

Colorado Springs
Parkways

*A Guide to
Parkway Landscapes
Planning, Planting and Maintenance
for Homeowners*



Introduction

This brochure contains general *“How To”* information and several landscape styles which emphasize responsible water use in the area between the curb and sidewalk—the parkway.

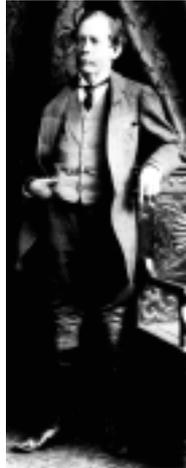
Water conservation has become vitally important to the West as our population increases and water supplies are stretched. We hope this will give you ideas on how to keep your parkway and our community beautiful while conserving our precious water resources.

City Council Vision Statement

*Colorado Springs is a beautiful, world-class city,
honoring its citizens, affirming and fostering greatness.
Our citizens are collaborative, innovative and entrepreneurial in spirit.
We have the courage and faith to make short-term sacrifices for long-term gain
to create an incredibly livable city that eliminates every barrier
and provides opportunity for all its citizens to succeed.*

History

Colorado Springs has a rich heritage of tree planting, beginning with General William Jackson Palmer's extensive street tree planting in the late 1800's. Many of the early street trees were fast growing cottonwoods that provided quick shade to a new town in the plains. General Palmer also planted one tree of every species known in Colorado in Monument Valley Park, his last gift to the city.



General Palmer

In July of 1978, the Colorado Springs City Council approved a revision of an ordinance relating to the maintenance of street parkways (Ordinance No. 78-142). Essentially, the ordinance allows the adjacent property owner to landscape the street parkway in any manner as long as it does not pose a safety or traffic hazard.

Additionally, it requires approval if hard surfacing is installed around street trees.

Today, this rich heritage, combined with our expanding knowledge of suitable plant materials and water conservation ethic can be combined to create a new beautiful streetscape heritage for our future citizens.



