

LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES



Philadelphia
City Planning Commission
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

2024



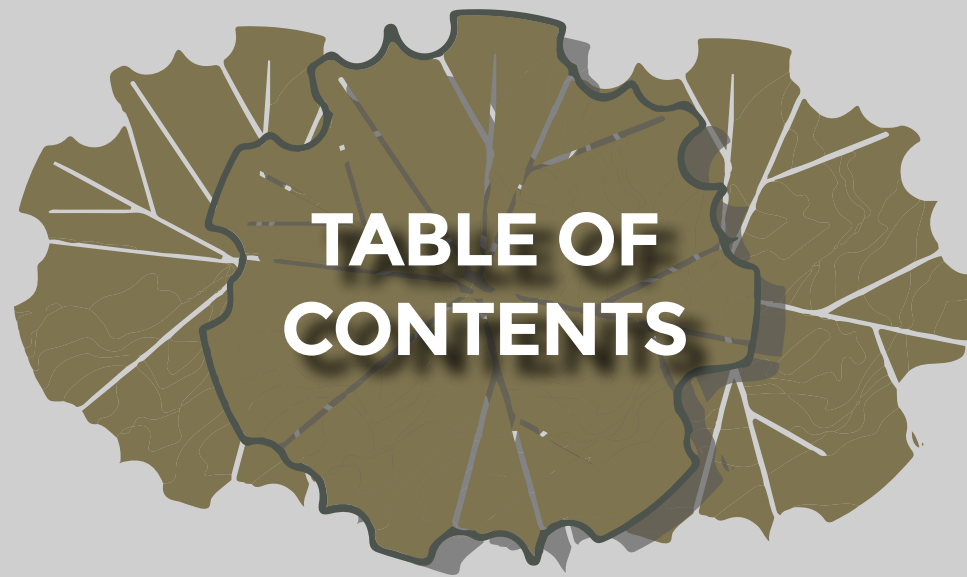


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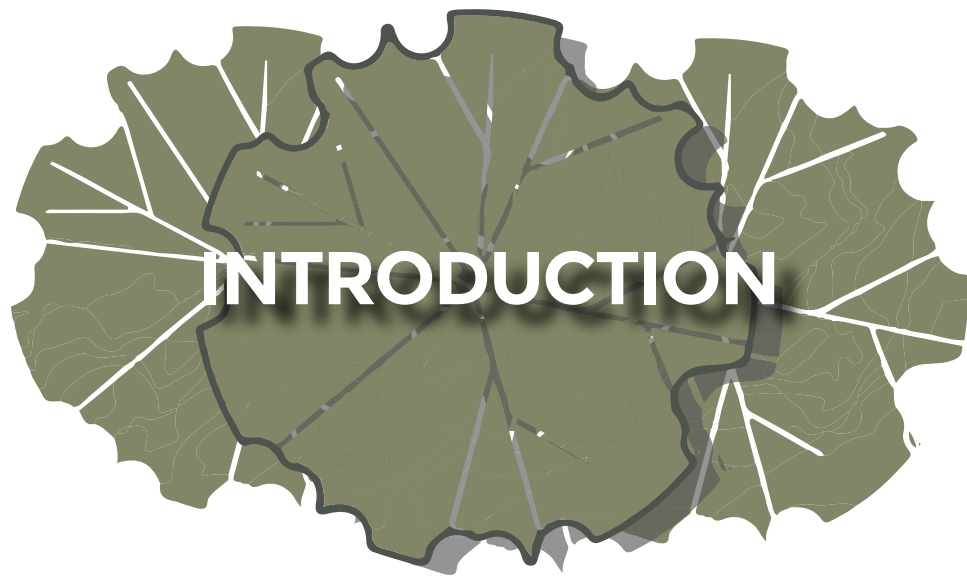
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INTRODUCTION

This **Landscape Design Guidelines** document is for use by developers, design professionals, attorneys, and others involved in the zoning permit application process. It consolidates and clarifies the Zoning Code requirements and Planning Commission regulations that cover landscapes. Some zoning requirements have been simplified or omitted for ease of use. Planning Commission staff are available to answer questions via email, at planning@phila.gov. This document details code requirements that became effective on September 13, 2022.

 **The Philly Tree Plan** guides the growth and protection of Philadelphia's tree canopy. The plan heavily references the landscape requirements in the Zoning Code and Planning Commission regulations. Some of the goals of the Philly Tree Plan are:

-  Plant trees in areas of high poverty
-  Plant trees, shrubs, and flowers that are well-suited to the climate of Philadelphia
-  Capture carbon dioxide emissions and improve air quality
-  Support the health and diversity of native plants, animals, and insects
-  Reduce summertime temperatures
-  Create attractive City spaces
-  Capture stormwater
-  Capture rainwater and reduce flooding
-  Preserve heritage trees
-  Reduce noise and light pollution

KEY TERMS

The following terms are used throughout the **Landscape Design Guidelines** document, the Zoning Code, and the Planning Commission regulations.

Caliper:

The trunk diameter of a nursery tree.

Development:

The erection or relocation of a structure, an alteration to an existing structure that results in a change in gross floor area, or a lot adjustment.

Diameter at Breast Height (DBH):

The trunk diameter of a standing tree (see page 23).

Earth Moving Activity:

Any construction or other activity that disturbs the surface of land including, but not limited to, excavations, embankments, land development, subdivision development, and the moving, depositing, or storing of soil, rock, or earth.

Environmental Restoration Project:

Site clearing, earth moving, and re-planting intended to repair an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed. Includes work to implement stream bed, flood plain, or forest restoration; wetland or meadow creation; or green stormwater infrastructure improvements.

Heritage Tree:

Any tree that has a diameter breast height of 24 in. or more and is of a species listed on the Department of Parks and Recreation  **Heritage Tree Species List**.

Landscape Buffer:

An area of trees, shrubs, and fencing designed to reduce noise, light, and air pollution from abutting properties, highways, and railroads.

Parking Lot:

Any outdoor area or space for the parking of more than three motor vehicles, including any spaces, aisles, and driveways, as defined in the Zoning Code.

Site Clearing:

The cutting or removal of trees, grubbing of roots, or removal or filling of building foundations to create a site that is free of physical obstructions to development. This shall not include tree removal that is conducted to address a life safety issue identified by the Department of Licenses & Inspections.

Soil Volume:

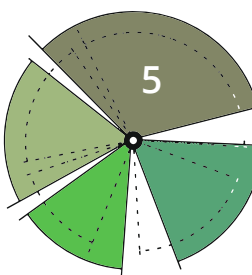
The amount of soil needed to support the health and growth of trees and shrubs.

Street Tree:

A tree that is planted in the sidewalk of a public street right-of-way.

Yard Tree:

Any tree required to be planted in the front, rear, or side yard of a lot.



ZONING CODE SECTIONS AND APPLICABILITY

The Philadelphia Zoning Code provides two sections of landscape requirements: Section 14-705 Landscape and Trees and Section 14-803(5) Parking Landscape and Screening. The information below clarifies the rules contained in each section and when they apply.

Section 14-705, On-site Landscape and Trees

What Does it Regulate?

Section 14-705 regulates the removal of trees and landscape planting for development

When Does it Regulate?

Development and associated site clearing on **existing lots greater than 5,000 square feet** are subject to all requirements of Section 14-705, **EXCEPT:**

- Lots with a principal urban agricultural use.
- Environmental restoration projects.
- Affordable housing developments.

Site clearing without development on existing lots greater than 5,000 sq. ft is subject to Section 14-705(1)(e), Preservation of Heritage Trees and Section 14-705(1)(f), Tree Replacement Requirements, **EXCEPT:**

- Lots with a principal single-family, two-family, parks and open space, or urban agricultural use.

In Section 14-705(2), Street Tree Requirements:

Development and associated site clearing on **existing lots greater than 5,000 sq. ft.** and/or subdivision of three or more lots is subject to all requirements, **EXCEPT**

- Lots with a principal single-family, two-family, parks and open space, or urban agriculture use.

Are My Existing Conditions “Grandfathered?”

Sometimes. Requirements contained in Section 14-701(5)d, Landscape Buffering Between Different Zoning Districts, only apply at the time a lot is developed, and no existing development shall be required to install a buffer landscape because of a change in the zoning district classification of an abutting lot.

Requirements contained in Section 14-701(5)e, **Yard Trees**, only apply at the time a lot is developed, **EXCEPT AS FOLLOWS:**

- Where there is an existing structure and the development would not increase the number of dwelling units or the gross floor area by 25% or more; **or**
- Where structures are destroyed and replaced, as set forth in Section 14-305(10), Reconstruction of Destroyed Structures).

Section 14-803(5), Parking Lot Landscape and Screening

What Does it Regulate?

For parking lots, off-street loading spaces, and drive-throughs – interior landscape, screening from public streets, and buffers from residential districts for parking lots. Single-family and two-family uses are not subject to these requirements. Vehicle sale and rental businesses are required to provide screening from public streets, but no other parking lot landscaping.

When Does it Regulate?

Development that results in any new structure or increases the number of dwelling units or the gross floor area of an existing structure by greater than 25%.

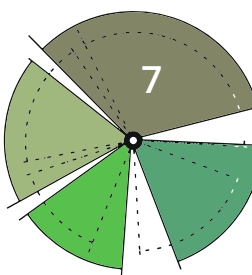
Development of a standalone parking lot.

Expansion or alteration of parking spaces in an existing parking lot.

Change of Use for properties greater than 50,000 sq. ft. in size where the change of use affects 75% or greater of the existing gross floor area.








Are My Existing Conditions “Grandfathered?”

