

# **City of Riverdale**

**Clayton County**

**Atlanta MSA**

**2003 Population Estimate 14,880; +15.1% change from 2000 Census.**

**Not a Tree City USA.**

**No tree board specified by ordinance.**

**Section 7. Off-street parking area layout, construction and maintenance, and landscape requirements for vehicular use areas.**

**Section 8. Provision for planted buffers.**

**Section 8.10 Street trees.**

**Year first adopted or last revised unknown.**

**Addresses private property.**

**Includes buffer and landscape requirements.**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Section 7. Off-street parking area layout, construction and maintenance, and landscape requirements for vehicular use areas.

7.1 Construction and maintenance requirements for off-street parking areas.

7.2 Minimum landscaping requirements for vehicular use areas.

7.3 Submission of proposed landscape plan.

7.4 City review of landscape plan.

7.5 Certification of compliance.

Section 8. Provision for Planted Buffers

8.1 Requirements for planted buffers.

8.2 Minimum specifications.

8.3 Buffer composition.

8.4 Maintenance.

Section 8.10. Street trees.

For more information, contact:

**Brantley Day**

Community Development Director

770.996.3397 voice / 770.996.9913 fax

[bday@riverdalega.gov](mailto:bday@riverdalega.gov)

[www.riverdalega.gov](http://www.riverdalega.gov)

## **Sec. 6. Landscaped strips--Street frontage.**

- (a) Within all zoning districts, a landscaped strip shall be provided in the front yard and in the unpaved street right-of-way. Such landscaped strip shall extend the full width of the lot beginning at the street pavement and extending ten feet into the required front yard of the development, excluding sidewalks, walkways and driveways. No parking shall be allowed in the landscaped strip.
- (b) All vehicles must be parked in an approved off-street parking area or approved driveway. All vehicles must be operable and may not be parked in any area not defined herein for that purpose. Parking in grassed or other landscaped areas is expressly prohibited.
- (c) An approved driveway shall meet the code requirements for off-street parking in construction and design.
- (d) Violation of this ordinance may be enforced in the environmental division of the municipal court.

(Ord. No. 02-08, § 1, 5-13-02)

## **Sec. 7. Off-street parking area layout, construction and maintenance, and landscape requirements for vehicular use areas.**

It is the intent of this regulation to provide standards for the layout, construction and maintenance of off-street parking areas, and to provide space for the use of landscape beautification and natural plant growth for development where off-street parking and open lot sales, displays and service areas are provided. It is the further purpose of this regulation to improve and protect the appearance, environmental and ecological conditions, character, design and value of the total urban area, thereby promoting the public health, safety and welfare.

7.1 *Construction and maintenance requirements for off-street parking areas:* Wherever off-street parking is required, such parking area shall be laid out, constructed and maintained in accordance with the following regulations:

- (a) *Ingress and egress.* Adequate ingress and egress to the parking area by means of clearly limited and defined drives shall be provided for vehicles. All drives and aisles shall be surfaced in a manner equivalent to that which is hereinafter provided for the parking area.
- (b) *Off-street storage lanes and areas.* Adequate off-street storage lanes and areas shall be provided for vehicles entering the parking facility so as to avoid backup and congestion on adjacent public streets.
- (c) *Drainage.* Parking areas shall be drained so as to eliminate surface water unless the parking area or some portion thereof is approved as a retention area by the city engineer.
- (d) *Surface of the parking area.* The surface of the parking area, except for landscaped areas, shall be constructed of dustless and durable Portland cement, concrete or asphaltic concrete complying with specifications

established by the public works director and maintained in a usable condition.

- (e) *Maintenance.* Landscaped areas shall be provided and maintained around the perimeter and within the parking area as set forth below.
- (f) *Approval of plans.* Plans for the layout of the parking area must be approved by the public works director.

