

Southside Single Family Property Landscape Standards

Planned Neighborhoods have understood for years that property values in a community are directly impacted by the general appearance of homes and landscaping. Years of continual erosion of downtown properties from the 1940's through the 1980's leads consumers to be especially leery of investing downtown if there is any evidence of an erosion of high standards for homeowners.

The HOA Board takes responsibility for landscape maintenance of common properties and property adjacent to townhomes. The responsibility for single family properties, however, rests with individual property owners. Frequently, those properties are owned by absentee homeowners.

Therefore, the HOA must establish guidelines and standards for landscaping to ensure lax individual homeowners do not impact overall property values through inadequate attention to landscape maintenance.

In September, 2006, the Southside HOA Board of Directors established Basic Guidelines for Single Family properties. A copy is attached. The 2015 HOA Board has refined and defined the guidelines into clear standards with a standard process of enforcement.

These standards are hereby distributed to single family property owners for comments for 60 days. The Board will review these comments, modify the standards, and publish them well before January, 2016 when they take effect.

Guidelines and Standards

Lawn Guidelines

Grass will be mowed regularly during the growing season. An unmowed yard not only indicates the onset of decay; it invites crime. Lawns require mowing less frequently when weeds are minimized. "Boulevards" (the area between sidewalks and street) ARE to be maintained by the property owner of land directly across the sidewalk from the boulevard. Yards will be mowed consistently to prevent excessive height variances across the landscape. And sidewalks, streets, and alleys should be cleared of grass clippings after each mowing.

Lawn Standards

If grass in a lawn exceeds 8 inches in length in more than 10% of the lawn area, a homeowner will be in violation of Southside Landscape Standards.

Bedding Area Guidelines

Modern landscape design requires the use of bedding areas, or other contrasts to grass-covered areas. Bedding areas may be covered in any material manufactured or grown for the purpose of contrasting against grassy areas. But weeds must be controlled regularly.

Bedding Area Standards

Each bedding area on the property, covered in mulch, stone, pine needles, chipped brick, vegetative groundcover or dirt, shall be 90% free of weeds. Weeds inside each bedding area shall be less than 8 inches tall.

Bushes, trees, and other plantings Guidelines

Almost any desirable yard contains plantings of some sort beside grass. Those plantings must be maintained and trimmed in the small lots of an urban environment. Police recommend bushes be kept less than 42 inches to reduce criminal opportunity.

Wide sidewalks are a key indicator of urban success. Parking is at a premium. Therefore, vegetation must be trimmed to prevent narrowing of sidewalks and parking places.

Bushes, Trees, and Vines Standards

Bushes, trees, and vines must not impede access to 1/3rd or more of the width of a sidewalk. Nor shall they impede access to more than 2 feet of street or alleyway.

Bushes adjacent to streets, alleys, or sidewalks shall not exceed 42 inches in height.

Dead bushes must be removed within 90 days. Dead trees must be removed within 12 months.

Enforcement

Any Southside resident or homeowner may file a Standards-Violation complaint with the Southside Property Manager anonymously. Or they may file a complaint with any member of the HOA Board.

Each complaint shall go to the HOA Board in a timely manner, and the Board will decide whether to cite the property owner for a standards violation.

Each homeowner shall be entitled to receive one citation per calendar year per Violation Type with no threat of penalty. The three Violation Types are:

Lawn

Bedding Area

Bushes, Vines & Trees

Should a homeowner receive a second citation within the same calendar year for the same Violation Type, the homeowner will incur a **\$25 fine**.

Should a homeowner receive a third citation within the calendar year for the same Violation Type, the homeowner will incur a **\$75 fine**. Repeated citations shall each incur a **\$75 fine**. Unresolved violations carrying into a new calendar year shall continue to incur penalties of **\$75** for each written citation.

Homeowners MAY APPEAL any citation issued pursuant to these standards by contacting the Property Manager. The appeal may be in writing or email. Or the appeal may be verbally before the HOA Board. The homeowner can question the validity of the complaint. Or the homeowner may request additional time to bring the property up to Standard. A simple majority of a quorum of the Board shall rule on the Appeal.