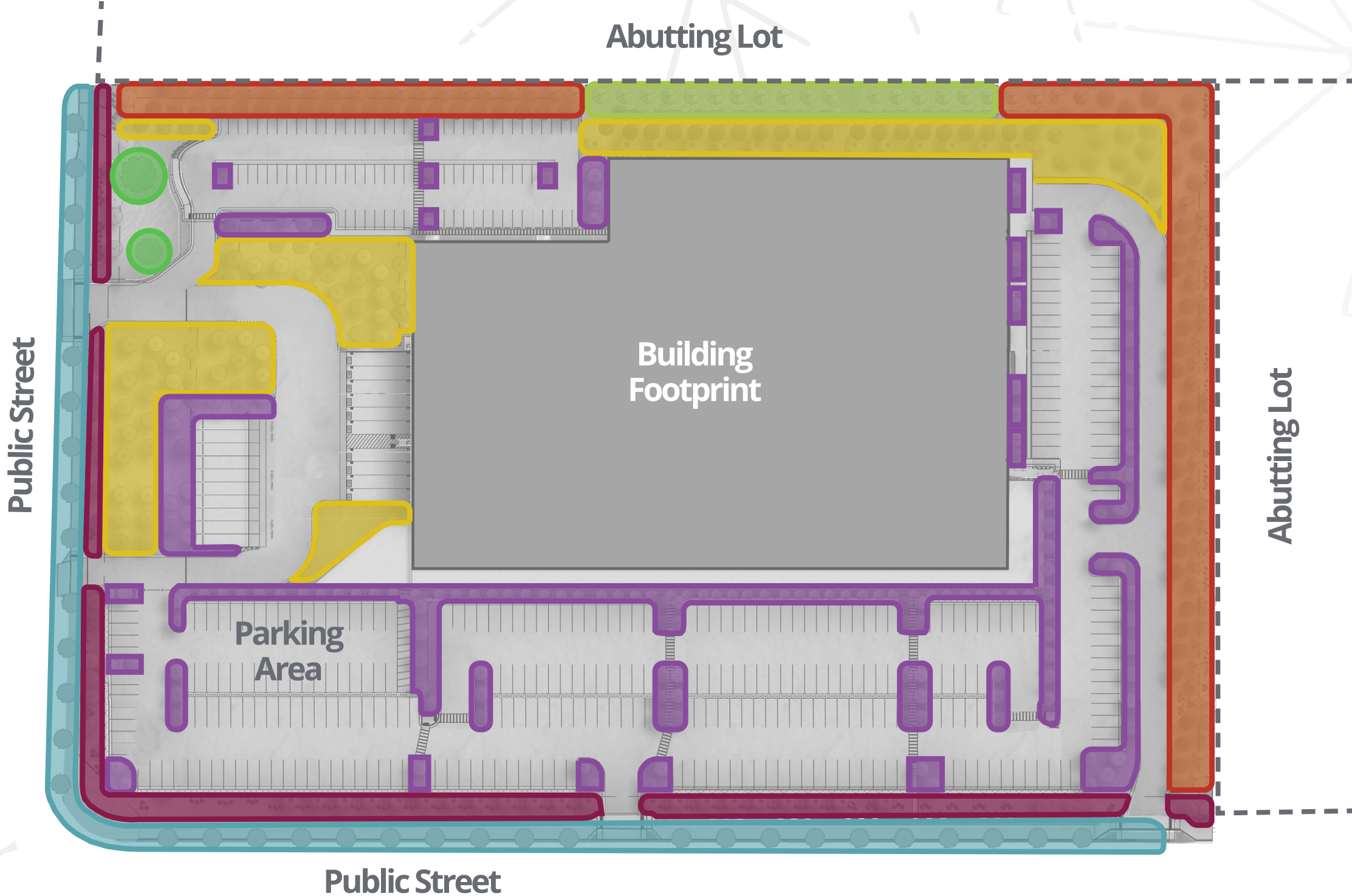
Sometimes. All landscape requirements shall apply to the entire lot for any development or changes to structures or uses on the property as listed above.



Landscape requirement categories (Plan)

LEGEND:

-  Heritage Tree
-  Land Use Buffering
-  Yard Tree Area
-  Street Tree Area
-  Parking Lot Buffer from Residential Districts
-  Parking Lot Buffer from Public Streets
-  Parking Lot Interior Landscaping



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A landscape and tree preservation plan must be submitted with a zoning permit application, where applicable. The plan must be prepared by either a licensed architect, licensed landscape architect, licensed professional civil engineer, or a certified arborist. It must include specific information about the proposed landscape plan and existing trees, per Section 9.4 of the Planning Commission Regulations. The requirements are listed here.

GENERAL PLAN INFORMATION

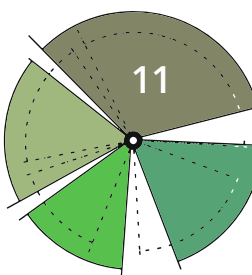
- ✓ North arrow, scale, and date. The landscape plan shall be drawn at a scale of one inch equal to 100 feet or less;
- ✓ Seal of design professional that prepared the plan;
- ✓ Zoning table that identifies each landscape requirement, with calculations and plant counts showing that the plan meets these requirements;
- ✓ Sight triangles and heights of any plants located in the sight triangle; and
- ✓ If needed, written landscape waiver request, including a list of Code provisions from which waivers are requested, a reasoning for the waivers, and calculation of in-lieu fee payment.

EXISTING TREES

- ✓ Existing trees to be removed and their size, shown in plan and tabular form;
- ✓ Existing trees to be preserved and their caliper size, shown in plan and tabular form;
- ✓ Certified arborist report if any trees are to be preserved or removed;
- ✓ Certified arborist report if any trees to be preserved or removed may be exempt from tree replacement requirements; **and**
- ✓ Calculation of tree preservation credits, shown in tabular form.
- ✓ Any additional information the executive director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission deems necessary in order to determine compliance with these regulations and the Zoning Code.

PROPOSED LANDSCAPE

- ✓ Landscape areas that are required by the Zoning Code, including dimensions that meet the Code.
- ✓ Proposed trees, shrubs, grasses, perennials, and groundcover shown in plan with species labeled;
- ✓ Proposed trees, shrubs, grasses, perennials, and groundcover shown in a tabular form indicating species, count, and size;
- ✓ Proposed fences and walls, shown in the plan;
- ✓ Proposed fence and wall detail; and
- ✓ Proposed location and total square footage of parking areas open to the sky



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Zoning Table

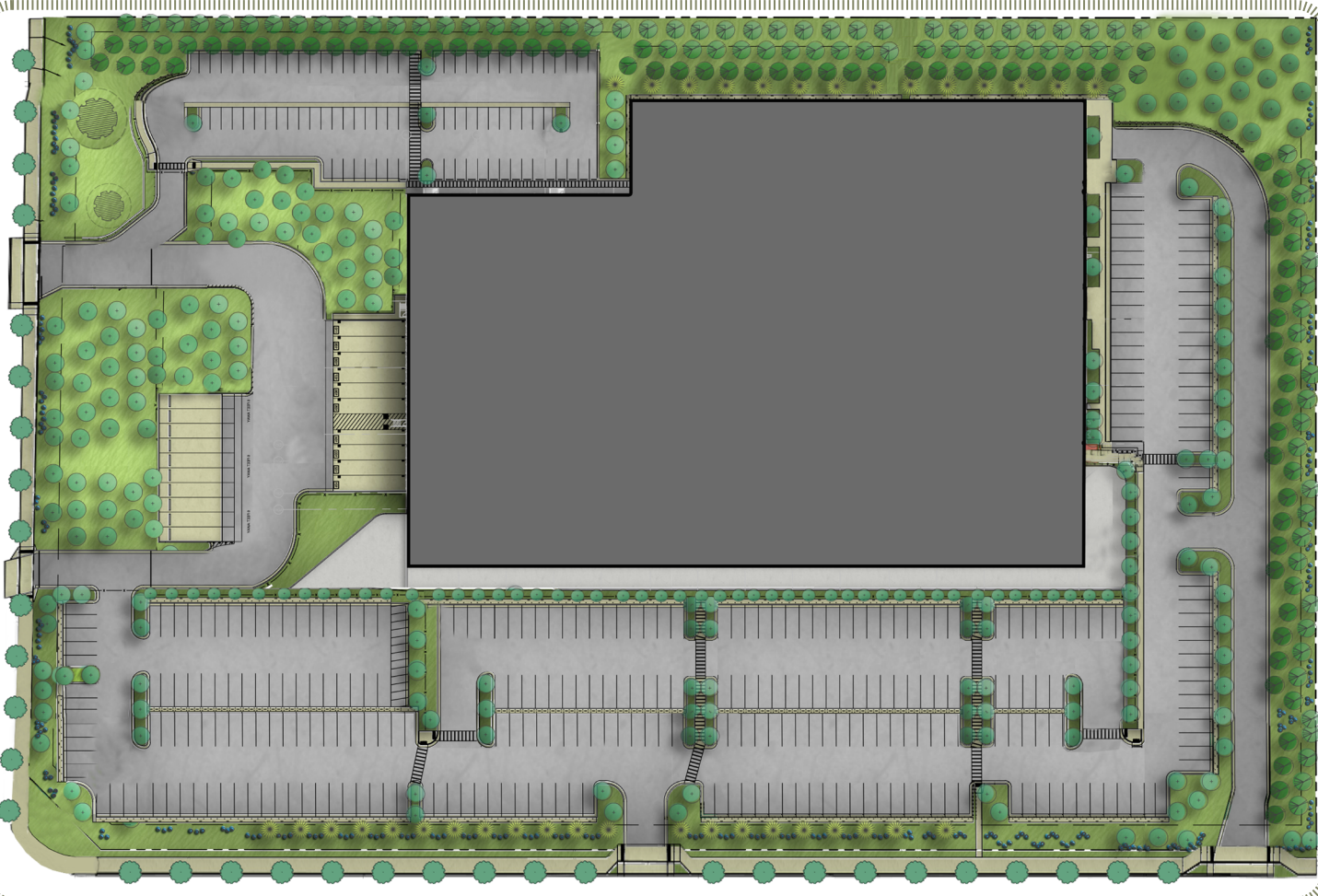
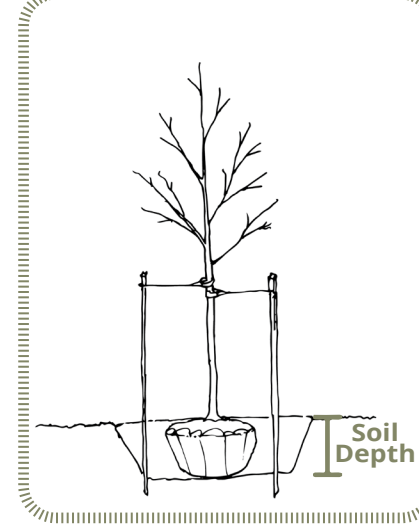
Proposed Plant List