7.2 *Minimum landscaping requirements for vehicular use areas:* Whenever vehicular use areas are provided, including off-street parking and open lot sales, displays and service areas, but excepting such use areas serving single-family or duplex developments, they shall conform to the minimum landscaping requirements hereinafter provided. All vehicular use areas subject to these regulations shall be required to have the following maintained perimeter and interior landscaped areas:

- (a) *Perimeter landscape requirements.* All exterior perimeters of all vehicular use areas shall have a perimeter landscaped area with no horizontal dimension less than five feet. A decorative masonry wall, earth berm, natural landscaping screen and/or combinations of the above shall be installed in such a manner as to screen the vehicular use area from adjacent properties or public rights-of-way. Screening areas shall be maintained at a minimum height of three feet and a maximum height of ten feet, except that trees may be a maximum height of 40 feet.

All required perimeter landscaped areas shall have at least one tree for every 250 square feet or fraction thereof, with the following conditions:

- (1) When abutting a public street right-of-way: Landscaped areas along a public street right-of-way shall have a minimum average dimension of ten feet from the right-of-way line to the vehicular use area.

In addition, planting and landscape materials shall be so arranged and/or reduced in height adjacent to driveway entrances/exits and at corners adjacent to public street intersections so as to maintain vision clearance for motorists.

- (2) When abutting adjacent properties: Required perimeter landscaped areas which would abut adjacent, existing nonresidential landscaped areas may be allocated as additional interior or other additional perimeter landscaping.

- (b) *Interior landscape requirements.* An area or combination of areas equal to ten percent of the total vehicular use area inclusive of perimeter landscaped areas shall be devoted to interior landscaping area. Each separate interior landscaped area shall contain a minimum of 25 square feet and shall have a minimum dimension of at least five feet and shall include at least one tree having a clear trunk of at least five feet, with the remaining area adequately landscaped with shrubs, ground cover or other authorized landscaping material not to exceed three feet in height.

Interior landscaped areas shall be exclusive of and separated by paved

driveway and/or parking areas from perimeter landscaped areas.

- (c) *Permitted modification to the landscaping requirements.* In cases where the landscaped area requirements of subsections 7.2(a) and (b) may exceed 20 percent of the vehicular use area, the applicant may be allowed to reduce dimensions of landscaped areas other than those abutting a public street right-of-way or adjacent to residential uses or zones to equal a 20 percent maximum, provided a method of vegetative and/or masonry screening is maintained and is approved by the public works director.

All instances where proposed innovative designs, landscaping techniques and site amenities are determined to fulfill the intent of this article, the strict application of the requirements of this section may be modified by the board of zoning appeals.

In instances where healthy plant material exists, the requirements outlined in subsections 7.2(a) and (b) of this section may be adjusted and thereby allow credit for the preservation of existing plant materials. The public works director may make such adjustments so long as the intent of this section is preserved.

- (d) *Landscape installation requirements.* All landscaping shall be installed in accordance with accepted good planting procedures.

- (1) *New plant materials.* All new living plant materials shall satisfy the requirements of "No. 1" or better as defined in the most current edition of American Standards for Nursery Stock.

All separate landscaped areas shall have a minimum variety of two living plant materials other than trees; total landscaping areas required shall include a minimum variety of three landscape materials other than trees.

- (i) *Trees.* A tree shall attain an average crown spread over 15 feet at maturity. Trees having an average crown less than 15 feet may be substituted by grouping the same so as to create the equivalent of a 15-foot crown spread. All trees shall be of a species which can be maintained with a minimum of one inch diameter at breast height (d.b.h.) measured 4 1/2 feet above the ground and shall be a minimum of six feet in overall height immediately after planting.
- (ii) *Shrubs.* Shrubs shall be a minimum of one foot in height when measured at the time of planting, except where they are to act as screening for residential uses or districts, in which case they shall be a minimum of three feet in height at the time of planting and maintained at a minimum height of six feet at maturity.
- (iii) *Lawn grass and ground covers.* Grass may be sodded, plugged, sprigged or seeded, except that solid sod shall

be used in swales or other areas subject to erosion. In areas where plant materials other than solid sod or grass are used, a fast growing grass seed shall be sown for immediate effect and protection until coverage is otherwise achieved. Grass sod shall be clean and reasonably free of weeds and noxious pests or disease. Ground covers which present a finished appearance and reasonably complete coverage at the time of planting may be used in lieu of grass sod.

