ORDINANCE NO. 189065

An ordinance amending Sections 12.03, 12.10.5, 12.11.5, 12.13, 12.21, 12.21.1, 12.22, 12.40, 12.41, 12.42, and 12.43 of Article 2, Sections 13.09 and 13.18 of Article 3; Section 62.177 of Article 2 of Chapter VI; and Section 91.7012 of Article 1 of Chapter IX of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, to update the existing Landscape Ordinance, to establish Landscape and Site Design Standards with a corresponding Point System, and to define and streamline provisions related to Outdoor Amenity Areas.

WHEREAS, the addition of Landscape and Site Design Development Standards will support development patterns that promote physical activity and healthy communities, address climate change, improve air quality through the inclusion of drought-tolerant, shade-producing, and locally native plant species, and provide a comfortable and safe walking environment in the public realm; and

WHEREAS, the addition of an Outdoor Amenity Area definition and standards will help create functional outdoor spaces that support user needs, integrate nature into the built environment, provide shade, and promote social interaction.

NOW, THEREFORE,

THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The title of Section 12.40 is amended in the table of contents of Article 2 ("Specific Planning- Zoning - Comprehensive Zoning Plan") of Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) to read as follows:

12.40 Landscape and Sign Design Ordinance.

Sec. 2. The definition of Floor Area is amended in Section 12.03 of Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to read as follows:

FLOOR AREA. The area in square feet confined within the exterior walls of a Building, but not including the area of the following: exterior walls, stairways, shafts, rooms housing building-operating equipment or machinery, parking areas with associated driveways and ramps, space dedicated to bicycle parking, space for the landing and storage of a helicopter, Outdoor Dining Areas, Outdoor Amenity Areas, and Basement storage areas. A building on a property zoned RA, RE, RS, or R1, except for a property in the Coastal Zone that is not designated as Hillside Area, is subject to the floor area calculations set forth in the definition for "Floor Area, Residential."

Sec. 3. The following definitions are added to Section 12.03 of Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code in alphabetical order to read as follows:

OUTDOOR AMENITY AREA. An outdoor space that may be covered or enclosed, in part, intended for the purpose of providing outdoor space used for recreation, that may be private or public, active or passive, and may be shaded and protected from the natural elements. Such areas may include outdoor spaces covered with overhead structures, such as awnings, balconies, outdoor passages, stairs and walkways, or other similar areas. An Outdoor Amenity Area may be located at-grade or at any level of the building, provided that the Outdoor Amenity Area standards are met, pursuant to Section 12.21 A.25. of this Code.

An Outdoor Amenity Area may be permitted in all zones, except the RA, RE, RS, R1, RU, RZ, RW1, R2, RD, RMP, RW2, and A zones. Portions of an Outdoor Amenity Area that satisfy the development standards in LAMC Section 12.21.A.25. shall be excluded from the calculation of floor area and height. Outdoor Dining Areas are not Outdoor Amenity Areas and shall be regulated pursuant to Sections 12.03 and 12.21 A.24. of this Code. An Outdoor Amenity Area shall exclude areas used for storage, vehicle parking or circulation, utility or mechanical areas, trash enclosures, and any similar ancillary use on the lot. A structure proposed as an Outdoor Amenity Area may require a building permit and is subject to all applicable provisions in this Code.

NATIVE PLANT. Any native plant species listed by the California Native Plant Society (Calscape).

TREE. Any woody plant (exhibiting secondary growth), including those identified as Native and/or Protected Trees, with a primary/leading trunk and supporting branches and leaves. A Tree shall not include a palm or succulent species. Tree sizes are differentiated by their canopy at maturity as follows:

TREE SIZE	CANOPY (DIAMETER AT MATURITY)
Small	15 feet
Medium	30 feet
Large	50 feet

TREE, PROTECTED. See Section 46.01 of this Code for the definition of "Protected Tree or Shrub."

TREE, SIGNIFICANT. Any tree with a trunk that measures 12 inches or more in diameter at 4 1/2 feet above the average natural grade at the base of the tree or is more than 35 feet in height.

TREE, STREET. Any tree located within the public right-of-way, including, but not limited to being located within, any sidewalk, median, alley, refuge island, or embankment on City-owned land.

Sec. 4. Subdivision 2 of Subsection B of Section 12.10.5 of Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

2. All use activities are conducted wholly within an enclosed building, except that restaurants may have Outdoor Dining Areas, and Outdoor Amenity Areas shall be permitted.

Sec. 5. Subdivision 2 of Subsection B of Section 12.11.5 of Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

2. All use activities are conducted wholly within an enclosed building, except that restaurants may have Outdoor Dining Areas, and Outdoor Amenity Areas shall be permitted.

Sec. 6. Subparagraph (2) of Paragraph (b) of Subdivision 2 of Subsection A of Section 12.13 of Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(2) All use activities are conducted wholly within an enclosed building, except that restaurants may have Outdoor Dining Areas, and Outdoor Amenity Areas shall be permitted.

Sec. 7. Subdivision 25 is added to Subsection A of Section 12.21, Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to read as follows:

25. Outdoor Amenity Area Applicability and Standards.

(a) **Purpose.** To allow for publicly accessible or private Outdoor Amenity Areas, intended for active or passive recreation, which may be shaded and protected from the natural elements.

(b) **Eligibility.** To qualify as an Outdoor Amenity Area as defined in Section 12.03 of this Code, an area must meet the following applicable criteria:

(1) **Covering of Outdoor Amenity Area.** An Outdoor Amenity Area may be covered with a solid, impermeable covering, subject to the Outdoor Amenity Area Design Standards, set forth in Section 12.21 A.25(c) of this Code. An Outdoor Amenity Area that is covered may be attached to a building or entirely detached.

An Outdoor Amenity Area with permeable coverings, such as lattice roofs, slatted roof pergolas, perforated panels, and shade sails, are not considered to be covered if the overhead roof material or gaps are at least 50 percent open to the sky.

(2) **Enclosure of Outdoor Amenity Area.** If an Outdoor Amenity Area is covered, consistent with the requirements set forth above in Section 12.21 A.25.(b)(1) of this Code, then the area may be enclosed by less than two-thirds of the surface area of the projected perimeter walls, as depicted in **Figure 1** below. Perforated or slatted materials shall be considered solid perimeter walls for purposes of calculating the Outdoor Amenity Area's enclosure. Examples of enclosure elements may include vertical walls, retractable wall systems, sliding doors, or temporary or permanent fences.

Figure 1: This diagram illustrates an Outdoor Amenity Area that is covered whose solid area is less than two-thirds of the perimeter walls (perspective view).