Soil Depth Detail

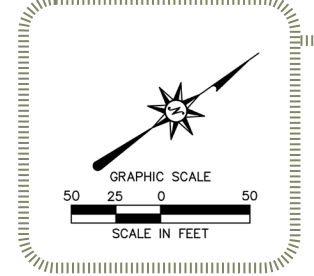
Name and Seal of Design Professional

| ITEM # | ITEM | REQUIREMENTS | PREVIOUSLY APPROVED (PER PERMIT NO. OR OTHERWISE) | PROPOSED (ITEM #1-OUT) | CHANGE (FROM PREV. APPROV. AND PROPOSED) | VARIANCE | CODE REFERENCE |
|--------|---|------------------------|---|------------------------|--|----------|----------------|
| 1 | MAX. OCCUPIED AREA (S OF LOT) | 10 PERCENT | 10 PERCENT | 10 PERCENT | NO CHANGE | NO | B4-91222A.2 |
| 2 | MIN. FRONT YARD | 20 FEET | 10 FEET | 20 FEET | ADDITIONAL 10 FEET | NO | B4-91222A.4E |
| 3 | MIN. SIDE YARD | 10 FEET | 10 FEET | 10 FEET | NO CHANGE | NO | B4-91222A.4E |
| 4 | MIN. REAR YARD | 10 FEET | 10 FEET | 10 FEET | NO CHANGE | NO | B4-91222A.4E |
| 5 | MAX. HEIGHT | 30 FEET | 40 FEET | 47 FEET | ADDITIONAL 7 FEET | NO | B4-91222A.2 |
| 6 | MAX. FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR) (S OF LOT AREA) | 200 PERCENT | 10 PERCENT | 10 PERCENT | NO CHANGE | NO | B4-91222A.2 |
| 7 | REQUIRED PARKING IN INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS | SEE REQUIREMENTS TABLE | 412 SPACES | 200 PLANT SPACES | HORIZONTAL ROW | NO | TABLE 14-803-2 |
| 8 | REQUIRED ADA & VAN ACCESSIBLE PARKING | SEE REQUIREMENTS TABLE | 1 ADA SPACE | 1 ADA SPACE | RELOCATION BY 1 ADA SPACE | NO | TABLE 14-803-4 |
| 9 | DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS FOR PARKING SPACES AND AISLES | SEE REQUIREMENTS TABLE | 18 FEET | 18 FEET | NO CHANGE | NO | TABLE 14-803-1 |
| 10 | REQUIRED BIKEWAY SPACES | SEE REQUIREMENTS TABLE | 18 SPACES | 18 SPACES | NO CHANGE | NO | TABLE 14-803-1 |
| 11 | OFF-STREET LOADING REQUIREMENTS | SEE REQUIREMENTS TABLE | 17 SPACES | 10 SPACES | RELOCATION BY 7 SPACES | NO | TABLE 14-803-1 |
| 12 | LANDSCAPE AREA WIDTH | SEE REQUIREMENTS TABLE | 17 MIN. | 17 MIN. | NO CHANGE | NO | B4-91222A.4E |

| SYMBOL | QUANTITY | BOTANICAL NAME | COMMON NAME | CALIPER/SIZE |
|------------------------|----------|--|-----------------------------|--------------|
| DECIDUOUS TREES | | | | |
| 1 | 10 | Acacia saligna 'Santolina' | Winged Seed Mimic | 2.5" DBH |
| 2 | 10 | Campanula medium 'Lobelia' | Common European Honeysuckle | 2.5" DBH |
| 3 | 10 | Campanula medium 'Lobelia' | Common European Honeysuckle | 2.5" DBH |
| 4 | 10 | Campanula medium 'Lobelia' | Common European Honeysuckle | 2.5" DBH |
| 5 | 10 | Campanula medium 'Lobelia' | Common European Honeysuckle | 2.5" DBH |
| 6 | 10 | Campanula medium 'Lobelia' | Common European Honeysuckle | 2.5" DBH |
| 7 | 10 | Campanula medium 'Lobelia' | Common European Honeysuckle | 2.5" DBH |
| 8 | 10 | Campanula medium 'Lobelia' | Common European Honeysuckle | 2.5" DBH |
| 9 | 10 | Campanula medium 'Lobelia' | Common European Honeysuckle | 2.5" DBH |
| 10 | 10 | Campanula medium 'Lobelia' | Common European Honeysuckle | 2.5" DBH |
| EVERGREEN TREES | | | | |
| 11 | 10 | Thuja occidentalis 'Smaragd' | Green Giant | 2.5" DBH |
| 12 | 10 | Thuja occidentalis 'Smaragd' | Green Giant | 2.5" DBH |
| SHRUBS | | | | |
| 13 | 10 | Hydrangea macrophylla 'Endless Summer' | Endless Summer Hydrangea | 2.5" DBH |
| 14 | 10 | Hydrangea macrophylla 'Endless Summer' | Endless Summer Hydrangea | 2.5" DBH |
| 15 | 10 | Hydrangea macrophylla 'Endless Summer' | Endless Summer Hydrangea | 2.5" DBH |
| 16 | 10 | Hydrangea macrophylla 'Endless Summer' | Endless Summer Hydrangea | 2.5" DBH |
| 17 | 10 | Hydrangea macrophylla 'Endless Summer' | Endless Summer Hydrangea | 2.5" DBH |
| 18 | 10 | Hydrangea macrophylla 'Endless Summer' | Endless Summer Hydrangea | 2.5" DBH |
| 19 | 10 | Hydrangea macrophylla 'Endless Summer' | Endless Summer Hydrangea | 2.5" DBH |
| 20 | 10 | Hydrangea macrophylla 'Endless Summer' | Endless Summer Hydrangea | 2.5" DBH |



| PROPOSED LEGEND | |
|---------------------|--|
| [Solid line] | PROPERTY LINE |
| [Dashed line] | EXISTING EASEMENT |
| [Dotted line] | RIGHT OF WAY |
| [Dash-dot line] | SETBACK LINE |
| [Thick solid line] | PROPOSED CONCRETE CURB |
| [Thin solid line] | PROPOSED RETAINING WALL |
| [Thick dashed line] | PROPOSED CONCRETE |
| [Circle with 'P'] | PROPOSED SIGN |
| [Circle with 'C'] | PROPOSED PARKING COUNT |
| [Circle with 'D'] | DECIDUOUS TREE |
| [Circle with 'E'] | EVERGREEN TREE |
| [Circle with 'S'] | SHRUBS/GRASSES |
| [Circle with 'H'] | EXISTING HERITAGE TREE TO REMAIN |
| [Circle with 'R'] | PROPOSED REPLACEMENT TREE FOR HERITAGE TREES |
| [Circle with 'I'] | PROPOSED INTERIOR LANDSCAPING |



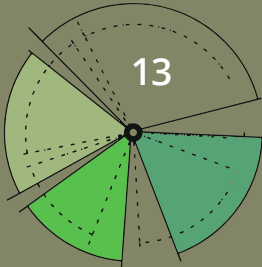
PROPOSED ONE STORY BUILDING DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT ADDRESS
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Drawn
Reviewed
Scale
Project No.
Date
CAD File
Title
SITE RENDERING
Sheet No.
C-2.0

Space for PCPC stamp(s)

Existing and Proposed Vegetation

North Arrow and Scale

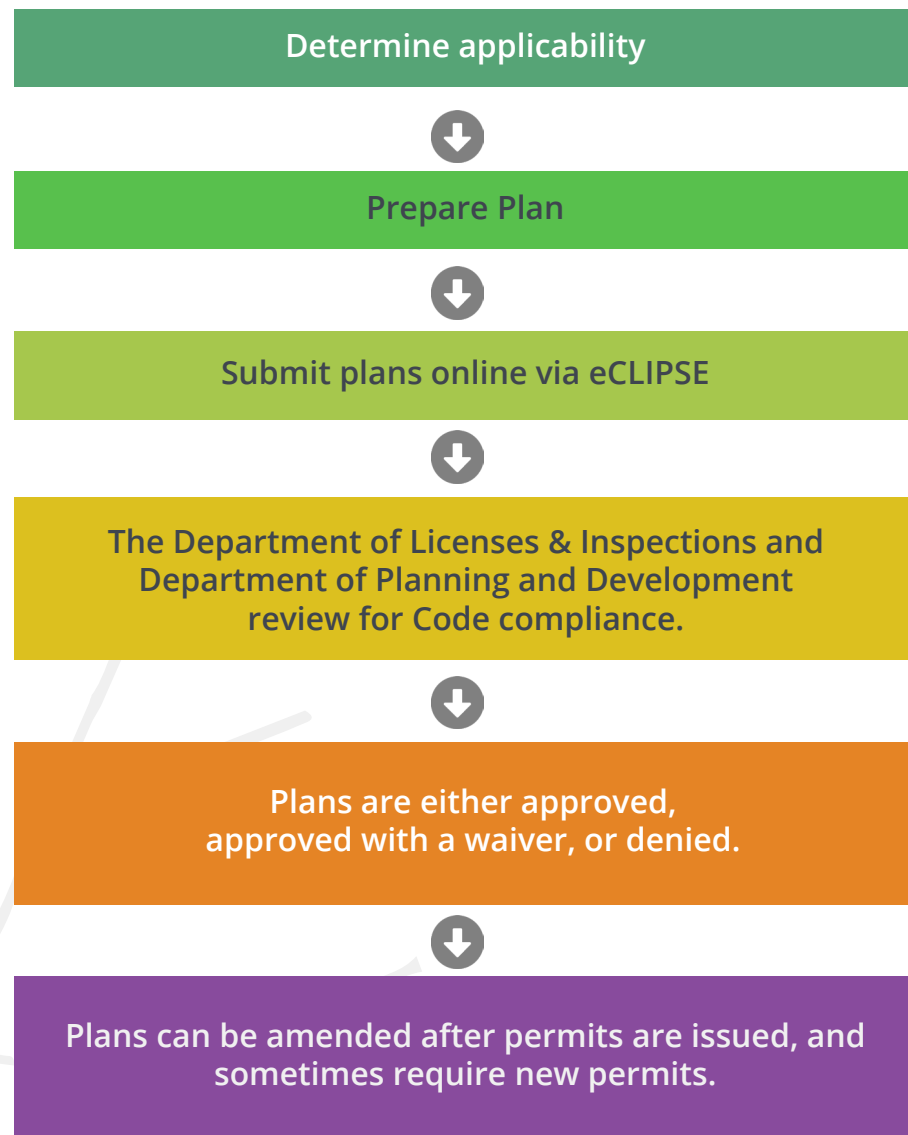


Plans Showing Existing and Proposed Vegetation

Other Submission Requirements

- Fence/ Wall Detail
- Arborist Report
- Waiver Request (Optional)

REVIEW PROCESS

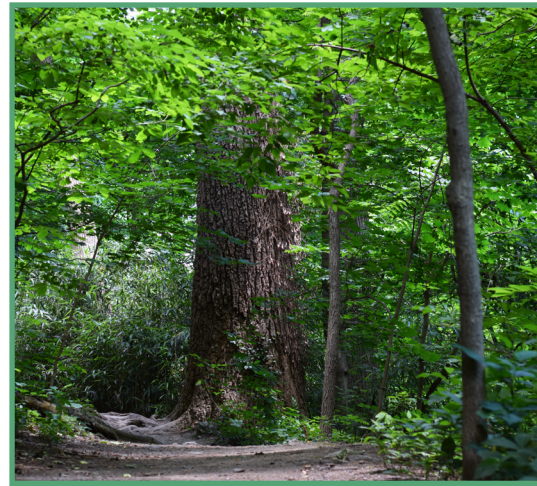


GENERAL LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS

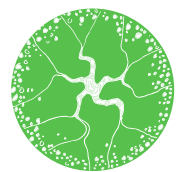
Landscape plans must provide enough space and soil volume for trees and plants to survive and thrive. It's also important to pick suitable types of plants for each location on a property and Philadelphia's climate. This includes a preference for plant species native to the Mid-Atlantic region and Eastern United States. The general landscape requirements include the following types of standards:

- ✓ **Required Plant Species:** Only plant species from the Planning Commission plant list may be used (See "Plant List" on page 43).
- ✓ **Minimum Plant Size:** Required trees must have a minimum caliper of 2 in., except for evergreen species, which must be at least 5 ft.in height.
- ✓ **Minimum Plant Spacing:** Trees must have a minimum spacing of 12 ft. from other trees. Shrubs must have a minimum spacing of 3 ft. from other trees and shrubs.
- ✓ **Minimum Soil Volume:** 36 in. of soil depth shall be provided for all ball and burlap (B&B) plants. 18 in. of soil depth shall be provided for container plants.
- ✓ **Shrub Replacement:** A maximum of 20% of required shrubs may be replaced one-for-one with a tall grass species.
- ✓ **Sight Triangle Requirements:** Plants that exceed 2.5 ft. in height at maturity are not allowed in sight triangles.

