

Topic: Heart of the Good Life Development - Landscaping

Agenda Item: 7 (b)

LANDSCAPING STANDARDS:

1. Landscaping Plan.

- a. A landscaping plan shall be submitted at the time of site plan and shall include the following requirements:
 - 1) Detailed natural land analysis, including vegetation, soil types and slopes.
 - 2) Man-made features.
 - 3) Details of all proposed vegetative landscaping materials, including placement, Latin name, common name, caliper/height, and quantity.
 - 4) Details of all proposed non-vegetative land landscaping and screening materials, including lighting.
 - 5) Where landscape or man-made materials are used to provide required screening from adjacent and neighboring properties, a cross-section shall be provided at a legible scale illustrating the prospective of the site from the neighboring property and property line elevation.
 - 6) At least thirty percent (30%) of the land area shall be sodded and landscaped with approved ground cover, shrubbery and trees.
 - 7) At least eight percent (8%) of the internal parking area shall be landscaped with grass, shrubbery, trees and/or other approved ground cover. This area is counted as part of the overall required "landscape area".
- b. Landscaping shall provide for an appropriate mix of plantings around a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the exterior footprint of all buildings. Landscaping shall improve the appearance of the structure and break up large unadorned building elevations.
- c. Minimum size of plantings:
 - 1) Over story deciduous – 2 1/2 inch caliper.
 - 2) Coniferous – 6 feet in height.
 - 3) Shrubs – 24-inch pot.
 - 4) Ornamental trees – 2 inch caliper.

In the event a site plan layout does not have adequate open space to accommodate plant quantities as per ordinance, such quantities per species can be combined into less quantities per species, provided total

regulated height or caliper is maintained. Trees shall be of varying species and shall be in accordance with the minimum size of plantings.

d. Species:

- 1) All trees and plantings used in site developments shall be indigenous to the appropriate hardiness zone and physical characteristics of the site. Invasive plants shall not be allowed.
- 2) All deciduous trees proposed to satisfy the minimum requirements of this policy shall be long-lived hardwood species.
- 3) The complement of trees fulfilling the requirements of this section shall be not less than twenty-five percent (25%) deciduous and not less than twenty-five percent (25%) coniferous.

e. Method of Installation:

All deciduous and coniferous trees shall be ball and burlap and staked and guyed per National Nurseryman's Standards. ~~All-s~~ Shrubs ~~shall~~ may be potted or ball and burlap.

f. Sodding and Ground Cover:

All open areas of any site not occupied by buildings, parking, or storage, shall be sodded or seeded over four (4) inches of topsoil. Exceptions are as follows:

- 1) Seeding over four (4) inches of topsoil of future expansion areas (areas to be built upon within eighteen (18) months) as shown on approved plans.
- 2) Areas designated as open space for future expansion area shall be properly planted and maintained with prairie grasses, wildflowers, or grass.

g. Slopes and Berms:

- 1) Final slope grade steeper than the ratio of 3:1 will not be permitted without special approval of treatment, such as terracing or retaining walls.
- 2) Berming used to provide required screening of parking lots and other open areas shall not have a slope to exceed 3:1.

h. Use of Landscaping for Screening:

Where natural materials, such as trees or hedges are approved in lieu of required screening by means of walls or fences, density and species of planting shall be such to achieve ninety percent (90%) opaqueness year round.

i. Lighting: Lighting shall be minimal. Lighting shall be downward directional and shall be compatible with the surrounding development. Lights approved with signs must be turned off at the close of business each day.

j. Statuary: There shall be no statuary allowed as part of the landscape plan.

k. Maintenance Policy:

- 1) All landscaping shall be properly maintained so as to preserve planting in a live state and shall be kept free of noxious weeds and debris.

- 2) Turf grass and lawns shall not grow to a height to allow such grasses to go to seed.
 - 3) All constructed or manufactured landscape elements, such as but not limited to benches, retaining walls, edging, and so forth, shall be maintained so as to be free of cracking, crumbling, dilapidation or deterioration.
 - 4) Rotten, deteriorated or damaged landscape elements shall be repaired, replaced, or removed.
1. Erosion Control:
All open disturbed areas of any site shall be seeded as an erosion control measure.

