

# Landscape Standards Update – Code Amendment DRAFT 1-2019

## 4-16 LANDSCAPING

### 4-16-01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Section 4-16 is to provide landscaping and performance standards which:

1. Enhance and promote a unique image for Adams County.
2. Protect the public health, safety and welfare by:
  - a. Increasing parking lot traffic safety by guiding the circulation of cars and people and lowering traffic speeds;
  - b. Minimizing noise, air, water and visual pollution;
  - c. Screening and buffering incompatible land uses;
  - d. Reducing the amount of reflected glare and heat absorbed in and around developments;
  - e. Breaking up large expanses of parking lots;
  - f. Preserving property values and neighborhood characteristics by lessening the impacts of potentially incompatible uses; and
  - g. Providing screening from wind.
3. Conserve water resources by:
  - a. Promoting the use of xeriscaping and drought-tolerant native plantings; and
  - b. Promoting the utilization of stormwater detention as an irrigation source.
4. Ensure landscaping is an integral part of the site design and development process.

### 4-16-02 APPLICABILITY

Development which satisfies one (1) of the following criteria shall be exempt from this section:

1. Agricultural uses.
2. Submitted or approved plans, building permits and/or development existing prior to the effective date of this Section shall comply with the regulations which were in effect at the time of approval.

The provisions of this article shall apply to development, which meets one (1) of the following and is not exempt:

1. All new development which has not applied for a building permit before the effective date of this Section; or

2. Existing development which requires a change in use permit as determined within the Change in Use Section of Chapter 4. **\*Adopted by the BoCC on December 13, 2010**

When there is a change in use, as determined within the Change in Use Section of Chapter 4\*, all of the applicable landscape requirements that can reasonably be complied with shall be complied with. Compliance is not reasonably possible if compliance cannot be achieved without adding additional land to the lot where the nonconforming situation is maintained or moving a substantial structure on a permanent foundation. Mere financial hardship caused by the cost of meeting the landscaping requirement does not constitute grounds for finding compliance is not reasonably possible. **\*Adopted by the BoCC on December 13, 2010**

Sections 4-03 through 4-10 determine additional standards and regulations for screening and fencing performance standards.

#### **4-16-03 EXISTING VEGETATION**

Existing valuable trees, shrubs and grasses shall be preserved within natural drainage areas and areas not needed for development. Healthy, mature trees and younger plants, which would normally succeed older plants, shall be preserved. Trees, which are decayed, diseased, or reaching the end of their natural life span should not be preserved. If valuable trees are destroyed by the development, new trees shall be installed to replace the destroyed trees. Existing vegetation, which is retained as part of the development, may be counted as part of the landscaping requirement, unless prohibited by Section 4-17 of these standards and regulations.

#### **4-16-04 LANDSCAPE MATERIALS & LOCATION**

##### **4-16-04-02-01 LANDSCAPE MATERIALS.**

All landscape materials shall conform to these standards and regulations. All landscape materials shall be healthy and compatible with the local climate and the site soil characteristics, drainage, and water supply.

No artificial trees, plants, or turf shall be used as a landscape material. **If an applicant is interested in using artificial turf in their development, they shall meet the minimum standards for required plant materials and submit a request for an alternative turf design to the Director of Community and Economic Development.** Areas for cultivation of crops or pasture shall not be considered landscaped. No noxious weeds, as defined by the Colorado Department of Agriculture, will be permitted in any area designated for landscaping.

#### 4-16-04-02-02 LANDSCAPE LOCATION

Landscaped areas shall not be enclosed by a fence, which limits its visibility. If a sight obscuring fence is required, it shall be set back from the landscaped area. This will have the effect of having the landscaped area adjacent to the right-of-way and the fence will be located behind the landscaped area.

All landscaping shall be located so it does not interfere with utilities, easements, road lighting or fire hydrants.

#### 4-16-05 XERISCAPING

Xeriscaping is encouraged in all areas of the county. When xeriscaping is proposed, the xeriscape landscape plans shall be developed to assure a successful, low water and low maintenance landscape. The following fundamental principals should be followed in proposing a xeriscape landscape plan:

1. *Planning and Design:* In addition to aesthetics and function of plants, the soils, drainage patterns, exposure to heat and wind, and the manner in which the site is irrigated, must be considered.
2. *Limited Turf Areas:* Where feasible, use less water demanding materials, such as ground covers, low water usage plants, or mulches instead of turf, and locate turf only in areas where it provides functional benefits.
3. *Turf Species:* Areas close to the building or where uniform turf is desired are best planted with fine-bladed, sod-forming turf varieties such as Buffalo grass or Bluegrass. Outlying areas, where soil cover is needed, but foot traffic is limited, can be planted with various coarse grasses such as Tall Fescue, Smooth Brome, and Wheatgrasses. Species of grass, which grow with the average rainfall received by Adams County per year, include Tall Fescue, Smooth Brome Fairway Crested Wheatgrass, Ephraim Crested Wheatgrass, Buffalograss, Blue Gramma, and others. Some varieties of Bluegrass, which are relatively drought tolerant, include Majestic, America, and Merion. The above listed drought tolerant grasses need water to become established. They also need occasional irrigation during a prolonged dry spell. The key to drought tolerance is deep root development. This is brought about by deep, thorough soil preparation and deep, infrequent watering.
4. *Soil Improvements:* Soil improvement allows for better absorption of water and improved water-holding capacity of the soil. Soils with organic matter also provide nutrients to plants. Improve the soil prior to planting and installation of any irrigation system by digging in a minimum of three (3) cubic yards of organic matter per one thousand (1,000) square feet to be planted. Organic matter could include aged manure, sphagnum peat moss, humus, compost or aged sawdust.

5. *Efficient Irrigation:* When used, well-planned sprinkler systems can save water. For efficient water use, irrigate turf areas separately from other plantings. Landscape plantings should be grouped according to similar water needs. Turf areas are best watered with sprinklers. Trees, shrubs, and groundcovers can be watered efficiently with low volume drip or spray systems.
6. *Mulches:* Mulched planting beds are an ideal replacement for turf areas. Mulches cover and cool the soil, minimize evaporation, reduce weed growth and slow erosion. Mulches also provide landscape interest. Mulches should be placed over geo-textile fabric (filter fabric) where ground cover or shrubs are to be used in order to allow water and air to pass through the fabric and discourage weed growth.
7. *Low Water Use Plants:* Low water use plants can serve nearly every landscape function. Section 4-16-14 includes recommended guides on xeriscape plants for the Front Range area.

**4-16-06 BUFFERYARDS**

**4-16-06-02-01 BUFFERYARDS**

The exterior boundaries of the lot which do not abut a public road right-of-way shall meet the bufferyard requirements shown below, depending upon the adjacent land use. All lesser intensity uses shall be buffered from higher intensity uses with a plant material bufferyard. If the adjacent land use is a vacant building or ground, then the zoning shall be used in place of the land use. Plant material used for bufferyards between uses differing in intensity is in addition to the total landscaping requirement.

The following bufferyards and plantings shall be required between the identified land uses at the time of occupancy:

Land Use	Existing Residential Uses	Existing Commercial Uses	Existing Industrial Uses	Existing Institutional Uses	Existing Agricultural Uses
New Residential Uses	A	C	D	A	A
New Commercial Uses	C	A	B	B	C
New Industrial Uses	D	B	none	D	D
New Institutional	A	B	D	A	A

Uses					
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Note: If a use does not conform to one (1) of the above categories, the Director of Community and Economic Development shall determine which category best matches the use.

Bufferyard Classification Requirements:

1. **Bufferyard A:** Five (5) foot minimum bufferyard width with one (1) tree per eighty (80) linear feet of lot line.
2. **Bufferyard B:** Ten (10) foot minimum bufferyard width with two (2) trees per eighty (80) linear feet of lot line.
3. **Bufferyard C:** Fifteen (15) foot minimum bufferyard width with two (2) trees per eighty (80) linear feet of lot line and six (6) foot high sight obscuring fence or wall located on the interior line of the bufferyard.\*
4. **Bufferyard D:** Fifteen (15) foot minimum bufferyard width with three (3) trees per sixty (60) linear feet and six (6) foot sight obscuring fence or wall located on the interior line of the bufferyard.\*

\*A continuous hedge may be substituted for the required fence or wall in Bufferyards C and D, as long as it has a minimum height at installation of three (3) feet and will reach six (6) feet or more at maturity.

**4-16-06-02-02 SPECIAL BUFFERYARDS**

Any new development abutting any portion of the designated Adams County Trail System, a public park, or limited access highway, shall be buffered from the trail, or park, using a Type C Bufferyard, unless increased or decreased by the Director of Community and Economic Development.

**4-16-07 REQUIRED LOT LANDSCAPING**

In addition to the required bufferyards and bufferyard landscaping, the following site landscaping shall also be required:

1. **Minimum Landscape Area:** All developments shall be required to landscape a minimum of ten (10) percent of the lot area. At least fifty (50) percent of the required landscape area shall be placed so it abuts adjoining public right-of-ways, excluding alleys and drives.
2. **Other Requirements:** The placement and design of the landscaping shall be at the discretion of the developer, but shall be approved by the Director of Community and Economic Development. In addition to the plantings required under this Section, both Section 4-16-08, Off-Road Parking Lot Landscaping, and Section 4-16-06, Bufferyards, shall apply. The bufferyard landscaping requirements and the required landscaping

adjacent to the front of a lot are required even if the 10% lot coverage is exceeded. The landscape area depth is measured from the property line (generally, the right-of-way line) inward. In eastern Adams County, no shrubs shall be required.

