

# Native Plants for Water Conservation

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Small Farms and Horticulture

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**University of Idaho**  
Extension  
*Latah County*



# Topics



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Why landscape with Native Plants

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Some featured Plants

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Design Tutorial

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Sample Plans

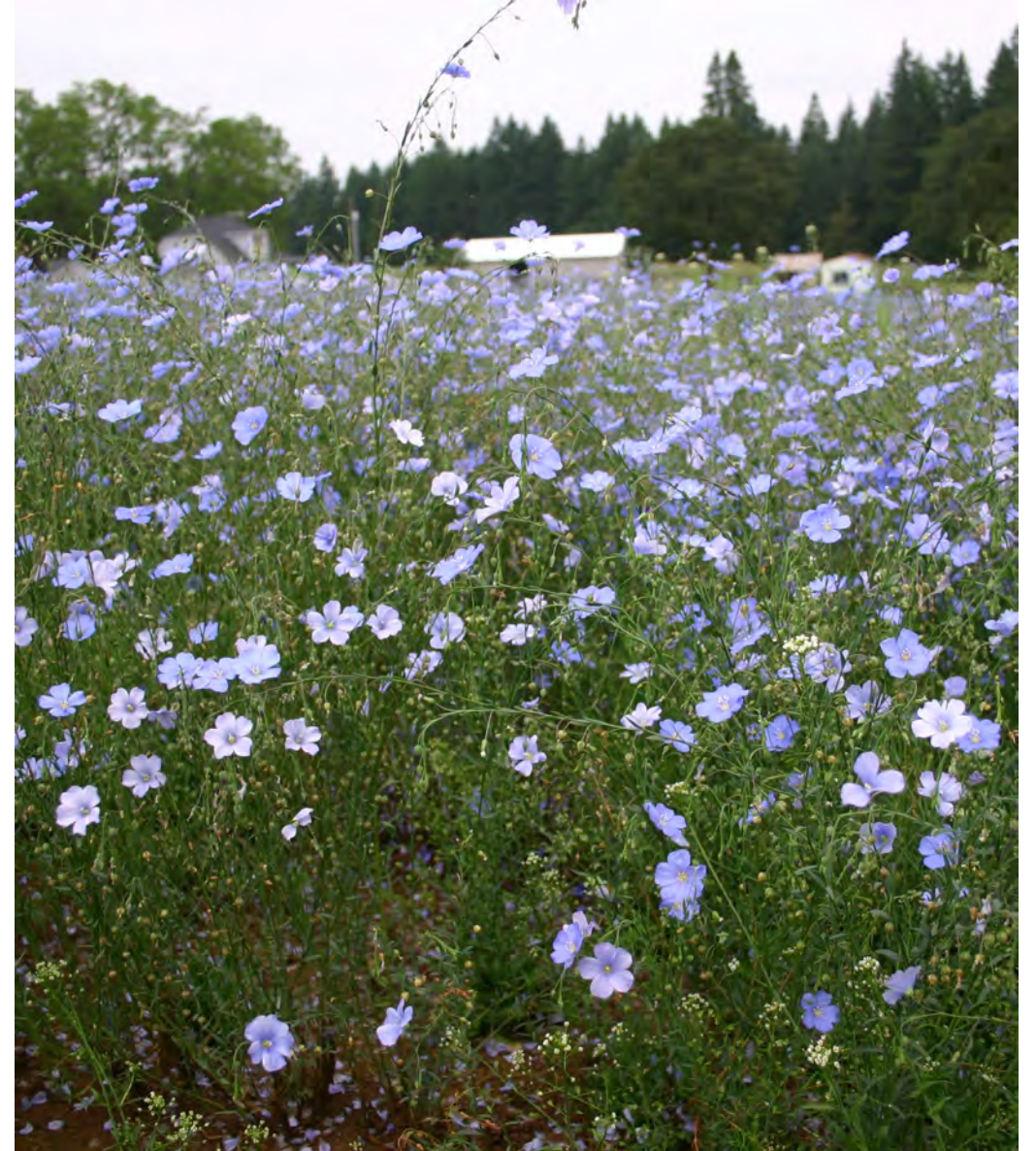
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Native Plant Design Checklist: last page of the publication (QR Code)

# Why use Native Plants?

## ***Native plants:***

- are adapted to the local climate and water cycle. Once established they **need very little irrigation water**
- use less water ***saves water and money***
- can be used in home landscaping similar to ornamentals
- planting beds can **add value and beauty** to your home landscape.
- **provide habitat** for wildlife, birds, and beneficial insects such as pollinators
- may require less maintenance once established
- What else?



A

**Golden currant,  
*Ribes aureum***



B



**Red osier dogwood,  
*Cornus sericea***



**Woods' rose,  
*Rosa woodsii***



**Douglas (Rose)  
spirea, Spiraea  
douglasii**



**Snowberry, *Symphoricarpos*  
spp. (*S. rotundifolius*, *S.*  
*oreophilis*, *S. albus*)**





# Kinnikinnick



Photo © 2002 Ben Lysell



# Elderberry





**Syringa  
(Philadelphus  
lewisii)**

# Why these featured plants?

tendency to be relatively hardy;

similarity in appearance to ornamental  
cousins;

ability to be trimmed;

relative benefit to native songbird and  
pollinator species;

ability to grow in a wide range of shade  
tolerance and water availability; and

aesthetic benefits, such as fall color, winter  
interest, varied height, or berry colors.

