

Naturescaping Planning Worksheet

Adapt this worksheet as needed to be relevant to your site, including adding more information if desired.

(If you have multiple sites, or parts to your project, you can # or Name them and use the entire worksheet for each of them by noting that number or name below)

I. Overview of site ____

1. **What are your overall priorities and goals for the site of concern?**
2. **Describe and document** your chosen project site. Consider the **size of the space** and any **constraints** (using the [measurement resources](#) if necessary). Map out your details about **existing infrastructure**, planned **new infrastructure**, **existing vegetation** to stay or go, etc.

Remember to note and document the **sun exposure** at this site in midsummer and the **soil composition/texture**.

3. Begin cataloging your **design goals/objectives**, both **functional** and **aesthetic**.
4. What are the **primary site challenges** you hope to overcome?
5. What are the **secondary** challenges you're facing on the site in question (or in context with the rest of the site)?
6. **Phases:** Completely changing your home landscape is a large task, and can be overwhelming to take on all at once. We recommend breaking your project into phases! By breaking your project into phases, it is much more feasible and easier to maintain momentum to follow through with your project until it is finished.

Map out for yourself a few of the phases you plan to take for your project. Note: This is different from priorities in that there may be some phases that need to happen before fulfilling a priority (e.g., sheet mulching, dealing with critical issues like drainage or erosion, or the need for access for large equipment or materials prior to plants that might close that access).

7. **Layout:** Map out the configuration of your pathways, planting beds, entertaining space, play areas, etc. -- document your preferred layout options with the context of all your goals.

- 8. Hardscape options:** If you're planning for hard paths or patios, what material choices are you considering? Remember you can phase this in, too, as budget permits (e.g. wood chip paths to start, maybe urbanite or pavers later; an urbanite wall for now, maybe a boulder wall later; etc.).

II. Initial Planting Ideas:

[Please make notes on the specific plants you are considering, or if unsure, document your goals, e.g., "Tree that is narrow enough to fit into space that's X by Y" or "shrub that has XYZ properties," and so on, and then use the search tools we've provided to find options for those goals.]

1. Canopy Options (if needed, describe goals and site issues leading to these choices):
2. Mid & low options/other woody plants or very tall perennials (if needed, describe goals and site issues leading to these choices):
3. Perennials, ferns (if needed, describe goals and site issues leading to these choices):
4. Ornamental grasses (if needed, describe goals and site issues leading to these choices):
5. Bulbs/other ephemerals (if needed, describe goals and site issues leading to these choices):
6. Groundcovers (if needed, describe goals and site issues leading to these choices):
7. Vines and any structures — including plants! — needed to support them (if needed, describe goals and site issues leading to these choices):

III. Specifics / Data-gathering

Here's a checklist of other tasks that might apply to your project, as well as resources to help you complete them:

Photos of your Site

It's helpful to have these on hand as you continue to consider your site goals and options; consider annotating them in different seasons and uploading them to an album somewhere like Dropbox or Google Photos/Drive.

Drainfield info & plant ideas

There are a few options here if you're missing information like your septic dimensions:

- a. Start with [this website](#).
- b. If you want to look at original as-built drawings associated with your permit, you can go to [this website](#) and enter your parcel number to look up various permits associated with your property. If you don't know your parcel number, find it in Thurston GeoData: <https://www.geodata.org/>

Planting ideas for drainfields: If your project includes a drainfield planting, please see [this guidance document](#) created for Naturescaping.

Locate utilities

If there's any chance of utilities in the area where you intend to start digging, call 811 early in your planning process to get a "Locate" done for free.

HOA regulations

If you have an HOA, be sure you check on covenants or any other requirements and get certainty that your goals are OK under the rules governing your neighborhood. Keep track here of any limitations that might interfere.