

STATE OF GEORGIA

CITY OF STOCKBRIDGE

ORDINANCE NO. OR17-440

AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR LANDSCAPING STANDARDS IN THE ZONING CODE; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the governing authority of the City of Stockbridge is the Mayor and Council thereof;

WHEREAS, the governing authority of the City of Stockbridge, Georgia desires to adopt certain landscaping standards; and,

WHEREAS, the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Stockbridge, Georgia, will be positively impacted by the adoption of this Ordinance.

NOW THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF STOCKBRIDGE HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1. That Title 12 of the Stockbridge Municipal Code is hereby amended by adding a new Chapter 12.05 attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Section 2. The preamble of this Ordinance shall be considered to be and is hereby incorporated by reference as if fully set out herein.

Section 3. (a) It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Mayor and Council that all sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses and phrases of this Ordinance are or were, upon their enactment, believed by the Mayor and Council to be fully valid, enforceable and constitutional.

(b) It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Mayor and Council that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, each and every section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance is severable from every other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance. It is hereby further declared to be the intention of the Mayor and Council that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, no section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance is mutually dependent upon any other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance.

(c) In the event that any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Ordinance shall, for any reason whatsoever, be declared invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, it is the express intent of the Mayor and Council that such invalidity, unconstitutionality or unenforceability shall, to the

greatest extent allowed by law, not render invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or sections of the Ordinance and that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, all remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of the Ordinance shall remain valid, constitutional, enforceable, and of full force and effect.

Section 4. All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby expressly repealed.

Section 5. Penalties in effect for violations of the City of Stockbridge at the time of the effective date of this Ordinance shall be and are hereby made applicable to this Ordinance and shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 6. The effective date of this Ordinance shall be the date of adoption.

ORDAINED this 9th day of October 2017,
2017.

CITY OF STOCKBRIDGE, GEORGIA

Judy Neal
Judy Neal, Mayor

ATTEST:

Vanessa Holiday
Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Michael Williams
Michael Williams, City Attorney

Date Presented to Mayor: 10-12-2017

Date Received from Mayor: 10-16-2017

EXHIBIT A
LANDSCAPING

EXHIBIT A

CHAPTER 5. LANDSCAPING, BUFFERS AND TREE PROTECTION

Sec. 5.00.00. Generally

Sec. 5.01.00. Definitions

Sec. 5.02.00. Buffer requirements

Sec. 5.03.00. Landscaping requirements

Sec. 5.04.00. Tree and vegetation protection

5.0.0. INTENT, PURPOSE, AND TITLE

5.0.1. Intent

This ordinance shall apply to all properties or portions thereof located within the incorporated areas of Stockbridge, Georgia, to the extent the provisions contained herein. The City Council of the City of Stockbridge hereby finds the protection and preservation of trees, the planting of new trees and other landscape material, and the provision of buffers between dissimilar uses as part of the development process is a public purpose and provides for the public health and general welfare.

5.0.2. Purpose

- A. The purpose of this chapter is to provide requirements for the landscaping and buffering of developments and for the protection of existing trees in all zoning districts in order to enrich the urbanized and natural environment of the city of Stockbridge.
- B. General requirements for landscaping of a development site are set forth in section 5.01.00, requirements for landscaped buffers are set forth in section 5.02.00, and requirements for the protection of trees are set forth in section 5.03.00
- C. It is the intent of the City to reduce the adverse visual, environmental and aesthetic effects of development in order to achieve the following objectives:
 1. Minimize stormwater runoff rates;
 2. Maximize the capacity of groundwater recharge in urban or suburban areas;
 3. Increase air filtration and removal of particulate and gaseous pollutants through additional plant materials;
 4. Provide shade and noise attenuation;
 5. Filter and reduce the glare of headlights and reflected sunlight from parked automobiles onto the public street rights-of-way and adjacent properties;

6. Improve the appearance of parking areas; and
7. Minimize the visual blight created by large expanses of paved surfaces.

Sec. 5.01.00. DEFINITIONS

Buffer: Land area used to visibly separate one use from another through screening and distance to shield or block noise, light, glare, visual or other conditions, minimize physical passage to dissimilar uses or to reduce air pollution, dust, dirt and litter. Buffer widths vary depending upon the zoning district and the adjacent zoning district and conditions of zoning. Specific types of buffers include:

- (A) **Natural/Undisturbed Buffer:** Land area in which there is no disturbance including but not limited to removal of understory trees or vegetation, and no grading allowed except for maintenance or removal of hazardous trees, approved perpendicular access and utility crossings.
- (B) **Enhanced Natural Buffer:** Land area where an existing natural buffer is found to be inadequate and therefore requires additional vegetative screening. No disturbance is allowed except for maintenance or removal of hazardous trees, approved perpendicular access, utility crossings and the initial addition of vegetative screening.
- (C) **Maintained Landscape Buffer:** Land area in which grading is allowed and re-vegetation to a buffer is required specific to zoning case. Buffer must be replanted but also maintained per approved landscape plan and not allowed to revert to a Natural/Undisturbed Buffer.
- (D) **Stream Buffer (State):** “The area of land immediately adjacent to the banks of state waters in its natural state of vegetation, which facilitates the protection of water quality and aquatic habitat.” The definition of stream buffer is governed by Georgia Law, O.C.G.A. § 12-17-3(2).
- (E) **Stream Buffer (Local):** With respect to a stream, a natural or enhanced vegetated area (established by Section 19.5.1 (1)), lying adjacent to the stream.

