

City of Columbus

Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Rewrite

Plan Commission
September 10, 2026

**Performance Standards &
Landscaping Requirements**



**VANDEWALLE &
ASSOCIATES INC.**

Today's Discussion & Project Schedule Overview

- Last meeting – July 9
 - Reviewed zoning map
- Today – September 10
 - Performance standards
 - Landscaping standards
- Next meeting
 - Building design
 - Admin and procedures
- Then full draft review and prepare for public hearing

Code Organization

Zoning Code Outline

- Article 1: Introduction
- Article 2: Establishment of Zoning Districts
- Article 3: Land Use Regulations
- Article 4: Bulk Regulations
- Article 5: Nonconforming Situations
- Article 6: Performance Standards
- Article 7: Exterior Building Design Standards
- Article 8: Landscaping Requirements
- Article 9: Signage
- Article 10: Administration and Procedures
- Article 11: Definitions

Remaining
Sections

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graph LR; A[Remaining Sections] --> B[Article 7: Exterior Building Design Standards]; A --> C[Article 10: Administration and Procedures]; D[Today's Review] --> E[Article 6: Performance Standards]; D --> F[Article 8: Landscaping Requirements];
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The diagram illustrates the structure of the zoning code. A box on the left labeled 'Remaining Sections' has arrows pointing to Article 7 and Article 10 in the list. A box on the right labeled 'Today's Review' has arrows pointing to Article 6 and Article 8 in the list. Articles 6 and 8 are highlighted in yellow, while Articles 7 and 10 are highlighted in pink.

Today's Review

Performance Standards

Article 6: Performance Standards

SITE FORM

- Group developments
- Access and visibility
- Parking and loading

OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

- Lighting
- Screening
- Noise
- Odor
- Vibration
- Air pollution

PROPERTY STANDARDS

- Fences and pools
- Recreation space
- Vacant buildings

Group Developments

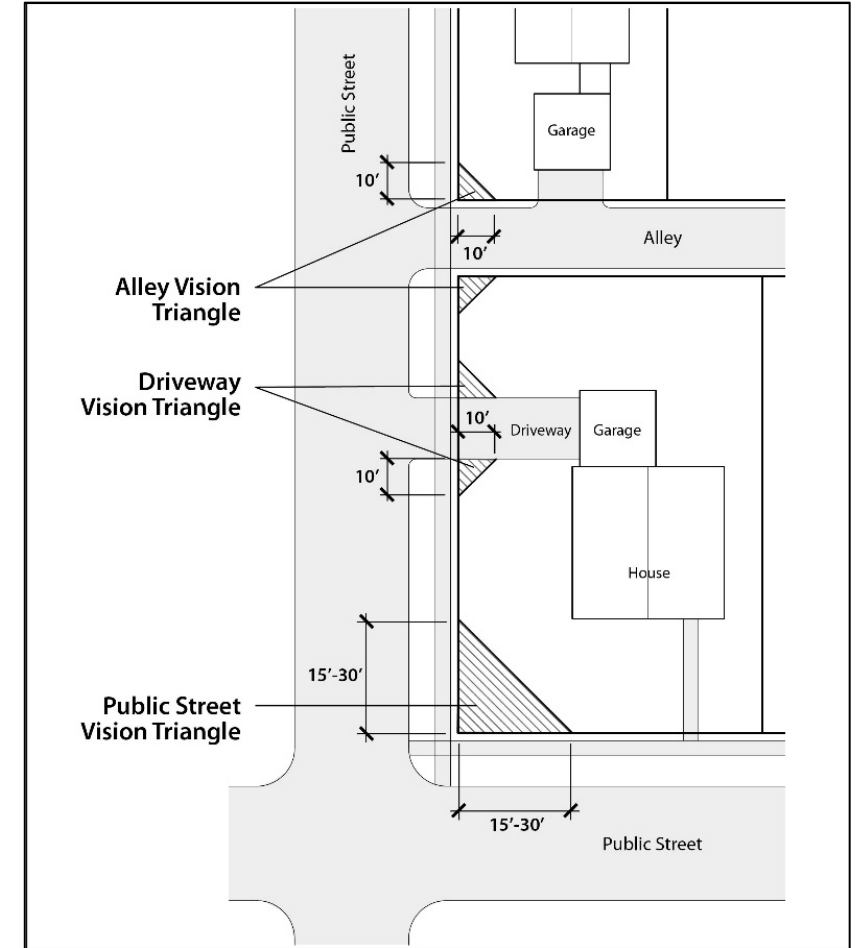
- A group development is a project with two or more principal buildings on a single lot. Instead of reviewing each building in isolation, the City reviews the entire site as one coordinated development.
- Example site conditions:
 - Internal roads, driveways, emergency access
 - Shared parking and pedestrian connections
 - Building placement and compatibility
 - Lighting, landscaping, storage and screening
 - The ability to divide the property into lots later
- Requires CUP

