



### **OVERVIEW**

Effective January 1, 1992, all developments are subject to the landscaping requirements in the Guilford County Development Ordinance. The landscaping requirements are designed to provide visual separations between land uses, reduce negative impacts between different land uses, and safeguard property values. Street frontages (Street Planting Yard), property lines (Planting Yards), and parking lots are required to be landscaped.

### **APPLICATION**

The landscaping requirements are applicable to the following:

- 1) New Principal Building or Use: Principal buildings or open uses of land constructed or established after January 1, 1992;
- 2) Changes in Use: Changes in use which result in an increase of two (2) or more in the Land Use Classification (LUC) number. In such cases, the landscaping requirements apply to the entire lot; and
- 3) Expansions or Reconstruction: Expansions which will result in a parking or building square footage increases of more than three thousand (3,000) square feet for development existing on January 1, 1992. In such cases, the landscaping requirements shall apply only to the expansion.

### **EXEMPTIONS**

The landscaping requirements do not do apply to:

- 1) Single family detached dwellings or two-family dwellings on their own lots;
- 2) Multi-family developments containing eight (8) or fewer dwelling units in a single zone (building) lot;
- 3) Property lines abutting railroad rights-of-way and utility easements in excess of sixty (60) feet in width; and

- 4) Property lines abutting dedicated street right-of-way which has remained unopened for a period of at least fifteen (15) years.

### **STREET PLANTING YARD**

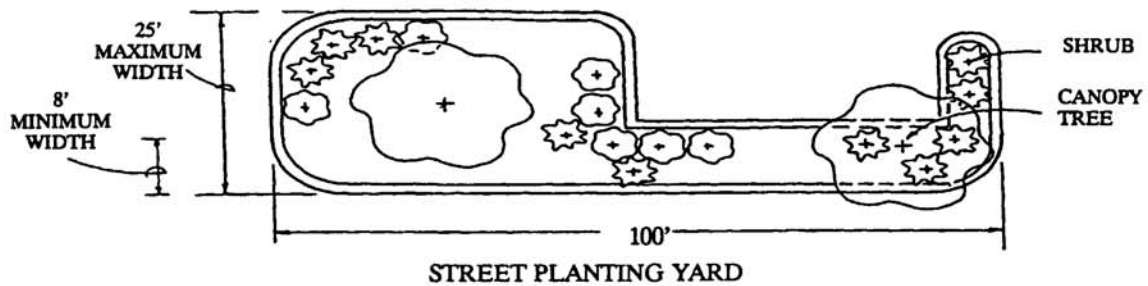
The Street Planting Yard is a planting area parallel to a public street designed to provide continuity of vegetation and a pleasing view along the street. Each public street frontage is subject to the landscaping requirements. The Street Planting Yard has a minimum width of eight (8) feet and maximum width of twenty-five (25) feet. Two (2) canopy trees and seventeen (17) shrubs are required for every one hundred (100) feet of street frontage. In calculating the street frontage access drives are excluded.

### **PARKING LOT PLANTINGS**

Parking lot plantings are designed to shade and improve the attractiveness of paved areas and are uniform for all parking lots. One (1) canopy tree for every twelve (12) parking spaces is required to be distributed throughout the parking lot at the end of parking bays, medians or between rows of parking or adjacent to parking lots as tree islands. A minimum of two hundred (200) S.P. and seven (7) feet in width is required for each parking lot island.

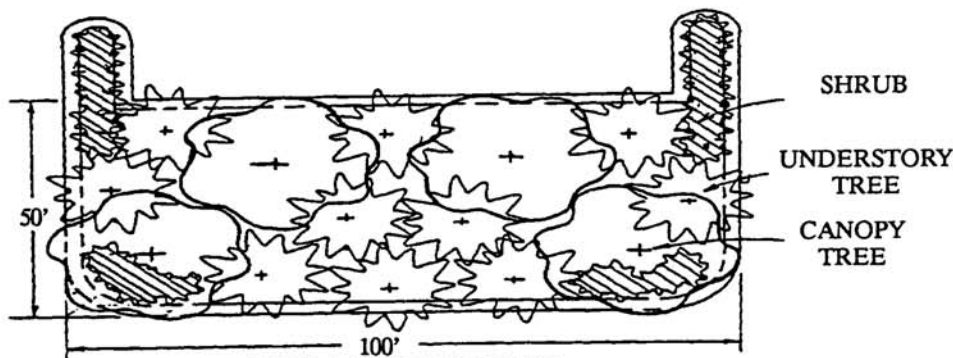
### **PLANTING YARDS**

Planting Yards are landscaped areas along interior property lines designed to provide a visual separation between uses and vegetation in developed areas. Planting Yard widths and planting rates are determined by the proposed land use of the property to be developed as compared to the existing uses of surrounding properties. Planting Yard materials and width increase in proportion to the intensity of conflict between adjacent uses. The Planting Yards range from Type "A" fifty (50) foot, densely planted yard to Type "D" five (5) planted yard.