- (2) *Existing plant materials.* Existing living plant materials to be preserved shall be in accordance with the city's tree protection regulations.
- (3) *Earthwork.* Earth berms shall be of variable height and slope. Swales and ponds shall be permitted for on-site retention of stormwater, provided they are approved by the city engineer.
- (4) *Encroachment.* Landscaped areas, walls, structures and walks shall require appropriate protection from vehicular encroachment by utilizing wheel stops, curbs, posts, wood, brickwork and/or other devices. Placement of these devices shall be located at least 2 1/2 feet from walks, walls and structures and may be placed one foot from landscaped areas to prevent a vehicular overhang of no more than 1 1/2 feet of landscaping area which may be counted as part of the required depth of each parking space.
- (5) *Maintenance.* The owner or his agent shall be responsible for the maintenance of all landscaping, which shall be maintained in good condition so as to present a healthy, neat and orderly appearance and shall be kept free from refuse and debris. All landscaped areas shall be provided with a sprinkler system or readily available water supply with at least one outlet located within 50 feet of all plant material to be maintained. The owner shall replace all landscaped materials required if, for any reason, they die or are severely damaged within one year of the final approval of the installation. The owner is thereafter responsible to maintain the landscaping in a healthy manner.
- (6) *Plant bed.* planting bed for all landscaping materials shall be free of weeds, debris and noxious material and shall consist of a healthy plant growth medium. The planting bed soil shall provide adequate support, drainage, and nutrients for the plants and thus may require incorporation of sand, peat and/or topsoil into the soil. Such planting soil shall be placed throughout the planting hole for each plant, and this hole shall be at least twice as wide as the width of the plant ball and 1 1/2 as deep as the depth of the plant ball.

7.3 *Submission of proposed landscape plan:* The owner/developer shall submit a proposed landscape plan. This landscape plan shall be drawn to a scale

including dimensions and distances, and clearly delineate the existing and proposed parking spaces, or other vehicular use areas, access aisles, driveways, sprinklers or water outlet locations, and the location, size and description of all other landscape materials, the location and size of buildings if any other landscape materials, the location and size of buildings if any to be served, and shall designate by name and location the plant material to be installed or, if existing, to be used in accordance with the requirements hereof [sic].

- 7.4 *City review of landscape plan:* The public works director shall approve or reject the required landscape plan. The decision of the public works director shall be deemed final administrative action.
- 7.5 *Certification of compliance:* Upon completion of the landscape improvements, the site shall be inspected for compliance to the approved landscape plan. A certificate of compliance must be issued before a certificate of occupancy can be issued for any related structures. When occupancy of a related building is desired prior to completion of the required landscaping, a temporary certificate of occupancy may be issued if a financial guarantee in the amount equal to 100 percent of the cost for landscaping improvements is provided and acceptable in form to the city attorney.

## **Sec. 8. Provision for planted buffers.**

When land is developed in a zoning district, or rezoned after development, for a use that adversely affects the conduct of residential lifestyles in an undisturbed environment, a planted buffer shall be established and maintained by the owner of the land being developed or rezoned, so as to provide for the protection and preservation of property values in residential districts. Also, uses that by their very nature tend to create visual and/or noise problems or other incompatible situations make it necessary that provisions are made to insulate adjacent properties from adverse impacts by requiring planted buffers.

- 8.1 *Requirements for planted buffers:* The requirements for planted buffers are as follows:
- (a) Where commercial or industrial land uses are contiguous with land zoned for single-family residential use, the minimum width of the required planted buffer shall be 25 feet except for C-4 and C-T Districts, which shall have a minimum width of ten feet.
  - (b) Where commercial or industrial land uses are contiguous with land zoned for mobile home parks, duplexes or multiple-family residences, the minimum width of the required planted buffer shall be 25 feet except for C-4 and C-T Districts, which shall have a minimum width of ten feet.
  - (c) When mobile home parks, duplexes or multiple-family land uses are developed, the minimum width of the required planted buffer shall be ten feet and constructed along the side and rear property lines of each separate development.
  - (d) The required planted buffer can be incorporated into the yard setback as specified in the appropriate zoning district.

