

**CITY OF CAPE CORAL
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPE CODE GUIDELINES
SINGLE FAMILY AND DUPLEX**

****NOTE****

Please Be Advised That This Code Applies To All New Single/Family Residential Home Sites Permitted After December 1st 2009.

All measurements such as tree height, tree diameter, distance from power lines, etc. will be strictly enforced. To allow accurate measurements, keep the area next to the tree trunk clear of sod, stones, mulch, etc. All plants must be planted at time of inspection – not still in pots, lying on the ground or blown over. **DO NOT CALL FOR AN INSPECTION UNTIL THE JOB IS COMPLETED.** Inspections are done in geographic order from City Hall. Inspections must be called in to the recorder (574-0550).

5.2.2 Definitions

Unless otherwise specifically stated in this Section, or unless otherwise clearly indicated by the context, the definitions of terms contained in this Section and Article XI, Definitions, of the City of Cape Coral Land Use and Development Regulations shall apply to the terms in this Section.

In the event of any difference between a definition in Article XI, Definitions, Cape Coral Land Use and Development Regulations, and a definition contained in this Section, the definition in this Section shall control for application of this Section.

The following terms shall have the following definitions when used in this Section:

5.2.2.1 Accent Tree – See "Tree, Accent"

5.2.2.4 Caliper Tree:

The measurement of the average of the largest diameter of a tree, and that perpendicular to it, measured twelve (12) inches above the ground.

5.2.2.5 Caliper Palm:

The diameter of the palm trunk taken at the widest portion, measured between 1 foot and 3 feet from the ground.

5.2.2.6 Canopy Tree – See "Tree, Canopy"

5.2.2.8 Clear trunk Palm:

A measurement from the soil line to a point on the trunk where the trunk caliper begins to taper abruptly, as per "Grades and Standards for Nursery Plants" published by the State Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Part 2.

5.2.2.12 Florida Native:

Any plant recognized as occurring naturally in the state of Florida prior to the 1500s, as identified in *Atlas of Florida Vascular Plants* by Wunderlin, R. P., and B. F. Hansen. 2008. (<http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu/>). Institute for Systematic Botany, University of South Florida, Tampa, or other scientific documentation recognized by the City.

5.2.2.13 Florida-Friendly Landscaping Program:

A program administered by the University of Florida that includes nine basic principles designed to help property owners prevent stormwater runoff, and preserve their water quality.

5.2.2.14 Groundcover:

Any low growing plant, 24 inches in height or less, that can be used to cover areas where sod or turf is not desired or will not grow.

5.2.2.15 Hardscape:

Tangible objects and features other than plant materials, including, but not limited to, steps and ramps, fountains and pools, fences, screens, dividers and walls, overhead structures (i.e. trellis), decks, retaining walls, play equipment, benches and planters, drainage structures, lighting, pavement, curbs, and site furnishings.

5.2.2.16 Heritage Tree:

A Florida native canopy tree with a 20-inch caliper DBH or larger.

5.2.2.17 Landscaping:

Landscaping shall consist of any of the following materials or combination thereof: grass, groundcovers, shrubs, vines, hedges, trees or palms; and nonliving durable material commonly used in landscaping, but excluding paving, gravel, rock, shell and artificial flora.

5.2.2.18 Mulch:

Non-living materials placed in landscaped areas that aid in moisture retention/detention, and weed control.

5.2.2.19 Native Plant – See Florida Native

5.2.2.20 Ornamental Grass:

A self-supporting, non-woody, perennial species of the plant family, Poaceae, Juncaceae, or Cyperaceae, that is not mowed but is allowed to grow to its full potential and is used in the landscape in the same way as a shrub.

5.2.2.25 Shrub:

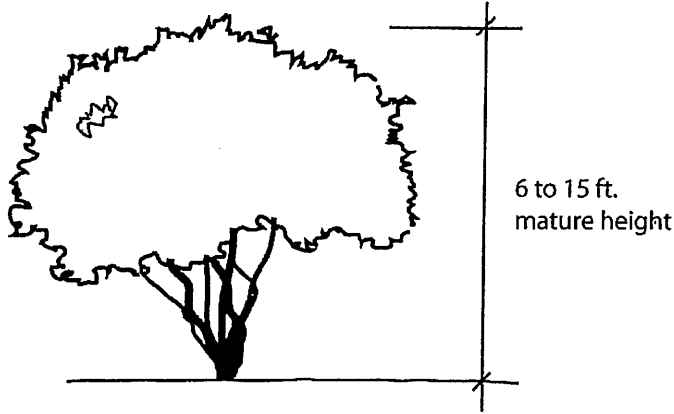
A low growing, self-supporting woody, deciduous or evergreen species of plant.