All land development activity subject to this ordinance shall meet the following requirements:

1. An undisturbed natural vegetative buffer shall be maintained for fifty (50) feet, measured horizontally, on both banks (as applicable) of the stream as measured from the top of the stream bank.
2. An additional setback shall be maintained for twenty-five (25) feet, measured horizontally, beyond the undisturbed natural vegetative buffer, in which all impervious cover shall be prohibited. Grading, filling and earthmoving shall be minimized within the setback.
3. No septic tanks or septic tank drain fields shall be permitted within the buffer or setback.

Clearing: The removal of vegetation from a property, whether by cutting or other means.

Clear Cutting: The broad removal of all trees and/or vegetation from an area.

Construction Buffer: A type of buffer which is temporary and remains in effect during the construction of a project.

Critical Root Zone: An area represented by a concentric circle centering on the tree's trunk with a radius equal in feet to one (1) times the number of inches of the trunk diameter.

Deciduous Tree: A tree that drops foliage at one season of the year, generally in autumn.

Department: The City of Stockbridge Community Development Department of, as established by the City of Stockbridge City Council, and as operated through the actions and administration of the City Manager or his/her designee.

Development Activity: Any alteration of the natural environment which requires the approval of a development or site plan and issuance of a development permit.

Development Permit: A permit that is issued by the City that authorizes development activity, and includes but is not limited to, a land disturbance permit or building permit.

Development Regulations: The adopted regulations providing for the subdivision and development of real property within the City, as amended from time to time by the City Council.

Diameter: The diameter of a tree is to be measured by one of the following methods:

- (A) For Existing Trees: The standard measure for existing trees on site is Diameter at Breast Height (DBH). The tree trunk diameter is measured at a height of four and one half (4½) feet above ground level on the uphill side of the tree. If a tree splits into multiple trunks below four and one half (4½) feet, the measurement will be taken at the most narrow point beneath the split.
- (B) For Newly Planted Trees: The standard measure for newly planted trees will be the diameter of the trunk six (6) inches above the ground level.

Director: The Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning or his/her designee.

Dripline: A line on the ground established by a vertical plane extending from a tree's outermost branch tips down to the ground; i.e., the line enclosing the area directly beneath the tree's crown from which rainfall would drip.

Floodplain, 100-Year: Those lands subject to flooding, which have at least a one percent probability of flooding occurrence in any calendar year; and specifically, the floodplain as

shown on the Flood Boundary and Floodway Map as prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Evergreen Tree: A tree that maintains foliage throughout the entire year.

Grading: The placement, removal or movement of earth.

Grubbing: The removal of stumps or roots from a site.

Impervious Surface: A surface that does not permit the absorption of fluids particularly pertaining to stormwater runoff.

Land Disturbance Permit (LDP): Any permit other than a Building Permit issued by City of Stockbridge that authorizes clearing or grading activities on a site or portion of a site. Said permit may be Clearing, Clearing and Grubbing, Grading, or Development Permit as defined and authorized under the Development Regulations of the City of Stockbridge.

Landscape Strip: Land area located within the boundary of a lot and required to be set aside and used for landscaping upon which only limited encroachments are authorized.

Pervious Surface: A surface that permits the absorption of fluids particularly pertaining to stormwater runoff.

Saved Tree: A tree in which the critical root zone has not been disturbed by more than twenty-five (25) percent.

Screening: A method of shielding or obscuring one abutting or nearby structure or use from another by opaque fencing, walls, berms, densely planted vegetation, or the like.

Shrub: A woody plant of relatively low height, as distinguished from a tree by having several stems rather than a single trunk.

Timber Harvesting: The felling, loading and transporting of timber products (pulpwood, etc.). The term "timber harvesting" may include both clear cutting and selective cutting of timber.

Tree: Any living, self-supporting woody or fibrous plant which normally obtains a diameter at breast height of at least three (3) inches.

Tree Density Unit (TDU): A credit assigned to a tree, based on the diameter of the tree, in accordance with tables contained in this Ordinance.

Tree Density Standard (TDS): The minimum number of Tree Density Units per acre which must be achieved on a property after development.

