



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CITY OF HUDSON, OHIO

Bufferyards

INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 3

Many communities around the country have established strong standards for landscape buffers and screens. That is because landscaped areas, mature vegetation, fences and walls work to separate or lessen the impact of conflicting and adjacent land uses.

Chapter 1207.04 of the Land Development Code establishes specific standards for provision of landscaping for all land uses. Bufferyard requirements are established based on land use types and are illustrated to clarify how they can be implemented in practice.

Bufferyard requirements apply to all new property development and any substantial expansion of existing structures, except for individual single family dwellings and parking lots of five (5) spaces or smaller.

For any bufferyard required in the Land Development Code, the applicant must submit a landscape plan to the City Community Development Office for approval as part of the Site Plan Review process or Subdivision Review process. Landscape plans must be prepared by a landscape design professional.

What is a bufferyard?

The Code defines a "bufferyard": "Open spaces, landscaped areas, fences, walls, berms, or any combination thereof; used to physically separate or screen one use or property from another so as to visually shield or block noise, lights, or other nuisances". Bufferyards are required around the boundary of all new developments to separate adjacent incompatible land uses and screen and soften their impacts.

Bufferyard Requirements

The types of Bufferyards required are outlined in Table 1, known as the "Bufferyard/Land Use Matrix". Table 1 refers to four different classifications of bufferyards; Bufferyards A through D. These classifications are based on the proposed land use

and on the existing land use of abutting parcels, with Bufferyard A being the minimum buffer standard and D the maximum buffer standard.

For example, a proposed "Industrial" land use abutting an existing "Single Family Residential" land use must meet the requirements of Bufferyard D, according to Table 1. Bufferyard D requires additional planting and screening to minimize land use conflicts between these very different land uses. A proposed "Office Commercial" land use abutting a "Single Family Residential" land use, on the other hand, must meet the requirements of Bufferyard C, which features smaller or less dense buffers.

Within each of the four bufferyard classifications, developers may choose one of four different options. The options are created for the design flexibility and maximum utilization of a parcel. They are designed to be equivalent in terms of their effectiveness in eliminating the impact of adjoining uses.

The options vary in width and in the number of plants required per 100 linear feet. Each bufferyard option can fluctuate in width and in plant materials based on a factor called the plant unit multiplier, which multiplies the number of required plantings by an amount between 0.4 and 1.0.

Figure 11 shows that Bufferyard B, for example, requires three (3) canopy trees, six (6) understory trees and nine (9) shrubs per 100 linear feet. A preferred planting list is provided in Appendix C of the Draft Land Development Code.

The plant unit multiplier assures that smaller bufferyards contain more vegetation and screening than do larger or wider buffer areas. For example, a bufferyard option with a plant unit multiplier of .6 contains about half the number of plants as does a buffer with a 1.0 plant unit multiplier. The buffer with the 1.0 multiplier, however, will be smaller in width.

Bufferyard Fencing and Earth Berm Requirements

Bufferyard provisions include the optional use of fences or earth berms. Where the minimum bufferyard distance width is being met, if a 4 to 6 foot earth berm, fence or wall is installed, then the required bufferyard plant material may be reduced by a maximum of 15 percent. This 15 percent reduction is in addition to other allowable reductions in plant material due to increasing the minimum bufferyard distance width.

The material and design of all fences requires approval from the Architectural and Historical Board of Review. Earth berms must be constructed of earthen materials and have a maximum slope of 3:1. Grass or ground cover must be used and maintained to prevent erosion of the earth berm.

Credit may be given for preserving existing healthy trees and shrubs and used to fulfill landscape requirements for any required planting, subject to

meeting certain criteria such as plant health, location, species, diameter and height.

For more information contact:

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This information is intended to provide guidance only. Please consult the Land Development Code for the definitive requirements.

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	Retail Commercial Land Use	Office Commercial Land Use	Industrial Land Use	Institutional/Civic Land Use	Multi-Family Residential Land Use	Single Family Residential Conventional LU	Single Family Residential Open Space Conservation Subdivision	Village Core Non-Residential Land Use	General Agricultural Land Use
Retail Commercial Land Use	A	A	B	A	C	C	C	N/A	B
Office Commercial Land Use	A	A	B	A	B	C	C	N/A	B
Industrial Land Use	B	B	A	C	D	D	D	N/A	N/A
Institutional/Civic Land Use	A	A	C	B	C	C	C	N/A	B
Multi-Family Residential Land Use	C	B	D	C	A	B	B	A	C
Single Family Residential Conventional LU	C	C	D	C	B	N/A	A	B	C
Single Family Residential Open Space Conservation Subdivision Land Use	C	C	D	C	B	B	B	B	C
Village Core Non-Residential Land Use	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	B	B	N/A	N/A
General Agricultural Land Use	B	B	N/A	B	C	C	C	N/A	N/A