5.2.2.26 Tree:

A perennial, self-supporting, woody plant with a main trunk or multiple trunks at least 5 feet in height in a clean condition at maturity, and branches forming a distinct elevated crown (See "*Tree, Accent*", "*Tree, Canopy*", and "*Tree, Palm*").

5.2.2.27 Tree, Accent:

For the purpose of this Section, an accent tree is defined as a tree of a species with a mature height of 6 to 15 feet.



5.2.2.28 Tree, Canopy:

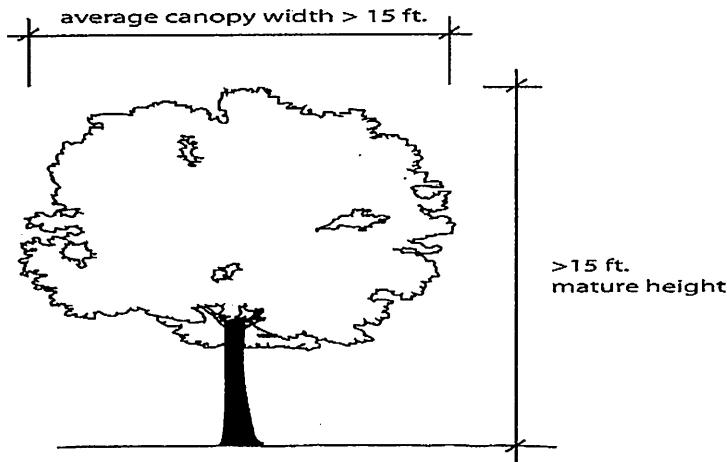
For the purpose of this Section, a canopy tree is a tree of a species with an average canopy width of 15 feet or greater and a height in excess of 15 feet at maturity and having a main trunk at least 5 feet in height in a clean condition at maturity.

5.2.2.29 Tree Height:

For accent trees with a single trunk and for canopy trees, tree height is measured from the ground to the topmost portion of the tree.

For multi-trunked accent trees, such as crepe-myrtle and wax-myrtle, tree height is measured to the top of the main body of the crown.

For palm trees, overall height is the highest point in the canopy, measured from the soil line to the last fully expanded leaf.



5.2.2.30 Tree, Palm

For the purpose of this Section, a palm tree is a self-supporting, fibrous-stemmed monocotyledon plant of the family Areaceae (Palmae).

5.2.2.31 Transmission Line

The electric lines that move high voltage electricity from a generation facility to a substation.

The following landscape requirements shall be met for all single-family and duplex units.

(A)

5.2.12. A. Trees Required

- (1) All newly constructed single-family homes and duplex buildings shall have a minimum number of trees per building site in accordance with Table 3, Trees Required for Single Family Homes and Duplexes.
- (2) Where a home site includes a septic tank between the structure and the street, trees shall be planted a minimum of 6 feet from the septic tank or its drain field.

Table 3: Trees Required for Single Family Homes and Duplexes

	<u>Canopy Trees</u>	<u>Accent Trees</u>	<u>Palm Trees</u>
<u>Option A:</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>==</u>	<u>==</u>
<u>Option B:</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>==</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Option C:</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>==</u>
<u>Option D:</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>

5.2.12. B. Credit for larger canopy trees.

The required number of canopy trees may be reduced by one tree if an existing or proposed canopy tree is at least 2 inches of increased caliper above the minimum planting size specified in Section 5.2.10. Single Family Homes and Duplexes are not eligible for the Tree Credit Program provided by Section 5.2.14.