Tree: Any self-supporting woody perennial plant, usually having a main stem or trunk and many branches, and at maturity normally attaining a trunk diameter greater than 3 inches at any point and a height of over 10 feet.

Tree Diameter: The widest cross-sectional dimension of a tree trunk measured at diameter breast height (dbh) or at a point below dbh for new trees or multi-trunked species, but in no case less than 6 inches from the ground.

Tree Protection Area (TPA): Any portion of a site wherein are located existing trees which are proposed to be p r e s e r v e d in order to comply with the requirements of this Ordinance. The Tree Protection Area shall include no less than the total area beneath the tree canopy as defined by the dripline of the tree or group of trees collectively.

Tree Planting List: The recommended species of replacement trees listed in Appendix “A” of this ordinance.

Tree Protection Area: Any portion of a site wherein are located existing trees which are proposed to be preserved in order to comply with the requirements of this article. The Tree Protection Area shall include no less than an area defined by this ordinance as the minimum critical root zone disturbed to be considered a saved tree.

Tree Removal: Any act which causes a tree to die within two (2) years after commission of the act.

Tree Replacement/Protection Plan (TP/RP): A plan that identifies tree protection areas where existing trees are to be preserved and where proposed replacement trees are to be planted on a property to meet minimum requirements, as well as methods of tree protection to be undertaken on the site and other pertinent information.

Tree Thinning: Selective cutting or thinning of trees only for the clear purpose of good forestry management in order to protect said forest from disease or infestation and in no way, shall be construed as clear cutting.

Zoning Buffer: A buffer required by the Zoning Ordinance or as a condition of zoning, special use or variance approval for a specific property.

Zoning Ordinance: The adopted zoning ordinance of the City of Stockbridge, as amended from time to time by the City Council.

Sec. 5.02.00. BUFFER REQUIREMENTS

Sec. 5.02.01. Applicability. Buffers shall be required between dissimilar districts or uses in accordance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance or as a condition of zoning, special use or variance approval.

Sec. 5.02.02. *Purpose and intent*

The intent of these requirements shall be to enhance the visual and aesthetic appearance of the city. The purpose of these buffer requirements is to achieve the following objectives:

- A. Provide space definition and landscape continuity within the built environment;
- B. Provide screening and relief from traffic, noise, heat, glare, odor and the spread of dust and debris;
- C. Reduce the impact of development on the drainage system and reduce flooding;
- D. Provide a sense of privacy;
- E. Reduce or eliminate the impacts of incompatibility;
- F. Reduce the visual impact of unsightly aspects of adjacent development; and
- G. Provide for the separation of spaces.

Sec. 5.02.03. *Location, measurement, and design of buffers*

- A. Buffers shall meet the minimum width requirements contained in the Zoning Ordinance, except as authorized to be reduced by the applicable buffer reduction process, as follows:
 - a. As specified in the "Minimum Buffer Strip Requirement Table"; or
 - b. As specified in a residential zoning district for a permitted non-residential use (e.g. a church, temple, synagogue, etc.); or
 - c. As required by a condition of zoning, special use, or variance approval
- B. Buffers shall be located on the outer perimeter of a lot or parcel, extending to the lot or parcel boundary line. Buffers shall not occupy any portion of an existing, dedicated or reserved public or private street, or right-of-way.
- C. Buffer width is normally measured from the property line; however, design variations are allowed. Average width shall be measured at the two (2) end points of the buffer and two (2) additional points which are each approximately one-third (1/3) of the total linear distance from the end point.
- D. Buffers shall be designed to avoid or minimize plantings within drainage, utility or other easements.
- E. Buffers shall be designed taking into consideration soils conditions, topography and natural resources. Native vegetation shall be used for landscaping and buffering unless the applicant demonstrates that the use of non-native, drought-resistant plants would best serve the site and advance the objectives of this section.
- F. Buffers shall be established by the owner of the proposed development site.
- G. Buffers shall be maintained by the property owner.

Sec. 5.02.04. *Buffer area standards*

- A. Minimum buffer area standards are presented in Table 5.02.03 (A).

Table 5.02.04 (A). Buffer Area Standards

Proposed Land Use	Adjacent Zoning District	Minimum Buffer Area
Office Institutional Commercial Mixed-use areas	RA, R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5 and RS	50 feet
Industrial	RA, R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5 and RS	100 feet
Commercial Mixed-use area	RD, RMH and RM	30 feet
Industrial	RD, RMH and RM	75 feet
Manufactured home parks Duplex Development Multifamily development	RA, R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5 and RS	20 feet
All other situations	20 feet	

Sec. 5.02.05. Plant materials for buffers on nonresidential developments

- A. Buffers required for nonresidential uses shall be planted with a combination of plant materials.
- B. Existing plants within a designated buffer area shall not be removed, unless the plants are dead or diseased. Where the administrator finds that existing plants do not provide an appropriate buffer, the following plant materials are required for each fifty (50) linear feet of buffer:
 - 1. One (1) large tree.
 - 2. Two (2) medium or small trees.
 - 3. Ten (10) screening shrubs.

