

# GUIDE TO LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING CODE

## City of Wauwatosa

Updated July 2022





Guide prepared by the City of Wauwatosa Development Department. Questions should be directed to :

**Development Department**

7725 W. North Avenue

Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Phone : 414.479.8907

This guide is intended to provide guidance to understanding and complying with landscaping and screening requirements outlined in Section 24.12 of the City of Wauwatosa Code of Ordinances.

For the complete code of ordinances, refer to the city's website and code of ordinances at :

<https://www.wauwatosa.net/>

[https://library.municode.com/wi/wauwatosa/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances](https://library.municode.com/wi/wauwatosa/codes/code_of_ordinances)



The landscaping and screening regulations are intended to advance the general purposes of the landscape ordinance, specifically to :

- Enhance quality of life for residents and visitors
- Protect property values
- Enhance the quality and appearance of new developments and redevelopment projects
- Mitigate possible adverse impacts of higher intensity land uses abutting lower intensity land uses
- Promote preservation, expansion, protection and proper maintenance of landscaping, including the wise use of water resources
- Improve air quality
- Protect water quality and reduce the negative impacts of stormwater runoff by reducing impervious surface area and providing vegetated areas that filter and retain greater amounts of stormwater on site
- Moderate heat by providing shade
- Reduce the impacts of noise and glare
- Promote sustainable landscape practices including the use of non-invasive native and regionally adaptable plants

# APPLICABILITY

24.12.010

In general, the regulations apply to new development that requires permitting or review by the city and significant expansion of existing use and developments.

The regulations pertaining to landscaping of parking lots have more detailed definitions of the criteria for applicability.

## What types of properties are exempt from the regulations?

- Parking areas within or under a building
- Detached houses
- Semi-detached houses
- Two-unit residential buildings
- Attached houses

# PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE

24.12.070

A performance guarantee is required to ensure that the owner will be in full compliance with landscape installation and maintenance requirements that were included in the approved plans. This fiscal agreement is required at the time of final execution of a certified survey map, subdivision plat or site plan approval with the City, or at the time of execution of an approved zoning permit, development agreement or any permit requiring a landscape plan.

Note: One-year establishment period is required for perennials, shrubs and trees larger than one quart. Landscapes established from seed, with the exception of turf, require a three-year establishment period.

## PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE OUTLINE

### *During site plan review process*

- Provide cost estimate for plant material and installation only; to be approved by city landscape architect
- Execute fiscal arrangement with the city at 100% of cost estimate

### *Immediately following installation*

- Landscape architect shall provide an affidavit stating that the landscaping is installed per the approved plan

### *One-year or three-years following installation*

- Landscape architect shall perform final inspection and provide affidavit that landscaping has been maintained and established per approved plan
- Fiscal security will be released following inspection by the city landscape architect

# LANDSCAPE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

24.12.060

If it is determined that a project is subject to the requirements of the landscaping and screening regulations, a landscape plan must be submitted that meets the requirements of Section 24.12.060. The landscape plan is required at time of site plan review, application of conditional use permit or building permit review.

A Wisconsin registered landscape architect must certify in writing that the plan is complete, accurate and in compliance with the landscaping and screening regulations of this chapter. The requirement that such plans and specifications be certified by a Wisconsin registered landscape architect may be waived for minor alterations and improvements that, in the sole determination of the development department, do not require the services of such a professional.

The landscape plan should include the following and be at a minimum scale of 1" = 50':

- Location of trees and vegetation
- Existing vegetation
- Vehicular use areas
- Specifications for soil/planting media
- Location of walls, fences, walks, lighting and other hard landscaping materials
- Location of underground and above ground utilities that impact landscape features, including relevant easements
- Irrigation plan
- Location of walls, fences, walks, lighting and other hard landscaping materials
- Identification of relevant landscape maintenance programs. Identification of snow storage areas, including a statement that snow will not be pushed into interior landscape islands
- Other information or data determined necessary by zoning administrator; such as cross-sections and additional product data
- Cross-sections for the purpose of showing walls, planting buffers, berms, etc.

