Landscaping your Home

Introduction to Landscape Design

Most homeowners want to create a landscape that is uniquely theirs.
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Most homeowners want to create a landscape that is uniquely theirs
Careful Planning + Design + Installation + Care = Attractive Functional Enjoyable Landscape
Failure to Plan + Failure to Care = Frustration
Higher Costs
Poorly Maintained Plantings
Landscape Design

• Landscape design creates functional landscapes for the user’s lifestyle
• All materials, both living plants and non-living, when blended and balanced, provide attractive landscapes
Reasons For Landscape Renovation

Landscape renovation should ONLY be done to increase its functional uses and beauty.
Natural Factors

• Consider
  – Physical aspects of your property
  – Natural assets and liabilities
  – Environmental Elements such as:
    • Soils
    • Climate
    • Home orientation
    • Topography
    • Existing vegetation
Soils

• Know what plants will adapt to your soil
• Consider
  – pH
    • Alkaline or acid
  – Texture
    • Sand or silt clay
  – Most Utah soils are naturally alkaline
Landscaping New Homes

• With new homes, most topsoil has been removed or buried
• Considerable improvement is needed to get the kind of soil needed to grow an attractive landscape
Creating The Ideal Soil

- Soils usually have too much clay or sand. Organic matter improves both types of soil.
- Amend in large areas, not just planting holes or beds.
- Soil testing information is available from your local Utah State University Extension Service Office.
Climate

- Utah is mostly a high mountain desert.
- There are many variations in:
  - Rain
  - Snowfall
  - Wind
  - High and low temperatures during seasonal changes
Frost

- Growing seasons range from less than 30 days in higher elevations to 200+ days at lower elevations
- Minimum temperatures range from below -40°F to over 110°F
Plant Zone Maps Are Based on Minimum and Maximum Temperatures

• Some publishers of zone maps are:
  – The United States Department of Agriculture
  – Utah State University -- Utah Climate
  – Sunset Western Garden Book

• Zones are not interchangeable
Orientation Of The Home

• Place the house after considering
  - Relation to the sun
  - Prevailing wind direction
  - Existing trees
  - Surrounding buildings
  - Mountains
Design And Construction

• Create a substantial difference in home and landscape comfort and livability
  – Carefully placed shade trees
  – Naturally designed windbreaks
  – Noise reduction
  – Visual screening of undesirable areas
Topography

• Correctly used, disadvantages, can become a valuable asset
  – Slopes add interest and create unusual possibilities for landscape features
  – Rocks and other diversified areas add interest
  – Drainage is essential but can be an excellent landscape tool
Landscaping Advantages

- Adds useable living area
- Increases property values by 10% - 30%
- Beautifies the home
- Makes the home more functional
- Provides essential green area
Landscaping for the User

- Don’t just plant plants
- Know how and where to start
- Use plants to solve problems
- Use plants to create function
- Use plants to create beauty
Personalizing Your Landscape

• Inspiration Sources include:
  – Photos of desirable landscapes
  – Pictures from magazines or newspapers
  – Paintings
  – Sculpture
  – Travel
  – Advertisements featuring plant materials
Public Gardens Are A Good Source For Ideas

• Red Butte Gardens
Public Gardens Are A Good Source For Ideas

- USU Botanical Gardens
Public Gardens Are A Good Source For Ideas

- Temple Square and the Church Office Building Plaza
Public Gardens Are A Good Source For Ideas

- Jordan River Peace Garden
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- Sugarhouse Park
Public Gardens Are A Good Source For Ideas

• State Capitol Building
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• Thanksgiving Point
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Incorporate Yourself

- Landscaping desires
- Special memories
- Special places
- Favorite colors
- Favorite materials
- Appealing shapes and forms
Design Help

- **Landscape Architects** -- degree in landscape architecture
- **Landscape Contractors** -- licensed contractors
- **Garden Designers** -- experience and education varies
- **Nurseries or Garden Centers** -- individuals qualified to offer landscape design assistance
Using The Help of a Landscape Designer

• Spend time explaining exactly what you want
  – Provide the designer with enough information to help them personalize your design
  – Provide adequate information; if you do not the design may not be the kind you wanted
Designing The Home Landscape

- The Public Area
- The Service Area
- The Living Area
The Public Area

- Most visible
- Frames the home and emphasizes the focal point using plants
- Blends the house with the natural surroundings
- Maintains open vistas to the home
The Public Area

- Softens the architectural lines of pavement and structures
- Horizontal ground lines combine with the vertical structural lines of the structure
Focal Points and Designs

• Usually the doorway serves as the focal point; landscape plants should draw the eye there

• The best designs are simple, easily maintained landscapes, without frills and distractions
Focal Points and Designs

- Trees should not bisect view of the house
- Balance and proportion are important when selecting plant materials
The Service Area

- Contains:
  - Clothes lines
  - Garbage cans
  - Firewood
  - Compost piles
  - Vegetable gardens
  - Fruit trees
The Service Area

- **Utilities**
- **Storage for:**
  - Lawnmowers
  - Snow blowers
  - Garden tools
  - Fertilizers
  - Outdoor furniture
  - Recreational vehicles and equipment
Service Areas Should Be

- Screened from public views
- Convenient
- Small; possessions expand to the space available
- Well managed; some service functions can be skillfully designed into other areas
Managing the Service Area

- Include vegetables in attractive flower and border plantings
- Fruit trees can double as landscape ornamentals
- Play equipment placed here but should be visible from the house
The Living Area

- Creates an extension of the family living area
- Make a personal design that reflects the family’s habits, needs, and desires
- Define outdoor living areas with walls, ceilings, floors, and windows
Focal Points