3. All applicants not able to meet the landscaping requirements may submit an Appeal from Administrative Decision. **\*Adopted by the BoCC on December 13, 2010**
4. The applicant/owner of land where landscaping is placed with or without County approval is responsible for relocation, alteration, and/or removal if required by the County at the owner's expense. Any landscaping within the right-of-way will not be used in the assessment of the land as part of right-of-way acquisition.

**4-16-07-01 STREET FRONTAGE LANDSCAPING**

The area along any property line abutting a public road right-of-way shall be landscaped using one (1) or any combination of the following landscape options:

- a. *Option 1:* Install a twenty-five (25) foot wide area along the road right-of-way. Within the landscape area, one (1) tree and two (2) shrubs shall be planted per forty (40) linear feet of frontage. Drive aisles shall be counted as zero (0) feet in depth.
- b. *Option 2:* Install a twenty (20) foot landscape area along the road right-of-way. Within the landscape area, one (1) tree and two (2) shrubs shall be planted per forty (40) linear feet of frontage. Drive aisles shall be counted as zero (0) feet in depth.
- c. *Option 3:* Install a ten (10) foot landscape area along the road right-of-way. Within the landscape area, two (2) trees and five (5) shrubs shall be planted per forty (40) linear feet of frontage. Drive aisles shall be counted as zero (0) feet in depth.
- d. *Option 4:* Install a five (5) foot landscape area along the road right-of-way. Within the landscape area, one (1) tree and two (2) shrubs shall be placed per forty (40) linear feet of frontage. A thirty (30) inch high decorative wall or the building shall be located between the parking area and the road frontage. Drive aisles shall be counted as zero (0) feet in depth.
- e. *Option 5:* Install a landscape berm with a two (2) foot minimum average height. The berm shall have a slope of no greater than one (1) foot of rise to every four (4) feet of run. Within the landscape area, one (1) tree and five (5) shrubs shall be planted per sixty (60) linear feet of frontage.

**\*Adopted by the BoCC on December 13, 2010**

**4-01-01-01-02 OFF-ROAD PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING (NUMBERING IS NOT WORKING)**

The following landscaping requirements can be used to satisfy the 10% total lot landscaping requirement and shall be consistent with the following: **\*Adopted by the BoCC on December 13, 2010**

1. *Trees:* There shall be one (1) tree provided for every ten (10) parking stalls.
2. *Internal Landscape Area:* Depending on the number of spaces, the following square feet of landscaped area must be placed within the vehicle use areas. The required landscaped area shall be "stepped" up based on the number of stalls, which will be provided. For example, a parking lot with fifty-two (52) stalls shall provide twenty-five (25) square feet per stall.

<i>Number of Parking Stalls</i>	<i>Required Landscaped Area</i>
0-9	None required
10-25	15 sq. ft. per stall
26-50	18 sq. ft. per stall
51-99	25 sq. ft. per stall
100 or more	35 sq. ft. per stall

3. *Distance to Landscaping:* No parking stall shall be more than one-hundred-twenty (120) feet from a required internal landscaped area.
4. *Terminal Islands:* The developer is encouraged to utilize landscaped terminal islands at the end of parking rows and/or divider strips between parking rows to help disperse the required landscaping throughout the entire parking lot.
5. *Curbs:* Landscaped areas within parking lots or along the perimeter of the property must be protected from vehicular traffic through the use of continuous concrete curbs, extruded asphalt or other approved permanent barriers.
6. *Clear Vision Area:* Clear vision areas within the off-road parking area must be established at road intersections by maintaining a maximum height for shrubs and ground cover of thirty (30) inches. Within a clear vision area, tree branches must be trimmed up eight (8) feet from the ground.
7. *Minimum Landscape Islands:* The minimum width or length of any landscaped area shall be five (5) feet, however the recommended minimum size is eight (8) feet. All of the required landscaped areas must contain a minimum of seventy-five (75) percent living landscaping material, with a maximum of twenty-five (25) percent nonliving landscaping material. In eastern Adams County, the percentages of living landscaping material may be

reduced to fifty (50) percent. Sidewalks abutting public rights-of-way are not counted toward the nonliving landscape material percentage.

