



## PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES

### RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPING, FENCES, POOLS, SPAS & HOTTUBS

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

This brochure is intended to serve as a starting point for residential landscaping, including decks and sprinkler systems, fencing, pools, spas, and hot tubs at Single Family Residences in the Residential Zones. For specific development standards (i.e. setbacks, lot coverage, building height, etc.) for your zone and for detailed information on a particular code requirement, refer directly to the City Development Code, River District SAP-08-0001, or the Hawkstone SAP-06-0001, as applicable, or contact the City of Liberty Lake Planning & Building Services for more information. For information on what zone you are in, please contact or stop by Planning & Building Services. These guidelines do not cover zones with PUD overlays, so check your homeowners association CCR's for further requirements on landscaping, sprinklers, fencing, etc. Additionally, some uses have specific landscaping requirements that are not covered in this brochure. Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed Use projects have different requirements and these requirements can also be found in the City Development Code, River District SAP-08-0001, or the Hawkstone SAP-06-0001, as applicable,

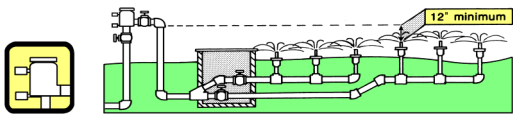
This handout serves as a brief overview on Residential Landscaping, Fencing, Pools, Spas, and Hot tubs for more information on specific requirements, please refer to the City of Liberty Lake Development & Building Codes.

#### SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Sprinkler Systems require a plumbing permit and inspections. Additionally, all irrigation systems (new or existing), must be equipped with an approved backflow prevention assembly. Only properly installed, state approved backflow prevention assemblies that meet the plumbing code will provide health protection for your family and neighbors. Please consult the City for a free list of certified testers. All piping and materials upstream of (before) the backflow prevention assembly must be of a type which is approved by the Uniform Plumbing Code. The plumbing permit must be obtained prior to installing the sprinkler system from the City. If your home is less than 6 months old, the builder may have already obtained a permit for a sprinkler system, please consult Planning & Building Services. In order to obtain the permit, you need to fill out an application & submit a diagram of how and where the system is going to connect to the water source. After installation, a backflow prevention device test must be conducted by a certified tester. After the test has been completed, contact the City to set up a system inspection. A copy of the backflow prevention test results, must be provided to the City inspector at this time. See Page 2 for a list of permitted backflow prevention devices.

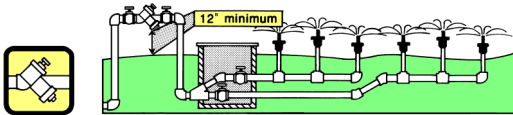
### **3 Types of Backflow Prevention Assemblies:**

**Pressure Vacuum Breaker (PVB)** - Sophisticated, Versatile, Requires annual test by a certified tester



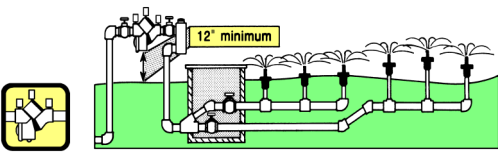
- Only one PVB required to serve the whole system; control valves can be located downstream of (after) the PVB. (Max. size = 2").
- PVB's must be installed a minimum of 1 foot (12") above the highest point of water they serve.
- PVB's must be tested by a Certified Backflow Assembly Tester, at the time of installation, annually, when moved, or repaired.
- No chemical or fertilizer may be introduced into an irrigation system equipped with PVB's.
- No pumps or back pressure on downstream side of (after) a PVB.

**Double Check Valve Assembly (DCVA)** - Highly Versatile, Requires annual testing by a certified tester, Low or non-health hazard systems only



- Only one DCVA required to serve the whole system; control valves can be located downstream of the DCVA.
- DCVA should be installed a minimum of one foot (12") above ground level.
- Some water suppliers may allow the DCVA to be installed below ground, check for proper clearance on all sides of the assembly.
- DCVA must be tested by a Certified Backflow Assembly Tester when installed ...annually ...when moved or repaired.
- No chemical or fertilizer may be introduced into an irrigation system equipped with DCVA's.

