



**CITY OF AGOURA HILLS
GUIDE TO THE LANDSCAPE PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS**

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PURPOSE

The intent of this handout is to provide information on how to prepare and obtain approval of a Landscape Plan in the City of Agoura Hills.

SECTION A: REVIEW PROCESS

Type I	Landscape Plan as part of other discretionary development permit¹
<i>Approving Authority</i>	Community Development Director, Planning Commission or City Council ²
<i>Review Process</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Preliminary Landscape Plan is submitted as part of, and processed with, other discretionary development permit application(s) – see separate handouts pertaining to the other discretionary permits¹ ➤ City Landscape Consultant (CA licensed Landscape Architect) reviews Preliminary Landscape Plan, providing comments to Planning staff ➤ Preliminary Landscape Plan acceptable to the City and preliminary acceptance of such Plan by the Fuel Modification Unit of the County Fire Department⁴ is required prior to scheduling the overall project for Director, Planning Commission or City Council review ➤ A Final Landscape Plan is submitted after project approval, during the Building Permit and Grading Permit phase ➤ The Final Landscape Plan must be stamped and signed approved by the City and the Fuel Modification Unit prior to issuance of a City Building Permit or Grading Permit
<i>Examples</i>	New commercial, light industrial or housing development, including single-family home
<i>Post Approval</i>	Applicant to submit copy of completed and approved irrigation plan to LVMWD ³
Type II	Landscape Plan only (new plan or renovation of existing landscape)
<i>Approving Authority</i>	Planning Division staff
<i>Review Process</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Submit items under Final Landscape Plan application for staff review and approval ➤ City Landscape Consultant (CA licensed Landscape Architect) reviews Final Landscape Plan and provides comments to Planning Division staff ➤ Once accepted on a preliminary basis by Planning Division staff, Final Landscape Plan requires approval by the Fuel Modification Unit of the County Fire Department⁴ ➤ City will stamp and sign Final Landscape Plan as approved that has the stamped approval of the Fuel Modification Unit
<i>Examples</i>	Landscape Plan for new area to be planted, or replacement/redesign of existing landscape, in an existing development
<i>Post Approval</i>	Applicant to submit copy of completed and approved irrigation plan to LVMWD ³

¹ Site Plan Architectural Review, Conditional Use Permit, Agoura Village Development Permit

² Depends on type of discretionary permit required

³ Las Virgenes Municipal Water District

⁴ Applicant is responsible for submitting application/plans to County Fire Department, Fuel Modification Unit. Applicant shall obtain preliminary acceptance of Landscape Plan by City prior to submitting Landscape Plan for Fuel Modification Unit review/approval. Submitting the Landscape Plan to the Fuel Modification Unit prior to City accepting the Landscape Plan may result in subsequent Fuel Modification Unit review.

SECTION B: PLAN SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Preliminary Landscape Plan

A. A digital copy via web link & 1 printed set of the following plans:

- Site Plan
- Building Elevations
- Grading Plan

B. A digital copy via web link & 3 printed sets of legible, clearly drawn landscape plans, to include:

- California-licensed landscape architect shall prepare and display current license
- Property address and Assessor's Identification Number
- Plans shall not exceed 30" x 42" in size, and shall be a minimum of 24" x 36"
- North arrow and plan scale of 1"=20'
- Title block indicating names, addresses and telephone numbers of the applicant and landscape architect
- Plans shall accurately and clearly depict and specify the following existing and proposed features:
 - Trees, shrubs, ground cover, annual/perennial planting areas – proposed and existing to remain or be removed
 - Required mitigation oak trees, if applicable
 - Property lines
 - Streets, street names, rights-of way, easements, driveways, walkways, bicycle paths, and any other paved areas
 - Identify types of paved areas, with make, style, color and material
 - Buildings and structures
 - Parking areas, including lighting, striping and wheel stops
 - General topography contour lines
 - Grading areas, including tops and toes of slopes and direction of slopes
 - Utilities, including street lights and fire hydrants
 - Natural features, including watercourses, rock outcroppings, etc.
 - Recreational amenities, pools, spas, ponds, water features, furniture, trellis and other landscape structures, fences, walls and retaining walls, and other outdoor design features – identify manufacturer, make, style, color, and materials, dimensions, and provide photos of items
- Planting Plan shall indicate the botanical name and size of each plant
- Plant container sizes and spacing shall be provided, with minimums to be established by Planning Division
- Plant symbols shall depict the size of the plants at maturity
- SHADE CANOPY:

