



Administrative Landscape Review Information and Submittal Requirements Checklist

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LANDSCAPE REVIEW PACKAGE

Landscape Review Package. The purpose of this package is to acquaint applicants with the landscape review process in the City of Indian Wells. Landscape projects within the City are subject to review by the City's Planning Department and applicable homeowners' associations. Preliminary plans shall be submitted to the Planning Department at which time a case number will be assigned. If the application must be reviewed by the City's Design Review Committee (DRC), the item will be scheduled for review within 30 days of a completed application. If Planning Department approval is only required, the item will be reviewed in a timely manner. Each design submittal case shall be reviewed individually. The attachment to this overview presents plan review requirements for landscape projects. There are two pathways for landscape review:

1. Staff Review. Staff may approve landscape plans for front and side-yard landscape projects visible from the street that affect a landscape area greater than 250 square feet and less than 2,500 square feet. Once approved, the applicant may proceed with a permit to install the approved landscaping, as per plan and schedule a follow-up inspection. There is no filing fee for Staff Review during California's emergency drought status.
2. Full Design Review Committee Assessment. If a landscape project is determined by the Planning Department to be inconsistent with the City's Zoning Code or affects an area over 2,500 sq. ft., the project will be reviewed by the City's DRC in a public meeting at City Hall. A filing fee (see current fiscal year fee schedule) is required and all documentation as outlined in the attached package must be complete prior to submission to the Planning Department.

The DRC meets on an as-needed basis at City Hall to review applications in accordance with subsection 21.06.020(b). DRC Meeting are public meetings and public notice posted 72 hours before the meeting as required by law. Plans must be submitted and the application package deemed complete at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.



ADMINISTRATIVE LANDSCAPE PLAN REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

I. INTRODUCTION:

Any new landscape or remodeled landscapes that affects front and/or side-yard landscape areas visible from the street greater than 250 square feet and less than 2,500 square feet shall be subject to administrative review from the City's Planning Department. It is understood that associated plans presented for review shall comply with the basic zoning and design parameters set forth in the Municipal Zoning Code and such design guidelines established by the City. If the plans are inconsistent with the City's Zoning Code or affects an area greater than 2,500 square feet, it must be reviewed by the City's Design Review Committee (DRC) per §21.60.085(d). If Planning Department approval is required only, the item will be reviewed in a timely manner.

If the landscape plans are not prepared by a licensed/registered landscape architect, landscape designer or architect, the City reserves the right to have the plans reviewed by a licensed professional with the cost being borne by the applicant. Landscape plans for areas greater than 2,500 square feet shall require plans drawn by a professional landscape architect licensed in the state of California.

Each design submittal case (i.e., application for a landscape improvement project) shall be reviewed individually. If the item is reviewed by the DRC, the City Planning Department Staff will briefly explain each application and the DRC will issue an approval a denial or a continuance for each case. If requested, the Planning Department shall issue written DRC decisions for each application, indicating approval or rejection. Rejected applications will include reasons for rejection.

II. APPLICABILITY:

All persons shall be required to apply to the City's Planning Department and/or Design Review Committee (DRC) for review and approval before commencing any of the following activities:

- (a) Modifying landscaping that affects more than 250 square feet within all areas of the City except Homeowner Association (HOA) property not visible from public right-of-way;

III. MINIMUM CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING DEPARTMENT REVIEW:

Site Photographs:

1. Provide photographs of the existing site. The photographs should include all areas where property is going to be changed or modified as part of the landscape project.

Irrigation Plans

1. Provide information pertaining to how and what type irrigation will be used to reduce water use. Drought tolerant or xeriscape type landscaping shall incorporate drip irrigation systems which meet Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) requirements at a minimum, including a smart irrigation timer, micro-spray, micro-bubbler, surface tubing, and/or pressure compensating bubblers; adjustable flood bubblers are not allowed. If synthetic ground cover is installed, only permeable landscape weed block/cloth or similar covering is acceptable. Plastic sheeting is not allowed as a ground cover.
2. All landscaped areas within the City of Indian Wells shall be irrigated by an automatic irrigation system compliant with Chapter 21.70 Water Efficient Landscaping of the City Municipal Code.

Landscape Planting Plans:

1. Site plan with north arrow identifying the planting areas drawn to scale, along with the location and spacing of proposed plants, trees and any other vegetation. Plants having similar water use shall be grouped together in distinct hydrozones. Right-of-way lines shall be shown on the final landscape plan.
2. Landscape design plans for corner parcel development projects must ensure traffic safety sight areas are designed to uphold public safety, consistent with Section 21.50.040 Protection of intersection visibility regulations of city's Municipal Code.
3. Show the location and type of irrigation system to be utilized within the different hydrozones, as appropriate.
4. Show all existing or proposed features on the site plan, including pools, spas, fountains, decks (concrete or wooden), planters, walkways, gates, low walls, etc. Also indicate proposed finishes for all flat work.
5. Provide a complete plant palette legend identifying size and species, both common and Latin names, and water usage per the Water Use Classification of Landscape Species (WUCOLS). Drought tolerant species are encouraged.