**Reduced Pressure Backflow Assembly (RPBA)** - Usually most expensive, Most complex, Allows for application of fertilizer or other chemicals into irrigation system (No other type has this approval), Requires annual testing by a certified tester



- Only one RPBA required to serve the whole system; control valves can be located downstream of the RPBA.
- RPBA's must be installed a minimum of one foot (12") above ground level.
- RPBA's must be tested by a Certified Backflow Assembly Tester...when installed ...annually ...when moved or repaired.
- In an RPBA equipped system, fertilizer and other agricultural chemicals may be introduced downstream of (after) the RPBA.

**Freeze Protection.** All backflow prevention assemblies need to be protected from freezing. Here are three methods used to protect backflow preventers:

- Shut off water supply to backflow preventer. Open both inlet and outlet valves. Open all test cocks. (This method only works on those systems that are not being used in winter months.)
- Leave your water running continuously. Wrap your backflow preventer with insulation. Usually wrapping alone does not protect the assembly unless some type of heat is provided. (Heat tape, light bulb, etc.)

## MINIMUM YARD SETBACKS

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Setbacks are the distance between a building (or other feature of development) and a property line, right-of-way, auto-court lane, or street, as applicable; however no structures shall be located within easements. Setbacks for decks and porches are measured from the edge of the deck or porch to the property line.

Please refer to the City Development Code, River District SAP-08-0001, or the Hawkstone SAP-06-0001, as applicable, or contact the City of Liberty Lake Planning & Building Services for more information on setback requirements.

*Note: see City Brochure on Accessory Structures, if applicable and consult the City about multi-family housing and other buildings that require Site Design Review*

### DECKS & PATIOS

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- **Decks:** A building permit is required for decks that have a surface height of 30" or more from ground level, or if the deck is being supported by one or more walls of the house. Additionally, decks with a surface height of 30" or more require a 36" tall railing. Deck stairs require at least a 36" x 36" landing. A building permit application and deck details will need to be submitted to apply for a permit. Consulting with an engineer or design professional is recommended if you are planning to place a spa or hot tub on any deck. Decks and their stairs shall not encroach into the required yard setbacks.
- **Patios:** A building permit is not required for patio installations and yard setbacks are not applicable.
- **Overhead Structures / Pergolas:** A building permit is not required for pergolas or other similar overhead structures unless the structure will be attached to the house, has a solid roof or cover, or is 120 sq. ft. or larger in size.
- A building permit application and structure details will need to be submitted to apply for a permit.

### FENCES & WALLS

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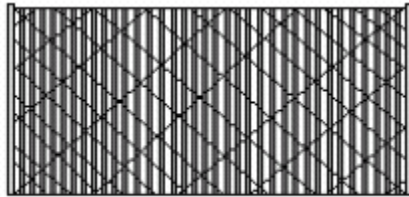
- The maximum allowable height of residential side and rear fences and walls is 6 feet, as measured from the lowest grade at the base of the wall or fence.
- A building permit is required for fences and walls exceeding 6 feet in height, in conformance with the Building Code, as well as retaining walls exceeding 4 feet in height.
- The height of fences and walls within a front yard shall not exceed 4 feet (except decorative arbors, gates, etc.), as measured from the grade closest to the street right-of-way. Sight-obscuring fences shall not exceed 3 feet in height (see the top of Page 4 for sight-obscuring fence examples).
- Fences and walls on corner lots shall comply with the vision clearance standards / Clear View Triangles shown on Page 4.

*Continued on Page 4*

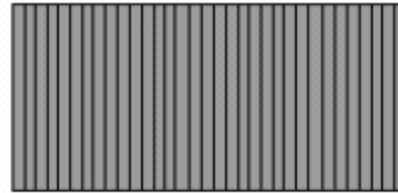
- Fences may be constructed on the property line provided they meet the above-mentioned requirements and the underlying zone does not prohibit them.
- Chain link fences and barb wire or razor wire are prohibited in Residential Zones.
- Walls and fences required as a condition of development approval shall be maintained in good condition, or otherwise replaced by the owner.

