

## **ARTICLE XIV LANDSCAPING, BUFFERING AND TREE PRESERVATION**

### **SECTION**

#### **1400 LANDSCAPING, BUFFERING AND TREE PRESERVATION**

#### **1401 INTENT AND PURPOSE**

It is the intent and purpose of these landscaping provisions:

- A. To reduce to a minimum the unaesthetic, unsightly and/or offensive views created by certain land uses which are necessary to support the City of Rockford by providing products, jobs and/or services needed by the community.
- B. To encourage tree and shrub planting, to foster the preservation and stabilization of the community's ecological balance, and to establish a more healthy environment. This can be done by using living plants to mitigate the ill effects associated with some land uses, such as to filter noise, dust and fumes, to buffer winds, to modify the rate of storm water runoff and soil erosion to adjacent properties, to reduce glare from the sun, vehicle headlights and parking lot area lighting, and to provide shade and noise attenuation.
- C. To enhance the environment and visual character of the City of Rockford for its citizens' use and enjoyment, and to safeguard property values of adjacent properties, to protect public and private investments, and to promote high-quality development within the City of Rockford. This will generally add to the beauty and worth of the entire City of Rockford by distributing plantings in and around parking lots and outside storage areas.
- D. To reduce the incompatibility between zoning districts of different intensities and type, and lessen the adverse impact of more intense land uses upon residential areas and other areas of less intense land use, thereby reducing the ill effects of large expanses of paved areas, outside storage yards and parking lots within the City of Rockford.
- E. To establish regulations limiting the removal of existing trees and ensuring the replacement of trees removed from public non-rights-of-way and private property within the City of Rockford. In so doing, this will safeguard the ecological and aesthetic environment of the community. These regulations are further intended to serve to dissuade the unnecessary clearing and disturbing of land so as to preserve, wherever practical, the existing natural vegetation that is indigenous to the region.

#### **1402 APPLICABILITY**

- A. The "General Landscaping Requirements," as stated in Sec. 1403, shall apply to:
  - 1. All privately-owned Multiple-Family Residential, Commercial and Industrially-zoned properties which have parking areas containing five (5) or more spaces;
  - 2. All open sales lots, outside storage lots, truck storage and equipment yards, terminals, and other vehicular maneuvering areas greater than 2,500 square feet in area; and
  - 3. All publicly-owned property (excepting rights-of-way). (See Figure 1402 for an example.) Paved areas for recreational uses, such as tennis courts, playgrounds and basketball courts, shall not be subject to these requirements, but may require landscaping as a condition of a Special Use Permit or a Variation.
- B. A landscape buffer shall also be required to be placed along the boundaries of the zoning lot which abuts properties in a different zoning district, as determined by Sec. 1403.2(C) and Table 1403(B), "Schedule of Buffer Requirements."

- C. Properties which are nonconforming with regard to Sec. 1400 of this Ordinance must be brought into conformity when:
1. A new building or new paved area is proposed;
  2. An addition to an existing building, parking lot or outside storage yard, greater than ten percent (10%) of the existing floor area or land area, is proposed;
  3. When a zoning application for a Special Use Permit or a Variation is filed, approval may be granted which includes a condition that requires the entire property to be brought into compliance with the minimum landscaping requirements of this Ordinance; a more intense landscaping may also be required.

*(For diagram, see Figure 1402 – Applicability on page 83)*

## **1403 GENERAL LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS**

All areas which require landscaping, as per Sec. 1402, shall meet the minimum requirements for "Shade Trees" (Sec. 1403.1), "Perimeter Landscaping" (Sec. 1403.2), and "Interior Landscaping" (Sec. 1403.3), as stated herein. Also, existing mature trees on all zoning lots in the City of Rockford are required to be preserved and protected and must remain in their natural setting, undisturbed, as specified in Sec. 1403.4, "Tree Preservation," until a plan for development, including a "Tree Protection and Preservation Plan" is approved by the Zoning Officer or a tree removal permit is obtained.

### **1403.1 Shade Trees**

Shade trees shall be required to be planted and maintained on the zoning lot in addition to the required perimeter landscaping, interior landscaping, and/or landscape buffer, as follows:

- A. One (1) shade tree shall be planted for every ten (10) parking spaces, or fraction thereof, or for every 2,500 square feet of paved land area, or fraction thereof, devoted to uses which require landscaping according to Sec. 1402(A). (Example: a paved area with 32 parking spaces, or 8,250 square feet, would require four shade trees. See Figure 1403.1 for an example.)
- B. In addition to the requirements of paragraph "A" above, one (1) shade tree shall be planted for every ninety (90) lineal feet, or fraction thereof, of frontage a property has on a street right-of-way. Said tree(s) shall be planted within twenty (20) feet of the property line which is common to a street right-of-way line. If overhead utilities would interfere with the growth of these trees, an alternate plan can be approved by the Zoning Officer. (Example: If a lot has 190 lineal feet of frontage, then three shade trees are required.)
- C. Shade trees shall be dispersed within the paved areas and/or around the edges of the paved areas within twenty (20) feet of the edge of the paved surface.
- D. Shade trees shall be planted in a planting bed of a minimum of one hundred forty (140) square feet in land area per tree, and no less than eight (8) feet in width.
- E. Existing mature trees located on subject property, which are a minimum of six (6) inches in size or larger, may be counted as part of the shade tree requirements if they are located in close proximity to the area requiring shade trees and are of a desirable quality and variety. This is subject to the approval of the Zoning Officer and acceptable only if the existing trees are satisfactorily protected, as specified in Sec. 1403.4, during any construction or grading activities. Each two (2) inches in diameter of existing trees preserved (as measured 12 inches above grade) may be counted as equal to one (1) new shade tree requirement, as determined by the Zoning Officer.