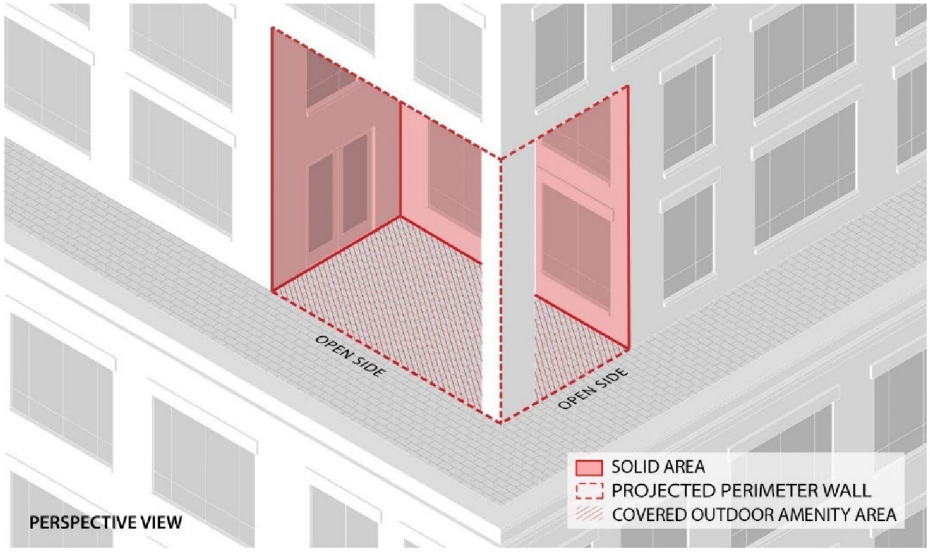
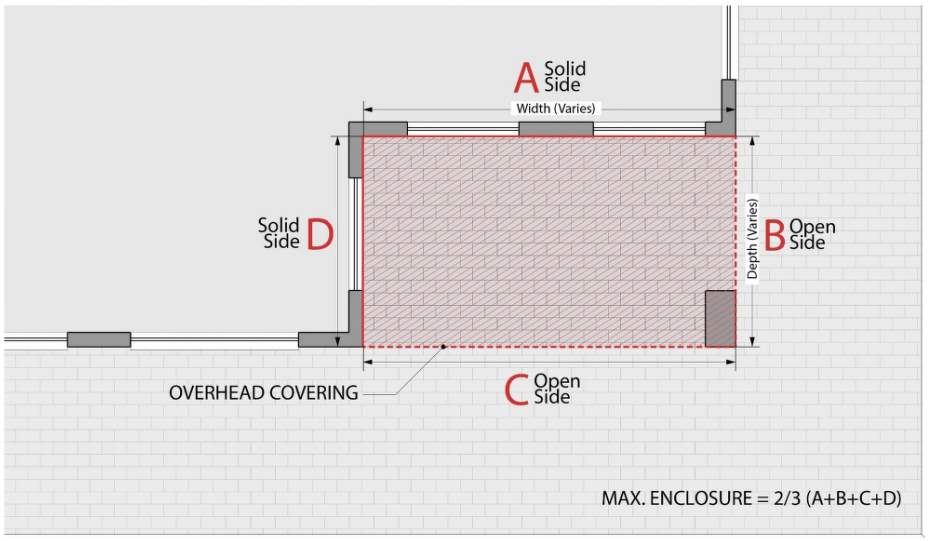


Figure 2: The diagram illustrates the same condition in plan view.



PLAN VIEW

(i) **Exemptions from Enclosure.** The following components shall be exempt from the enclosure calculation: Any required guard rails of 42 inches in height or less, measured from finished floor elevation, do not count toward a solid wall area, and any structural components, including, but not limited to, beams and columns used for structural support, as determined by the Department of Building and Safety.

(3) **Allowable Uses.** An Outdoor Amenity Area shall be used for the purpose of providing outdoor space for active or passive recreation. Should the Outdoor Amenity Area be converted to another use or otherwise physically altered to no longer comply with the Outdoor Amenity Area Design Standards set forth in Section 12.21 A.25. of this Code, the converted area must conform to the current regulations of the zone and other applicable land use regulations at the time of conversion. Such conversion may require additional discretionary entitlements under the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

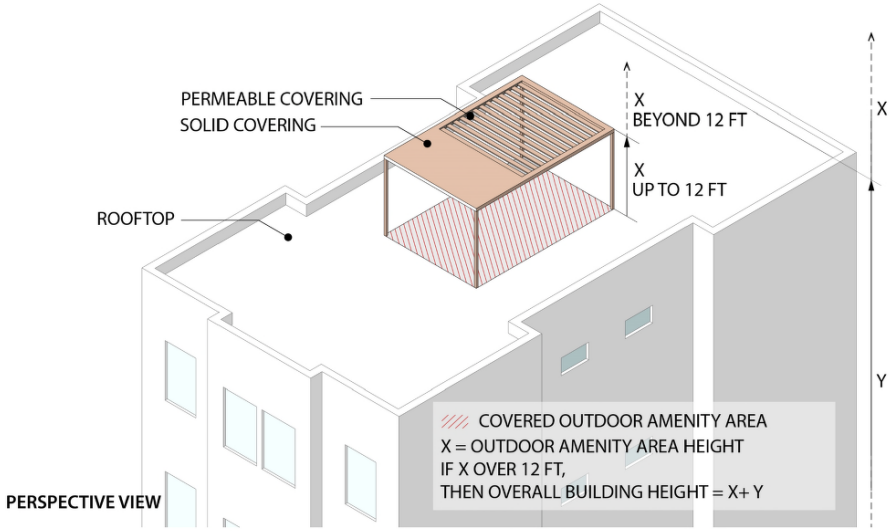
Where an Outdoor Amenity Area is proposed within 100 feet of a residential use, no amplified sound shall be permitted after 10:00 p.m. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the noise levels of the Outdoor Dining Area shall not exceed the standards set forth in the Noise Ordinance (Ordinance No. 156,363).

(4) **Relationship to Floor Area.** A new or existing Outdoor Amenity Area that satisfies the Outdoor Amenity Area

Design Standards, set forth in Section 12.21 A.25.(c) of this Code, shall not be considered as floor area, as long as the Outdoor Amenity Area meets all other applicable requirements of this Code.

(5) **Relationship to Building Height.** A Rooftop Outdoor Amenity Area structure shall not be counted towards the total building height, provided the Outdoor Amenity Area structure does not exceed 12 feet in height from the building rooftop finished floor elevation to the top of the Outdoor Amenity Area structure. If the structure extends more than 12 feet in height above the roof of the main structure, the entire Outdoor Amenity Area will count towards the overall building height and floor area.

Figure 3: This diagram illustrates the relationship between a rooftop covered Outdoor Amenity Area and the building's overall height.



(6) **Relationship to Required Yard**. A covered Outdoor Amenity Area within a required front or rear yard may be attached to the primary building or structure or completely detached. Attached or detached Outdoor Amenity Areas may take up to a cumulative maximum area of 25 percent of the required front or rear yard area in which they are located. An Outdoor Amenity Area, however, shall not be permitted within the required side yard area.

A covered Outdoor Amenity Area shall not be considered an accessory building. Where provisions herein conflict with regulations related to placement on a lot in Sections 12.21 C.1. through 12.21 C.3., or in Section 12.22 C.20. of this Code, this

provision shall prevail. The placement of an Outdoor Amenity Area shall not obstruct a minimum 36-inch-wide direct pedestrian path of travel to, from, or through, a passageway required for fire access.

Figure 4: This diagram illustrates the relationship of an attached covered Outdoor Amenity Area to a Required Yard.

