



PLANNING CODE CONSISTENCY REVIEW REQUIRED

The City of Millbrae requires Planning review of any hardscape in the front yard to ensure consistency with the minimum front-yard landscape requirement. Planning review is required to maintain rainwater absorption on each property, thereby decreasing strain on the existing storm system and rainwater runoff in the neighborhood. The front yard landscaping requirement is also intended to maintain a positive aesthetic and landscaped appearance in residential neighborhoods by prohibiting on-site parking in areas outside driveways and limiting excessive hardscape.

DEFINITION

“Landscaped area” means any portion of a building site that is devoted to and maintained for the growing of live vegetative materials such as trees, shrubs, grass (~~including synthetic grass¹~~), and ground cover, for primarily decorative purposes. Such area may contain xeriscaping (landscaping with slow-growing, drought-tolerant plants and little or no irrigation), natural or manmade water features (such as ponds, streams, waterfalls, and fountains), and other amenities (such as walkways, retaining walls, patios, decks, arbors, trellises, raised planter beds, decorative stone/brick work, benches, lighting). Landscaped areas shall not be surfaced with concrete, asphalt, or other impervious materials, but shall be natural earth and may contain organic mulch (such as wood shavings and bark) or inorganic fillers (such as sand and gravel), and decorative rocks/boulders.

“Front-Yard” means a yard extending across the full width of the front of the lot between its front lot line and any portion of the front facade of the main building.

Any change to the front-yard requires approval from the Planning Division. Work may not begin until after the landscape plan has been approved.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Required materials include:

1. A letter describing the scope of work.
 - a. Provide details on new proposed plants, brickwork, trees, etc.
2. A site plan that includes an outline of the front-yard area of landscaping, and areas of hardscape.
 - a. Include square footage of landscaped areas.
 - b. Include square footage of hardscaped areas (driveway and walkway).
3. A color photo of the front of the existing house taken from the sidewalk.

APPROVAL PROCESS

Step 1: Submit plans (10-day review period)

- Show existing and proposed conditions. Include information on plant material and landscaping design.

Step 2: Planning prepares comments

Step 3: Once all comments are addressed, Planning approves the plan

Step 4: Construction may begin

Step 5: Final inspections

¹ On October 26, 2021, the Millbrae City Council adopted a temporary moratorium on the installation of artificial turf and synthetic grass. This temporary moratorium was extended on December 2, 2021, for a period of 10 months and 15 days.

FAQs

What are the requirements for paving?

In R-1 and R-1 LL zones, not less than sixty percent (60%) of the front-yard shall be landscaped with the exception that all site improvements required to provide disabled accessibility, to the extent not feasible in non-landscaped areas, may extend into the required landscaped area. The remainder of the front-yard may be used for vehicular parking or storage; however, all vehicular parking and storage areas shall be surfaced (MMC 10.05.0620(G)(2)).

The no-paving regulations also apply to the vegetation strip located between the street and sidewalk. This strip may not be paved and must remain landscaped. The City encourages the planting of trees if they don't exist to increase pedestrian comfort through shade, clean the air, and provide an attractive streetscape.