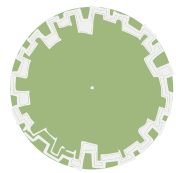
ON-SITE AND STREET TREES



LEGEND:



Heritage Trees



Tree Replacement



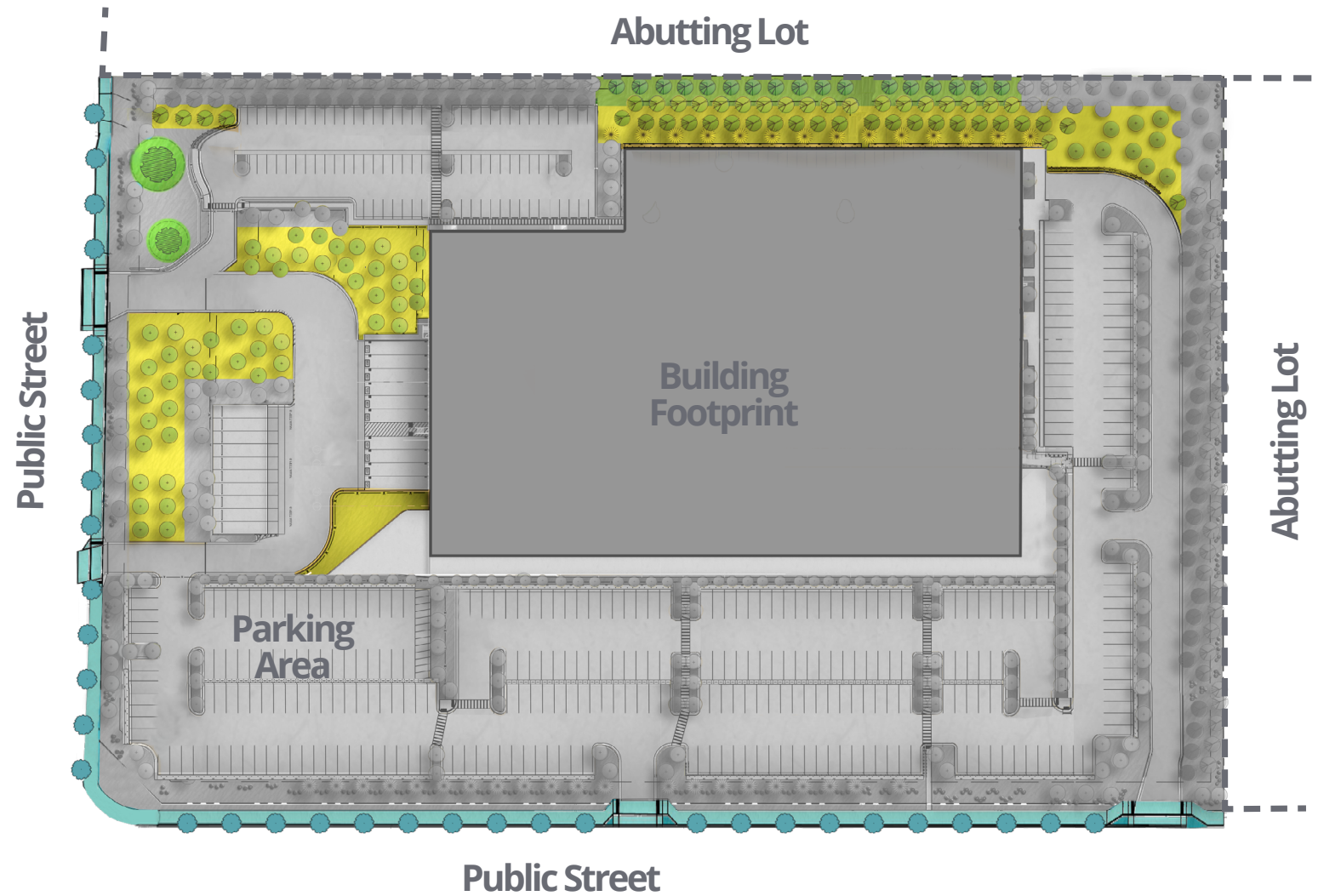
*Landscape Buffering
Between Different
Zoning Districts*



Yard Trees



Street Trees





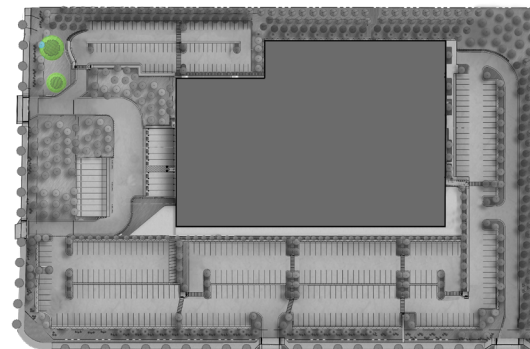
Special exception approval is needed to remove a heritage tree except when one of the following conditions apply:

- The tree is located:
 - On a property less than 70 acres in size; zoned for industrial uses (I-1, I-2, I-3, or I-P); and contains a principal use in the industrial or distribution/warehouse and storage use categories, and includes no residential uses;
 - At least 75 feet from the nearest public street;
 - At least 75 feet from the nearest property zoned Residential (RSD, RSA, RTA, RM, RMX), Commercial (CA), Commercial Mixed-use (CMX), Special Purpose (SP), or IRMX.
- A certified arborist has determined that the tree is dead, damaged, diseased, or a threat to public health or safety.
- The Streets Department has determined that the tree is in the way of providing public services or is hazardous to traffic, bicyclists, or pedestrians.
- The Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development (PAID) owns the property and it is subject to City requirements pertaining to the Industrial and Commercial Development Fund.

ON-SITE AND STREET TREES



Heritage Trees



Heritage trees are a valuable resource to the environment. If removed, it will take decades for a newly planted tree to replace the value of a mature heritage tree. The code defines a heritage tree as any tree that has a diameter of 24 in. DBH or more and is a species listed on the [Department of Parks and Recreation Heritage Tree Species List](#).

All removed heritage trees must be replaced according to the Tree Replacement Requirements in Section 14-705(1)(g). See page 20.

Example of A Tree Preservation Plan

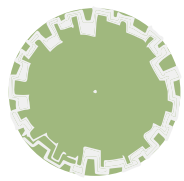
LEGEND:

-  Heritage Tree
-  Other Tree
-  Tree Proposed for Removal





ON-SITE AND STREET TREES



Tree Replacement

This section explains standards for replacing trees that are removed because of development activity. These standards are an important part of maintaining Philadelphia's tree canopy.

All healthy trees on a property with a DBH of 2.5 in. or larger and are removed, must be replaced. The total caliper of replacement trees must equal the total DBH of trees removed from the site. Replacement trees planted on an abutting property count toward the total DBH. Any new trees planted to meet the requirements of the Zoning Code may be deducted from the total tree replacement requirement.

Some tree removals are exempt from replacement requirements. Exemptions are granted for trees removed under any of the following conditions, as determined by a certified arborist:

- The tree is dead, damaged, or diseased;
- The tree is listed on the Pennsylvania Invasive Species List; or
- The tree is a danger to life or property.

Where total removal of healthy trees is equal to or more than 24 in. DBH, applicants must provide mailed notice of tree removal to the District Councilmember and the Director of the Office of Sustainability prior to Zoning Permit approval and tree removal.

THE ARBORIST REPORT

An arborist report is important in providing information regarding the health and condition of specific trees, that the cause of the problem, and actions which may be taken to remedy the problem. Arborist reports are also important to the city development services as they help determine which trees can be safely removed without causing undue loss to the community. An Arborist Report may include:

- Outline of Goals and objectives of the report
- Assignment Description
- Tree Assessment
 - Heritage Tree Risk Assessment
 - Heritage Tree Longevity and Health review
 - Woodland sampling
 - Mapping
 - Report of findings
- Separate detailed tree survey sheets with:
 - Tree reference number
 - Species
 - Stem diameter
 - Physiological condition
- Category grading/Structural condition
- Management recommendations
- Limits of the Assignment or Scope
- Documents/Site Plans
- Testing and Analysis Methods

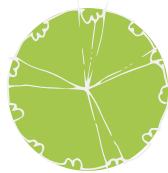
TREE REMOVAL NOTIFICATION

- Where total removal of healthy trees > 24 in. DBH, mailed notice must be provided to the District Councilmember and the Director of the Office of Sustainability
- Proof of Mailing uploaded to eCLIPSE.
- Alternatively, applications reviewed by the Zoning Board of Adjustment or Civic Design Review Committee will satisfy this requirement.

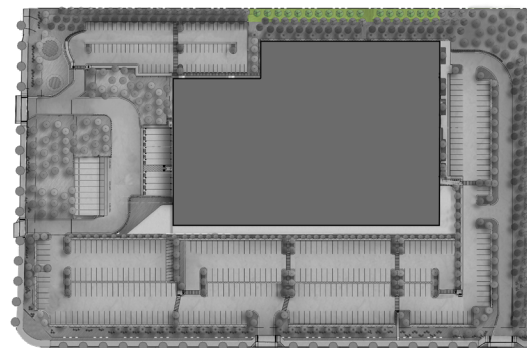


LANDSCAPE BUFFERING BETWEEN DIFFERENT ZONING DISTRICTS

ON-SITE AND STREET TREES



Landscape Buffering Between Different Zoning Districts



A landscape buffer is a planted landscape bed designed to reduce noise, light, and air pollution from abutting properties, highways, and railroads.