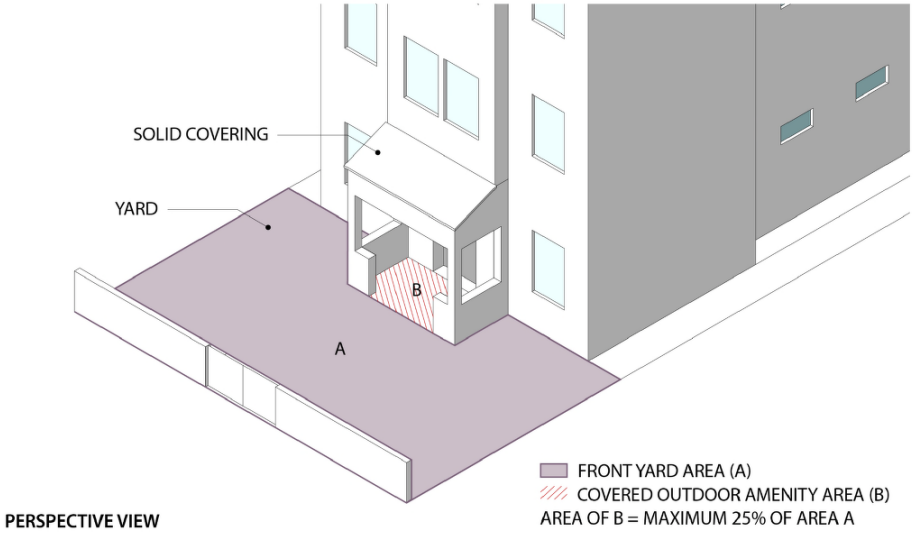
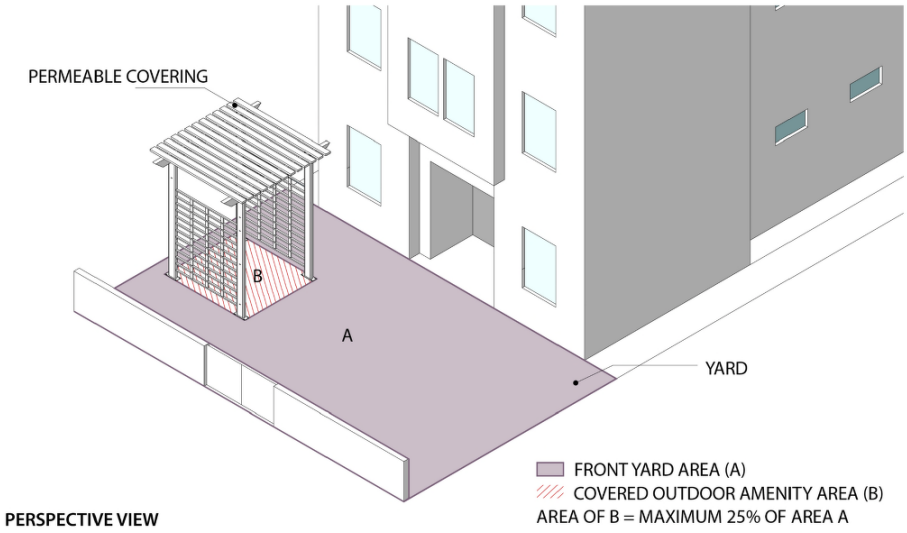


Figure 5: This diagram illustrates the relationship of a detached Outdoor Amenity Area to a Required Yard.



(7) **Relationship to Common Open Space.** The square footage of the Outdoor Amenity Area underneath all covered structures shall not exceed 50 percent of the cumulative total

square footage of required outdoor common open space. An Outdoor Amenity Area that is not within a required common open space area (Section 12.21 G.2. of this Code) is not subject to this requirement.

(8) **Relationship to Specific Plans.** In instances where the provisions of the Outdoor Amenity Area conflict with any provisions of an applicable Specific Plan, the Specific Plan provisions shall prevail.

(9) **Relationship to Supplemental Use Districts, Redevelopment Plans or other Overlays.** In instances where provisions of the Outdoor Amenity Area conflict with any provisions of an applicable Supplemental Use District, Redevelopment Plans or other Overlay, the provisions in this Section of this Code shall prevail.

(c) **Outdoor Amenity Area Design Standards.**

(1) **Minimum Clear Height for an Outdoor Amenity Area that is Covered**. An Outdoor Amenity Area that is covered, and enclosed by 50 percent or more of the surface area of the projected perimeter walls (see **Figure 6**), must have a minimum clear height of 1.5 times the average depth of the covered area (Minimum Clear Height = 1.5 x Average Depth). The height shall be a minimum of 7.5 feet, as measured from finished floor elevation to the underside of the covering for the entire Outdoor Amenity Area.

Figure 6: This diagram illustrates the minimum clear height required for a covered Outdoor Amenity Area that is enclosed by 50 percent or more of the surface area of the projected perimeter walls.

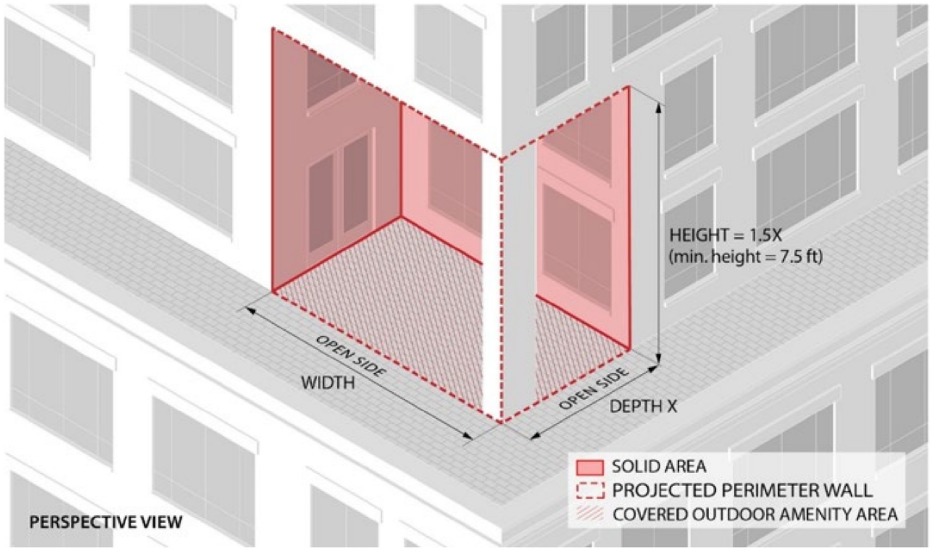
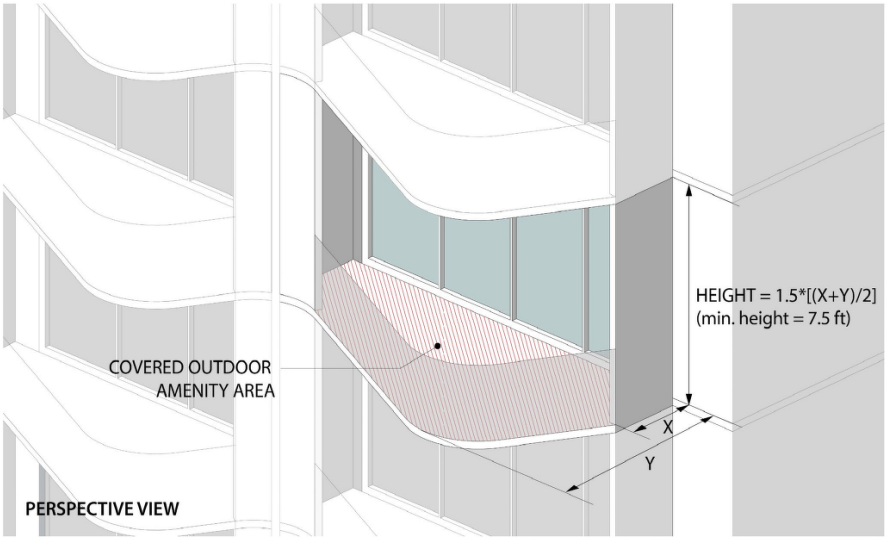


Figure 7: This diagram illustrates the way in which minimum clear height required is calculated when a covered Outdoor Amenity Area has variable depths.



