

# VIII. LANDSCAPE REGULATIONS

# DAVIDSON LAND PLAN CODE

## Purpose/Applicability

These regulations are established to protect and enhance the natural landscape of Davidson and ensure the appropriate use of plant material in new construction. It is the intent of these regulations to preserve natural tree cover and include new tree planting with development in order to:

- a. reinforce community identity,
- b. reduce visual blight and noise,
- c. increase building and property values,
- d. prevent soil erosion,
- e. reduce storm water runoff,
- f. increase groundwater recharge,
- g. create shade and reduce solar overheating

Supplemental regulations will be added to these landscape provisions to specify acceptable plant species. Tree preservation provisions are to be encouraged upon adoption of this code. Prior to requirement of tree preservation, the Town of Davidson must put in place adequate measures to ensure compliance with these provisions. This will require appropriate enforcement mechanisms.

Buffer-yard and street tree requirements will be required upon adoption of this code.

## Street Trees

Street trees shall be planted along both sides of of all public streets with the exception of parkways, where street trees shall be installed along the side of the street opposite the park. Street trees shall be large maturing canopy species such as the Sugar Maple, Willow Oak, or American Beech. Street trees shall be a minimum of 3" in caliper and shall be planted a maximum of 40' on center.

## Tree Preservation and Protection

During the development and construction of a subdivision or non-residential development, or any lot therein, adequate protective measures shall be provided to minimize damage to existing trees and other vegetation. The subdivider, developer and builder shall make every effort to protect and retain all existing trees, shrubbery, vines and grasses not actually lying in public roadways, drainageways, building foundation sites and a construction activity area equal to 20 ft. around the building foundation, private driveways, paths and trails. Generally, all trees measuring 8" in caliper measured at DBH (4'-5' above grade) shall be preserved and protected. Of such trees only those within the strictly defined construction site area may be removed. In some particular instances the Town Planner or his/her representative may find that the removal of certain trees could foster the growth of others. Such clearing may only be permitted with the specific authorization of the Town Planner.

The following measures shall be followed to protect existing trees on a developing site:

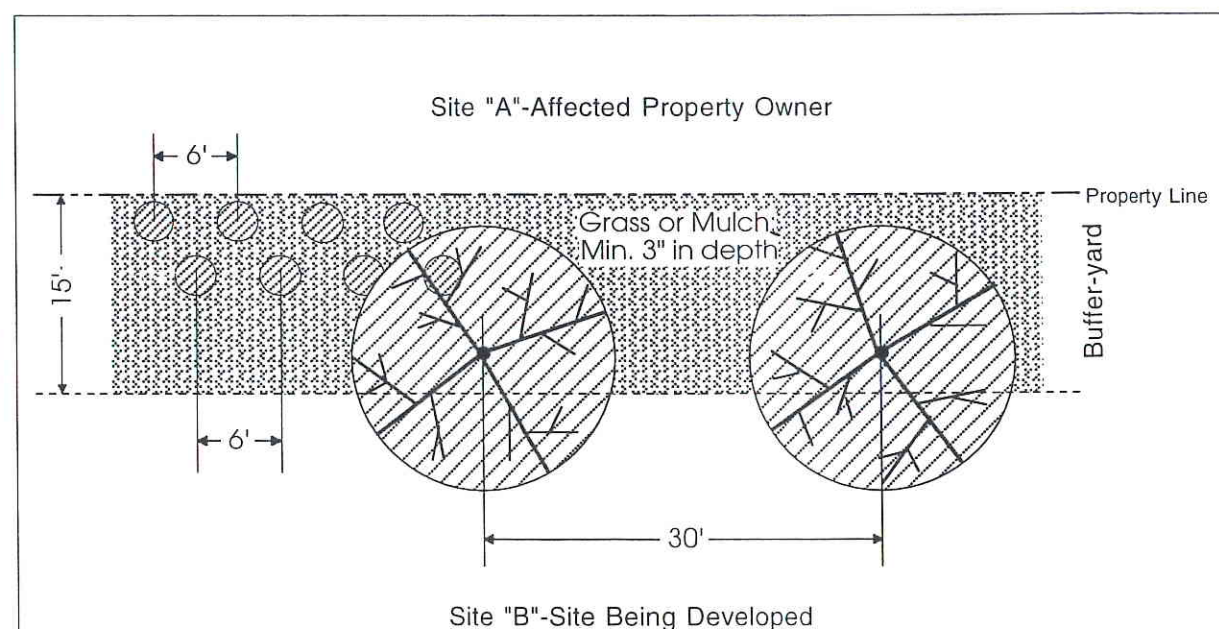
- a. Prior to construction, tree protective barriers shall be placed around all trees to be saved and their root protection area(s), to prevent damage to trees over 8 inches in caliper. These barricades shall be installed prior to grading, construction, or other land disturbing activity. The barricades shall be constructed from material substantial enough to protect the roots, trunk, and crown of the tree, such as 2"x4" standards and 1"x4" rails, silt fencing or orange safety fencing, minimum 4 ft. in height on metal posts. The barricade shall be placed at a distance from the trunk, equal to the farthest drip line of the tree and should include the total area beneath the tree's canopy.
- b. No soil disturbance or compaction, stock piling of soil or other construction materials, vehicular traffic, or storage of heavy equipment are allowed in the tree and root protection area(s), or within the drip line of trees to be retained.
- c. Root pruning shall be kept to an absolute minimum.
- d. Pruning of existing trees shall be done according to the National Arborists' Association Standards in a manner that preserves the character of the crown.
- e. Grading must not encroach on a tree's root zone in ways that threaten the survival of the tree. Root cuts and fills must be limited to 1/4 of the area within the drip line of the tree. Any cuts must be clean and painted promptly with a tree paint.
- f. No ropes, signs, wires, unprotected electrical installation or other device or material, shall be secured or fastened around or through a tree or shrub.
- g. Except for sidewalks and curb and gutter, no paving with concrete, asphalt or other impervious material shall be allowed within the drip line of trees to be retained.

## Buffer-yards

Landscape screens are required in situations where a new building has a high impact on existing neighbors, such as workplace buildings adjacent to residential uses. Screens are required to protect against noise, lighting and other disruptive effects, to protect the character of residential areas and conserve property values.

The buffer-yard area shall be a minimum of 15 feet and shall consist of plant material which at maturity creates a screen which is 100% opaque. For every one hundred linear feet, the screen shall consist of a combination of at least three (3) canopy trees planted 30 feet on center and thirty-four (34) evergreen shrubs in a double-staggered row six (6) feet on center. New trees and shrubs shall be evenly spaced at planting, with trees having an 8-foot minimum installed height, and shrubs have a 36-inch minimum installed height. For dimensions of less than 100', plantings and spacing shall be in proportion to the basic ratio described above. No mechanical equipment such as air conditioner units are permitted within the buffer area. An example site plan is illustrated below:

### Buffer-yard Example



Plantings will consist of evergreen shrubs, 6' on center, double staggered rows, and canopy trees planted 30' on center.