EXEMPT DISTRICTS

- Multi-Family-1
- Multi-Family-2
- Planned Development (PD)
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial

Access and Visibility Standards

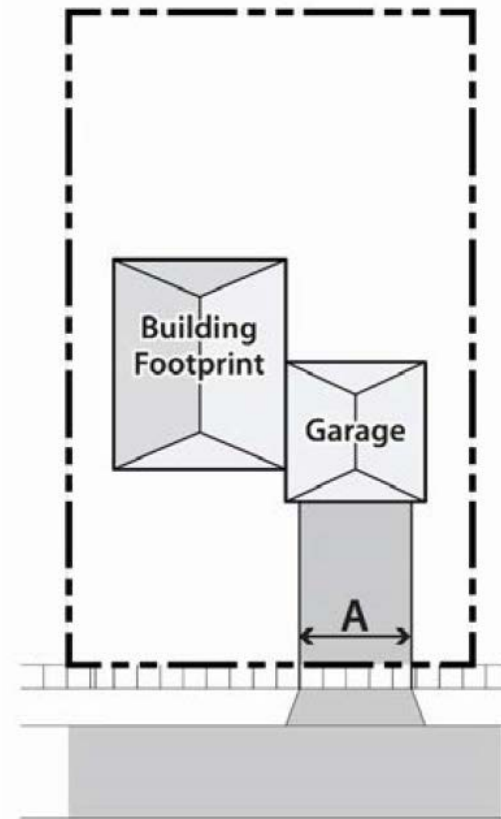
- Establish standard for number and location of driveways to manage safety, circulation
- Manage vision triangles at corners
- Default 1 access point per site
- Non-residential
 - If >200 feet frontage, additional driveway may be permitted with a site plan approval
- Residential
 - Corner lots can have a driveway on each street
 - Two driveways on one street may be allowed with size limitations for total width of access points compared to frontage (60%)



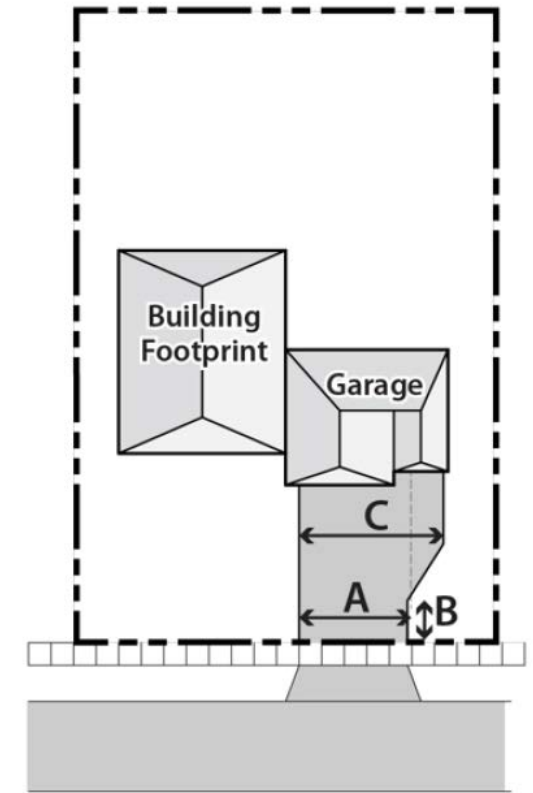
Access and Visibility Standards

- Paved surfaces are required
- Establishes driveway width
- Establishes tapering standards

Driveways up to
24 Feet Wide



Driveways Wider
than 24 Feet Wide



Recreational Vehicle Parking

- Recreational Vehicle includes RVs, Campers, Boats, etc.
- City has discussed RV regulations recently (before new zoning code discussion)
- Current draft standards
 - If parked in the front yard, it must be on driveways
 - May be parked in side or rear yard
 - Plan Commission discuss whether to require paving or allow on grass



