

# **HIGHLAND RANCH HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION**

## **LANDSCAPE MANUAL**

VERY IMPORTANT: An incredible amount of weeds will grow out of rock, bark and other non-growing ground covers unless you use weed barrier fabrics underneath. Black plastic (visqueen) does not last well and should not be used for this purpose.

ALSO VERY IMPORTANT: Washoe County requires that portions of your front yard within 4 ½ feet of the curb must remain mostly level and available for pedestrian traffic. The only materials allowed in that area are sidewalks, concrete installed by a licensed and bonded contractor to County specifications, grass or rock smaller than 1.5 inches. If your landscaping in this area violates County standards you will have to return the areas to an acceptable condition.

The purpose of this manual is to assist you in designing and installing low water use landscaping that achieves all of the following Highland Ranch goals:

1. It will be beautiful and still use less water and result in a low water bill.
2. It will be inexpensive to purchase and install.
3. It will survive during drought years.

This manual only pertains to areas of your property between the fence and the street, which are required to be landscaped as specified in this manual. No landscaping standards are set for areas of your property behind the fence.

### **Information**

Demonstration gardens of many appropriate plants have been constructed at the arboretum at Rancho San Rafael Park, and at Sierra Pacific Power Company on Neil Road near South Virginia. We recommend books on dry climate gardening published by Ortho Books

### **Coverage**

Upon a 90 day close of escrow on a resale, 90% of your front yard (and side street yard on corner lots) must be covered, and therefore, not bare dirt year round.

The following requirements have been established to keep front yard landscaping consistent with the goals listed above. In each case, the percentage should be of

the portions of property visible from the street that is not already covered by concrete when you move in. Innovative and interesting designs that do not comply with these requirements should be submitted, in advance, to the Design Committee, which has the authority to grant variances from these requirements.

### **In Front Yard Excluding in Front of the Vehicle Gate**

1. Any combination of the following materials, rock, gravel, bark or concrete, shall not cover more than 60% of the area. Of that 60%, no more than a third can be concrete, brick, waterfalls or any other impervious coverage.
2. Lawn shall not cover more than 70% of the area.
3. Areas that are mostly growing plants (including lawn) shall cover at least 40% of the available area. Until plants have grown to maturity, smaller temporary plants should be planted to cover the ground.

### **In Front of Vehicle Gate**

1. Pea gravel (or larger) may cover up to 100% of the space.
2. Concrete may cover up to 100% of the space. Permits for concrete must be obtained first from the Highland Ranch Design Committee.
3. The area may be landscaped with a combination of hard surface that can be driven on, and growing areas that will not be driven on.

### **Portion Facing Side Street on Corner Lots**

1. Any combination of the following materials, rock, gravel, bark or concrete, shall not cover more than 80% of the area. Of that 80%, no more than a fourth can be concrete, brick, waterfalls or any other impervious coverage.
2. Lawn shall not cover more than 40% of the area.
3. Areas that are mostly growing plants (including lawn) shall cover at least 20% of the available area. Until plants have grown to maturity, smaller temporary plants should be planted to cover the ground.

### **Types of Plants**

Sun Valley has been exempt from all watering restrictions in past years, mainly because Sun Valley is fully metered. Even so, it is still possible that future restrictions could prevent you from watering your lawn at all, or make it

prohibitively expensive. The dry climate books list a variety of plants that consume a great deal less water than lawn, but yet result in beautiful landscaping. Some plants may use less water, but may also be easily damaged in drought conditions. For that reason, we recommend that you buy from the list of drought tolerant plants in Appendix A at the end of this manual.

### **What is Drought Tolerant?**

The following is courtesy of Moana Nursery. Frequently, the term *drought tolerant* is thought of as being “dry” or “desert like”, but this is an unfair description. Plants which are drought tolerant are just that; tolerant of drought conditions. They need not be limited to cactus varieties or other dry climate plants, but include a wide selection of lush, green plants that are attractive in any landscape. Once established, these plants are able to withstand long periods of dryness without deterioration, going several weeks or in some cases, an entire season between deep watering. Such plants reduce the impact on limited water supplies. When planting drought tolerant species for trees and shrubs, it is necessary to water frequently and deeply for one or two seasons. Once the plant has become established, it can thrive on far less water than we are accustomed to providing. If plants are watered frequently such as during lawn watering, they become shallow rooted and, therefore, dependent upon frequent irrigation. On the other hand, less frequent watering will promote deep rooting which makes for a healthier plant, which also becomes established more quickly. Trees, shrubs and plants also require less water when proper gardening practices are followed. This includes proper irrigation, the use of mulches and controlling weeds. The final result is healthy plants and a more efficient use of water in the high desert climate. Once established, a large majority of most landscape plants are relatively drought tolerant. It is important to realize that plants which are not considered drought tolerant can still be planted and water conserved if the following gardening practices are followed: use organic material or water holding polymers at time of planting; installation of drip or soaker hose irrigation systems; using mulches on top of ground where plants are growing; controlling water robbing weeds around landscape plants.