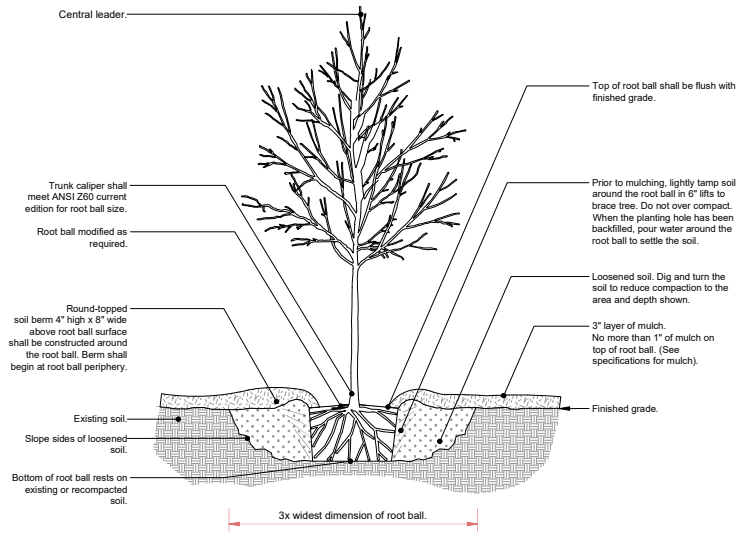


## What is required on the plant list?

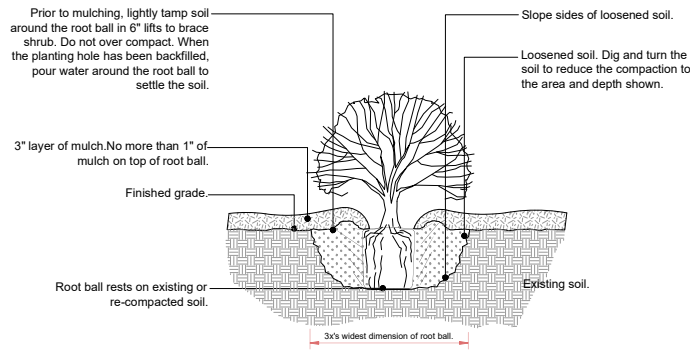
- Quantities
- Botanical Name
- Common Name
- Caliper/Container Size
- Root Type
- Height of material

## What details should be included?

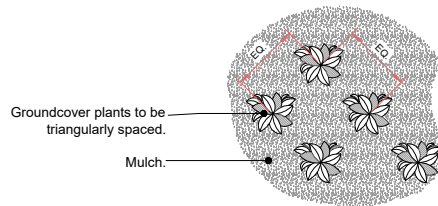
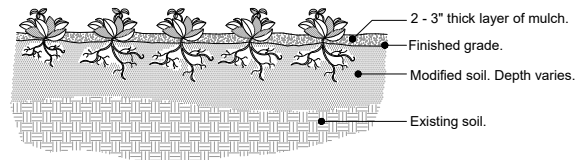
- Tree, shrub and perennial planting
- Hardscape including retaining walls, pavers, etc. that are not included in the civil site plans



DECIDUOUS TREE DETAIL



SHRUB DETAIL



GROUNDCOVER DETAIL



# LANDSCAPING FOR VEHICULAR USE AREAS

Landscaping of vehicular use areas, or parking lots, is an important part of the landscape code. There are requirements in place for perimeter landscaping (24.12.020) and interior landscaping (24.12.030). The following information is applicable to both of these code sections.

*What information needs to be included on the landscape plan?*

If there are new vehicular use areas or subject modifications to an existing vehicular use areas, there are additional requirements for what needs to be shown on the landscape plan. The vehicular use areas need to be clearly identified and dimensioned for the purpose of determining compliance with the landscape requirement.