Tree-lined parkways of Colorado Springs

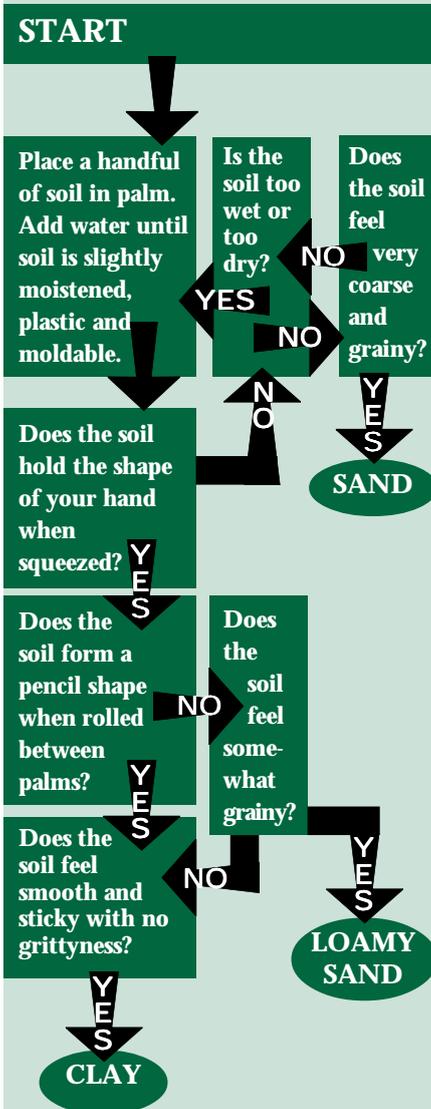


TREE CITY USA

***Colorado Springs
boasts over 100,000
public trees and has
been a Tree City USA
designee since 1976.***

Design

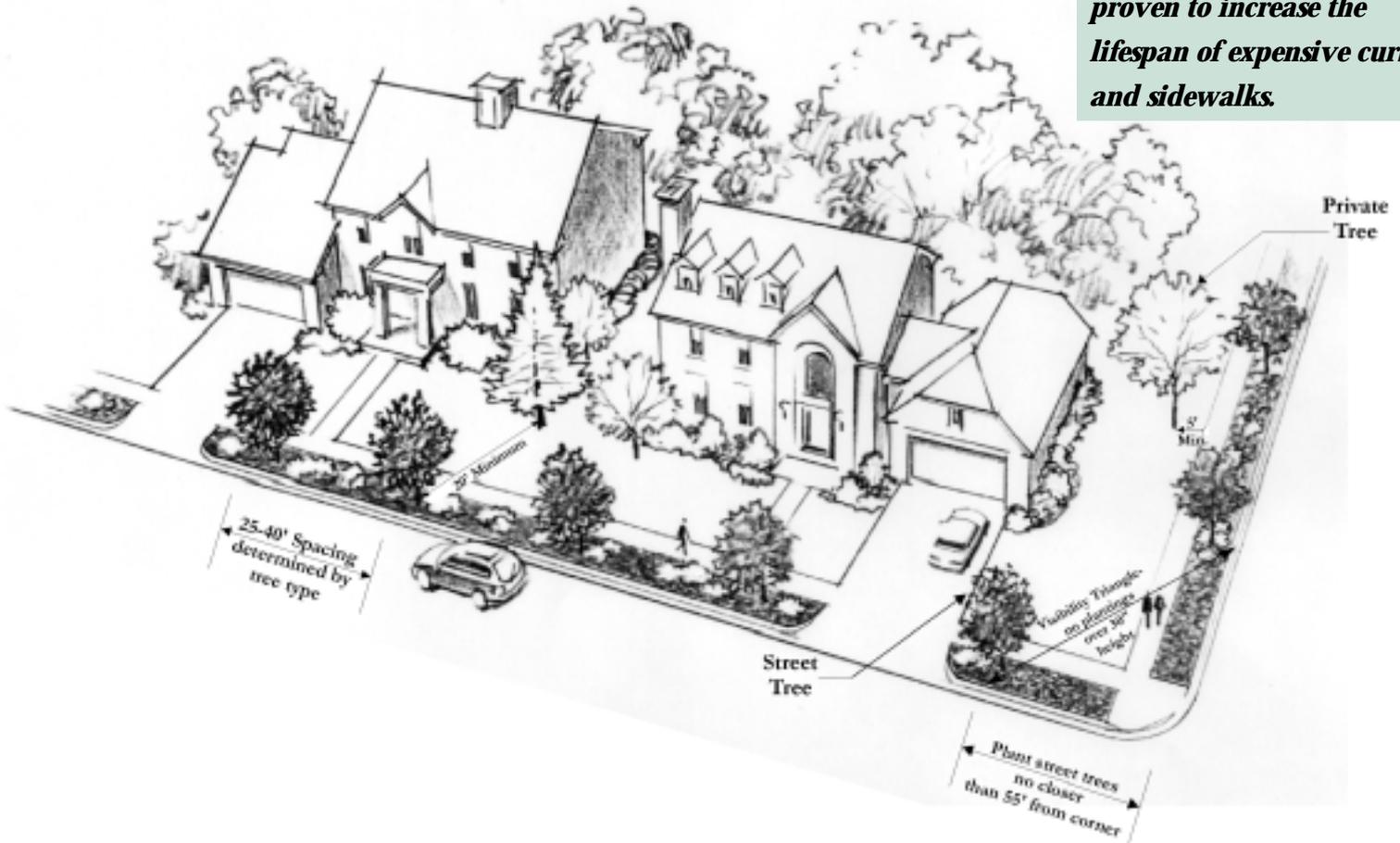
Soil Ribbon Test



- Measure and diagram your parkway width and length.** Locate existing vegetation, utility lines and paving.
- Determine your parkway design style.** This brochure includes several parkway style options. Look up and down your neighborhood street. Be certain that your ideas for a maintainable, water efficient parkway will visually fit into your neighborhood and your own landscape.
- Determine your soil type.** Soils in parkways are typically compacted and poor. For customized recommendations, the soil should be analyzed by a soil laboratory and amended as recommended. Often a simple ‘ribbon test’ to determine soil type (sand or clay), tilling the existing soil, and incorporation of 3-6” of composted organic material is adequate to help moisture penetration, moisture retention and increase water availability for plants. Soil amendment is a case where **“more is better.”** As stated above composted organic material is recommended. Mountain or sedge peat, though widely available, is high in calcium and will “cement” your soil, and therefore is not recommended.
- Check the details when finalizing your design. Be certain to:**
 - Have underground utilities marked by the Utility Notification Center, 1-800-922-1987.
 - Verify compliance with all setbacks and visibility corridors in the diagram on page three and the City Forestry regulations, see references on page twenty.
 - Verify compliance with any neighborhood covenants governing parkway planting.
 - Check parkway width. Street trees are not allowed in parkways less than 4-feet wide.
 - Contact City Forestry to determine eligibility for the New Home Street Tree Program, and for required street tree permits.

Setbacks and Visibility Triangle

Aside from creating beautiful gardens, low water-use plantings have proven to increase the lifespan of expensive curbs and sidewalks.



Planting Preparation

All new plantings require supplemental watering the first two years. Water applications should encourage deep rooting—best achieved with infrequent, deep watering. However, on slopes the deep watering must be achieved through a series of several light applications instead of one that would cause run-off and erosion. When properly selected, many native and adapted plants may not require supplemental water after establishment. A drought or exceptionally hot period can trigger the need for supplemental watering for **ALL** plants.

