

Edmonds Commons

Landscape Maintenance Plan

August 25, 2025

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A. LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The landscape plan for this multifamily residential development is designed to:

- Provide an enjoyable outdoor environment and aesthetic amenity for residents and passers-by. Attractive plantings with seasonal interest compliment the building with public and private outdoor areas.
- Ensure public safety for residents and the public. Sight lines are maintained along the right-of-way and in parking areas with low shrubs and open, limbed-up trees.
- Protect the health of residents and the public as well as the environment, by minimizing use of pesticides (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, and rodenticides). Plant selection emphasizes native plants and hardy ornamental cultivars to prevent pests and the use of harmful chemicals, especially where they may contact people or wash off in surface water. Pest, weed, and disease problems that arise are managed through “Integrated Pest Management” (IPM) methods described below.

B. LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

The following is a suggested schedule of landscape maintenance tasks. Vary maintenance as needed to promote vigorous, healthy growth, control weeds invasive plants, and achieve the desired landscape aesthetic. See Sections C and D for definitions and specific practices described by this landscape management plan.

January:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.

February:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.
- Apply granular fertilizer around trees or shrubs in late February. Make application prior to a moderate rainfall so the rain will wash the fertilizer in.
- Add new mulch to planters where the mulch depth has been reduced to less than 2 inches (5 cm) thick. Mulch not required where shrubs or groundcover completely hide the soil surface from view.

March:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.

April:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.
- Fertilize all landscape areas. The fertilization of shrubs/groundcover areas may be eliminated when the plants reach maturity or completely fill the planters, without space between them.
- Add new mulch to planters where the mulch depth has been reduced to less than 2 inches (5 cm) thick. Mulch not required where shrubs or groundcover completely hide the soil surface from view.
- Activate irrigation system (April 1). Flush out irrigation systems as needed. Run and check for proper operation of each valve zone. Test sensors (rain, soil, or weather sensors). Remove and clean WYE filter screens. Clean or replace plugged MP-Rotator nozzles. Replace plugged drip emitters. Replace irrigation controller program back-up batteries.

May:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.

June:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.
- Prune spring & winter-flowering shrubs as needed to maintain proper shape (natural, touching, not hedged or topiary except where specified by owner).

- Add new mulch to planters where the mulch depth has been reduced to less than 2 inches (5 cm) thick. Mulch not required where shrubs or groundcover completely hide the soil surface from view.

July:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.

August:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.
- Add new mulch to planters where the mulch depth has been reduced to less than 2 inches (5 cm) thick. Mulch not required where shrubs or groundcover completely hide the soil surface from view.

September:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.
- Fertilize all landscape areas in September or early October. The fertilization of shrubs/groundcover areas may be eliminated when the plants reach maturity or completely fill the planters, without space between them.
- Inventory all plant materials. Inventory shall include an exact count of all shrubs and trees, itemized by planting area. Replace any dead or missing plants subject to the terms of these specifications.

October:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.
- Add new mulch to planters where the mulch depth has been reduced to less than 2 inches (5 cm) thick. Mulch additions are not required where shrubs or groundcover completely hide the soil surface from view.
- Turn off and prepare irrigation system for winter. Make sure backflow preventer is well-insulated or drained prior to first freeze. Blow out pipes using compressed air in areas where freezing could result in breakage and with appropriate pressure so as not to damage more sensitive portions of the irrigation system. Drain drip irrigation lines (15 October) as recommended by manufacturer.

November:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.

December:

- Remove all weeds, litter, and other debris from planting beds.
- Prune any tree branches that interfere with public safety. Prune all trees yearly as needed to remove dead and crossing branches and to encourage spreading and upward growth that fits the available space. Do not top trees.
- Prune summer and fall-blooming shrubs as needed to maintain proper shape.

C. LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT AREAS

The following is a suggested plan for general ongoing landscape maintenance in each landscape area of the project.

