

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: Does the Landscape Ordinance apply to all of Lexington County?**

A: No. The more rural portions of the county (Western and Southern) are not currently included in the ordinance area. Also, the Lexington County Landscape Ordinance only applies to unincorporated areas of the County. Most municipalities within the County have their own Landscape Ordinances and requirements. Please check with your local City/Town Hall or the County website for information regarding their regulations.

**Q: Where can I find the Landscape Ordinance and Landscape Maps?**

A: Both are available on the County web site. The Ordinance may be found at [www.lex-co.com/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/LandscapeOrdinance.html](http://www.lex-co.com/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/LandscapeOrdinance.html) and the maps can be found as a layer on the GIS maps, at [www.lex-co.com/GIS/Index.html](http://www.lex-co.com/GIS/Index.html).

**Q: If the trees die (newly planted or existing) that are a part of my landscape plan, do I need to replace them?**

A: Yes. You must replace all dead trees within the growing season. The Landscape Administrator may extend this replanting period based on climactic or other planting conditions.

**Partial List of Tree Species  
Suitable for Commercial Sites in Lexington County**

**Canopy Trees**

Shumard Oak	River Birch
Laurel Oak	Southern Magnolia
Live Oak	Lace Bark Elm
Willow Oak	Red Maple
Cherry Bark Oak	Baldcypress
White Oak	Pecan

**Understory Trees**

Crapemyrtle	American Hornbeam
Flowering Crabapple	Eastern Redbud
Nellie Stevens Holly	Japanese Maple
Kwanzan Cherry	Sassafras
Trident Maple	Loblolly-Bay

**For more information regarding specific varieties, growth characteristics, and/or planting specifications please contact the Landscape Administrator or any other local certified ornamental plant professional.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Lexington County Administration Building**

212 South Lake Drive, Lexington SC 29072

**3rd Floor**

Addressing (Planning/GIS) ..... (803) 785-1454

**4th Floor**

Building Inspections ..... (803) 785-8130

Floodplain Management ..... (803) 785-8121

Landscape Ordinance ..... (803) 785-8121

Subdivision Regulations (Plat Approval) ..... (803) 785-8121

Zoning ..... (803) 785-8121

**Lexington County Public Works/Engineering Building**

440 Ballpark Road, Lexington, SC 29072

Stormwater Management/Land Disturbance ..... (803) 785-8201

County Right-of-Way Encroachment ..... (803) 785-8201

**Army Corps of Engineers**

Wetlands Delineation ..... (803) 253-3444

**Additional Resources**

SC Forestry Commission ..... (803) 896-8800

SC Forestry Association ..... (803) 798-4170

Clemson Extension Service, Lexington County Office ..... (803) 359-8515

**Landscape Permit Fees**

Landscape Permit

Residential ..... \$53 per acre (or portion thereof)

Nonresidential ..... \$75 per acre (or portion)

Landscape Variance Request ..... \$267

Landscape Appeal ..... \$160

Landscape Text Amendment Request ..... \$310

Landscape Map Amendment Request ..... \$310



# LEXINGTON COUNTY



## UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE

**COUNTY OF LEXINGTON  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
212 South Lake Drive, Suite 401  
Lexington, SC 29072**

**Phone: (803) 785-8121**

**Fax: (803) 785-8188**

[www.lex-co.com/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/Index.html](http://www.lex-co.com/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/Index.html)

## LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE

### What is the Landscape Ordinance?

The Lexington County Landscape Ordinance was enacted in January 2001. The purpose of the Ordinance is to protect and enhance the character, appearance, and image of Lexington County through attractive and creative landscape design; to ensure the land-use compatibility through the use of vegetation as a transition area and screening; and to preserve scenic, canopied tree corridors.

**The Landscape Ordinance applies only to the new construction and additions to existing commercial projects and residential attached (3 units or more) in the designated portions of the unincorporated areas of Lexington County.**

## COMPONENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE

*There are 5 main components of the Landscape Ordinance:*

- Parking Lots
- Road Corridors
- Service Area/Utilities
- Building Design
- Compatibility, Buffers, and Screening

The Landscape Ordinance is most commonly utilized with Parking Lots and Road Corridors.