- ❑ **Till the soil and incorporate soil amendments.** Some of the existing soil may need to be removed to make room for newly tilled soil and soil amendments in order to maintain proper elevation. This can be hard, time-consuming work in compacted parkway soils. Be prepared and Good Luck!
- ❑ **Plan your final soil slopes.** A concave or ‘dished’ shape will optimize water retention, but will not provide adequate drainage in areas where offsite water currently flows into the parkway or in clay soils. A flat or mounded shape will work best in these situations. If desired a flat walkway can connect to on street parking. Maintaining soil level two inches below the curb and sidewalk surfaces will allow the mulch to be contained without creating a tripping hazard for pedestrians.
- ❑ **Plan your method for watering.** Efficient irrigation is essential in the often narrow, wind prone parkways where overspray wastes water and inconveniences pedestrians and motorists. Consider irrigation requirements and water application methods in conjunction with plant selection. Use the matrix on the next page to select the method best suited for your parkway.
- ❑ **Select plant material in conjunction with irrigation method.** Plants with the same water needs should be grouped together in hydrozones.
- ❑ **Plant material should also be selected based on aesthetic goals, water requirements, maintenance level, soil type, grading and traffic influences.** A list of tough, water thrifty plants divided by water needs—hydrozones—is included on pages eighteen and nineteen of this brochure.

Irrigation Methods

Irrigation Methods	Description	Good for protected areas	Good for windy areas	Level or concave grading	Sloped or bermed areas	Sandy soils	Clay soils	Suitable for Winter Watering
<i>Pop-Up Spray Sprinklers</i>	Space heads for overlap as recommended by the manufacturer. Low trajectory 4" pop-ups are best for turf. Low trajectory 12" pop-ups can be used for groundcovers and shrubs.							
<i>Bubblers</i>	Bubblers on slopes can cause erosion. Use in areas where flood irrigation is desired.							
<i>Micro-sprays</i>	Microspray arc range, throw radius and adjustability make them well suited for parkway irrigation. Separate pressure regulation and filtration are required.							
<i>Drip Irrigation</i>	Drip irrigation's various emitter flow rates, configurations, individual emitter flow control and pressure compensating emitters are well suited for parkway irrigation. Separate pressure regulation and filtration are required. Emitters can be installed above or below the soil surface.							
<i>Soaker Hose</i>	Soaker hoses are an easy to install and easy to obtain irrigation well suited for parkway irrigation. Best water absorption and retention is achieved by installing the hose prior to laying the mulch.							
<i>Hand Watering</i>	Hand watering is proven to be the most flexible, water conscious irrigation method. Simply holding the hose or utilizing a hose end sprinkler device, available at most hardware stores, applies water. Be certain to consider a safe location for the hose crossing the sidewalk and the regular time commitment required for hand watering.							

All plants benefit from monthly deep soakings during the winter months.

Note:
Most of the irrigation emitters at the left can be used on pop-up or on fixed risers sprinkler bodies; however, the fixed risers may be subject to vandalism, breakage by wildlife and breakage by general maintenance and therefore, are not recommended.

Planting

Vegetation enhances environmental quality by:

- ✿ Supplying oxygen while mitigating air pollutants;
- ✿ Acting as a natural energy conservator by slowing strong winds and by evaporating water in leaves, thereby cooling the air;
- ✿ Reducing noise pollution by acting as a sound barrier;
- ✿ Preventing soil erosion with stabilizing root systems; and
- ✿ Providing beauty.

- ❑ **Use your parkway plan diagram and selected plant material to determine number of plants to purchase.** Proper plant spacing can be found in the references listed at the end of this brochure.
- ❑ **Check the details prior to planting.** Be certain to:
 - Review location of marked underground utilities
 - Review planting procedures outlined in the *Urban Tree Care* brochure (see references)
- ❑ **Spread Mulch.** Properly applied organic mulch reduces evaporation, retains moisture, reduces soil erosion, creates a weed barrier and maintains stable soil temperatures. Organic mulch can also establish a protective two-foot diameter “ring” around woody plant material and trees in areas to be mowed. This ring protects the plant from mower damage and eases maintenance and trimming requirements.
 - **Non-organic mulches** (such as gravel and rock) severely stress new parkway plantings by concentrating heat at the roots. Only in cases of extremely high winds, drainage overflow or beneath large existing street trees should they be considered. Weed barrier fabric that allows water infiltration may be appropriate beneath non-organic mulch. **Never use plastic.**
 - **Organic mulch** that “knits” together—such a shredded wood mulch—to minimize wind dispersion is essential in parkway plantings. Bark nugget mulch does not “knit” together and will wash or blow away. Organic mulch will compact once installed. Weed barrier fabric is not recommended beneath organic mulch, because it prevents the mulch from working into the soil and improving soil texture. **Never use plastic.**



Mulch helps keeps this parkway free of weeds.

Apply mulch to achieve the following final mulch depths:

🍁 **Trees and shrubs:**
3-6" depth organic mulch

🍁 **Perennial and groundcover areas:**
1.5-3" depth organic mulch



*Tree planting at GreenSprings 2000-
photo courtesy of Juliet L. Stanley*

Maintenance

Proper maintenance will keep your parkway in compliance with the City's Weed Code – Chapter 21. Article 6. Part 3. For further information, contact Code Enforcement at 719.444.7891.

