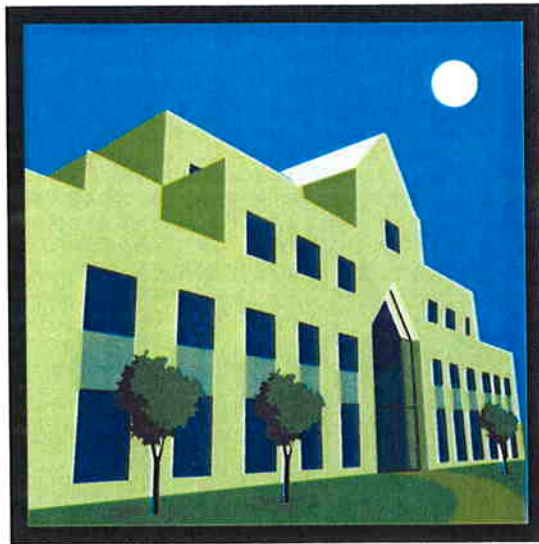


City of Ceres

WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Two or More Dwellings and/or
Nonresidential Development



Adopted by City Council Resolution 94-27, February 28, 1994

City of Ceres

WATER EFFICIENT LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Section 1.0: Purpose and Intent

The purpose of these Guidelines is to establish landscaping regulations that are intended to:

- A. Enhance the aesthetic appearance of development by providing standards relating to quality, quantity, and functional aspects of landscaping and landscape screening.
- B. Increase compatibility between various land uses, particularly between residential and abutting commercial and industrial land uses.
- C. Reduce the heat and glare generated by development.
- D. Reduce water consumption in the landscape environment using conservation principles. Comply with State laws requiring local agencies to adopt water-conserving landscape standards.
- E. Protect public health, safety, and welfare by minimizing the impact of all forms of physical and visual pollution, controlling soil erosion, screening incompatible land uses, preserving the integrity of neighborhoods, and enhancing pedestrian and vehicular traffic and safety.
- F. Provide developers and property owners with a better understanding of the City's expectations regarding the design and installation of landscaping and irrigation systems as currently required by Code.
- G. Establish a system to insure that the City's interests in landscaping and irrigation systems are carried out are both cost-effective and flexible. The City Council recognizes that minor deviations may be granted to these Guidelines, whenever such deviations are more likely to satisfy the purpose and intent of the Guidelines.

Section 2.0: Applicability

Section 3.0 of these Guidelines shall apply to the development of a lot with a single-family dwelling (including model homes) as a permitted use where the Ceres Zoning Ordinance requires the landscaping of the front yard (front setback) and exterior side yard (side setback). Section 4.0 of these Guidelines shall apply to all development projects that consist of two or more dwelling units on a single lot or lots, or nonresidential uses that are subject to the discretionary review and approval by the City of Ceres and where landscaping and irrigation systems are required by the Zoning Ordinance. Section 5.0, Definitions, and Appendix A shall apply to all developments regulated by these Guidelines.

Section 4.0: Landscaping for Two or More Dwellings and/or Nonresidential Development

The following process shall be observed in conjunction with the review and approval of landscaping and irrigation plans prepared in conjunction with two or more dwelling units and/or nonresidential developments:

- A. Concept Landscape Plan. A concept landscape plan shall be submitted as a part of each application for a discretionary permit. The concept plan shall meet the intent of these Guidelines by exhibiting a generalized design layout which adequately demonstrates the desired landscaping program in terms of location, size/scale, function, theme, and similar attributes. The concept plan shall provide the reviewing body with a clear understanding of the landscaping program prior to the preparation of a detailed, comprehensive landscape plan.
- B. Comprehensive Landscape and Irrigation Plan. A comprehensive landscaping and irrigation plan shall be prepared following the approval of an application for a discretionary permit by the final decision making body. The comprehensive landscaping plan shall be submitted with the application for a building permit. The standards and guidelines below provide the guidance needed to prepare an acceptable comprehensive landscaping and irrigation plan.

Section 4.1: General Landscape Design Policies for Two or More Dwellings and/or Nonresidential Development

The following landscape design policies are intended to assist the designer/landowner in understanding the City's expectations for landscaping associated with development in Ceres.

- A. Landscaping and open spaces should be designed as an integral part of the overall site plan design. Landscaping and open spaces should enhance the building design, enhance public views and spaces, provide buffers and transitions, provide for a balance of solar uses, and provide screening.
- B. Landscape design should accent the overall design theme through the use of structures such as arbors and trellises which are appropriate to the particular architectural style of adjacent structures.
- C. Landscaped areas should incorporate plantings utilizing a three tier system: (1) grasses and ground covers, including vines; (2) shrubs; and (3) trees.

- D. The following are common planting design concepts that should be used whenever possible:
- specimen trees used in informal groupings and/or rows at major focal points;
 - the use of native plants where possible;
 - extensive use of flowering vines both on walls and arbors;
 - pots, wall, or raised planters;
 - the use of planting to create shadow and patterns against walls;
 - trees to create canopy and shade, especially in parking areas;
 - the use of flowering trees in informal groups to provide color;
 - informal massing of colorful plantings;
 - use of distinctive plants as focal points;
 - berms, plantings, and low walls to screen parking areas from view of public rights-of-way while allowing filter views of larger buildings beyond.
- E. Planting areas between walls and streets, and buildings and streets should be landscaped in a hierarchy of plants in natural formations and groupings. Solid walls three feet (3'-0") or higher should receive vines, particularly when adjacent to public streets.
- F. A colorful landscape edge should be established at the base of buildings. Avoid asphalt edges at the base of structures as much as possible. Plant materials located in containers are appropriate.
- G. Planting masses on-site should assume a simple, non-uniform arrangement. The diversity of massing types should be great enough to provide interest, but kept to a level which evokes a relaxed natural feeling.
- H. Plants should be selected based upon their adaptability to the climatic, geological, and topographical conditions of the site. The planting of trees is encouraged, especially deciduous trees planted on the south side of buildings.
- I. Plants having similar water needs should be grouped together in distinct "hydrozones" so that the irrigation system can efficiently provide adequate water supplies.