(2) **Above-Ground Outdoor Amenity Area**. An Outdoor Amenity Area may be located within or below allowable architectural projections, rooftop structures, recessed areas, or other outdoor spaces attached to the primary structure. If covered,

an Outdoor Amenity Area structure located on a rooftop shall not exceed two-thirds of the total square footage of the rooftop.

(3) **Outdoor Amenity Area in a Required Yard.** An Outdoor Amenity Area structure in a required front or rear yard may be covered but shall not be enclosed by perimeter walls, excluding guardrails up to 42 inches in height. Depending on the design of the Outdoor Amenity Area, the following additional requirements may apply:

(i) When attached to a main building, the perimeter of the covered Outdoor Amenity Area structure may be excluded from the building perimeter when establishing grade for purposes of determining building height and the number of stories for the main building.

(ii) The maximum height of a covered Outdoor Amenity Area structure in a required front or rear yard shall be 12 feet in height, where height is measured from lowest adjacent grade within a five-foot perimeter of the Outdoor Amenity Area structure footprint, to the highest point of the Outdoor Amenity Area structure.

(d) **Relief.** A deviation from the Outdoor Amenity Area Design Standards in Section 12.21 A.25. of this Code, may be requested in accordance with Section 13B.5.1. (Alternative Compliance) of Chapter 1A of this Code.

Sec. 8. Subparagraph (g) of Subdivision 1 of Subsection C of Section 12.21 of Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(g) Every required front, side and rear yard shall be open and unobstructed from the ground to the sky, except for those projections and coverings permitted by Sections 12.08.5., 12.09.5., 12.21 A.25., and 12.22. of this Code.

A minimum of 50 percent of the front yard area of one-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, multiple dwellings, group dwellings, apartment houses, hotels, motels, apartment hotels, and retirement hotels, located in the RE, RS, R1, RU, RZ, R2, RD, R3, RAS3, R4, RAS4, R5, or C Zones, shall be comprised of planted area. Front yard paved areas outside of planted areas shall be limited to necessary driveways and walkways, including decorative walkways. No automobile parking space shall be provided or maintained within a required front yard.

In addition, the planted area in the RD, R3, RAS3, R4, RAS4, R5, or C Zones shall include at least one tree that is a minimum 15 gallon in size and at least 6 feet in height at the time of planting, for each 500 square feet of planted area (rounded up, if resulting in a fractional number), and shall be equipped with an automatic irrigation system, which shall be properly maintained. The front yard shall be planted in accordance with a landscape plan prepared by a licensed landscape architect, licensed architect, or landscape contractor, to the satisfaction of the Department of City Planning.

No swimming pool, fish pond, or other body of water which is designed or used to contain water 18 inches or more in depth, shall be permitted in any required yard space in which fences over 3-1/2 feet in height are prohibited, even though the pool, pond or body of water extends below the adjacent natural ground level.

Sec. 9. Paragraph (b) of Subdivision 8 of Subsection C of Section 12.21, Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(b) **Landscaping.** For a retaining wall of eight feet or greater in height, the applicant must submit a landscape plan designed to completely hide the retaining wall from view when the landscape reaches maturity or within ten years, whichever is shorter. The landscape plan shall be subject to the review and approval of the Director of Planning.

Sec. 10. Paragraph (a) of Subdivision 2 of Subsection G of Section 12.21, Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(a) **Common Open Space:**

(1) Common open space shall comply with all of the following requirements:

(i) Be open to the sky and have no structure that projects into the common open space area, except for an Outdoor Amenity Area, as provided in Section 12.21 A.25., and Projections Into Yards, as provided in Section 12.22 C.20.(b) of this Code;

(ii) Be accessible to all the residents of the site;

(iii) Have a minimum area of 400 square feet with no horizontal dimension less than 15 feet when measured perpendicularly from any point on each of the boundaries of the open space area, except that planters used for medium or large shade trees may be placed within this area provided

that the top of the planter is no taller than 42 inches in height and the total planter area does not exceed 25% of the provided common open space area;

(iv) Constitute at least 50 percent of the total required usable open space in developments built at an RD, R3, RAS3, R4, RAS4, or R5 density regardless of the underlying zone; and

(v) Be located at the grade level or first habitable room level, except in developments built at an RD, R3, RAS3, R4, RAS4, or R5 density regardless of the underlying zone.

(2) Common open space areas shall incorporate recreational amenities such as swimming pools, spas, picnic tables, benches, children's play areas, ball courts, barbecue areas, sitting areas, or other site amenities listed on the Amenity Features Menu.

(3) A minimum of 25 percent of the common open space area shall be planted with ground cover, shrubs, or trees. At least one 24-inch box tree for every four dwelling units shall be provided on-site; and this tree requirement may be satisfied by including existing or new public right-of-way Street Trees, and existing on-site Significant Trees that are protected during construction pursuant to the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance's corresponding Point System standards related to Tree Conservation. For a common open space area located in a building courtyard, terrace, rooftop, or other such area located above the ground floor elevation and not in natural soil, all shrubs and trees shall be contained within permanent planters at least 30 inches in depth, or ground cover shall be at least twelve inches in depth. All required planted areas shall be equipped with an automatic irrigation system with proper drainage.

The Director of Planning or the Director's designee shall have the authority to review and approve or disapprove all proposed landscape and open space plans submitted in compliance with this section and Section 12.40 of this Code.

(4) Notwithstanding the provisions set forth in this paragraph:

(i) A recreation room at least 600 square feet in area for a development of 16 or more dwelling units, or at least 400 square feet in area for a development of fewer

than 16 dwelling units, may qualify as common open space, but shall not qualify for more than 25 percent of the total required usable open space.

(ii) A roof deck in a development built at a R3 or a RAS3 density, regardless of the underlying zone, may be used as common open space, excluding that portion of the roof within ten feet from the parapet wall.

(iii) A roof deck in a development built at a R4, RAS4, or R5 density, regardless of the underlying zone, may be used in its entirety as common open space.

Sec. 11. Subdivisions 5 through 7 of Subsection A of Section 12.21.1, Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code are amended to read as follows:

5. In computing the total floor area within a building, the gross area confined within the exterior walls within a building shall be considered as the floor area of that building, except for the space devoted to bicycle parking, stairways, elevator shafts, light courts, rooms housing mechanical equipment incidental to the operation of buildings, Outdoor Dining Areas, and Outdoor Amenity Areas.

6. Whenever any unusual situation or design of building exists so that it is difficult to determine the precise application of those provisions, the Department of Building and Safety shall make such determinations in a manner to carry out the indicated purpose and intent hereof.

7. In computing the total height of a building, a covered Outdoor Amenity Area located on a rooftop shall not be counted, provided it is less than 12 feet in height measured from the roof elevation, consistent with Section 12.21 A.25. of this Code.

Sec. 12. Paragraph (e) of Subdivision 20 of Subsection C of Section 12.22, Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(e) Any open, unenclosed porch, platform, or landing place (including access stairways thereto) not covered by a roof or canopy, that does not extend above the level of the first floor of the building, may extend or project into the required front yard, side yard, rear yard, passageway, or other open space, not more than 6 feet in depth as measured from the vertical plane of the building, provided that in no event shall any such porch, platform or landing space be more than 6 feet above the natural ground level adjacent thereto. The linear width of such projections is additionally limited to a cumulative total of 50 percent of the building frontage on each side. For provisions concerning Outdoor

Amenity Areas in required yards, refer to Section 12.21 A.25.(b)(6) (Relationship to Required Yards).

