



www.redmond.gov/ZoningCode

Landscaping

DR011



What type of landscaping should I use?

The City of Redmond encourages successful, sustainable, and aesthetically pleasing landscaping. When excellent landscaping practices are applied, they can:

- Enhance the environment by minimizing erosion and flooding, filtering water runoff, and establishing managed habitat for local birds and animals;
- Create a beautiful, varied environment for the community that is both desirable and welcoming, which provides increased value; and
- Minimize the need for water usage, chemical substances and materials, and long-term maintenance/replacement costs of landscaping.

To help foster these sorts of practices, the City has implemented regulations and plans that promote a well landscaped urban environment. Whenever developers or applicants submit commercial, industrial, multi-family, and single-family subdivision projects, they are required to meet the landscaping standards in Redmond Zoning Code [Chapter 21.32, Landscaping](#).

General Landscape Practices

The City of Redmond encourages property owners to use best landscaping practices. This means choosing the best types of plants that

suit local conditions, apply efficient and tailored irrigation systems, and locating plants in a manner that promotes successful vegetation and minimizes maintenance.

Species Types and Survivability

The basic principle of landscaping in Redmond is choosing plants that are of native species, hardy, and proper size and condition before planting.

The City uses two guides that outline native species of Western Washington and the best condition of plants prior to planting. The *Plants of the Pacific Northwest: Washington, Oregon, British Columbia and Alaska* and American Nurseryman Standards guides provide these details.

An online supplement to the native species guide is [King County's Native Species Guide](#), which offers a complete list of native species in the Central Puget Sound. The guide allows users to search by photographs or name, view the full list of species, review preferred landscape plan types, and build a list of species that a user may choose to plant, depending on soil conditions.

Redmond lies within the USDA's 8b Hardiness Zone. This essentially means that plants should be rated for an extreme minimum temperature of 15°F to 20°F so they can survive our winter temperatures and perform well.

Placement of Plants

The location and context of plant types



should be considered before planting. Plants having similar water-use characteristics should be grouped together. A drought tolerant plant should be grouped with drought tolerant plants whereas a water-intensive plant should be grouped with other water-intensive plants. This helps to ensure that irrigation systems can be properly calibrated to the needs of planting groups and provide for the long-term maintenance of landscaped areas.

Plants should be appropriately spaced based upon their type and function. This helps plants perform better as they have room to grow and do not have to outcompete other species. This also assists with creating a more aesthetically pleasing landscaped area.

To establish successful planting areas, the City requires that landscaped areas be a minimum of 64 square feet, 5 feet in width and length in general, and extend at least 5 feet from any building exterior wall.



Irrigation

Any planting area that is more than 500 square feet should be supplied with an appropriate irrigation system designed to conserve water, except for planting areas that are drought tolerant and therefore do not require regular watering. Automatic irrigation should use a subsurface system that is intelligently equipped with a rain sensor as well as backflow prevention devices.

Ecological Score Card

The Ecological Score Card serves to create diverse landscape areas using best practices. The score card applies to applicants who submit a land use application providing new landscaped areas that exceed 500 square feet. Applicants must achieve at least 20 points on the score card by applying specific landscaping techniques in the design of their landscaped areas (see [RZC Section 21.32.060, Ecological Score Requirements](#)).

The Ecological Score Card allows 21 different types of landscaping techniques to be applied and receive credit. Each technique generally carries between 2 and 7 points.

These are some examples of

techniques that could be applied:

1. Green roofs that provide 10 percent of roof coverage, 5 points;
2. Minimum of 25 percent of deciduous trees are 3" caliper or greater at installation, 3 to 5 points; and
3. Proposed water features use recycled water, 3 points.

Street Trees

Street trees add green canopy, provide shade and habitat, and create localized ambiance. The City currently has a street tree program (known as the *Street Tree Plan*), which is administered by the Parks Department. The Department maintains all trees within the City's right-of-way that are part of this program.

Because the program generally covers only principal, minor, and collector arterials, not all streets have street trees being planted and/or maintained by the Parks Department. Some property owners however would like to have trees adjacent to their property by planting trees along their portion of the street right-of-way. A property owner is free to plant trees along the street right-of-way as long as the property owner is willing to also take on the long-term maintenance of the trees.

The Parks Department can help determine if a street is covered by the street tree program. If not, and a property owner would like to place trees, he or she should consider a few things before planting trees:

- What type of tree(s) to plant: the Parks Department has a list of recommended trees that do well along streets.
- The placement of trees: trees should be spaced every 30 feet on

center. When placing trees, care should be taken to allow for sightlines from driveways and intersections as well as avoiding the obstruction of utilities, traffic signs, and streetlights. Other standards can be found in [RZC Section 21.32.090, Street Trees](#).

Neighborhood-Specific Regulations

The Education Hill, North Redmond (including Wedge Subarea), Willows/Rose Hill, Overlake, and Downtown neighborhoods have landscaping regulations that are more specific than Redmond's citywide regulations.

For example, any new residential development in the Education Hill, North Redmond, and Willows/Rose Hill must provide front yard landscaping. In Willows/Rose Hill, bioswales that are constructed must follow certain landscaping designs. Meanwhile, the North Redmond Wedge area outlines very defined requirements in regards to street tree variation, the type of tree canopy ratio in common planting areas, and specific landscape screening standards. To review additional residential neighborhood landscape standards, refer to [RZC Section 21.08.180\(F\), Residential Development and Architectural, Site and Landscape Design Regulations](#).

Downtown and Overlake also maintain specific landscape standards. These can be found respectively in [RZC Sections 21.10.140, Landscaping](#) and [21.12.130, OV Landscaping](#).

Applicable Code Sections

RZC 21.32: Landscaping

RZC 21.08.180(F): Residential Development and Architectural, Site and Landscape Design Regs.

RZC 21.10.140: Landscaping

RZC 21.12.130: OV Landscaping

Questions: 425-556-2494 or planneroncall@redmond.gov.

You can also visit us in person at the Development Services Center located on the 2nd floor of City Hall. Open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm.

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