

Memorandum

TO: Engineers, Architects, and Landscape Professionals

FROM: Rodger Lentz, Planning & Development Services Director

DATE: June 19, 2009

SUBJECT: Crape/Crepe Myrtle Use Change

Planning and Development Services has received numerous complaints over the last several years pertaining to the excessive 'topping' of crape/crepe myrtles throughout the city. With this compromising the City of Wilson's aesthetics, we feel it is in the City's best interest to modify the criteria in which it is planted. Therefore, crepe myrtles may continue to be utilized as a large shrub and not as a required small tree.

The City has found this particular species, although planted as a currently accepted tree, is more commonly being used as a large shrub which its characteristics commonly lend themselves. These trees are being subjected to the practice of topping at an uncontrollable rate which defeats the tree's ability to grow to expected heights. Also they do not meet the overall intention of the City's goal to provide trees along its roadways, in parking areas and as buffers. These trees when topped leave behind ugly scars on the landscape and defeat the intent of the approved site plan. Therefore, topped Crape/crepe myrtles do not meet the height expectations needed to offer shade and other similar attributes of tree species commonly used along roadways and parking facilities.

The City will be undertaking efforts to work with property owners to replace any topped crape/crepe myrtles required by the landscape ordinance. Replacement with an alternate tree species will not require a revised landscape plan, only notification to the Land Development office.

It is the Planning & Developments Services Department intent not to ban crape/crepe myrtles from use within the city. It will be accepted as a large shrub. It simply will no longer be accepted as a required tree in any landscape plan presented for approval. If you have any questions please contact the Land Development staff at (252) 399-2219 or 399-2220.