

Landscaping for Florence Businesses

Florence is the City of Rhododendrons, for good reason. Our native Rhododendron is one of the showiest of native plants. Hybrid Rhododendrons are also a good plant choice. Choose the variety carefully. There are varieties that do well in shade, and those more suited to sunny or windy sites.



Rhododendron in Bloom

Landscaping plants and materials should enhance and be compatible with the ***Coastal Village Character of Florence***, with liberal use of evergreens, conifers and native species. Shorepine, wax myrtle, fir and spruce species do well and are relatively maintenance free and evergreen. Deciduous shrubs and smaller flowering trees such as azaleas, vine maple and prunus varieties (flowering plum and cherry) provide good contrast in a landscaped area.

For successful tree and plant selection, consult with your local nursery and with the suggested ***Tree and Plant List for the City of Florence***, available at City Hall.



Native Vegetation

The use of indigenous drought-tolerant plants is encouraged and is a preferred alternative to removal of vegetation and re-planting. Mature landscaping provides summer shade and wind breaks, controls erosion, and allows for water conservation due to larger plants having established root systems.



Native Vegetation

Native vegetation are those plant species native to the Florence region that are listed as native on the suggested ***Tree and Plant List for the City of Florence***, such as Shorepine, Fir, Hemlock, Spruce, Native Rhododendron, Wax Myrtle, Kinnikinnick, Huckleberry and Salal.

A ***Preservation Credit*** is available for preserving native Rhododendrons, native vegetation, mature trees, wetlands, riparian areas and steep slopes. The preservation credit can be used to reduce the percentage of landscaping required for new development as well as reduce the number of shrubs and trees required on your site.

Incentives to Preserve Native Vegetation

The City offers incentives for preserving existing native vegetation, which can translate into big savings for the developer. For specific requirements, see Florence City Code 10-34-2-4. **Credit will be granted for preserving native vegetation:**

- 2 to 1 credit per square foot of native vegetation preserved**
- and**
- 2 to 1 credit per caliper-inch of mature trees preserved**



Well-designed Landscaping

General Design Guidelines

A combination of deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, and ground covers should be used for all planted areas. Choose four or five varieties that do well in your site and use them in different combinations, rather than too many kinds of plants. The selection of plant and tree species should be based upon site conditions such as wind and sun exposure, water availability, and drainage conditions.

All yards and parking lots should be landscaped to provide, as applicable, erosion control, visual interest, buffering, privacy, open space and pathway identification, shading, and wind buffering. Landscaped areas help to control surface water drainage and can improve water quality, as compared to paved or built surfaces. The following principals should be considered when creating and implementing a landscape plan:

- Retain natural vegetation whenever possible.
- Use a combination of plants for year-long color and interest.
- Use shrubs and trees as wind breaks and for screening parking areas.
- Articulate pedestrian pathways and open space areas with landscape materials.
- Provide focal points within a development, for example, by preserving large or unique trees or groves, incorporating hedges and flowering plants.
- Use trees to provide summer shading within common open space areas and within front yards when street trees cannot be provided.
- Use landscaping to screen outdoor storage and mechanical equipment areas, and to enhance graded areas such as berms, swales, and detention/retention ponds.

Irrigation and Water Conservation

The Florence area experiences an annual rainfall of 70 inches! This sounds as if watering lawns and shrubbery is unnecessary. Not so. Most of our rainfall is during the November to March cool season. In the summer and fall, the sandy soil becomes completely dry unless daily irrigation is supplied.



Irrigation

Permanent, underground irrigation is required for all landscaping, except existing native vegetation; new native drought tolerant plants must have temporary irrigation for plant establishment.

Water-wise drip-irrigation systems and “smart timers” are strongly encouraged to conserve water use and save money on monthly water bills. The use of indigenous drought-tolerant plants from the City’s tree and plant list is also recommended for water conservation.

Automatic irrigation is important to good plant maintenance. The initial cost is offset by plant survival, good landscape appearance, and continuing maintenance labor costs. All underground irrigation systems require a back-flow prevention device that must be installed and certified by a plumber or irrigation specialist licensed by the State. Consultation with a professional on design layout and installation is recommended.



Back-flow Prevention Device

Soil

Pocket-planting with a soil-compost blend around plants and trees is recommended to ensure healthy growth and adequate bedding space for large shrubs and trees. Pocket-planting is a technique used on the coast in sandy soil areas by removing existing sand approximately twice the width and the same depth of the pot size, and replacing it with a soil-compost blend for new plantings. A good soil mix will ensure maximum plant survival and make maintenance easier. Consult a local plant supplier for best results.

Street trees

Trees provide climate control through shading during summer months and wind screening during winter. Trees and other plants can also buffer pedestrians from traffic. Trees should be selected based on climate zone, growth characteristics and site conditions, including available space, overhead clearance, soil conditions, exposure, and desired color and appearance.

Street trees in planter strips or tree wells along sidewalks provide shade for pedestrians, promote traffic calming by creating a sense of enclosure on streets, and slow storm water runoff. Even when deciduous trees lose their leaves they can serve as wind breaks and slow runoff.



- Provide a broad canopy where shade is desired, except where limited by available space.
- Use low-growing trees for spaces under low utility wires.
- Select trees that can be “limbed-up” to comply with vision clearance requirements.
- Use narrow or “columnar” trees where awnings or other building features limit growth, or where greater visibility is desired between buildings and the street.
- Use species with similar growth characteristics on the same block for design continuity.
- Avoid using trees that are susceptible to insect damage and trees that produce excessive seeds or fruit.
- Select trees that are well-adapted to the environment, including soil, wind, sun exposure, temperature tolerance, and exhaust. Drought-resistant trees should be chosen where they suit the specific soil type.
- Select trees for their seasonal color if desired.
- Use deciduous trees for summer shade and winter sun, unless unsuited to the location due to soil, wind, sun exposure, annual precipitation, or exhaust.
- The diameter of the tree trunk at maturity shall not exceed the width and size of the planter strip or tree well.

Bio-swales

Storm water facilities, such as detention/retention ponds and bio-swales must be landscaped. Landscaped bio-swales are encouraged and can count toward meeting the total area landscaping requirement if they are designed and constructed consistent with the City Code and approved by the Public Works Department. Storm water facilities must be landscaped with water-tolerant plants.



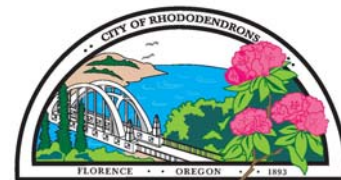
Bio-swale

Additional Resources

For more information about landscaping requirements, consult the Florence City Code Title 10, Chapter 34: Landscaping.

Also available are the following City of Florence publications:

- “Native Vegetation and Rhododendron Preservation”
- “Noxious Weed Threats to the Florence Region”
- “Tree and Plant List for the City of Florence”



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