

CMR MAC Landscaping Guidelines

The intent of these Guidelines is to ensure design continuity that will help preserve or improve the community's appearance, protect property values, and enhance the overall environment of the Carmel Mountain Ranch (CMR) Community. These guidelines apply to traditional landscaping as well as water-conserving, drought-tolerant, and smart-scape landscaping schemes.

General

The surrounding topography in CMR should inspire landscape design and creativity, with an emphasis on blending in with the community.

For designs incorporating artificial turf, see CMR MAC Artificial Turf Guidelines.

A completed CMR Home and Landscape Improvement Application must be submitted to the MAC and approved before any work is performed.

Designs will be reviewed on a case by case basis. The MAC may use discretionary judgment in response to any proposed designs, as no two circumstances are exactly alike, as long as it is consistent with the spirit and intent of these guidelines.

Planning and Design

Front yards are defined as the area between the public sidewalk and the home, back to the original front fence on both sides. The square footage of the original driveway leading directly to the garage door(s) should not be included in the total 'front yard' area for percentage calculations. Walkways shall be included as hardscape in percentage calculations.

Plants/Hardscape Calculations

Front yard designs have the following requirements:

- A minimum of 55% of the ground planted with living trees, shrubs, vines and groundcovers (see Plant Selection section below).
- A maximum of 45% in approved stone, rock, gravel, or hardscape (such as concrete or paver walkways).

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Driveways

Hardscape for driveways is limited to the area in front of the garage doors.

A maximum 2-foot-wide strip of concrete or pavers adjoining either side of the driveway for pedestrian purposes will be considered to allow residents exiting vehicles parked in the driveway to step on a solid surface other than turf or soil. This modification is not intended for additional parking.

The square footage of concrete or pavers used to widen driveway shall be included as hardscape in percentage calculations. Widening of driveways in excess of 2 feet on each side will not be approved by the MAC.

Rock/Stone

Stones are permitted providing they are of a natural color and shape. Natural colors are those found in the geology or historical architecture associated with CMR. Rock/Stone areas should be considered as hardscape in plant/hardscape calculations. Rock types and colors, such as white quartz and black volcanic rock, are not permitted.

The minimum stone size permitted is 3/4-inch. Fine or "Pea" gravel stones are not permitted. "River Rock", "Native Cobble", or other approved types are preferred, with a minimum 3-inch diameter. Ground that is to be covered in approved rock should be mounded and curved in a natural manner as opposed to spread out in open, flat areas. Weed barrier should be considered as an underlayment to discourage weed growth.

Boulders, both real and manufactured, are permitted if they appear natural, their color and size deemed appropriate to surrounding landscapes, and they are approved by the MAC.

Decomposed Granite (DG) can be used as a fill material between plants in planting areas and should not be considered as hardscape if used for this purpose.

Plant Selection

Invasive plants, such as Pampas Grass, Tamarisk, Giant Reed, Morning Glory, Mexican Tobacco, Bamboo and others deemed invasive by the MAC, are not acceptable, and will not be approved if submitted.

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Front yard designs shall include at least one tree.

Homeowners are required to keep the existing/proposed landscaping as approved by the MAC.

Practical use of Turf

While turf is not prohibited, it should be recognized as the landscapes highest water-user. New landscape plans are encouraged to avoid installing turf in narrow strips, small irregular shapes, or on steep slopes, as these are difficult to irrigate efficiently.

Artificial turf may be considered as plants in plant/hardscape calculations. Artificial turf must have a natural appearance, with appropriate thatch, weave pattern, pile length, and membrane. The simulated species and color of the turf must be similar to turf and artificial turf of the surrounding neighbors. Please refer to the CMR MAC Artificial Turf Guidelines for the information required to be submitted with the application if considering artificial turf in the design.

Efficient Irrigation

Consider upgrading the existing landscape irrigation components as a method of reducing water consumption.

Mulching

The use of mulch around the base of trees and shrubs is encouraged in order to reduce evaporation, run off, prevent soil erosion, and suppress weeds. Mulch should be contained to prevent runoff during periods of heavy rain.

Drainage

Proper drainage should be incorporated into the design to prevent erosion and washout of materials in the event of a heavy rain.

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Maintenance

Perform annual aeration and dethatching of mature turf and groundcovers to improve water and fertilizer penetration into the root zone. The majority of ornamental shrubs used in front yard landscapes throughout CMR are considered low water users and, in many cases, are very adaptable to xeriscape designs and are drought tolerant once they are well established.

Remove weeds from planted areas and rocks as they occur.

Information to be provided with the CMR Home and Landscape Improvement Application

The following information must be included with the CMR Home and Landscape Improvement Application when submitted to the MAC. Applications submitted with missing information will not be reviewed and sent back to the homeowner with a request for the missing information before review.

- Complete detailed drawing of the project area. A scaled drawing showing dimensions should be submitted for the entire front (or back) yard, even if only a portion of the yard is planned to be improved. Drawings shall include a legend or other means of identifying all plants and features. Drawings should indicate drainage pattern and flows. Partial, unscaled, or incomplete drawings will be sent back to the homeowner for additional information prior to review.
- Photo(s) of existing area.
- List of all natural plants proposed.
- Sample or specification/photo of rock to be used as a base.
- Sample or specification/photo of accent rock or decomposed granite.
- Sample or manufacturer's specification for artificial turf (See CMR MAC Artificial Turf Guidelines).
- For accent boulders, a description and approximate size.