

LANDSCAPING

Landscape design is an integral component of Site Planning and Building Design. The current pattern of walkways, driveways and landscape elements such as fences, hedges, and retaining walls in the neighborhood should be considered when developing the landscape design. Plant selection should recognize the importance of water conservation, fire resistance, and erosion control. The use of impervious surfaces should be minimized. The preservation of trees is essential.



Design Review Findings

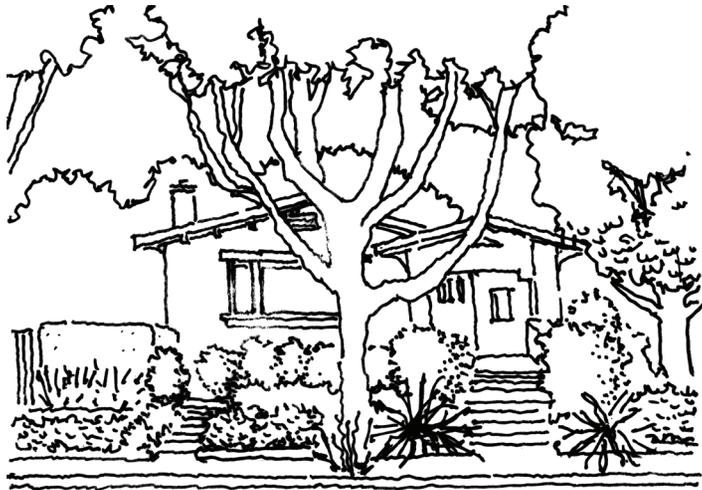


- Site development follows the natural contours of the site, minimizes grading, and is appropriate given the property's natural constraints.
- All protected trees shall be preserved. If constraints exist on the property, the number of protected trees, heritage trees, and native trees approved for removal shall be reduced to an absolute minimum. Removal of any smaller oak trees deemed to be in good health by the City Arborist shall be minimized.
- The landscape design minimizes hardscape in the front setback area and contains elements that are complementary to the neighborhood streetscape.
- Development of the site shall not unreasonably impair the ability of adjoining properties to utilize solar energy.

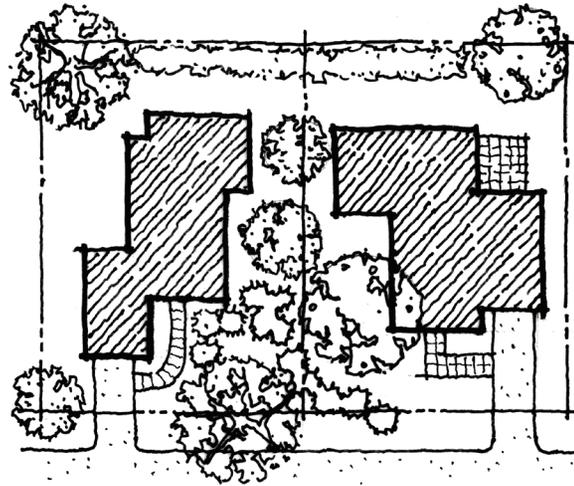
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Front Yard Landscaping

Front yard landscaping includes hardscape, greenscape, and accessory structures (e.g., fences, gates, pillars). A well designed landscape can help connect the residence to the site and define the entry, pathways, and boundaries of a property. While landscape design is highly personal and largely left to the discretion of the individual property owner, the design should reflect the constraints of the lot and character of the neighborhood.



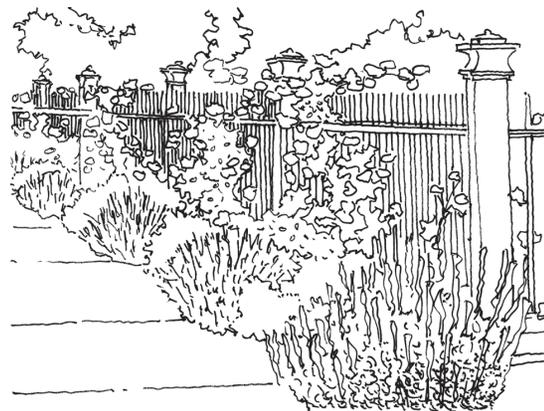
✓ Landscaping can be used to create an inviting entry.



✓ Landscaping can be coordinated with adjacent properties to create a lush yard for both neighbors.



