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DESIGN GUIDELINES

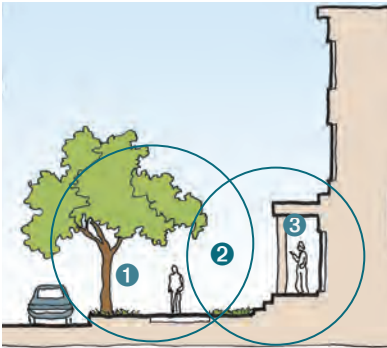
Landscaping



5 Landscaping

The landscape of a small lot project can be divided into three areas. This provides a helpful framework for designing a cohesive landscape plan. The public area consists of the street, parkway, sidewalk, and driveway; the private area incorporates spaces not within a common area or driveway; and the transitional area is comprised of the spaces in between. It is important to strike a balance between privacy, transparency, visual interest, and order when landscaping for these areas.

This approach clearly delineates public, private and transitional zones without creating walls and yet maintains visual interest through variations in plant materials, grades, and limited hardscape. This also minimizes water consumption and maximizes contributions to local flora and fauna while also enhancing the living environment of both the public, private, and transitional areas.



1 Public, 2 transitional, and 3 private areas.

Objective: Design landscaping that delineates the public, private, and transitional areas; enhances visual interest; and utilizes native and drought tolerant plants.

FRONT AND COMMON AREA GUIDELINES



Excessive use of turf grass is visually bland, requires extensive irrigation, and fails to enhance or define both the public and private outdoor spaces.

Front yards and common areas serve a dual function, and therefore deserve particular attention. They act as both habitable outdoor space for its owners and as shared areas within the proposed development and the neighborhood. The yard is a visual amenity to the development, neighborhood, and passers-by. Additionally, it serves as a semi-transparent bridge between the private interior of the home and common areas.

Landscaping should be visually interesting, sustainable, and relatively easy to maintain. Turf grass should be used sparingly. Use water-conserving plant materials and irrigation systems. Utilize trees along the parkway and shorter shrubs in the transitional zone.



However, subtle variations in grade and drought-tolerant plant materials helps to gracefully define transitions in the landscape.

- 1 Use a range of low-water and drought-tolerant plant materials and ground cover to provide visual interest in place of turf grass.
- 2 Use fences and shrubbery less than 3'6" tall in areas adjacent to the sidewalk (within 5' of front lot line), and common public areas.
- 3 Plant shade trees within public areas, ideally spaced between 15' and 20' apart, to screen blank building facades and shade the driveway and parking areas.
- 4 Whenever possible, use subtle variations in grade.
- 5 Plant parkways separating the curb from the sidewalk with trees, ground cover, low-growing vegetation, or permeable materials that accommodate both pedestrian movement and clearance for car doors.
- 6 Design the landscape to be integrated with the building and for the intended use of the space.

PRIVATE OUTDOOR SPACES GUIDELINES

Private outdoor spaces can take the form of small interior yards, balconies, and roof decks. For these spaces, the emphasis should be placed on flexibility. For yard space, plant materials need not be too varied, so that residents may easily modify them to make them their own.

- 1 Designate fully private outdoor space whenever possible.
- 2 Utilize plants that can be easily modified/maintained by residents.
- 3 Provide balconies to enhance rather than substitute for actively used common open spaces. Balconies and roof decks should be generous enough in size to create usable spaces.



The use of raised beds in varying heights provides for a flexible outdoor space by serving as both landscaping and seating options.

PLANT MATERIALS GUIDELINES

Ultimately the landscape should enhance the natural environment of the neighborhood and should be relatively low-maintenance. Drought-tolerant and native species satisfy both of these criteria by creating visually appealing and sustainable landscapes.

- 1 Apply mulch in between and around plants to conserve moisture and eliminate bare earth, which can look unsightly.
- 2 Use water-conserving ground cover instead of turf grass.
- 3 Avoid invasive plant materials.
- 4 Plant in groupings according to water needs.
- 5 Incorporate existing natural features and topography.

For more information, visit: http://www.bewaterwise.com/Gardensoft/garden_types.aspx?listType=types



This side yard is wide enough to allow for layers of planting and decorative paving.

PRIVACY GUIDELINES

With small lot developments come issues of privacy – not only for residents, but also for those of neighboring properties. For instance, improperly designed developments result in balconies overlooking neighboring yards or other balconies, and windows facing directly into adjacent residences.

Small lot designs should maximize access to private outdoor space, light, and views, while ensuring an adequate level of privacy for all residents. This will require particular attention to the orientation and spatial configuration of the development, distances between walls, and the location of windows and balconies.

Whenever possible, small lot designs should designate some fully private outdoor space for each dwelling. This can take the form of small interior yards, balconies, and roof decks. For these spaces, emphasis should be placed on flexibility.

- 1 Windows and balconies from separate dwellings should not face or overlook each other.
- 2 Minimize the number of windows overlooking neighboring interior private yards.
- 3 Use translucent glass, landscaping, and screens to create privacy.
- 4 Provide functional distances between building walls and vary height to maximize private outdoor space, light and views.
- 5 Plant trees, shrubs, and vines to screen walls between property lines. Use variations in color, material, and texture.
- 6 Rooftop open space should be located away from the building edge to enhance privacy.