

Designs for Parking Strips

The area between street and the sidewalk (a.k.a parking strips) is a prominent and challenging area to garden. These areas are often exposed to extreme conditions such as pollution, water competition, drought and heavy foot traffic.

This pamphlet offers some designs using low maintenance, tough plants for three challenging scenarios. Each design also gives some tips for the specific situation, and a list of alternative plants so you can create your own plan. The designs are based on 3 1/2 x 40' areas. For larger areas simply use more of the plants in the design or repeat the design. If you would like a suggestion for trees, ask at the Information desk for the list provided by the Urban Forestry Division. You do need a permit to plant a tree in a parking strip. You do not need a permit to plant shrubs and smaller plants, but we do recommend you know the location of water and gas lines.

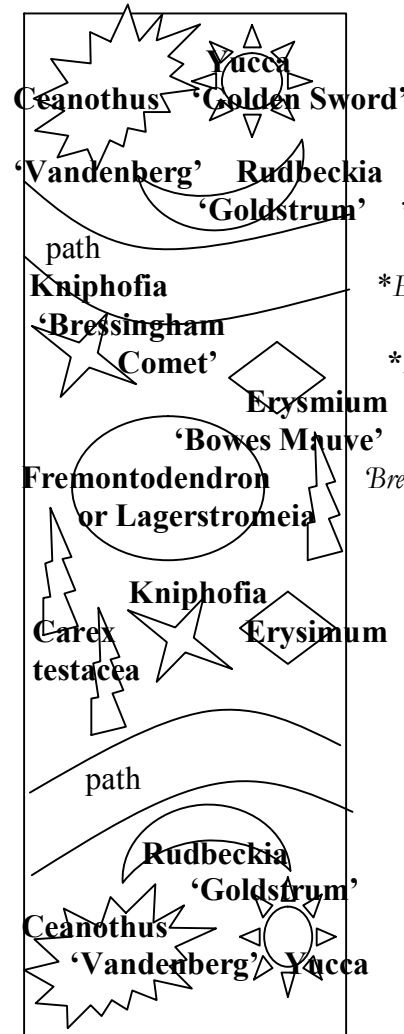
We are happy to provide you with suggestions for what ever unique situation of your parking strip. The back of this pamphlet offers some tips for a successful planting in all situations.



Hot spot without established trees

Intense sun (south or west exposure) and radiated heat screams for drought tolerant plants. To give these tough ones a good start, amend the soil with 2-4" of compost. Drainage is usually essential for most drought tolerant plants, so add 1/2" of pumice or gravel.

*Alternative plants: *Agastache*, *Arbutus unedo*, *Agave*, *Cistus*, *Hebe 'Quick Silver'*, *Hebe 'James Sterling'*, Juniper, Lavender, *Manzanita*, *Opuntia*, *Penstemon*, Rosemary.



Plant list

**Carex testacea*
 **Ceanothus 'Vandenberg'*
 **Erysimium 'Bowes Mauve'*
 **Fremontodendron californica*
 **Kniphofia 'Bressingham Comet'*
 **Rudbeckia 'Goldstrum'*
 **Yucca 'Golden Sword'*

Fill in with Sedum, Narcissus, Artemesia and/or Helenium.

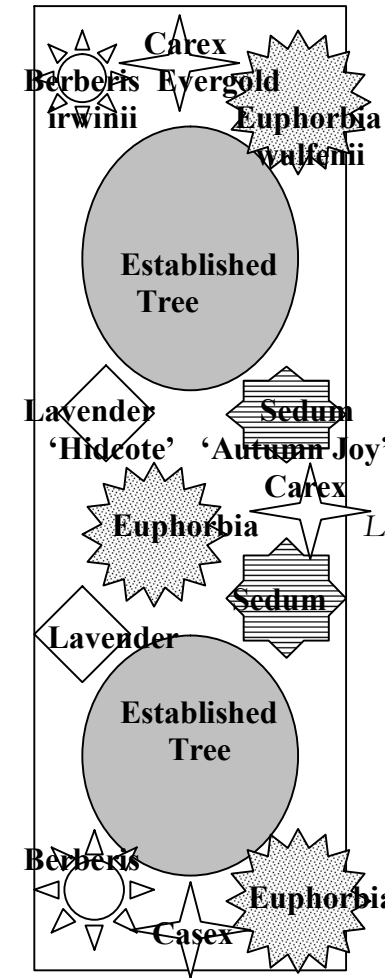
Afternoon sun with established trees

The extreme of all situations. Hot sun and intense water competition. Focus on rough and tough plants with shallow roots.

