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# STORMWATER LANDSCAPING IN PARKING LOTS

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Site Plan Review

City of Saint Paul

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## What is stormwater landscaping?

Stormwater Landscaping is landscaping in or near a parking lot that allows stormwater to infiltrate into the ground so it does not go into the sewer system or helps clean stormwater before it enters the sewer system. It includes:

- Rain gardens and similar recessed/sunken landscaped areas where stormwater can collect and infiltrate into the ground
- Swales and similar landscaped areas that filter stormwater runoff as it drains through them.
- Ponds and similar landscaped areas that provide temporary ponding after storms

## When is stormwater landscaping required?

Stormwater Landscaping is required for parking lots that cover more than 0.25 acres and have 5 or more parking spaces over the minimum number of parking spaces required by zoning. This requirement does not apply to parking ramps. (See Section 63.319.b of the Saint Paul Legislative Code)

Parking lots that meet this threshold must provide 30 square feet of stormwater landscaping for every parking space over the minimum number of required spaces. Stormwater Landscaping can be counted to meet the overall landscaping requirement for the site.

The Stormwater Landscaping must be located where there are soils that can infiltrate water effectively (hydrologic soil type A or B) or with an under drain system in hydrologic soil type C.

Stormwater landscaping is not required in areas with poorly draining soils (type D); or where there is groundwater or bedrock within 3 feet of the surface; or there are nearby wells or utilities.

In addition to the Stormwater Landscaping requirement, sites must also comply with other state and local requirements including the City's rate control standard.

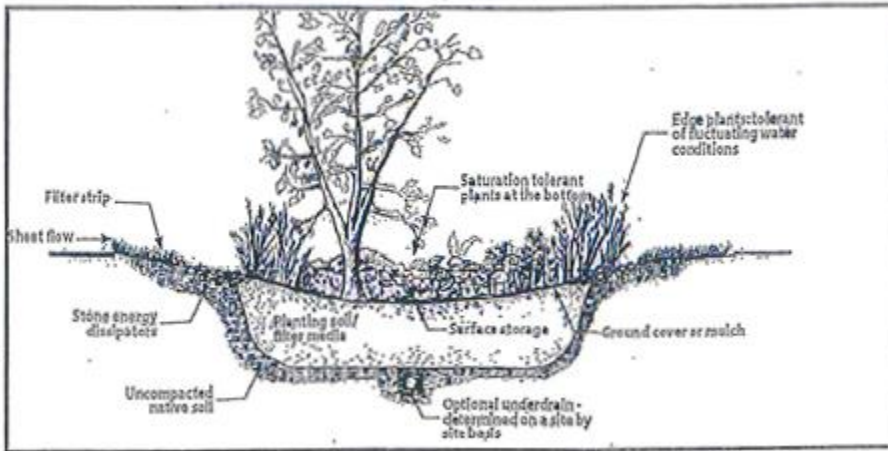
## Examples of Stormwater Landscaping

The layout of the stormwater landscaping practice will vary according to individual sites and to specific site conditions such as underlying soils, drainage, existing vegetation and location of utilities. The following illustrations are shown to provide ideas on alternative design options. They are not meant to be specific designs or specifications:

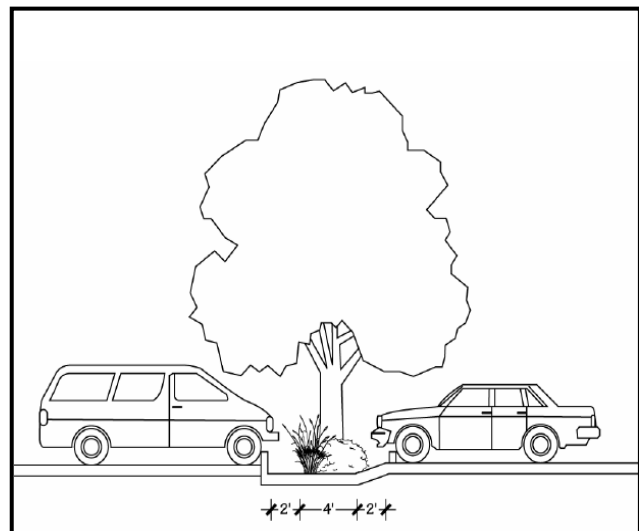
**Rain gardens** are shallow depressions with plants that infiltrate and improve water quality. Uncompacted soil in the rain garden allows water to infiltrate and plant roots absorb stormwater.



Rain garden in a Saint Paul parking lot



**Figure 2-57:** A commercial center with a parking lot vegetated swale.



**Depressed landscape strips** Rain gardens and swales can be designed as long strips so they handle stormwater without losing parking spaces.

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