Section 4.2: General Landscape Requirements and Development Standards for Two or More Dwellings and/or Nonresidential Development

The following represent the minimum requirements and development standards for the landscaping of development that consists of two or more residential units and/or nonresidential development in the City of Ceres.

A. Water Conservation. The design of the landscaping shall be based on one of the two following methods:

1. *"Water Allowance" Method.* This method involves establishing a water allowance for each site, which provides the basis for the entire landscape program. A water allowance is simply the maximum amount of water that may be applied to a landscaped area (24.6 gallons per square foot of landscaped area on an annual basis). It is determined by the evapotranspiration rate for the Ceres area, adjusted to reflect both the water consumption of the plant materials involved and the efficiency of the irrigation system. This method involves designing landscapes with a mixture of low, medium, and even high water-using plants, if desired, provided that they be maintained within the water allowance determined for each site. The principal advantage is that it permits a greater degree of flexibility in the selection and arrangement of plant materials. The methodology for the water allowance method is described in Appendix A.
2. *"Prescriptive Format" Method.* The prescriptive format involves selecting plant materials that fit the following predetermined formula:
 - not more than 35% of the landscaped area planted with turf.
 - balance of landscaped area to consist of at least 90% in drought tolerant plant materials and not more 10% in plant materials with medium to high water needs.

For the prescriptive format, the developer shall submit the information required in Section 3.4. No water allowance calculations need be provided as long as the landscaping by type, meets the percentages listed above. Forms for the single-family application of this method are contained in Appendix B.

While this method restricts the selection and arrangement of plant materials, its principal advantage is that it is somewhat easier to understand and to implement than the water allowance method.

B. Trees.

1. Minimum tree size shall be fifteen gallon (15) unless another size is specified in certain situations.
2. When more than five (5) trees are required on a site, twenty percent (20%) of all required trees shall be 24 inch box size or larger.

3. Fifteen gallon (15) trees shall be double staked and planted in accordance with city standards.
4. All 24 inch box size or larger trees shall be supported with guy wires meeting city standards.
5. Trees varieties shall be long-lived (minimum of 50 years), clean, require little maintenance and be structurally strong and disease and pest resistant.
6. Trees planted adjacent to streets, parking areas and pedestrian walkways shall have a deep rather than shallow root system and be coordinated with any street trees located within the right-of-way.
7. Trees planted in turf areas should be provided with a three foot (3') diameter clear area around the trench.
8. Trees planted in paved areas shall have a protective tree grate and shall have a deep rather than shallow root system.

C. Shrubs.

1. Eighty percent (80%) of all shrubs shall be five (5) gallon size or larger unless another size is specified in certain situations.
2. Accent plants may be one (1) gallon in size.

D. Ground Cover/Turf.

1. The size and spacing of plants used for ground cover shall be based on the requirements for the specific plants to achieve 100 percent coverage within one year from being planted.
2. Where turf is used for ground cover, concrete mow strips shall be used to separate turf areas from other landscaped areas.
3. Drought tolerant grasses should be planted in turf areas unless specific conditions prevent the selection of these species.
4. When designing landscaping for a project using the "prescriptive format" method, areas devoted to turf shall not exceed 35% of the total landscaped area. Exceptions include: public parks, cemeteries, and golf courses.
5. Turf is not permitted in narrow planting strips (areas less than eight feet (8') wide), median strips and parking strips.

6. Turf is not recommended for berms and other areas with slopes in excess of 20%. The toe of turf-planted berms or sloped areas (greater than 5%) shall be located a minimum of 24 inches behind any curb, street or walkway.
7. Turf shall not be install within 24 inches of driveways or sidewalks unless a three inch (3") deep swale measured from the top of the hardscape is constructed at least three feet (3') back of the hardscape.

E. Rock-Stone and Mulch.

1. A minimum of three inches (3") of rock, gravel, or mulch (e.g. wood chips, bark, etc.) shall be required in conjunction with ground covers, shrubs and trees, provided that it does not become the dominant feature of the landscape program except for the few months after initial planting. Non-porous material such as impervious sheet plastic may not be placed under the mulch as it blocks the infiltration of rainwater and can cause runoff elsewhere on the site.
2. Inorganic materials such as rocks, stones, boulders and timbers may be incorporated into a landscape program only when used in conjunction with live plant materials and when limited to an accent feature.

F. Planters.

1. All planter areas shall provide positive drainage away from paved areas.
2. Planters should be separated from surrounding areas by a six inch (6") high curb of raised concrete or treated wood, or be recessed at least two inches (2") below the surrounding surface with a 4:1 slope away from any adjoining paved area.
3. All planters constructed adjacent to buildings or structures shall be designed to avoid water intrusion into the adjacent building or structure.

G. Irrigation Systems

1. All landscaped areas shall be provided with an approved automatic irrigation system that meets the criteria listed below:
 - Low pressure/low precipitation rate systems (e.g. drip irrigation, etc.) shall be used where high pressure/high precipitation systems are not required and a low pressure system can provide an adequate supply of water.