**Fencing, partially sight-obscuring** - A fence which provides partial visual separation.

**Fencing, fully sight-obscuring** - A fence which provides complete visual separation.



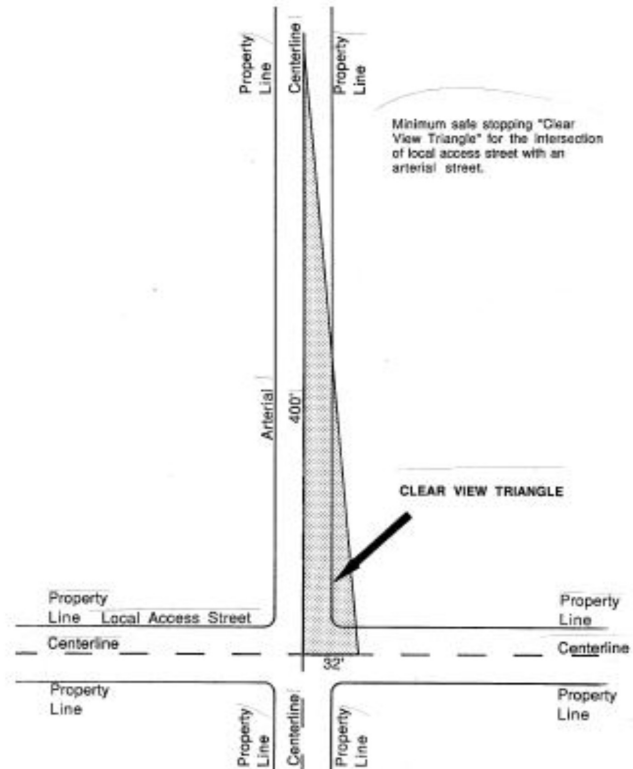
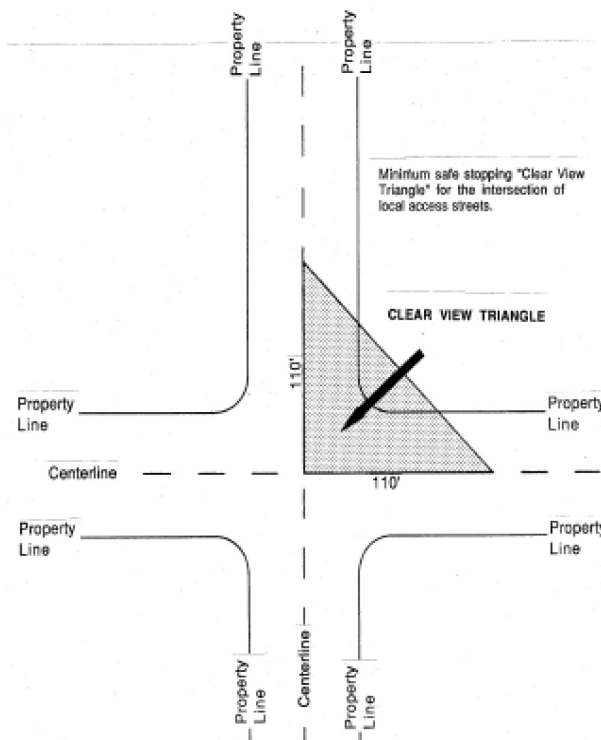
Partially Sight Obscuring Fence



Fully Sight Obscuring Fence

## CLEAR VIEW TRIANGLE

No signs or structures, or vegetation in excess of three feet in height shall be placed in "vision clearance areas" or "clear view triangle", as described and shown below. The minimum vision clearance area may be increased by the Community Development Director upon finding that more sight distance is required (i.e., due to traffic speeds, roadway alignment, etc.). Vision clearance standards shall be based on the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards. The following examples are based on a typical single family home situation.



## POOLS, SPAS, & HOT TUBS

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- All swimming pools, spas, and hot tubs with a depth of 24” or more require a building permit from the City. In order to obtain the permit, you need to complete pool, plumbing, and mechanical permit applications (as applicable) & submit engineered drawings of the proposed pool. Underground pools can be constructed within the required setback areas, however they cannot be constructed within easement areas. A site plan showing the proposed pool location and proposed access point for the installation must also be supplied.
- Above-ground pools, spas, and hot tubs over 24” in depth also require a permit from the City. In order to obtain the permit, you need to complete pool, plumbing, and mechanical permit applications (as applicable) & submit plans w/ manufacturer specification of the proposed pool (engineering may be required).
- Pool enclosures or overhead structures shall not encroach into the required yard setbacks.
- All pools, spas, and hot tubs are required to be enclosed by a fence or wall no less than 4’ in height with a gate having a latch openable only from the pool side of the fence. Using covers to enclose or cover the pool shall not be used in lieu of the fencing requirements, except fencing is not required for above-ground spas and hot tubs if the unit is equipped with a listed safety cover that locks. Additional locks or alarms may be required based on fencing location, consult the City for info.
- If the spa or hot tub will be heated by gas, a mechanical permit will be required.
- Electrical Permits are required for pool, spa, and hot tub installations and they can be obtained from the Dept. of Labor & Industries (see City Brochure - Information Directory).