- Parking lot landscaping shall include shade trees to cover 50% of the total parking area with tree canopies within 15 years (see AHMC Section 9654.5.C. Parking Lot Landscaping) and refer to “Parking Lot Tree Canopy Coverage” exhibit.
- Provide shade canopy calculations and areas on plan sheet
- FUEL MODIFICATION: Review County Fire Department, Fuel Modification Unit’s “Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines.” (<https://www.fire.lacounty.gov/forestry-division/forestry-fuel-modification>) All projects in Agoura Hills are classified in the very high fire hazard severity zone for design purposes, and shall be designed consistent with the Fuel Modification requirements. Preliminary acceptance by the Fuel Modification Unit is required prior to scheduling the project for Director, Planning Commission or City Council review. Final Fuel Modification Unit approval is required post-entitlement as part of the plan check review process for final permits. To ensure an efficient process, provide the Preliminary Landscape Plan set to the Planning Division for review. If acceptable to the City, then forward your plans to the Fuel Modification Unit for preliminary acceptance.

2. Final Landscape Plan

A. A digital copy via web link & 1 printed set of the following:

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- Site Plan approved by City
 - Building Elevations approved by City
 - Grading Plan approved by City
 - Project Conditions of Approval by City
 - If Type II project only, completed Master Application
 - If Type II project only, completed Consultant Acknowledgement Statement

B. A digital copy via web link & 3 printed sets of legible, clearly drawn landscape plans, to include:

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- All items required in the Preliminary Landscape Plan submittal, Item 1. Above
 - California-licensed landscape architect shall prepare, stamp and sign the plans
 - Landscape plans shall prominently display the following notes:
 - All plant material shall conform to the most recent edition of ANSI Z60.1-American Standard for Nursery Stock
 - All trees shall also conform to the CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, “Standards for Purchasing Container-Grown Landscape Trees”
 - Prior to scheduling an inspection of the landscape installation with the City, the applicant’s landscape architect shall certify in writing that the installation is in conformance with the approved landscape plans
 - Irrigation Plan shall be provided separate from, but utilizing the same format as, the Planting Plan
 - Irrigation design shall provide adequate coverage and sufficient water for the continued healthy growth of all proposed plantings with a minimum of waste and over spray on adjoining areas
 - Irrigation Plan shall be concise and accurate and shall include the manufacturer, model, size, demand, radius, and location of the following, as applicable:
 - Design and static pressures
 - Point of connection
 - Backflow protection
 - Valves, piping, controllers, heads, quick couplers

- Gallon requirements for each valve
- Irrigation plans are to comply with the guidelines and/or requirements set forth by:
 - Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
 - City of Agoura Hills AHMC Section 9618.6 Water Efficiency Landscaping
 - Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
 - State of CA Recycled Water – Statutes and Regulations (i.e., “Purple Book”)
 - CA Code of Regulations Title 23, Division 2, Chapter 2.7 Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance
 - Los Angeles County Department of Public Health submittal and plan approval is required for projects using recycled/rainwater/cistern irrigation water
- Completed and approved irrigation plans to be submitted to the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
- Provide 3 printed and 1 digital via web link copies of details and specifications addressing planting, soil preparation, tree staking, guying, installation details, post installation maintenance, and other items per the Planning Division

SECTION C: LANDSCAPE DESIGN ELEMENTS

The following offers summary guidance in designing a Landscape Plan and Irrigation Plan based on standards of the Agoura Hills Municipal Code (AHMC) and City Architectural Design Standards and Guidelines, both of which are available on the City’s website.

All Landscape Plans and Irrigation Plans are required to comply with the following AHMC sections:

- Landscape Standards: 9658.3 through 9658.6
- Parking Lot Landscape: 9654.5

In addition, the following zoning districts have specific landscaping requirements: CS, CS-MU, BP-OR, BP-M, POM, FC and OA, as well as sites within Hillside and Significant Ecological Areas (9652 *et seq*) and the Ladyface Mountain Specific Plan and Agoura Village Specific Plan. These requirements may stipulate a certain minimum percent of the site to be landscaped, oak trees to be planted on-site, and/or may address the type and characteristics of landscape to be provided. Please consult these requirements prior to preparing a Landscape Plan and Irrigation Plan.

Consider the City Oak Tree Guidelines and Ordinance (AHMC Section 9657 *et seq* and Appendix A of the AHMC) when preparing the Landscape Plan.