✓ Well-designed front yard fencing and landscaping can maintain privacy between properties while preserving a connection to the street and neighborhood.



✓ Landscaping can soften the appearance of fencing.

Design Techniques

The front yard landscape design should incorporate one or more of the following techniques:

- Incorporate landscape elements that complement the streetscape
- Select landscape elements that are compatible with other front yards found in the neighborhood
- Incorporate landscape elements that develop a sense of connection between the home and the neighborhood
- Design landscaping that is compatible with the home's architecture
- Design walls, fences, gates, pillars, and accessory structures in proportion to the home and the site
- Soften the appearance of fences and walls with landscaping

Pervious Material and Hardscape

“Hardscape” includes impervious surfaces and other surfaces that may be permeable but are not otherwise considered natural landscaping (e.g., trees, dirt, grass). Where hardscape may be necessary for driveways and walkways, pervious materials are encouraged. Pervious materials allow infiltration of stormwater into the soil, thereby reducing runoff and the amount of pollutants that enter creeks, the Bay, and other water bodies. This can improve water quality, help reduce creek erosion, and facilitate groundwater recharge.



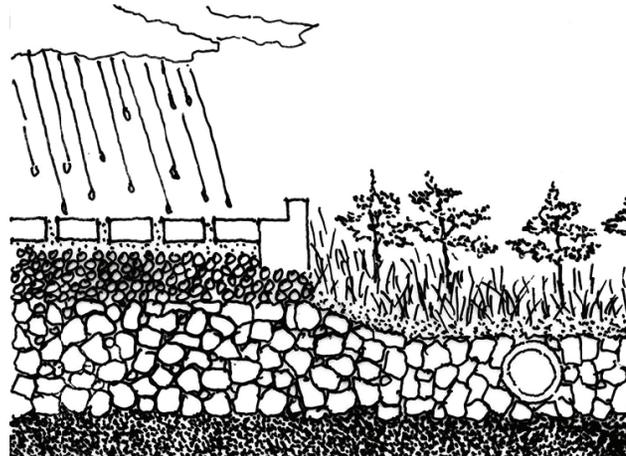
✓ Pervious pavement systems are available in many different types that offer environmentally-friendly and aesthetically pleasing options for driveways, walkways, and patios.



✗ Excessive hardscape and a lack of live landscaping in the front yard can diminish the semi-rural character of neighborhoods.



✓ Grasscrete and other grass paving systems decrease the amount of impervious surface on a property and can be more visually appealing than traditional hardscape surfaces.



✓ Pervious materials contain pores or separation joints that allow water to flow through and seep into a base material (typically gravel or drain rock).

Design Techniques

The landscape design should incorporate one or more of the following techniques:

- Minimize hardscape in the front setback area
- Minimize impervious surfaces, especially where runoff may be a concern
- Minimize compacted landscaped areas which can inhibit site drainage
- Consider using pervious materials for driveways, walkways, and/or patios

Pervious pavement may be suitable in locations that are:

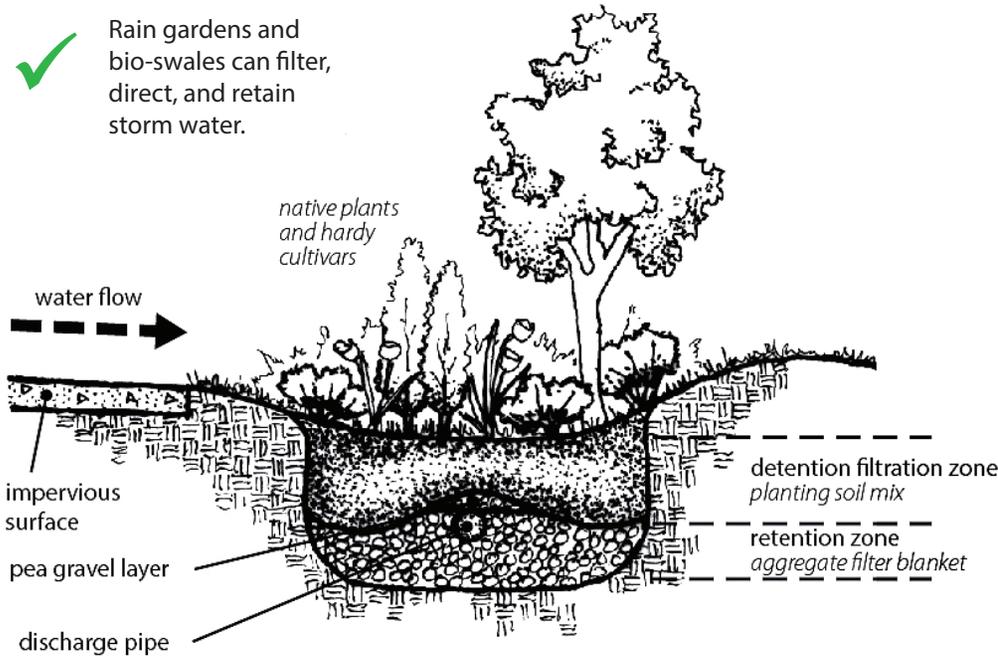
- flat or nearly flat (maximum 2% slope)
- not in a seasonally wet area (e.g., creek bed)
- not close to a building foundation (unless measures are taken to prevent infiltration under the structure)

