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Sustainable Public Rights-of-Way BMP Guidebook

Landscape Planning and Vegetation Maintenance

By The North Central Texas Council of Governments



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Introduction



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1. Trees should be planted a minimum of 5' away from the curb on the ROW and 4' away from the curb on a median.
2. Tree spacing should be based on crown spread; see the Tree Matrix.
3. Root barriers can be used as long as the soil volume is adequately maintained for the species.
4. Trees planted near intersections and major driveways should be out of the visibility triangle. The city's code should be referenced for more details on the visibility triangle. If guidance from the city is not available refer to the Federal Highway Association 3.3.1 Sight Distance:
https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/training/fhwasa1108/ch3.cfm#:~:text=Figure%203.%20Sight%20Distance%20Triangles%20for%204-Leg%20Stop-controlled%20Intersections9

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Planting Trees in a Median

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1. Trees should be planted in a median if it is at least 8' wide.
2. If a median is less than 12' wide, trees should be planted in a straight line down the middle of the median. If a median is greater than 12' wide, trees should be planted offset down the median.
3. Drainage goals should be considered when building medians at a higher or lower grade.

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1. When possible, trees should be planted at a 5' minimum away from underground utility lines.
2. Cities should check with the utility provider for tree recommendations. If they don't have recommendations, use the following:
 - Trees should not be planted directly under aerial utility lines. Trees should be planted outside any easement.
 - If a tree's mature height is 20' or below then it can be planted within 20' of an overhead utility line.
 - If a tree's mature height is greater than 20' it should be planted at least 20' away.

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Landscape Irrigation

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1. Pressurized control lines, wires and valves should be out of the ROW.
2. Irrigation systems should not spray over impervious surfaces according to TCEQ Chapter 344 - Landscape irrigation 344.62 (g). <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/legal/rules/rules/pdflib/344f.pdf>

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Landscape Maintenance

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1. Cities are recommended to establish who maintains parkway or landscape easement.
2. Roads should be maintained to have at least a 14' overhead clearance.
3. Sidewalks should be maintained to have at least a 7' overhead clearance.
4. Consideration should be made for visibility maintenance around signs, access points, monuments, etc.
See the Tree matrix for details on species.

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Ground Cover

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1. There should be a minimum of a 9" mowstrip (concrete or brick paver) around curbs, planting beds, monuments and landscape features
2. Vegetation should be 30" or less above the nearest gutter line.