*(For diagram, see Figure 1403.1 – Shade Trees on page 84)*

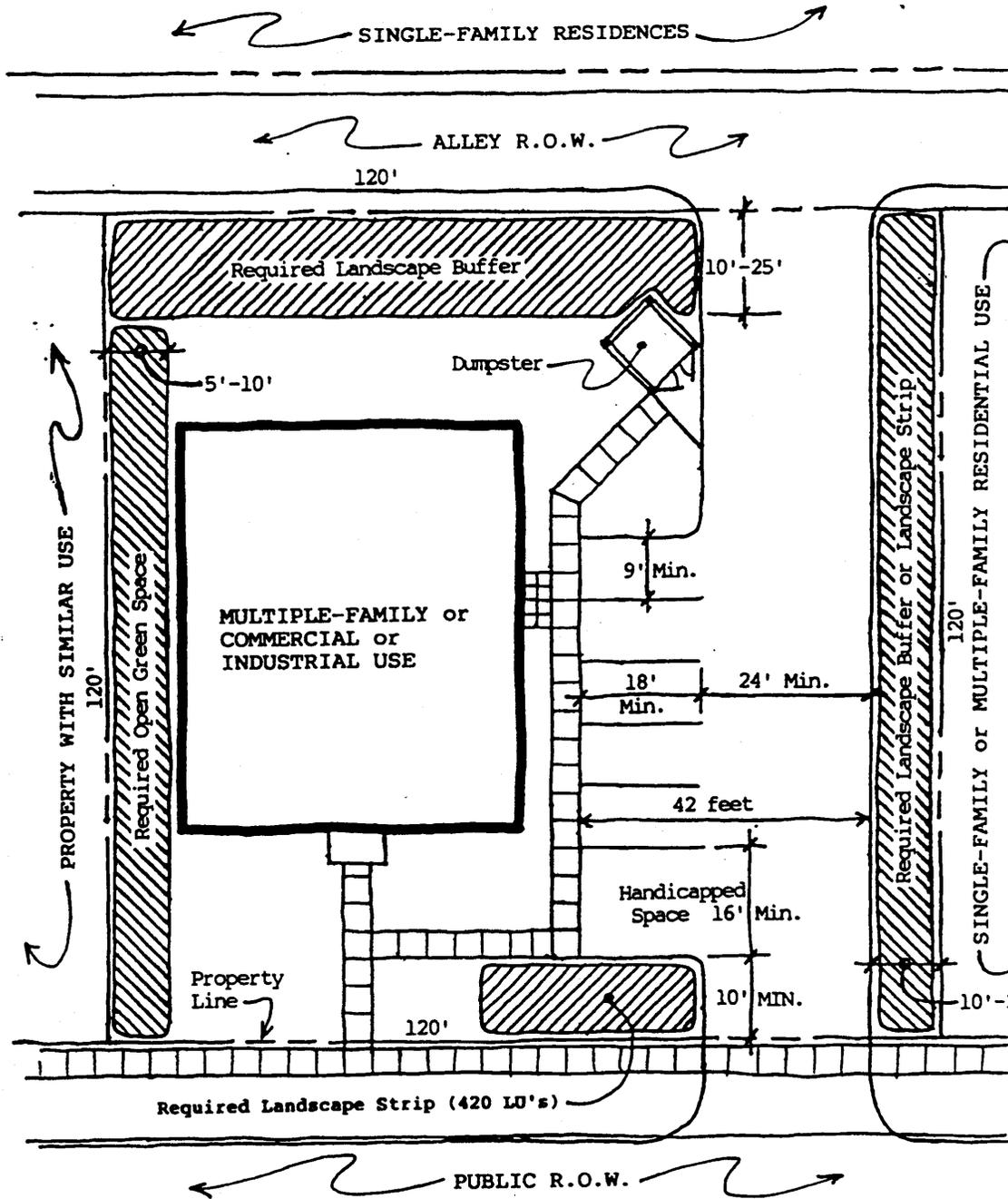


Figure 1402 - Applicability

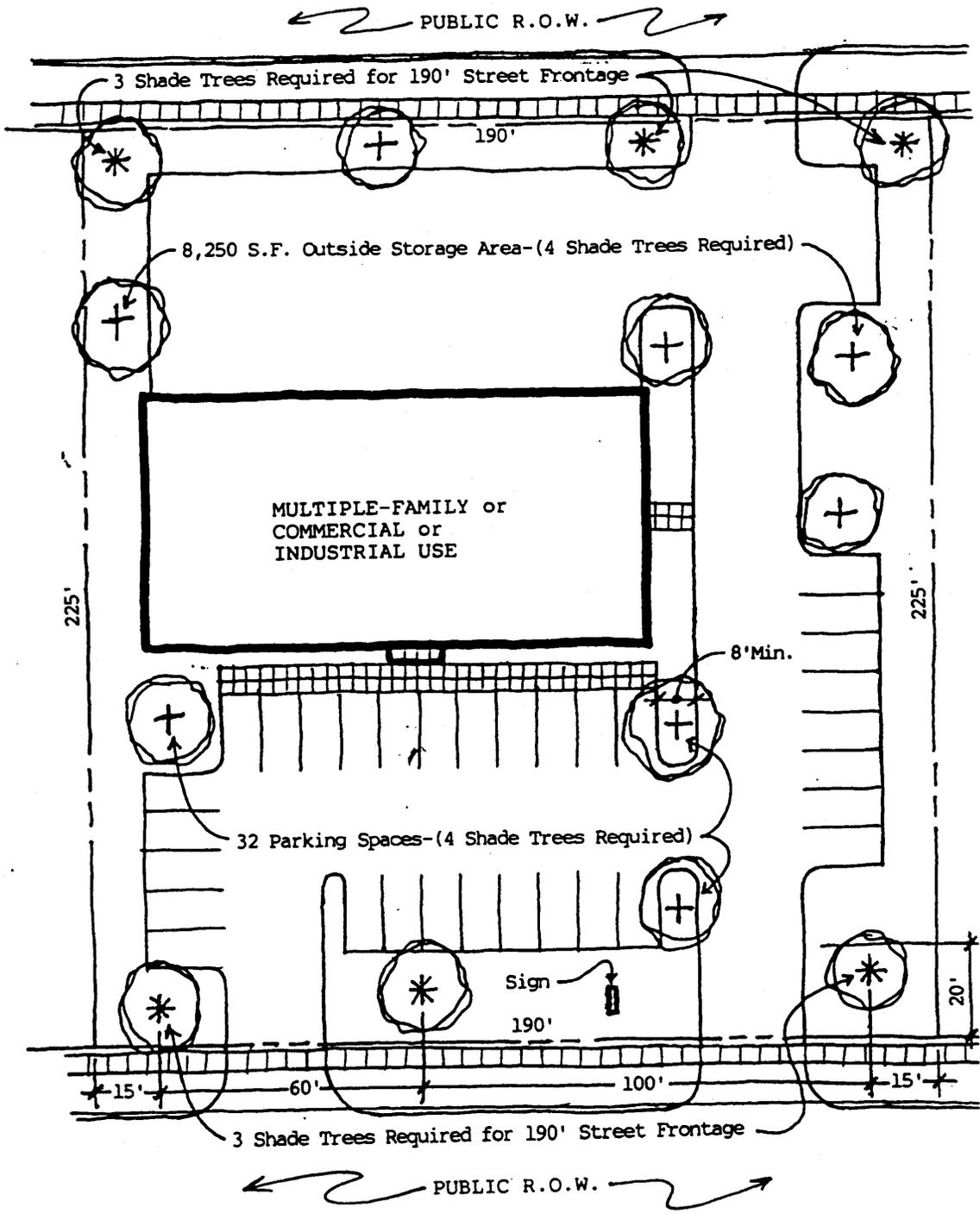


Figure 1403.1 - Shade Trees

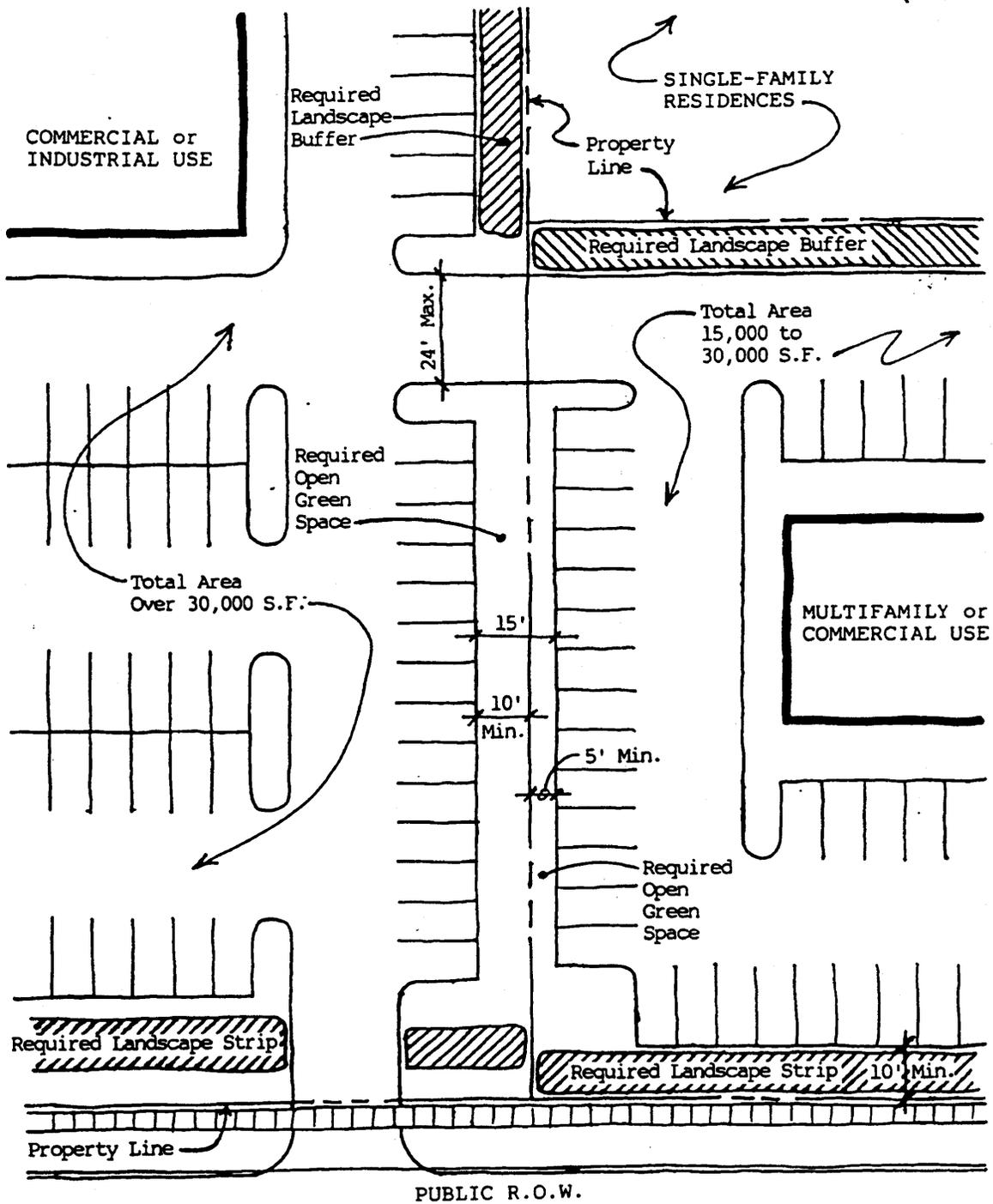


Figure 1403.2(A)- Perimeter Landscaping

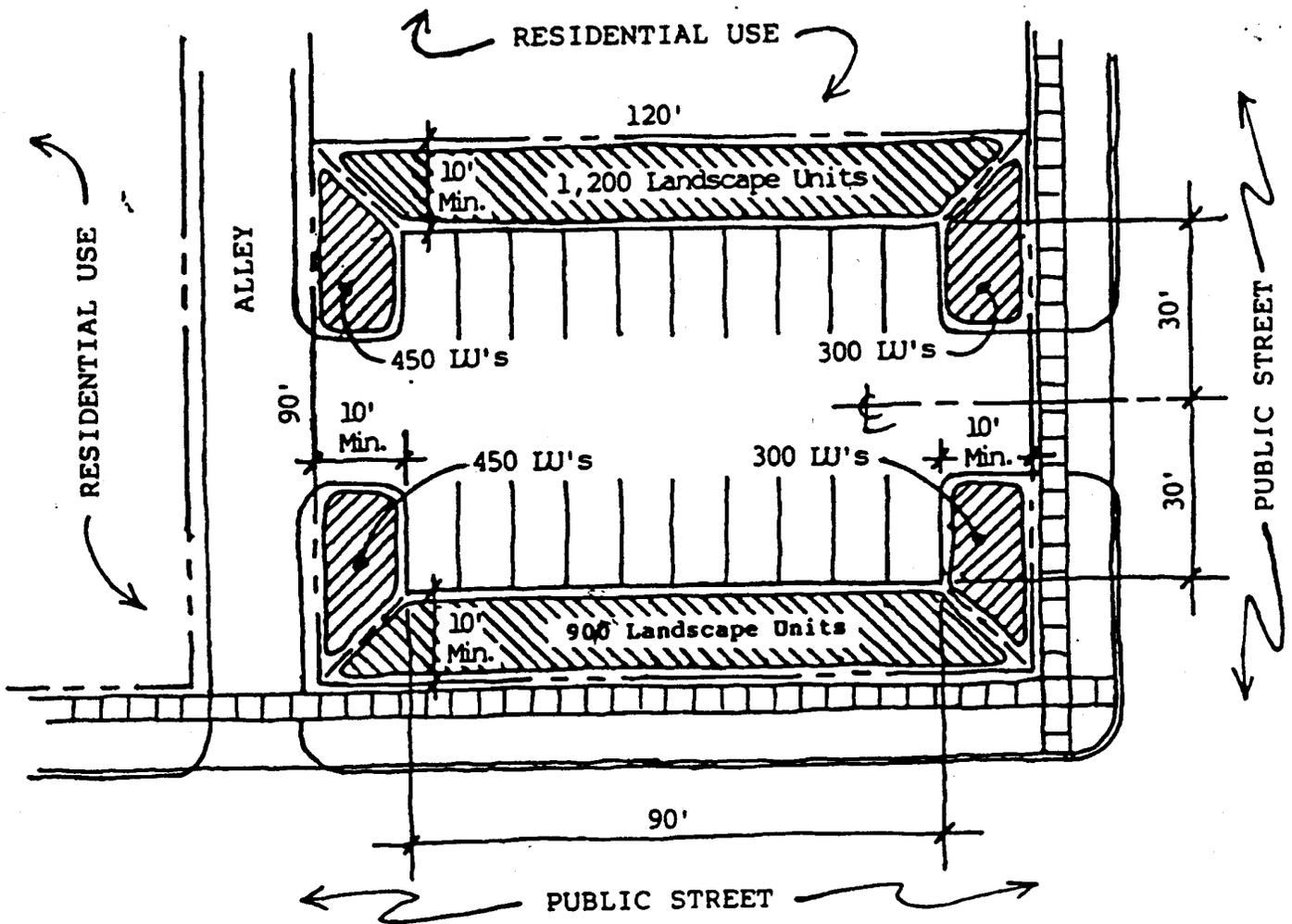
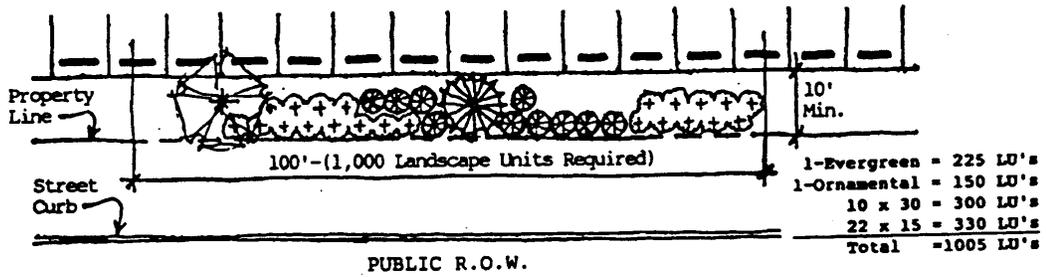