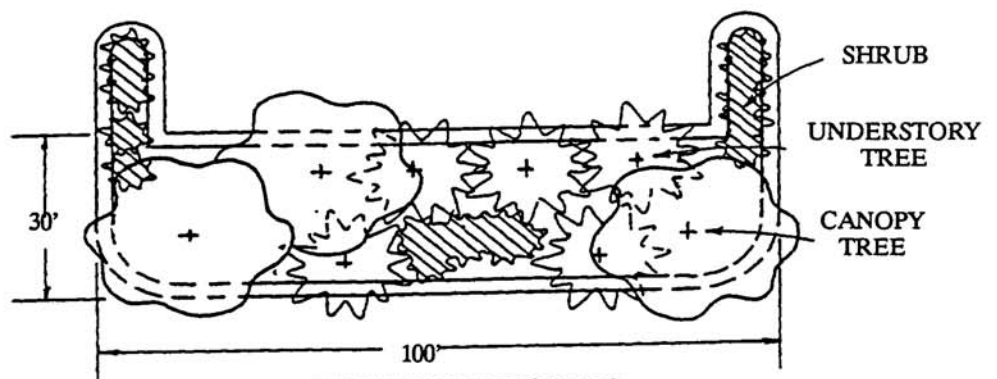
**STREET PLANTING YARD**

- \* 8' average width
- \* Plantings: 2 canopy trees per 100'
- 17 shrubs per 100'



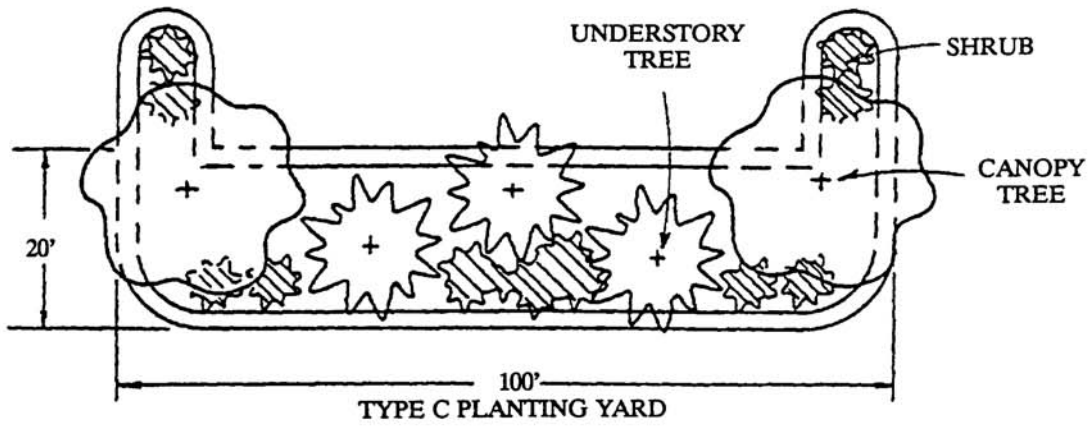
**TYPE A PLANTING YARD**

- \* 40' minimum, 75' maximum width
- \* Plantings: 4 Canopy trees per 100' on center
- 10 Understory trees per 100' on center
- 33 Shrubs per 100' on center