Off-Street Parking Quantity (Previously Discussed)

- New parking minimums established
- Built-in flexibility options
 - Plan Commission may reduce or increase parking requirements upon detailed review of a parking study provided by the applicant
 - Allows land bank/phased parking
 - Allows peak use/shared day-night parking
 - Allows alternative off-site supply (shared on another property)
- Parking maximums
 - Residential – none
 - Commercial – 2x the minimum
 - Industrial – 1.5x the minimum

MINIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY	
Zoning District or Land Use	Parking Ratio
SF or TF	2/unit
MF	1.5/studio, 1.5/one-bedroom, and 2/two-bedroom or greater
Downtown (DMU)	No minimum
Commercial	1 per 500 sf
Industrial	1 per employee on largest shift

Bicycle Parking

- Prior decision:
 - Multi-family minimum = 0.25 bike spaces/ unit
 - Commercial minimum = 4 bike spaces/use
 - Downtown = no minimum required
- Standards established for bike parking when it is included on a site plan such as location and type of rack
- Draft standard states 4 bicycle spaces could replace 1 required vehicle parking space
 - Keep this option or delete?



Off-Street Parking Layout

- Updated parking lot dimensional standards, including modern standards for drive aisle width for example (24 feet)

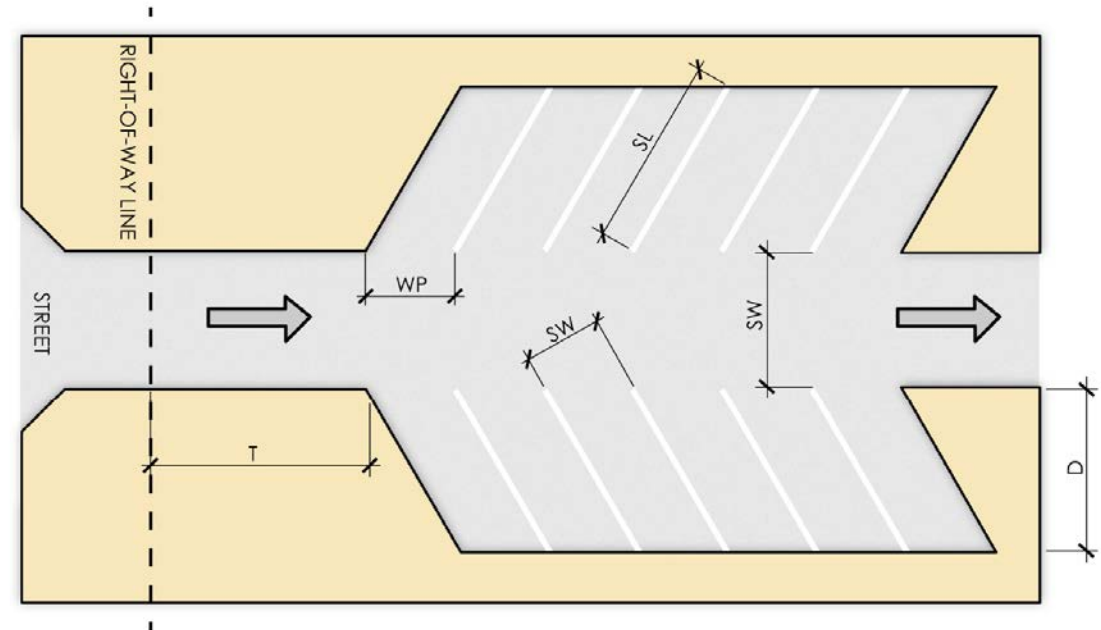
Figure 114.06.06c: Parking Layout Dimensions

Minimum Permitted Dimensions	Parking Angle in Degrees				
	0°	45°	60°	75°	90°
Stall Width at Parking Angle (SW)	9'	9'	9'	9'	9'
Stall Width Parallel to Aisle (WP)	20'	12'	10'	9'	9'
Stall Depth to Wall (D) ¹	9'	18'	18'	18'	18'
Stall Length (SL)	18'	20'	20'	20'	18'
Cross Aisle Width for 1-way traffic flow (AW)	14'	14'	14'	14'	14'
Cross Aisle Width for 2-way traffic flow (AW)	24'	24'	24'	24'	24'
Throat Length (right-of-way to parking angle) (T) ²	Figure 114.06.06d				