C.1. Grounds maintenance – all outdoor areas

Clean-up:

- Remove biodegradable landscape debris to a yard waste recycling facility, leaves, branches, annuals, dead plant material, potting soil, etc.. Acceptable facilities include composting facilities, topsoil producing facilities or other facilities which utilize yard waste for landscape purposes. No biodegradable material should be disposed of in garbage to land fill sites.
- A weekly general clean-up program will be performed. The clean-up program shall include a policing of all maintained areas for the removal of trash (paper, cans, bottles etc.) and landscape waste such as fallen limbs.
- All trash and landscape debris shall be removed and disposed of off site.
- Mulch is to be maintained clear of building foundations and paved areas, and off utility covers.
- Debris shall not be carried into patios, entryways or doorways.
- Debris deposited by typical weather occurrences will be cleaned up.
- Sweep patios and sidewalks at least weekly.

Fall leaf removal – September through January

- Leaves may be raked or blown into shrub beds for mulch as directed by Owner's Agent, or accumulated leaves will be raked and/or blown from landscape bed areas and collected and removed from property and disposed of off site.
- Sweep leaves from patio at least weekly.

C.2. Pruning – Trees, Shrubs, and Groundcovers

Trees

- Trees shall be maintained in a healthy, vigorous growing condition, free from disease and large concentrations of pests.
- Prune trees only to remove dead, diseased, broken, dangerous, or crossing branches, and as required below.
- Prune in accordance with generally accepted standards for proper pruning. Use of a certified arborist, particularly with significant trees, is recommended.
- Discard all tree trimmings off-site using a legal method.
- Replace dead or missing trees with identical species and size per landscape plans.

- Remove tree stakes from trees after two growing seasons. Check tree ties to adjust and loosen as needed after the first growing season. Remove stakes from site and dispose of by a legal method. Recycle used stakes if possible.
- Once a year, prune all single trunk deciduous trees to encourage a high-branching structure. Remove all non-structural branches between the ground and a point half the tree's total height (for tall trees don't remove branches higher than 20' [6 m] above the ground).
- All sucker growth from trunk and base of trees shall be removed monthly or as required to maintain a clean appearance.
- The cutting blades on pruning shears, clippers, blades, saws, etc. shall be sterilized after pruning each tree to minimize the possibility of spreading disease.
When pruning trees known or suspected to be diseased, cutting blades shall be sterilized (with 10% bleach solution or other approved) after each cut.
- Limb up trees in and adjacent to pedestrian areas to a clearance height of 80 inches.

Shrubs

- Shrubs shall be kept in a healthy, vigorous condition, free from disease and large concentrations of pests.
- Shrubs shall be pruned monthly only as needed to remove branches that are dead, broken, extending beyond the face of curbs or sidewalks, or are climbing building walls.
- Shrubs shall be pruned only as required for safety, visibility, and plant health, and allowed to develop into the natural shapes expected of the plant variety. Do not shear shrubs into topiary (shapes) unless specifically instructed.
- Allow shrubs two (2) months to rejuvenate following a hard frost prior to pruning or replacing.
- Replace any dead or missing shrubs with plant material of identical species and size per the landscape plans.
- When pruning shrubs known or suspected to be diseased, the cutting blades shall be sterilized after each cut.

Groundcovers

- Groundcover shall be maintained in a healthy, vigorous growing condition.
- Replace any dead or missing groundcovers with plant material of identical species and size per the landscape plans.
- Keep groundcover trimmed to edge of sidewalks, curbs, and paved areas on a monthly basis.

C.3. Fertilizer - Trees, Shrubs, Vines and Groundcovers

- Fertilizers shall be either organically derived or slow-release synthetic products, to minimize water pollution and feed plants over a longer period of time.

- Granular slow release or organic fertilizer shall be 5-5-5 formulation or similar, applied per label rate for plant type. Water immediately after applying to move the fertilizer into the soil and wash the fertilizer off of plant surfaces.

C.4. Mulch layer - Trees, Shrubs, and Groundcovers

Maintaining a deep layer of mulch greatly reduces the labor and materials needed to control weeds, reduces water use, and helps the plants stay healthy.

