

MEDIAN LANDSCAPING GUIDELINES

1. **APPLICATION:** Median Landscaping Guidelines apply to all landscaped highway medians that will be maintained by the County.

2. **SUBMISSION OF A LANDSCAPE PLAN:** The Contractor is required to submit a landscape plan that conforms to these guidelines for approval by the County. The plan shall be prepared by a Landscape Architect licensed in the State of South Carolina and contain the following information:

A. Scale drawing showing the location and identification of all proposed plant materials, mulched areas and sodded areas.

B. Written schedule (in chart form on plan) of materials to be planted, including location, species, spacing, caliper, height, quantities and installation details of trees shrubs and other landscaping materials.

C. Seal of a Landscape Architect licensed in the State of South Carolina.

3. **GENERAL PLANT CHOICE AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:** The objective of these Guidelines is to enhance the aesthetic qualities of Beaufort County's roadways, to showcase indigenous and indigenous friendly plant species, and to minimize the need for irrigation and long-term maintenance. The following eight considerations further the above objective:

A. Plant native plant species that are tolerant of the extremes in temperatures, intermittent drought and sandy soils of the South Carolina Lowcountry. Non-native species with these qualities are fine as long as they are not classified as invasive.

B. Make sure that each plant is given sufficient space to grow as the plant is naturally inclined to grow. Ideally no trimming or pruning should be necessary.

C. Choose turf that is drought tolerant and requires infrequent mowing.

D. Design mulch beds to minimize the amount of weeding and edging that is necessary.

E. Make the necessary preparations and investments up front to ensure that the plants survive. These include proper planting techniques, providing water for the first year, and avoiding planting from late spring to early fall.

F. Placement of plant material should always be designed to insure that clear-sight windows are provided within the limits of intersection sight distance. Obstructing highway signage also must be avoided.

G. Mass planting of shrubs and ground cover is recommended using one species in each planting bed. Shrubs and ground cover should be installed so that each species will grow together into one solid mass. This technique is not only aesthetically pleasing but decreases maintenance and crowds out weeds.

H. Planting design should be simple. One overstory tree species combined with one type of shrub or ground cover is desirable.

4. **PLANT CHOICES:** The following plant list includes those species that have a proven track record in the Lowcountry. Appropriate plant types not listed below will be considered by the County on a case-by-case basis.

A. Overstory Trees: Tree species shall be drought and heat tolerant. Species that commonly drop branches or large seeds shall be avoided. Non-native invasive species such as Chinese Tallow (Popcorn Tree), Mimosa, and China Berry shall be avoided.

1. Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*)
2. Sabal Palmetto
3. Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*)
4. Shumard Oak (*Quercus shumardii*)
5. Southern Red Oak (*Quercus falcata*)

B. Understory Trees: Look for same qualities as described in overstory trees.

1. American Holly (*Ilex opaca*)
2. Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*)
3. Chaste Tree (*Vitex agnus-castus*)
4. Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*)
5. Wax Myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*)

C. Low Shrubs/Ground Cover: These shrubs are low growing and remain low growing with little need to trim or cut back.

1. Parsons Juniper (*Juniperus davurica 'Parsonii'*) (4 to 5 feet on center)
2. Dwarf Yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria 'nana'*) (4 to 5 feet on center)
3. Indian Hawthorn (*Raphiolepis indica*) (4 to 5 feet on center)

D. Native Grasses: Grasses can be used in place of shrubs and perennials. This native species requires little maintenance.

1. Gulf Muhlygrass (*M Capillaris*) (4 to 5 feet on center)

E. Perennials: The following perennials require very little maintenance and watering once established. They also make good ground covers and are at their best when they are allowed to spread naturally. *The uses of perennials in landscaped medians are limited to prominent gateway areas and other accent sites and require an ongoing maintenance agreement to be established with an outside party.*

1. Lady Banks Rose (*Rosa banksiae*)
2. Gold Mound Lantana (*Lantana camara*)
3. Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia fulgida*)
4. Society Garlic (*Tulbaghia violacea*)
5. Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia grandiflora*)

5. **PLANT CONFIGURATION AND SPACING:** Table 1.1 below provides the recommended spacing of plant materials to achieve the objectives stated above. Plants other than ground covers and shrubs lower than 3 feet in height shall not be permitted within 50 feet of a median opening.