Sec. 5.02.06. Plant materials for buffers on residential developments

- A. The following plant materials shall be required for each fifty (50) linear feet of buffer on a residential development:
 - 1. One (1) large tree.
 - 2. Two (2) medium or small trees.
 - 3. Ten (10) screening shrubs.

- B. Buffer areas shall meet the standards for landscape plant materials set forth in Section 5.01.04.

Sec. 5.02.07. *Screening Requirements*

- A. Buffers shall be natural, undisturbed, and free of encroachments except as authorized by a condition of zoning, special use or variance approval, or as authorized herein, and shall contain the existing tree cover and vegetation as well as any supplemental plantings or replantings as may be required.
- B. Buffers shall be of such nature and density so as to screen activities, structures and uses on the property from view from the normal level of a first story window on an abutting lot and shall further provide a year-round effective visual screen.
- C. Buffers required alongside property lines shall extend to a street right-of-way line unless otherwise required by the Director in order to observe the sight distance requirements contained in the Development Regulations, or as authorized by a condition of zoning, special use, or variance approval.
- D. In situations where the required buffer width is partially or completely contained within an existing easement (e.g. power or natural gas transmission, etc.), the screening requirements of this Ordinance shall be met outside of the easement area.

Sec. 5.02.08. *Supplemental Plantings*

- A. Buffers in which vegetation is non-existent or is inadequate to meet the screening requirements of this Ordinance shall be planted with supplemental plantings so as to provide a year-round effective visual screen.
- B. Supplemental plantings and replantings shall consist of evergreen trees, shrubs, or combination thereof, native or adaptable to the region. All trees planted shall be a minimum of 6 feet in height at time of planting and shall be a species which will achieve a height of at least 20 feet at maturity. All shrubs planted shall be a large growing species, shall be a minimum of 3 feet in height at time of planting and shall be a species which will achieve a height of at least 10 feet at maturity.
- C. All supplemental plantings shall be installed to allow for proper plant growth and maintenance.

Sec. 5.02.09. *Non-Vegetative Screening*

- A. Non-vegetative materials utilized to satisfy the screening requirements of this Ordinance, in addition to the use of existing vegetation and/or supplemental plantings, may consist of walls, fences, earthen berms or any combination thereof.
- B. If walls or fences are to be utilized, their placement and installation shall be such so as to cause minimal disturbance of existing vegetation and located so as to provide an effective visual screen.

Sec. 5.02.10. *Disturbance or Encroachments*

- A. Ditches, swales, stormwater conveyance facilities, stormwater detention ponds, sanitary sewer conveyance facilities, similar facilities, and any associated easements, shall not encroach into a buffer except that necessary access and utility crossings (e.g. stormwater or sanitary sewer pipes) may encroach into the buffer as near to perpendicular as practical.
- B. Supplemental plantings or replantings of vegetation, or authorized non-vegetative screening devices shall be authorized to encroach into a buffer provided there is minimal disturbance of any significant existing vegetation.
- C. Land disturbance is authorized in areas of a buffer that are devoid of significant vegetation provided that the final grade and replantings of vegetation meet the screening requirements contained herein.
- D. Dying, diseased or dead vegetation may be removed from a buffer provided minimal disturbance occurs. Vegetation thus removed shall be replaced where necessary to meet the screening requirements contained herein.

Sec. 5.02.11. *Protection During Land Disturbing Activities*

- E. During authorized land disturbing activities, buffers shall be clearly demarcated and protected prior to commencement of, and during, construction.
- F. The method of demarcation and protection utilized shall be in accordance with Best Management Practices(BMP) or as required by the Department.

Sec. 5.02.11. *Standards for Construction of Buffers*

A. Where Required

Construction buffers shall be required where specifically provided in the Zoning Ordinance between single family residential subdivisions, or as a condition of zoning, special use or variance approval.

B. Time Constraints

Construction buffers shall only be in effect during the construction period of a project and shall terminate upon project completion. In the case of a residential subdivision, a construction buffer shall terminate upon each individual lot with the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the principal dwelling.

Sec. 5.02.12. *Disturbance or Encroachment*

- A. Construction buffers shall be natural, undisturbed and free of encroachments except as authorized by a condition of zoning, special use or variance approval, or as authorized herein.
- B. The encroachment of ditches, swales, stormwater conveyance facilities, stormwater detention ponds, sediment basins, sanitary sewer conveyance facilities, similar facilities, and any associated easements, into a construction buffer shall not be authorized except that necessary access and utility crossings (e.g. stormwater or sanitary sewer pipes), and natural bottom detention ponds (sediment basins must be located outside of the construction buffer) and their appurtenant structures which require no grading and removal of trees, may encroach upon the construction buffer.
- C. If the construction buffer on a residential lot is devoid of existing trees and vegetation, and a tree survey is submitted to document this situation prior to conducting land disturbing activities (including clearing) on the lot, then the Department may authorize the encroachment of a building or structure into the construction buffer for a distance not to exceed 10 feet.