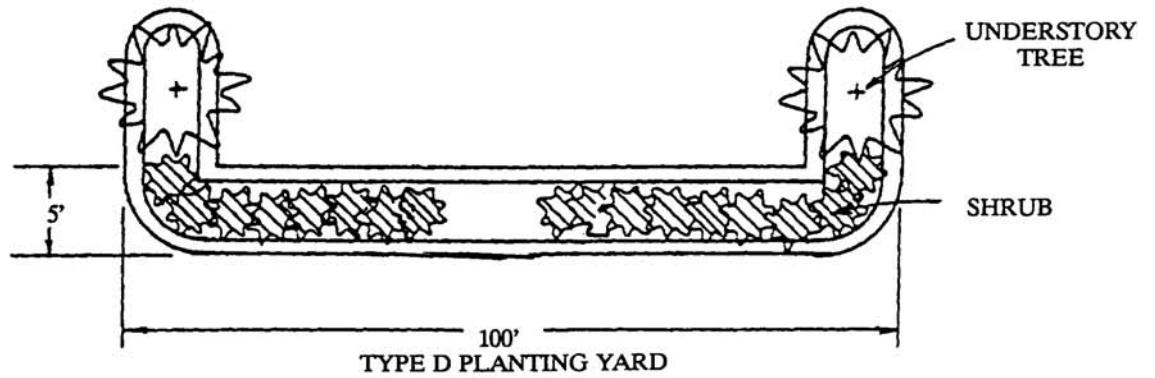


**TYPE B PLANTING YARD**

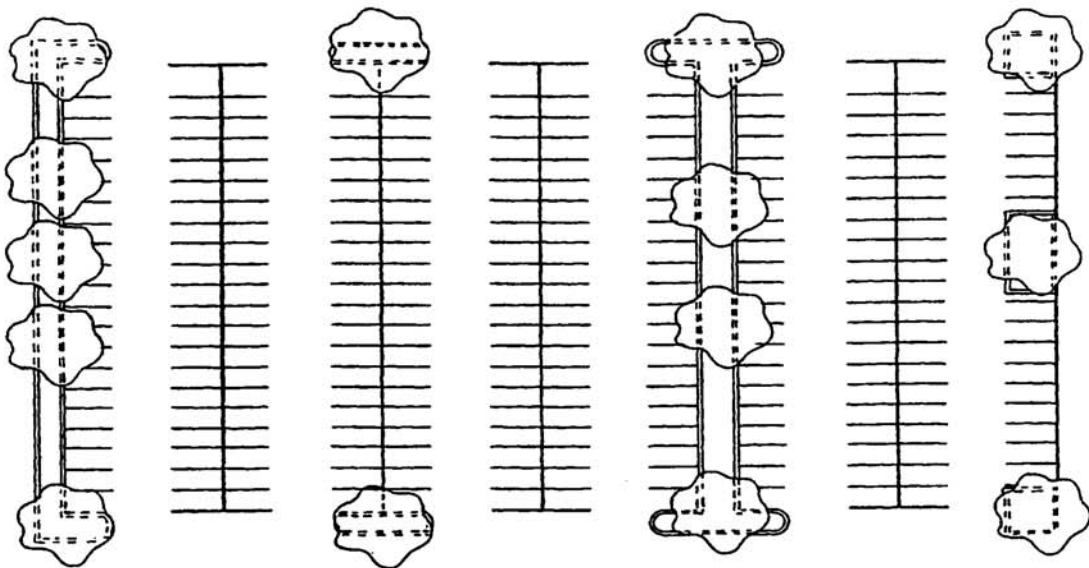
- \* 25' minimum, 50' maximum width
- \* Plantings: 3 Canopy trees per 100' on center
- 5 Understory trees per 100' on center
- 25 Shrubs per 100' on center



- \* 15' minimum width, 40' maximum width
- \* Plantings: 2 Canopy trees per 100'
- 3 Understory trees per 100'
- 17 Shrubs per 100'



- \* 5' minimum width, 10' maximum width
- \* Plantings: 2 Understory trees per 100'
- 18 Shrubs per 100'



**PARKING LOT PLANTINGS**

- \* One Canopy Tree for every Twelve (12) Parking Spaces.
- \* The illustration above contains examples of possible arrangements.

## APPLICATION OF PLANTING YARDS

The **Planting Yard Chart** is used to determine the type of planting yard applicable to a particular project. First, compare the proposed land use to the surrounding land uses. For example, proposed land use of 3 adjoining an existing land use of 2 requires a Type B Planting Yard. The Permitted Use Schedule (Table 4-3-1) in the Development Ordinance lists of all Land Use Classifications. The **Planting Yard Rate Chart** is used to determine the width and rates for a specific type of planting yard.

### Planting Yard Chart

PROPOSED LAND USE	EXISTING ADJACENT USE(S)						
	Land Use Classification	1	2	3	4	5	Undeveloped
1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
2	C	D	D	D	D	D	D
3	B	B	D	D	D	D	D
4	A	A	C	D	D	D	D
5	A	A	B	C	D	D	D

\* No Planting Yard Required

- Land Use Classification: 1 = Single Family Residential and open land uses.  
 2 = Multi-family Residential Uses.  
 3 = Service, Retail and Office Uses.  
 4 = Wholesaling, Light Manufacturing and Industrial Uses.