Staff was directed at the April Planning Commission meeting to verify the Landscape Standards for the City of Baxter. Baxter does not have separate landscape requirements that apply to their industrial park or industrial zoned properties. They do have a landscape ordinance that applies to all commercial and industrial properties; a copy is attached.

Please review this ordinance and come prepared to offer suggestions to include in the Heart of the Good Life Landscape Standards.

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D. Landscaping:

1. Purpose:

- a. Purpose:** The purpose of this subsection is to establish minimum landscaping requirements to create a positive community image; to improve the appearance of vehicular use areas and property abutting public rights of way; to require buffering between noncompatible land uses; to protect, preserve and promote the aesthetic appeal, character and value of the surrounding neighborhoods; and to promote public health and safety through the reduction of noise pollution, air pollution, visual pollution and glare.
- b. Reduction Of Visual Impacts:** The landscaping standards shall require reduction of visual impacts associated with given uses, including, but not limited to:
 - (1) Truck loading areas;
 - (2) Trash storage;
 - (3) Parking lots, interior lot areas and perimeters;
 - (4) Large unadorned building massing;
 - (5) Garage doors associated with auto oriented uses; and
 - (6) Vehicular stacking areas for drive-through uses.

2. General Landscape Requirements For All Zoning Districts:

- a. Compliance:** No new site development, permanent building or structure construction, remodeling involving outside changes to the site or vehicular use area modifications are allowed, unless the provisions of this subsection are met for the property in its entirety.
- b. Preservation:** Landowners are encouraged to preserve as much of their property in its natural, native state as possible.
- c. Ground Coverage:** All upland areas not otherwise forested or improved with buildings, structures, landscaping, or other allowed impervious surfaces shall be sodded or hydroseeded with species normally grown as permanent lawns and established to ninety percent (90%) coverage, except for the following:
 - (1) Grass seeding may be approved by the zoning administrator in areas that have an underground irrigation system. Grass must be established to ninety percent (90%) coverage.
 - (2) Native seeding may be approved by the zoning administrator. A site plan and planting schedule shall be submitted for review. Depending on the size, location and visibility of the native area to adjacent properties and right of way, the zoning administrator may forward the item to the city council for consideration. All native

areas shall be established to ninety percent (90%) coverage with approved plantings and then maintained at this coverage.

- (3) Other coverage methods may be accepted as part of an overall landscape plan.
- d. Topsoil: Adequate topsoil shall be added to ensure growth of all plantings.
- e. Ground Coverage Not Allowed: Ground coverage shall not include exposed sand, soil or weeds.
- f. Maintenance: All landscaped areas shall be maintained by the property owner and kept neat, clear and uncluttered. The property owner shall be responsible for maintenance and replacement of trees, shrubs, grass, ground covers and sodding. If required landscaping is not maintained or replaced, the city may deem this a nuisance and proceed with abatement and recovery of cost upon notice in accordance with the provisions of title 4, chapter 1 of this code.
- g. Landscape Health: Plants must be sound, healthy, vigorous, and free of disease, insect eggs and larvae.
- h. Landscape Sizing: The following landscape sizing shall be required at the time of planting. Larger plants may be used or specified at any time.

Landscaping Type	Minimum Size
Overstory deciduous (shade) trees	2 inch diameter (measured 6 inches above ground)
Coniferous (evergreen) trees	6 feet
Ornamental trees	1 ¹ / ₂ inch diameter (measured 6 inches above ground)
Shrubs	3 gallons

- i. Overstory Tree Equivalency: Up to fifty percent (50%) of the required number of overstory trees on a site may be substituted with an equivalent number of understory trees, smaller trees or shrubs. In such cases, two (2) ornamental trees, two (2) 4-foot coniferous trees, two (2) 1.5-inch diameter overstory trees, or ten (10) shrubs shall be equivalent to one overstory tree.
- j. Required Landscaping: Where required trees are removed to allow placement of building addition or site expansion, the required trees shall be replaced elsewhere on the property. Exceptions may be made by the zoning administrator if sites become overcrowded with trees based on new planting requirements.
- k. Credit For Existing Trees:

- (1) **Rear And Side Yard Trees:** Credit for existing rear and side yard trees cannot be used to offset the front tree requirements.
 - (2) **Mature Trees:** Credit trees, when mature, must be able to be seen by passing public when site is completed.
 - (3) **Minimum Requirements:** Such trees fulfill the minimum requirement as to size and species. The zoning administrator shall determine the amount of the credit for such existing trees based upon their location and distribution in the lot.
 - I. **Protection Of Existing Trees:** Proper precautions to protect trees during development shall be indicated on grading and landscape plans submitted for plan review. The following protective measures shall be followed:
 - (1) **Tree Fencing:** Installation of snow fencing or polyethylene laminate safety netting placed at the drip line or at the perimeter of the critical root zone (CRZ), whichever is greater, of significant trees, specimen trees, and woodlands to be preserved. No grade change, construction activity, or storage of materials shall occur within this fenced area.
 - (2) **Soil Chemistry:** Measures shall be taken to prevent a change in soil chemistry due to concrete washout and leakage or spillage of toxic materials, such as fuels or paints.
 - (3) **Retaining Walls:** Installation of retaining walls or tree wells to preserve trees must be no closer than the drip line or at the CRZ, whichever is greater.
 - (4) **Utilities:** Placement of utilities in common trenches shall be located outside of the drip line of trees to be preserved. The use of tunneled installation for utilities is encouraged.
 - (5) **Aeration, Fertilizer And Irrigation Systems:** The use of tree root aeration, fertilization, and/or irrigation systems is encouraged to promote the health of trees to be preserved.
 - (6) **Transplanting:** Transplanting of existing trees is encouraged. If trees cannot be immediately transplanted, the trees shall be moved to a protected area for later transplanting into the construction area.
 - (7) **Staking Of Trees And Plant Hardiness:** The property owner is responsible for keeping trees in a plumb position. When staking is required, it shall occur so as not to create any hazards or unsightly obstacles. All wires shall be encased in hose to prevent tree damage.
 3. **Landscape Plan Submission:** Prior to commencement of turf removal, grading, or planting, the property owner or developer shall prepare a landscape plan acceptable to the city for review. The contents of the plan shall include the following:
 - a. A landscape plan shall be submitted providing all information required in this subsection. The plan shall be drawn to a scale between one inch equals eight feet (1" = 8') scale and one inch equals one hundred feet (1" = 100'), showing and

labeling by name and dimensions all existing and proposed property lines, easements, utility lines, buildings, and other structures, vehicular use areas (including parking stalls, driveways, service areas, square footage), and water outlets.

- b. Planting schedules including the quantity of plants to be installed, common name, botanical name, plant size at installation and at full growth, and root type (balled and burlapped, container).
 - c. Typical elevations and/or cross sections as may be required.
 - d. Title block with the pertinent names and addresses (property owner and person drawing plan), scale, date, north arrow.
 - e. Existing landscaping shall be shown including species and size. Any approved material in satisfactory condition may be used to satisfy this subsection in whole or in part.
4. Landscape Performance Standards For R-1, R-2, RS And F Districts:
- a. Ground Coverage: Subject to subsections D2c and D2e of this section.
 - b. Tree Requirements:
 - (1) Minimum: A minimum of one deciduous tree shall be planted in the front yard between the principal structure and street right of way. In the case of a multiple frontage lot, each frontage will require a deciduous tree. If the house is on the lake, the planting requirement will apply to both the street frontage and land between the lake and the house.
 - (2) Credit For Existing Trees: A credit for existing trees that are preserved which meet the minimum size requirements can be granted by the city.
 - (3) Trees Not Allowed: Trees listed in subsection D5h of this section are not allowed to be used as a credit or as acceptable tree planting.
 - c. Landscape Completion And Escrow:
 - (1) Certificate Of Occupancy: No certificate of occupancy will be issued until after the property has been brought to final grade and all required plantings and ground cover are installed.
 - (2) Non-Growing Season Escrow:
 - (A) A temporary certificate of occupancy may be granted for a building during the non-growing season provided that that owner deposits a cash escrow or other acceptable surety with the city in an amount as set forth in the fee schedule adopted annually by the city council. Upon satisfactory installation of the landscaping, the escrow will be returned to the depositor and a certificate of

occupancy issued.

(B) If the landscaping is not installed by June 1 of the following year, the escrow will be forfeited. The city may then abate the violation and assess the cost to the property with the addition of any administrative fees.

(C) The city may grant a thirty (30) day extension after a written request of the landowner, or if the city determines weather conditions are not yet acceptable for planting to occur.

