



Codes and Ordinances Governing Your City

Landscaping Requirements

When Do I Have to Have My Front Yard Landscaped

Your front yard needs to be landscaped within 2 years of occupancy of a new home. For an existing home, the city council passed a new requirement that requires that your front yard be landscaped within 2 years after 31 October 2008.

What about My Side and Back Yards

A side yard is considered a part of the front yard if it is not behind a fence. Landscaping from the front yard is required to the fence or to the back plane of the home if there isn't any fence. There isn't any requirement to landscape your backyard, but you must keep the weeds down, under 4 inches 30 feet from your home for fire safety reasons.

What is Considered Landscaping

Landscaping shall include the treatment of the ground surface with live materials such as, but not limited to, sod, grass, ground cover, trees, shrubs, vines and other growing horticultural plant material. In addition, a combination of xeriscape

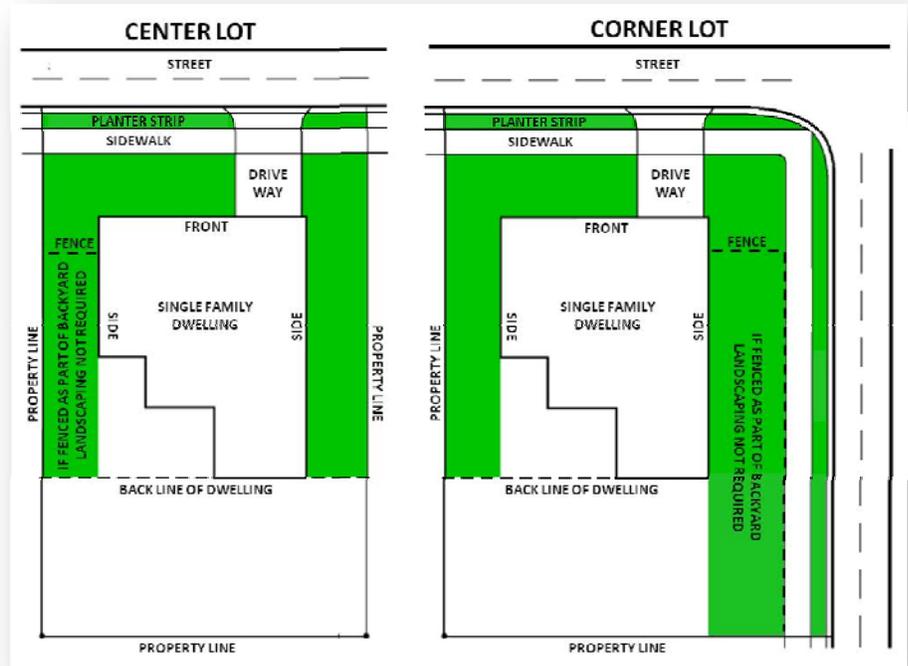
plantings and the utilization of native vegetation are encouraged in clusters on smaller and flatter terrain lots and allowed exclusively on slopes over 15%. Native vegetation includes grasses and trees that are currently established in the non-developed hillside areas of the city. Erosion control and elimination of noxious weeds must be accomplished in order to qualify as native plantings. Simply grading the ground and allowing vegetation to grow back is not allowed because this promotes noxious weeds to grow. Landscaping may also include other decorative surfacing such as bark chips, crushed stone, mulch materials, or pavers. Structural features such as fountains, pools, statues, playgrounds, and benches shall also be considered a part of the landscaping, but such objects alone shall not meet the requirements of landscaping. Hard surfaces, such as concrete or asphalt, shall not cover more than 30% of a front yard area.

What if I Have Animal Rights

Properties within zones with animal rights are allowed to keep areas of the property for use of raising livestock and agriculture uses. This can include corrals, pastures, coops, barnyards, etc. These areas will still be required to maintain weed control. Noxious weeds and native grasses shall be kept less than 4 inches tall within 30 feet of a structure. Noxious weeds shall be kept less than 12 inches tall for all other areas.

Commercial and Large Residential Developments

Landscape materials must be installed prior to completion of all commercial projects, Planned Unit, Senior Housing, Hillside Cluster, and Mountain Home Developments and the planning commission must approve the landscaping plan. The plan shall show planting materials, irrigation, structural features, playgrounds, sport fields, building locations, and hard surfaces (streets, sidewalks, trails, etc.). It shall also show grading with contours and spot elevations before construction and anticipated contours and elevations after completion. If the subdivision





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contains individual lots to be built upon after subdivision completion, only common areas in the subdivision will be subject to this requirement. Individual lots will be required to follow front and rear yard landscaping requirements.

Native Vegetation

The use of native vegetation is encouraged on steeper slopes over 15% and on larger lots over ½ acres in size to conserve water and to help preserve the native hillside areas of the city. Properties within the Urban/Wildland Interface Area (generally hillside areas in the southern area of the city) shall adhere to the requirements for vegetative clearance as listed in section 9.3.9 of this code. Properties within the Hillside Residential - 1 Zone have additional native vegetation preservation requirements.

So What Are All The Rules?

You can view the complete city code at the city office or go to the city website at www.elkridgecity.org and look under Quick Links and City Code:

City Code 10-12-36 Landscaping Requirements