- Site Design: Building placement and site design to respect the landscape characteristics of the existing terrain and maximize preservation of open space
- Grading:
 - Grading to be kept to a minimum, except to the extent necessary to integrate the building into the land, improve surface drainage, protect oak trees and provide adequate access
 - Grading to be sympathetic to natural surroundings, including avoiding vertical engineered slopes

- Planted berms and slopes shall be no steeper than 2:1, and 3:1 is preferred, to provide sufficient planting opportunities
- Shape and form of land contouring to simulate natural landforms and be free-flowing, meandering and curved rather than angular geometric forms
- Berms may be incorporated into the grading plans to soften the appearance of buildings from public view
- Water Quality: Landscape design to coordinate with site storm water design and Low Impact Development (LID) requirements.
- Planting:
 - Select climate appropriate plants
 - Native and other adapted plant species shall be used
 - Planting shall be used to soften the impact of development and provide erosion control
 - Landscape design shall be respectful of the natural surroundings:
 - Trees and shrubs to be concentrated in concave areas while convex portions planted with mainly ground cover
 - Trees and shrubs to be arranged in informal masses and placed selectively to reduce the scale of long, steep slopes
 - Plantings that transition to the native hillsides shall reflect landscape patterns that occur in the natural surroundings, and shall be primarily native plants
 - Arrange plants to soften the appearance of buildings, provide a variety of texture and color, and screen undesirable views
 - Native trees are to be incorporated into the landscape where possible
 - Consider the following in selecting plants:
 - Palm trees are not allowed
 - Succulents may be used only as accent plants
 - Turf grass is limited to active use areas
 - Artificial grass is not allowed on commercial sites, and is discouraged on other sites in favor of other types of plants
- Oak Trees: City-protected oak trees are Coast Live Oak, Valley Oak and scrub oak. The City values these oak trees for their aesthetic and habitat benefits, and they characterize the natural environment of the City. Design development with the goal of protecting and avoiding encroachment into oak trees. Refer to the City Oak Tree Ordinance (AHMC Section 9657 *et seq* and Appendix A)
- Fire Safety: Consider the “Fuel Modification Plan Guidelines” prepared by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Fuel Modification Unit. All projects in Agoura Hills are considered very high fire hazard severity zone areas for design purposes. Landscape plans are to be designed with consideration for fire safety (<https://www.fire.lacounty.gov/forestry-division/forestry-fuel-modification/>).
- Irrigation: Design irrigation to meet or exceed the California Municipal Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO). The intent is to minimize the need for supplemental water by using climate appropriate plants and efficient irrigation design. Note that

renovated and new landscapes typically require that the irrigation systems meet the current regulations.

SECTION D: FEES AND DEPOSITS

Refer to the Planning Fee Schedule for Landscape Plan fees and City consultant deposit. Fees and deposits are required to be paid by the applicant upon application submittal.

SECTION E: LANDSCAPE DESIGN CHECKLIST

This form is intended to serve as a guide in preparing the Landscape Plan.

Circle One		
Invasive Plants. Are any species listed on the Cal IPC list of potentially invasive plants, such as running bamboo, fountain or Mexican feather grass, or periwinkle proposed? If yes, which potentially invasive plants are proposed?	Yes	No
Right Plant, Right Place. Will proposed plans include climate appropriate and native plants? Will the plants have adequate space when mature, adequate sunlight, etc. as verified by a source such as the Sunset Western Garden Book?	Yes	No
Planting Restrictions. Are any of the following plants proposed? Palm trees are not allowed. Succulents may be used only as accent plantings. Turf grass is to be limited to active use areas. Artificial turf is not allowed on commercial sites, and discouraged for other sites in favor of other plantings.	Yes	No
Landscape Design. Does landscape complement architecture, provide a variety of planting texture and color, and screen undesirable views? Are plants arranged in informal masses and do they create transition to the natural surroundings?	Yes	No
Water Conservation. Are a majority of low water use plants proposed? Is WUCOLS (Water Use Classification of Landscape Species) designation provided for each plant?	Yes	No
Native Plants. Are native trees, including oaks, proposed? Are the majority of proposed plants native? Native plants are preferred where possible to reduce use of fertilizers, pesticides, and water, and provide food and habitat for beneficial insects and wildlife.	Yes	No
Fire Safety. Has the planting been designed in consideration of Fuel Modification Unit requirements?	Yes	No
Specific Requirements. Are any of the following applicable to the project?		
Oak tree planting requirement?	Yes	No
50% parking lot shade requirement?	Yes	No
Oak tree mitigation (refer to Oak Tree Ordinance and Appendix)?	Yes	No
Hillside or Significant Ecological Area?	Yes	No