

Article XXIV. Water-Efficient Landscape Provisions.

Sec. 44-264. Intent and purpose.

It is the intent and purpose of this article to establish standards and procedures for the design, installation, and management of water conserving landscapes and water- efficient irrigation systems in order to utilize available plant, water, and land resources to avoid excessive landscape water demands and to foster long-term water conservation while ensuring high quality landscape design, and respecting the economic, environmental, aesthetic and life-style choices of individuals and property owners.

The City of Paramount recognizes that landscaping has numerous positive effects and values in the community, including cleaning the air and water, preventing erosion, offering fire protection, replacing ecosystems displaced by development, providing areas for active and passive recreation, and providing aesthetic enhancement of the built environment. The City also recognizes that water conservation is a long-term priority in California. The City expects to improve the overall community by combining the positive influence of landscaping with recognized water-conserving practices.

(Ord. No. 825)

Sec. 44-265. Definitions.

The following definitions are established:

- (a) Automatic controller A mechanical or solid-state timer, capable of operating valve stations to set the days and length of time of a water application.
- (b) Backflow prevention device A safety device used to prevent pollution or contamination of the water supply due to the reverse flow of water from the irrigation system.
- (c) Hydrozone A portion of the landscaped area having plants with similar water needs that are served by a valve or set of valves with the same schedule.
- (d) Landscape area The entire parcel less the building footprint, driveways, non-irrigated portions of parking lots, hardscapes, such as decks and patios, walkways, and other non-porous areas.
- (e) Mulch Any material such as leaves, bark, straw, or other materials left loose and applied to the soil surface to reduce evaporation.
- (f) Reclaimed water Treated or recycled waste water of a quality suitable for nonpotable uses such as landscape irrigation; not intended for human consumption.
- (g) Sprinkler head Device which sprays water through a nozzle.
- (h) Static water pressure The pipeline or municipal water supply pressure when water is not flowing.
- (i) Turf A surface of earth containing mowed grass with its roots. Cool season grasses include annual bluegrass, Kentucky bluegrass, Perennial rye grass, Red fescue, and Tall fescue. Warm season grasses include Bermuda grass, Kikuyu grass, Seashore paspalum, St. Augustine grass, Zoysia grass, and Buffalo grass.

- (j) Valve A device used to control the flow of water in the irrigation system.
- (k) Xeriscape A water-conserving garden utilizing drought tolerant and low water use landscaping.

(Ord. No. 825)

Sec. 44-266. Landscape requirements.

Landscaping shall be installed in all landscape areas in conjunction with the following, except as noted in Section 44-269:

Any alteration, modification, or expansion of a landscaped area; and/or

Any expansion that results in an increase of thirty percent (30%) or more of the gross floor area of all structures on the property; and/or

Any modification or alteration to a building that exceeds 10 percent (10%) of the property's assessed value prior to the modification or alteration.

All existing exempt landscaped areas which will become non-exempt under this Article shall have their existing landscaping and irrigation systems adapted to meet the specifications of this Article. The following landscaping requirements are hereby established for the design of all landscape plans prepared for all properties located within the City of Paramount:

- (a) One set of planting and irrigation plans prepared by a California licensed Landscape Architect shall be submitted to the Community Development Department at the same time as building construction drawings are submitted for plan check. These plans will contain all planting and irrigation work to be done concerning the development, as well as utility and trash enclosure locations. Building elevation plans, including materials and colors, shall accompany the landscape submittal for reference. After initial review by the City, the Landscape Architect shall make all noted corrections as required by the City. Subsequently, the Landscape Architect shall submit three final sets of prints to be approved, stamped and signed by the City.
- (b) All proposed changes to approved plans are subject to approval by the Community Development Department.
- (c) All landscaped areas that are to be dedicated to the City of Paramount shall be designed to meet all the City standards and specifications. Reproducible mylar Record Drawings of all dedicated improvements are required to be submitted to the City.
- (d) Landscaping plans specifying the size, type, quantity and location of all plant material shall be submitted to the Director of Community Development for approval. Approval criteria for landscaping plans will consider, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (1) The adequacy of plant material in achieving a buffer along public streets.
 - (2) The use of landscaping to enhance the aesthetic quality of property and buildings.
 - (3) The general suitability of the plan relative to the placement, type and size of plant material selected for screening purposes and aesthetic quality.