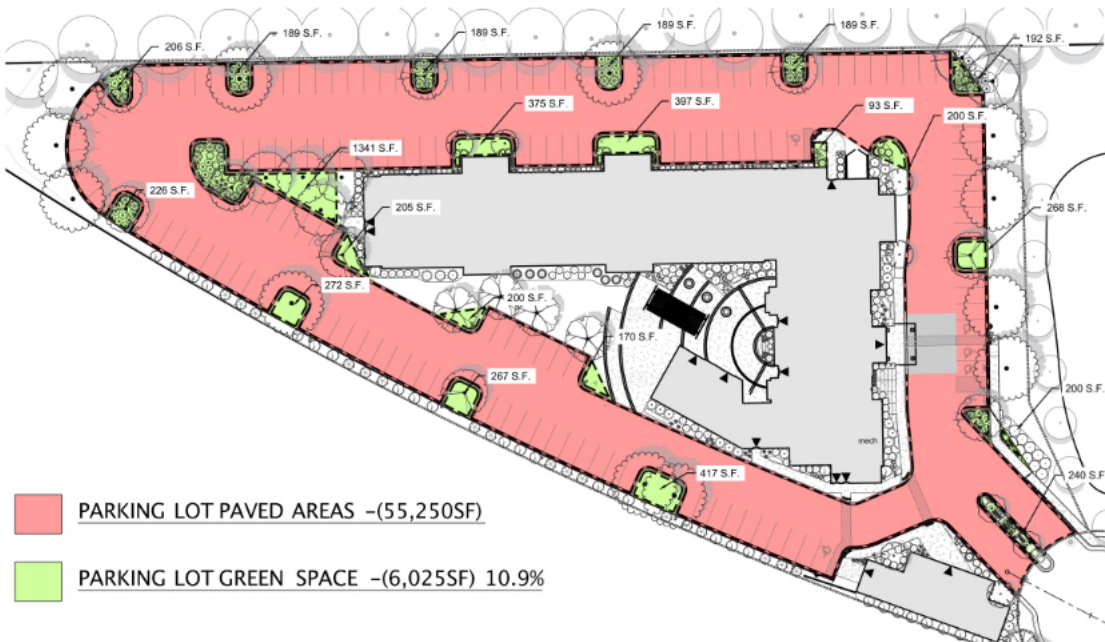
Also, a tabulation in chart form of each vehicular use area, including the square footage of each vehicular use area, the square footage of each interior landscape area and the number of trees and plants proposed to be provided within interior and perimeter areas.

## What is the vehicular use area?

Vehicular use areas include parking spaces, drive aisles, driveways and drive-through lanes. Vehicular use areas that are covered by canopies or similar structures must be included when calculating minimum interior vehicular use area landscaping requirements, but installation of landscaping is not required beneath canopies or other structures that block sunlight or rainfall. Parking and circulation areas located within a parking structure are not counted as vehicular use areas for purposes of these interior vehicular use area landscaping requirements.

PARKING LOT LANDSCAPE AREA	
REQUIRED INTERIOR PARKING LANDSCAPE AREA	5,525 SF
PROVIDED INTERIOR PARKING LANDSCAPE AREA	6,025 SF
REQUIRED INTERIOR PARKING TREES	35
PROVIDED INTERIOR PARKING TREES	35 TOTAL -24 (IN ISLANDS) -11 (IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO PARKING)
PROVIDED INTERIOR PARKING SHRUBS	125

**NOTE:**  
\* DUE TO UTILITY LOCATIONS ONLY 24 TREES ARE LOCATED IN INTERIOR ISLANDS, BUT 11 HAVE BEEN PLACED IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE PARKING AS TO STILL PROVIDE SHADE AND SENSE OF SCALE.



# PERIMETER VEHICULAR USE AREA LANDSCAPING

24.12.020

*What projects require compliance with the perimeter landscaping requirements?*

Perimeter vehicular use area landscaping must be provided in accordance with the standards of this section when parking stalls are located within 100 feet of the right-of-way and when stalls are part of any of the following:

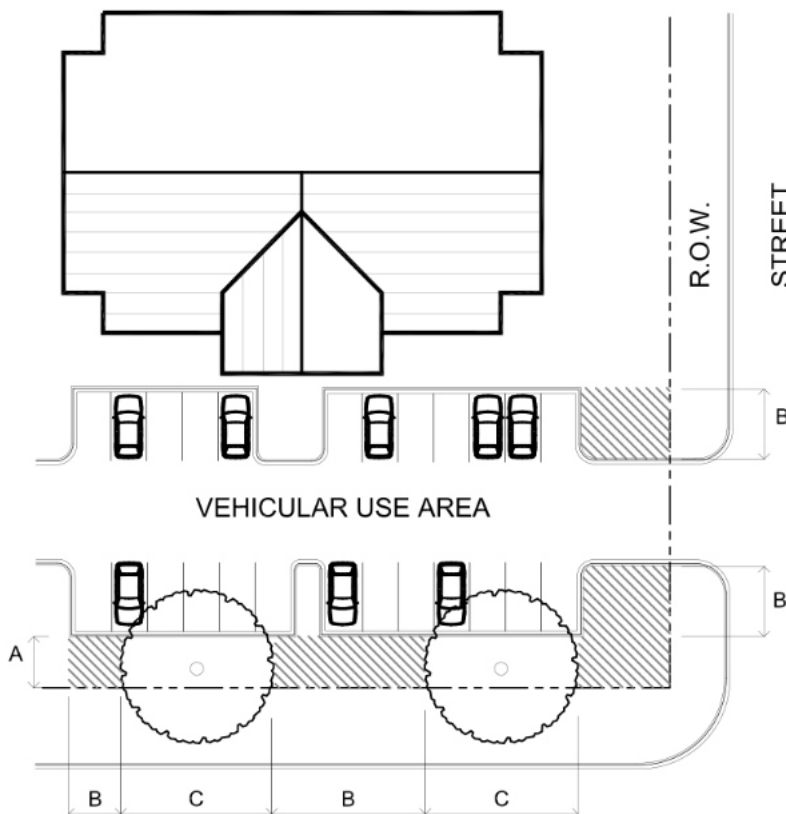
1. Any new construction of a parking lot
2. Parking areas that are rehabilitated, reconstructed or reconfigured
3. Vehicular use area expansions greater than 1,750 square feet
4. Vehicular use area is expanded by greater than 50 percent. In this case, the entire parking lot is required to meet the requirements of this ordinance