Notes:

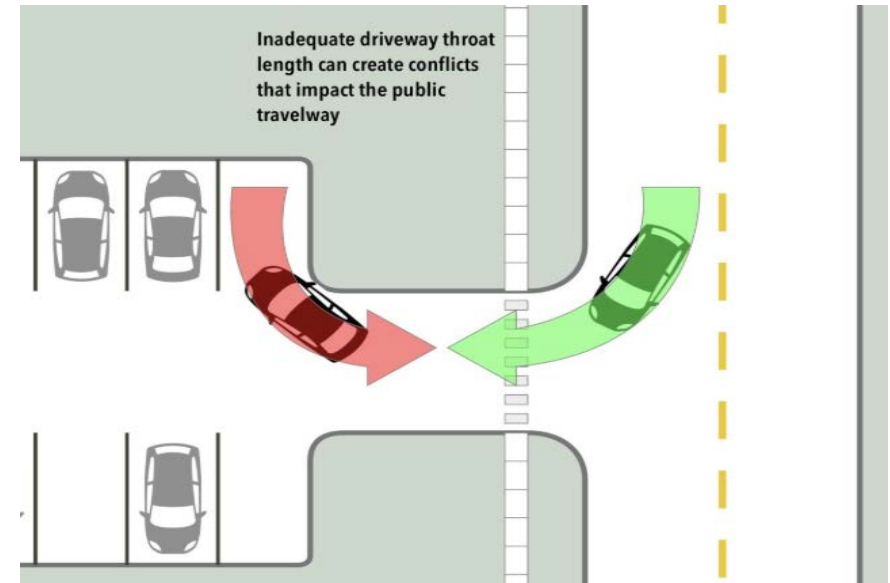
¹Stall Depth (D) may be reduced by 2 feet, provided vehicle overhang is located over a landscaped area or pedestrian walk if said walk is oversized to provide a minimum of 5 feet of clear pedestrian access and a concrete curb or wheel stop is provided to protect vegetation and pedestrians.

²In no case shall the throat length be less than the required pavement setback.



Off-Street Parking Design

- 6-inch-high curb required around traffic circulation, parking areas, and internal landscape islands
 - Alternative curb allowed by Public Works Director with consideration of a stormwater management plan
 - Industrial zoning flexibility (Less or no curb required in side and rear yard)
- Parking stall paint markings
- Pavement setbacks
- Throat length dimensions



Exterior Storage and Screening

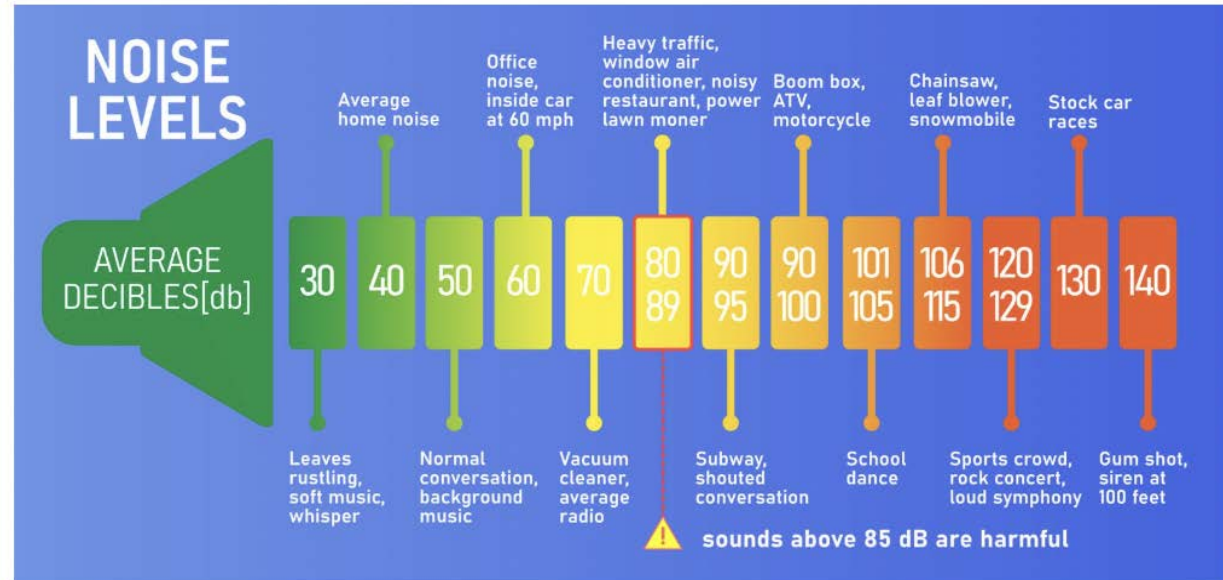
- Outdoor storage of materials must be screened
- Trash enclosure screening required in multi-family and mixed-use districts
 - Must be maintained in screened location as shown on approved site plan
 - Industrial exempt
- Ground-mounted mechanical screening required