- (4) The creation of hydrozones to improve irrigation efficiency by grouping plants with similar water requirements together.
 - (5) The protection and preservation of native species.
 - (6) The use of landscaping to screen parking areas from public streets.
 - (7) The creation of xeriscapes.
- (e) All required landscaping areas shall be subject to, but not limited to, the following minimum standards:
- (1) Planters. All landscaping shall be planted in permanent planters surrounded by 6 inch by 6 inch concrete curbing except where a planter abuts a building or concrete block wall. Planters shall be 6 inches below building floor slabs; if this is not possible, appropriate waterproofing of the walls or curbing is required. All areas not devoted to paving or building shall be landscaped and permanently maintained.
 - (2) Trees.
 - a. All trees shall be a minimum 24-inch box size, or larger, with a ratio of one 36-inch box tree to every three 24-inch box trees planted, unless a waiver is obtained from the Director of Community Development. All boxed specimens shall be rootball staked. Specimen trees larger than 36-inch box size will be required in some projects.
 - b. The following is a suggested method for meeting tree quantity requirements in projects with little planting space for numerous trees:

TABLE OF TREE EQUIVALENTS

Individual Tree Box Size	Equivalent Number of Trees (24-inch Box Size)
24 inches	1
36 inches	2
48 inches	3
60 inches	4
72 inches	5

- (3) Landscape groundcover. All front setback areas shall be fully landscaped utilizing water efficient materials with drought resistant plants. Additional plant material, such as shrubs and ground cover may be used to supplement landscaped areas. All setback areas fronting a street must be planted with drought resistant landscaping. All front setback areas shall be fully turfed and substantially mounded as a minimum requirement. Additional plant material used as shrubs and ground cover shall be used to supplement turfed areas.
 - a. Landscape materials. All required landscaping shall be covered with materials such as drought tolerant plants, compost, mulch, artificial turf and permeable hardscape.

- b. Plant density. Plant density shall cover at least 65% of the front yard area. Acceptable materials are: Drought tolerant plants, artificial turf, and permeable materials or a combination thereof.
- c. Non-plant density. A maximum of 35% of the required front yard area shall include accent plant alternatives, including pavers and brick set on a bed of sand where no mortar or grout has been used, a three inch layer of mulch, decomposed granite, or artificial turf.
- d. Turf replacement. Turf is not a required landscape material. Drought tolerant landscape materials that retain water onsite are preferred when replacing existing turf.
- e. Artificial turf. Artificial turf as a possible landscape alternative is subject to the following conditions:
1. Site preparation. Artificial turf must be properly prepared by a licensed contractor, including site preparation and installation of base materials. Site preparation must consist of:
 - (i) Removal of all existing plant material and top three inches of soil in the installation area.
 - (ii) Recommended use of weed spray to assist in site preparation.
 - (iii) Placement of a weed barrier over the compacted and porous crushed rock or other comparable material below the turf surface to provide adequate drainage.
 - (iv) Area must be sloped and graded to prevent excessive pooling, runoff, or flooding onto adjacent property.
 2. Installation.
 - (i) Artificial turf must be permanently anchored with nails and glue, and all seams must be nailed, or sewn, and glued, with the grain pointing in a single direction.
 - (ii) Artificial turf cannot encroach upon living plants/trees and must end at least 3 inches from the base of any newly planted plant/tree.
 - (iii) Artificial turf must be separated from live planting areas by a barrier such as a mow strip or bender board to prevent mixing of natural plant materials and artificial turf.
 3. Materials. Artificial turf product must:
 - (i) Have an 8 year, "no-fade" manufacturer's warranty.
 - (ii) Be permeable to water and air and non-flammable.