Table 1.1 Plant Configuration and Spacing

Plant Type	Spacing – Street Trees (feet on center)	Spacing – Clustering or Massing (feet on center)
Overstory Trees		
Live Oak	75	n/a
Sabal Palmetto	25	10
Bald Cypress	50	n/a
Shumard Oak	50	n/a
Southern Red Oak	50	n/a
Understory Trees		
American Holly	25*	10 – 15
Crape Myrtle*	25*	10 – 15
Chaste Tree	25*	10 – 15
Yaupon Holly	n/a	10 – 15
Wax Myrtle	n/a	10 – 15
Shrubs/Ground Cover/Grasses		
Parsons Juniper	n/a	2 ½
Dwarf Yaupon Holly	n/a	3 ½
Indian Hawthorn	n/a	3 ½
Gulf Muhlygrass	n/a	3 ½

*When using crape myrtles as street trees, tall cultivars such as ‘Muskogee’, ‘Natchez’ and ‘Tuscarora’ are recommended. When clustering, smaller cultivars are recommended.

6. **TURF GRASS:** Drought tolerance, mowing frequency, texture, and shade tolerance are all factors in choosing optimum turf grasses.

A. Application: The method of application for turf grass shall be hydroseeding.

B. Seed Mixture: The seed mixture shall consist of a temporary grass selection to bind the soil and ensure the establishment of the permanent grass selection.

1. Temporary Grasses: Annual ryegrass (cold season application), Brown-top millet (warm season application).
2. Permanent Grasses: Common Bermuda

C. Design Considerations: Configuration of grass areas should be designed for ease of mowing. The outside radius of grass planting areas should not be smaller than the turning

radius of the mowing equipment. The width of grass areas between road surfaces and mulch beds should correspond with the width of the mowing equipment.

7. MULCH: The best choice and installation of mulch should provide nutrients to the plants, discourage the growth of weeds, and retain moisture. A poor application of mulch will offer only a temporary aesthetic solution.

- A. Provide a pre-emergence treatment to keep weed seeds from germinating.
- B. Provide a weed barrier fabric underneath the mulch
- C. Use a 3-inch layer of Triple Ground Hardwood Mulch.
- D. Individual street trees shall be planted with a 4-foot in diameter mulched tree ring.

8. PLANTING METHODS: The landscape plan submitted by the Contractor shall provide shrub and tree planting details. The following information shall be included in the tree planting details:

- A. The depth of the hole shall be such that the root ball is one or two inches above finish grade. The soil below the root ball shall be compacted.
- B. The diameter of the hole shall be twice that of the diameter of the root ball.
- C. The soil that is backfilled in the hole shall be amended with compost and slow release fertilizer and compacted only with water.
- D. Balled and burlap plants shall have all the wire, rope and the top third of the burlap removed.
- E. If a tree cannot stand vertically on its own, the tree shall be temporarily braced with three stakes and guy wires. The wires and stakes shall be entirely within mulched area.

9. MAINTENANCE: For one year after the completion of the roadway and medians, it is the Contractor's responsibility to provide maintenance services. At a minimum, the following items will be required from the Contractor during this period.

- A. Turf shall be mowed as needed according to seasonal growth. Maximum height of cut Bermuda grass shall be 2". No more than one third of leaf length may be removed during mowing.
- B. All plant beds and tree rings shall be edged every other mowing during the growing season. Weeds and sucker growth shall be removed as needed.
- C. Lawns and plant beds shall be watered at such frequency as weather conditions require as to replenish soil moisture below root zone and maintain healthy growth. An average of one inch of water (through both rainfall and manual watering) per week shall be maintained.
- D. Replacement of dead or injured plants due to pests (insects, molds, fungi, mildew, and animals) or contractor negligence shall be done without cost to the County. Missing or stolen plant materials shall be reported to the County immediately upon discovery by the Contractor.
- E. The contractor shall inspect plant materials for pest problems and advise the County or its representative of such problems.
- F. Dead wood, brown palm fronds and palm seed heads shall be removed from vegetation as needed.

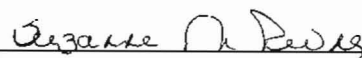
*These specifications will be added to Beaufort County's road construction contract specifications under Section 811.A (this is in reference to the SCDOT road specification numbering system).

Adopted 28th of July 2003.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY

BY: 
Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman

ATTEST:


Suzanne M. Rainey, Clerk to Council