

BUSINESS DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

Des Plaines, Illinois

Prepared for the **City of Des Plaines**

by:

THE LAKOTA GROUP
LAURIE MARSTON, AICP

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Section 6: Landscaping

Business District Design Guidelines

LANDSCAPING GUIDELINES

The following landscaping guidelines supplement the City's Landscape Ordinance, which defines the necessary landscape requirements that property owners must meet or exceed on all new developments and rehabilitations.

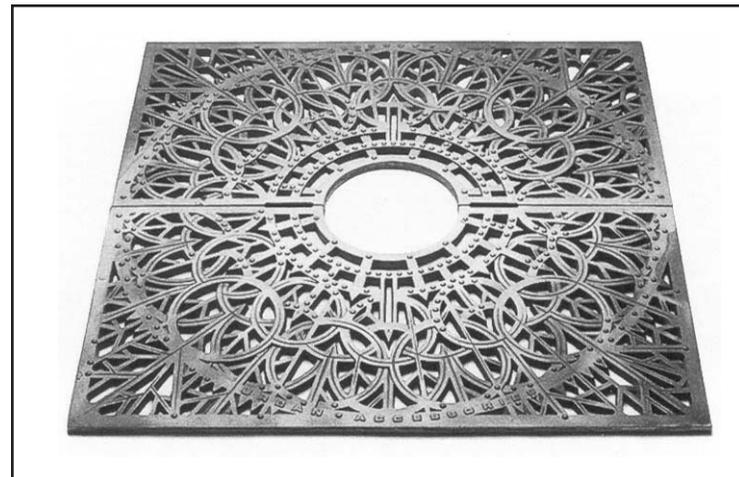
The Landscape Ordinance also provides a general plant palette for a variety of landscape conditions including tree plantings, hedge plantings, shrub plantings, and groundcover plantings. In addition to the recommended species, the Landscape Ordinance sets standards for material quality, digging and handling, inspection, planting details, and maintenance.

- Landscape treatment should be provided to enhance architectural features, strengthen vistas and provide shade.
- Unity of design should be achieved by repetition of certain plant varieties and other materials, and by correlation with adjacent developments.
- Plant material should be selected for structure, texture, color and for its ultimate growth potential. Plants that are indigenous to the area and that will be hardy, harmonious to the design, and attractive should be used.
- In locations where plants will be susceptible to injury by pedestrian or motor traffic, they should be protected by appropriate curbs, tree guards, or other device.

Street Trees

Street trees in the Downtown are numerous, appear in good condition and are adequately spaced. Landscaping is sparse along Oakton and Lee Streets. Most of the Oakton and Lee Street Corridors has narrow sidewalks, as well as few parkways or street trees.

- New trees and plantings should be installed in parkways and paved areas where needed.
- Parkway trees should be installed consistently along the street, but not in a manner to detract from building signage or illumination.
- Deteriorating tree grates should be replaced with a decorative grates.



Decorative tree grate example.

Seasonal Flowers & Shrubs

Beyond street trees, there is minimal landscaping within properties, i.e. planters, hanging baskets, flower boxes or planting pockets. There is a need for additional landscaping in open pockets along streets and sidewalks within Downtown and along Oakton and Lee Streets.

- Moveable decorative planters should be placed in plazas and along pedestrian paths and sidewalks where they will not impede safe flow of pedestrians. They should be sized and scaled to the open space and sidewalks, and follow the streetscape theme for each area.



The Oakton Corridor lacks landscaping.