## What projects are exempt from perimeter and interior landscaping requirements?

- Projects limited to re-striping, patching, and/or resurfacing of an existing area
- Vehicular use area expansions less than 1,750 square feet

## Key Components to Compliance

- Applies to parking stalls within 100' of right-of-way
- Minimum landscape area is 10' depth, outside of the right-of-way
- Minimum of 2 deciduous trees and 8 shrubs per 50 linear feet of frontage
- Existing trees can be preserved to meet this requirement
- Integration of stormwater features are encouraged



- A Minimum dimension 10' from right-of-way
- B Perimeter landscape areas required to meet ordinance regulations
- C Existing tree to be preserved. Area of dripline exempt from perimeter landscape area requirements.

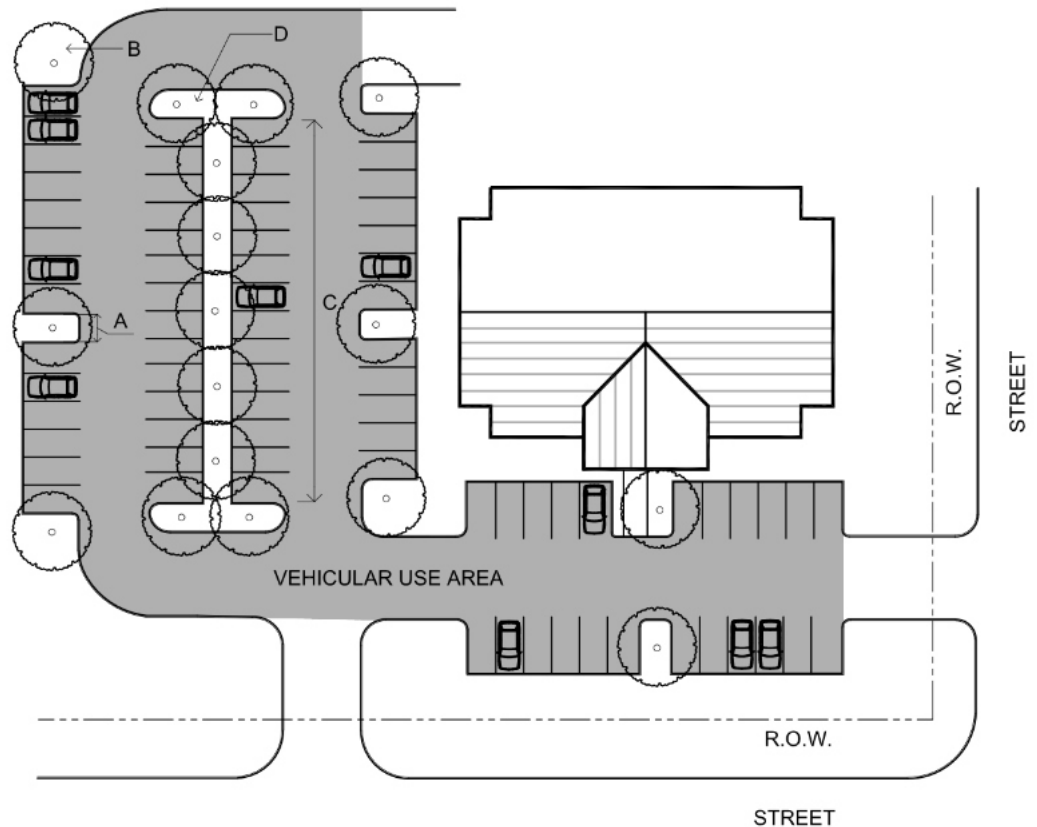


# INTERIOR VEHICULAR USE AREA LANDSCAPING

24.12.030

*What projects require compliance with the perimeter landscaping requirements?*

1. Any new construction of a parking lot
2. Parking areas that are rehabilitated, reconstructed or reconfigured
3. Vehicular use area expansions greater than 1,750 square feet
4. Vehicular use area is expanded by greater than 50 percent. In this case, the entire parking lot is required to meet the requirements of this ordinance



