equipment.* Exterior ground-mounted or building-mounted equipment including, but not limited to, mechanical equipment, utility meter banks, and coolers shall be screened from public view with landscaping or with an architectural treatment compatible with the building's architecture.
- C. *Rooftop equipment.* All rooftop equipment shall be screened from public view with an architectural treatment that is compatible with the building's architecture and integral to the overall appearance of the building. The methods of screening rooftop equipment include, but are not limited to, encasement or partition screens. Equipment screens shall be required at a height that is as high or higher than the equipment being screened. The Planning Commission may grant exceptions to the screening requirements in cases where one of the following criteria are shown to exist:
1. A building is located at a high elevation in relation to surrounding properties and it is clearly demonstrated that rooftop equipment will not be visible.
 2. A building is located within the middle of an industrial park and rooftop equipment will not be visible from arterial roadways or residential properties, nor will it have a negative impact upon any sensitive areas or scenic view or vistas.
 3. A building is sited in such a manner that the location and setback of rooftop equipment from the building edge, in relation to the elevation and visibility of surrounding properties, is such that the equipment will not be visible from any distance.

- D. *Outdoor storage.* In addition to the standards identified in Section 9-4-14, outdoor storage areas shall be screened from view of public right-of-way and surrounding residential or public use areas, as follows:
 1. Required screening shall provide ninety (90) percent opacity through solid fences or walls, berming, landscaping, or any combination thereof.
 2. Screening fences or walls, when utilized, shall be constructed of attractive, permanent finished materials, compatible with those used in the construction of the principal structure
 3. Planting screens shall consist of healthy, fully hardy plant materials, at least six (6) feet in height and shall be designed to provide a minimum year-round opaqueness of ninety (90) percent at the time of maturity.

9-25-9 Selection, Installation and Maintenance Requirements.

- A. *In general.* All landscaping materials and screening methods depicted on development plans approved by the City shall be considered as required elements of the project. All plant materials must meet the standards set by the American Association of Nurserymen and be of a variety that is indigenous to the hardiness zone in which Savage is located, except that the following trees are expressly prohibited from being planted:
 1. Box Elder -- *Acer negundo*
 2. Silver Maple -- *Acer saccharinum*
 3. Northern Catalpa -- *Catalpa speciosa*
 4. Mulberry -- *Morus alba*
 5. Cottonwood -- *Populus deltoids* (seedless varieties are acceptable)
 6. Willow -- *Salax species*
- B. *Minimum plant size.* All required plant materials shall meet the minimum size standards identified below. For the purposes of determining tree trunk size, the diameter shall be measured six (6) inches above ground level.

Plant Type	Minimum Size
Deciduous Shade Tree	Two and one-half (2½) inch diameter
Deciduous Ornamental Tree	One and one-half (1½) inch diameter
Coniferous / Evergreen Tree	Six (6) feet in height
Shrubs	Five (5) gallons

- C. *Installation requirements.* Required landscaping shall be considered a site improvement subject to the performance agreement and guarantee established in Section 9-2-10-L.
- D. *Maintenance and care.* The developer, its successor and/or subsequent owners shall be responsible for the continued maintenance of landscape materials on a continuing basis for the life of the development. Plant material that exhibits evidence of insect pests, disease, or damage shall be appropriately treated and dead plants promptly removed and replaced within the next planting season.
- E. *Inspection.* All landscaping shall be subject to periodic inspection by the Zoning Administrator. Landscaping that is not installed, maintained, or replaced as needed to comply with the approved landscape plan shall be considered in violation of the terms of the site plan or building permit. The landowner shall receive notice of such violation in accordance with code enforcement requirements as specified in Section 9-2-11.