(B)

5.2.10. B. Plant Species and Grade

A minimum of 50 percent of all required canopy trees and accent trees and a minimum of 30 percent of all required shrubs and groundcovers, excluding turf grass areas, shall be Florida native as defined by this section. Any plant material on the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council's list of Category I invasive exotics, as may be amended, shall not be counted toward the required plantings in this section. The City of Cape Coral discourages the use of any plant material on the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council's list of Category II invasive exotics, which are not expressly prohibited by Section 5.2.9. Plant materials used in conformance with the provisions of this section shall meet or exceed the Standards for Florida No. 1, as set forth in the latest edition of "Grades and Standards for Nursery Plants" published by

the State Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, including, but not limited to, minimum crown spread diameter, root-ball sizes, and container volumes.

(C)

5.2.10. C. Tree Standards

5.2.10.C. 1. Canopy Tree Size

All canopy trees required to meet minimum requirements shall have a minimum height of ten feet, shall have a minimum caliper of two (2) inches measured at a height of twelve (12) inches above the ground.

5.2.10.C. 2. Palm Tree Size

Palm trees required to meet minimum requirements shall have a minimum size of sixteen (16) feet overall, unless located within ten feet of a walkway, in which case they shall have a minimum of ten feet of clear trunk at planting.

5.2.10.C. 3. Accent Tree Size

Accent trees required to meet minimum requirements shall have a minimum height of (8) feet, have a minimum caliper of 1½ inches measured at a height of 6 inches above the ground.

(C)

5.2.12. C. Shrubs Required

Each single-family home and duplex shall be landscaped with a minimum of 20 three-gallon shrubs of which a minimum of 10 shall be planted at any location in the front yard.

5.2.10.D. Shrub Standards

Except as otherwise provided herein, shrubs shall be a minimum of eighteen (18) inches in height and be in at least a three (3)-gallon container size at time of planting. Ornamental grasses may be used in lieu of 30 percent of shrubs required. Saw palmettos (*Serenoa repens*) and coonties (*Zamia floridana*) may be used as shrubs, provided they are 12 inches in height at time of planting. Shrubs required for buffer yard plantings must be a minimum of 32 inches in height and be in at least a seven (7)-gallon container size at time of planting.

(D)

5.2.10.E. Groundcovers and Sod

5.2.10.E.1. Groundcovers shall be planted no more than 24 inches apart for 1 gallon pots or 12 inches apart for 4 inch pots.

5.2.10.E.2. Wherever used, sod shall be installed with no gaps or overlaps, so as to present a finished appearance and prohibit erosion of the planted area.

(E) (APPLYS TO P.U.E. WITHOUT POWER LINES)

5.2.11 Planting in Public Drainage and/or Utility Easements

No canopy trees, accent trees, palm trees, or shrubs required by Section 5.2 shall be planted within a public drainage and/or utility easement without approval of the City. The City may deny approval to place landscaping materials in an easement if such would conflict with existing or proposed utilities or drainage functions. If the City approves the placement of any plant material installed to meet the requirements of this section within a public drainage and/or utility easement and the landscape material is removed or damaged by construction or maintenance of drainage facilities or utilities, the property owner shall replace all such plant material within 30 days of the completion of the drainage or utility work, in accordance with the following criteria.

(F)

5.2.7A Overhead Power Lines.

Canopy tree branches or palm tree fronds within 10 feet of existing overhead transmission or distribution lines, measured radially from the line, shall be subject to trimming or removal by the power company as necessary to maintain public overhead utilities in accordance with the National Electric Safety Code (NESC). No canopy trees or palm trees shall be planted closer to an overhead transmission or distribution line than as specified by the Minimum Separation Distance Between Center of Trees and Overhead Transmission or Distribution Lines indicated in Table 1. In order to avoid conflicts with power lines and avoid the need for removal or pruning that would harm or distort their natural shape, it is recommended that no canopy trees or palm trees should be planted closer to an overhead transmission or distribution line than as specified by the Recommended Separation Distance Between Trees

and Overhead Transmission or Distribution Lines indicated in Table 1. The separation between a tree and an overhead transmission or distribution line shall be the distance from the center of the tree at ground level to the closest point on the ground that is within the vertical plane of a overhead transmission or distribution line at rest.

A species of canopy tree or palm tree that is not listed in Table 1 shall not be planted within twenty (20) feet of existing overhead transmission or distribution lines without the prior written consent of the Department of Community Development Director or the Director's designee.