8. *Splitting Parking Lots:* Parking lots containing between 200-750 parking stalls are required to be divided into two (2) or more lots, separated by a landscaped strip which may be counted toward the required off-road parking landscaping area. Parking lots with more than 750 stalls are required to divide the lot into at least two parking lots with a landscaped strip separating them. The minimum width of these landscaping strips shall be ten (10) feet.
9. *Sidewalks Counted:* A landscaped divider strip within a parking lot which separates either parking rows or parking lots shall be allowed to count a sidewalk located within this divider strip toward a part of the required off-road parking lot landscaping. The intent of this sidewalk is to help facilitate safe pedestrian movement. This sidewalk must meet the following criteria if it is to be counted toward the required landscaping:
  - a. The sidewalk has a five (5) foot wide walking path and shall add two (2) feet for vehicle overhang, if the sidewalk abuts a parking stall.
  - b. The sidewalk runs the entire length of the divider strip.
  - c. The sidewalk is bordered on at least one (1) side by landscaping, of which the sidewalk cannot account for more than fifty percent (50%) of the area of the divider strip.
10. *Other Vehicle Areas:* Areas used for vehicle service, parking, and business transactions such as areas adjacent to gasoline pumps (even if under a canopy) and areas for drive up service, shall be considered parking areas and shall comply with the parking lot landscaping requirements. Drive areas shall be calculated at a rate of one (1) parking space per two hundred (200) square feet of vehicle service area.
11. *Vehicle Sales Lots:* Vehicle sales lots shall provide trees at the rate of one (1) tree per one hundred (100) lineal feet, and shrubs at the rate of one (1) shrub per ten (10) lineal feet of display area fronting a public right-of-way. Plants may be grouped together, provided at least two-hundred-fifty (250) square feet of contiguous growing area, unencroached upon by shrubs or impervious surfaces, surrounds each planted tree.

#### 4-16-08 GENERAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR ALL USES

##### 4-16-08-01 COVER IN LANDSCAPED AREAS

All required landscaped areas and bufferyards must contain a minimum of seventy-five percent (75%) organic landscaping material, with a maximum of twenty-five percent (25%) non-living landscaping materials. All required landscaped areas and bufferyards shall be irrigated, maintained and kept free of weeds, debris and litter. In eastern Adams



County, the percentages of living landscaping material shall be reduced to fifty percent (50%) and an automatic irrigation system is not required. Eastern Adams County is defined as that portion of Adams County outside the definition of Urban Adams County as defined in Chapter 11. In eastern Adams County, single-family residential land uses are not required to install landscaping and no landscaping is required for commercial and industrial land uses, which are serviced exclusively by wells and which are restricted by the Colorado Division of Water Resources to inside use only. In addition, xeriscaping is encouraged in all areas of the County.

**4-16-08-02-01 MINIMUM SIZE REQUIREMENTS FOR TREES AND SHRUBS**

Landscaping materials shall comply with the following minimum size standards at the time of planting, with caliper measurements taken six (6) inches above grade.

<i>Plant Type</i>	<i>Maturity Height</i>	<i>Size at Planting</i>
Ornamental	Less than 20'	1" to 1-1/2" cal.
Large Deciduous	Over 20'	2" to 2-1/2" cal.
Evergreens (Sm.)	Less than 20'	5' tall
Evergreens (Lg.)	Over 20'	6' tall
Low Shrubs	1' to 3'	5 gal. container
Upright Shrubs	3' to 10'	5 gal. container

**4-16-08-02-01-01-01 GRADING STANDARD**

The following grading standard shall apply to all new landscaping and buffering areas:

<i>Landscaping</i>	<i>Maximum Slope</i>	<i>Minimum Slope</i>
Lawn and grassed areas	4:1	100:1
Berms and Mounds		
Grassed	4:1	20:1
Non-Maintenance	2:1	N/A

**4-16-08-03 MAINTENANCE STANDARDS**

All landscaping and required buffering shall be continually maintained including irrigation if applicable, weeding, pruning and replacing in a substantially similar manner as originally approved. The following survival standards shall apply to all landscaping and required buffering:

1. *Living Ground Covers:* Living ground covers must be fifty percent (50%) established after the first growing season, and ninety percent (90%) established thereafter.

2. *Non-Living Ground Covers:* Non-living ground covers, such as rock or mulch must be one hundred percent (100%) intact after one (1) year and eighty percent (80%) intact thereafter.

3. *Trees and Shrubs:* Trees and shrubs must have a one hundred percent (100%) survival rate after one (1) year and a ninety percent (90%) survival rate thereafter.

**4-16-09 LANDSCAPING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SPECIFIC USES**

**4-16-09-02-01 SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING LANDSCAPING**

1. *Front and Side Setbacks:* The entire front and side setbacks shall be landscaped, except for driveways.
2. *Back Yard Setback:* A minimum thirty percent (30%) of the back yard shall be landscaped.
3. *Required Ground Cover:* A minimum of thirty percent (30%) of the required front and side landscape area must be covered by living ground material, such as low growing ground cover, shrubs, or grass, within one (1) year following occupancy and thereafter. If the required landscaping cannot be completed prior to occupancy, then a bond in the amount of one-hundred-twenty-five percent (125%) of the cost of the landscaping, as established by a local landscaping firm, must be filed with the Director of Community and Economic Development to guarantee completion of the landscaping within one (1) planting season after occupancy. If the landscaping has not been completed within one (1) planting season, the County may proceed against the bond to complete the landscaping. Single-family residential uses in eastern Adams County are not required to install landscaping or automatic irrigation systems.
4. *Required Trees and Shrubs:* A minimum of one (1) large tree and five (5) shrubs, or two (2) ornamental trees and five (5) shrubs, shall be required for each lot. Evergreens shall be considered ornamental.
5. *Minimum Size Requirements:* Minimum size requirements for trees and shrubs shall be:

<i>Plant Type</i>	<i>Maturity Height</i>	<i>Minimum Plant Size at Planting</i>
Ornamentals	Less than 20'	1" to 1-1/2"
Large Deciduous	Over 20'	2" to 2-1/2"
Evergreens (Sm.)	Less than 20'	5' tall
Evergreens (Lg.)	Over 20'	6' tall
Low Shrubs	1' to 3'	5 gallon
Upright Shrubs	3' to 10'	5 gallon

**4-16-09-02-01 SINGLE FAMILY ATTACHED LANDSCAPING**

1. *Front and Side Setbacks:* The entire front and side setbacks shall be landscaped, except for driveways.
2. *Back Yard Setback:* A minimum of thirty percent (30%) of the back yard shall be landscaped.
3. *Required Ground Cover:* A minimum of thirty percent (30%) of the required front and side landscape area must be covered by living ground material, such as low growing ground cover, shrubs, or grass, within one (1) year following occupancy and thereafter. If the required landscaping cannot be completed prior to occupancy, then a bond in the amount of one-hundred-twenty-five percent (125%) of the cost of the landscaping, as established by a local landscaping firm, must be filed with the Director of Community and Economic Development to guarantee completion of the landscaping within one (1) planting season after occupancy. If the landscaping has not been completed within one (1) planting season, the County may proceed against the bond to complete the landscaping.
4. *Required Trees and Shrubs:* A minimum of one (1) large tree and five (5) shrubs, or two (2) ornamental trees and five (5) shrubs, shall be required for each lot. Evergreens shall be considered ornamental.
5. *Minimum Size Requirements:* Minimum size requirements for trees and shrubs shall be:

<i>Plant Type</i>	<i>Maturity Height</i>	<i>Minimum Plant Size at Planting</i>
Ornamentals	Less than 20'	1" to 1-1/2"
Large Deciduous	Over 20'	2" to 2-1/2"
Evergreens (Sm.)	Less than 20'	5' tall
Evergreens (Lg.)	Over 20'	6' tall
Low Shrubs	1' to 3'	5 gallon
Upright Shrubs	3' to 10'	5 gallon

**4-16-09-02-01 DWELLING, TOWNHOUSE LANDSCAPING**

1. *Minimum Landscaped Area:* Not less than 30% of the site area shall be landscaped.
2. *Required Ground Cover:* A minimum of one-third (1/3) of the required landscape area must be covered by living ground material within one (1) year following occupancy and thereafter. If the required landscaping cannot be completed prior to occupancy, then

a bond in the amount of one hundred twenty-five percent (125%) of the cost of the landscaping, as established by a local landscaping firm, must be filed with the Director of Community and Economic Development to guarantee completion of the landscaping within one (1) planting season after occupancy. If the landscaping has not been completed within one (1) planting season, the County may proceed against the bond to complete the landscaping.

3. *Required Trees and Shrubs:* A minimum of one (1) large tree and two (2) shrubs, or two (2) ornamental trees and two (2) shrubs, shall be required for each increment of fifteen hundred (1,500) square feet in western Adams County and three thousand (3,000) square feet in eastern Adams County.
4. *Parking Lot Landscaping:* All parking lots which consist of thirty (30) spaces or more must be designed to include landscaped islands between rows. This landscaping shall be credited toward the total landscaped area required.
5. *Required Tree Mix:* The selection of trees shall be a mix of large deciduous (30% - 70%) and ornamental (30% - 70%) trees. Evergreens shall be considered ornamental.
6. *Minimum Size Requirements:* Minimum size requirements for trees and shrubs shall be:

<i>Plant Type</i>	<i>Maturity Height</i>	<i>Minimum Plant Size at Planting</i>
Ornamentals	Less than 20'	1" to 1-1/2"
Large Deciduous	Over 20'	2" to 2-1/2"
Evergreens (Sm.)	Less than 20'	5' tall
Evergreens (Lg.)	Over 20'	6' tall
Low Shrubs	1' to 3'	5 gallon
Upright Shrubs	3' to 10'	5 gallon

7. *Irrigation System Required:* A fully automatic irrigation system is required.

