

Article 13: Buffers

Section 291: Purpose

The purpose of this Article is to improve the aesthetic qualities of the County and to protect and preserve the appearance, character and value of its neighborhoods and business areas by:

- A. Providing for quality and consistency in the design of landscaping and screening;
- B. Providing for the separation of incompatible types of land use; and
- C. Providing for the conservation of existing trees and the planting of new trees in conjunction with the development of land.

Section 292: Applicability

These requirements shall apply to the following:

- A. New commercial, industrial or mobile home park subdivisions next to a differing use.
- B. Development authorized by conditional use permits conditioned upon submission of an approved site plan drawn and sealed by a registered architect or engineer.
- C. Expansion and/or conversion of an existing use.

Section 293: Flexibility in Administration Required

- A. The County Commission recognizes that because of the wide variety of types of developments and the relationships between them, it is neither possible nor prudent to establish inflexible screening requirements. Therefore, the permit issuing authority may require more intensive or allow less intensive screening whenever it finds such deviations are more likely to satisfy the standard set forth in Section 292.
- B. Without limiting the generality of Subsection (1), the permit issuing authority may modify the presumptive requirements for:
 - 1. Commercial developments located adjacent to residential uses in commercial zoning districts;
 - 2. Commercial uses located adjacent to other commercial uses within the same zoning district,

Section 294: Site Plan Requirements

All site plans for landscaping and buffering shall be drawn and sealed by a registered architect or engineer and shall include the following:

- A. Property boundary, including north arrow and scale.
- B. Topographical information, detailing the final grading of the site and all drainage for the landscaped/buffered areas.
- C. All structures, parking and loading areas, islands, sidewalks, entrances and exits, drives, utilities and rights-of-way (if applicable)
- D. The location and identification of all existing trees, shrubbery and other vegetation.
- E. The locations, varieties (botanical and common name), number and mature size of all plant materials to

be planted within the landscaped/buffer areas.

F. Any sight-proof fencing, solid screening and/or earth berming to be utilized on the site.

Section 295: Buffers

A. The County Commission finds that:

1. Buffering between two lots lessens the transmission from one lot to another of noise, dust, and glare.
2. Buffering can lessen the visual pollution that may otherwise occur within an urbanized area. Even minimal screening can provide an impression of separation of spaces, and more extensive screening can shield entirely one use from the visual assault of an adjacent use.
3. Buffering can establish a greater sense of privacy from visual or physical intrusion, the degree of privacy varying with the intensity of the screening.
4. The provisions of this article are necessary to safeguard the public health, safety, and welfare.

B. General Buffering Standard: Every applicable development and approved use shall provide sufficient buffering so that:

1. Neighboring properties are shielded from any adverse external effects of that development; and
2. The development is shielded from the negative impacts of adjacent uses such as streets or railroads.

C. Types of Buffers. The following three basic types of buffers are hereby established:

1. *Opaque Screen, Type A.*

- a. A screen that is opaque from the ground to a height of at least six feet, with intermittent visual obstruction from the opaque portion to a height of at least 20 feet. An opaque screen is intended to exclude all visual contact between uses and to create a strong impression of spacial separation.
- b. The opaque screen may be composed of a wall, fence, landscaped earth berm, planted vegetation, or existing vegetation. Compliance of planted vegetative screen or natural vegetation will be judged on the basis of the average mature height and density of foliage of the subject species, or field observation of existing vegetation.
- c. The opaque portion of the screen must be opaque in all seasons of the year. At maturity, the portion of intermittent visual obstructions should not contain any completely unobstructed openings more than 10 feet wide. The portion of intermittent visual obstructions may contain deciduous plants.