- (iii) Be cut-pile infill and made from polyethylene or a blend of polyethylene and polypropylene.
 - (iv) Have a hole punched permeable backing with spacing not to exceed four inches by six inches on center.
 - (v) Have a minimum blade length (pile height) of 1.25 inches.
 - (vi) Have a minimum face weight of 65 ounces.
 - (vii) Infill materials can consist of ground rubber or silicon sand.
 - (viii) Nylon based or plastic grass blades (ie patio carpet or astro-turf) are not permitted.
4. Maintenance.
- (i) Artificial turf must be maintained in a green, fadeless condition free of weeds, stains, tears, or looseness at edges and seams.
 - (ii) Proper weed control must be maintained at all times.
 - (iii) Damaged areas must be repaired or replaced.
- f. Hardscape. Hardscape (non-permeable) is limited to existing driveways, walkways, patios and courtyards.
- g. Applicability. These provisions shall be applicable for all new development and for existing development where turf is to be replaced within the existing landscape.
- h. Water-Efficient Landscape Provisions. Landscaping shall comply with the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) of the State of California and Article XXIV of the Paramount Municipal Code.

- (f) Every plant shall be installed in the following manner:
- (1) Ground cover shall be installed a minimum of eight (8) inches on center spacing.
 - (2) Shrubs, annuals, semi-annuals, and other plants shall be installed in groups or clusters.
 - (3) Mulch shall be provided three (3) inches deep in all landscape areas except for ground-cover areas.
 - (4) Security plant material (plants with thorns) may be used adjacent to buildings and walls where public open-space areas adjoin private open space.
 - (5) Foundation planting shall be used adjacent to all buildings and walls.
- (g) All established healthy plant material shall be saved and protected. If development precludes retention of plant material, then adequate replacement material (based upon type and size of existing plant material) shall be required to mitigate the plant material removed.
- (h) Development standards specifying water use classification of landscape species shall be available in the Community Development Department.

(Ord. Nos. 825, 1067)

Sec. 44-267. Irrigation Requirements.

The following irrigation criteria are established for the preparation of irrigation plans for all properties located within the City of Paramount.

- (a) Irrigation. All landscaped areas shall be provided with a water efficient irrigation system consisting of:
- (1) Drip irrigation.
 - (2) Bubblers for shrubs and trees.
 - (3) Rotating sprinklers rated at emitting less than one gallon of water per minute.
 - (4) Pressure regulators, allowing no more pressure than recommended by the manufacturer of the drip system (usually about 10 to 15 psi) or the rotating sprinklers (usually about 35 psi).
 - (5) Separate valves for each portion of the landscape (known as 'hydrozones') that requires a unique watering schedule.

(Ord. Nos. 825, 1067)

Sec. 44-268. Landscape and irrigation maintenance.

The following maintenance schedule is established to ensure water use efficiency of the landscape and irrigation system.

- (a) Landscape and irrigation systems shall be monitored by the property owner to ensure that the landscape and irrigation system is operating in optimum condition, including but not limited to:
- (1) Maintain irrigation lines.
 - (2) Conduct valve adjustments/repairs.
 - (3) Conduct sprinkler head adjustments/repairs.
 - (4) Reset/repair automatic controllers.
 - (5) Maintain static water pressure at the point of connection to the public water supply.
 - (6) Aerate and dethatch turf areas.
 - (7) Replenish mulch.
 - (8) Prune and weed all landscape areas.
 - (9) Replace all dead plant material.

If a landscaped area is in a deteriorated condition the property owner may be required to perform an irrigation audit, in accordance with the State of California Landscape Water Management Program - *Landscape Irrigation Auditor Handbook*, hereby incorporated by reference.

(Ord. Nos. 825, 1067)

Sec. 44-269. Repealed by Ordinance No. 1067.

(Ord. Nos. 825, 1067)

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