Operational Impacts

- Vibration
- Noise
- Air Pollution
- Odor Standards
- Glare and Heat Standards
- Fire and Explosions
- Toxic Waste Materials
- Hazardous Materials

Mostly used in compliant-driven enforcement situations



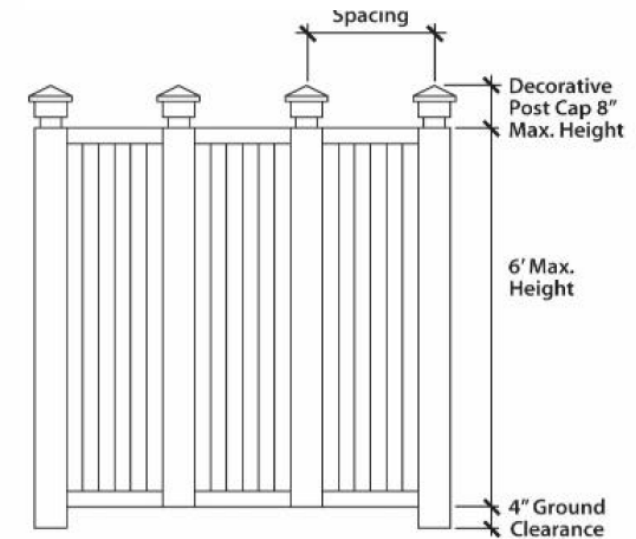
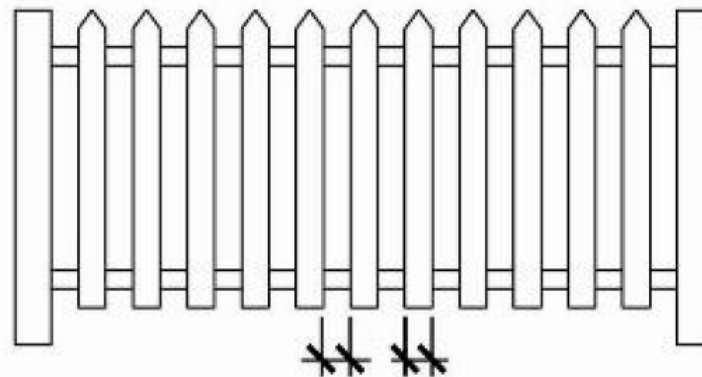
Air Pollution Standards (For Example)

- Mitigation required for particulate emissions >44 microns (per Wis. Admin. Code NR 415)
- Prohibits emissions exceeding Ringelmann No. 2
- Prohibits outdoor wood furnaces
- Owner/operator responsible for measurement and proof
- Generally aligns with DNR standards; local inclusion supports administration but does not replace DNR requirements



Fencing

- Materials, location, height, maintenance
- Residential
 - 4 feet in street yards, opacity maximum
 - 6 feet in side or rear yards, privacy fence allowed
 - Chain link not allowed (keep or modify?)
- Non-Residential
 - Up to 8 feet security fence allowed in front yard
 - Allow barbed wire in Industrial?



Swimming Pool Standards

- Limited standards in current code
- New standards:
 - Applies to outdoor pools (exempt = storable pools, ponds less than 36" deep, lockable hot tubs)
 - Location required to be in side or rear yard
 - Setbacks required to be 10 feet from lot lines
 - Safety fence or pool-industry rated locking cover required



On-Site Recreational Space Requirements

- Developments with 3+ units required to provide private recreational or gathering space for residents
- Qualifying space
 - Indoor or outdoor gathering/recreation (play areas, common rooms, fitness spaces)
 - Ground level, porch, deck, balcony or rooftop terraces
- Keep policy or not?