# Design Tutorial

## Assess

### Assess your site

- Property boundary
- N-S-E-W
- Plants to remove
- Plants to keep

## Set

### Set goals

- Native plants
- Outdoor patio
- Garden bed

## Design

### Design principles:

- Height & width
- Color
- Texture
- Seasonal changes

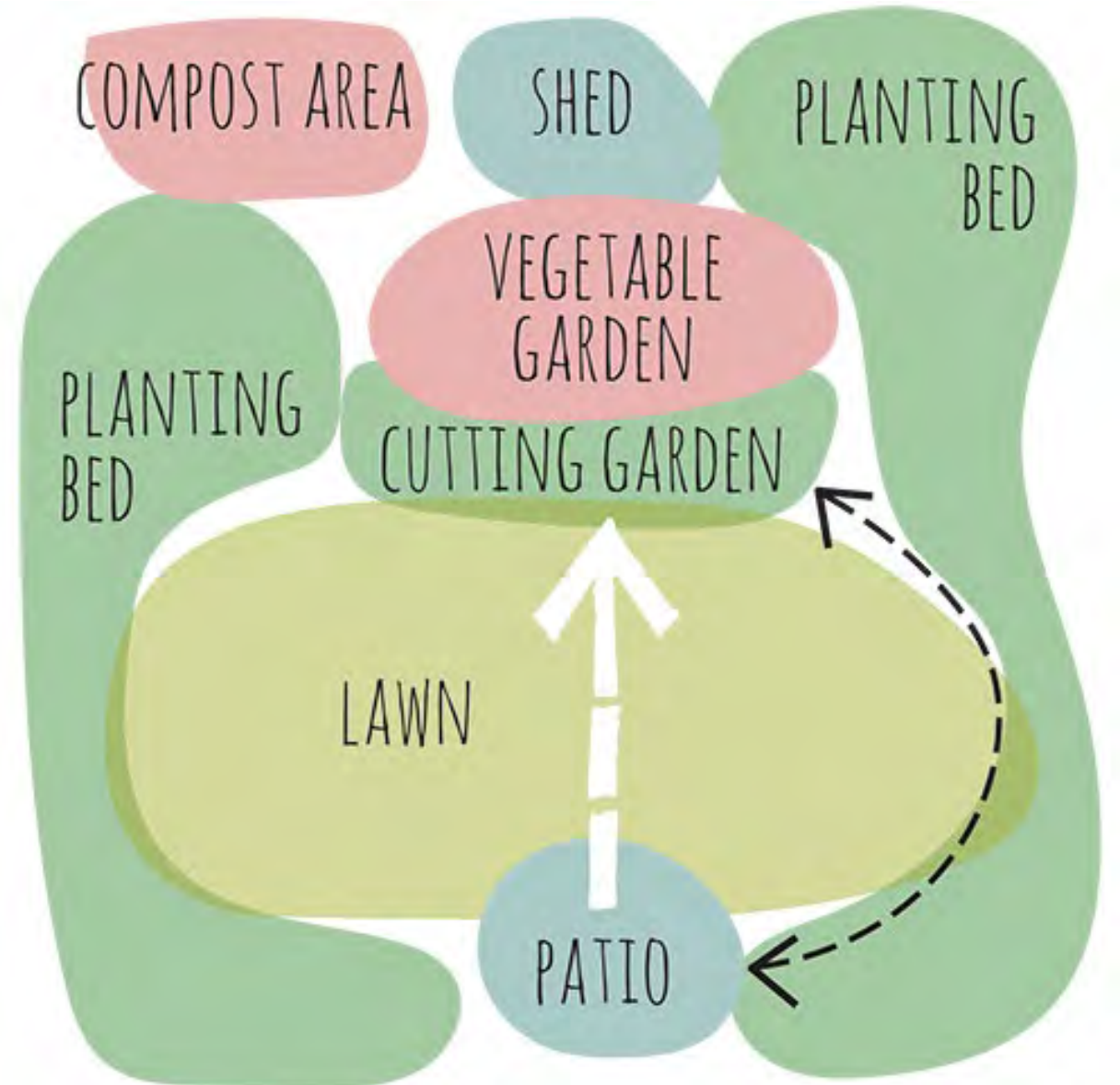
# Landscape Design

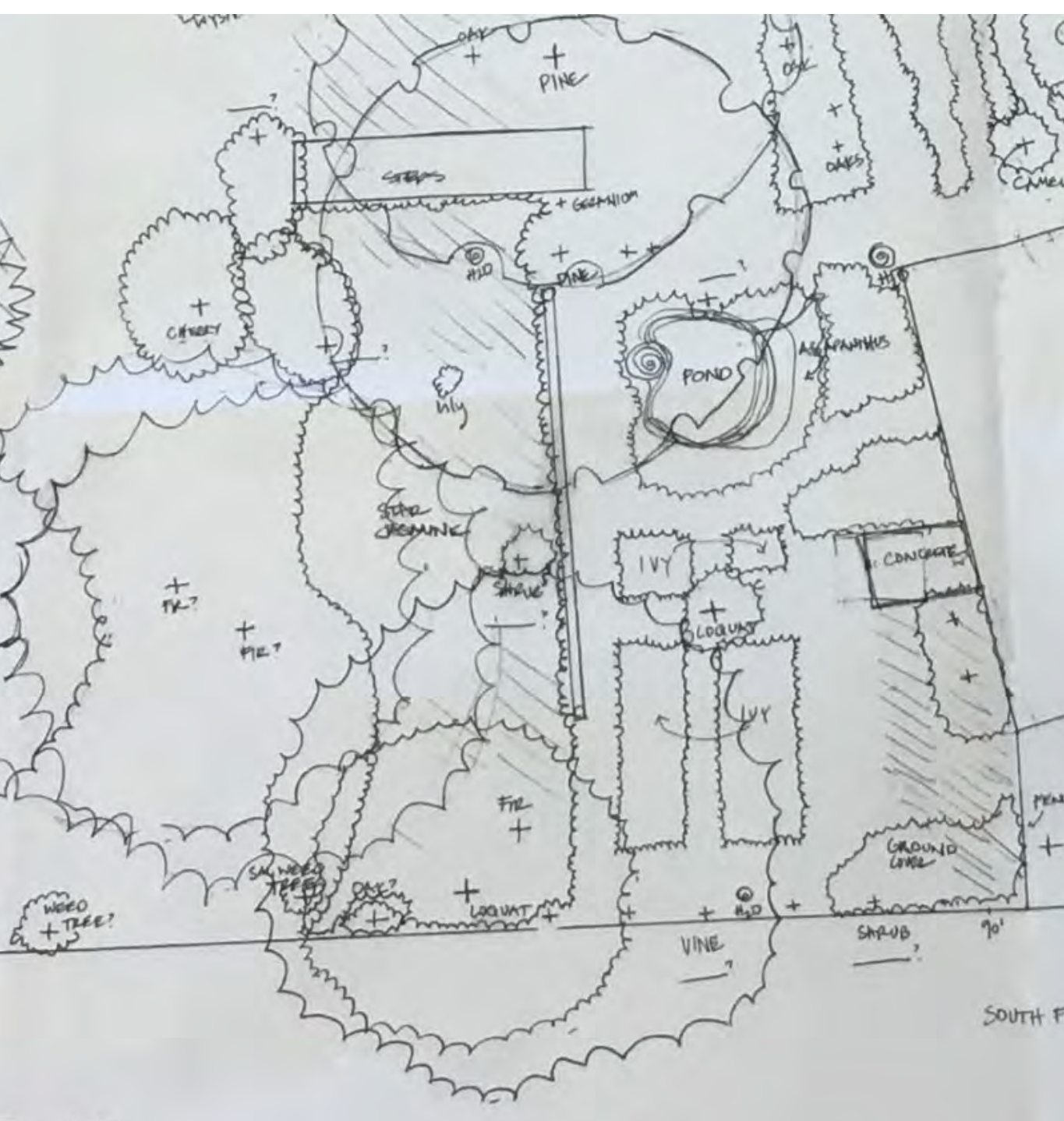
1. Evaluate your site
2. Develop an overall plan
3. Develop a planting plan
4. Install hardscapes
5. Install plants
6. Install irrigation



# Begin

1. Site Evaluation
    - Aerial photo from Google Maps
    - Measure your property
    - Use a survey
  2. Draw your garden or property outline
  3. Put **bubble outlines** over the top
  4. Refine areas to design with a scale in mind
    - Trees
    - Architectural features
    - Pathways
    - plants
- Optional: add trace paper between each step





# Evaluate your site

- Cardinal directions
  - north side of buildings are shady
  - South side of buildings is sunny and hot and dry
- Wind direction
- Water availability
- Other site-specific considerations
  - Busy street
  - Small lot
- What site considerations are you facing?