4-16-09-02-02

**DWELLING, MULTI-FAMILY LANDSCAPING**

1. *Minimum Landscaped Area:* Not less than thirty percent (30%) of the site area shall be landscaped.
2. *Required Ground Material:* A minimum of one-third (1/3) of the required landscape area must be covered by living ground material within one (1) year following occupancy and thereafter. If the required landscaping cannot be completed prior to occupancy, then a bond in the amount of one hundred twenty-five percent (125%) of the cost of the landscaping, as established by a local landscaping

firm, must be filed with the Director of Community and Economic Development to guarantee completion of the landscaping within one (1) planting season after occupancy. If the landscaping has not been completed within one (1) planting season, the County may proceed against the bond to complete the landscaping.

3. *Required Trees and Shrubs:* A minimum of one (1) large tree and two (2) shrubs, or two (2) ornamental trees and two (2) shrubs, shall be required for each increment of fifteen hundred (1,500) square feet in western Adams County and three thousand (3,000) square feet in eastern Adams County.
4. *Parking Lot Landscaping:* All parking lots which consist of thirty (30) spaces or more must be designed to include landscaped islands between rows. This landscaping shall be credited toward the total landscaped area required.
5. *Required Tree Mix:* The selection of trees shall be a mix of large deciduous (10% - 50%) and ornamental (10% - 50%). Evergreens shall be considered ornamental.
6. Minimum size requirements for trees and shrubs shall be:

<i>Plant Type</i>	<i>Maturity Height</i>	<i>Minimum Plant Size at Planting</i>
Ornamentals	Less than 20'	1" to 1-1/2"
Large Deciduous	Over 20'	2" to 2-1/2"
Evergreens (Sm.)	Less than 20'	5' tall
Evergreens (Lg.)	Over 20'	6' tall
Low Shrubs	1' to 3'	5 gallon
Upright Shrubs	3' to 10'	5 gallon

7. *Irrigation System Required:* A fully automatic irrigation system is required.

**4-16-09-01-04 DWELLING, MANUFACTURED HOME PARK**

A twenty (20) foot strip around the boundary must be landscaped to provide a visual screen. All open spaces and other unimproved areas must be suitably landscaped. All landscaping must be maintained and furnished with an automatic sprinkler system.

**4-16-09-01-05 DWELLING, MOBILE HOME PARK**

A landscaping plan shall be submitted for review and approval. The setbacks of the development and any other area not covered by mobile homes, driveways, ingress and egress, or other structures, shall be landscaped.

#### 4-16-09-02- COMMERCIAL USES

##### 4-16-09-02-01 AUTOMOBILE SERVICE STATIONS

1. *Screening:* Service stations shall be separated from abutting residential properties by a six (6) foot high masonry wall and a Type E Bufferyard.
2. *Landscaping:* In addition to all other required landscaping, boundary landscaping is required for a minimum depth of ten (10) feet along all property lines abutting roads, except for the area required for road openings. Permanent irrigation facilities shall be provided for all landscaped areas.

##### 4-16-09-02-02 BED & BREAKFAST ESTABLISHMENTS

*Screened Parking:* Off-road parking for the guest rooms shall be screened with landscaping meeting the requirements of a Type C Bufferyard.

##### 4-16-09-02-03 CAMPGROUNDS, COMMERCIAL

In addition to all other required landscaping, interior landscaping of the campground shall require at least one (1) tree and two (2) shrubs per campsite. Each tree shall be at least two (2) inch caliper in size when planted. Shrubs shall be a minimum of five (5) gallon size when planted.

##### 4-16-09-02-04 DRIVE-IN ESTABLISHMENTS, INCLUDING DRIVE-THRU RESTAURANTS

*Landscaping:* Planting requirements for the drive-up window and access lanes shall be the same as those required for parking area landscaping in accordance with the Parking Performance Standards in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** of these standards and regulations.

##### 4-16-09-02-05 AUTOMOBILE DEALERSHIPS; AUTOMOBILE RENTAL; AUTOMOBILE OR BUS REPAIR, PAINTING, AND BODY WORK; AND TRUCK TRAILER AN HORSE TRAILER SALES AND RENTAL

###### **Automobile Dealerships**

Boundary landscaping is required for a minimum depth of fifteen (15) feet along all property lines abutting roads, except for the area required for road openings. Permanent watering facilities shall be provided for all landscaped areas.

###### **Automobile Rental**

In addition to all other landscaping, boundary landscaping is required for a minimum depth of fifteen (15) feet along all property lines abutting

roads, except for the area required for road openings. Permanent watering facilities shall be provided for all landscaped areas.

#### **Automobile or Bus Repair**

Boundary landscaping is required for a minimum depth of fifteen (15) feet along all property lines abutting roads, except for the area required for road openings. Permanent irrigation facilities shall be provided for all landscaped areas.

#### **Truck Trailer and Horse Trailer Sales and Rental**

Boundary landscaping is required for a minimum depth of fifteen (15) feet along all property lines abutting roads, except for the area required for road openings. Permanent watering facilities shall be provided for all landscaped areas.