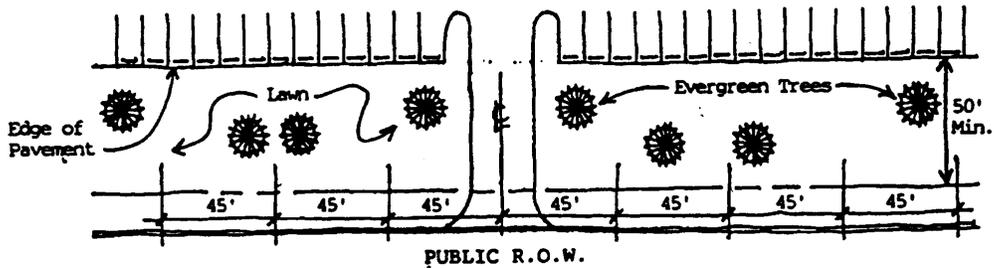


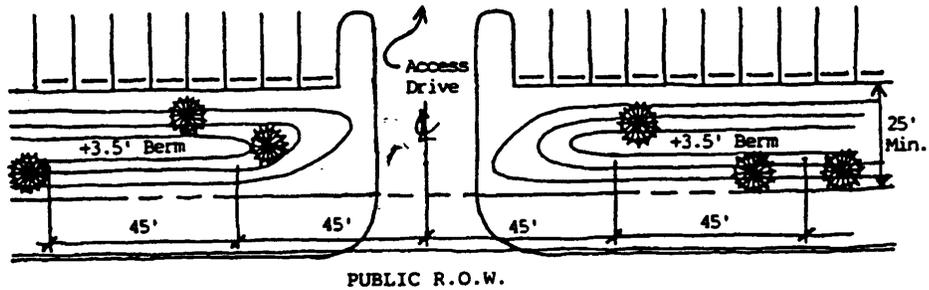
Figure 1403.2(B) - Landscape Units



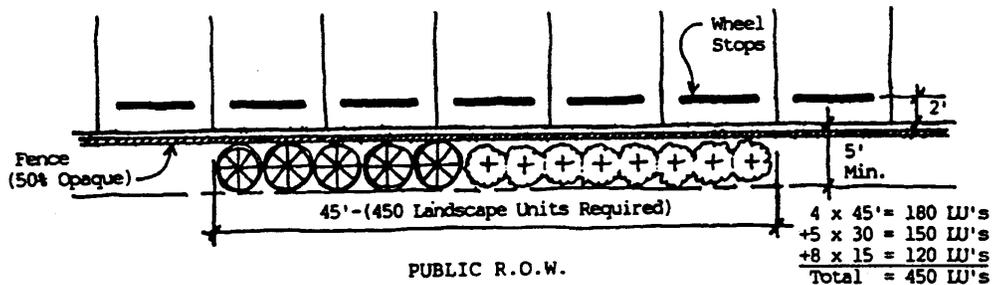
STANDARD LANDSCAPE STRIP - (10 LU's / Lineal Foot)



EXPANSIVE LAWN & TREES - (10 LU's / Lineal Foot)

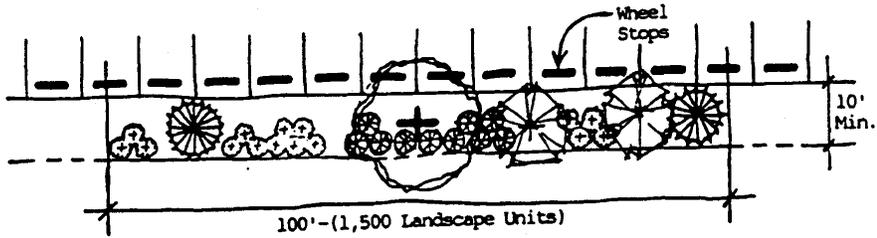


LAWN & EARTH BERM - (10 LU's / Lineal Foot)