- ❑ The importance of proper maintenance cannot be overemphasized. A public streetscape is no place for bedraggled plants or beds cluttered with weeds. Maintenance considerations should include:
 - Length of establishment period watering;
 - Quantity and application rate for establishment period and growing season watering;
 - Adapting watering schedule for plant growth–increase watering beneath tree canopy to account for the umbrella effect of the tree foliage on the plants beneath;
 - Intensive establishment maintenance period–up to 5 years;
 - Site cleanliness and litter removal;
 - Plant pruning to maintain size, shape and clear passage;
 - Mulch renewal every two years;
 - Weed control–a properly timed pre-emergent application can save long hours of weed pulling;
 - Pest control and fertilization as determined by your specific plant selection; and
 - If necessary, determining proper mowing heights for turf and groundcovers.

- ❑ City Forestry maintains a prune cycle on all street trees. The City Forester is available to perform street tree pruning upon special request in cases such as storm damage or disease.

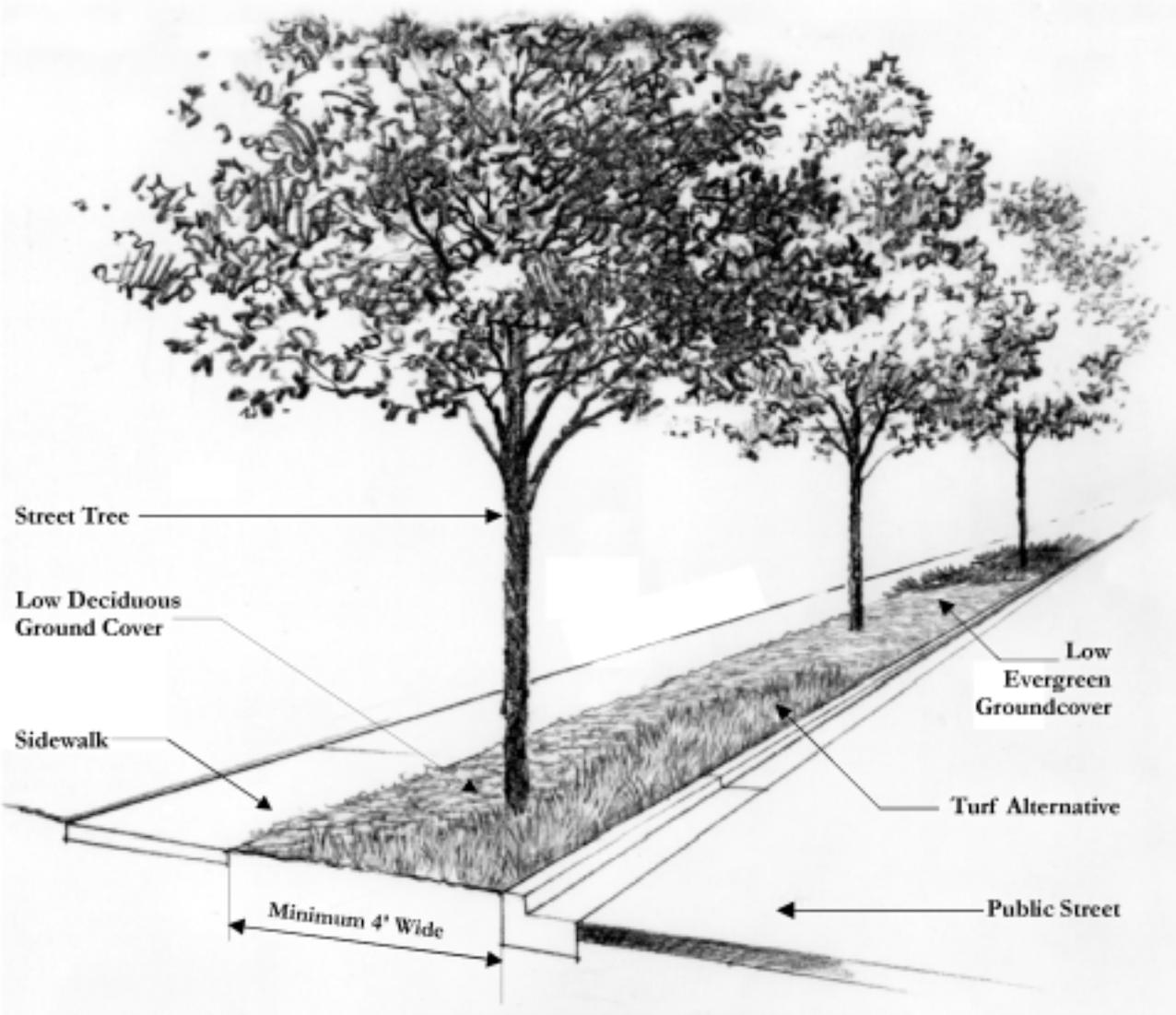
- ❑ Parkway plantings left standing over the winter can provide textural interest. Since snow is not persistent cut back plants when they begin to look disheveled or after a heavy snow has flattened them.

Parkway Styles

Nine



Street Trees with Turf/Turf Alternative





Street trees provide shade and separation from the public roadway with turf or ground cover uniformly covering all of the parkway area.