Where is a Buffer Required?

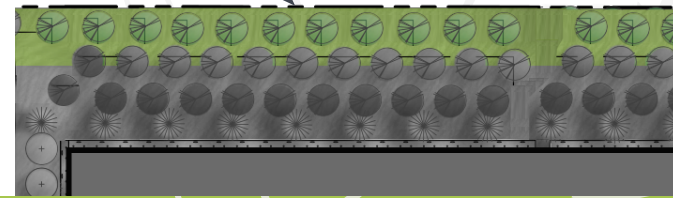
Along non-primary street frontages and the side and rear of a property that meets any of the following conditions:

- ✓ Located in a Residential Multi-Family (RM) or Residential Mixed-Use (RMX) zoning district next to a lot in a Residential Single-Family (RSA or RSD) or Residential Two-Family (RTA) zoning district
- ✓ Located in a Commercial (CA), Commercial Mixed-Use (CMX), Industrial (I, IRMX, or ICMX), or Special Purpose (SP) zoning district next to a lot in a Residential (RM, RMX, RSA, RSD, or RTA) zoning district.

Along "non-primary" street frontages and the side and rear of a property that is next to a railroad or any of the highways listed in Section 14-705 (1).(d).(1).(c).

Landscape buffer between different zoning districts (Plan)

Min. 8 ft. Buffer



Note: At least 50% of a landscape buffer's required trees must be an evergreen species.

Landscape buffer between zoning districts and highways

Landscape buffer between zoning districts and railroads



Min. 8 ft. Buffer

One tree and three shrubs per 20 LF/ Fence, wall, or berm.

Min. 8 ft. Buffer

One tree and three shrubs per 20 LF/ Fence, wall, or berm.

Landscape buffer between different zoning districts

| Building on the lot | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Zoning Districts | |
| RSA/ RSD | Yellow |
| RTA | Light Yellow |
| ALL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS | Orange |



| Building on the abutting lot | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Zoning Districts | |
| RM/ RMX | Orange |
| CA/ CMX | Red |
| I/ IRMX | Purple |
| ICMX/ SP | Light Purple |

Min. 8 ft. Buffer

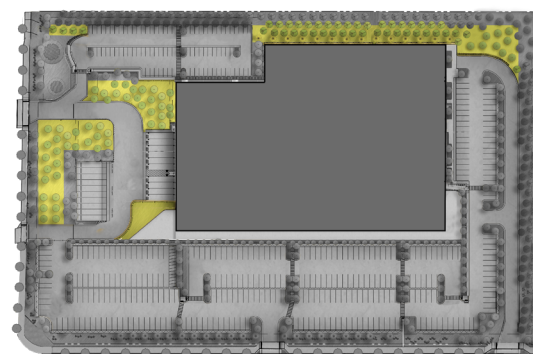
One tree and three shrubs per 20 LF/ Fence, wall, or berm.



ON-SITE AND STREET TREES



Yard Trees



Yard tree requirements are new to the Zoning Code and were added to increase tree canopy on the open area of a property that is usually paved or maintained as lawn. Recommendation: On larger properties, plant Yard Trees in groups to re-establish naturalized areas. This reduces maintenance and adds habitat for native birds.

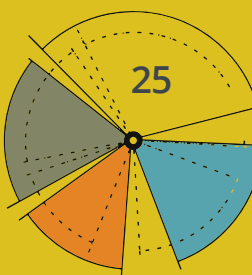
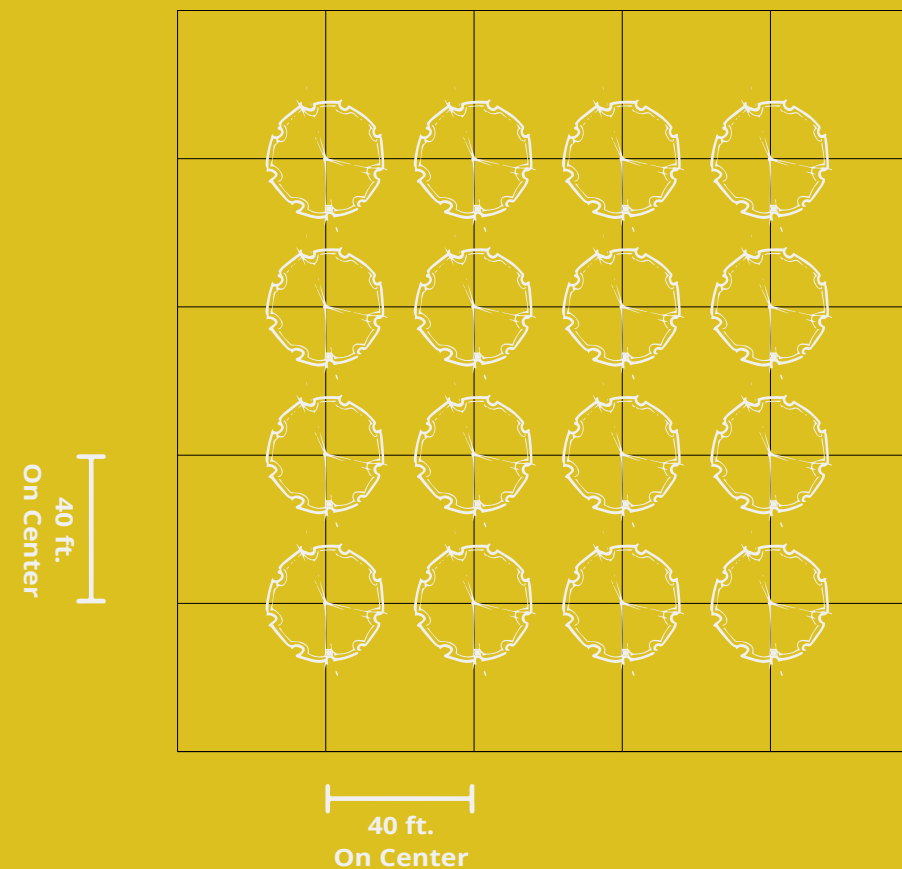
Where are Yard Trees Required?

Yard trees are required to be planted in the yards of all new development within the Residential Multi-Family (RM), Commercial (CA), Commercial Mixed-Use (CMX), Industrial (I), and Special Purpose (SP) zoning districts. **One yard tree is required per 1,600 sq. ft. of open area (rounded up to the nearest whole number)**. Parking lots, areas of required parking lot landscaping, required buffer areas, and watercourses are excluded from the open area calculation.

Yard trees are not required for expansions of existing buildings that do not increase the number of dwelling units or gross floor area by 25% or more, or where structures are destroyed and replaced.



The Yard Tree Requirement is based on providing a grid of trees spaced 40 ft. apart

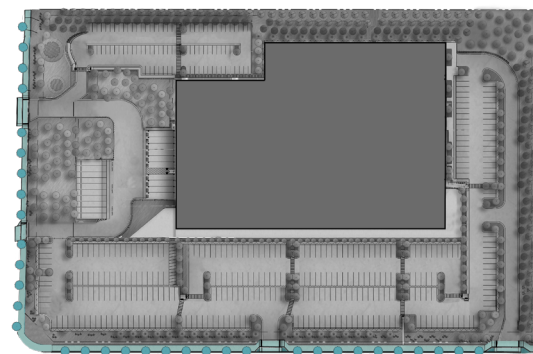




ON-SITE AND STREET TREES



Street Trees



Street trees can make up the most significant part of the City's tree canopy in rowhouse and hi-rise neighborhoods. They also help to slow traffic, make walking more pleasant, and provide curb appeal. Street trees are planted in the sidewalk of a public street right-of-way.

Where are Street Trees Required?

Street trees are to be provided as follows:

- ✓ On lots greater than 5,000 sq. ft., except for lots with a single-family, two-family, parks and open space or urban agricultural uses;
- ✓ Subdivisions of three or more lots.

The Zoning Code requires one street tree per 35 ft. of street front with a minimum spacing of 15 ft. on center.



Tree pits with newly planted street trees

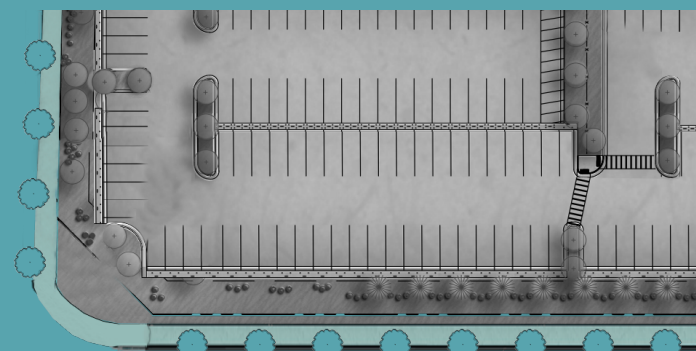


Street Trees along a commercial corridor

Example of Street tree requirements (Section)



Example of Street tree requirements (Plan)



PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

Landscape planted within parking lots help to lower summertime temperatures, capture rainwater, and provide curb appeal. Loading spaces, and drive-throughs.



The Zoning Code requires trees, shrubs, and plants at the interior of parking lots, along public streets, and against Residential zoning districts.

These landscape requirements apply to parking spaces, drive aisles, driveways, off-street loading spaces, and drive-throughs.