Sec. 13. Subparagraph (10) of Paragraph (a) of Subdivision 23 of Subsection A of Section 12.22, Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(10) **Landscaping.** All landscaping shall comply with Section 12.40 of this Code and the following requirements:

(i) **Landscaping - Setback.** A landscaped, planted area having a minimum inside width of 5 feet shall be required along all street frontages of the lot and on the perimeters of all parking areas of the lot or lots which abut a residential zone or use.

(ii) **Irrigation System.** An automatic irrigation system shall be provided for all landscaped areas. This system shall be installed prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy. A Landscape Management Plan shall be submitted to the satisfaction of the Department of City Planning, pursuant to Section 12.40 F.1.(b)(ii) of this Code.

Sec. 14. Subparagraph (4) of Paragraph (b) of Subdivision 23 of Subsection A of Section 12.22, Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(4) **Landscape Maintenance.** Maintenance of landscaped areas shall include continuous operations of watering, removal of weeds, mowing, trimming, edging, cultivation, reseeding, plant replacement, fertilization, spraying, control of pests, insects, and rodents, or other operations necessary to assure normal plant growth. All trees, shrubs, and ground cover shall be maintained as healthy and vigorous at all times. Irrigation systems, installed pursuant to the requirements in Subparagraph (a)(10)(ii) above shall be continuously maintained in accordance with Section 12.40 of this Code.

Sec. 15. Subparagraph (9) of Paragraph (a) of Subdivision 28 of Subsection A of Section 12.22, Article 2, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(9) **Landscaping.** All landscaping shall comply with Section 12.40 of this Code and the following requirements:

(i) **Landscaping - Setback.** A landscaped, planted area having a minimum width of 5 feet shall be required along all street frontages of the lot or lots, except for that portion of the lot line where an access driveway is required by the City as determined by the Department of Building and Safety, and on the perimeters of all parking areas of the lot or lots that abut a residential zone or use.

(ii) **Irrigation System.** An automatic irrigation system shall be provided for all landscaped, planted areas. The system shall be installed and operational prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy. A Landscape Management Plan shall be submitted to the satisfaction of the Department of City Planning, pursuant to Section 12.40 F.1.(b)(ii) of this Code.

Sec. 16. Section 12.40 of Article 2 of Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended in its entirety to read as follows:

SEC. 12.40. LANDSCAPE AND SITE DESIGN ORDINANCE.

A. Purpose. The general purpose of this ordinance is to ensure that new residential and non-residential developments incorporate objective design standards that promote climate resilience, urban cooling, tree canopy, and nature-based strategies, for landscape and site design. The specific purposes of this section are as follows:

1. To encourage the development of safe, functional, and attractive development projects, consistent with the Los Angeles urban environment, ecology, and local neighborhood context;

2. To create attractive and walkable public streets and spaces that combat extreme heat by promoting shade coverage and urban cooling;

3. To respond to state, regional, and local mandates for action in areas, such as water conservation and stormwater capture, amelioration of air quality, energy conservation, soil health and conservation, public health, and environmental justice;

4. To reduce reliance on vehicle trips by supporting site design features that prioritize pedestrian safety, local amenities such as parkways, street trees, street furniture, and bicycle infrastructure that supports active transportation;

5. To increase the amount and quality of landscaping appropriate to the Los Angeles regional climate, topography, and micro-climates, to preserve and increase new tree canopy coverage as a means of addressing climate change citywide, to support biodiversity and year-long habitat, and to promote beneficial native landscaping;

6. To establish regulations that meet multiple citywide policy objectives addressing open space, sustainability, conservation, and mobility, based upon the Los Angeles Framework Element, Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles, Mobility Plan 2035, Conservation Element, and Sustainability pLAn, and successive updates to these policies, while allowing for design flexibility and innovation;

7. To address health considerations in design; and promote physical activity and amenities that support physical and mental well-being in daily activities by providing an inviting and comfortable experience for occupants within and around a site; and

8. To establish objective design standards through the Landscape Design Point System, and to standardize landscaping and site design for applicable projects.

B. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following words and phrases are defined as follows, with words and phrases not expressly defined to follow the definitions set forth in Section 12.03 of this Code.

Elective Standard. An optional objective design standard that is measurable, verifiable, and identified on a menu of standards listed in the Landscape and Site Design Point System that can be selected to meet a Project's minimum point requirements.

Ground Floor Frontage. The lowest story within a building that is accessible to the street, has its floor level within 3 feet above or below curb level, is parallel to or primarily facing any public street, and is at least 15 feet in depth of the total depth of the structure.

Designing for Health Standard. An objective design standard addressing health considerations that is measurable, verifiable, and identified on the list of standards in the Landscape and Site Design Point System that can be selected to meet a Project's minimum point

requirements. A Project located on a parcel identified in a Citywide map of Health and Urban Forest Equity Priority Areas is required to meet additional Designing for Health Standards in the Landscape and Site Design Point System.

Landscape Practitioner. A professional, responsible for the design, installation, or maintenance of landscape and irrigation systems, who is a certified arborist or licensed by the State of California as a landscape architect or landscape contractor.

Landscape and Site Design Point System. A flexible, performance-based point system that is organized by category, composed of objective design standards with assigned point values, and based on effectiveness in addressing health, equity, and sustainability goals identified in Subsection A. above. This Point System is a companion document to the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance that assigns point values that correspond with the menu of available Mandatory, Mandatory if Applicable, and Elective Standards, and shall be initially adopted by the City Council as part of the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance, to be maintained and updated by the City Planning Commission pursuant to Section 12.40 D.1. of this Code.

Mandatory Standard. A required objective design standard, as identified in the Landscape and Site Design Point System, that is measurable, verifiable, and identified on a menu of standards listed in the Landscape and Site Design Point System, which shall be selected to meet a Project's minimum point requirements.

Mandatory if Applicable Standard. An objective design standard that applies in limited circumstances, is measurable and verifiable, and is as set forth in the Landscape and Site Design Point System.

Permeable. A material that permits water penetration to a soil depth of 18 inches or more, including non-porous surface material poured or laid in sections not exceeding one square foot in area and collectively comprising less than two-thirds of the total surface area of loosely laid material such as crushed stone or gravel.

Project. See "Project Types," as defined per the Applicability criteria set forth below in Subsection C.1., subject to qualifying exemptions listed in Subsection C.2.

C. Applicability. A Project that qualifies as any of the following Project Types, listed below and identified in the Landscape and Site Design

Point System, shall comply with the provisions contained in this section, subject to the list of exemptions listed below in Subsection C.2.

1. **Project Type.**

(a) **Residential or Mixed-Use**. The construction of new residential or mixed-use building(s) with five or more dwelling units and/or guest rooms and efficiency dwelling units; or the division of land creating five or more lots, whether an air space lot or parcel of land, when done in conjunction with new construction.

(b) **Non-Residential**. The construction of any new non-residential building(s) for commercial, institutional, or public use. This includes the infill of new, detached buildings on-site with existing buildings.

(c) **Industrial or Hybrid Industrial Projects**. The construction of any new industrial use building(s) listed in the Subject Use list in Section 13.18 E.2 of this Code, or hybrid-industrial use building.