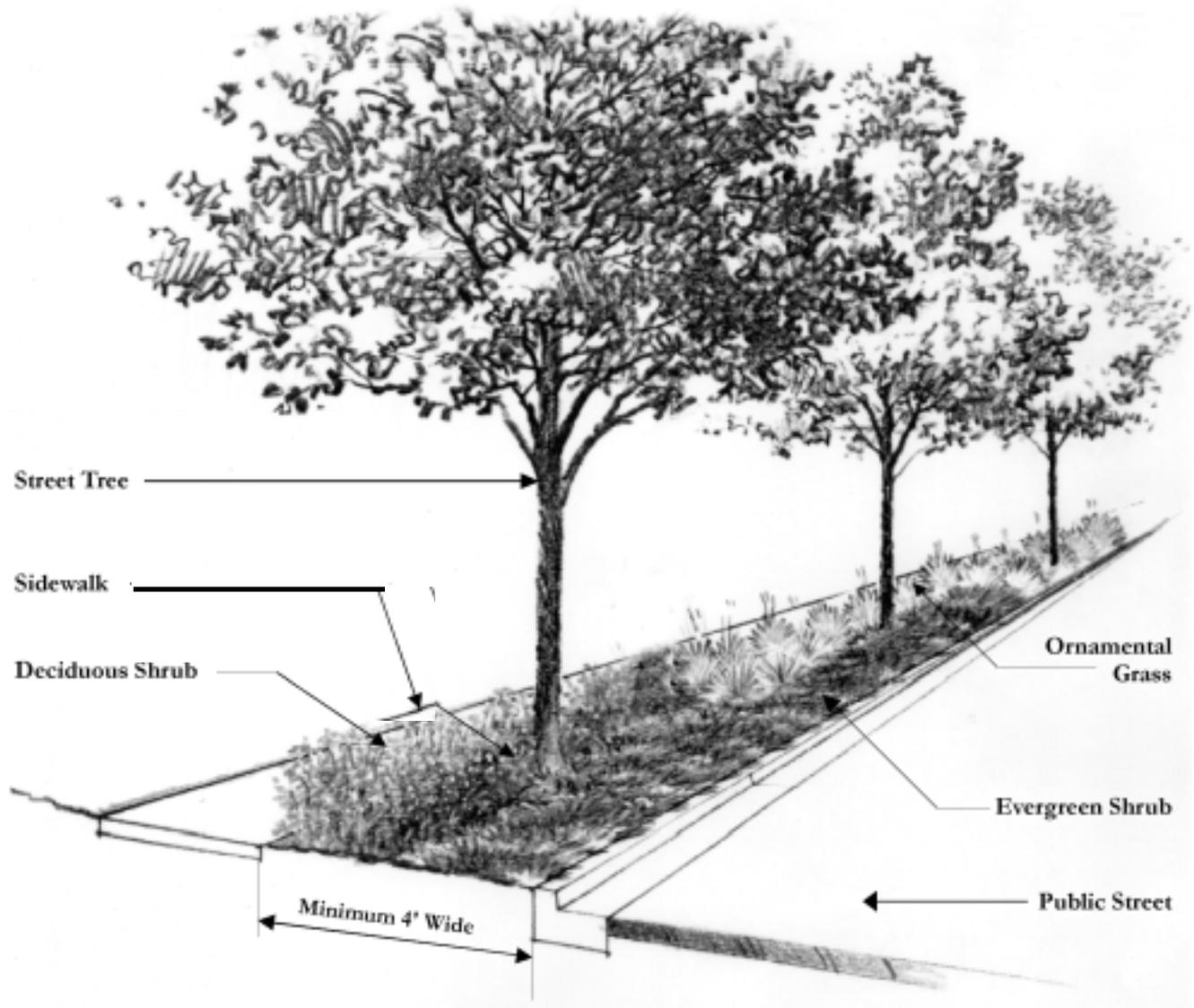
Ground cover adds leaf texture, leaf color, and, depending upon selection, low maintenance within the parkway.

Maintaining turf is challenging. Water-intensive and frequently mown grasses should be avoided.

Grading for this style should allow for tree planting slightly above surrounding soil elevation. Turf should not be planted on steep slopes.