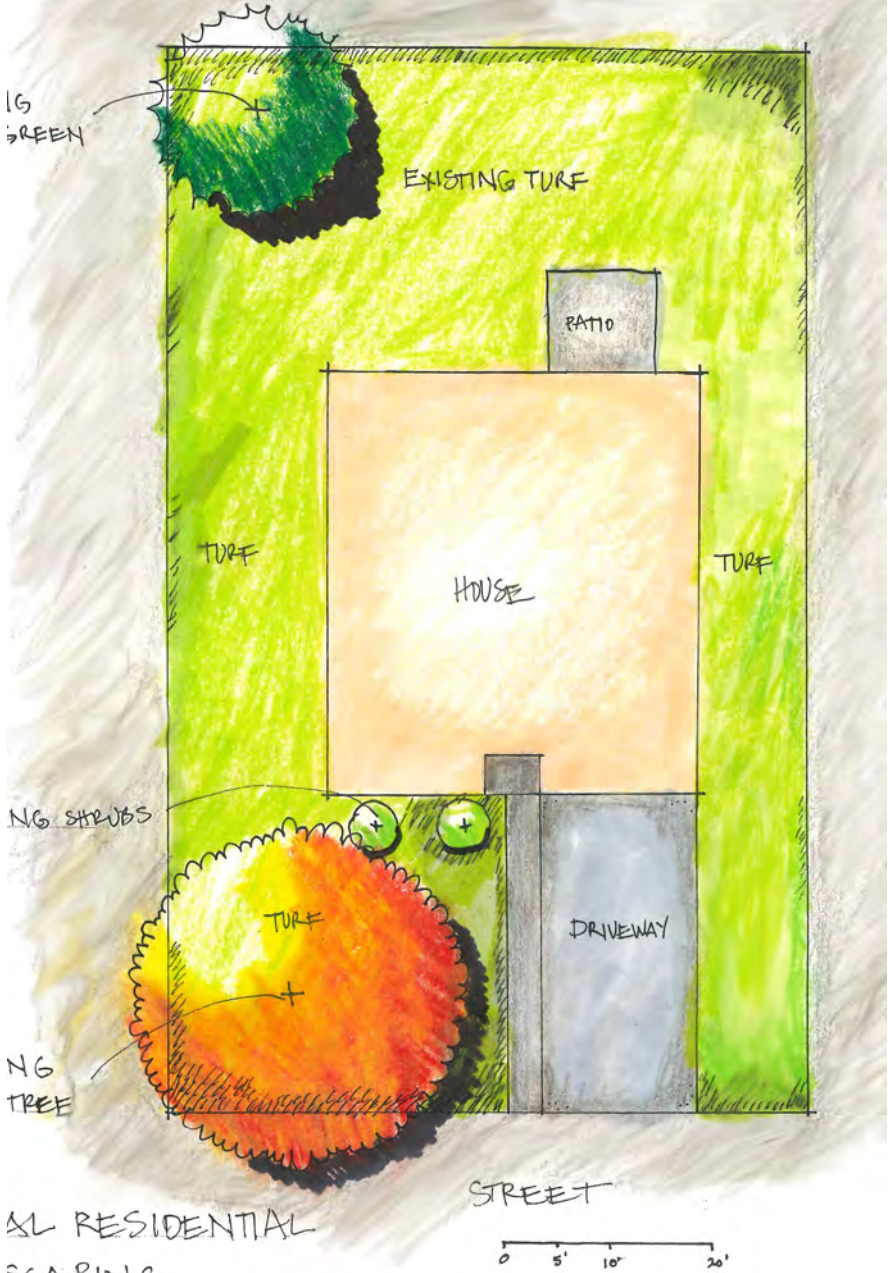




# Garden Design Concepts

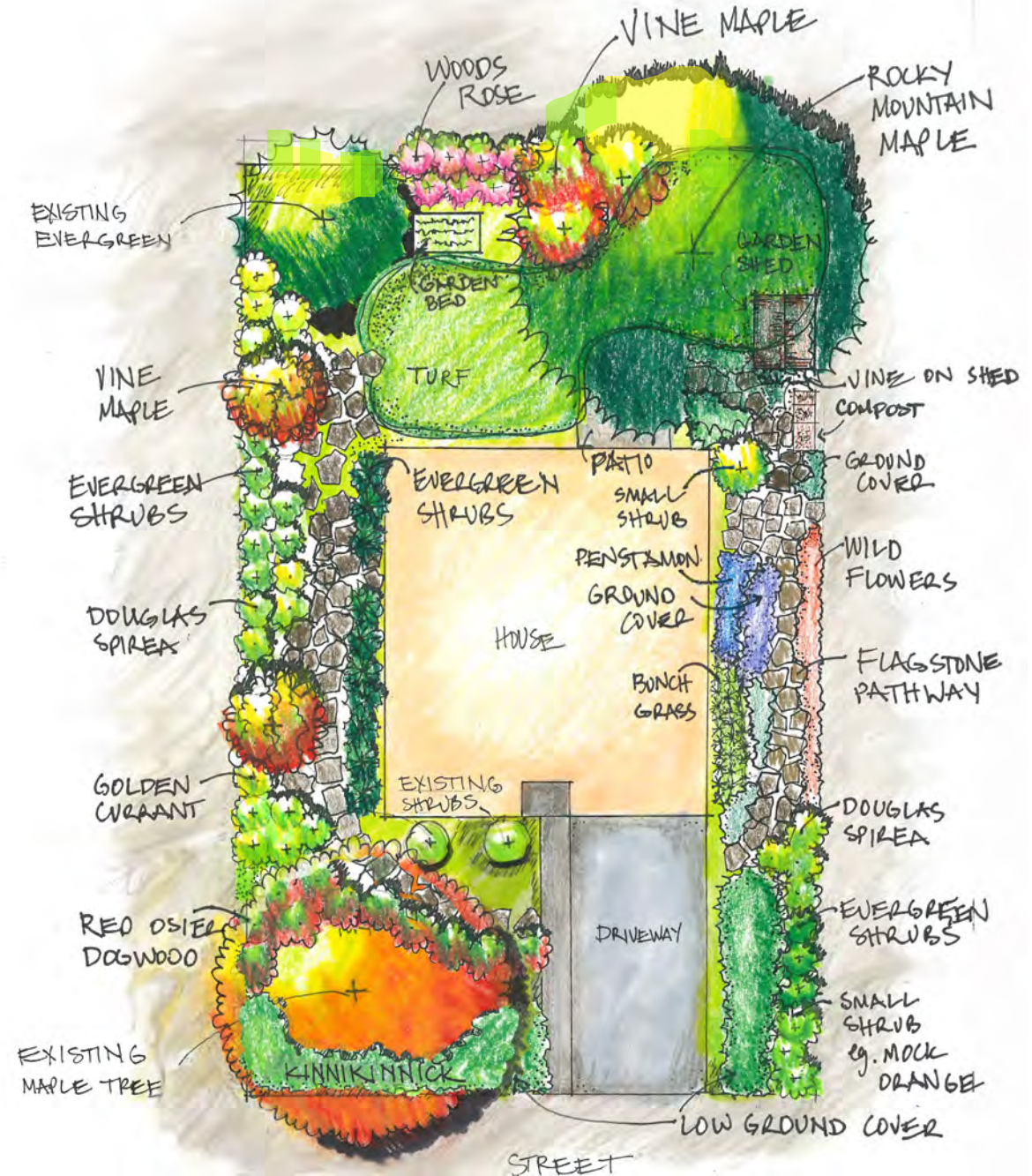
- What are your goals?
- Think of activity areas and outdoor rooms
- Imagine each space in each season
- Focus higher maintenance areas for curb appeal
- Use design principles with nature