## STREET TREES

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Street trees are required in most residential developments. Requirements for street tree planting strips are provided in the Development Code and the River District SAP-08-0001. Street tree installation shall be based on a landscape plan approved by the City as part of the development approval.

- **Growth Characteristics.** Trees shall be selected based on growth characteristics and site conditions, including available space, overhead clearance, soil conditions, exposure, and desired color and appearance. The following should guide tree selection:
  - Provide a broad canopy where shade is desired.
  - Use low-growing trees for spaces under utility wires.
  - Select trees which can be “limbed-up” where vision clearance is a concern.
  - Use narrow or “columnar” trees where awnings or other building features limit growth, or where greater visibility is desired between buildings and the street..
  - Use species with similar growth characteristics on the same block for design continuity.
  - Avoid using trees that are susceptible to insect damage, and avoid using trees that produce excessive seeds or fruit.
  - Select trees that are well-adapted to the environment, including soil, wind, sun exposure, and exhaust. Drought-resistant trees should be used in areas with sandy or rocky soil.
  - Select trees for their seasonal color, as desired.
  - Use deciduous trees for summer shade and winter sun.
  - Select trees that do not have invasive roots.

*Note: see City Brochure on Street Trees and Sidewalk Maintenance for more information on City approved street trees, planting, pruning, and other maintenance.*

## LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

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The use of mature, native vegetation within developments is a preferred alternative to removal of vegetation and re-planting. Mature landscaping provides summer shade and wind breaks, and allows for water conservation due to larger plants having established root systems.

**Significant Trees and Shrubs** - All trees within the public right of way with a trunk diameter of 12 inches or greater, as measured 4 feet above the ground (DBH), and all plants within the drip line of such trees and shrubs, as well as critical area vegetation shall be protected in accordance with the City Development Code / SAP-08-0001. Additionally, individual trees and shrubs with a trunk diameter of 12 inches or greater should be protected, if practical. Other trees may be deemed significant, when nominated by the property owner or City staff and designated by the City Council as "Heritage Trees" (i.e., by virtue of site, rarity, historical significance, etc.)

**Protection of Significant Vegetation** - Significant vegetation shall be retained whenever practical, as determined by the City. Preservation may become impractical when it would prevent reasonable development of public streets, utilities, or land uses permitted by the applicable zoning district and relocation of the vegetation or replacement with equivalent vegetation with the closest DBH for trees or commercially available nursery size available in the Spokane/ Coeur d'Alene metro region shall be required within the development or if not possible, then relocated or replaced within another area in the City.

**Construction**. All areas of significant vegetation shall be protected prior to, during, and after construction. Grading and operation of vehicles and heavy equipment is prohibited within significant vegetation areas, except as approved by the City for installation of utilities or streets. Such approval shall only be granted after finding that there is no other reasonable alternative to avoid the protected area, and any required mitigation is provided in conformance with City Code.

### **Exemptions.**

- **Dead, Diseased, and/or Hazardous Vegetation** - Vegetation that is dead or diseased, or poses a hazard to personal safety, property, or the health of other trees, may be removed. Prior to tree removal, the applicant shall provide a report from a certified arborist or other qualified professional to determine whether the subject tree is diseased or poses a hazard, and any possible treatment to avoid removal, except for emergencies as listed below.
- **Emergencies** - Significant vegetation may be removed in the event of an emergency when the vegetation poses an immediate threat to life or safety, as determined by the Community Development Director.

*Note: see City Brochure on Street Trees and Sidewalk Maintenance for more information on street tree preservation requirements.*

Please note that while every effort is made to assure the accuracy of the information contained in this brochure it is not warranted for accuracy. This document is not intended to address all aspects or regulatory requirements for a project and should serve as a starting point for your investigation.

For detailed information on a particular project, permit, or code requirement refer directly to applicable file and/or code/regulatory documents or contact the City of Liberty Lake Planning & Building Services.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

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