Street Trees with Shrubs

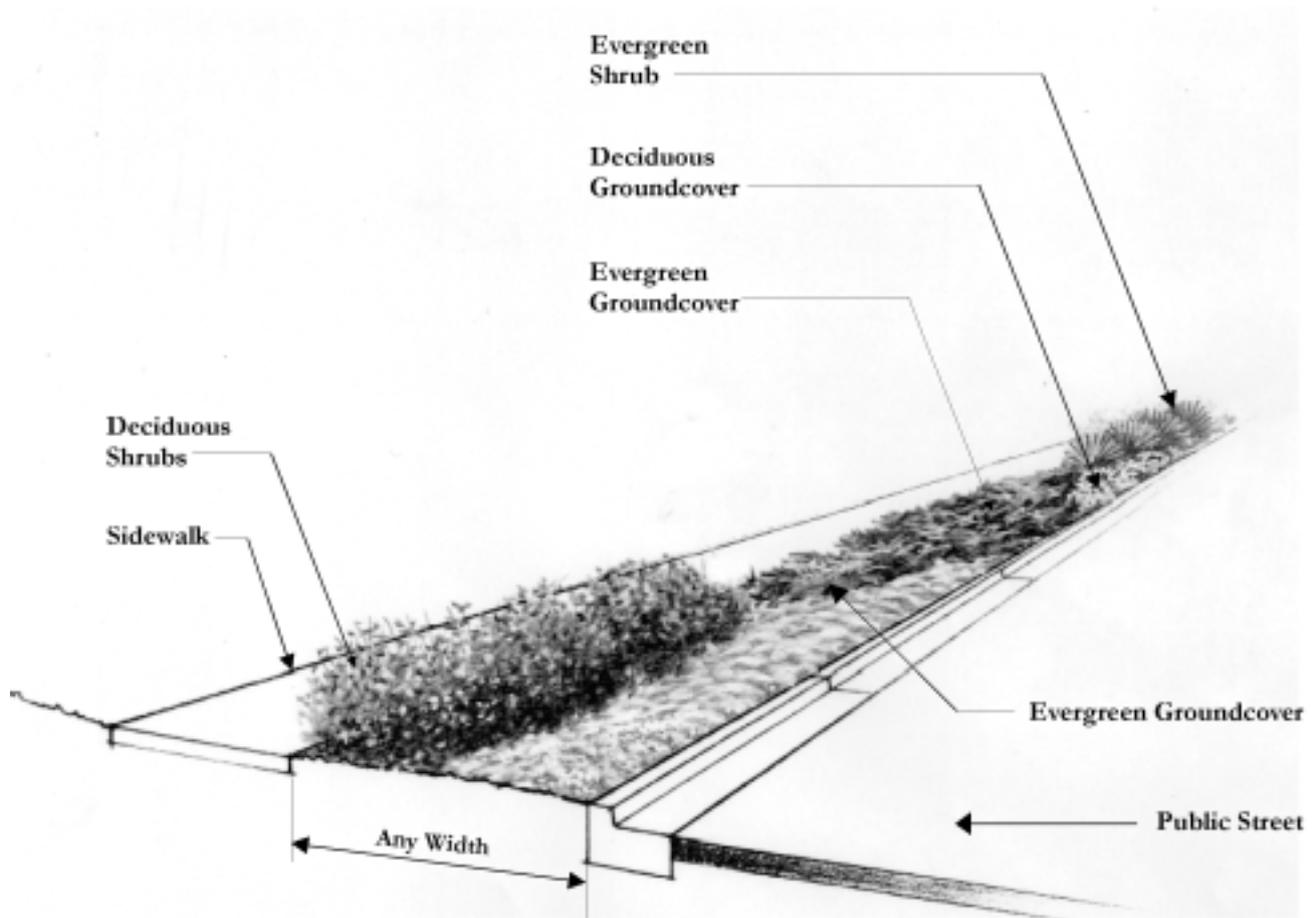




Street trees for shade and separation from the public roadway, with shrub plantings adding leaf texture, leaf color, and plant material height within the parkway. Plant selection might include flowering varieties for both shade trees and shrubs. Grading for this scheme should allow for tree planting slightly above surrounding soil elevation.