### **4-16-09-02-06 GUN AND ARCHERY RANGES**

Two (2) Type D Bufferyards shall encircle the perimeter of the gun range to provide a natural noise barrier. A ten (10) foot berm shall be incorporated into the bufferyard around the site.

#### **4-16-10 LANDSCAPING PLAN REQUIRED**

A landscaping plan shall be required as a condition of building permit approval. The Director of Community and Economic Development shall determine if the plan meets the requirements of these standards and regulations. At a minimum, a landscaping plan shall contain the following items:

1. Scale - written and graphic;
2. North arrow;
3. Label the zoning of subject property and adjacent properties;
4. Label the current land use of subject property and all adjacent properties;
5. Existing plant material, if applicable;
6. Plants to be removed or relocated, if applicable;
7. Existing and proposed structures, overhangs, and pavings, if applicable;
8. Planting details specifying mulching materials;
9. Details of berms, walls, or any other structural buffering device if required by these standards and regulations;
10. Title block with name of project, name of person preparing plan and date;
11. A written statement describing type of irrigation system proposed - detail the proposed irrigation system or method of irrigation;

12. Plant schedule showing the following:
  - a. Number and location of plants of each species;
  - b. Plant name (common name, botanical name and variety name); and
  - c. Size and condition of plants - size be expressed in terms of size of container, height of plant, or caliper of tree; condition to be expressed in terms of size of container, ball and burlap, and/or bare root plant division (list shall be divided according to trees, shrubs and ground covers, and turf types), and;
13. Cost estimate including materials and cost of installation, when installation of landscaping is deferred.

#### **4-16-11 LANDSCAPING INSTALLATION AND CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY**

All required landscaping and buffering shall be installed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. If weather conditions necessitate a delay in installation of landscaping, a Certificate of Occupancy may be issued only if collateral is filed with the County in an amount designated by the Director of Community and Economic Development, along with a schedule of completion, and a development agreement. The amount of the collateral will reflect one-hundred-twenty-five percent (125%) of the estimated cost of purchasing and installing the landscaping. In eastern Adams County, single-family residential land uses are not required to install landscaping and no landscaping is required for commercial and industrial land uses, which are serviced exclusively by wells and which are restricted by the Colorado Division of Water Resources to inside use only.

#### **4-16-12 LANDSCAPING PHASING**

A development agreement will be accepted in partial lieu of landscape if the applicant chooses to install landscape in phases. In the case of phased landscaping, a Certificate of Occupancy may be issued only if collateral is filed with the County in an amount designated by the Director of Community and Economic Development, along with a schedule of completion, and a development agreement. The amount of the collateral will reflect one-hundred-twenty-five percent (125%) of the estimated cost of purchasing and installing the landscaping. All landscape phasing shall be approved at the discretion of the Director of Community and Economic Development.

#### **4-16-13 ADMINISTRATIVE RELIEF\***

Administrative relief is provided to add flexibility in the application of the landscaping regulations in this Section 4-16 when a standard is inapplicable or



inappropriate to a specific use or design proposal. However, the granting of administrative relief should not always mean a requirement is reduced without compensation. For example, the granting of a reduced buffer yard depth should be compensated by the planting of additional trees, shrubs, or other plants.

A written request for administrative relief shall be submitted to the Director of Community and Economic Development either before or in conjunction with the building permit review process. The written request shall include a justification in terms of the findings necessary to grant administrative relief. The written request shall close with a section for the Director of Community and Economic Development's use, which will include a block for the decision of approval/denial, the Director of Community and Economic Development's signature, and decision date. The written request with decision shall be attached to the plan or retained in the applicable file, as appropriate. An example of this written request shall be available from the Director of Community and Economic Development.

The Director of Community and Economic Development must make all of the following findings in order to grant administrative relief:

1. The strict application of the regulations in question is unreasonable given the development proposal or the measures proposed by the applicant or the property has extraordinary or exceptional physical conditions or unique circumstances which do not generally exist in nearby properties in the same general area and such conditions will not allow a reasonable use of the property in its current zone in absence of relief;
2. The intent of the landscaping section and the specific regulations in question is preserved, and;
3. The granting of the administrative relief will not result in an adverse impact upon surrounding properties.

The Director of Community and Economic Development shall render a decision on the request within ten (10) working days of receipt of the request and all required information. An appeal of the decision of the Director of Community and Economic Development may be made to the Board of Adjustment within ten (10) days after the decision. At this time, the appeal will be placed on the agenda for the next Board of Adjustment meeting. The Landscape Appeal shall be processed in the same manner as a Variance request.

The Board of Adjustment shall grant the appeal, modify the administrative decision, or deny the appeal based on consideration of the staff report, the evidence from the public hearing, and compliance with the criteria for approval.