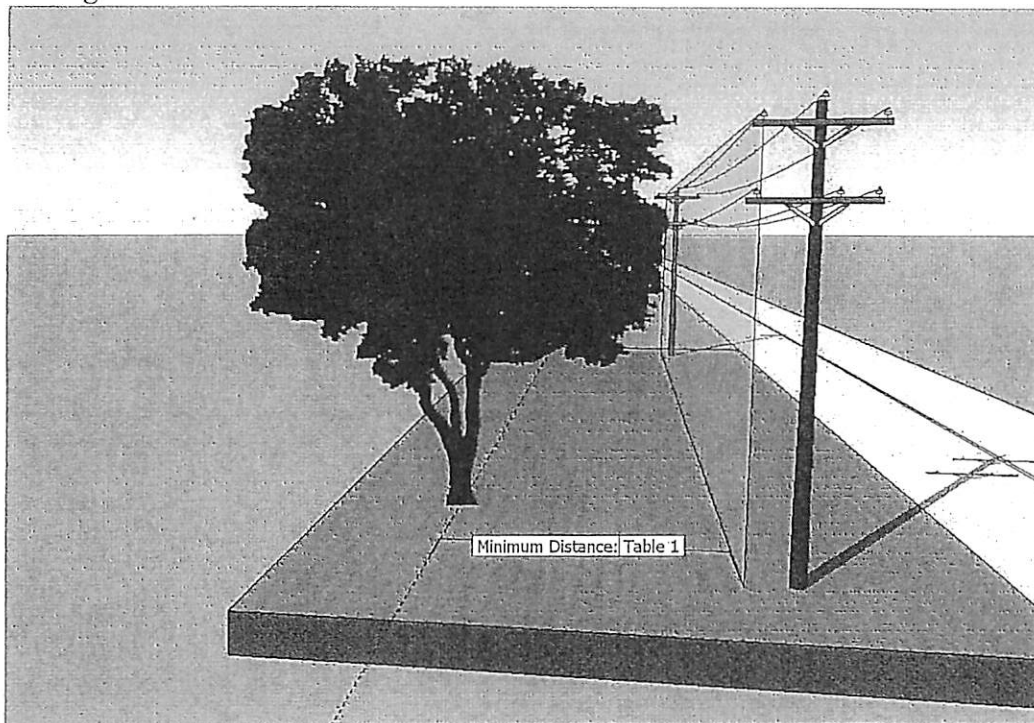


Table 1: Minimum Separation Distance Between Trees and Overhead Transmission or Distribution Lines

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Botanical Name</u>	<u>Minimum Separation Distance (in feet) Between Center of Trees and Overhead Transmission or Distribution Lines</u>	<u>Recommended Separation Distance (in feet) Between Center of Trees and Overhead Transmission or Distribution</u>

			<u>Lines</u>
<u>Palms</u>			
<u>Allexandra Palm</u>	<i>Archontophoenix alexandrae</i>	<u>10</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Areca Palm</u>	<i>Chrysalidocarpus lutescens (Dyopsis lutescens)</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Bamboo Palm</u>	<i>Chamedorea spp.</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Cabbage Palm (Sabal Palm)</u>	<i>Sabal palmetto</i>	<u>8</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Canary Island Date Palm</u>	<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>	<u>15</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Chinese Fan Palm</u>	<i>Livistonia chinensis</i>	<u>8</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Christmas Palm</u>	<i>Adonidia merrillii (Veitchii merrillii)</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Coconut Palm</u>	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	<u>10</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Date Palm</u>	<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>	<u>10</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Dwarf Palmetto</u>	<i>Sabal minor</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>European Fan Palm</u>	<i>Chamaerops humilis</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Fishtale Palm</u>	<i>Caryota mitis</i>	<u>8</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Foxtail palm</u>	<i>Wodyetia bifurcata</i>	<u>8</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Lady Palm</u>	<i>Rhapis excelsa</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum</u>