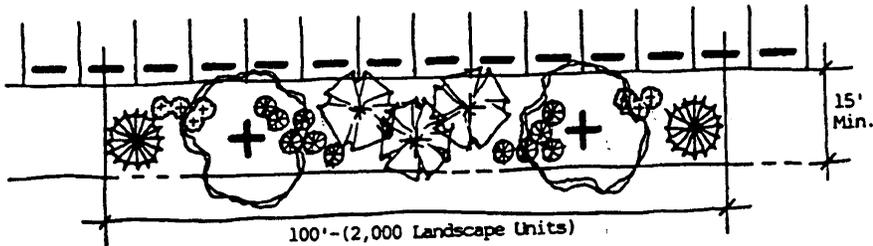


REDUCED LANDSCAPE STRIP - (10 LU's / Lineal Foot)

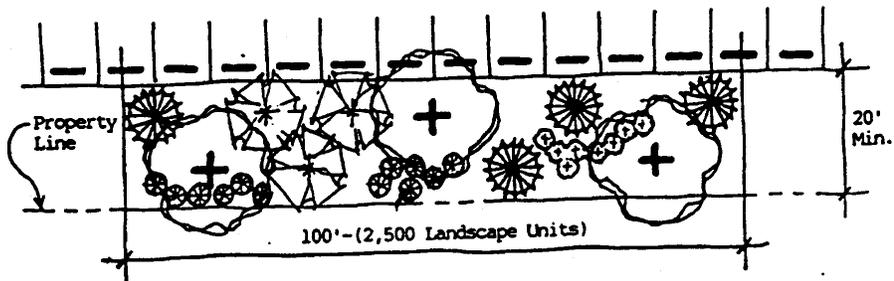
### 1403.2(C) - Alternate Methods



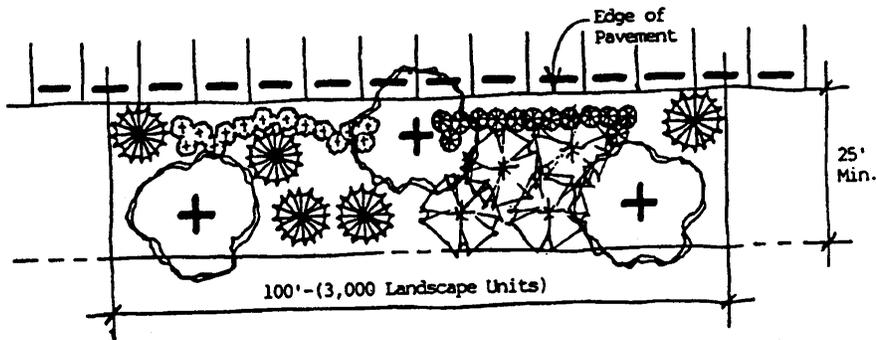
**TYPE "A" BUFFER (15 Landscape Units/Lineal Foot)**



**TYPE "B" BUFFER (20 Landscape Units/Lineal Foot)**



**TYPE "C" BUFFER (25 Landscape Units/Lineal Foot)**



**TYPE "D" BUFFER (30 Landscape Units/Lineal Foot)**

1403.2(D) - Buffer Examples

**1403.2 Perimeter Landscaping**

The perimeter landscaping requirements shall consist of perimeter landscape strips and/or landscape buffering and/or open green spaces, and shall be located on subject property within the boundary of the zoning lot.

**A. Perimeter Landscape Strip**

Any multiple-family residential, commercial or industrial property that has a parking/storage use which is required to be landscaped, as per Sec. 1402(A), shall be required to install perimeter landscape strips as specified in the following sections in addition to the other landscaping requirements on the zoning lot. The perimeter landscape strip shall be installed between the use to be screened and the property line adjacent to any street or alley right-of-way, and adjacent to land that is used or zoned for residential purposes.

- 1. The required perimeter landscape strip shall be comprised of a combination of the following: shade trees, evergreen trees, ornamental trees, evergreen and deciduous shrubs, perennial plants, ground cover plants, lawns, berms, fences and walls.
- 2. The quantity, size and spacing of these elements shall be measured by Landscape Units (LUs) which is a value assigned to landscape elements based on their cost relative to each other, the land area they cover, and the screening characteristics they possess. (See Table 1403(A) for Landscape Unit values and Figure 1403.2(E) for a graphic example.)
- 3. The perimeter landscape strip shall meet the minimum requirement of ten (10) landscape units of landscaping per lineal foot of street frontage along rights-of-way, and ten (10) landscape units of landscaping for each lineal foot of a property line common to adjacent properties zoned or used for residential purposes. A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the Landscape Units shall be evergreen to provide year-round screening. (Example: A zoning lot which has a parking lot with 60 lineal feet of frontage, including driveways, on a street would require a landscape strip with 600 landscape units; a zoning lot which has a parking lot with 120 lineal feet of frontage on an adjacent residential use would require a landscape strip with 1,200 Landscape Units. See Figure 1403.2(B).)
- 4. The land use to be screened and the landscaping shall be designed so that the land use will be effectively screened from view from the public right-of-way and residential properties adjacent to the property which is required to be landscaped.

**B. Alternate Methods of Perimeter Landscape Strip Compliance**

The requirements of the landscape strip may be achieved by using one of the following methods or a combination of these methods, subject to the approval of the Zoning Officer.

**TABLE 1403(A) - SCHEDULE OF LANDSCAPE UNITS**  
*(See next page.)*

- 1. **Standard Perimeter Landscape Strip:**  
Must be a minimum of ten (10) feet wide, and may be planted with any combination of plant material to meet the landscape unit requirements. However, shade and evergreen trees must first be counted toward the shade tree requirements of Sec. 1403.1 before their landscape unit values can be used in the landscape unit requirements for perimeter landscaping. Fifty percent (50%) of the required landscape units must be evergreen plant material.

**TABLE 1403(A)  
SCHEDULE OF LANDSCAPE UNITS**

<b>LANDSCAPE UNITS</b>	<b>PLANT TYPE REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>MINIMUM SIZE</b>	<b>HEIGHT</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED SPACING (ON CENTER)</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
225	Shade trees	2" cal.	27' – 90'	1/10 spaces	
225	Evergreen trees	6' – 7'	9' – 54'		
150	Ornamental trees	6' – 7'	9' – 54'		
30	Evergreen shrubs	18" – 24"	3' – 6'		50% of LUs
15	Deciduous shrubs	18" – 24"	3' – 6'		
4	Perennial plants	1 qt. pot	2' – 3'		
1	Ground cover plants	2" pot	1' – 2'		
0.2	Earth berm & lawn	3'6"	Per S.F.		3:1/maximum
0.1	Lawn only	N/A	Per S.F.		3"-6" hgt max
4	Fence or wall*	3'	Per L.F.		50% opaque

\*This shall be counted as "Evergreen" Landscape Units.

2. Expansive Lawn and Trees:

This method uses separation by horizontal distance and evergreen trees to lessen the impact a particular use may have on citizens in a public right-of-way or on adjacent private property. The edge of the paved area for the land use requiring landscaping may be located a minimum distance of fifty (50) feet from the property line with an open expanse of lawn and one (1) evergreen tree for every forty-five (45) feet of frontage located between the property line and the edge of the pavement, for a landscape unit value of ten (10) per lineal foot of frontage, calculated as follows:

$$(\text{lawn value } 0.1 \times 50' = 5) + (\text{tree value of } 5/\text{L.F.}) = 10$$

3. Lawn Earth Berm:

This method uses horizontal separation, berming and evergreen trees and/or evergreen or deciduous shrubs to screen the desired use. An earth berm of a maximum 3:1 slope (horizontal:vertical) and a minimum of three feet six inches (3'6") high with one (1) evergreen tree per forty-five (45) lineal feet of frontage may be used if a minimum distance of twenty-five (25) feet is maintained between the property line and the edge of the paved area for the land use requiring landscaping. This will meet the landscape strip requirement of ten landscape units per lineal foot of frontage, and is calculated in the following manner:

$$(\text{berm value } 0.2 \times 25' = 5) + (\text{tree value } 5/\text{L.F.}) = 10$$

4. Reduced Perimeter Landscape Strip:

Requests for use of alternate or reduced landscaping schemes may be justified only when one or more of the following conditions apply:

- a. The site involves space limitation or unusually shaped parcels of land;
- b. Topography, soil, vegetation, or other site conditions are such that full compliance is impossible or impractical;
- c. Due to a change of use of an existing site, the required landscape strip is larger than can be provided; and
- d. Safety considerations are involved, such as traffic sight lines.