Shrubs with Ground Cover

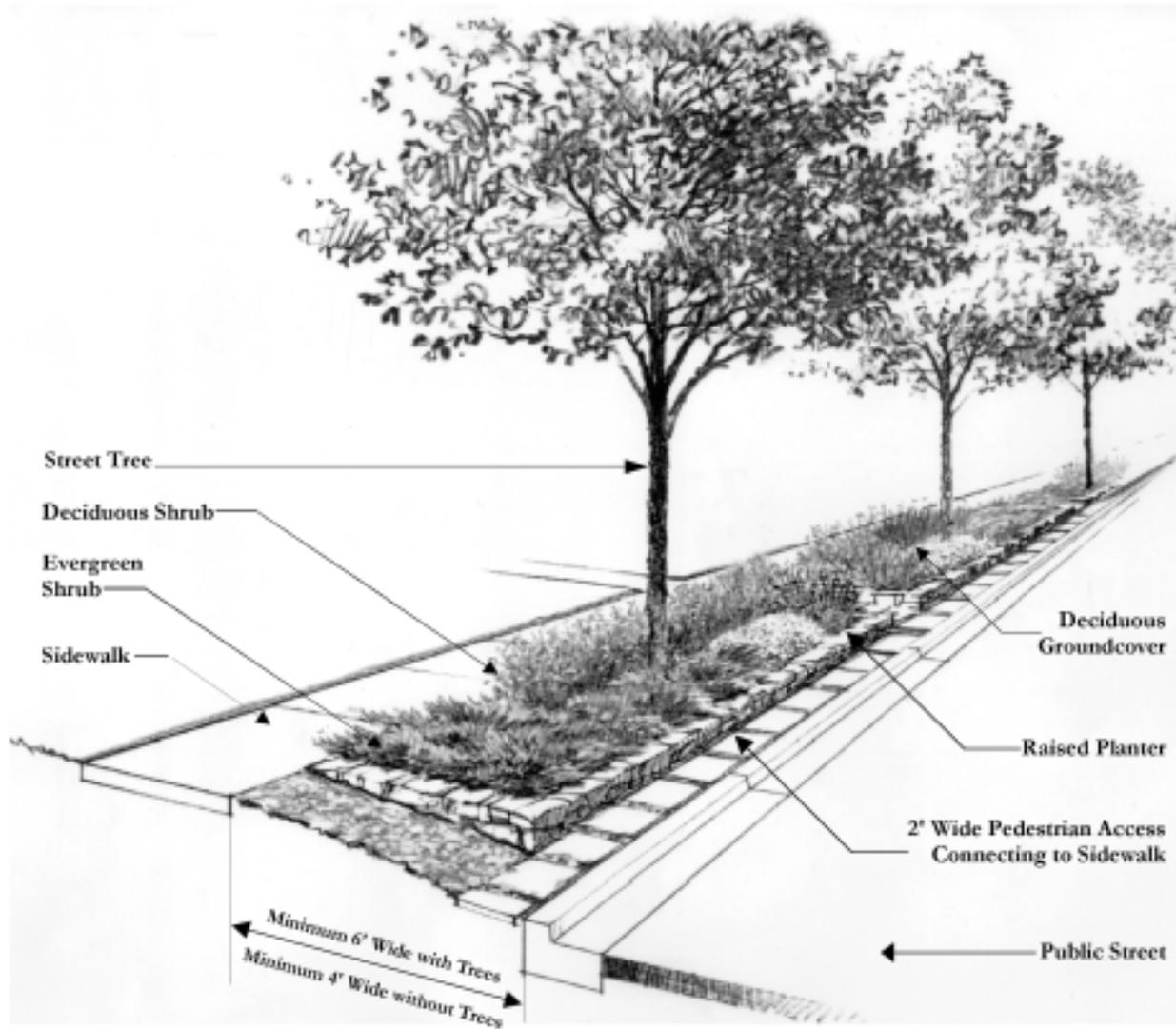




Shrub plantings add leaf texture, leaf color, and plant material height within the parkway. Ground cover can be planted as masses of one or as variety of ground cover plants that will cover all of the parkway area. Plant selection might include flowering varieties for both shrubs and ground covers. Grading for this scheme might allow for a variety of soil elevations to accent the planting arrangement.



Specialty Situation – Raised Planter





There may be situations that demand a unique design within the parkway. In situations with a large amount of pedestrian traffic, the design solution might include a 2' wide hard surfaced paved area adjacent to the street curb. This paving directs pedestrians to a sidewalk or driveway. Paving the entire parkway is discouraged.

Along streets with heavy traffic, for sloped parkways, or where a separation from the street is desired, a raised planter might be a design solution. This design allows for a concentration of plantings and care into a defined, protected area. Key design considerations involve allowing for adequate space for street trees to be included in planters, placing planters at least 2' from the street curb, and following the

height limitation of 30" within the parkway. Outside the raised planter, plants such as low growing drought tolerant grasses, and porous paving are suggested. Excessive maintenance can be avoided by placing mulch directly in contact with the soil.



Parkway Plant List

This list presents a few reliable plant materials that you might consider for your parkway project. Plants have been listed in a particular water need category based on standard parkway conditions. Some

plants are able to adapt to a variety of conditions. Check the references at the end of this brochure for plant adaptability and additional plants that meet your aesthetic, water, and maintenance requirements. Plants on this list conform to City height

limitations adjacent to street corners and driveway intersections (30" maximum for shrubs and first branch at 6' for deciduous trees for parkway plantings). Evergreen trees may require a 10' wide parkway.

Anticipated Water Need Per Year: **	Moderate 15-25" Per Year	Low 7-15" Per Year	Very Low 0-7" Per Year
Deciduous Street Tree <i>(40-60' Mature Height)</i>	American Linden Littleleaf or Crimean Linden* Norway Maple* Northern Red Oak White Ash	Patmore Ash Honeylocust White Oak Western Hackberry Swamp White or White Oak Ohio Buckeye*	Marshall Ash Summit Ash Western Hackberry Bur Oak Western Catalpa
Evergreen Street Tree <i>(20-60' Mature Height)</i>	Austrian Pine White Fir	Ponderosa Pine Scotch Pine Douglas Fir	Pinon Pine Bristlecone Pine Rocky Mountain Juniper
Ornamental Street Tree <i>(15-30' Mature Height)</i> <i>(For overhead wire areas)</i>	Washington Hawthorn Peking Tree Lilac Japanese Tree Lilac	Cockspur Hawthorn Caddo Maple Amur Chokecherry	Amur or Tartarian Maple Goldenrain Tree Russian or Downy Hawthorn
Deciduous Shrubs <i>(12-30" Mature Height)</i>	Neon Flash Spirea* Rock Cotoneaster* Cranberry Cotoneaster* Coral Beauty Cotoneaster* Emerald Mound Honeysuckle*	Blue Mist Spirea Little Princess Spirea* Daphne Spirea* Crimson Pygmy Barberry Meidiland Rose	Golddrop Potentilla* Sutters Gold Potentilla* Pawne Butte Sandcherry Dwarf Leadplant* Gro-Low Sumac*