			<u>distance</u>
<u>Macarthur Palm</u>	<i>Ptychospema macarthurii</i>	8	14
<u>Majesty Palm</u>	<i>Ravenea glauca</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Needle Palm</u>	<i>Rhapidophyllum hystrix</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Paurotis Palm</u> (Everglades Palm) (may grow to 25 feet)	<i>Acoelorrhaphe wrightii</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	13
<u>Pindo Palm</u>	<i>Bulia capitata</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Pygmy Date Palm</u>	<i>Phoenix roebellini</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Queen Palm</u>	<i>Syagrus romanzoffiana</i>	2	18
<u>Royal Palm</u>	<i>Roystonea spp.</i>	10	21
<u>Saw Palmetto</u>	<i>Serenoa repens</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Senegal Island Date Palm</u> (Reclinata Palm)	<i>Phoenix reclinata</i>	8	16
<u>Silver Palm</u>	<i>Coccothrinax argentata</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Solitare</u> (Alexander Palm)	<i>Psychosperma elegans</i>	8	14
<u>Thatch Palm</u>	<i>Thrinax spp.</i>	<u>No minimum distance</u>	<u>No minimum distance</u>
<u>Washingtonia Palm</u> (Mexican Washington)	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	8	13

<u>Palm)</u>			
Canopy Trees			
<u>Bald Cypress</u>	<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	<u>15</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Black Olive</u> (also see <u>Shady Lady Black Olive</u>)	<i>Bucida buceras</i>	<u>20</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Cassia fistula</u>	<i>Cassia fistula</i>	<u>15</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Gumbo Limbo</u>	<i>Bursera simaruba</i>	<u>15</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Jacaranda</u>	<i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i>	<u>20</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Laurel Oak</u>	<i>Quercus laurifolia</i>	<u>15</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Live oak</u>	<i>Quercus virginiana</i>	<u>20</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Mahogany</u>		<u>15</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Pigeon Plum</u>	<i>Coccoloba diversifolia</i>	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Slash Pine</u>	<i>Pinus elliottii</i>	<u>15</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Southern Magnolia</u>	<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	<u>15</u>	<u>30</u>

<u>Wild Tamarind</u>	<i>Lysiloma bahamensis</i>	<u>25</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>Yellow Poinciana</u>	<i>Peltophorum pterocarpum</i>	<u>15</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Drake Elm</u>		<u>15</u>	
<u>Red Maple</u>	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	<u>15</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Satin Leaf</u>	<i>Chrysophyllum oliviforme</i>	<u>12</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Shady lady Black Olive</u>	<i>Bucida buceras</i> 'Shady Lady'	No minimum distance	<u>15</u>

<u>Tabebuia,</u> <u>pink or</u> <u>yellow</u>	<u>Tabebuia spp.</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>15</u>
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(G)

5.2.7.B. Visibility Triangles

All landscaping and buffers shall conform to the design limitations established by Article III, Section 3.7, Visibility Triangles.

(H)

5.2.9 Prohibited Vegetation

5.2.9.A. (1) The following invasive exotic plants are prohibited and shall be removed from the development site, in its entirety. Methods of removal and control that would damage native vegetation to be preserved are prohibited.

(2) The development sites shall be maintained free from invasive exotic plants in perpetuity. For purposes of this subsection, invasive exotic plants include the following:

<u>Prohibited Invasive Exotics</u>			
<u>Common name</u>	<u>Scientific name</u>	<u>Common name</u>	<u>Scientific name</u>
Earleaf acacia	Acacia auriculiformis	Old World climbing fern	Lygodium microphyllum
woman's tongue	Albizia lebeck	Melaleuca, paper tree	Melaleuca quinquenervia
Bishopwood	Bischofia javanica	Downy rose myrtle	Rhodomyrtus tomentosus
Australian pines	All Casuarina species	Chinese tallow	Sapium sebiferum
Carrotwood	Cupianopsis anacardioides	Brazilian pepper, Florida holly	Schinus terebinthifolius
Rosewood	Dalbergia sissoo	tropical soda apple	Solanum viarum
air potato	Dioscorea alata	Java plum	Syzygium cumini
murray red gum	Eucalyptus camaldulensis	Rose apple	Syzygium jambos
Cuban laurel fig	Ficus microcarpa	Cork tree	Thespesia populnea
Japanese Climbing fern	Lygodium japonicum	Wedelia	Wedelia trilobata

5.2.9.B. The Weeping Fig, *Ficus benjamina*, is prohibited due to aggressive root systems unless it is maintained as a hedge with a maximum height of eight (8) feet.