(d) **Surface Parking Area Construction or Configuration.** Any standalone surface parking area of eight or more parking stalls, involving the following:

(1) Construction or reconfiguration of existing surface parking area;

(2) Resurfacing or regrading of existing surface parking areas;

(3) Creation of new surface parking areas; and

(4) Re-striping of surface parking areas and projects, specifically projects involving resurfacing or regrading of existing surface parking areas or the creation of new surface parking areas and changes necessary to meet accessible parking standards, electric vehicle parking requirements or for general maintenance and upkeep of parking facilities accessory to the primary use of land.

2. **Exemptions**. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the following:

(a) Construction limited to additions of floor area, alterations, changes of use, or interior tenant improvements to existing residential or non-residential buildings.

(b) Construction limited to accessory buildings incidental to the main use of a structure, or the construction of an Outdoor Amenity Area or Outdoor Dining Area.

(c) Any use of land whereby 60 percent of the site is comprised of permeable ground surfaces or otherwise contains landscaping such as cemeteries, golf courses, ball fields, public parks, natural reserves, open spaces, or other similar uses. Artificial turf areas shall not be deemed permeable for purposes of this exemption.

(d) Temporary uses of land, such as construction staging, seasonal uses like Christmas tree lots, pumpkin patch lots, farmer's market lots, and other similar uses. Temporary surface parking areas shall be subject to the provision of Section 12.40 C.1.(d) of this Code.

(e) Sites designated as Historic-Cultural Monuments, if the site includes landscape features that have been identified as a character-defining feature, subject to review by the Office of Historic Resources.

(f) Fire stations, police stations, and other public utilities.

D. Planning Approvals and Building Permit Issuance. A Project may accrue points to meet the obligations of this section, as set forth in the corresponding Landscape Site Design Point System, by selecting from a menu of Mandatory and Elective Standards. The Department of City Planning shall not approve or sign off on any Project, unless a Project meets the minimum point requirement set forth in this section and the corresponding Landscape and Site Design Point System. Nor shall any building permit or Certificate of Occupancy be issued by the Department of Building and Safety for any Project that is not in compliance with the requirements of this section and the corresponding Landscape and Site Design Point System.

1. **Administration.**

(a) **Landscape and Site Design Point System**. Adopted as part of this Ordinance, as may be amended and modified by the City Planning Commission pursuant to Section 12.40 D.1.(b) of this Code, the

corresponding Landscape and Site Design Point System outlines a performance-based point system that is organized by category, comprised of objective design standards with assigned point values that meet the intent of this Ordinance. The Landscape and Site Design Point System is organized under three (3) Design Approaches: Pedestrian-First Design, 360 Degree Design, and Climate-Adapted Design, and is further organized into nine (9) Design Categories.

(b) **Updates to the Landscape and Site Design Point System.** The City Planning Commission shall have the authority to update and modify the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance Point System if it finds that the updates meet the intent and stated purposes of the ordinance. Specifically, the City Planning Commission is authorized to: (i) revise the Point System's Mandatory and Elective Standards and their associated point values to provide feasible options for Applicants to meet program goals and outcomes, and (ii) update the Point System to reflect evolving industry standards, best practices, and emerging technologies. Any subsequent modifications to the Landscape and Site Design Point System shall be effective upon adoption by the City Planning Commission pursuant to the procedures referenced in Section 13B.1.5. (Guidelines or Standards Adoption/Amendment) of Chapter 1A of this Code, without the need for further ratifications or approval by the City Council. Planning Staff shall transmit a copy of the City Planning Commission's Letter of Determination to the corresponding City Council file within two business days from the date of issuance.

(c) **Project Review and Approval Procedures**. The Director of Planning or the Director's designee shall have authority to approve or disapprove a Project in accordance with the Landscape and Site Design Point System, pursuant to the procedures prescribed in Section 13B.3.1. (Administrative Review) of Chapter 1A of this Code.

(d) **Amenity Features Menu**. The Director of Planning shall have the authority to establish and maintain an Amenity Features Menu to meet the required Site Amenities within the Landscape and Site Design Point System. Projects shall provide at least the minimum number of amenity features from the list of options in the Amenity Features Menu. Site Amenities will be made permanently available to the tenants of the building. The location and number of amenity features shall be identified on the proposed plans submitted to the Department of City Planning as part of Administrative Review, with the accompanying dimensions called out as required by the selected options.

(e) **Administrative Review Fees.** A "Landscape and Site Design Approval and Verification" fee, pursuant to the table in Section

19.04 of Chapter I and Section 15.3.2. of Chapter 1A of this Code, shall be paid to the Department of City Planning for services and staff time to review submitted architectural and landscape plans, pursuant to this subparagraph.

E. Landscape and Site Design Point System by Project Type and Design Category. The point thresholds established in this Subsection are a procedural and administrative framework that allows specified projects to select from a variety of design pathways, rather than serving as a single development standard. The point system provides a flexible menu of design options for projects, rather than imposing a single, fixed requirement. Any request for relief from an individual Mandatory or Mandatory if Applicable Standard within the point system shall be requested on an individual basis.

1. **Required Points Based on Project Type**. For each Project Type listed above in Subsection C.1., the following total points shall be required and can be achieved through a combination of Mandatory and Elective Standards, within the corresponding Design Categories and Designing for Health Standards, as shown in Table 1 below.

(a) **Residential or Mixed-Use**. A Residential or Mixed-Use Project must meet a total of 27 points, subject to the following additional point requirements, if applicable:

A Project seeking an approval pursuant to either the City's Mixed Income Incentive Program (LAMC Section 12.22 A.38.), Citywide Affordable Housing Incentive Program (LAMC Section 12.22 A.39.), or State Density Bonus Program (LAMC Section 12.22 A.37.) shall comply with the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance points requirements, as specified in those programs, to utilize the procedures of those programs. A minimum of three points are required within each of the nine categories, as described below in Subsection E.2. of this Section.

(b) **Non-Residential.** A Non-Residential Project must meet a total of 27 points. A minimum of three points are required within each of the nine categories, as described below in Subsection E.2. of this Section.

(c) **Industrial or Hybrid Industrial Projects.** An Industrial or Hybrid-Industrial Project must meet a total of 15 points.

(d) **Surface Parking Area Construction or Reconfiguration Projects.** A standalone Surface Parking Area Construction or Reconfiguration Project (proposed independent of a Residential, Mixed-Use, Industrial, Hybrid Industrial or Non-Residential Project) must meet a total of 15 points.

2. **Organization of the Point System**. The Director of Planning or the Director's designee shall determine conformance with the Landscape and Site Design Point System, which provides a menu of available Mandatory, Mandatory if Applicable, and Elective objective design standards. The design standards are organized under three (3) Design Approaches: Pedestrian First Design, 360 Degree Design, and Climate Adapted Design, which are further organized into nine (9) Design Categories. Within the categories, each individual objective design standard is assigned a point value.

3. **Designing for Health Standards.** In addition to complying with the minimum point requirements identified above in Subsection E.1., a Residential/Mixed-Use or Non-Residential Project must also meet a minimum of eight (8) Designing for Health Standards, which may be counted towards the total number of points. A complete list of available Designing of Health Standards is provided in Table 3 of the Landscape and Site Design Point System.

A Residential/Mixed-Use or Non-Residential Project, however, that is located within a mapped Health and Urban Forest Equity Priority Area, must meet at least ten (10) required Designing for Health Standards.

An Industrial or Surface Parking Area Project, located within a mapped Health and Urban Forest Equity Priority Area, must meet at least two (2) of the required Designing for Health Standards.