- Add additional mulch regularly to maintain a layer no less than 2 inches (5 cm) deep at all times in shrub planters, tree wells, and beds where plants have not yet closed in over soil surface. Decomposition of organic mulch is considered normal wear and tear, and replacement of decomposed mulch is required seasonally. Mulch is not required in areas where plant foliage completely covers the soil surface, such that the soil is not visible through the foliage. Any mulch found outside planter areas shall be returned to the planter on a weekly basis.
- Mulch shall be uniform in color and appearance, and free of sticks or trash. Mulch may be compost, shredded fall leaves (with Owner’s permission), or chipped or shredded wood, such as arborist chips, hog fuel, or play chips. Bark is less preferable, because it does not feed the soil as readily, may seal the surface preventing water entry, and may inhibit some plants’ growth. When replacing existing mulch, use a mulch product that is similar in appearance to that already at the site.

D. INTEGRATED PEST (WEED, INSECT, AND DISEASE) MANAGEMENT

Definition: “Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, is an approach to pest control [weeds, insects, and diseases] that uses regular monitoring to determine if and when treatments are needed, and employs physical, mechanical, cultural, and biological tactics to keep pest numbers low enough to prevent intolerable damage or annoyance. Least-toxic chemical controls are used as a last resort.”

Daar, Olkowski & Olkowski: IPM Training Manual for Landscape Gardeners, 1992

D.1. Weed Control for Trees, Shrubs, Vines, and Groundcovers

- Weeds in planted areas, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, or pavement shall be removed or killed weekly as the weeds emerge. Weeds shall be removed (not just killed) if they are larger than 2 inches (5 cm) in height or diameter. Dispose of weeds offsite. Regular maintenance of the mulch layer will help minimize weeds in shrub and groundcover areas.
- Contractor is strongly encouraged to use Integrated Pest Management techniques for controlling weeds. Techniques include mulching, pulling, allowing plantings to grow densely and shade ground, heat and hot water controls. If herbicides must be used, choose the least toxic available and spot apply on weeds. Pre-emergent herbicides are not allowed – maintaining a thick mulch layer combined with mechanical weeding is as effective.

D.2. General IPM Steps and Methods

IPM Steps Include:

- 1) Prevention first: plant vigorous, pest-resistant, site-adapted varieties. Plan cultural practices to minimize pests (watering, mulching, pruning, etc.).
- 2) Identify/know the pest (weed, etc.) life cycle.
- 3) Set action thresholds – tolerate some damage.
- 4) Monitor regularly (keep records of monitoring).
- 5) When pests exceed threshold, use control method with the least non-target impact. (Try cultural, physical, or biological methods first. As a last resort, use spot applications of least toxic chemical.) Only treat when the pest is most vulnerable and its natural enemies are in their least susceptible life stage.
- 6) Keep records of control methods and results, evaluate, and adapt cultural practices.
- 7) Replace problem plants/designs with more pest, disease, and weed-resistant varieties.

Weed Control Methods – General Guidelines:

- Crowd out weeds with dense healthy plantings, ground covers and shade canopies.
- Accept a few weeds – target the problem ones.
- Mulch beds in fall, winter, or early spring.
- Control weeds before they go to seed.
- Hoe, pull, mow, or till (mulch makes hoeing easier).
- Use flame or radiant heat weeders over pavement, cracks, fence lines, and building edges, or over mulch on rainy days (use fire precautions as per equipment labeling).
- Don't over-fertilize – it promotes weeds and pests.
- Spot apply the least-toxic chemical (e.g. soap and vinegar-based weed killers, or cut-and-paint stems with systemic herbicides) to minimize non-weed impacts.
- If a pesticide must be used, post signs for at least 24 hours stating: area affected; date/time applied; specific pesticide used; re-entry cautions (from label); and phone number to call with questions. Always follow label for application and protection. Professional applicators (including users of "weed & feed," or even low risk herbicides like vinegar) must be licensed by State law, see <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/> .