8.2 *Minimum specifications:* The following are minimum specifications for required planted buffers. Buffers shall:

- (a) Be depicted in detail (the type and location of natural and planted vegetation are to be illustrated) on each site plan or plat prior to approval, and shall be designated as a permanent easement.
- (b) Not to be disturbed by grading, property improvements or construction activities except where necessary to prevent a nuisance, or to thin such natural growth, where too dense to permit normal growth, or to remove diseased, misshapen or dangerous and decayed timbers. Any contemplated disturbance shall first be brought to the attention of the public works director and formal approval secured prior to initiating activity within required buffer areas. Any hardwood trees with a diameter of 24 inches or more measured at three-foot height shall not be removed unless approved by the governing authority.
- (c) Utilize existing vegetation in an undisturbed state where it has been determined that existing vegetation is appropriate for inclusion within the buffer strip or, when required, be supplemented with approved, additional plantings.
- (d) Retain the natural topography of the land, except when a portion must be cleared and graded as required by the local law to prevent soil erosion or sedimentation.
- (e) Be completely installed in accordance with the approved plan prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy.
- (f) Not to be used for temporary or permanent parking or loading other than for provision of drainage improvements as mandated by local law, or for a structure other than a fence.
- (g) Attain a minimum height of three feet at planting, to full buffer depth, and six feet within three years of the planting date.

8.3 *Buffer composition:* In those instances where the natural vegetation and topography are insufficient to achieve the desired level of screening as determined by the public works director, a planted buffer shall be provided and shall consist of plant material of such growth characteristics as will provide an acoustical and visual screen. The following plants are approved for use as part of the screening buffer:

TABLE INSET:

(a)	Trees	Yaupon Holly ( <i>Ilex Vomitoria</i> )
		American Holly ( <i>Ilex Opaca</i> )
		Eastern Red Cedar ( <i>Juniperus Virginiana</i> )
		Laurel Cherry ( <i>Prunus Caroliniana</i> )
		Arizona Cypress Redbay ( <i>Persea Bordonia</i> )
		Virginia Pine
(b)	Shrubs	Cleyera ( <i>Cleverta Japonica</i> )
		Euonymus ( <i>Euonymus Japonicus</i> )

		Japanese Privet ( <i>Ligustrum Japonica</i> )
		California Privet ( <i>Ligustrum</i> )
		European Privet ( <i>Ligustrum Vulgare</i> )
		Southern Waxmyrtle ( <i>Myrica Cerifera</i> )
		Northern Bayberry ( <i>Myrica Pennsylvania</i> )
		Pittosporum ( <i>Pittosporum Tobira</i> )
		Japanese Yew ( <i>Podocarpus Macrophyllus</i> )
		Red Tip ( <i>Photinia</i> )
(c)	Ground Cover	Shore Juniper ( <i>Juniperus Contorta</i> )
		Periwinkle ( <i>Vinca Minor</i> )
		Lippia ( <i>Lippia Nodiflora</i> )
		Evergreen Candytuft ( <i>Iberis Sempervirens</i> )

Other evergreen plant materials having the same growth characteristics as the aforementioned may be substituted, subject to approval by the public works director prior to installation.

- 8.4 *Maintenance:* The planted buffer installed as required by this ordinance shall be guaranteed. Necessary trimming and maintenance shall be performed to maintain the health of the plant materials, to provide an aesthetically pleasing appearance, and to assure that the buffer serves the purpose for which it was intended. This shall be a responsibility of the property owner.

If the planted buffer is not properly constructed and maintained in accordance with the intent of this ordinance, the governing authority shall have the right to require additional screening constructed of solid materials that present an attractive visual appearance. Failure to comply with the requirements to establish and maintain the required buffers and/or screening shall be a violation of this ordinance, and shall subject the owner of improvements thereon to a fine or forfeiture of any applicable certificate of occupancy, or both.

**Sec. 8.10. Street trees.**

Street trees and other shrubbery that may be retained or planted shall be retained or planted so as not to obstruct required visibility along the street.

**Sec. 8.10. Street trees.**

Street trees and other shrubbery that may be retained or planted shall be retained or planted so as not to obstruct required visibility along the street.