5.2.9.C. City of Cape Coral and state-prohibited vegetation shall be removed from all sites prior to issuance of Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion.

(I)

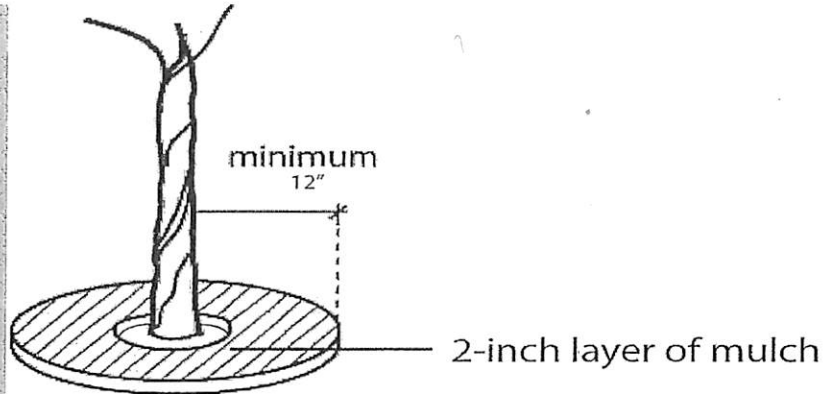
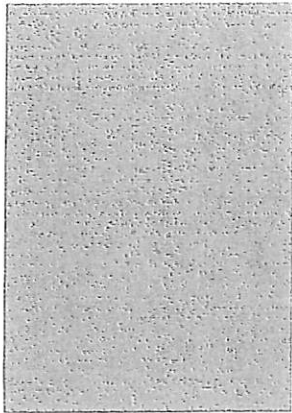
5.2.12. D. Mulch, Groundcover, and Planting Beds

5.2.2.15 Hardscape:

Tangible objects and features other than plant materials, including, but not limited to, steps and ramps, fountains and pools, fences, screens, dividers and walls, overhead structures (i.e. trellis), decks, retaining walls, play equipment, benches and planters, drainage structures, lighting, pavement, curbs, and site furnishings.

5.2.12.D.1. (1) The soil surface of the land area not covered by structures or hardscape features shall be covered with sod or planting beds containing canopy trees, accent trees, palm trees, shrubs, groundcover, or any combination thereof. When shrubs are used in planting beds, shall be planted not more than 48 inches apart (four (4) ft.) **Permeable synthetic turf may be used in lieu of sod, so long as it is not used to cover more than twenty (20) percent of the total land area not covered by structures or hardscape features and is not within a front yard or right-of-way.**

5.2.12.D.2. (2) A 2-inch minimum layer of organic mulch, measured after watering in, shall be placed and maintained around all newly installed canopy trees, accent trees, palm trees, and shrubs. A 2-inch minimum layer of organic mulch, measured after watering in, shall be placed around all newly installed groundcover plants so that bare areas of soil are not exposed; however, the mulch around groundcover plants is not required to be maintained after the groundcover becomes established. Except as otherwise provided in these regulations, each canopy tree, accent tree, and palm tree shall have organic mulch no less than thirty-six (36) inches (3) ft beyond its trunk in all directions; however, the mulch shall be kept away from the trunks and stems of plants so as to avoid conditions that may be conducive to collar rot, basal canker or other fungi. The use of cypress or cedar mulch is strongly discouraged.



5.2.12.D.3.

The use of any inorganic mulch, including, but not limited to, pebbles or shells to cover the soil surface is not recommended. Inorganic mulch should only be used to frame the outside of beds or to control erosion and should not be used to cover the root ball of newly planted trees or shrubs. **Inorganic mulch shall not exceed ten percent of the total land area not covered by hardscape features.**

5.2.12.D.4.

The right-of-way from the edge of the street pavement to the property line shall be planted with sod or other approved groundcovers, except as otherwise provided in the City of Cape Coral Code of Ordinances or Land Use and Development Regulations.

(J)

5.2.12.E.

Irrigation Systems (Not Required)

Irrigation systems are encouraged but not required; however, where they are installed, they shall meet the standards of Section 5.2.13.D.