Policies:

1. The County recognizes the specific landscape requirements in this Section cannot and do not anticipate all possible landscape situations. In addition, the County recognizes there may be landscape proposals that conform to the purpose, intent and objectives of the landscape standards, but were not

anticipated in the specific regulations. Therefore, the County may grant administrative relief in the event of these situations and proposals.

2. The County recognizes a proposed development of a relatively small commercial or industrial lot, which was created prior to the current landscape requirements, or the expansion or remodeling of an existing commercial site may present unusual difficulties in complying with the current requirements. Therefore, the County may grant administrative relief in the event of these situations and proposals.
3. The County shall attempt to balance the reasonable use of such a lot with the provisions of required landscaping. This balance will be affected by the site's characteristics, as well as the proposed development plan.
4. The County recognizes in order to allow reasonable development; there should be an upper limit to the amount of the site, which is required to be landscaped. As a general guideline for relatively small commercial or industrial lots (such as one (1) acre or less), the requirements should not exceed twenty-five (25) percent of the site.

The reasonable development of a site may require the granting of administrative relief to some of the requirements. Although all of the categories of landscape requirements are considered important, the County generally assigns the following priorities for compliance with the landscape requirements:

1. Adjacent residential uses should be buffered;
2. An attractive appearance of the project should be provided along adjacent roads by landscaped setbacks and trees, and;
3. The parking areas and building elevations which form major public views of the project should be visually softened and enhanced by trees and other plantings.

Compliance with the requirements, such as the third priority above, should not be “forced” into a site design. For both visual effect and ease of maintenance, relatively few, but larger landscaped areas, which are integrated with the other elements of the site design, are generally encouraged. In addition, relatively numerous and smaller landscaped areas, which are not integrated with the other elements of the site design, are generally discouraged.

**\*Adopted by the BoCC on December 13, 2010**

#### **4-16-14 RECOMMENDED PLANT MATERIALS**

The following is a reference list of agencies and local jurisdictions that have plant material recommendation lists that are most compatible with the Adams County area:

- Denver Water Wise Landscape Handbook (Denver Water)

- Colorado Native Plant Society Low-Water Native Plants for Colorado Gardens: Front Range & Foothills (West Adams County)
- Colorado Native Plant Society Low-Water Native Plants for Colorado Gardens: Prairie and Plains (Central and East Adams County)
- Colorado State University Extension Office Publications
- A Plant Select guide to plants for smart, stunning, successful western gardens (partnership with CSU and Denver Botanic Gardens)

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## 4-17 WEEDS AND DANGEROUS TREES

### 4-17-08 WEEDS AND OFFENDING VEGETATION

1. *Duty to Control Weeds:* It is the duty of every owner or occupant to abate weeds and offending vegetation on all premises.
2. *Maximum Height of Weeds:* Weeds and offending vegetation greater than twelve (12) inches in height, on all premises, shall be cut to and maintained at a height of six (6) inches or less according to the following:
  - a. In Residential (except RE), Commercial, and Industrial Zone Districts, within the entire lot or parcel.
  - b. In the A-1 and RE Zone Districts, within the established front building setback and within the required side and rear setback for principal dwellings. If no structure exists on the property, then the minimum required principal dwelling setbacks. In the A-2 and A-3 Zone Districts, within the required or established principal dwelling setbacks. In all Agricultural and the RE Zone Districts a minimum of a twenty (20) foot perimeter around the existing principal dwelling and all accessory structures.
  - c. In CO, PL, AV, and DIA Zone Districts, no requirements.
  - d. Notwithstanding the forgoing, any weeds classified as noxious by the State of Colorado or Adams County must be completely abated in accordance with the requirements of the State of Colorado or Adams County, as applicable.

### 4-17-09 DANGEROUS TREES

1. *Duty to Control Dangerous Trees:* Any owner or occupant of a lot shall cause to be cut or removed any dangerous trees located on the lot which may be considered troublesome, a hindrance to the general public, or which in any way endangers the security and usefulness of any public road, highway, aviation facility, alley, utility, sidewalk, or bicycle trail.
2. *Tree Branch Clear Height*
  - a. *Roads, Alleys, and Highways:* All trees located on a lot shall be trimmed to a clear height of twelve (12) feet above the surface of public roads, alleys or highways when the branch extends into the established right-of-way or existing roadway.
  - b. *Public Sidewalks and Bicycle Trails:* All trees shall be trimmed to a clear height of eight (8) feet above public sidewalks or bicycle trails when the branch extends into or over the sidewalk or trail. All tree limbs shall be

trimmed so as not to interfere with sight distance triangles in accordance with these standards and regulations.

3. *Duty to Control Interfering Roots:* Dangerous trees upon a lot whose roots are causing interference with public sidewalks or utilities shall be controlled or removed.

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