A reduced landscape strip may be used only in areas where there is not sufficient space, as determined by the Zoning Officer, based on the conditions stated above. The reduced

landscape strip shall be as wide as practically possible and, in no instance, shall the required landscape strip be less than five (5) feet wide without obtaining a Variation. When a reduced landscape strip is allowed, a masonry wall or wood fence, which is at least fifty percent (50%) opaque and a minimum of three (3) feet in height, must be located on the inside of the planting strip. The remaining area must be planted with plant materials so that a total landscape unit value of ten (10) per lineal foot of frontage is achieved, and fifty percent (50%) of the landscape units shall be evergreen. The construction materials and techniques of the proposed wall or fence must meet the approval of the Zoning Officer. If the Zoning Officer approves this structure, it may be given a value of four (4) landscape units per lineal foot. (See Figure 1403.2(C) for examples of alternative methods of the required landscape unit.)

<b>TABLE 1403(B) SCHEDULE OF BUFFER REQUIREMENTS</b>						
<b>Zoning of Subject</b>	<b>Zoning of Adjacent Property</b>					
<b>Property</b>	<b>R-E, R-1</b>	<b>R-2, R-M</b>	<b>R-3, R-4, C-1</b>	<b>C-2, C-4</b>	<b>C-3, I-1</b>	<b>I-2</b>
R-E, R-1	N	N	N	N	N	N
R-2, R-M	N	N	N	N	N	N
R-3, R-4, C-1	A	A	N	N	N	N
C-2, C-4	B	B	A	N	N	N
C-3, I-1	C	C	B	A	N	N
I-2	D	D	C	B	A	N

**C. Landscape Buffers**

Landscape buffers shall be required for all buildings, structures and uses of land which consist of multiple-family residential, commercial or industrial uses which have a property line that is also a boundary line of a zoning district.

1. The buffers which are required to be placed along the boundaries of the zoning lot abutting properties in a different zoning district are determined by reference to Table 1403(B), "Schedule of Buffer Requirements," as follows:
  - a. Identify the existing or proposed district in the column titled "Subject Property."
  - b. For each boundary abutting property in another zoning district, identify the column headed by the zoning classification of the adjacent property.
  - c. Read across the row of the "Subject Property" and down the column of the "Zoning of Adjacent Property" to determine the type of buffer required.
  - d. Refer to Sec. 1403.2(C)(4) for the complete description of the required buffer.
2. Developments which include the granting of a Special Use Permit for a Planned Residential Development or a Planned Mixed-Use Development shall be assigned a Type "A" buffer as a minimum requirement unless a more intense buffer is specified during the zoning application and approval process. The granting of any other Special Use Permit in any zoning district shall require buffers as determined by Table 1403(B). However, as a condition of the Special Use Permit, a more extensive buffer may be required.
3. Nothing in this section shall repeal or modify the requirements of Sec. 1403.1 ("Shade Trees"), Sec. 1403.2 ("Perimeter Landscaping"), or Sec. 1403.3 ("Interior Landscaping").
4. Description of Buffers
  - a. Type "A" Buffer: The standard Type "A" Buffer is ten (10) feet wide and shall consist of fifteen (15) landscape units per lineal foot of a zoning district boundary line, with evergreens comprising fifty percent (50%) of the landscape units. The following plant list and quantities represents an example of the plantings required per one hundred (100) lineal feet:

1	Shade tree	=	225 LUs
2	Ornamental tree	=	300 LUs
15	Deciduous shrub	=	225 LUs
10	Evergreen shrub	=	300 LUs
2	Evergreen tree	=	450 LUs
TOTAL			1,500 LUs

Depending on the space available, the applicant may choose one of several alternative buffer widths to provide a Type "A" Buffer, each with a different amount of required plantings reflected as a multiplier of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet. These alternatives include the following:

- (1) Twenty (20) foot wide buffer with fifty percent (50%) of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet.
- (2) Fifteen (15) foot wide buffer with seventy-five percent (75%) of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet.
- (3) Five (5) foot wide buffer with ninety percent (90%) of the required landscape units and a continuous hedge or wood site-obscuring fence, the height which shall be determined by the Zoning Officer as per Sec. 405.3.

- b. Type "B" Buffer: The standard Type "B" Buffer is fifteen (15) feet wide and shall consist of twenty (20) landscape units per lineal foot of a zoning district boundary line, with evergreens comprising fifty percent (50%) of the landscape units. The following plant list and quantities represents an example of the plantings required per one hundred (100) lineal feet:

2	Shade trees	=	450 LUs
3	Ornamental trees	=	450 LUs
7	Deciduous shrubs	=	105 LUs
11	Evergreen shrubs	=	330 LUs
3	Evergreen trees	=	675 LUs
TOTAL			2,010 LUs

Depending on the space available, the applicant may choose one of several alternative buffer widths to provide a Type "B" Buffer, each with a different amount of required plantings reflected as a multiplier of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet. These alternatives include the following:

- (1) Twenty-five (25) foot wide buffer with fifty percent (50%) of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet.
- (2) Twenty (20) foot wide buffer with seventy-five percent (75%) of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet.
- (3) Ten (10) foot wide buffer with ninety percent (90%) of the required landscape units and a continuous hedge or wood site-obscuring fence, the height of which shall be determined by the Zoning Officer as per Sec. 405.3.

- c. Type "C" Buffer: The standard Type "C" Buffer is twenty (20) feet wide and shall consist of twenty-five (25) landscape units per lineal foot of a zoning district boundary line, with evergreens comprising fifty percent (50%) of the landscape units. The following plant list and quantities represents an example of the plantings required per one hundred (100) lineal feet:

3	Shade trees	=	675 LUs
3	Ornamental trees	=	450 LUs
8	Deciduous trees	=	120 LUs
12	Evergreen shrubs	=	360 LUs
4	Evergreen trees	=	900 LUs
TOTAL			2,505 LUs

Depending on the space available, the applicant may choose one of several alternative buffer widths to provide a Type "C" Buffer, each with a different amount of required plantings reflected as a multiplier of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet. These alternatives include the following:

- (1) Thirty (30) foot wide buffer with fifty percent (50%) of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet.
- (2) Twenty-five (25) foot wide buffer with seventy-five percent (75%) of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet.
- (3) Fifteen (15) foot wide buffer with ninety percent (90%) of the required landscape units and a continuous hedge or wood site-obscuring fence, the height of which is to be determined by the Zoning Officer as per Sec. 405.3.

- d. Type "D" Buffer: The standard Type "D" Buffer is twenty-five (25) feet wide and shall consist of thirty (30) landscape units per lineal foot of a zoning district boundary line, with evergreens comprising fifty percent (50%) of the landscape units. The following plant list and quantities represents an example of the plantings required per one hundred (100) lineal feet:

3	Shade trees	=	675 LUs
4	Ornamental trees	=	600 LUs
14	Deciduous shrubs	=	210 LUs
13	Evergreen shrubs	=	390 LUs
5	Evergreen trees	=	1,125 LUs
TOTAL			3,000 LUs

Depending on the space available, the applicant may choose one of several alternative buffer widths to provide a Type "D" Buffer, each with a different amount of required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet. These alternatives include the following:

- (1) Thirty-five (35) foot wide buffer with fifty percent (50%) of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet.
- (2) Thirty (30) foot wide buffer with seventy-five percent (75%) of the required landscape units per one hundred (100) feet.
- (3) Twenty (20) foot wide buffer with ninety percent (90%) of the required landscape units and a continuous hedge or wood site-obscuring fence, the height of which is to be determined by the Zoning Officer as per Sec. 405.3. (See Figure 1403.2(D) for examples of landscape buffer requirements and variations.)

**D. Open Green Space**

This requirement is intended to prevent large expanses of pavement which flow uninterrupted from one zoning lot to another and create a continuous sea of asphalt. At a minimum, an open green area must be provided between zoning lots where neither the Perimeter Landscape Strip nor the Landscape Buffer is required. This area is required to be a minimum of four (4) feet wide on each property.

**[For diagrams, see Figures 1403.2(A) – Perimeter Landscaping, on page 85; Figure 1403.2(B) – Landscape Units, on page 86; Figure 1403.2(C) – Alternate Methods, on page 87; and Figure 1403.2(D) – Buffer Examples, on page 88]**

### **1403.3 Interior Landscaping**

All zoning lots that have uses which are required to be landscaped and consist of paved land areas greater than fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet shall be required to provide interior landscaping located within the perimeter of the paved area.

NOTE: 15,000 square feet of paved area will provide parking for approximately 55 cars and will support an 11,000 square-foot medical office building, a 13,750 square-foot grocery store, or a 33,000 square-foot furniture and appliance store, for example. (See Sec. 1300.6)

- A. The land area devoted to interior landscaping shall be a minimum of four percent (4%) of the total land area devoted to the use requiring landscaping. If paved land areas exceed fifty thousand (50,000) square feet, then eight percent (8%) of the total land area shall be devoted to interior landscaping.

