

**Section 4. Open Space.**

Whenever a developer proposes the provision of open space as a project or subdivision amenity, such open space should be provided in compliance with the following recommendations and guidelines.

While open space may vary widely in terms of type, size, use and location, open space is a critical element in determining the quality of the built environment. The following information provides general guidelines for determining: the total amount of open space to be provided; the size of each open space area; general standards for the development or preservation of open space areas; and, examples of the various types of open space which may be incorporated into a single family or multifamily residential development in order to enhance the quality of the built environment.

A. Computation of Size of Area Recommended for Open Space.

The area (in acres) of land recommended to be set aside as open space in a residential development should be not less than one thirty-fifth (1/35) of an acre times the number of dwelling units or lots, whichever is greater, provided that if any land to be set aside also:

1. lies within an area within the one hundred (100) year floodplain (but outside of any floodway);
2. has slopes greater than fifteen (15) percent; or,
3. is included within overhead utility easements,

such land shall be calculated at a rate of one twentieth (1/20) of an acre rather than one thirty-fifth (1/35) of an acre.

Any area located in a designated floodway or which is required to comply with any drainage requirement, storm water management system or flood management system shall not qualify for open space credit.

B. General Standards for the Development of Open Space.

As a general rule, areas set aside for open space use should comply with the following guidelines:

1. Buffering – An adequate buffer should be provided between any open space and nearby dwelling units or other buildings or structures. Buffering may be accomplished by distance, fencing or landscaping, individually or in combination, as appropriate to the setting.

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2. Surfacing of Playground Areas – Playground areas should utilize safety surfacing (see CPSC playground safety guidelines) under and around all play equipment.
3. Hazard Signs – Water areas or other safety hazards should be identified with tastefully designed hazard signs.
4. Safety – Open space areas which are activity areas for children should have impediments between the activity area and any street near the perimeter of the open space to minimize the opportunities for young children to run or wander into a nearby street. Such impediments may include landscaping, berms or fencing, individually or in combination, as appropriate to the setting.

C. Types of Open Space.

The sections which follow provide examples of various specific types of open space which may be provided and outlines recommended standards for the development or preservation of each type of open space.

1. Playground – All playgrounds should:
  - a. include an open shelter or benches in an amount and style appropriate for the proposed development;
  - b. utilize safety surfacing (see CPSC playground safety guidelines) under and around all play equipment; the remainder of the playground area may be covered in grass, sand, mulch or crushed gravel as appropriate for the proposed development;
  - c. be landscaped around the perimeter with overstory trees, two and one-half (2 ½) inch caliper at time of planting, spaced not more than forty (40) feet on-center, or equivalent as appropriate for the setting;
  - d. have a minimum size equal to or in excess of:
    - (1) single family or two family subdivision – the minimum area required for an individual lot in the district applicable to the site; or,
    - (2) multifamily projects – 10,000 sq. ft.; and,
  - e. be centrally located within the project or subdivision, be easily accessible, and be conveniently and safely reached and used by the residents of the project or subdivision; provided, however, in the

case of a larger project of subdivision, playgrounds should be located at several locations throughout the project or subdivision so that no individual lot or dwelling unit is more than one-quarter ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) mile from a playground.

2. Mini-Parks – The purpose of the mini-park is to provide adequate active recreational facilities to serve the residents of the subject project or subdivision. The following are illustrative of the types of facilities which serve the active recreational needs of the residents of a project or subdivision and therefore qualify as mini-park elements: tennis court; racquetball courts; swimming pools; sauna; exercise rooms; meeting or activity rooms within clubhouses; basketball courts; slides; and, play apparatus.

Each mini-park should include the types of recreational facilities that are most suited to and used by the age bracket of persons likely to utilize the mini-park. In most cases, a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the mini-park area should be set-aside as a "tot lot" (i.e., areas equipped with imaginative play apparatus oriented to younger children as well as seating accommodations for parents). However, if the anticipated resident profile indicates that less than five percent (5%) of the residents are likely to be children under twelve (12), the "tot lot" provisions may not be appropriate.