NOTE: Individual HOAs may have restrictive landscaping requirements. Please contact your respective HOA with written approval prior to submitting plans.

Landscape Standards: All residential structures shall be landscaped to provide a mature appearance to blend with existing neighborhoods and enhance the overall appearance of the residential areas.

1. Residential Lots

- a. Plant density shall be three (3) plants per 100 square-feet of landscape area minimum.
- b. Live or artificial turf areas are permitted and discounted from overall landscape area.
- c. A variety of five (5) unique plant species shall be incorporated within the overall landscape area.
- d. 70% of plants shall be five (5) gallon; 30% of plants shall be fifteen (15) gallon. Only seasonal plantings (flowers) may be less than five (5) gallon, but shall not be counted toward plant density.
- e. A minimum of two (2) 24-inch box trees required in each front yard. Two (2) palm trees at least 8-feet in height may substitute for one (1) 24-inch box tree. Corner lots shall meet this minimum tree requirement for each of their frontages. Tree root control barriers shall be used on trees installed within 5-feet of any hardscape element or structure.

2. Common Areas.

- a. Plant density shall be three (3) plants per 100 square-feet of landscape area minimum.
- b. Artificial turf areas permitted. Non-functional turf permitted only if irrigated by non-potable water source. Non-functional turf and/or artificial turf shall be discounted from overall landscape area.
- c. A variety of four (4) unique plant species shall be incorporated within the overall landscape area.
- d. 70% of plants shall be five (5) gallon; 30% of plants shall be fifteen (15) gallon. Only seasonal plantings (flowers) may be less than five (5) gallon, but shall not be counted toward plant density.
- e. One (1) 36-inch box tree or two (2) palm trees at least 8-feet in height required per 1,000 sqft of landscape area.

3. Commercial Areas.

- a. Plant density shall be four (4) plants per 100 square-feet of landscape area minimum.
- b. Artificial turf areas permitted. Non-functional turf permitted only if irrigated by non-potable water source. Non-functional turf and/or artificial turf shall be discounted from overall landscape area.
- c. A variety of five (5) unique plant species shall be incorporated within the overall landscape area.
- d. 70% of plants shall be five (5) gallon; 30% of plants shall be fifteen (15) gallon. Only seasonal plantings (flowers) may be less than five (5) gallon, but shall not be counted toward plant density.
- e. Trees shall be incorporated into the design of all off street parking areas in compliance with Section 21.100.030 of the City's Municipal Code.

- f. Trees shall be planted along commercial street frontages at a rate of one (1) 36-inch box tree, or one (1) palm tree at least 10-feet in height, per 30-linear feet of street frontage or at the minimum distance between trees as recommended for the specific tree species.
4. Inorganic Ground Covers and Materials
- a. Open or voided areas within a defined landscape area shall be covered with inorganic ground covers, including but not limited to decomposed granite, crushed rock, cobbles, boulders, and mulch is acceptable. Bare earth shall not be permitted. A minimum of two (2) different textures of inorganic ground covers shall be required within defined landscape areas. Standards area as follow:
 - i. Crushed Rock: 0.5-inch to 1-inch in size, installed at 2-inch minimum depth.
 - ii. Decomposed Granite: 2-inch minimum depth. Not permitted on slopes greater than 3:1
 - iii. Cobble: 8" or less diameter set on grade with 1" partially buried so that cobble is not sitting on grade.
 - iv. Pebbles: 1-inch to 2-inch in size, installed at 3-inch minimum depth.
 - v. Mulch: 3-inch minimum depth.
 - vi. Boulders: Maximum 3-feet in height and must be buried 1/3 of height of boulder
 - vii. Artificial turf must be manufactured to meet the following quality standards:
 - 1. Must be permeable to allow water infiltration.
 - 2. Minimum face weight of 75oz per square yard.
 - 3. Minimum pile height of 1.75-inch.
 - 4. Blades shall be comprised of two (2) colors for a natural appearance.
 - 5. Made in the USA

Design Guidelines: Residents are encouraged to use the city's aesthetic design guidelines and ideas to make the overall landscape design align with the city's quality of life standards. If a landscape design doesn't meet the aesthetic criteria, the Community Development Director may forward it to the city's Design Review Committee (DRC). Design guidelines are as follows:

1. Use of Complimentary Colors: Colors that harmonize and enhance the overall landscape design and built environment are encouraged.
2. Berming: The aesthetic use of berms and undulating topography is strongly encouraged to add visual interest to the overall landscape design.
3. Proportion and Scale: The design should consider the size relationship between plants, hardscape, and architectural elements, including the application of principles such as the "golden ratio" for spatial arrangements.
4. Order and Balance: Symmetry is encouraged in formal or modern gardens, while asymmetrical planting designs are preferred for natural garden settings. The architecture and setting should inspire the landscape design. For natural settings,

shrubs should be planted in non-uniform masses to present a natural landscape appearance.