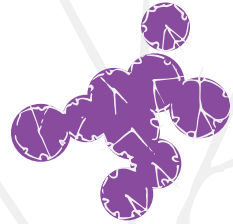
LEGEND:



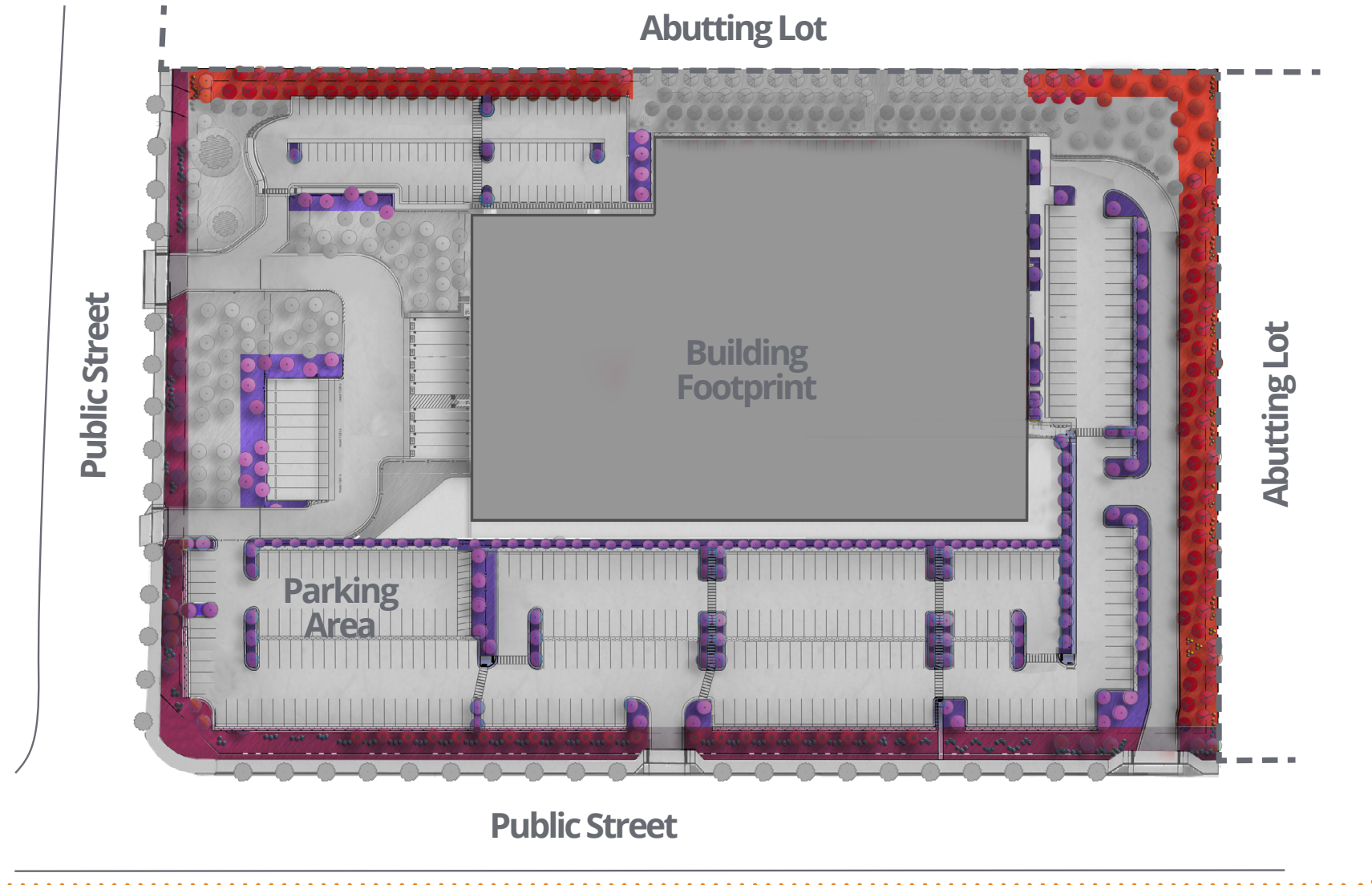
Buffer from Residential Districts



Screening from Public Streets

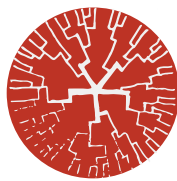


Interior Landscaping

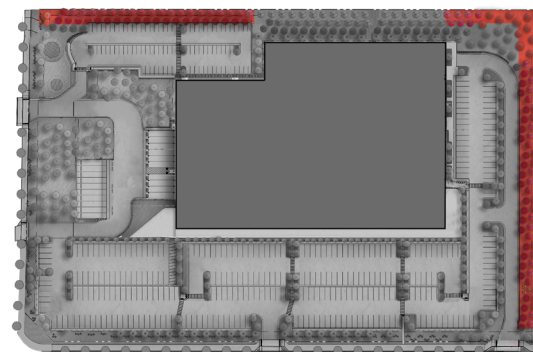


BUFFERING FROM RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING



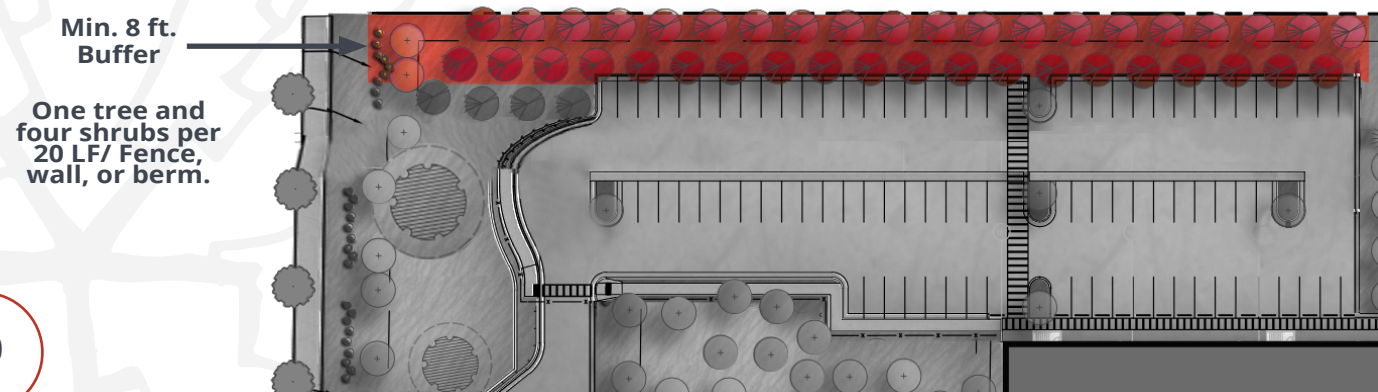
Buffering From Residential Districts



An area of trees, shrubs, and fencing is required when a parking lot, loading space, or drive-through is located next to a lot in a Residential zoning district. These buffers are meant to reduce noise, light, and air pollution that would impact a residential use. Requirements are based on lot size.

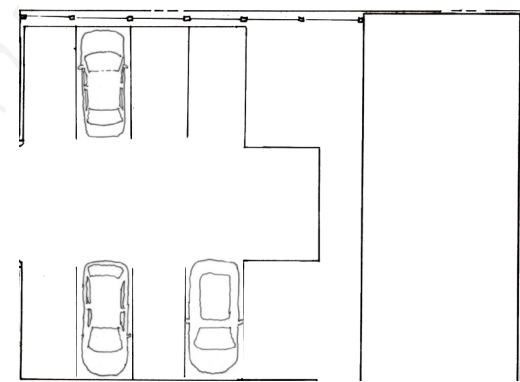
- ✓ For lots 5,000 sq. ft. or greater, a minimum 8 ft. wide landscape buffer **and** 5 ft. tall fence, wall, or berm must be provided;
- ✓ For lots smaller than 5,000 sq. ft., only a 5 ft. tall fence, wall, or berm must be provided.

Example of Buffering from residential districts (Plan)



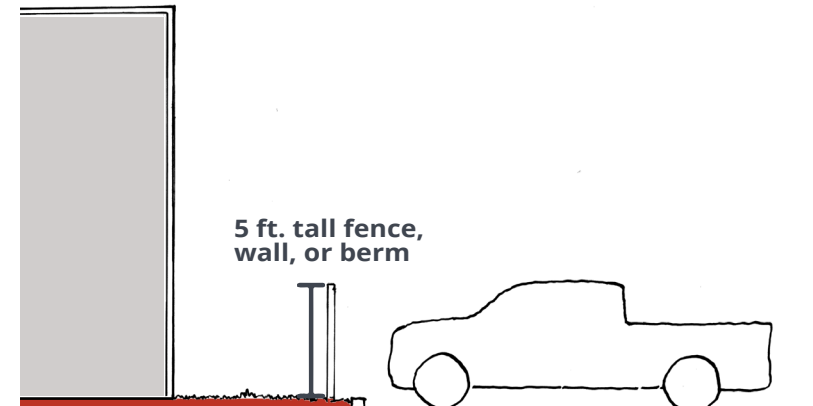
Buffering from residential districts for lots less than 5,000 sq. ft.

5 ft. tall fence, wall, or berm



Buffering from residential districts for lots less than 5,000 sq. ft.

5 ft. tall fence, wall, or berm



Buffering from residential districts for lots 5,000 sq. ft. or greater

Five-foot-high fence, wall, or berm

Min. 8' Buffer

One tree and four shrubs per 20 LF/ Fence, wall, or berm.



Landscaped Buffer

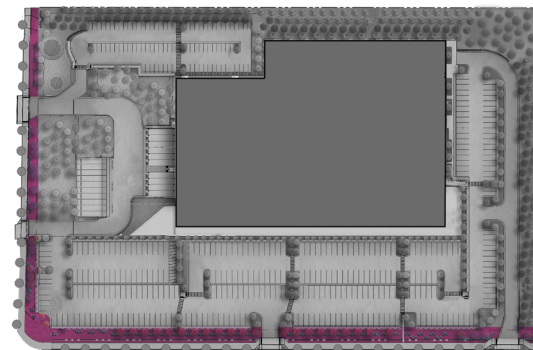
Note: At least 50% of the required trees in a landscaped buffer must be an evergreen species of tree.

SCREENING FROM PUBLIC STREETS

PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING



Screening From Public Streets

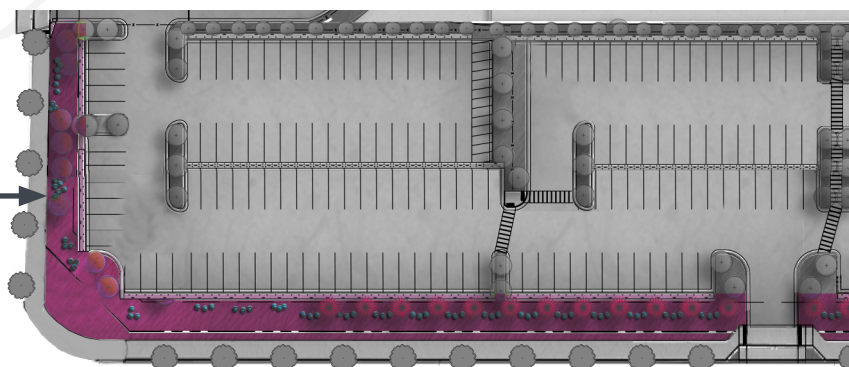


A landscape screen must also be planted to block the view of parking lots, loading spaces, or drive-through from a public street. **The screens must be planted along the entire edge of the parking lot, loading space, or drive-through facing the street, except at vehicle access points.** The landscape should screen parked vehicles but not block the view of drivers exiting the parking lot. Requirements are based on lot size.