FORMULA FORMULA

- 200 SF per building + 25 SF per bedroom



Vacant Building Regulations

- Requires minimum upkeep for public safety reasons and to avoid a blighting effect on surrounding properties
- Applies to multi-family, commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings
- Could be limited to commercial and industrial



Vacant Building Regulations

Vacancy rules escalate over time

NOW

- Owner contact statement
- Annual condition / prospects report

1 YEAR

- Possible fire access box
- Remove signage

5 YEARS

- Comprehensive maintenance review
- Possible code compliance

10 YEARS

- If not maintained, possible site clearance
- Return to vegetative cover



Landscaping

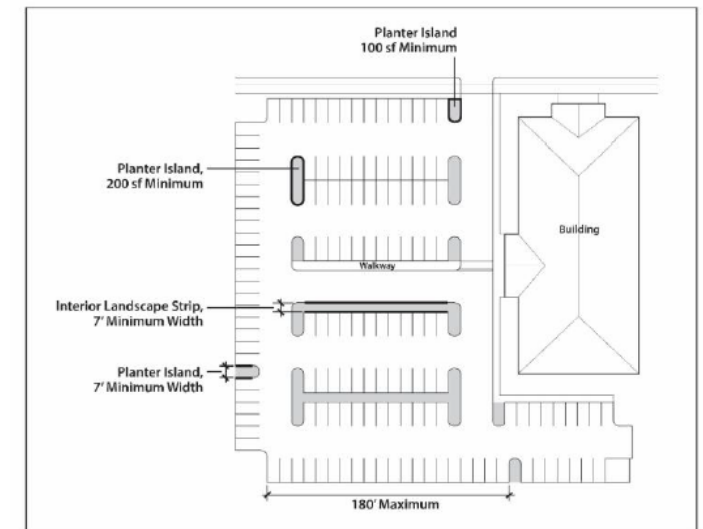
Landscaping Requirements

- Points-based system (Shade Tree = 50 pts.)
- Minimum points by zoning district
- Points calculated by area to ensure distribution and balance (see box)
- Flexible bufferyard choices to address land use conflicts
- Exempts single family and two family uses
- Graphics help explain rules for things like parking lot design (tree islands)

4 Landscaping Calculations

- Yards
 - Building foundation
 - Paved areas
 - Street frontage
- (Bufferyard if applicable)

Figure 114.08.30a: Requirements for Interior Landscaping

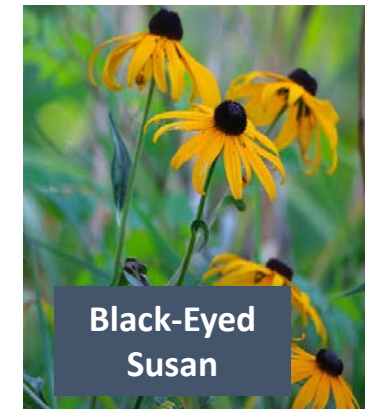
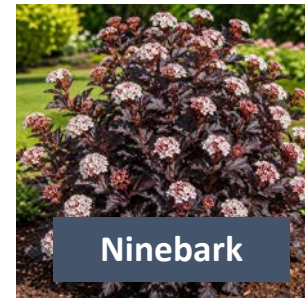
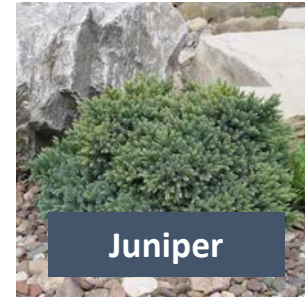


Landscaping Points (Example by CMU District)

	Building Foundation	Paved Areas	Street Frontage Length	Yards
Number of Points by Area	80 points per 100 feet of linear building foundation	50 points per 10 stalls or per 10,000 sf of paved area	100 points per 100 feet of linear street frontage	20 points per 1,000 sf of the largest building floor's area
Location of Points	Placement within 10 feet of building	Place within 10 feet of paved area	Place within 10 feet of street right of way	Any location

Landscaping Points (Example of Plant Points)