NOTE: 50,000 square feet of paved area will provide parking for approximately 185 cars and will support a 37,000 square-foot medical clinic, a 46,000 square-foot grocery store, or a 111,000 square-foot furniture and appliance store, for example. (See Sec. 1300.6)

- B. The interior planting beds shall be edged with six (6) inch high concrete curbing to protect the planting beds from vehicular traffic and snow plows, and shall be planted with plant materials which equal one landscape unit per square foot of planting bed. Decomposing materials, such as wood landscape timbers or railroad ties, may not be used in place of the required concrete curbing.
- C. The interior planting beds shall be located and designed so as to protect parked vehicles and assist with vehicular traffic circulation, snow removal and drainage. Interior planting beds, or traffic islands, should be located at intersections of traffic aisles for this purpose.
- D. The minimum size for all interior planting beds shall be seventy (70) square feet with a minimum width of four (4) feet. Also, if an interior planting bed is to include a shade or evergreen tree, the minimum size shall be one hundred forty (140) square feet, with a minimum width of eight (8) feet. These dimensions shall not include curbing.
- E. An interior planting bed is one which is surrounded on three (3) or more sides with pavement.

**(For diagram, see Figure 1403.3 – Interior Landscaping, on page 96)**

### **1403.4 Tree Preservation**

Existing mature trees of six (6) inches or greater in diameter, as measured twelve (12) inches above grade when preserved, may be used to meet the new shade tree requirement at the rate of each two-inch diameter of existing mature trees preserved equal to one new shade tree requirement (Sec. 1403.1(E)). When existing trees are designated by the property owner for preservation, the existing soil and/or grade shall not be disturbed or altered within fifty (50) feet of the trunk of said tree(s) except according to a Tree Protection and Preservation Plan submitted to and approved by the Zoning Officer. When tree preservation is not possible, the removal of existing mature trees (of 6 inches or greater in diameter) shall require a tree removal permit.

#### **A. Tree Protection and Preservation Plan**

To receive credit for preservation of mature trees in the development process, a Tree Protection and Preservation Plan shall be submitted which shows the location, size and variety of all trees, six (6)

inches or greater in size, existing on subject property. This plan shall also indicate which trees are to be removed, which trees are to be saved, and what preservation techniques will be used to preserve the trees that remain. Preservation techniques shall consist of the following:

1. Snow fencing, or other type of approved fencing, shall be installed around the trunk of any tree to be preserved a minimum distance of one (1) foot from the trunk of the tree for every one (1) inch of a tree's trunk diameter measured twelve (12) inches above grade. This fencing must be installed prior to the start of work on any development.
2. Cut or fill of soil and trenching is forbidden inside the area required to be fenced off from construction. The existing grade, at the base of any tree to be preserved and within the specified area around the trunk, shall not be altered in any manner not specifically approved by the Zoning Officer in the Protection and Preservation Plan.
3. Building or road construction materials or equipment may not be stored within any area required to be fenced off from construction activities for tree protection.

**B. Removal of Trees Designated for Preservation**

In the event a tree designated for preservation and preservation credit is removed or destroyed without a tree removal permit, then it shall be replaced with new trees or the equivalent fee paid to the City Zoning Division according to Table 1403-C, below:

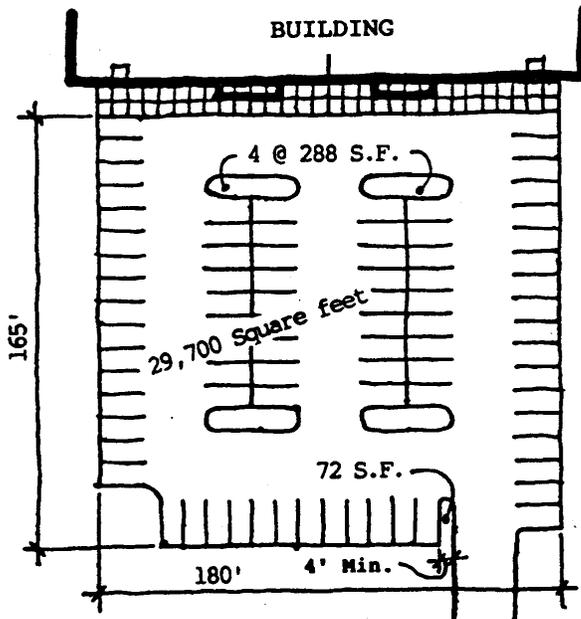
**TABLE 1403(C)  
TREE REPLACEMENT OR REMOVAL FEES**

Diameter of Tree Removed	Number of Replacement Trees	Fee Amount
6-9 inches	3 – 3" trees	\$900
9-12 inches	4 – 3" trees	\$1,200
12-18 inches	6 – 3" trees	\$1,800
18-24 inches	8 – 3" trees	\$2,400
24-30 inches	10 – 3" trees	\$3,000
30-36 inches	12 – 3" trees	\$3,600
36-42 inches	14 – 3" trees	\$4,200
42-48 inches	16 – 3" trees	\$4,800
Over 48 inches	18 – 3" trees	\$5,500

1. The minimum size of replacement trees shall be three (3) inches in diameter as measured six (6) inches above grade.
2. Replacement trees must be of a variety which meets with the approval of the Zoning Officer and includes those listed in Sec. 1405.3. Silver Maple and other similar softwood species are excluded and shall not be permitted.
3. A landscaping plan shall be submitted and approved by the Zoning Officer prior to planting of the replacement trees.

**C. Tree Removal Permit Required**

No mature tree (six (6) inches or greater in diameter) shall be removed from any publicly-owned property, excluding public rights-of-way, or private property located in the Multifamily, Commercial or Industrial Zoning Districts within the city limits of Rockford without first obtaining a tree removal permit from the Zoning Officer. The Zoning Officer shall first determine if said tree has been used to meet the requirements of this Zoning Ordinance before issuing any tree removal permit. If the tree has been used to meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, then it must be replaced, if removed, in accordance with Table 1403(C).



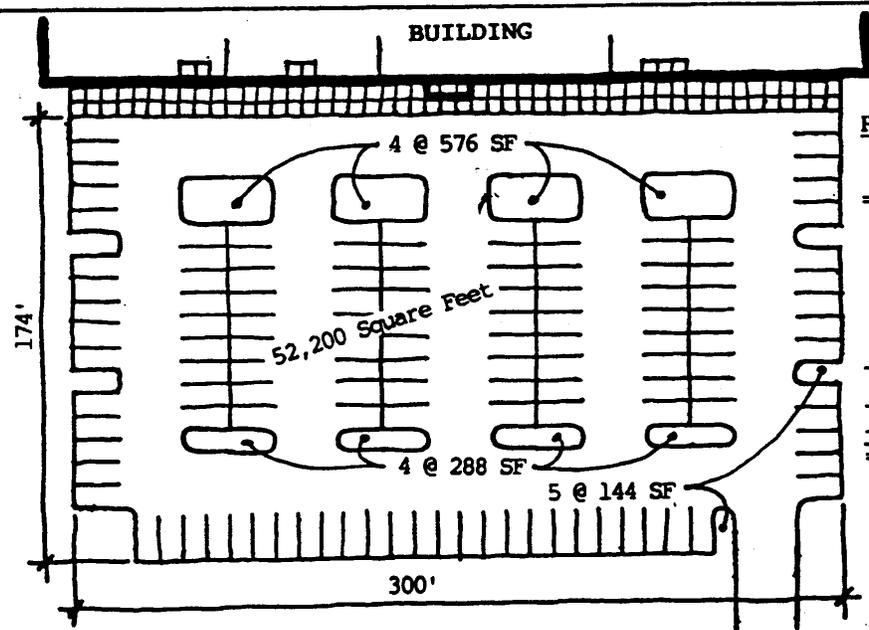
Required:

180'	
x 165'	
=29,700 S.F.	
x .04	
=1,188 S.F.	

Provided:

288 S.F.	
x 4	
=1,152 S.F.	
+ 72 S.F.	
=1,224 S.F.	

4% INTERIOR LANDSCAPING / 15,000 - 50,000 S.F



Required:

300'	
x 174'	
=52,200 S.F.	
x .08	
=4,176 S.F.	

Provided:

2,304 S.F.	
+1,152 S.F.	
+ 720 S.F.	
=4,176 S.F.	

8% INTERIOR LANDSCAPING / OVER 50,000 S.F.