- ✓ For lots 50,000 sq. ft. or greater, a minimum ten ft. wide landscape buffer **and** a 3 ft. tall fence, wall, or berm screening is required along primary street frontages; a minimum 5 ft. wide landscape buffer is required along “non-primary” frontages;
- ✓ For lots 50,000 sq. ft. and less, a minimum 5 ft. wide landscape buffer is required;
- ✓ For lots less than 5,000 sq. ft. **OR** Vehicle sale and rental businesses, a 3 ft. tall fence may be installed instead of a landscape buffer.

Buffering from public streets for lots less than 5,000 sq. ft. (Plan)

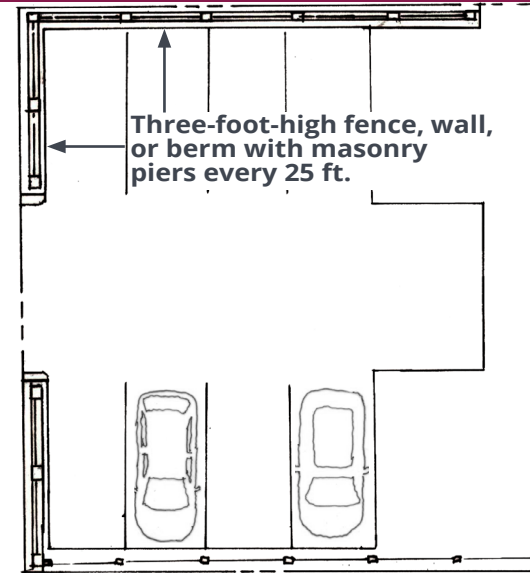
Min. 5 ft. Buffer
One tree and four shrubs per 20 linear ft.



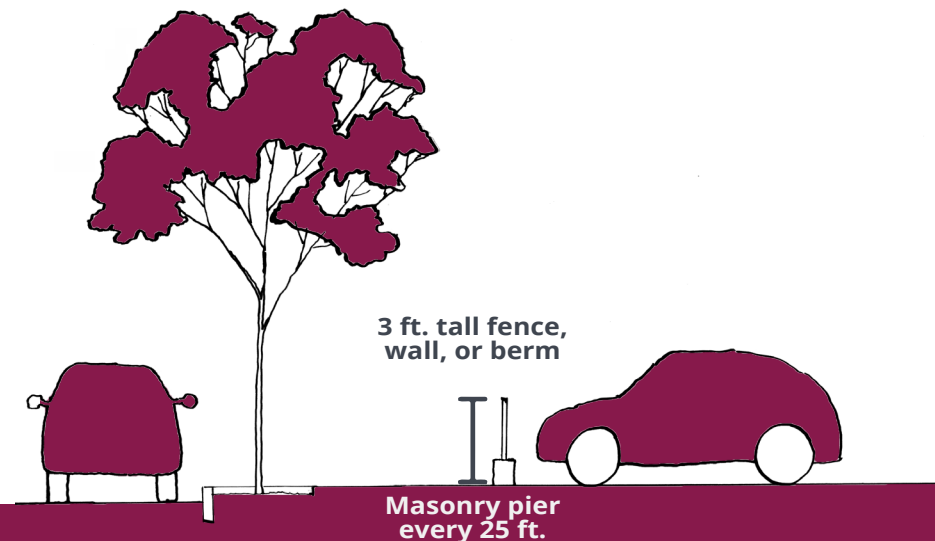
Buffering for lots less than 5,000 sq. ft. (Plan)



Landscaped Parking Lot Buffer



Buffering for lots less than 5,000 sq. ft. (Section)



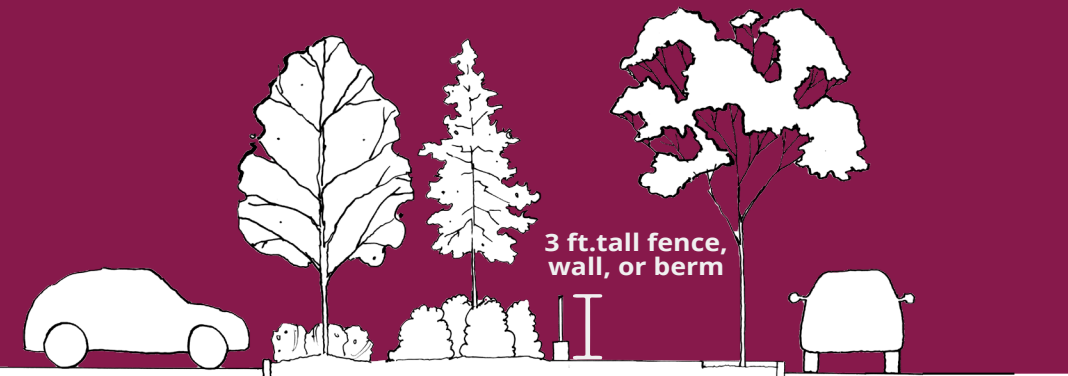


Landscaped Parking Lot Buffer



Ornamental Fence

Buffering for lots 50,000 sq. ft. or greater (Section)



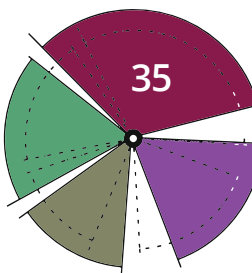
One tree and four shrubs per 20 linear ft./ Fence, wall, or berm with masonry piers every 25 linear ft.

Min. of 5 ft. wide buffer with one tree and four shrubs per 20 LF for non-primary street frontages

Buffering for lots between 5,000 to 50,000 sq. ft. (Section)

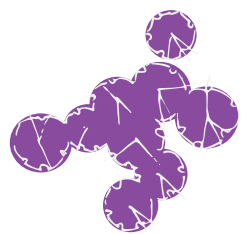


One tree and four shrubs per 20 linear ft.

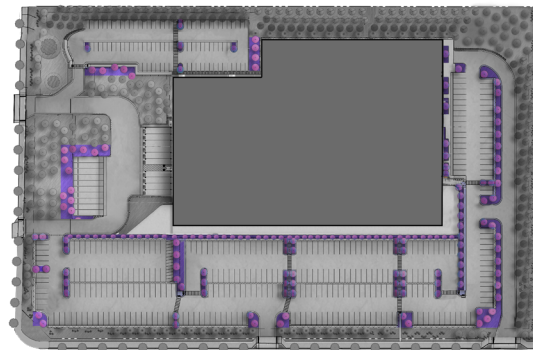


INTERIOR LANDSCAPING

PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING



Interior Landscaping



The interior of parking lots, off-street loading areas, and drive-throughs must provide a landscape area calculated as a minimum of **10% of the total area** of all parking spaces, drive aisles, driveways, off-street loading spaces, and drive-throughs.

Landscape can be planted in islands or at the edge of parking lots. Special consideration is given to providing trees and shrubs enough distance from parking spaces in truck parking lots so that they are not damaged.

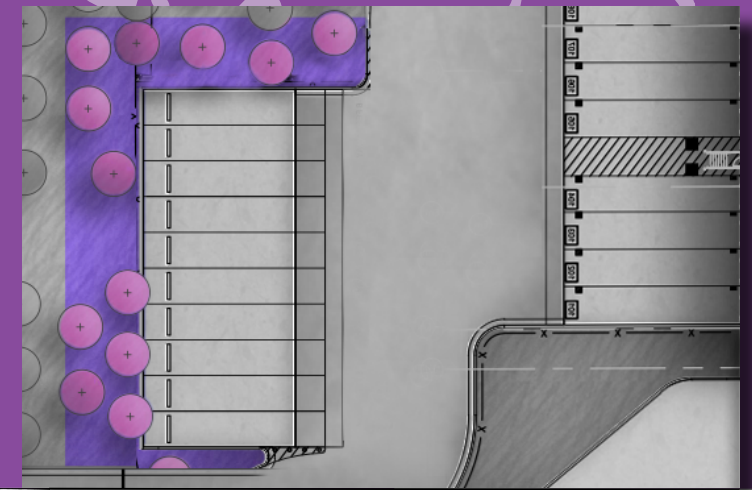
In parking lots with more than 50 parking spaces, the interior landscape areas should be used to break up the parking lot into groups of no more than 20 contiguous parking spaces.

| Interior Landscaping Requirements | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Lots less than 5,000 sq. ft. | One tree per five parking spaces |
| Lots 5,000 sq. ft. or greater | 10% of total parking spaces, loading spaces, driveways, aisles |
| | One shade tree and three shrubs |
| Landscape Islands | 15 perennials/ ground cover per 200 sq. ft. of landscaped areas |
| | Car parking: Min. width of 8 ft. and Min. area of 100 sq. ft. Truck parking: Min. width of 15 ft. and Min. area of 225 sq. ft. |
| Perimeter Landscaping Areas | Car parking: Within 10 ft. |
| | Truck parking: Within 10 ft. Trees no closer than 8 ft. Shrubs no closer than 5 ft. |

Interior landscaping for truck parking lots



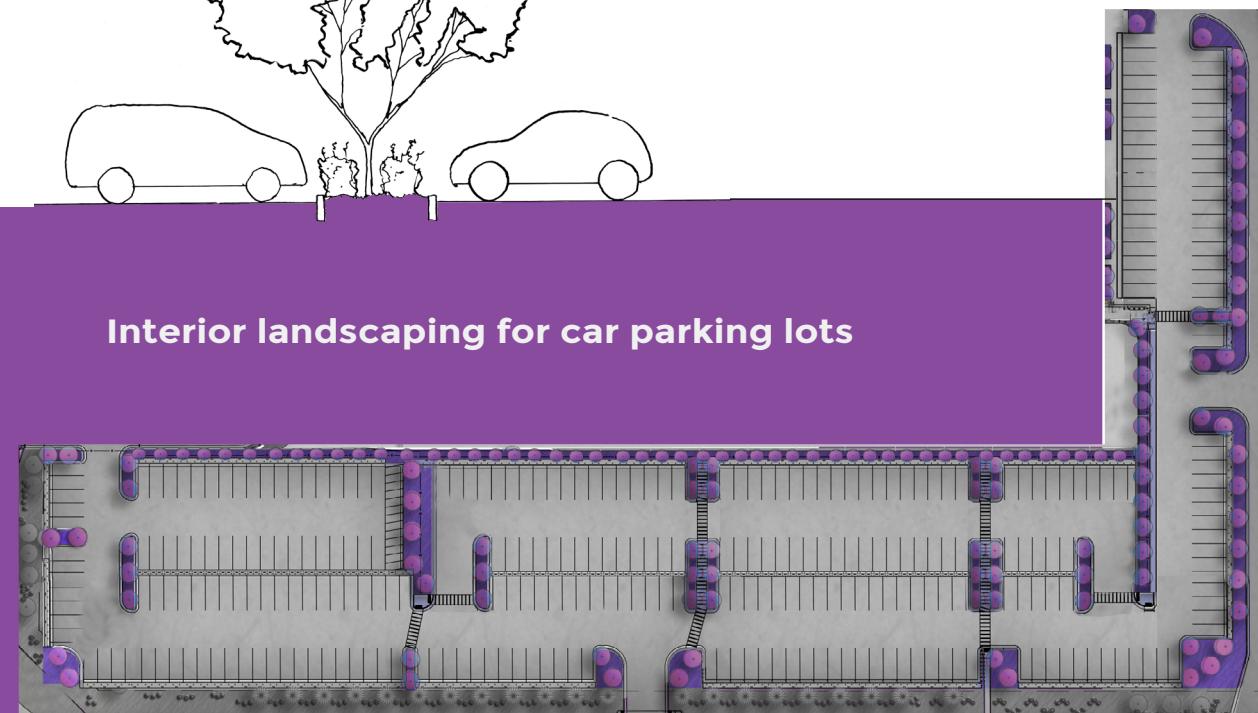
Interior landscaping for truck parking lots