# Typical Urban lot

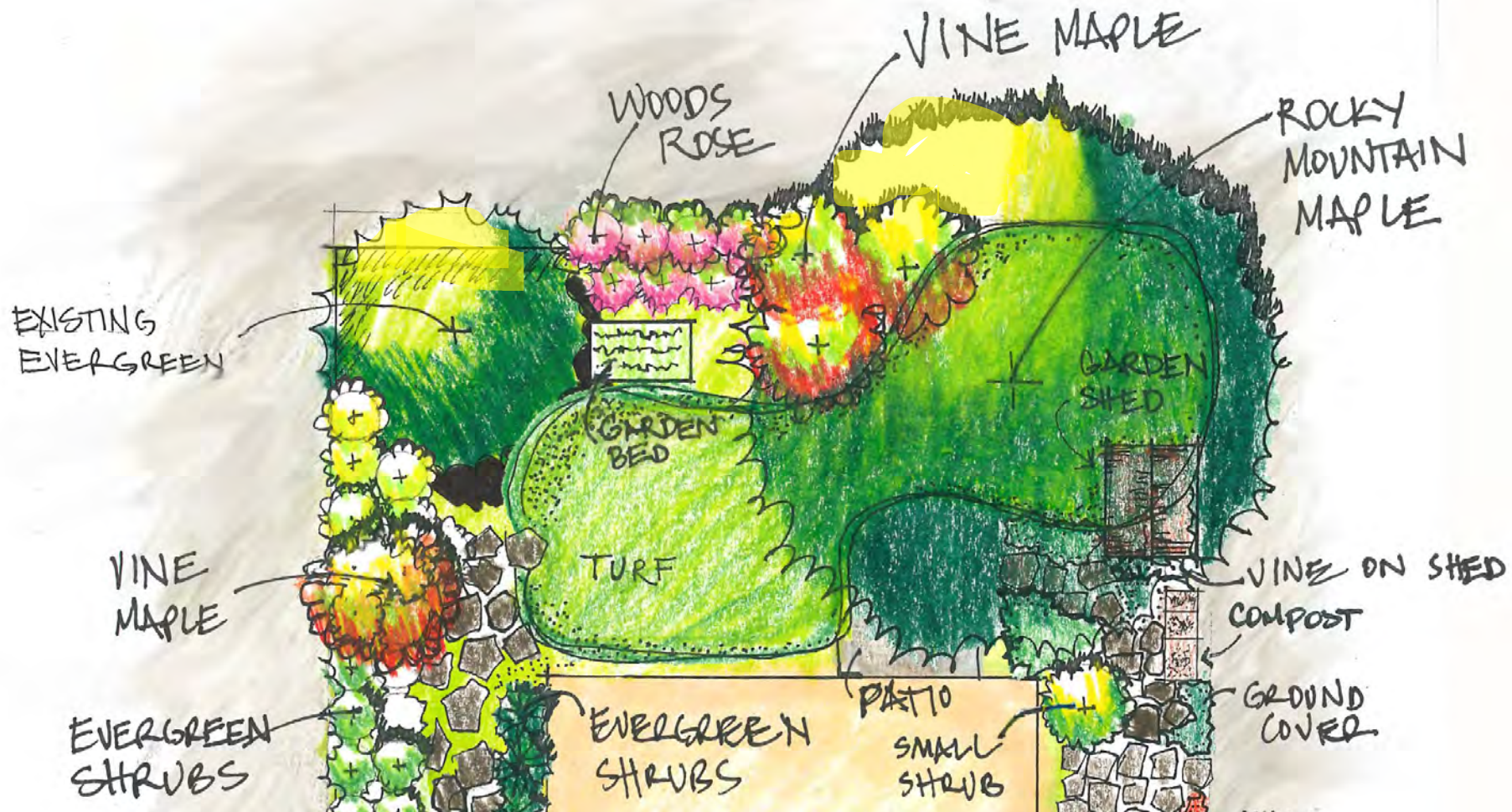


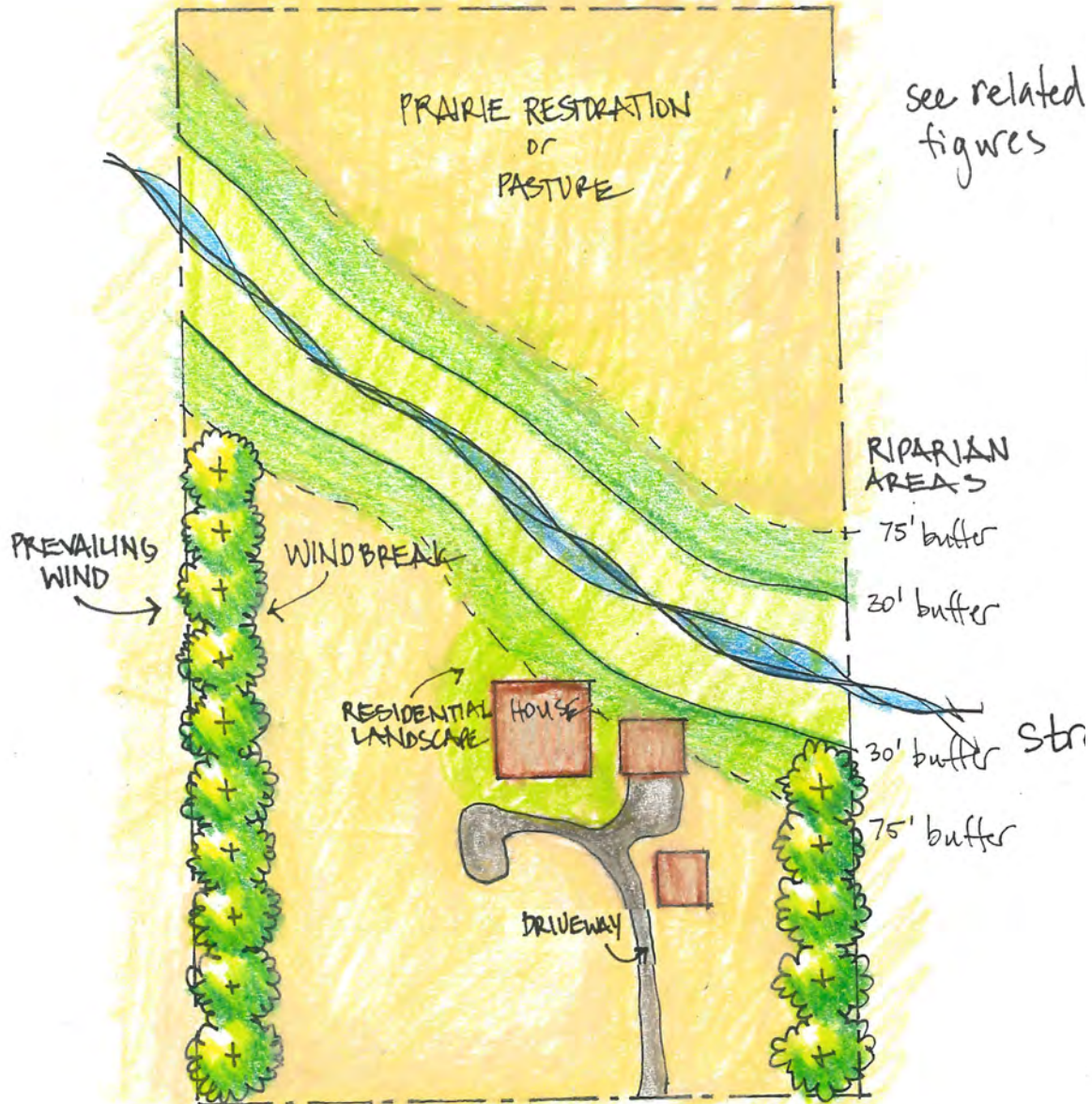
AL RESIDENTIAL  
SCAPING

# Revised Planting Plan