Sec. 5.02.13. *Protection During Land Disturbing Activities*

- A. During authorized land disturbing activities, construction buffers shall be clearly demarcated and protected prior to commencement of, and during, construction.
- B. The method of demarcation and protection utilized shall be in accordance with Best Management Practices (BMP) or as required by the Department.

Sec. 5.03.00. LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS

Sec. 5.03.01. Applicability and provision of landscape plans

- A. The requirements of Chapter 5 shall apply to all properties to be used, developed, or redeveloped within the city, except as may specifically be exempted in subsection 5.03.01.C., below.
- B. In order to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of this chapter, a landscaping plan shall be submitted with applications for development approval for all development subject to these standards. The requirements and procedures for submittal, review and approval of all applications are set forth in Chapter 12.
- C. The following types of development are exempt from the requirements of this Section:
 - 1. Single-family dwellings;
 - 2. Duplex buildings; and
 - 3. Applications for accessory uses, accessory structures or temporary uses.

Sec. 5.03.02. Maintenance requirements

- A. All landscaped areas shall be maintained to ensure that plant materials remain healthy. Any diseased or dead plant materials shall be replaced as soon as reasonably possible based on the growing season, but not later than six (6) months following identification of the need for replacement.
- B. Necessary trimming and maintenance shall be performed to maintain the health of the plant materials, to provide an aesthetically pleasing appearance and to ensure that landscaped and buffer areas serve the intended purpose.

Sec. 5.03.03. Landscape standards for nonresidential development

- A. Required landscaped areas, including general landscaping, parking lot landscaping, perimeter landscaping and buffer areas shall not be disturbed by grading, property improvements or construction activities, except where necessary to prevent a nuisance, or to maintain natural plant growth, or to remove diseased, misshapen, or dangerous and decayed trees.
- B. All landscaped areas, including general landscaping, parking lot landscaping, perimeter landscaping and buffer areas shall utilize existing natural vegetation in an undisturbed state provided that the existing vegetation is appropriate for inclusion.
- C. A minimum of twelve (12) percent of the total buildable area in any parcel shall be devoted to landscaping.
- D. The requirement to provide landscaping shall be in addition to any buffers as required in Section 5.02.00.

E. The site design standards for landscaping are provided in Table 5.03.03 (E).

Table 5.03.03 (E). Site Design Standards for Nonresidential Landscaping

Location of Landscaping	Number of Plants	Type of Plants
Front yard setback	1 tree per 40 linear feet of frontage Full coverage of pervious areas	50 percent large trees Grass or ground cover
Side yard setback	1 tree per 25 linear feet of frontage Full coverage of pervious areas	50 percent large trees Grass or ground cover
Rear yard setback	1 tree per 25 linear feet of frontage Full coverage of pervious areas	Grass or ground cover

Sec. 5.03.04. Residential landscape standards

- A. Prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy, any parcel of land for which a building permit has been requested shall have preserved or planted trees, meeting the following standards:
 1. Minimum caliper for planted trees is one and one-half (1½) inches.
 2. A minimum of seventy-five (75) percent of planted trees shall be hardwoods.
 3. All recorded lots within a subdivision shall have planted or preserved the required number of trees according to the zoning district, as set forth in subsection 5.01.02.B.
 4. Requirements for planting or preserving trees are in addition to requirements for landscaping and buffer areas, but may be located included in the landscaping and/or buffer areas.

B. Tree planting requirements.

Tree planting requirements are presented in Table 5.01.02 (B).

Table 5.03.04 (B). Tree Planting Requirements

Zoning District	Number of Trees Planted or Preserved	
	First acre	Each additional ¼ acre
RA, R-1	10	2

R-2	7	2
RM, RMH	10	2
R-3, R-4, R-5, RD, RS	4 trees per parcel (no matter the parcel size)	

C. Standards for subdivision entrances. A minimum of one (1) large tree, one (1) medium or small tree and five (5) shrubs shall planted or retained for each subdivision entrance sign located on private property. The type, size and location of these plant materials shall conform to the specifications set forth in section 5.01.04. Plant materials shall not be located to interfere with the clear visibility requirements of Section 8.01.07.

Sec. 5.03.05. *Landscape requirements for parking lots*

A. *Perimeter landscaping for parking lots.* A landscaped area having a minimum horizontal dimension of 10 feet shall be maintained between the property line and a parking lot. The width of a sidewalk shall not be included within the 10-foot perimeter landscape area.