Figure 1403.3 - Interior Landscaping

**D. Tree Removal Permit Application and Approval**

An application shall be accompanied by a written statement indicating reasons for removal of tree(s), and a description and photo of the tree(s) proposed for removal. A permit may be issued if one or more of the following conditions is present:

1. A safety hazard to pedestrians, buildings or vehicular traffic exists according to the Zoning Officer.
2. A tree is diseased, storm damaged or weakened and should be removed in the opinion of the Zoning Officer.
3. Removal is necessary to observe good forestry practice due to crowding, as determined by the Zoning Officer.
4. A development plan, as per Sec. 1404, including an Existing Tree Survey, a detailed Landscaping Plan, and a Tree Protection and Preservation Plan, is submitted for review and meets with the approval of the Zoning Officer prior to the issuance of a tree removal permit.

**1403.5 Landscaping of Freestanding Signs**

The base of all freestanding signs greater than one hundred (100) square feet and greater than fifteen (15) feet in height shall be landscaped with evergreen and deciduous shrubs as follows: square footage of sign face times 0.75 equals Landscape Units. These Landscape Units are in addition to other landscaping requirements.

**1404 APPROVAL PROCESS, ENFORCEMENT AND MAINTENANCE**

**1404.1 Submitting of Plans**

A site plan or landscaping plan, when required, shall be submitted to the Zoning Officer with every application for zoning clearance for a building or parking lot permit for any proposed use or structure, or an addition to a use or structure, and prior to the start of work on development of any land area to be used for multifamily residential, commercial or industrial uses. Site plans should be prepared by an architect or landscape architect, and landscaping plans should be prepared by a landscape architect and shall meet all the requirements of Sec. 1403 and include the following information:

- A. The site plan shall be drawn to scale and show building location, dimensions, setbacks, ingress and egress, street curbs, access ways, parking spaces, vehicular maneuvering areas, existing vegetation to remain, new landscape areas, paving, grading, fencing, curb cuts, lighting, and other improvements as may be required.
- B. The landscaping plan shall be drawn to scale and indicate the variety, quantity, size and location of all existing and proposed plant materials, as well as other landscape improvements such as earth berms, walls, fences, screens, lighting and paved areas, parking lots, driveways and protective barriers or curbing as required and proposed. Trees proposed for removal shall be documented (see Sec. 1403.4(D)).
- C. The landscaping plan shall also contain a plant list which includes the plant materials by species and their size, quantity, root type and special characteristics.
- D. A Tree Protection and Preservation Plan shall be included which indicates methods and details for protecting existing trees, shrubs and other vegetation that are to remain and are to be protected during construction.
- E. The landscape design shall be subject to the following provisions:

1. Wherever landscaping may interfere with traffic vision, the height shall be maintained at or under three (3) feet in height; placement shall meet the approval of the Zoning Officer and the City Traffic Engineer.
2. If location and circumstances dictate, plant material to be used should be resistant to salt damage and resistant to the fumes and emissions of automobiles.

#### **1404.2 Approval or Disapproval**

The Zoning Officer shall review the submitted plans and determine whether or not the minimum requirements and intent of this Ordinance have been met, prior to granting zoning clearance. The Zoning Officer shall have the right to approve or disapprove any landscape design which does not reasonably meet the requirements of this section. The granting of approval by the Zoning Officer may include such conditions as (s)he deems reasonable and necessary to carry out the intent of this Ordinance. In evaluating the landscaping/site plans, the Zoning Officer may consult other City officials such as the City Engineer and the City Forester. When consultation requests are made by the Zoning Officer, the consulted City official shall respond with a written statement of findings.

#### **1404.3 Issuance of Permits**

No Certificate of Zoning Compliance shall be issued by the Zoning Officer, and no Certificate of Occupancy shall be issued by the Building Official unless the parking and landscaping improvements have been completed or a completion bond, a cash deposit, or a certified check to cover the cost of the approved improvements, as estimated by the City Engineer, has been deposited with the Finance Department.

#### **1404.4 Completion of Improvements**

All landscaping and off-street parking and loading space improvements shall be completed prior to the occupancy of any building or the commencement of use of the land. In the event of adverse weather conditions, the Zoning Officer may authorize a one-time extension of not more than six (6) months, provided the property owner shows intent to complete the improvements as evidenced by a valid contract for completion of the required improvements.

#### **1404.5 Maintenance**

It shall be the owner's responsibility to maintain landscaped areas in a neat, clean and orderly manner, and to keep plant materials in a healthy condition. Any plants of any kind that die must be replaced within the same growing season with the same variety and size unless a change is approved by the Zoning Officer. Maintenance shall include, among other things, adequate watering, pruning, mowing, and removal of litter not only of the owner's property, but also the area between the property line and the street curb or edge of pavement. At no time shall plowed snow be deposited on woody plant materials or on the trunks of trees.

### **1405 SUBSTITUTIONS, MINIMUM STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDED PLANT LIST**

#### **1405.1 Substitutions**

If, due to seasonal planting problems or availability of plant material, plant substitutions are necessary, plant substitutions may be made after approval has been granted for a specific plan by the Zoning Officer, provided the following conditions are maintained:

- A. Any plant substitutions must meet the requirements for evergreen plant materials.
- B. Minor revisions to planting plans are acceptable if there is no reduction in the quality of plant material or no significant change in size or location of plant materials, and if the new plants are of the same general category (i.e., shade, ornamental or evergreen trees) and have the same general design characteristics (mature height, crown spread) as the materials being replaced. Proposed materials must also be compatible with the area to ensure healthy plant growth.

- C. If these criteria are not fulfilled, changes to approved plans must be resubmitted and reviewed anew.

## **1405.2 Minimum Standards**

Plant materials shall conform to the requirements described in the latest edition of "American Standards for Nursery Stock," which is published by the American Association of Nurserymen.

### **A. Size**

Plants used for screening purposes must reach a minimum height of thirty-six (36) inches within three (3) years of installation unless otherwise approved by the Zoning Officer. All plants shall be at least as large as the minimum size set forth below at the time of planting.

1. Shade trees shall be a minimum of two (2) inches in diameter, measured six (6) inches above grade, and a minimum of twelve (12) feet in height or greater when planted. Shade trees required for replacement of trees removed without a tree removal permit and in violation of Sec. 1403.5 shall be three (3) inches in diameter, measured six (6) inches above grade and fourteen (14) feet in height, or greater.
2. Ornamental trees shall be one (1) inch in diameter, measured six (6) inches above grade, and six (6) feet in height or greater when planted.
3. Evergreen trees shall be six (6) to seven (7) feet in height or greater when planted.
4. Evergreen shrubs shall be eighteen (18) to twenty-four (24) inches in height or spread or greater, depending on the variety, when planted.
5. Deciduous shrubs, dwarf and semi-dwarf shrubs shall be eighteen (18) to twenty-four (24) inches in height or spread or greater, depending on the variety, at the time of planting. Strong growing shrubs shall be three (3) to four (4) feet in height or greater when planted.

### **B. Grade**

Unless otherwise allowed for specific reasons, all trees shall have comparatively straight trunks, well developed leaders and tops, and roots characteristic of the species, cultivar or variety showing evidence of proper nursery pruning. All plants must be free of insects, diseases, mechanical injuries and other objectionable features at the time of planting.

### **C. Spacing**

Trees shall not be grouped, but instead shall be dispersed among the parking areas or around the edges of the paved areas. All other plant materials should follow the spacing recommendations in Table 1403(A).

### **D. Protective Measures**

All landscape planting beds shall be protected from damage by vehicular traffic, snow plows or other hazards with six (6) inch high continuous concrete curbing, concrete parking blocks, stone curbing, or other similar permanent protective barriers as approved by the Zoning Officer. Decomposing materials, such as wooden railroad ties or landscape timbers, shall not be allowed as a substitute for this requirement as they have a short useful life and require frequent replacement as compared with stone and concrete.

## **1405.3 Recommended Plant Species List**

Listed below are recommendations for Shade Trees, Evergreen Trees, Ornamental Trees, Evergreen Shrubs, Deciduous Shrubs, Perennial Plants and Groundcover Plants suited for use in required landscape plantings of this Ordinance. This list is not conclusive and is not intended to be restrictive. The plants suggested here should do well in public landscapes, although some may be more suited to specific locations. Each landscape site needs to be evaluated individually with regard to plant selection.