- A Minimum dimension 10' in width and at least 135 square feet
- B Landscaped areas within the corners of the vehicular use area may be counted up to a maximum of 200 square feet at each corner
- C No more than 15 consecutive parking spaces without a landscape island
- D Landscape islands shall be provided at the end of each row

## Key Components to Compliance

- At least 10% of the interior of the vehicular use area must be landscaped
- Landscape islands must be at least 135 square feet and 10 feet in width
- Landscape islands must be provided at the end of each parking row
- No more than 15 consecutive stalls without a landscape island
- Corners can count toward interior, up to 200 square feet per corner, and only if the area contains a deciduous tree
- Shade trees must be provided in interior landscape islands at a minimum rate of 1 tree per 180 square feet of required interior landscape area

## What landscape features require screening?

### Ground-mounted mechanical equipment over 30 inches in height

*Does not include solar panels, wind energy or other renewable energy devices*

*Subject to principal building setbacks for all R- and C-zoned properties*

## What type of screening is acceptable?

- Solid fence
- Solid wall
- Dense hedge, 4' height at time of planting
- Combination of such features
- Must be tall enough to screen the equipment



### Roof-mounted mechanical equipment over 30 inches in height visible from ground level

*Does not include solar panels, wind energy or other renewable energy devices*

*Subject to all R- and C-zoned properties*

- Parapet along facades facing the lot used or zoned
- Solid screen that is as tall as the tallest part of the equipment, with the screen an integral part of the architecture
- Equipment setback from roof edges at least 3 feet for each one foot of height

## What landscape features require screening?

## What type of screening is acceptable?

### Refuse/Recycling Containers

*Screened from view of street and abutting property*

*Note : Additional requirement for drainage and curbing. Refer to code of ordinances for specific details*

- Must be 6' height on all sides with a secured or lockable gate extending to ground level
- Solid wall
- Decorative (metal or wood) opaque fence



### Materials, Supplies and Equipment

*All stored materials, supplies, etc. not on display*

*Note : Additional requirement for drainage and curbing. Refer to code of ordinances for specific details*

- Solid fence
- Solid wall
- Dense hedge, 4' height at time of planting
- Combination of such features
- Must be tall enough to screen the equipment

### Manufacturing and SP-PUB Districts

*Any manufacturing or SP-PUB district abuts a residential zoning district*

*Note : Refer to code of ordinances for additional specific requirements*

- 6' height solid fence
- 6' height solid wall
- Adequate screening on abutting residential property



Required landscape areas must meet minimum standards. The following pages outline the requirements for materials and design.

## Mulch

- Areas must be covered with biodegradable mulch, ornamental grasses, forbs, native plants or other planting combination
- Landscape-grade stone or aggregate may be used
- Biodegradable mulch may not leach dye or colorant
- 3' mulch area from trunk must be provided at each tree

## Fences and Walls

- Chain link fences cannot be used
- Fences and walls are subject to Chapter 15.28 of the city code of ordinances

## Intersection Visibility

- Plant material within the visibility triangle may not exceed 30 inches in height or cleared to a height of 8'
- Evergreen trees not permitted

## Curbs & Vehicle Barriers

- Curb or barrier must be provided when parking is adjacent to landscaped areas
- Must be designed to allow stormwater runoff, with use of gaps and breaks

## Fire Hydrants & Utilities

- Landscaping must be placed to allow full visibility of and access to fire hydrants and utility systems

## Bioretention

- Must be consistent with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Conservation Practice Standard 1004

## Water Conservation

- Water conservation practices are strongly recommended and include:
  - Practical turf areas
  - Use of water-conserving plant material
  - Grouping of plants with similar water needs
  - Use of pervious paving
  - Rainwater harvesting
  - Use of mulches
  - Use of soil amendments based on analysis
  - Use of reclaimed water