B. *Interior landscaping.*

1. Parking lots with twenty (20) or more parking spaces shall provide interior landscaping.
2. Interior planting areas may be in tree islands, at the end of parking bays, or between rows of parking spaces. Planting areas may also be located within driveway medians, provided the median is a minimum of ten (10) feet wide.
3. There shall be one (1) tree required for each two hundred fifty (250) square feet of interior landscape areas.
4. Parking lots shall be designed so that no more than twelve (12) parking spaces occur in an unbroken row without an intervening landscaped area having a minimum width of eight feet measured from the back of curb to back of curb.
5. Landscape islands, peninsulas, or medians shall conform to the planting area specifications set forth in subsection 5.01.04.E.
6. Vehicle stops or curbing shall be used to ensure that vehicles do not overhang required landscaped areas.

Sec. 5.03.06. *Landscape plant materials standards*

A. Trees for landscaped and buffer areas shall be selected from Table 5.01.04 (A). Where the planting area is within a power line easement, small trees shall be selected. (Plants noted with

the symbol “*” are preferred for buffers; recommended trees for all landscaping and reforestation are noted with the symbol “#.”)

Table 5.05.06 (A). Landscape Materials — Trees

Large Trees (also called shade trees or canopy trees; height at maturity 35 or more feet)	Medium Trees (also called under story trees; height at maturity 25 to 35 feet)	Small Trees (also called under story trees; height at maturity less than 25 feet)
# Willow Oak	Mountain Silverbell	Japanese Maple
# Sugar Maple	Saucer Magnolia	Star Magnolia
# Scarlet Oak	# Sourwood	# Japanese Dogwood
# Red Maple	Weeping Cherry	# Flowering Dogwood
English Oak	# Leyland Cypress	# Crape Myrtle
# Bald Cypress	Yoshino Cherry	# Eastern Redbud
# Schumard Oak	# Golden Rain Tree	# Wax Myrtle
# Dawn Redwood	Kwansan Cherry	Amur Maple
# White Oak	Mountain Ash	*# Yaupon Holly
Chinese Elm	Redmond Linden	Crabapple
Darlington Oak	Yellowwood	# Sweetbay Magnolia
Littleleaf Linden	*# American Holly	# Service Berry
Gingko (male only)	# Pistachio	
	Japanese Black Pine	
Japanese Cedar	*# Cherry Laurel	
# Tulip Poplar	* Arizona Cypress	

Japanese Katsura Tree	*# Virginia Pine	
# London Plane-Tree	* Eastern Red Cedar	
(Sycamore)	# River Birch	
Japanese Pagoda	# Fosters Holly	
American Beech		
Japanese Zelkova		
# Southern Magnolia		
Deodar Cedar		
Sequoia		
# Sawtooth Oak		
# Red Oak		
# Blackgum or Tupelo		
# Black Walnut		

B. Shrubs to be installed in landscaped or buffer areas shall be selected from Table 5.01.04(B).

Table 5.03.06 (B). Landscape Materials — Shrubs

Large Screening Shrubs	Small Shrubs (height at maturity is approximately 36 inches)	
American Holly	Warty Barberry	Forsythia
	Dwarf Burford Holly	Dwarf Burning Bush
Burford Holly	Dwarf Chinese Holly	Spiraea (all varieties)

Osmanthus	Japanese Holly	Viburnum
Nellie R. Stevens Holly	Dwarf Yaupon Holly	Oakleaf Hydrangea
Thorny Eleagnus	Mugo Pine	Japanese Flowering Quince
Savannah Holly	Juniper	Weigela
Hetz Juniper	Oregonholly Grape	Azalea
Ligustrum	Nandina	Flowering Jasmine
Arborvitae	Dwarf Nandina	Winter Jasmine
Russian Olive	Leatherleaf Vinburnum	
Eastern Red Cedar	Winter Honeysuckle	Chinese Witchhazel
	* Northern Bayberry	* Cleyera
	* Pittosporum	* Euonymus
	* Japan Yew	
	* Red Tip	*

C. Grasses and ground covers shall be selected from Table 5.01.04 (C).

Table 5.03.06 (C). Landscape Plant Materials — Grasses and Ground Covers

Grass	Ground Cover
Fescue	* Shore Juniper
Bermuda	English Ivy (shade)

Centipede	* Periwinkle (shade)
Zoysia	Purpleleaf Wintercreeper
	Dwarf Roses
	Aaronsbeard St. Johnswort
	* Evergreen Candytuft (border)
	Rockyspray Cotoneaster
	Lily-Turf
	Willowleaf Cotoneaster
	Creeping Lilyturf (shade)
	Pachysandra (shade)
	Hybrid Daylily
	Ornamental Grasses
	* Liriope

D. All plant materials shall meet the following general requirements:

1. All plant materials shall be nursery grown, number 1 grade and installed according to accepted planting procedures.
2. All plant materials shall meet current American Association of Nurseryman Standards.

