

1           **Section 11: Skagit County Code Section 14.16.830 is hereby amended to read**  
2 **as follows:**

3  
4 **14.16.830      Landscaping Requirements.**

- 5 (1) Purpose and Intent. Landscaping is essential to provide an aesthetically pleasing  
6 balance between the built and natural environment for the residents of Skagit  
7 County. Landscaping should be used to help:  
8 (a) Soften and enhance the appearance of the built environment and retain the  
9 natural landscape character where possible and practical.  
10 (b) Buffer conflicting land uses.  
11 (c) Maintain property values.  
12 (d) Provide shade and visual relief to parking areas and streets.  
13 (e) Reduce storm water runoff and erosion by providing areas for water  
14 retention and biofiltration where deemed necessary.  
15 (f) Aid in protecting the natural landscape character of Skagit County by  
16 helping to maintain and enhance the visual landscape quality through the  
17 use of native plant materials.  
18 (g) Avoid danger to aircraft in the AEO zone.  
19 (2) Applicability. An approved landscape plan is required for any new commercial or  
20 industrial building or use application. There are different requirements depending  
21 on the commercial/industrial zoning district.  
22 (3) Application Procedures.  
23 (a) Submittal. Landscape plans shall be submitted to the Planning and Permit  
24 Center. An approved plan is required prior to the issuance of a building  
25 permit. Plans shall be drawn to scale showing the location of buildings,  
26 above and below ground utilities, and the location, quantities and sizes of  
27 proposed plants and other proposed materials in the landscape area.  
28 (b) Appeal. Any Applicant may appeal the decision of the reviewer pursuant  
29 to a Level I process in SCC 14.06 (Permit Procedures).  
30 (4) Types, amounts, and locations of landscaping required.  
31 (a) Type I.  
32 (i) Description. Type I landscaping is intended to provide screening  
33 of areas to reduce the visual impact of incompatible or less  
34 desirable characteristics. It is intended to be a very dense sight  
35 barrier. The planting strip shall be a minimum of 20 feet wide.  
36 (ii) Applicability.  
37 a) A 20-foot-wide Type I buffer is required on all  
38 development within SRT, BR-LI, BR-HI, BR-CC, NRI,  
39 and RMI zones where it abuts RI, RRv, RVR, BR-R, BR-  
40 URv and R zoned land. Entire property lines need not be  
41 landscaped if Applicant can demonstrate the activity  
42 (building or use) is adequately screened and agrees to  
43 additional Type I landscaping with future applications. A  
44 request for a reduction shall be by Administrative Decision  
45 pursuant to SCC 14.06. Requirements for the NRI zone are  
46 found within that zone.



1 appearance of streets, parking areas and building elevations of  
2 applications subject to this Section. This is the typical landscape  
3 requirement that every commercial/industrial application shall  
4 meet.

5 (ii) Applicability.

- 6 a) An 8-foot-wide Type III buffer is required on the street  
7 frontage of all development within all  
8 commercial/industrial zones. Entire property lines need not  
9 be landscaped if the Applicant can demonstrate the activity  
10 (building or use) is adequately screened and agrees to  
11 additional Type II landscaping with future applications. A  
12 request for a reduction shall be by Administrative Decision  
13 pursuant to SCC 14.06.
- 14 b) Type III landscapes may be applied as conditions to  
15 discretionary land use applications.

16 (iii) Amount of plantings.

- 17 a) Standards for AVR, NRI, BR-LI, BR-HI, BR-CC, RFS,  
18 SRT, and RMI zones:
- 19 1) Trees. Evergreen and deciduous trees, with no  
20 more than 50% being deciduous, a minimum of 6  
21 feet in height, and planted at intervals no greater  
22 than 30 feet on center, or maximum spacing of 1  
23 tree for every 30 feet of road frontage may be  
24 planted in groupings so as not to visually block a  
25 business entrance. In the Airport Environs Overlay  
26 (AEO), tree height at maturity shall be no greater  
27 than the maximum building height for the specific  
28 site.
- 29 2) Shrubs and berms. Minimum of 3½ feet in height,  
30 and lawn or ground cover planted so that the ground  
31 will be covered within 3 years or earth mounding  
32 (berms) an average of 3½ feet in height planted with  
33 shrubs, or ground cover so that the ground will be  
34 covered within 3 years and produce a landscape at  
35 least 3½ feet in height.
- 36 b) Standards for RVC, RC, and CSB:
- 37 1) A minimum of 2 groupings 50 square feet each  
38 shall be provided.
- 39 2) A minimum of 1 tree in one group and 2 trees in the  
40 second group.
- 41 3) Shrubs shall be adequate to cover the minimum  
42 square footage requirement.