*MULCH- twice a year if you can.

*If you can't get into the soil, create planting pockets using wood or rocks, and fill with a blend of 2/3 potting soil and 1/3 compost. Do not cover the root zone of the tree with more than 2" of compost.

*Alternative plants: *Cotoneaster* sp, *Daphne cneorum*, *Festuca*, *Helianthus angustifolia*, *Phygelius*, Rosemary, *Salvia officinalis*, *Thymus*. See back of pamphlet for seed suggestions.



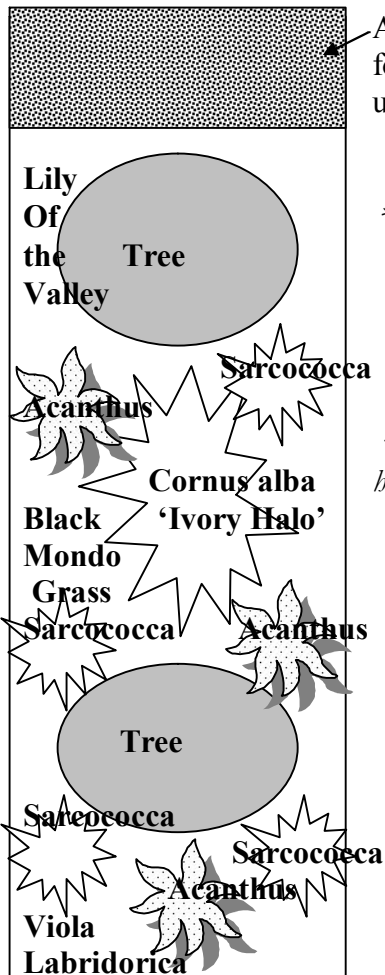
Plant list

Berberis irwinii
Carex o. 'Evergold'
Euphorbia wulfenii
Lavendula 'Hidcote' or 'Munstead'
Sedum spectabilis
 'Autumn Joy'

Fill in with Sempervivums Crocus and Narcissus, Lithodora and Kinnickinick

Morning sun with established trees

Tree roots will make it tough to dig, and the water competition high. This is one of the most challenging gardening situations, dry shade. Plants need to be tough as nails and shallow rooted. Seeds are excellent for areas that you can not dig in due to tree roots. Native plants offer some additional options. Alternative plants include: *Bergenia*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Choisya 'Aztec Pearl'*, *Ilex crenata*, *Linnaea borealis*, *Luzula sylvatica*, *Mabonia sp.*, *Saxifraga stolonifera*, *Vaccinium ovatum*. See back of pamphlet for seed suggestions.



A spot of gravel for garbage pick up and car doors.

Plant List

- **Acanthus mollis*
- or *spinous*
- **Cornus alba*
'Ivory Halo'
- **Dicentra*
formosa
- **Sarcococca*
bookeiana 'humilis'

Fill in with

- Ophiopogon nigra* (Black Mondo),
- Viola labadorica*,
- Narcissus*,
- and
- Convallaria* (Lily of the Valley)..

Tips for a successful parking strip planting

1. Amend the soil with compost. Mix in at least 2" of compost in the existing soil. If the area is filled with roots, scratch, at most, 2" of compost into the soil.
2. Fall planting uses the rains to your best advantage. Spring or summer plantings need regular water in the first few seasons. Fall plantings need some water in the dry spells for the first few seasons.
3. Choose plants that will fit your situation. A dry western exposure would thrive with sun loving, drought tolerant plants. These same plants may grow spindly in a heavily shaded location.
4. Design to accommodate your lifestyle. Incorporate details into your design such as a space for refuse bins or a strategic path for car doors to open.
5. **MULCH!!!!** One of the best tools for stressful areas. Use compost for mulch to build the soil and help retain moisture through the dry months. Also, mycorrhiza and compost tea can enliven the soil which aids plants in stressful times.

Seeds for sun

- Calendula
- Centaurea*
- Eschscholzia*
- Fenoicum*
- Linaria*
- Nicotiana*
- Nigella*

Seeds for part shade

- Alyssum
- Cerithe
- Lunaria*
- Myosotis*
- Nasturtium*

Written by Laura Altvater

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