Anticipated Water Need Per Year: **	Moderate 15-25" Per Year	Low 7-15" Per Year	Very Low 0-7" Per Year
Evergreen Shrubs <i>(12-30" Mature Height)</i>	Emerald Gaiety Euonymus* Emerald n' Gold Euonymus* White Bud Mugo Pine Spreading Broom*	Arcadia Juniper* Hughes Juniper* Youngstown Juniper*	Blue Star Juniper* Broadmoor Juniper Buffalo Juniper* Scandia Juniper* Sierra Spreader Juniper*
Ornamental Grasses <i>(12-30" Mature Height)</i>	Adagio Dwarf Maiden Grass Northern Sea Oats Tufted Hairgrass	Blue Avena Grass Japanese Blood Grass Dwarf Fountain Grass	Blue Fescue Grass Ribbon Grass Mexican Feather Grass
Deciduous Ground Cover <i>(2-12" Mature Height)</i>	Creeping Potentilla Rock Soapwort Bishops Weed Blue Charm Veronica Moonbeam Coreopsis	Himalyan Fleece Flower May Night Salvia Candytuft Stella D'Oro Daylily Plumbago	Mother-of-Thyme Wall Germander Snow in Summer Poppy Mallow Pussytoes
Evergreen Ground Cover <i>(2-12" Mature Height)</i>	Creeping Phlox Periwinkle Wolly Veronica Wintercreeper Ajuga	Sierra Spreader Juniper* Greenmound Juniper* Prostrate Mugo Pine Creeping Mahonia Creeping Red Thyme	Kinnikinnick Calgary Carpet Juniper* Buffalo Juniper* Pine Leaf Penstemon Prince of Wales Juniper* Sedum*
Turf/ Turf Alternatives <i>(2-12" Maintained Height)</i>	Bluegrass Tall Fescue Grass Rosy Veronica Ajuga Moneywort	Western Wheatgrass Turkish Veronica Himalyan Fleece Flower Bar Harbor Juniper* Icee Blue Juniper*	Blue Grama Grass Wooly Thyme Yellow or Purple Ice Plant Little Bluestem Grass Blue Chip Juniper*
Perennial Plants to Try	Spanish Peaks Foxglove Purple Mountain African Daisy Denver Gold Columbine Coral Canyon Twinspur	Silver Salvia Red Rocks Penstemon Lavender Mist Sun Daisy Showy Penstemon Sunset Hyssop	Rocky Mountain Penstemon Silver Blade Evening Primrose Basket-of-Gold Sulfur Flower Poppy Mallow

* Denotes salt tolerant plant materials

** Water in addition to natural precipitation.

All plants are **Plant Select**® species suggested for use by the Denver Botanic Garden and Colorado State University.

References

Colorado Springs Utilities

Water Resources

Xeriscape Demonstration Garden
719.668-4555

www.csu.org/xeri/

Xeriscape Demonstration Garden-Plant Checklist, brochure or website

City of Colorado Springs

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

City Forester's Office

719.385.5942

www.springsgov.com/parksrec/forestry/forestry

Trees for Colorado Springs

Urban Tree Care, booklet

Street Tree and Hard Surfacing Permits

New Home Street Tree Program

Colorado State University Cooperative Extension

719.636.8920

www.colostate.edu/Depts/CoopExt

Soils: Key to Successful Gardening, Fact Sheet 7.222

Xeriscaping, Fact Sheet 7.232

Fall & Winter Watering, Fact Sheet 7.211

City of Colorado Springs Landscape Code and Policy

719.385.5905

Appendix B: Plant List

Utility Notification Center of Colorado

Line locator service, schedule ahead
1.800.922.1987

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

www.nrcs.usda.gov/TechRes.html

Streetwise Plantings, by C. Colstrum Burrell,
Fine Gardening Magazine, October 2000,
pages 48-52

Passionate Gardening - Hellstrips, book by
Lauren Springer and Rob Proctor
pages 114-117

Rocky Mountain Plant Guide and
Rocky Mountain Perennial Plant Guide,
booklets by Colorado Nursery
Association, available for purchase at the
Colorado Springs Utilities,
Xeriscape Demonstration Garden or
Colorado Nursery Association
303.758.6672

Professional Landscape Architects

See yellow pages

Landscape Contractors, Landscape Suppliers, Hardware Stores and Garden Centers

See yellow pages

Prepared by :

Tapis Associates & NES, Inc.

Design & Layout by:

City of Colorado Springs

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

2000 & published for Web: 2006



A COLLABORATION OF



Colorado Springs Utilities

It's how we're all connected

Colorado
State
University
Cooperative
Extension



CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS
PARKS, RECREATION &
CULTURAL SERVICES -- FORESTRY