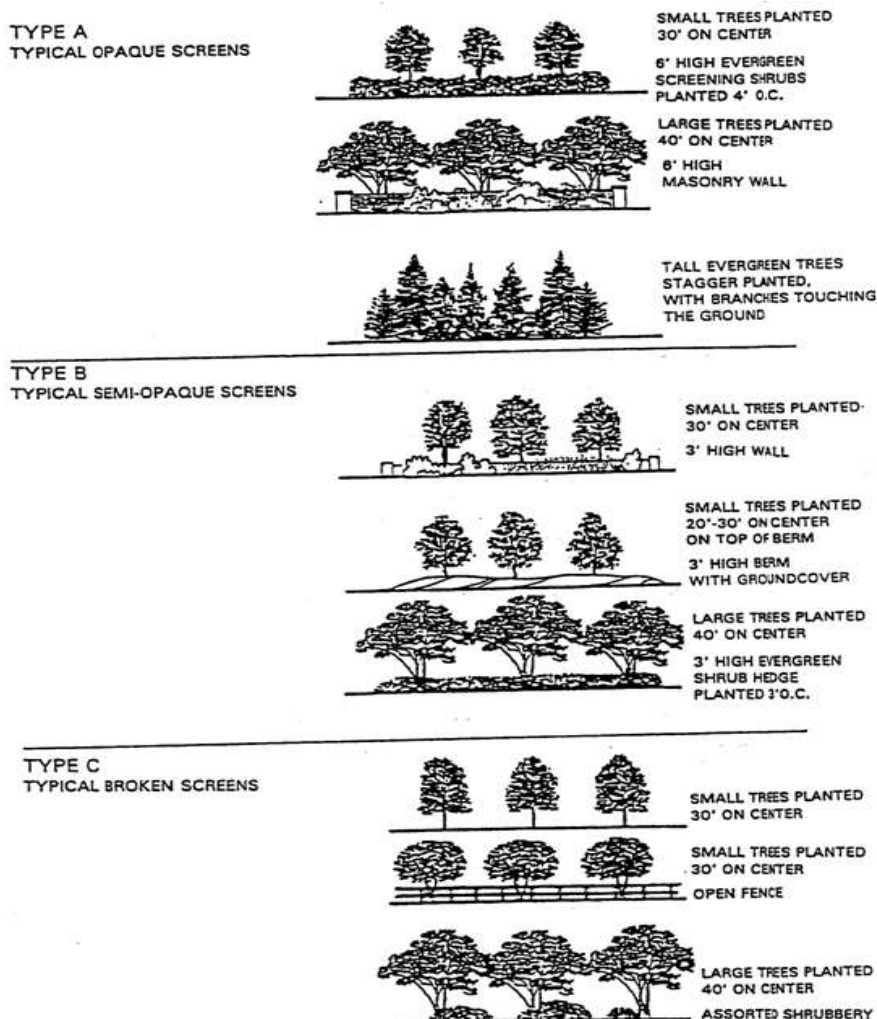
2. *Semi-Opaque Screen, Type B.*

- a. A screen that is opaque from the ground to a height of three feet, with intermittent visual obstruction from above the opaque portion to a height of at least 20 feet. The semi-opaque screen is intended to partially block visual contact between uses and to create a strong impression of the separation of spaces.

- b. The semi-opaque screen may be composed of a wall, fence, landscaped earth berm, planted vegetation, or existing vegetation. Compliance of planted vegetative screen or natural vegetation will be judged on the basis of the average mature height and density of foliage of the subject species, or field observation of existing vegetation.
- c. At maturity, the portion of intermittent visual obstructions should not contain any completely unobstructed openings more than 10 feet wide. The zone of intermittent visual obstruction may contain deciduous plants.

3. *Broken Screen, Type C.*

- a. A screen composed of intermittent visual obstructions from the ground to a height of at least 20 feet. The broken screen is intended to create the impression of a separation of spaces without necessarily eliminating visual contact between the spaces.
- b. It may be composed of a wall, fence, landscaped earth berm, planted vegetation, or existing vegetation. Compliance of planted vegetative screen or natural vegetation will be judged on the basis of the average mature height and density of foliage of the subject species, or field observation of existing vegetation. The screen may contain deciduous plants.



D. When buffers are required:

Existing Use

New Use	Existing Use												
	Multi-Family	High Density	Medium Density	Low Density	COM Indoor	COM Outdoor	Ag. Uses	School, Library Church	Hospital & Clinic	Private & Fraternal Club	M&I Outdoor	M&I Indoor	Recycling and Trash
Screen Types: A=Opaque B=Semi-Opaque C=Broken Blank=No Requirement													
Residential													
Mobile Home Park Subdivision	C	C	B	A									
Commercial (COM)													
Uses Conducted totally indoors	C	C	B	B			B	B	B	B			
Uses Conducted Substantially Outdoors	B	B	A	A	B		B	A	A	A		B	
Agricultural Uses	B	B	A	A	B			A	A	A			
Institutional and Social													
Hospitals and Clinics	B	B	C	C				B		B			
Private Clubs and Fraternal Organizations	B	B	C	C				B	B				
Manufacturing and Industrial (M&I)													
Uses conducted totally indoors	B	B	A	A	B	C	B	A	A	A	B		
Uses Conducted substantially outdoors	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	A	A	A		B	
Recycling Centers and Trash Transfer	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	B	A	

The County Commission recognizes that the table above cannot and does not cover every possible situation that may arise. Therefore, in cases not specifically

covered the permit issuing authority is authorized to determine the buffer requirements using this table as a guide.

Section 296 thru 319: Reserved