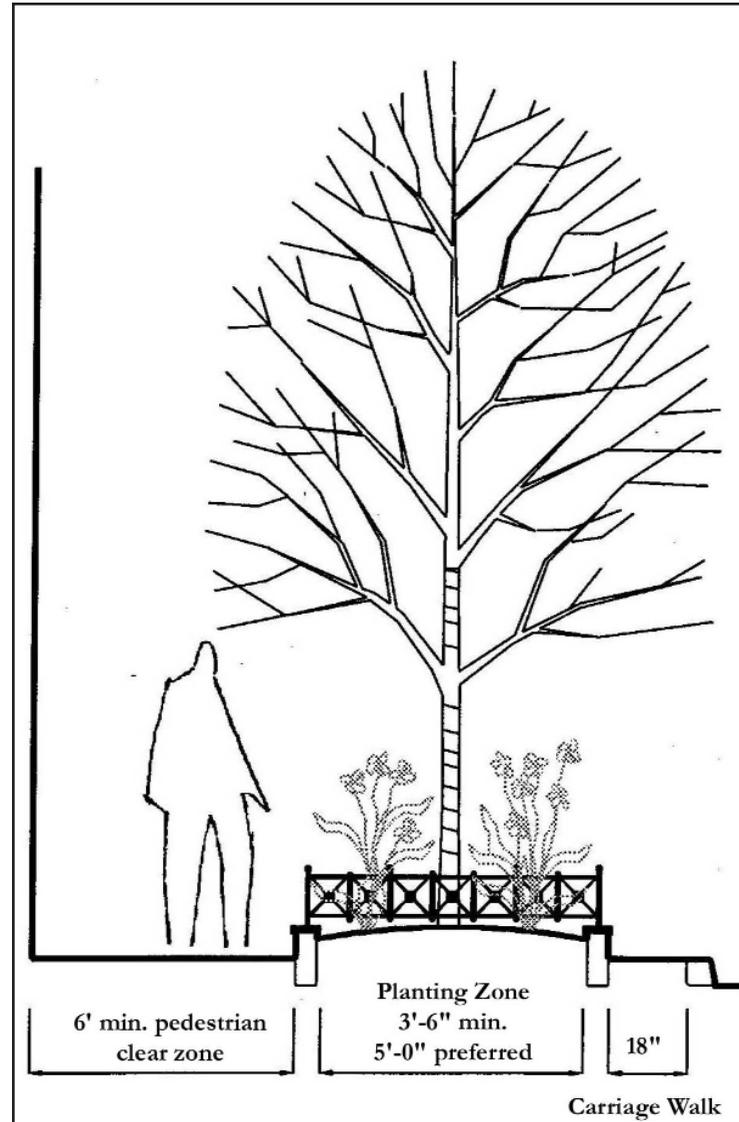
Landscaping

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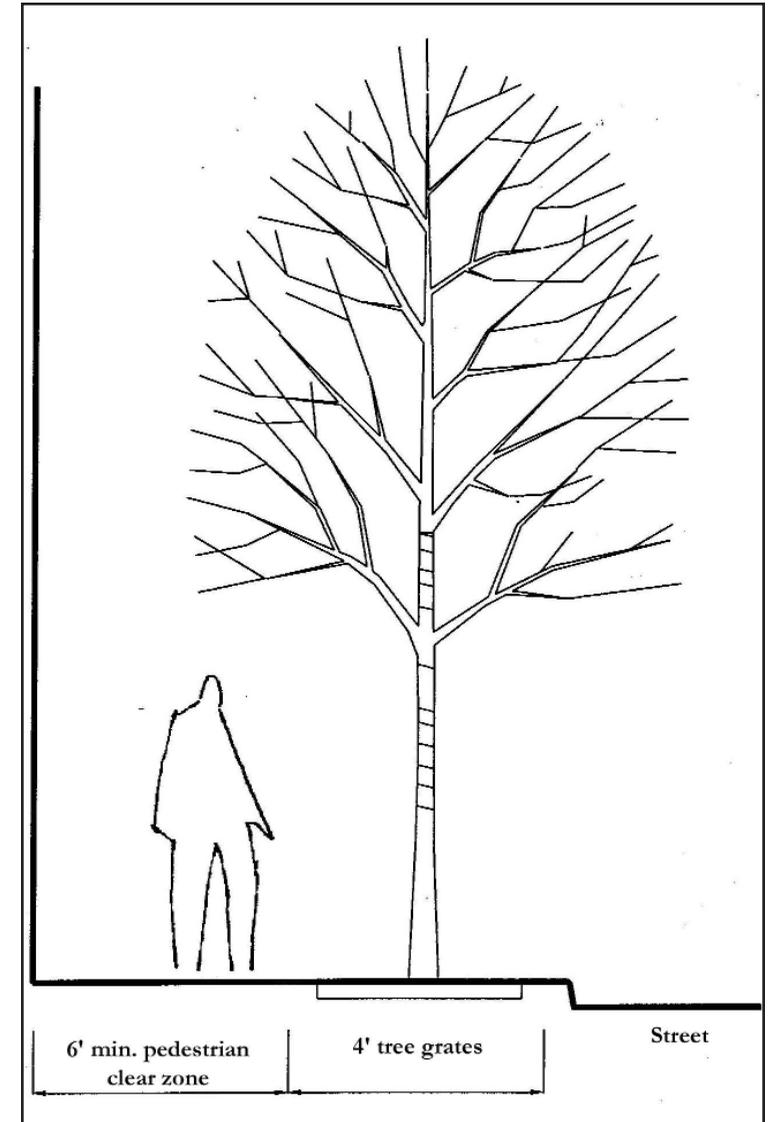
- New plantings and color pockets should be added along the street where space allows and in plazas. Raised beds, moveable planters, flower boxes, and hanging baskets provide seasonal interest, enhance the pedestrian experience, and reinforce the area's character. The City and Chamber of Commerce should work jointly to educate business owners about maintaining planters, boxes and baskets.
- Along wider sidewalks, raised landscape planters can be used to break up large paved areas, add visual interest to the street, and separate pedestrians from traffic.
- Vacant lots should be maintained with sod and low level plantings until developed with new buildings.