Interior landscaping for car parking lots



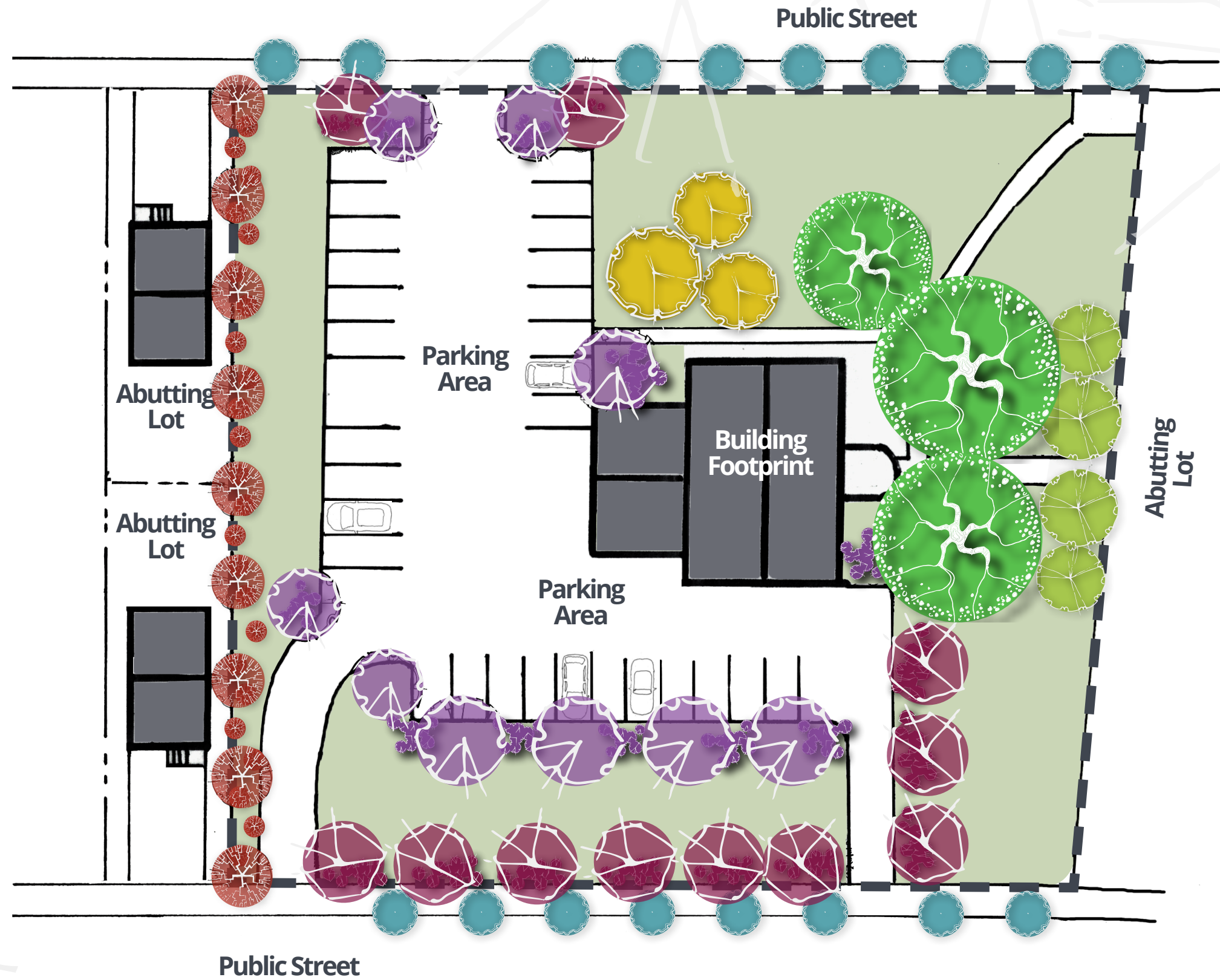
Interior landscaping for car parking lots



Landscape requirements for lots between 5,000 sq. ft. and 50,000 sq. ft. (Plan)

LEGEND:

-  Heritage Tree
-  Land Use Buffering
-  Yard Tree
-  Street Tree
-  Parking Lot Buffer from residential Districts
-  Parking Lot Buffer from Public Streets
-  Parking Lot Interior Landscaping



TREE PRESERVATION CREDITS

It can take decades for a newly planted tree to provide the same benefits as a mature tree already established on a site. The City strongly encourages the preservation of existing, mature trees as a way to maintain its tree canopy. As such, the preservation of mature, healthy trees may earn credits toward the tree planting requirements of the Zoning Code (except for tree replacement requirements). Preserved trees should be indicated on the plan. To obtain credit trees must meet the following requirements:

- ✓ On the same lot as the proposed development;
- ✓ At least 5 in. DBH, **AND**
- ✓ In healthy condition as determined by a certified arborist.




The tree preservation credit table is shown below. Any preserved trees for which credit is given, and that are lost to damage or disease within two years after the credit is awarded, must be replaced by the landowner with the trees otherwise required.

| Tree Preservation Credit Table | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Size of Preserved Tree (DBH) | Inches Credited |
| 12 in. DBH or greater | 12 inch |
| 8 in. DBH to 12 in. DBH | 8 inch |
| 5 in. DBH to 8 in. DBH | 5 inch |

Example of A Tree Preservation Plan



LEGEND:

-  Heritage Tree
-  Other Tree
-  Tree Proposed for Removal

PLANT LIST

CANOPY & SHADE TREES

ORNAMENTAL TREES

EVERGREEN TREES

SHRUBS & GRASSES

GROUND COVER AND PERENNIALS

PWD GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE PLANT LIST

PPR HERITAGE TREE LIST

PPR STREET TREE LIST

PA DCNR INVASIVE SPECIES LIST

PENNSYLVANIA DEPT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

PHILA WATER DEPT

PHILADELPHIA PARKS AND REC

When selecting plants, it is important to consider whether the selected plant is suitable for the intended use and site. Selecting plants thoughtfully helps ensure long-term survival of the landscape. Many factors affect a plant's success, such as the intended form and function of a plant, and the micro-climate of the planting site. Proper planting and soil specifications as well as a strategy for long-term maintenance is also necessary to ensure the health and beauty of a landscape.

The Planning Commission has created a [List of Plants](#) that are required to be used in site development. The list of trees, shrubs, grasses and perennials provide a range of form and function to cover all planting needs. This list contains a mix of plant species native to the Eastern United States and some hybrid and non-native species suitable to the Mid-Atlantic climate and the urban environment of Philadelphia.

The use of invasive species as identified by the [Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources](#) is prohibited.

WAIVERS AND IN-LIEU FEES

In certain situations, providing the number of plants or landscape area size required by the Zoning Code may be impractical or impossible. This could be due to site constraints or hardships, such as an underground utility line or insufficient site space to meet tree replacement requirements. If Planning Commission staff agrees that some or all requirements cannot be met, according to Section 9.4 of the Planning Commission regulations, landscaping requirements may be waived. An in-lieu fee must be paid for any trees that are waived. The fee is calculated two ways:

- ✓ **By tree:** Pay \$1,000 for each tree waived from the requirements of
 - 🔗 [14-705\(1\)\(d\) \(Landscape Buffering Between Different Zoning Districts\)](#),
 - 🔗 [14-705\(1\)\(e\) \(Yard Tree Requirements\)](#), and
 - 🔗 [14-803\(5\) \(Parking Landscape and Screening\)](#)

OR

- ✓ **By Inch:** For each caliper inch of tree waived from the requirements
 - 🔗 [14-705\(1\)\(g\) \(Tree Replacement Requirements\)](#), based on a progressive fee schedule:

| Progressive Fee Category (overall density of existing trees on the lot) | Fee |
|---|----------------|
| Up to 75 in. DBH per acre | \$400 per inch |
| Greater than 75 in. DBH and less than 250 in. DBH per acre | \$200 per inch |
| Greater than 250 in. DBH per acre | \$50 per inch |

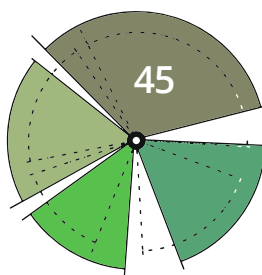
- ✓ **Deductions:** Additional trees planted on the lot that are not required by this § 14-705(1) (On-Site Landscape and Tree Requirements) or § 14-803(5) (Parking Landscape or Screening) can be deducted from the calculation above.

- ✓ **Making a Payment to the City:** When a project requires an in-lieu fee payment, the applicant must make the payment to Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR) prior to building permit issuance. Ways to pay:

- E-mail parksandrecreation@phila.gov to schedule an appointment and attach the zoning permit and approved landscape plan.
- Pay in person at 1515 Arch St., 10th Floor.
- Cashier's Check or USPS Money Order ONLY, made payable to *Fairmount Park*.
- If a building permit expires or is abandoned, the in-lieu fee will be credited to the lot for four (4) years from the date of payment.
- In-lieu fee refunds will be granted up until the issuance of a

Exceptions:

- Properties in the Fairmount Park System may deduct trees planted within one mile of the property from the fee calculations.
- The total in-lieu fee for a property that meets each of the below conditions shall not exceed 5% of the appraised value of that property, as shown in the average of two appraisals conducted by independent appraisers.
 - The property is less than 70 acres in total size; **and**
 - Is zoned I-1, I-2, I-3, or I-P; **and**
 - Has a principal use in the Industrial or Wholesale, Distribution, and Storage categories; **and**
 - Includes no Residential uses.



LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES



Philadelphia
City Planning Commission
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

2024