- a. Mini-parks should be landscaped around the perimeter with overstory trees, two and one-half ( $2\frac{1}{2}$ ) inch caliper at time of planting, spaced not more than forty (40) feet on-center, or equivalent as appropriate for the setting.
- b. Each mini-park should be centrally located, easily accessible, and conveniently and safely reached and used by residents of the project or subdivision; provided, however, in the case of a larger project of subdivision, mini-parks should be located at several locations throughout the project or subdivision so that no individual lot or dwelling unit is more than one-quarter ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) mile from a mini-park.
- c. Each mini-park should be constructed on land that is relatively flat, dry and capable of serving the intended purpose.
- d. Mini-parks generally range in size from:
  - (1) Single family or two family subdivision – the minimum lot area for an individual lot in the applicable district to 30,000 square feet; or,

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(2) Multifamily projects – 5,000 square feet to 30,000 square feet.

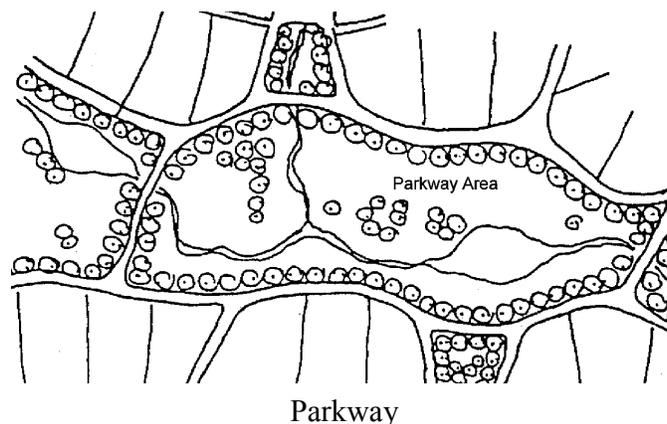
3. Greenways, Walkways or Pedestrian / Bike Path Alternatives.

Greenways, walkways or pedestrian / bike path alternatives may be credited against the area recommended for open space by these guidelines, provided that such greenways, walkways or pedestrian / bike path alternatives:

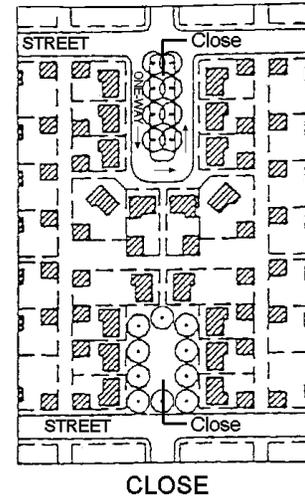
- a. connect to a Town sidewalk or greenway;
- b. are dedicated to public use; and,
- c. are located in an easement measuring at least thirty (30) feet in width.

4. Parkway – All parkways:

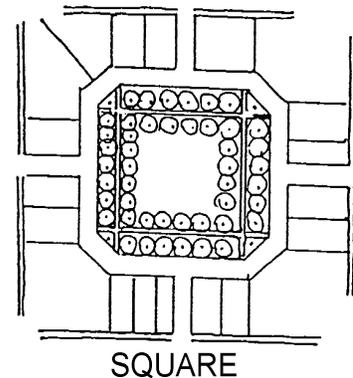
- a. should retain, to the greatest extent possible, natural or pre-existing contours, topography, water courses and vegetation;
- b. if sparsely vegetated, should be provided with supplemental interior landscaping of an informal design;
- c. should be landscaped around the perimeter with overstory trees, two and one-half (2 ½) inch caliper at time of planting, spaced not more than forty (40) feet on-center, or equivalent as appropriate for the setting; and,
- d. are generally a minimum of one (1) acre in area and have a minimum width of fifty (50) feet of open space between from back of curb / edge of pavement to back of curb / edge of pavement.



5. Close - All closes :
- should be surfaced in grass or other suitable ground cover as approved;
  - should be landscaped around the perimeter with overstory trees, two and one-half (2 ½) inch caliper at time of planting, spaced not more than forty (40) feet on-center, or equivalent as appropriate for the setting; and,
  - are generally between 2,500 square feet and 15,000 square feet in area.



6. Square – All squares:
- may be surfaced in any combination of grass or other suitable ground cover as approved;
  - should be landscaped around the perimeter with overstory trees, two and one-half (2 ½) inch caliper at time of planting, spaced not more than forty (40) feet on-center, or equivalent as appropriate for the setting; and,
  - are generally between 2,500 square feet and one (1) acre in area.



D. Maintenance of Open Space.

Any developer who proposes the provision of open space as a project amenity should, at the time of filing any petition for rezoning, development plan approval or subdivision approval, submit a proposal which describes the developers proposal for the development, ownership and long term maintenance of such open space.