

Community Focus Statement A: Maintain the rural character of the community.

Action Statement A.4: Establish a landscaping and lighting guide to help current and new residents and businesses either install or modify landscaping and lighting to meet the needs of the desert and dark sky regulations.

A4

Benchmark: A landscaping and lighting guide is implemented and shared throughout the community for use in new development and in renovating existing properties.

Champion: Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

Estimated Cost: Variable depending on proposed improvements


Landscaping and appearance contribute greatly to the character of Lucerne Valley and provide health and environmental benefits. Lucerne Valley has a “Garden Club” that maintains the native desert vegetation at the Senior Center. The club also holds an annual native/xeric plant sale.

A set of guidelines for landscaping would establish clear options for vegetation that minimizes water usage, contributes to health, and reflects the vision and community values of Lucerne Valley. A focus on native, drought-resistant, and aesthetically pleasing plants will reduce water consumption and enhance the community’s overall beauty.


In addition to landscaping guidelines, the adoption of lighting standards for development will ensure the visibility of the night sky is unhindered by light pollution. Such standards could include lighting lumen level, number and type of lighting equipment, direction of light or shielding, and timing of lighting. The control of unnatural lighting makes a dramatic improvement in the nighttime visibility of stars and significantly increases the beauty and feel of the community. The Joshua Tree Community is currently working on a draft ordinance. This can serve as a template for the Lucerne Valley Community.

When developing the landscaping and lighting guidelines, a combination of empirical data and community input should be used to draft specific allowances, suggestions, and prohibitions. The guidelines should focus on native and drought-tolerant vegetation that would thrive in Lucerne Valley without displacing existing native species but also fit the culture and aesthetics of the community. Similarly, lighting guidelines should outline proven methods of reducing light pollution without inhibiting the sense of safety for residents.



COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING



Hesperaloe parryiflora



California Friendly Model Home. Photos: Courtesy of Eastern Municipal Water District

Dioscorea frutescens

Minimum Front Yard Landscaping Standard

| County-Wide Guidelines | Minimum Shrubs ¹ (5 gal.) and Groundcover | Minimum Trees | | Automatic Irrigation |
|------------------------|--|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | 15 gal. ² | 24" box ² | |
| All | 50% ² | 1 | 1 | With smart controller |
| Corner Lot Returns | 50% ² | 1 | 3 | With smart controller |

Notes:

- ¹ Of this amount, 60% shall be 5 gal. foundation shrubs and 40% shall be 1 gal. shrubs. 50% of the area underneath the shrubs shall be covered by a vegetative, drought-tolerant groundcover.
- ² Calculating number of shrubs: Area for shrubs to be divided by 25 sq. ft. The resulting number is the total number of shrubs that must be planted to achieve full coverage.
- ³ The 24" box tree shall be a minimum 2" caliper and the 15 gal. tree shall be a minimum 1" caliper.

2. Landscape architects and designers are strongly encouraged to use clinging vines, espaliers, trellises, and shrubs to enhance the architecture and define attractive private open spaces.
3. Front yard areas should be designed using landscape elements pertaining to the form, horizontal and vertical lines, hardscape and softscape, and ornate qualities that are compatible with the primary structure. Visual openness and water efficiency should be maintained. Special attention shall be given to selecting appropriate trees and plants that, at their maturity, will be in scale with the house and yard.
4. Landscape architects and designers are encouraged to use visual focal points such as boulders, landscape mounds, planter beds, etc.
5. To the extent feasible, existing mature trees and shrubs that represent the existing significant landscaping elements shall be preserved.
6. Vegetative ground cover that will absorb rainwater and reduce runoff shall be used. Permeable surfaces should be used wherever possible to reduce paving.
7. Air conditioning, mechanical equipment, and trash enclosures shall be screened from the public right-of-way with suitable plantings.
8. Landscaping shall be included as part of the design for a fence or wall. It should be used to soften and

Example of landscaping guidelines encouraging the use of native vegetation. Photo source: [County of Riverside](#)

| Action | Action Leader | Timeline | Resources |
|--|---|------------------|--|
| 1. Hold a meeting to establish a Landscaping Organization | Champion | Month 1 | San Bernardino County Landscaping Standards http://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/lus/DevelopmentCode/DCWebsite.pdf |
| 2. Identify native and drought-tolerant vegetation that fits the aesthetics and environment of Lucerne Valley. | Lucerne Valley Landscaping Organization | Month 1 | San Bernardino County Glare and Lighting Standards 83.07 http://cms.sbcounty.gov/lus/Planning/DevelopmentCode.aspx |
| 3. Draft landscaping guidelines based on the vegetation list and community input. | Lucerne Valley Landscaping Organization | Months 2–4 | Heaps Peak Arboretum, Plants of the San Bernardino Mountains http://www.heapspeakarboretum.com/mountainplants.htm |
| 4. Finalize the landscaping guidelines. | Lucerne Valley Landscaping Organization | Month 4 | |
| 5. Draft lighting guidelines based on community input. | Lucerne Valley Landscaping Organization | Months 4–6 | International Dark Sky Association, Lighting Ordinances http://darksky.org/lighting/lighting-ordinances/ |
| 6. Finalize the lighting guidelines. | Lucerne Valley Landscaping Organization | Month 6 | |
| 7. Promote awareness and provide information on the guidelines and reasons for the standards. | Lucerne Valley Landscaping Organization | Month 6, ongoing | |