E. All plant materials shall meet the size and location specifications presented in Table 5.01.04(E).

Table 5.03.06 (E). Plant Materials Specifications

Plant	Size at Planting	Maximum
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	Spacing	
Large trees	2-inch caliper	40 feet apart, on center
Medium and small trees — single trunk	1-inch caliper	25 feet apart, on center
Medium and small trees — multiple trunks	5 feet in height	25 feet apart, on center
Large screening shrubs	4 feet in height	5 feet apart, on center
Shrubs	18 inches in height	24 inches apart, on center
Ground cover	Installed in a manner that presents a finished appearance and complete coverage	
Grass	Sodded, sprigged, plugged, or seeded, except that solid sod shall be used in drainage swales or other areas subject to erosion. Lawn grasses shall be planted to achieve complete coverage within two calendar years from the time of planting.	

- F. Where both large and medium/small trees are planted, they shall be planted in a double staggered row, alternating large and medium/small trees.
- G. Spacing requirements for trees shall include consideration of trees planted on abutting properties. Trees may be grouped, so long as a sufficient planting area is provided as set forth in paragraph I., below.
- H. Trees shall be planted in locations away from septic tanks and drain fields.
- I. Planting areas shall meet the following specifications:
 - 1. A planting area of one hundred twenty-five (125) square feet shall be required for each medium or large tree.
 - 2. A planting area of ninety (90) square feet shall be required for each small tree.
 - 3. The minimum dimension of any planting area shall be ten (10) feet.

J. Notwithstanding the above, street trees shall be shown on a development landscape plan.

Sec. 5.04.00. TREE AND VEGETATION PROTECTIONS

Sec. 5.04.01. Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide for the protection, conservation, and replacement of trees and landscaping to improve the urbanized and natural environment of the city of Stockbridge. The policy of the City of Stockbridge is to minimize trees removal on development sites and, upon proper site development, achieve replacement of trees by uniform standards set forth in this section.

Sec. 5.04.02. Applicability

- A. The terms and provisions of this section and the standards set forth herein shall apply in the following circumstances:
 - 1. Individuals engaged in any activity, private and/or governmental, on real property that requires issuance of a land disturbance permit within the city according to subsections 12.02.06. F through H.
 - 2. Individuals engaged in the building and/or development of single-family homes or subdivisions, multifamily and manufactured home developments, and all nonresidential uses.
 - 3. Owners of individual properties more than five (5) acres in size and which are not part of a platted subdivision.
- B. Nothing in this section shall be construed to allow removal of any tree or vegetation in a required stream buffer, watershed buffer, buffer adjacent to waters of the state, or other undisturbed or planted buffer located for protection of natural resources, except where such removal has been specifically authorized as set forth in this UDC.

Sec. 5.04.03. Specific requirements for timber lands

- A. Land used for silviculture shall comply with the requirements of subsection 5.03.03.B. or subsection 5.03.03.C., below.
- B. Land declared silviculture shall be exempt from the requirements for tree protection, provided the following conditions are met:
 - 1. A certificate from the tax assessor indicating agricultural preference has been presented to the City;
 - 2. A forest management plan demonstrating compliance with the erosion control standards set forth in Section 8.05.00; and

3. A commitment to follow Georgia Forestry Commission "Best Management Practices" as set forth in paragraph E., below.
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- C. Land that has been designated as silviculture may subsequently be developed, provided that a development plan has been prepared and approved by the administrator prior to any clearing, grading, clear-cutting or other land disturbance. The purpose of the development plan is to ensure that cutting or harvesting of trees occurs in such a manner as to avoid the practice called "clear-cutting" prior to any subsequent development.
 - D. Prior to clearing, harvesting, or cutting trees, or any grading or land disturbance, a combined timbering and logging permit shall be obtained from the City, according to procedures set forth in subsection 12.02.06.H. The development plan shall include a forest management plan for the timberland site. The management plan shall demonstrate compliance with erosion control standards set forth in Section 8.05.00, protection of soil and water resources, and compliance with all applicable best management practices.
 - E. Georgia Forestry Commission "Best Management Practices" (BMPs) include, but are not limited to, the following measures:
 1. Analyze and plan site preparation, considering all aspects of streamside management zones.
 2. Avoid the cutting of roads or trails unless necessary. Roads or trails determined to be necessary according to Georgia Forestry Commission BMPs shall not be located on ridge-tops and the use of soft roads or trails during wet ground conditions shall be avoided.
 3. Avoid harrowing, root raking or bulldozing.
 4. When forestry activities are completed for a period, temporary access roads shall be retired. This includes reshaping, mulching and seeding, in combination with installing water bars.
 5. Logging debris shall be deposited on exposed soil, dry washes, and at points of concentrated drainage created by skid trails and roads. Such debris shall not be piled in live or wet-weather streams.
 6. Logging equipment shall not be services in locations where such activities will adversely impact soil or water quality.
 7. Skidding on steep slopes shall be conducted along a gradual grade rather than perpendicular to the slope and such skidding shall be alternated between several skidding trails to minimize soil exposure and disturbance.
 - F. In addition to the BMPs set forth above and promulgated by the Georgia Forestry Commission, the property owner shall not conduct any other land disturbing activities for a period of three (3) years following completion of such forestry practices. (See subsection 8.05.01.A.6.)