Grading, Drainage, and Erosion Control

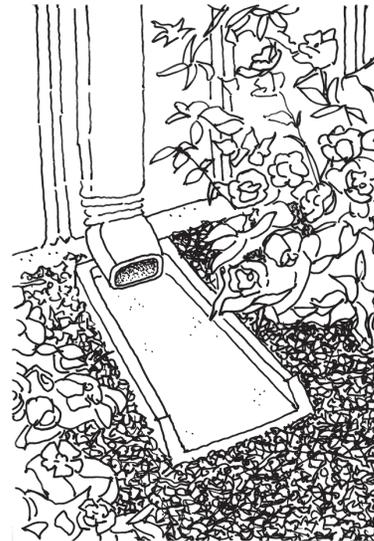
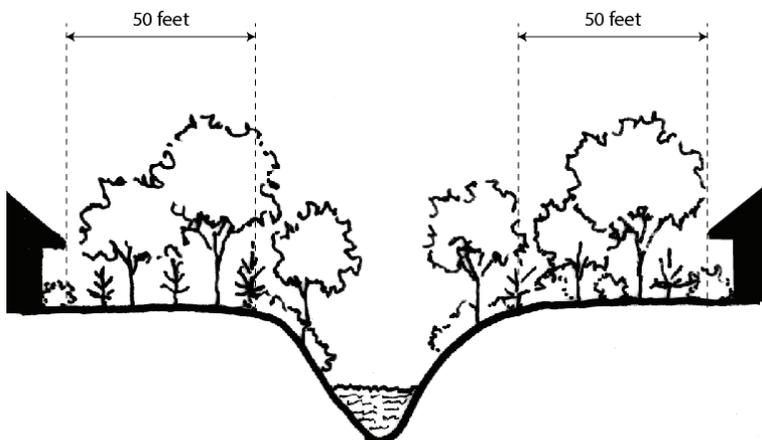
Storm water must be retained on-site and directed away from adjoining property and toward stormwater drains, and drainageways. Stormwater best management practices should be integrated into the landscape and grading design plans to minimize runoff and to increase on-site retention and infiltration. Low Impact Development (LID) is an alternative site design strategy that uses natural and engineered infiltration and storage techniques to control storm water runoff. Refer to the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program for information on applicable stormwater ordinances and stormwater management plans.



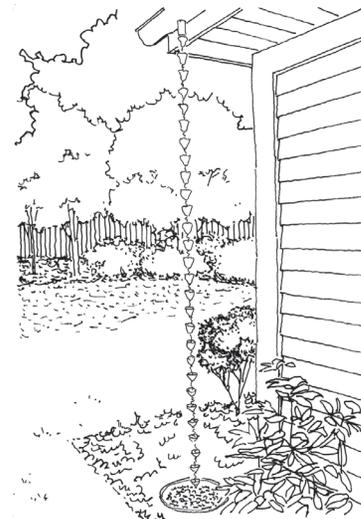
Rain gardens and bio-swales can filter, direct, and retain storm water.



Any proposed construction or grading within 50 feet from the top of creek bank shall comply with Santa Clara Valley Water District Guidelines.



Splash blocks or rain chains can prevent erosion.