# Sample Planting Plan





RURAL PROPERTY EXAMPLE

Figure 7A Rural Lot Overview

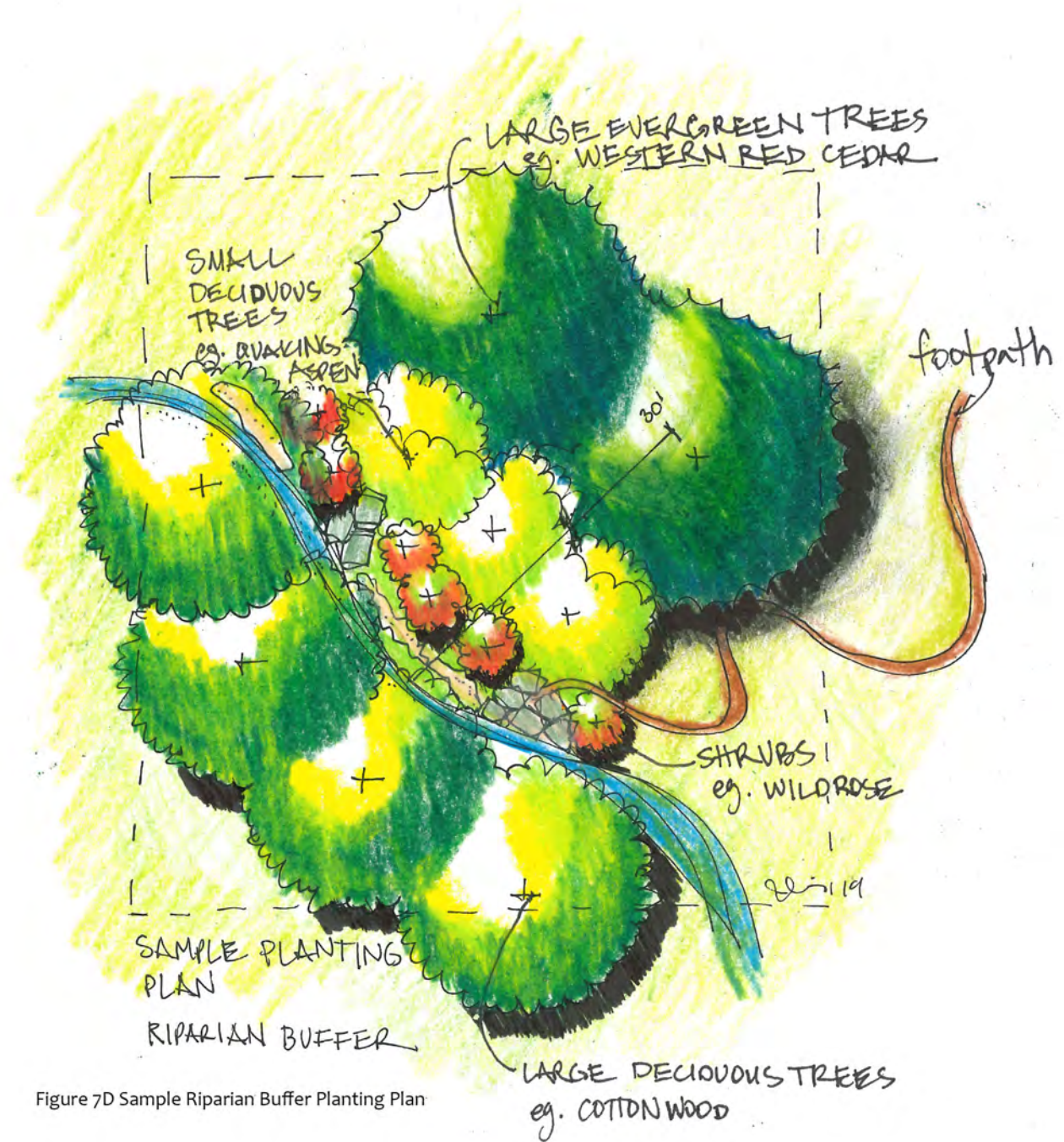


Figure 7D Sample Riparian Buffer Planting Plan