### Planting Yard Rate Chart

Yard Type	Planting Yard Rates					
	Minimum Width (ft.)	Min. Avg. Width (ft.)	Maximum Width (ft.)	Canopy Tree Rate	Understory Tree Rate	Shrub Rate
Type A Yard	40 <sup>a</sup>	50 <sup>a</sup>	75	4/100 lf/oc	10/100 lf/oc	33/100 lf/oc
Type B Yard	25 <sup>a</sup>	30 <sup>a</sup>	50	3/100 lf	5/100 lf	25/100 lf
Type C Yard	15 <sup>a</sup>	20 <sup>a</sup>	40	2/100 lf <sup>b</sup>	3/100 lf	17/100 lf
Type D Yard	5	5	10	-	2/100 lf	18/100 lf

lf: linear feet                      oc: on center

## DEFINITIONS

### Canopy Tree

At time of Planting: Minimum eight (8) feet in height and two (2) inches in caliper, measured six (6) inches above grade.

At Maturity: Minimum forty (40) feet in height with a minimum crown width of thirty (30) feet.

Examples: Loblolly Pine, Red Maple, Bradford Pear, Virginia Pine, White Oak.

### Understory Tree

At time of Planting: Minimum four (4) feet in height and one (1) inch in caliper, measured six (6) inches above grade.

At Maturity: Ranging from thirty-five (35) to fifteen (15) feet in height. Burford Holly, Crepe Myrtle, Flowering Dogwood, Japanese Maple, Wax myrtle.

Examples: Burford Holly, Crepe Myrtle, Flowering Dogwood, Japanese Maple, Wax myrtle.

### Shrubs

At time of Planting: Minimum eighteen (18) inches.

At Maturity: Minimum thirty-six (36) inches in height and a minimum spread of thirty (30) inches within three (3) years of planting.

Examples: Azaleas, Common Juniper, Gardenia, Mountain Laurel, Winterberry Holly.

## LANDSCAPING PLAN APPROVAL

For developments fewer than 15,000 S.E of gross floor area or less than one acre of open land use, a detailed Landscaping Plan must be submitted and approved before any building permit can be issued. For developments over 15,000 S.E of gross floor area or more than one acre of open land use, a conceptual landscaping plan maybe submitted and approved along with the Site Plan. Within ninety days after issuance of the Building Permit, a detailed Landscaping Plan must be submitted and approved.

## ALTERNATE LANDSCAPING PROPOSED

If strict compliance with the landscaping requirements is not practical due to utility easements, streams, natural rock formations, topography, lot configuration, or other physical conditions, an

alternate landscaping scheme may be proposed. The alternate plan may propose different plant materials, planting yard widths, or methods. In evaluating the alternate landscaping scheme, the Enforcement Officer must determine if the scheme meets the intent and purpose of the landscaping requirements. This determination shall take into account the land use of adjoining properties, the proposed number, species, arrangement, location and coverage of the plantings, and the level of screening, height, spread, and canopy of proposed plantings at maturity.

## INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PLANT MATERIALS

The installation of all plant materials must be completed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy maybe issued, deferring the installation of the plant materials:

- 1) If plant materials are unavailable;
- 2) If completion of the planting areas would jeopardize the health of the plant materials; or
- 3) If weather conditions prohibit completion of the planting areas.

To receive a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy, the developer shall submit a copy of a signed contract for installation of the required planting areas and may be required to post a surety, not to exceed 180 days, equal to the amount of the contract.

Once installed, the property owner is responsible for maintaining all required plants and planting areas in good health and appearance. Missing, unhealthy, or dead plants must be replaced within 180 days. Replacement of the plants must be the same or better than those originally planted. When plants are damaged due to unusual weather conditions or other acts of God, the property owner has up to 2 years to replant.

## OTHER SPECIFICATIONS

The landscaping requirements also contain substitutions that can be made within planting areas, criteria for the use of fences and walls and provisions for the preservation of existing trees. Refer to Section 6-3 of the Guilford County Development Ordinance for further information.

**This Bulletin is intended for public information purposes only. It summarizes and omits some provisions. It is not to be construed or used as an official Development Ordinance interpretation in any legal proceeding. MEK**