5. Repetition and Unity: Repetition fosters order, but variety is essential to prevent monotony. This can be achieved through the effective use of color, texture, and form.
6. Focal Points: The overall landscape design should incorporate focal points, such as unique plants or features (e.g., boulders, water features, planters, hardscape designs) that contrast with their surroundings in terms of color, size, or texture.
7. Interconnection: Dry river features and pathways are encouraged to connect different landscape areas, promoting unity and flow.
8. Simplicity: The design should prioritize simplicity, focusing on primary and accent installations.
9. Plant Placement: A hierarchy of plant placement is encouraged, with low plants in the foreground and taller plants against structures to create depth. Consideration should be given to the mature size of plants to prevent overcrowding.
10. Seasonal Interest: A mix of perennial and seasonal plants is recommended to ensure year-round color and interest.
11. Texture and Form: A variety of textures and forms should be incorporated for added interest. The combination of fine and coarse-textured materials, such as boulders, crushed rocks, cobbles, and decomposed granite, in complementary colors is encouraged.
12. Landscape Lighting: Any outdoor lighting shall comply with Chapter 22.12 Lighting Standards of the City Municipal Code.
13. Landscape Water Features: Any water features included within the landscape area should complement the overall design, be proportionate in size, incorporate recirculating water system, and shall not exceed a maximum of 18-inches in depth measured from the highest possible water level as required by California Building Code Chapter 31 (Special construction), Section 3119.
14. Project applicants shall reference the Lush and Efficient Landscape Gardening Manual prepared by the Coachella Valley Water District prior to submittal of any landscaping plan for review and approval by the city: http://web.cvwd.org/conservation/lush_book/index.html. Applicants shall also consult the Invasive Plant Inventory prepared by the California Invasive Plant Council prior to selection of any plant species for landscaping: <https://www.cal-ipc.org/plants/>

Other Landscape Standards

1. Corner Lots: Ensure intersection visibility is maintained consistent with Section 21.50.040 of the Municipal Code
2. Trees and shrubs shall be planted so that at maturity they do not interfere with utility service lines, street lighting, street sweeping, traffic safety sight areas, on-site signs, and basic property rights of adjoining property owners.
3. Trees planted near public curbs, sidewalks, or utility vaults shall have a limited root structure and shall be installed to prevent physical damage to public improvements and shall comply with the following provisions:
 - a. Canopy trees shall be placed a minimum of ten feet from public street curb and a minimum of three feet from sidewalks.
 - b. Palm trees with a trunk height of ten feet or more shall be placed a minimum of three feet from public street curb and sidewalks.
 - c. A root barrier system shall be installed when trees are located near public curbs, sidewalks, or utility vaults.
 - d. Landscape and irrigation plans shall be required for all public street parkways and median islands and shall conform to city standards and be submitted for review and approval to the city engineer and planning division.

V. APPEAL PROCESS: Any disapproval of plans by the DRC may be appealed by an application in writing to the Planning Commission within fifteen (15) days from the date of notification of disapproval. The Planning Commission shall consider the matter and affirm, reverse or modify the DRC decision. The decision of the Planning Commission may be appealed to the City Council, in accordance with the requirements of Section 2.12.040(k).

VI. VIOLATION - ACTION: In addition to any other remedies for violation of City ordinances in force, the City may bring and maintain any action permitted by law to restrain, correct, or abate any violation of this Chapter and in the event that legal action is brought by the City, reasonable attorney's fees and court costs shall be awarded to the City and shall constitute a debt owing by the violator to the City. The City may place a lien on the affected property in the event any debts so incurred are not timely paid.

ADMINISTRATIVE LANDSCAPE REVIEW SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

- Application fee as per the current fee schedule.
- Site photographs of existing property conditions
- Title Sheet with Index
 - a. Title block containing location of project, index of sheets, name, address, and contact of both owner and person preparing the plans.
 - b. A data table containing Assessor's parcel number and landscape area identified in square feet.
 - c. Vicinity map
- Irrigation Plans
 - a. Layout indicating what type of irrigation will be used to reduce water use and comply with Chapter 21.70.
 - b. Provide on plans the point of connection (POC) or location of irrigation valves screened from public view.
 - c. Include size of all irrigation lines on the plan, types of sprinkler heads (ie bubblers, pop-up, or nozzles).
 - d. Provide irrigation equipment legend with manufacturer, nozzle size, pattern (45, 90, or 180 or bubbler) and spray radius.
- Landscape Planting Plans
 - a. Site layout with dimensions, north arrow, scale, and size of landscape area.
 - b. Indicate property lines as necessary.
 - c. Show all concrete hardscape, water features, walls, planters and building outlines.
 - d. Legend shall include plant symbols, botanical name (genus, species, and variety), common name, size, and quantity. Include existing plantings.
 - e. For corner lots, show corner sight line distance on planting plan.
 - f. Callout inorganic ground covers, see standards provided above.
 - g. Follow landscape design guidelines to blend with existing neighborhoods and enhance the overall appearance of the residential areas.
 - h. Reference the Lush and Efficient Landscape Gardening Manual (http://web.cvwd.org/conservation/lush_book/index.html).

- i. Avoid Invasive Plant Species. Reference the Invasive Plant Inventory prepared by CA Invasive Plant Council here: <https://www.cal-ipc.org/plants/>.
- Other information as required per the request of the Community Development Director.