• Selected trees or shrubs
• Garden structures
• Statuary
• Fountains
• A picturesque view
The “Floor” of the Outdoor Room

- Turf
- Paved surfaces
- Ground covers
- Decks
- Matched areas
The “Walls” of the Outdoor Room

- Structures and plant materials as the borders
- Fences, supplemented by plants
- Natural plant walls
- Natural rocks or hills
The “Ceiling” of the Outdoor Room

- Mostly sky
- Softened, blended and framed by the overhead canopy of tree branches
- Patio covers, gazebos, and archway arbors add to the canopy
- Plant materials also serve as curtains for areas that are best screened
Consider Your Needs

- Recreational equipment
- Outdoor relaxation
- Cooking areas
- Specialty gardens
Living Areas Are Dynamic

- Change with changes in age and interest
- Play equipment and sandboxes may be replaced with decks and flower beds
Landscape Designs

Formal Vs Informal
Formal Landscapes

- Designs have
- Balance
- Geometric patterns
- Straight lines
- Perfect symmetry
Formal Landscapes

• Accessories include
• Fountains
• Pools
• Sculptures
• Topiary
• Formal hedges
Formal Landscapes

- Architecture has
- Formal facades
- Centered entryways
- Symmetrical windows
- High maintenance
Informal Landscapes

- Architecture follows basic landscape principles
- Asymmetrical
  - Curves
  - Random features
  - Lends itself to asymmetrical home.
Well Done Landscapes Often Contain a Variety of Formal and Informal Garden Designs

Mix both types for overall appeal but don’t to overdo it
Formal Or European Gardens Features

- Patterned after medieval knot gardens
- Small, rectangular plots are enclosed by clipped hedges of boxwood or other plants
- Walkways are brick or gravel
- Picture-perfect gardens are high maintenance, suitable for areas such as accents or focal points.
Oriental Gardens Features

- Stones
- Trees
- Shrubs
- Rely upon unusual shapes and textures
- Well defined
- Few flower beds and limited turfgrass areas.
Wild or Woodland Gardens
Features

• Suggest alpine slopes or meadows, woodlands or desert areas
• Informal flowers include wildflowers and natural plants
• Natural stone, wood, and water features
• Make use of many trees and shrubs
Cottage or English Garden Features

• Abundant annual and perennial flowers
• Flowerbeds backed with formal or informal hedges
• Many different plant materials
• Weathered wood or stone walkways
Spanish or Mediterranean Garden Features

- Traditional to southwestern landscapes
- Effective with many traditional home styles
- Wrought iron accessories
- Large paving stones
- Small fountains and pools
- Drought tolerant plants
- Well-balanced symmetry with formal design
Contemporary Garden Features

- Raised flower beds
- Planters
- Paved areas
- Decks or patios
- Outdoor cooking areas
- Low maintenance
- Turfgrass
Designing The Base Map

• Analyze the site
• Make changes with pencil and eraser instead of crowbar, shovel, and wheelbarrow
Creating The Base Map

• Draw accurate, clearly defined property boundaries on graph paper
• Include home and all permanent hard-surfaced areas
• Note the location of windows and doors, utility connections, water faucets, overhead wires, and other permanent features
Creating The Base Map

• Add contours to show where slopes and drainage patterns
• Inventory and map out existing plantings
• Determine those to keep and those to remove
• Make notes of views to change
• Place the compass directions on the map
Creating The Base Map

• Include additional notes about microclimates such as sun, shade, wind, or other problems
• Make copies or blue prints to draw on as you experiment with your landscape designs
• If you want to make extensive changes, start over with a new, clean copy
Landscaping Principles

• Proportion
• Balance
• Variety
• Unity
Following The Designs

• Throughout the extent of the landscape
• Throughout life of plant
• Create strong, observable lines and repetition of various shapes
• Blend harmonious colors and different sizes, shapes and textures
Proportion

- Structural and plant elements are in scale to the house
- Choose trees and shrubs that are proportional to the home at their mature size
- Create flowerbeds, shrubs, fences, sidewalks, driveways, and other elements in proper proportion with the house
Balance

• Create visual weight on either side of the focal point using
  – Mass
  – Form
  – Color
Balance

• **Symmetrical**
  - Sides are essentially mirror images of one another

• **Asymmetrical**
  - Differences in size, colors, textures, and plant placing creates balance
Variety

• Adds interest
• Creates focal points using
  – Different in plant sizes
  – Sculptures
  – Different textures
  – Different colors
• Emphasizes certain objects
Unity

- Unity and variety go together to create a beautiful landscape.
- In areas you are trying to emphasize, variety help create emphasis in appropriate areas.
- In areas where no emphasis is desired, lack of variety keeps the eye from being drawn to that area.
Foundation Plantings

- Blend the vertical lines of the house to the horizontal lines of the soil to draw the eye toward the focal point (generally the front door)
- Use plants which mature to about 1/2 of the height of the house to the eves or roofline
Foundation Plantings

• Are easily designed on symmetrical homes
• Can be equally effective on asymmetrical homes
• Solve architectural problems by creating a new visual effect
Foundation Plantings

• Avoid
  – Planting right next to the foundation of the home
  – Using too many kinds of plants
  – Tall plants that have to be over-pruned to maintain their size
  – Continuous straight lines of plant materials across the front of the house
Foundation Planting

• Avoid
  – Plants that grow and cover windows
  – Plants that bisect the house
  – Trying to cover an entire foundation all at once
  – Too many different bright colors or unusual foliage types