Table 1 - Landscape and Site Design Point System Requirements by Prcject Type.

Project Type	**Minimum Points Required for each of the 9 Design Categories**	**Minimum Required Designing for Health Standards per Project**	**Total Points Required**
Type (a) or (b): Residential/ Mixed-Use or Non-Residential Projects	3 points	8 standards, or10 if Project is located within Health and Urban Forest Equity Priority Area	27 points (See Note)
Type (c): Industrial/ Hybrid	N/A	0 standards, or	15 points

Industrial Projects		2 if Project is located within Health and Urban Forest Equity Priority Area	
Type (d): Surface Parking Area Construction or Reconfiguration	N/A	0 standards, or 2 if Project is located within Health and Urban Forest Equity Priority Area	15 points
Note: A Project seeking an approval pursuant to LAMC Section 12.22.A.37. (State Density Bonus Program), LAMC Section 12.22.A.38. (Mixed Income Incentive Program), or LAMC Section 12.22.A.39. (Affordable Housing Incentive Program) shall comply with the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance points requirement, as specified in those programs, to utilize the procedures of those programs.			

4. **Mandatory Point Equivalency.** In the Landscape and Site Design Point System, if a Project is unable to satisfy a Mandatory or Mandatory if Applicable Standard due to a physical constraint, three (3) different points must be selected to substitute for each unmet Mandatory Standard. A maximum of three (3) Mandatory Standards can be substituted. No relief from the project's total required points shall be permitted. This point equivalency requirement is in addition to the baseline points required for the project type, as prescribed in Subsection E.1.(a) through (d).

F. Verification of Points and Certificate of Substantial Completion.

1. **Approvals.** The Director of Planning, or the Director's designee, will review each Project through the following two-part verification process:

(a) **Preliminary Approval**. A Project shall be reviewed, pursuant to Section 13B.3.1. (Administrative Review) of Chapter 1A of this

Code, for compliance with the required number of points and standards as applicable to a Project at the time of application filing with City Planning for those projects that require a Planning entitlement, or at the time of building permit clearance for by-right projects.

(b) **Final Compliance Verification**. A final verification of compliance with the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance will require the filing of a Covenant and Agreement, a Landscape Management Plan, a Certificate of Completion, and confirmation of payment of any applicable Tree Planting In-lieu Fees, prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy, as described in Subparagraphs (i) through (iv) below.

(1) **Covenant and Agreement**. Prior to issuance of a building permit, an applicant shall record a Covenant and Agreement for a Project, listing the selected Landscape and Site Design Ordinance Mandatory and Elective Standards, including any required maintenance of landscaping associated with the standards, as verified by the Department of City Planning, in order to guarantee compliance.

(2) **Landscape Management Plan**. As part of the Covenant and Agreement, a Landscape Management Plan for landscape installation on public and private property shall be provided to the Director of Planning by a Project's Landscape Practitioner after substantial completion of Project landscape improvements. Where public improvements are required, a Landscape Management Plan for landscape installation shall be provided by a Project's Landscape Practitioner to the Department of Public Works' Bureau of Contract Administration prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

The Landscape Management Plan shall include:

1. Plans showing full dimensions drawn to scale, landscape installation, irrigation, and drainage.

2. Recommended irrigation for each hydrozone during the initial five-year plant establishment period to ensure that newly planted trees and landscape are healthy, vigorous, and fully established.

3. Recommended summer and winter irrigation schedules after the five-year plant establishment period.

4. A statement acknowledging that pruning of any required parking lot trees, once they are established, shall not reduce the tree shading to less than 50 percent of its summer canopy prior to pruning.

5. A guarantee of maintenance of any installed plant material, on public or private property, and replacement in-kind of any such plant material that must be removed for any reason. The Landscape Management Plan shall be in effect for the life of the building.

(a) **Certificate of Completion**. Upon completion of construction and prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy, the architect of record and the Landscape Practitioner of record for a Project shall file a Certificate of Completion, attesting to the Department of City Planning that the Project landscape design features are consistent and in compliance with the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance, and that the approved plans have been implemented in substantial conformance with the Preliminary Approval in Subsection F.1.(a) above.

(b) **Tree Planting In-Lieu Fee**. If applicable, an applicant shall provide evidence of payment of any applicable tree planting in-lieu fees, paid to the Department of Public Works to comply with the City's Development Tree Planting Requirement, pursuant to the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance and Section 62.177. of this Code, at or before the time of the Final Compliance Verification.

If the Urban Forestry Division of the Bureau of Street Services subsequently determines that additional tree planting in-lieu fees are required for New Street Trees, as specified in the Landscape and Site Design Point System and based on a physical inspection of the public right-of-way adjacent to a Project, any additional required tree planting in-lieu fees shall be paid by the applicant prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the Project.

2. **Modification of Approved Plans.** If a change to a Project occurs during permitting through the Department of Building and Safety or construction that results in a recalculation of points or substitution of points, approval of a new Administrative Review application pursuant to Section 13B.3.1. (Administrative Review) of Chapter 1A, and payment of the corresponding application fee pursuant to Section 19.04 of Chapter 1 of this Code, shall be required, as well as a new set of Final Compliance Verification documents as applicable.

G. Relationship to Other Provisions of The Los Angeles Municipal Code.

1. **Specific Plans and Supplemental Use Districts.** Where development standards in a Specific Plan, Supplemental Use District, Redevelopment Plan, or other overlay contains similar regulations, these standards may be used to satisfy Mandatory and Elective Standards in the Landscape and Site Design Point System, if applicable. In instances where a provision of the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance or the Landscape and

Site Design Point System differ from a provision of an applicable Specific Plan, Supplemental Use District, Redevelopment Plan, other overlay, or other general provision of the Zoning Code, or require additional development standards than otherwise required, the more restrictive provision shall prevail.

2. **Relationship to LAMC Section 12.37.** Notwithstanding Section 12.37 A. of this Code, a Project subject to the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance shall be required to provide street trees pursuant to the Landscape and Site Design Point System regardless of the street classification of the abutting street frontages of a Project's lot or lots. Where complete roadway, curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements exist within the present dedication contiguous to a lot, all by-right and discretionary Projects subject to the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance shall provide street trees located in tree wells or parkways or some combination thereof pursuant to this section and the Mandatory Standard addressing "Public Realm Improvements and New Street Trees" in the Landscape and Site Design Point System.

Sec. 17. Section 12.41 of Article 2 of Chapter I of the LAMC is repealed.

Sec. 18. Section 12.42 of Article 2 of Chapter I of the LAMC is repealed.

Sec. 19. Section 12.43 of Article 2 of Chapter I of the LAMC is repealed.

Sec. 20. Subdivision 1 of Subsection F of Section 13.09, Article 3, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

F. Development Standards. Notwithstanding the requirements of any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, all Projects shall comply with the following development standards.

1. **Landscaping and Surface Parking Lots**. Landscaping of a Project and a surface parking lot shall be provided in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance, codified in Section 12.40 and Section 12.22 A.23.(10)(ii) (mini-shopping centers and commercial corner developments) of this Code. A Project must also comply with all the following additional requirements:

(a) **Open Area**. All open area not used for buildings, driveways, parking, recreational facilities, or Pedestrian Amenities shall be landscaped by shrubs, trees, ground cover, lawns, planter boxes, flowers, or fountains.

(b) **Pavement**. Paved areas, excluding parking and driveway areas, shall consist of enhanced paving materials such as stamped concrete, permeable paved surfaces, tile, and/or brick pavers.