The Downtown streetscape lacks seasonal plants and other landscape features.



Conceptual sidewalk landscaping with raised landscape planter.

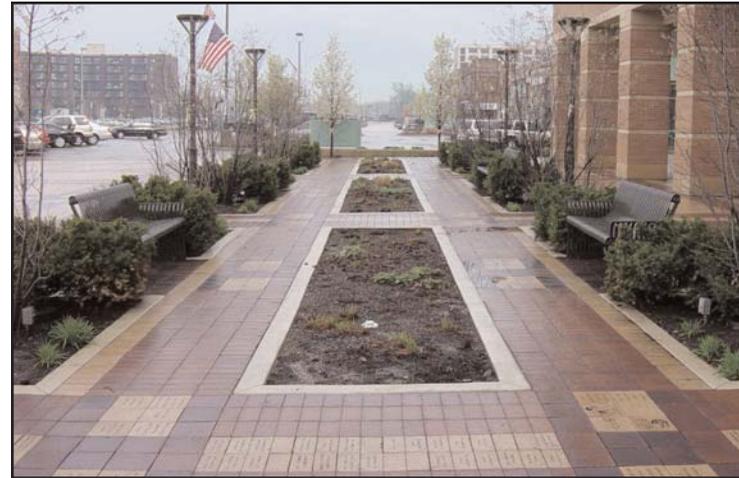


Conceptual sidewalk landscaping with trees grates.

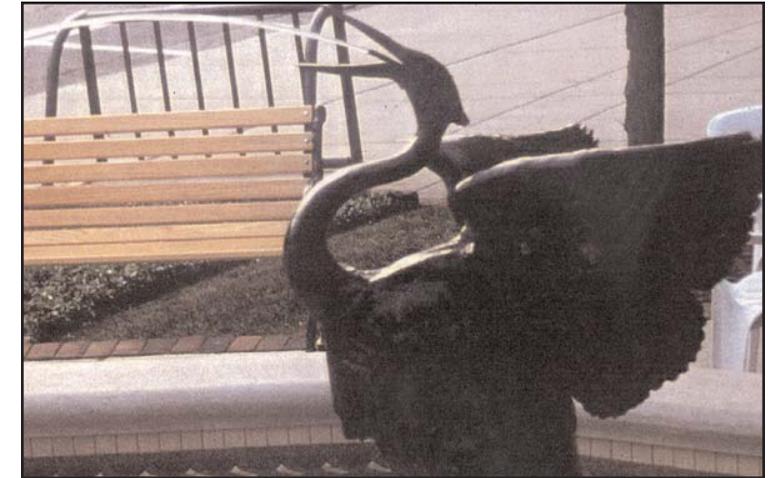
Plazas

Plazas exist in various locations throughout Downtown. These plazas provide seating and landscaping, and are generally in good condition. There are no plazas or open space along Oakton and Lee Streets.

- Existing and future open spaces and plazas should incorporate special features such as fountains, artwork, plantings, and other elements.
- Plazas should provide a variety of seating areas through benches and seatwalls.
- Moveable decorative planters should be placed in plazas and along pedestrian paths leading to plazas. They should be placed where they will not impede the safe flow of pedestrians. They should be sized and scaled to meet the size of the open space and/or paths.
- All plazas must be designed to meet ADA requirements.
- Plazas should include a variety of landscape materials to provide shade, create seasonal interest and soften building edges.
- In areas where general planting will not prosper, other materials, such as fences, walls and pavers should be used. Carefully selected plants should be combined with such materials where possible.