### Parking Lots

The Ordinance requires that there be at least one canopy tree per each eight parking spaces. No parking space can be greater than 50 feet from the trunk of a tree. A minimum of 160 square feet planting area is required per tree. Where overhead utilities are present, understory trees may be substituted at a ratio of three understory trees per required canopy tree.

### Road Corridors

Any road identified as an Arterial, Collector, or Local Road by the Lexington County Zoning Ordinance shall be considered a road corridor. The Ordinance states:

- street frontage trees shall average at least 1 tree per 40 feet of frontage, or portion thereof;
- street frontage trees required to be planted shall be setback at least 10 feet, but not greater than 20 feet, from the future road right-of-way;

All landscaping must be outside of the vision clearance triangle at any intersection with a road right-of-way. Regular maintenance of these features to ensure a clear line of sight is required.

### Service Areas/Utilities

Service areas and equipment/structures related to garbage collection, utilities, and communication must be screened from public rights-of-way and adjoining property through the use of landscaping, berming, and/or fencing or a combination thereof. If fencing or a wall is used for screening, at least 50% of the structure must be softened with vegetation.

### Building Design

Large unadorned buildings visible from and/or within 500 feet of a road right-of-way must be landscaped.

### Compatibility, Buffers, and Screening

When buffer and screening are required by the Zoning Ordinance, the plan must show the location of the buffer and screening, and the location and identification of canopy trees 8 inches DBH (diameter breast height) and larger, and understory trees 4 inches DBH and larger, that are within the buffer area.

Walls, fences, and/or berms required for screening must have vegetation in front of at least 50% or in lieu of the screening structure. Walls, fences, or berms not required by the Zoning Ordinance, but are visible from the road and less than 500 feet from the road right-of-way must have vegetation in front of at least 50% of the structure. Vegetation must be placed on the protected property line side of the required screening, leaving sufficient space for access and maintenance of the vegetation.

## LANDSCAPE PLANS

The Ordinance requires developers to submit 3 copies of the Landscape Plan prior to the start of any development or timber harvesting of the property. This applies to *non-residential (commercial) developments as well as residential attached development (3 or more dwelling units only) within the designated, unincorporated area of Lexington County*. Agriculture and forestry are exempt from the Ordinance. Dealerships with greater than 10,000 square feet of display/storage area are exempt from the parking requirement. The landscape fee is based on total developed acreage.

The landscape plan must show:

- Total acreage of property
- Area/acreage to be developed
- Location and identification of trophy trees
- Location of proposed and existing structures, driveways, and parking areas
- Proposed location of service areas (i.e. garbage collection stations, utilities, buffers and detention/retention ponds)

Trees must be marked and protected as shown on the landscape plans.

**Please Note: A landscape plan must be approved and the appropriate fee received before a building permit can be issued.**

## DEFINITIONS

**Critical Root Zone** - A protection zone measured as a one-foot radius around a tree for each inch in diameter breast height (DBH) measured 4.5 feet above the ground.

**Minimum Planting Tree Size** - Canopy trees shall be at least 12 feet tall and 2-inch caliper, understory trees shall be six feet tall, with no minimum caliper. Shrubs shall be in three-gallon containers (minimum).

**Tree** - Any hard-wooded perennial plant, whether coniferous or deciduous, of a species which normally reaches a height of 8 feet or more at maturity.

**Canopy Tree** - Any single-stem tree of a species, which normally reaches a height of 30 feet or more, and a crown spread of 20 feet or more at maturity.

**Understory Tree** - Any single or multi-stem tree of a species, which normally reaches a height of between 8 and 30 feet and a crown spread of less than 20 feet at maturity.

**Trophy Tree** - A tree of significant size, as relative to its species. Hardwoods greater than 24 inch DBH, pines greater than 30 inch DBH, and understory trees greater than 12 inch DBH.

**Arterial, Collector, or Local Roads** - Any roads bearing these road classifications as defined in the Lexington County Zoning Ordinance and shown on the Zoning Maps.

**Parking Lot** - Any parcel of land, or portion thereof, which is used for parking, loading, or associated circulation, whether paved or unpaved.