(c) **Street Trees**. At least one 24-inch box street tree shall be planted where determined feasible in the public right-of-way on center, or in a pattern satisfactory to the Bureau of Street Services, for every 25 feet of street frontage.

(d) **Landscape Management Plan**. A Landscape Management Plan shall be submitted pursuant to Section 12.40 F.1.(b)(ii) of this Code.

Sec. 22. Paragraph (i) of Subdivision 2 of Subsection F of Section 13.18, Article 3, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(i) **Landscaping** (applies to project types: NEW, MAJOR IMPROVEMENT, ADDITION, CHANGE of USE).

(1) **Setbacks**. All required side and back yard setbacks in Section 13.18 F.2(h) of this Code abutting a Publicly Habitable Space shall be landscaped to provide a buffer.

(2) **Planting**. A Landscape Practitioner shall select trees or hedges that are between 6 and 8 feet high, low in water use, low in biogenic emissions, high in carbon and particulate matter filtration qualities, and retain foliage for most months of the year. Trees shall be limited to selections from the Department of Public Works Bureau of Street Services, Street Tree Selection Guide, except non-drought tolerant trees and Palms shall be prohibited. A minimum of one tree shall be planted and maintained every 10 linear feet within the setback. A list of preferred trees is also provided in the Clean Up Green Up (CUGU) application packet available at the Planning Department's Development Services Counter. Landscape Plans shall be submitted to the Department of City Planning for approval.

(3) **Irrigation**. Project applicants shall design and install irrigation systems pursuant to the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance, Section 12.40 of this Code. A Landscape Management Plan shall be submitted pursuant to Section 12.40 F.1.(b)(ii) of this Code.

Sec. 22. Subparagraphs (1) through (5) of Paragraph (e) of Subdivision 13 of Subsection A of Section 14.00, Article 4, Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code are amended to read as follows:

(1) **Yard/Setback**. A Qualified Permanent Supportive Housing Project may only qualify for this incentive when the landscaping project qualifies for the number of landscape points equivalent to 10 percent or more than otherwise required by

Section 12.40 of this Code and the corresponding Landscape and Site Design Point System. All adjustments to individual yards or setbacks may be combined to count as one concession or incentive.

(i) Up to a 20 percent decrease in the required width or depth of any individual yard or setback, except along a property line that abuts an R1 or more restrictive zoned property, in which case no reduction is permitted.

(ii) In residential zones, however, the resulting front yard setback may not be less than the average of the front yards, as measured to the main building, or adjoining lots along the same street Frontage. If located on a corner lot adjacent to a vacant lot, the front yard setback may align with the facade of the adjacent building along the same front lot line, and may result in more or less than a 20 percent decrease in the required setback. If there are no adjacent buildings, no reduction is permitted.

(2) **Lot Coverage**. Up to a 20 percent increase in lot coverage limits, provided that the landscaping for the Qualified Permanent Supportive Housing Project qualifies for the number of landscape points equivalent to 10 percent or more than otherwise required by Section 12.40 of this Code and the Landscape and Site Design Point System.

(3) **Floor Area Ratio**.

(i) Up to a 35 percent increase in the allowable Floor Area Ratio.

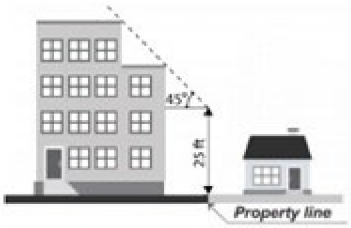
(ii) In the RD1.5 Zone, up to a 20 percent increase in the allowable Floor Area Ratio.

(iii) In lieu of the otherwise applicable Floor Area Ratio, a Floor Area Ratio not to exceed 3:1, provided the parcel is in a commercial zone.

(4) **Height**. Up to a 35 percent increase in the maximum allowable height in feet, applicable over the entire parcel regardless of any of the lower underlying height limits. For purposes of this subparagraph, Section 12.21.1 A.10. of this Code shall not apply. In its place, the following transitional height requirements shall be applied:

(i) In any zone in which the height or number of stories is limited, this provision shall permit a maximum height increase of one additional story up to eleven feet.

(ii) When adjacent to or across an alley from an R2 or more restrictive zone, the building's transitional height shall be stepped-back within a 45-degree angle, as measured from a point 25 feet above grade at the property line.



(iii) In the RD1.5 Zone, when adjacent to or across an alley from an R2 or more restrictive zone, the building's transitional height shall be stepped-back within a 45-degree angle as measured from a point 20 feet above grade at the property line.

(5) **Open Space**. Up to a 20 percent decrease in the required open space, provided that the landscaping for the Qualified Permanent Supportive Housing Project qualifies for the number of landscape points equivalent to 10 percent or more than otherwise required by Section 12.40 of this Code and the Landscape and Site Design Point System.

Sec. 23. Subsection (a) of Section 62.177 of Article 2 of Chapter VI of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

(a) **Definitions.** The definitions provided in Section 62.00 of this Code along with the definitions contained in this subsection shall govern the construction, meaning and application of words and phrases used in this section.

(1) "**Board**" shall mean the Board of Public Works or its designee.

(2) "**Development Tree Planting Requirement**" shall mean the tree planting requirement under Sections 12.21 G.2.(a)(3),12.40, and/or any other provisions of the Zoning Code.

(3) **"Public Works Tree Planting Requirement"** shall mean a tree planting requirement imposed as a permit condition for the removal of a street tree under Section 62.169 of this Code.

Sec. 24. Subsection 91.7012.1 of Division 70 of Article 1 of Chapter IX of the Los Angeles Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

91.7012.1. General. All fill and cut slopes in designated hillside areas shall be planted and irrigated to promote the growth of ground cover plants to promote slope stability and protect the slopes against erosion, as required in this Section. When selecting plant species, applicants shall refer to the Preferred and Prohibited Plant Lists, established and maintained by the Department of City Planning.

Sec. 25. SEVERABILITY. If any portion, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance is for any reason held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such a decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance and each portion or subsection, sentence, clause and phrase herein, irrespective of the fact that any one or more portions, subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases be declared invalid.

Sec. 26. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance and have it published in accordance with Council policy, either in a daily newspaper circulated in the City of Los Angeles or by posting for ten days in three public places in the City of Los Angeles: one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall; one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall East; and one copy on the bulletin board located at the Temple Street entrance to the Los Angeles County Hall of Records.

Approved as to Form and Legality

HYDEE FELDSTEIN SOTO, City Attorney

By Kimberly A. Huangfu
KIMBERLY HUANGFU
Deputy City Attorney

Date September 10, 2026

File No. 24-1399

Pursuant to Charter Section 559, I **disapprove** this ordinance on behalf of the City Planning Commission and recommend that it **not** be adopted.

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
Director of Planning

Date September 10, 2026

"M:\Real Prop_Env_Land Use\Land Use\Kimberly Huangfu\Ordinances\Landscape Ordinance\2026.08.31 Revised Landscape and Site Design Ordinance (CD-12 motion)\2026.08.31 Revised Ordinance - LAMC Sec 12.40 (Landscape and Site Design).docx"

The Clerk of the City of Los Angeles hereby certifies that the foregoing ordinance was passed by the Council of the City of Los Angeles.

CITY CLERK

Pat Y. Lath

MAYOR

Karen Bass

Ordinance Passed September 22, 2026

Approved 10/05/2026

Ordinance Posted: 10/06/2026
Ordinance Effective Date: 11/15/2026