# Colorful Windbreak

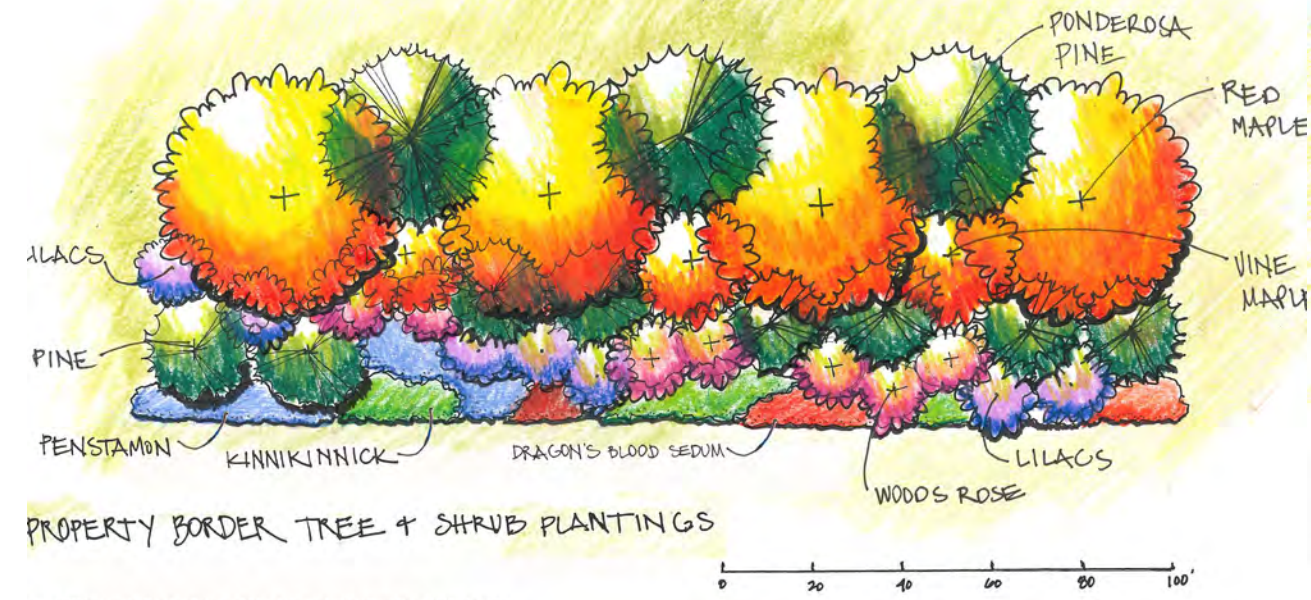


Figure 7B Property Border Tree and Shrub Sample Planting (Rural Windbreak)