Plant Category	Landscaping Points
Shade/Tall Trees	30-50 points
Medium/Low Trees	10-20 points
Shrubs	3-10 points
Grasses, Perennials, Rain Garden, Pollinators	1-2 point



Bufferyard Overview

- Protects adjacent use
- Steps:
 1. Reference Matrix
 2. Choose Buffer Class Option (A-D)

Figure 114.08.30h: Bufferyard Example

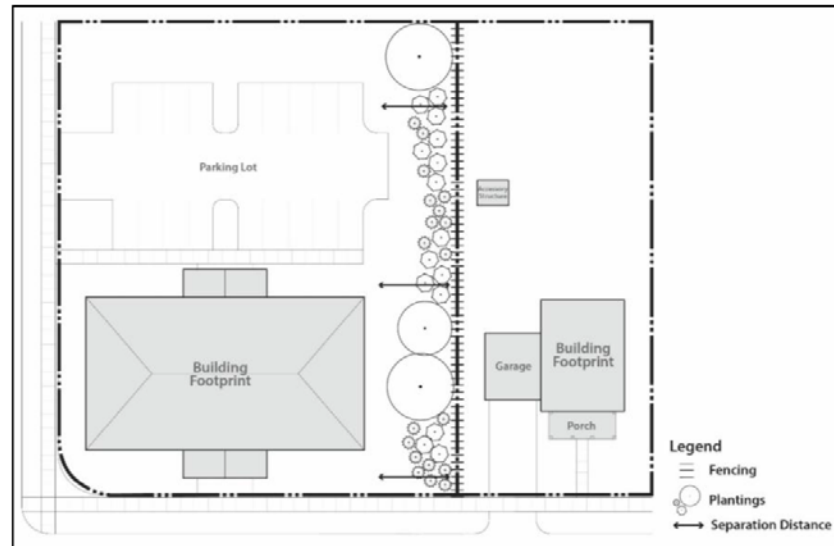


Figure 114.08.30e: Required Bufferyard Class Matrix

Apply the required bufferyard class from this Figure to Figure 114.08.30f and select an appropriate bufferyard design option. Note that certain land uses, conditional uses, and planned development projects may have more stringent bufferyard requirements. Key: NR = no bufferyard required. A through D identify the required bufferyard class.		Adjacent Property Zoning District									
		AG, PR	SR-1, SR-2	MH	MR-1	MR-2, INST	DMU	CMU, BP	LI	HI	IOA
Subject Property Zoning District:	Agriculture (AG), Parks and Recreation (PR)	NR									
	Single Family Residential-1 (SR-1) and Single Family Residential-2 (SR-2)	NR	NR								
	Manufactured Home Residential (MH)	NR	A	NR							
	Multi-Family Residential-1 (MR-1)	NR	A	A	NR						
	Multi-Family Residential-2 (MR-2) and Institutional (INST)	NR	A	A	A	NR					
	Downtown Mixed Use (DMU)	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR				
	Corridor Mixed Use (CMU) and Business Park (BP)	NR	C	C	B	B	NR	NR			
	Light Industrial (LI)	NR	C	C	C	C	C	B	NR		
	Heavy Industrial (HI)	NR	D	D	D	D	C	C	C	NR	
	Intensive Outdoor Activity (IOA)	NR	D	D	D	D	D	D	C	NR	NR

Bufferyard Class (A-D) Design Choices

- Four classes (A–D) provide increasing levels of screening
- Multiple options per class provide design flexibility
- Options balance width, landscaping, and barriers (fences, walls, or berms)
- Higher classes require more intensive screening

Figure 114.08.30f: Design Options for Required Bufferyards

Bufferyard Design Options	Minimum Width	Required Plantings Per 100 Linear Feet	Required Fence, Wall, or Berm
A-1 Planted Transition	10 feet	2 screening trees and 8 medium or tall shrubs	None
A-2 Decorative Fence	8 feet	1 screening tree and 6 medium or tall shrubs	Minimum 4-foot decorative fence having at least 50% opacity



Other Landscaping Notes

- Allows redistribution of points on site if inadequate area through Site Plan Review
- Code provides lists of plant examples, plants commonly used for screening, prohibited species consistent with DNR regulations
- Rain garden and bioswale regulations are provided
- Existing plants get 2x points (provides flexibility and encourages preservation of matures plants/trees on site)
- Native plants get 1.5x points (incentive approach)

Next Steps & Questions