## Existing Vegetation

- Existing non-invasive trees and shrubs count towards the requirement of the landscape code
- Must meet height and size requirements

## Maintenance

- Property is responsible for on-going maintenance
- Maintenance plan to include :
  - Irrigation
  - Integrated pest management
  - Fertilization
  - Tree care and pruning
  - Replacement of lost vegetation
  - Weed management



## Plant Standards

### PLANT SELECTION

- Must be well-suited to the micro-climate and on-site soil conditions
- Must comply with American Standards for Nursery Stock (ANSI) specifications
- Must be rated to USDA Hardiness Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5
- If more than 30 trees used, a mixture of 3 or more tree species must be used
- If more than 50 shrubs will used, a mixture of 3 or more shrubs species must be used

### TREES

- Deciduous/Broadleaf Trees : Minimum caliber size 2.0 inches and minimum clear stem of 5'
- Evergreen Trees : Minimum height of 5'

### SHRUBS

- Deciduous/Broadleaf Trees : Minimum height of 15 inches or 2-gallon size; Minimum height in perimeter vehicular use area is 24 inches
- Evergreen Trees : Minimum width of 2 feet or a minimum of 7-gallon size

### PERENNIALS & GRASSES

- Minimum 4.5 inch container size

### GROUNDCOVERS

- Minimum 2.5 inch container size

## Seed Mixes/Native Plantings

- Seed mixes , for establishment of native plantings or turf alternatives, must be clearly identified on the plan
- Three year maintenance plan required

# LANDSCAPE INSTALLATION AFFIDAVIT



## CITY OF WAUWATOSA

### *Development Department*

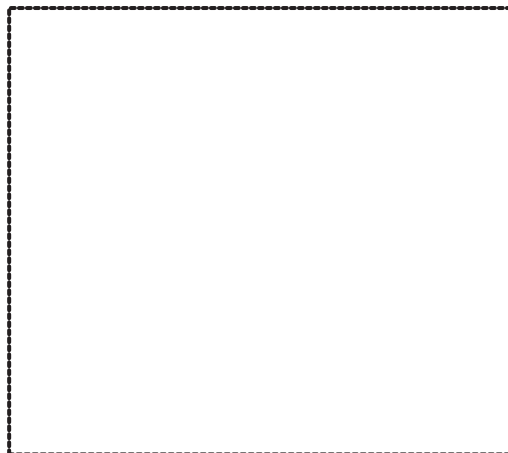
7725 W. North Avenue

Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Phone : 414.479.8907

I, hereby certify that on \_\_\_\_\_ (date), the landscaping located at \_\_\_\_\_ (address), known as the “\_\_\_\_\_” (project name), having been installed pursuant to the recent construction project at this address, is in fact installed and intact, healthy and growing, according to the landscape plan dated \_\_\_\_\_ as reviewed and approved by the City of Wauwatosa Development Department.

*Attach and stamp a cost estimate to this affidavit for reference at time of execution of performance guarantee.*



*Imprint seal above. Sign and date.*



# LANDSCAPE COMPLETION AFFIDAVIT



## CITY OF WAUWATOSA

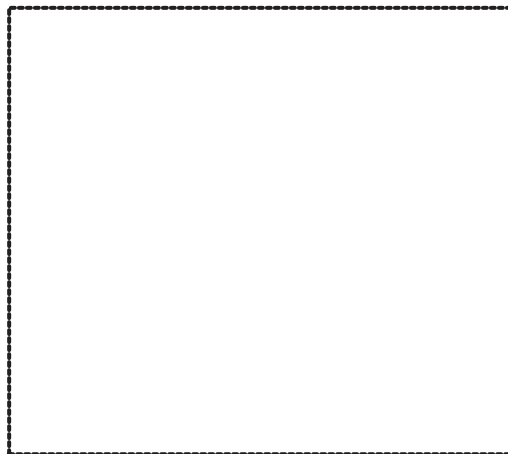
### *Development Department*

7725 W. North Avenue

Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Phone : 414.479.8907

I, hereby certify that on \_\_\_\_\_ (date), the landscaping located at \_\_\_\_\_ (address), known as the " \_\_\_\_\_ " (project name), having been installed pursuant to the recent construction project at this address, is in fact installed and intact, healthy and growing, according to the landscape plan dated \_\_\_\_\_ as reviewed and approved by the City of Wauwatosa Development Department and certified with *Landscape Installation Affidavit* dated \_\_\_\_\_.



*Imprint seal above. Sign and date.*