Downtown's Library Plaza.



Fountain example



Plaza example



Riverwalk/Plaza example.

Landscaping

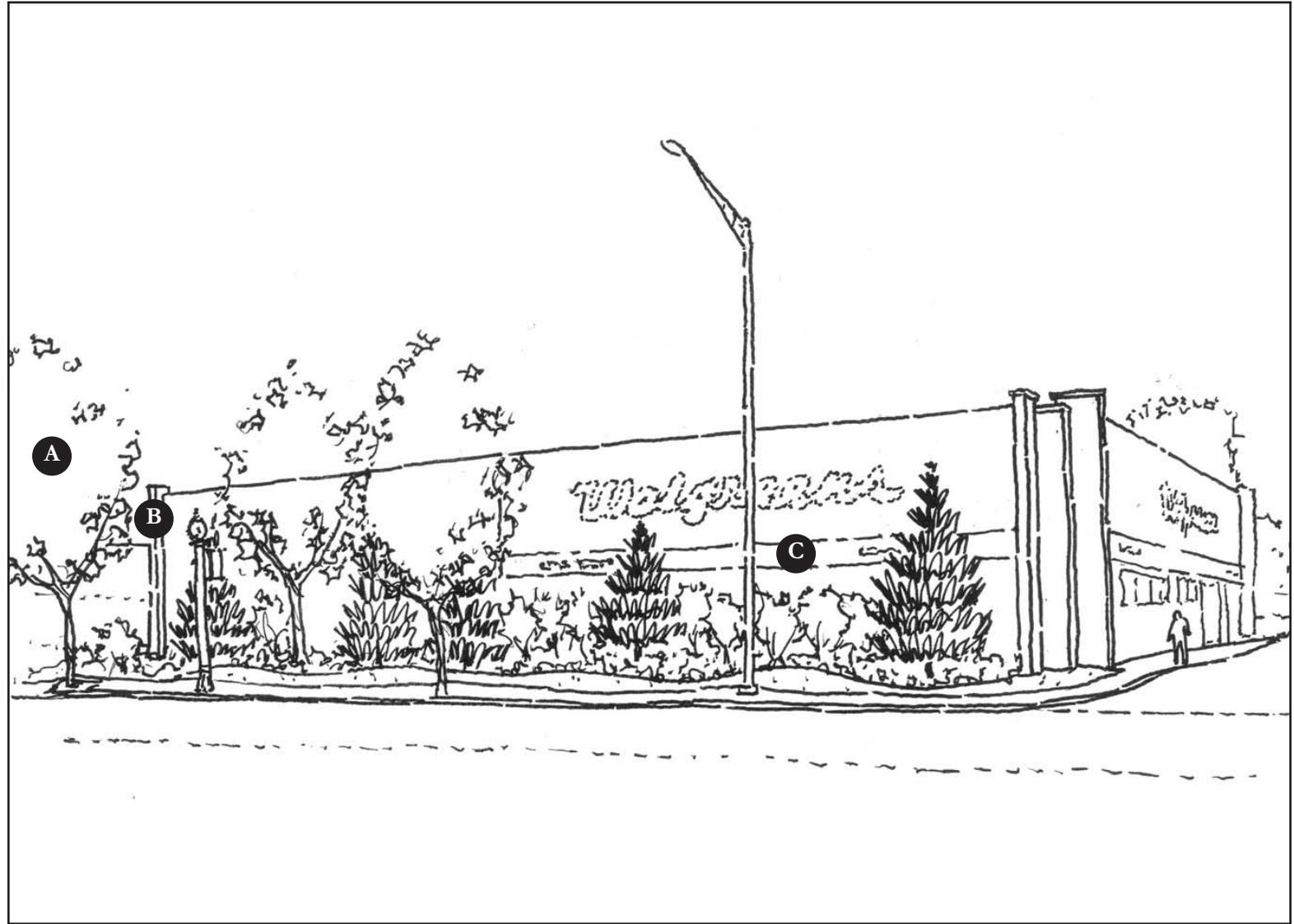
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OAKTON STREET LANDSCAPING

- A. Street trees added to parkway.
- B. Pedestrian scaled lighting added to supplement street lighting.
- C. Additional shrubs and evergreens used to screen blank walls where space allows.



Solid building wall with minimal landscaping on Oakton Street.



Oakton Street Site Landscaping Concept