Sec. 5.04.04. *Exemptions*

The following situations shall be exempt from the provisions of Section 5.03.00:

- A. Individual homeowners within platted subdivisions. This exemption does not exempt owners from requirements for protective buffers along streams, creeks and reservoirs as set forth in Chapter 3.
- B. All properties for which a covenant has been established with the Henry County Board of Tax Assessors, pursuant to O.C.G.A. §§ 48-5-7.1 and 48-5-7.4, shall be exempt from the terms of this appendix provided such covenant has not been breached and otherwise remains in effect.
- C. The following situations within all residential districts shall also be exempted:
 - 1. Where an addition to a principal dwelling will constitute structural and exterior changes to the dwelling.
 - 2. Where construction of an accessory structure(s) and/or uses including, but not limited to, swimming pools and tennis courts is permitted, including an accessory dwelling.
 - 3. Removal of diseased, dead, infested or dying trees, or living pine trees or other trees that may pose a danger to an existing or proposed dwelling or other substantial structure.
 - 4. Mass grading shall be allowed on lots having an area of ten thousand, eight hundred and ninety (10,890) square feet or less.

Sec. 5.04.05. Requirements in all zoning districts

- A. The mass grading and/or clear-cutting of properties which are five (5) acres in area or greater for the purpose of residential development is strictly prohibited, except as noted in subsection 5.03.04.C. As to each such development, only that land area necessary for development and construction of roadways, utilities and amenity areas (i.e., parking lots for clubhouses, pool areas, tennis courts, etc.) shall be cleared.
- B. Mass grading and clear cutting of any lot in a residential subdivision shall be prohibited, except as noted in subsection 5.03.04.C. On such lots, land shall be cleared only as is necessary for purposes of the proper development of the lot. Clearing shall be limited to the specific development and an area not to exceed ten (10) feet from the specific development, including areas for installation of the following improvements:
 - 1. Placement of the individual dwelling;
 - 2. Placement of driveways and sidewalks;
 - 3. Placement of utilities and detention ponds;
 - 4. Placement of septic systems;
 - 5. Building roads;
 - 6. Placement of decks and patios; and
 - 7. Installation of proper drainage as required by the City of Stockbridge.

- C. Developers and builders shall coordinate the location of utilities with all utility companies in order to prevent root damage within the critical root zones of protected trees to minimize damage to trees within protected zones.
- D. Topographical difficulties and/or the installation of utilities shall be considered at the time of the development of a residential subdivision or parcel. Each parcel of land shall be considered on a case-by-case basis as to the removal of trees where topography and/or utility installation is a factor. Special consideration shall be given to maintaining the natural topography of the site when possible, and to incorporate the preservation of existing trees into the development plans for the site. The administrator shall have final approval of the site development plans. Failure to follow the approved development plan shall result in denial of the certificate of occupancy.
- E. Unnecessary removal of trees or other vegetation shall be prohibited. The planting of grass or other ground covers shall not supersede the requirement for trees as indicated by each zoning district.
- F. Efforts shall be taken to preserve existing trees, especially those sound trees that are eight (8) inches dbh or larger. The preservation of large specimen trees is encouraged.
- G. Tree species proposed for planting shall be ecologically compatible with the site.
- H. Replacement trees shall be planted in a manner that will provide adequate space for nourishment, light and maturation.

Sec. 5.04.06. Protection of trees during construction

Methods and standards for tree protection shall be required as follows:

- A. Trees identified to be preserved and/or planted, and being counted as credit for meeting the requirements of Section 5.03.00, shall have a valid, recognizable method of tree-protection (tree-save) marking or delineation installed at the critical root zones.
- B. No person engaged in the construction of any structure(s) or improvement(s) shall encroach on a designated tree-save/critical root zone area with heavy machinery or store heavy building materials, including gravel, soil or debris piles, in such areas.
- C. During construction, a tree save area must be designated around any trees that are to remain at the end of construction. Desirable trees shall be identified and a physical barrier set up around the tree or group of trees. This barrier may consist of a four-foot high orange safety fence, wide plastic caution tape, a simple fence made of lumber, or other appropriate methods used to identify the drip line area.
- D. Tree save area barriers shall be placed beyond the drip line area (critical root zone) and shall prevent the stockpiling of soil or building materials, dumping cleaning solvents, or parking vehicles or equipment within this barricaded area.