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Landscaping

While landscaping can add immensely to the value, beauty and comfort of a church site, most architectural firms do not provide detailed landscaping design in their scope of services unless specifically requested by the owner. Many jurisdictions will require a rudimentary landscaping plan consisting of a site plan indicating the location, type and size of new and existing trees and shrubs, areas of sod and mulch, as well as an erosion control plan. It is now common for permit authorities to require landscaping islands in the parking areas based upon the amount of pavement. These islands are usually located at the ends of parking rows. Landscaping islands, however, can become an impediment to snow removal. In transition yards (a green area separating the church parking lot or buildings from adjoining residential or commercial property) a screen of trees and shrubs is also often required by permit authorities.

Deciduous trees on the south and west of the building will shade and cool the church in summer yet let warming sunlight through the bare branches in winter. The church should select hardy plant types that require little maintenance. Keep in mind that the little shrubs being planted may quickly grow too large for their placement near parking spaces, sidewalks, and buildings.

The church should consider the benefits of good landscaping design. A knowledgeable landscape architect can be hired to develop a master plan for landscaping that can be developed over time as funds become available.

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