Design Techniques

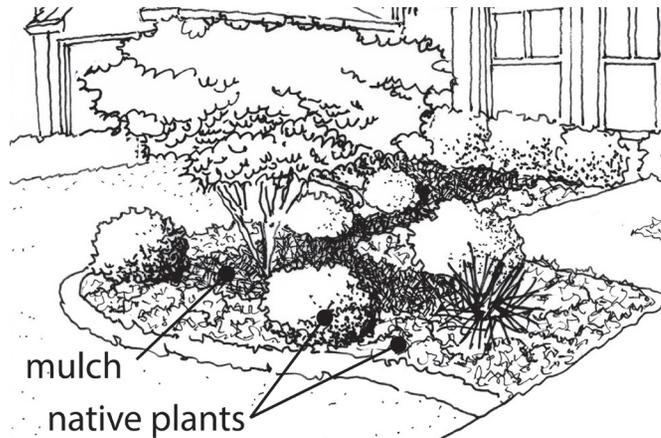
The grading and drainage design should incorporate one or more of the following techniques:

- Minimize soil erosion, runoff, and water waste
- Retain water from irrigation and normal rainfall within property lines
- Minimize drainage onto impervious surfaces
- Minimize the potential for soil compaction
- Direct runoff from driveways, walkways, roofs, and/or patios onto vegetated areas
- Avoid grading within the driplines of protected trees

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Water Efficient Landscaping

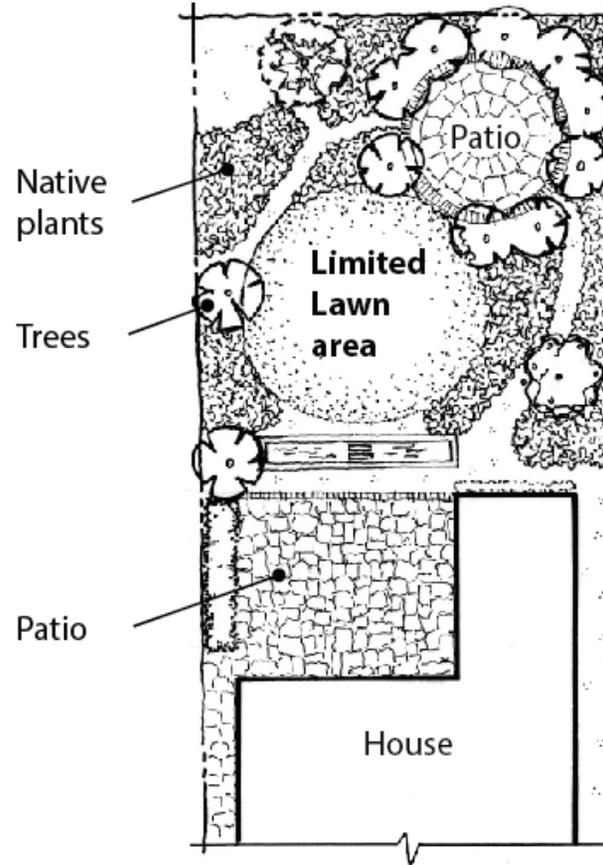
The City acknowledges the aesthetic benefit of landscapes while recognizing the need to invest water and other resources as efficiently as possible. Water efficiency can be achieved without an overreliance on hardscape. Landscape design, installation, maintenance and management can and should be water efficient. Simple changes in plant type and irrigation methods can greatly reduce the water required for an attractive landscape. There are many plants that use surprisingly little water. New irrigation systems can increase irrigation efficiency and result in water use reduction.



✓ Mulch can aid in greater water retention by minimizing evaporation and reducing weed growth. However, mulch should be used sparingly in conjunction with an attractive water efficient landscape.

✓ A dry river rock bed can reduce water use while adding a natural-looking element to the landscape. It can also reduce topsoil erosion in areas where runoff is a problem.

Dry river rock bed



✓ Grass lawns can require a large amount of water and maintenance. Consider limiting turf to functional areas such as play or recreation areas. Use turf sparingly for aesthetic purposes.

Design Techniques

The landscape design should incorporate one or more of the following techniques:

- Group plants according to their water needs
- Select native species that are adapted to site soil characteristics
- Protect and preserve native species and natural vegetation
- Select drought tolerant and/or water-conserving plants and turf species
- Select plants based on disease and pest resistance
- Design irrigation that is appropriate for soil conditions, plant type, and season