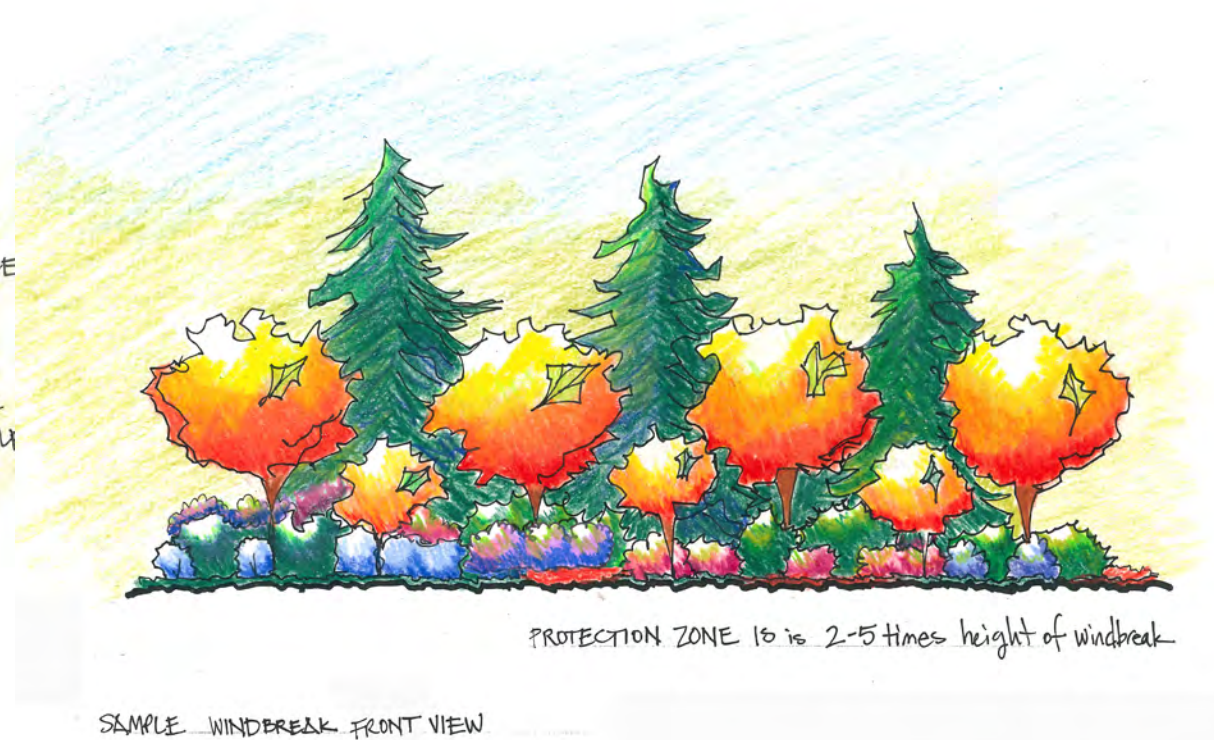


Figure 7C Property Border Tree and Shrub Planting (Windbreak) Front View

# Plant categories

- Ground Cover
- Low plants - e.g. tulips and other flowers
- Shrubs
- Vine
- Small Trees
- Large Trees



# Other Sample Plans

Plant Select.org:

<https://plantselect.org/design/downloadable-designs/>

City of Spokane

City of Moscow, ID

Spokane Water Nerds



# Checklist

- Look up for power lines
  - Do not plant trees that will grow large under power lines
- Look side-to-side
- Look at the scale of the house and how big your plants, trees or shrubs will get in relation to the house

## BUL 1010 APPENDIX

## NATIVE PLANT DESIGN CHECKLIST



Figure 10: Sample Riparian Buffer Planning Plan

Use this checklist to help you plan and prioritize your native plant landscaping process (to identify your design goals, site type, etc.). Then you can more easily decide what alterations are necessary. Through this process you can become mindful of which areas of your property hold more moisture and which tend to dry out so you can discover which plants make for a better match. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Which plants do better in wet and dry areas?
- Which thrive in or tolerate shady areas or low-lying ground cover?
- Which will prosper as tall and/or wide-spreading plants?

A little imagination and planning will help you realize the viewscape in your design as well as benefit your chosen plants as they grow and mature.

1. Identify your goals for the yard or landscape. Locate or identify potential hazards and other property characteristics:
  - Hidden infrastructure (In Idaho, call Dig Line before digging, 811 or 1-800-342-1585)
  - Sunny and shady areas; consider seasonal solar exposure
  - Wet and dry areas
  - Soil type(s) (Consider a soil test)
  - Areas for redesign and planting
  - Other considerations: sources and availability of plants; outline a project budget
2. Conduct a more targeted site evaluation by assessing/ apprehending the following elements (see also Mayes et al. [2019], p. 10–11, <https://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/BUL/BUL932.pdf>, for more detailed guidance):
  - Property shape, boundary lines, and necessary setbacks
  - Slope steepness and direction
  - Wind
  - Municipal or homeowner association requirements
  - Overhead wires
  - Existing hazards (e.g., big overhead branches)
  - Fire safe zone and considerations
  - Adequate distance from structures, structure locations within property boundary
  - Available water sources (native plants need water to get established)
  - Existing vegetation to keep
  - Existing vegetation to remove
3. Plan out pathways and access:
  - Identify the entry points
  - Identify how to route foot traffic
4. Anticipate the size and shape of various plants over time:
  - Envision whether or not a plant's growth will fulfill/ meet your design goals



**Thank you!**



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