### **Water Valve Location**

The valve to shut off water to your home is located on the side near the back of the garage. In the ground, within 1 foot of this valve, is a “tee” in the water line. You can dig down to this tee, remove the cap and attach an irrigation system. Remember that you must have a backflow prevention device. Backflow devices and above ground manifolds must be behind the builder installed fences.

## **Additional Information**

### **Design Consideration**

The Sun Valley General Improvement District has two important requirements. Sewer cleanouts and water meter boxes must remain visible and readily accessible. In addition, water meter boxes cannot be fenced in.

Native soil at Highland Ranch is mostly decomposed granite, which may be difficult for roots to penetrate (weeds of course, have no problem). All soil under plantings should have a soil amendment added, such as compost, shredded wood or some other organic product. Failure to do so will usually cause landscaping not to survive.

Sprinkler systems must include a backflow prevention device, which must be clearly shown on the permit application. You may wish to know the water pressure at your home prior to designing a sprinkler system.

Under each driveway, approximately 4 feet back from the black felt strip (located behind the driveway approach) near the curb we placed a 2 inch plastic pipe large enough for water pipes and electric wires.

Your landscaping must be installed so as not to interfere with natural drainage on your lot or your neighbor's. Drainage problems due to altered grading may cause water to collect under your home.

### **Permits**

Improvements that you build on your lot may require a permit from the Highland Ranch Homeowners' Association or Washoe County Department of Building and Safety, or both. Please refer to the Architectural Standards Manual for what improvements require DC permits. You can expect that you will be cited and/or fined for improvements you build without a permit.

1. You may have to pay a fine and then remove the structure if it is not possible to get a permit for that particular structure.
2. You may have to remove the structure, get a permit, pay a substantial fine and rebuild the structure in conformance with the building codes.
3. You may have to get a permit and pay a substantial fine, but be allowed to leave the structure in place.

## **Materials and Services**

It is smart not to allow heavy trucks carrying material or concrete onto your property because the following type of damage can occur:

The driveway of your home was not built to withstand the weight of heavy trucks. A foundation can be broken by a heavy truck and such damage would be extremely expensive to repair and probably not covered by insurance. Heavy trucks may crack the curb and gutter in front of your home and Washoe County would expect you to remove and replace.

We recommend that you buy all plants from nurseries located in the Truckee Meadows. Plants from out of area nurseries may not be appropriate for our elevation and climate. If you have problems with plants, it is helpful to deal with a local person.

## Homeowners' Association

The Association, as specified in the CC&Rs, will enforce provisions (that you agreed to) that visible areas of your lot are landscaped and kept in neat and attractive manner. The Associations' duties will include at least the following:

1. To assure that your front yard is landscaped within the time that you promised to do so at the time of purchase: In very rare cases, the Association may grant you an extension of the completion date. (See *Coverage*).
2. To assure that front yard landscaping is pleasing in appearance: Gravel on 100% of the front yard would not be considered pleasing. The Association has the right to demand that such landscaping contrary to the above ratios be redone.
3. To assure that the landscaping is properly maintained, including being kept free of weeds.
4. For corner lots, to assure that the side street yard is landscaped and maintained: If you fail to landscape your property or to maintain the landscaping, the Homeowners' Association can be expected to use every available means to encourage you to do so, including letters, phone calls, fines, liens, arbitration and, if everything else fails, legal proceedings that could result in substantial costs or loss of your property.

## Drought Tolerant Plants

These plants are most likely to survive drought. These are frequently the same plants that use less water.

### Deciduous Trees (sheds leaves in winter)

Bay wood	Tree of Heaven	Hackberry
Amour Maple	Catalpa	Russian Olive
Redbud	Green Ash	Western
Linden	Sycamore	Redmond and Little Leaf
Mountain	Fruitless Mulberry	
Red and Pine Oak	Honey Locust	

### Flowering Trees

Flowering Plum	Pear	Hawthorne Idaho Locust
Crabapple	Golden Chain Tree	

### Evergreen Trees

Austrian	Ponderosa	Colorado Norway Spruce
Scotch	Jeffrey Pine	

### Shrubs

Juniper	Purple Leaf Plum	Barberry
Quince	Broom	Butterfly Bush
Yucca	Oregon Grape Holly	Purple Smoke Tree
Mugo Pine	Potentially	Spirea
Lilac	Russian Olive	
Pyracantha	Sumac	

### Perennials

Yarrow	Blue Fescue	Bearded Iris
Red Hot Poker	Dusty Miller	Penstemon
Lambs Ear	Gallardia	Thyme
Alyssum	Daylily	Santolina
Snow in Summer	Poppy	Sage