43 (d) Type IV.

- 44 (i) Description. Type IV landscaping is intended to provide relief and  
45 shade in parking areas.

- 1 (ii) Amount of plantings. Applications within: RFS, RMI, AVR, NRI,  
2 BR-LI, BR-HI, BR-CC and SRT zoning designations shall have a  
3 minimum of 16 square feet of landscaping for every parking stall.
- 4 (iii) Design.
- 5 a) Each area of landscaping must contain at least 100 square  
6 feet of area and must be at least 4 feet in any direction. The  
7 area must contain at least 1 tree at least 6 feet in height and  
8 with minimum size of 1½ inches in caliper measured 6  
9 inches above existing grade if deciduous. Deciduous trees  
10 shall have a clear trunk at least 5 feet above the ground.  
11 The remaining ground area must be landscaped with a  
12 variety of plant materials to include low shrubs, 2 feet at  
13 maturity, perennials, annuals and ground cover.
- 14 b) A landscaped area must be placed at the end of each  
15 parking row in a multiple lane parking area. This area must  
16 be at least 4 feet wide and must extend the length of the  
17 adjacent parking stall.
- 18 c) If less than 6 stalls are required, a minimum of 100 square  
19 feet shall be landscaped. The area does not need to meet  
20 the dimensional standards of Subsection (iii)(a), above.
- 21 d) Up to 100% of the trees proposed for the parking area may  
22 be deciduous.
- 23 e) The trees shall be protected from the public, either  
24 pedestrian or motor vehicles, by appropriate curbs, tree  
25 guards or other protective devices.
- 26 f) Applications within all other commercial/industrial zoning  
27 designations. For every 10 required stalls, a minimum of  
28 200 square feet of landscaping shall be provided including  
29 at least 3 trees and a mix of shrubs and groundcovers.
- 30 (5) General Standards. The following general standards will be required in all  
31 districts where landscaping is required:
- 32 (a) Existing Vegetation. Preference is to retain as much of the existing  
33 mature vegetation (not including invasive non-native species) as possible  
34 within planting areas. Existing mature vegetation may be included in the  
35 required amount.
- 36 (b) Trees shall be varieties that will not conflict with underground or overhead  
37 utilities.
- 38 (c) No artificial lawn or shrubbery will be permitted in landscaped areas.
- 39 (d) Required landscaping or other vegetation within 30 feet of a driveway or  
40 street intersection shall not impair the sight vision between 30 inches and  
41 8 feet from the ground. All trees shall have no branches or foliage below  
42 8 feet above the street level.
- 43 (e) Erosion control measures and temporary run-off control may become part  
44 of a landscape plan.
- 45 (f) Maintenance for all landscaping and screening areas shall be provided by  
46 the owner of the landscaped property. Broken or dead trees or shrubs shall

- 1 be replaced. All screening and landscaping areas shall be kept free of  
2 weeds and trash. Any property owner who fails to maintain landscaping  
3 areas will be considered to have committed an offense to this Code  
4 pursuant to SCC 14.44 (Enforcement and Penalties).
- 5 (g) Performance assurance bonding shall be in a cash deposit or other  
6 assurance acceptable to the County equal to 125% of the estimated  
7 installation costs if landscaping improvements have not been completed  
8 prior to application for occupancy. Such deposit shall be accompanied by  
9 a letter that shall stipulate the completion of the landscaping no later than  
10 9 months from date of occupancy. If the conditions are not met, the  
11 County may use the deposit to perform the landscaping.
- 12 (h) Phased projects shall submit a landscape plan for the site as a whole  
13 before any issuance of a building permit is granted.
- 14 (i) Alternative landscape plans may be submitted which differ from the  
15 requirements contained in this Section. The Administrative Official shall  
16 make an administrative decision to approve or deny the landscape plan  
17 pursuant to a Level I process. All plans shall demonstrate how they meet  
18 the intent as outlined in this Section or that a hardship exists because of lot  
19 topography, size, or location.
- 20 (j) Landscape materials shall be provided consistent with the County's list of  
21 acceptable landscape materials.  
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