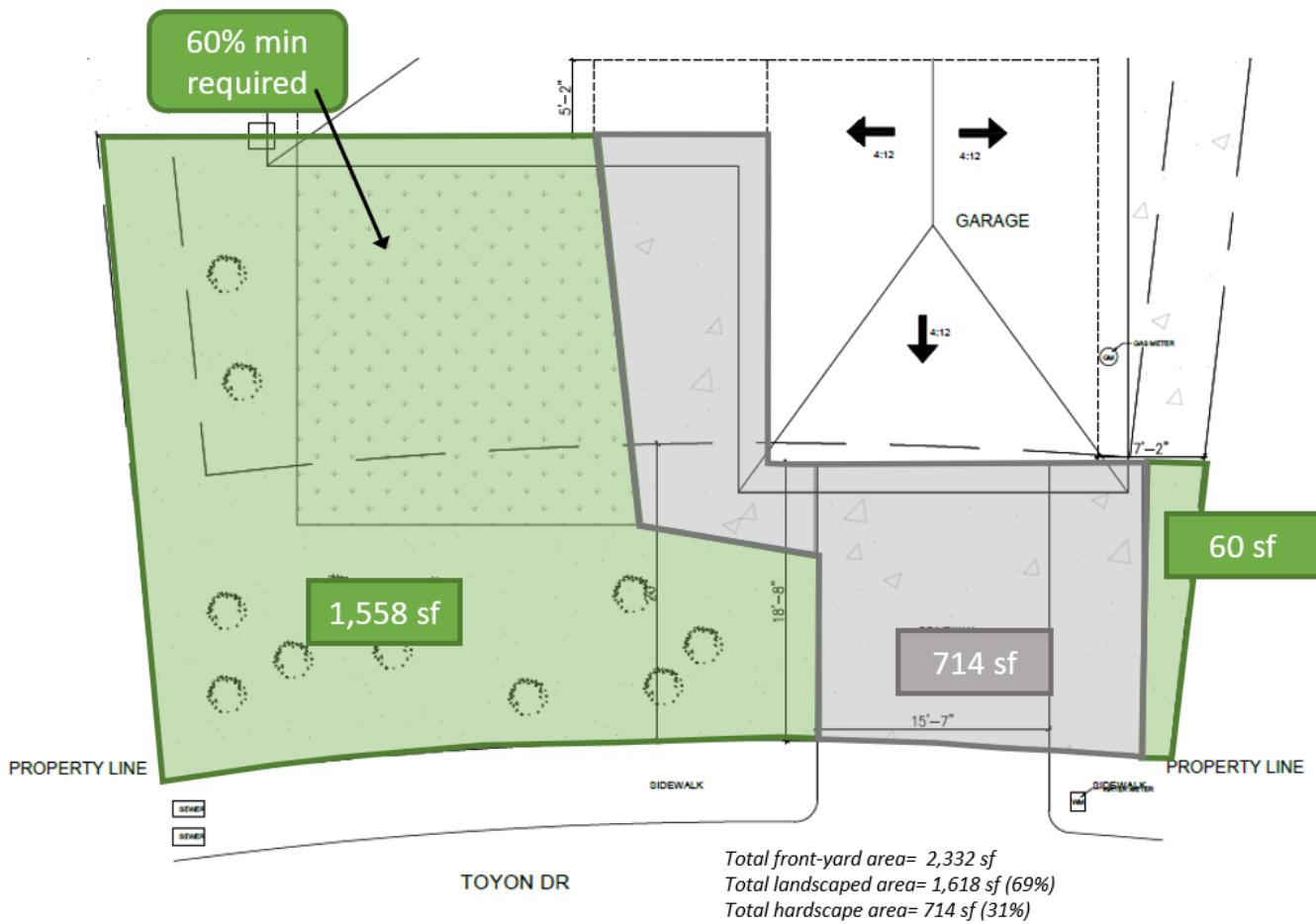


Figure 1. Sample landscape plan

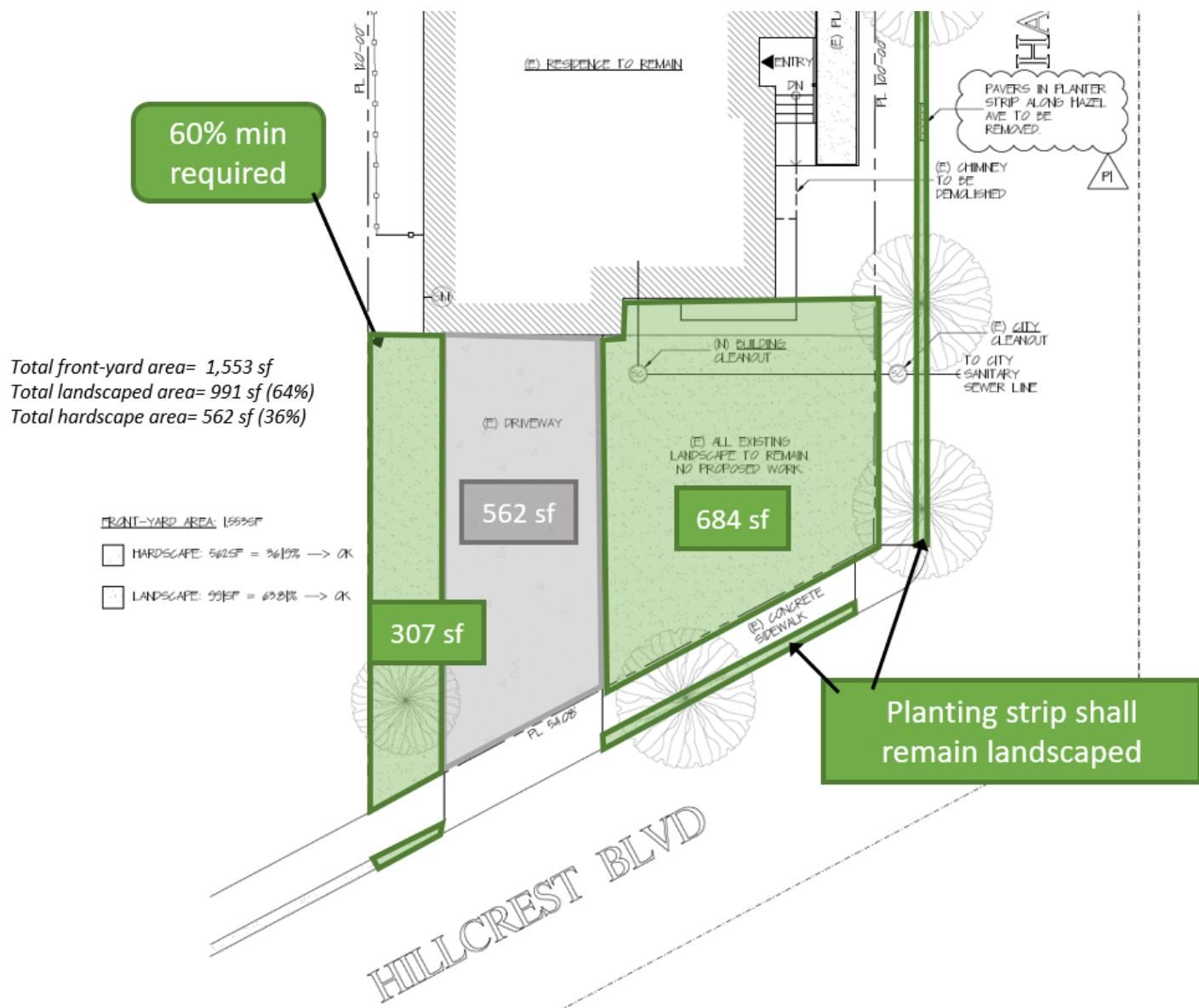


Figure 2. Sample landscape plan with a planter strip



What is paving?

Paving is any surface that inhibits the free absorption of water into the ground. Examples of paving include asphalt, concrete, brick, and tile.

Can permeable pavers be counted towards the 60% minimum landscape requirement?

No, permeable pavers or permeable driveways/walkways are **not** considered landscaping and do not count towards the minimum landscape requirement. Permeable pavers or permeable driveways/walkways are counted as paving/hardscape (see definition of landscaping).

Where can paving be located?

The amount of paving is limited in required yards along street frontages (front-yards and street side yards). In required yards and along street frontages, paving is limited to that required for necessary driveways. Driveways are defined as the area from the street to the garage which crosses the curb cut or rolled curb.

What is landscaping?

Landscaping: “any portion of a building site that is devoted to and maintained for the growing of live vegetative materials such as trees, shrubs, grass (*including synthetic grass*¹), and ground cover, for primarily decorative purposes. Such area may contain xeriscaping (landscaping with slow-growing, drought-tolerant plants and little or no irrigation), natural or manmade water features (such as ponds, streams, waterfalls, and fountains), and other amenities (such as walkways, retaining walls, patios, decks, arbors, trellises, raised planter beds, decorative stone/brick work, benches, lighting). Landscaped areas shall not be surfaced with concrete, asphalt, or other impervious materials, but shall be natural earth and may contain organic mulch (such as wood shavings and bark) or inorganic fillers (such as sand and gravel), and decorative rocks/boulders (MMC 10.05.0200)”.

¹On October 26, 2021, the Millbrae City Council adopted a temporary moratorium on the installation of artificial turf and synthetic grass. This temporary moratorium was extended on December 2, 2021, for a period of 10 months and 15 days.