**A. Shade Trees: (Mature size 35' to 90' or more in height)**

Acer platanoides - Norway Maple (columnar varieties available)  
Acer rubrum - Red Maple (columnar varieties available)  
Acer saccharum - Sugar Maple (columnar varieties available)  
Alnus glutinosa - Common Alder and similar species  
Betula nigra - River Birch  
Carpinus betulus - European Hornbeam  
Celtis occidentalis - Common Hackberry  
Cercidiphyllum japonicum - Katsuratree  
Fagus grandifolia (or sylvatica) - American Beech (or European Beech)  
Fraxinus americana - White Ash (seedless cultivars recommended)  
Fraxinus pennsylvanica - Green Ash (seedless cultivars recommended)  
Fraxinus quadrangulata - Blue Ash  
Ginkgo biloba - Ginkgo or Maidenhair Tree (columnar varieties exist)  
Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis - Thornless Common Honeylocust  
Larix decidua - European Larch and similar species  
Metasequoia glyptostroboides - Dawn Redwood  
Phellodendron amurense - Amur Corktree  
Populus tremuloides - Quaking Aspen  
Prunus sargentii - Sargent Cherry  
Pseudolarix kaempferi - Golden Larch  
Pyrus calleryana "Bradford" - Bradford Callery Pear and cultivar  
Quercus acutissima - Sawtooth Oak  
Quercus alba - White Oak  
Quercus bicolor - Swamp White Oak  
Quercus macrocarpa - Burr Oak  
Quercus rubra - Red Oak  
Taxodium distichum - Common Baldcypress  
Tilia species - Linden (Basswood) varieties  
Ulmus parvifolia - Chinese Elm (resistant to Dutch Elm disease)

**B. Evergreen Trees: (Mature size 35' to 90' or more in height)**

Abies species - Balsam, Concolor and Fraser Fir  
Chamaecyparis species - Falsecypress (tree species only)  
Juniperus chinensis - Chinese Juniper (tree species only)  
Juniperus virginiana - Eastern Redcedar (tree species only)  
Picea abies - Norway Spruce  
Picea glauca - White Spruce  
Picea pungens - Colorado Spruce  
Pinus cembra - Swiss Stone Pine  
Pinus densiflora - Japanese Red Pine  
Pinus flexilis - Limber Pine  
Pinus nigra - Austrian Pine  
Pinus resinosa - Red Pine  
Pinus strobus - Eastern White Pine  
Pinus sylvestris - Scotch Pine  
Pseudotsuga menziesii - Douglas Fir  
Taxus species - Yew (tree form species)  
Thuja occidentalis - American Arborvitae (tree form species)  
Tsuga canadensis - Canadian Hemlock (tree form species and cultivars)

**C. Ornamental Trees: (Mature size 15' to 35' in height)**

Acer species - Amur, Hedge, Japanese, Paperbark and Trident Maple  
Aesculus species - Bottlebrush and Red Buckeye

*Alnus cordata* (or *glutinosa*) - Italian Alder (or European Alder)  
*Amelanchier* species - Serviceberry  
*Betula populifolia* - Gray Birch  
*Caragana arborescens* - Siberian Peashrub  
*Carpinus caroliniana* - American Hornbeam or Musclewood  
*Cercis canadensis* - Eastern Redbud  
*Chionanthus virginicus* - White Fringetree  
*Cornus* species - Dogwood (tree species only)  
*Crataegus* species - Hawthorn  
*Halesia carolina* - Carolina Silverbell  
*Hamamelis virginiana* - Common Witchhazel  
*Magnolia* species - Magnolia  
*Malus* species - Crabapple  
*Ostrya virginiana* - American Hophornbeam or Ironwood  
*Prunus cerasifera* - Cherry Plum and cultivars  
*Syringa reticulata* - Japanese Lilac Tree  
*Viburnum* species - Viburnum (tree type species)  
 NOTE: Some evergreen species may be used as ornamentals.

**D. Deciduous Shrubs: (Mature size 3' to 15' in height)**

*Acer* species - Maple (shrub varieties such as *A. compestre compactum*)  
*Aesculus parviflora* - Bottlebrush Buckeye  
*Aronia* species - Chokeberry (Red-, Black- and Purple-fruited)  
*Berberis* species - Barberry shrub cultivars  
*Calycanthus floridus* - Carolina Allspice  
*Caragana arborescens* "Nana" - Dwarf Siberian Peashrub  
*Chaenomeles* species - Dwarf Flowering Quince  
*Clethra alnifolia* - Summersweet Clethra  
*Cornus* species - Dogwood (shrub varieties only)  
*Cotoneaster* species - Cotoneaster shrub varieties  
*Enkianthus campanulatus* - Redvein Enkianthus  
*Auonymus alatus* and species - Winged Euonymus or Burning Bush  
*Forsythia* species - Border Forsythia  
*Fothergilla* species - Dwarf and Large Fothergilla  
*Hamamelis vernalis* - Vernal Witchhazel  
*Hydrangea* species - Smooth, Oakleaf and Bigleaf Hydrangea  
*Hypericum prolificum* - Shrubbery St. Johnswort and related species  
*Ilex verticillata* - Common Winterberry ad cultivars  
*Kerria japonica* - Japanese Kerria  
*Kilkwitzia amabilis* - Beautybush  
*Ligustrum* species - Privet  
*Lindera benzoin* - Spicebush  
*Lonicera* species - Honeysuckle  
*Myrica pennsylvanica* - Northern Bayberry  
*Physocarpus opulifolius* - Eastern Nienbbark and cultivars  
*Potentilla fruticosa* - Bush Cinquefoil and cultivars  
*Ramnus frangula* - Glossy Buckthorn and cultivars  
*Rhododendron* deciduous species - Azalea cultivars and hybrids  
*Rhus* species - Sumac shrub varieties  
*Rosa* species - Shrub Rose  
*Spiraea* species - Spirea shrub varieties and cultivars  
*Stephanandra incisa* - Cutleaf Stephanandra and cultivars  
*Syringa* (*meyeri*, *microphylla*, *patula*, *vulgaris*) - Lilac shrubs  
*Viburnum* species - Viburnum shrub species (excellent native plant)  
*Weigela florida* - Old Fashioned Weigela and cultivars  
*Yucca filamentosa* - Adam's Needle (evergreen, but limited in size)

**E. Evergreen Shrubs: (Mature size 3' to 15' in height)**

Buxus microphylla l- Littleleaf Boxwood  
Chamaecyparis species - Falsecypress (shrub and dwarf varieties)  
Euonymus fortunei varieties - Wintercreeper Euonymus, shrub form  
Ilex x meserveae - Meserve Holly (Blue Boy and Blue Girl, etc.)  
Juniperus chinensis, communis, sabina - Juniper shrub cultivars  
Kalmia latifolia - Mountain Laurel  
Mahonia aquifolium - Oregon Grape Holly  
Picea varieties - Spruce (shrub and dwarf varieties)  
Pinus aristata - Bristlecone Pine  
Pinus mugo - Mugho Pine  
Pinus species - Pine (shrub and dwarf varieties)  
Rhododendron evergreen species - Rhododendron cultivars and hybrids  
Taxus species - Yew (shrub and dwarf cultivars)  
Thuja species - Arborvitae (shrub and dwarf cultivars)  
Tsuga canadensis, caroliniana - Hemlock (shrub and dwarf cultivars)

**F. Perennial Plants: (Mature size 1' to 3' or more in height)**

Astilbe species (Perennial False Spiraea varieties)  
Chrysanthemum species (Garden Mum and Daisy varieties)  
Coreopsis species (Tickseed varieties)  
Dicentra species (Bleeding Heart varieties)  
Echinacea species (Coneflower varieties)  
Ferns (fall under various botanical names)  
Grasses (fall under various botanical names)  
Hemerocallis species (Daylily varieties)  
Heuchera species (Coral Bells varieties)  
Hosta species (Plantain Lily varieties)  
Iris species (Iris varieties)  
Peonia species (Peony varieties)  
Rudbeckia species (Coneflower varieties)

**G. Groundcover Plants: (Mature size 3" to 24" in height)**

Ajuga species (Carpet Bugle)  
Bergenia species (Bergenia varieties)  
Convallaria majalis (Lilly-of-the-Valley)  
Cotoneaster species (Cotoneaster low-growing varieties)  
Euonymus fortunei (Wintercreeper)  
Ferns (fall under various botanical names)  
Festuca ovina glauca (Blue Fescue)  
Grasses (fall under various botanical names)  
Hedera helix (English Ivy varieties)  
Hemerocallis species (Daylily varieties)  
Hosta species (Plantain Lily varieties)  
Iberis sempervirens (Candytuft)  
Juniperus horizontalis (Creeping Juniper and cultivars)  
Juniperus procumbens (Japgarden Juniper and cultivars)  
Pachysandra terminalis (Japanese Spurge)  
Phlox subulata (Creeping Phlox)  
Polygonum species (Fleece Flower varieties)  
Sedum species (Stonecrop)  
Vinca minor (Periwinkle)  
Waldsteinia species (Barren Strawberry varieties)