5. Landscape Performance Standards For R-3, C1, C2, OS, I, CI, And PB Districts:

- a. **Priorities:** When establishing landscaped areas for a site, top priority shall be given toward establishing landscaping areas in front yards (between buildings and street frontages). A secondary priority shall be given toward establishing landscaping areas around the site perimeter.
- b. **Ground Coverage:** Subject to subsections D2c and D2e of this section and the following.
- c. **Tree Requirements:**
 - (1) A minimum of one overstory deciduous or coniferous tree is required for every one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet of total building floor area. If a development does not include an expansion of building floor area, one such tree is required for every seventy five feet (75') of site perimeter.
 - (2) In addition to the trees required in subsection D5c(1) of this section, a minimum of one overstory deciduous or coniferous tree is required for every seventy five feet (75') of frontage along all roadways. The zoning administrator may allow the required street frontage trees to be clustered along the street frontage, provided there is adequate spacing between trees, based on the canopy of the given species at maturity.
 - (3) Thirty percent (30%) of the total amount of required trees shall be coniferous.
 - (4) Coniferous trees shall not be located within fifty feet (50') of a driveway.
- d. **Shrubs:** A minimum of one shrub is required for every four hundred fifty (450) square feet of total building floor area. If development does not include an expansion of building floor area, one such shrub is required for every forty five feet (45') of site perimeter.
- e. **Interior Parking Lot Landscaping:** In addition to the requirements of this subsection, subsection 10-5-2C12 of this title includes requirements for interior parking lot landscaping.
- f. **Remodeling Or Redevelopment:** In recognition of the fact that properties which have already been developed with permanent improvements as of the effective date

hereof generally have less flexibility in meeting landscape requirements, the minimum quantities of trees and shrubs required in subsections D5c and D5d of this section, shall be reduced by one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the requirements for new construction or development.

g. Landscape Completion And Escrow:

(1) **Certificate Of Occupancy:** No certificate of occupancy will be issued until after the property has been brought to final grade and all required plantings and ground cover are installed.

(2) **Non-Growing Season Escrow:**

(A) A temporary certificate of occupancy may be granted for a building during the non-growing season provided that that owner deposits a cash escrow, letter of credit, or other acceptable surety with the city in an amount as set forth in the fee schedule adopted annually by the city council. Bonds are not acceptable.

(B) If the landscaping is not installed by June 1 of the following year, the escrow will be forfeited. The city may then abate the violation and assess the cost to the property with the addition of any administrative fees.

(C) The city may grant a thirty (30) day extension after a written request of the landowner, or if the city determines weather conditions are not yet acceptable for planting to occur.

h. Trees Not Allowed: Trees not allowed or to be used as credit for existing trees or trees which may not be planted to comply with the requirements are:

- (1) Box elder.
- (2) Silver maple.
- (3) Northern catalpa.
- (4) Russian olive.
- (5) F. ginkgo (female only).
- (6) Mulberry.
- (7) Cottonwood.

i. Planting For Wildlife Habitat:

- (1) For wildlife habitat, when in doubt, plant:

(A) Spruce or fir rather than pine;

(B) A mixture of red and white oaks, including bur oak;

(C) Fruit and nut bearing plants also edible by humans;

(D) Native species rather than exotics or ornamental cultivars;

(E) More warm season grass (prairie) than cool season grass (brome and bluegrass).

(2) For year long food supply for wildlife:

(A) Highbush cranberry.

(B) Wild plum.

(C) Crabapple.

(D) Red osier dogwood.

(E) Juneberry.

(F) Chokecherry.

(G) Gray dogwood.

(H) Mountain ash.

(I) Staghorn sumac.

J. Recommended Coniferous Trees:

(1) American larch (tamarack).

(2) Balsam fir.

(3) Black Hills spruce.

(4) Colorado spruce (blue spruce).

(5) Northern cedar (arborvitae).

(6) Eastern white pine.

(7) Norway red pine.

(8) White spruce.

k. Recommended Deciduous Trees:

(1) Red and bur oak.

(2) American linden.

(3) Amur maple.

Note: Other materials may be used subject to city approval. Contact the county extension service or DNR forestry, and local nurseries for additional information regarding trees conducive to this area. (Ord. 2016-021, 5-17-2016)