THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN YOU DESIGN YOUR LANDSCAPE - PART 3of3

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In this final article on landscape design consideration, let's take a look at some other important points that makes a good landscape ranging from paying attention to details, to the consideration of the influence that time has on a landscape. We will also examine some ways that you can be a good steward of your landscape.

A landscape design is all about details. Not only must you consider things such as the plants, the hardscape (i.e., paved areas) and assorted garden decorations, but also be aware of details such as sounds, scents and even the sensation of touch in your landscape. The sound of wind and water are very much a part of a landscape that can be enhanced with a proper design. Sunlight, which changes throughout the day, can also highlight or change the appearance of a plant. Plant forms are also important considering that some plants spread while others provide a weeping appearance. Still other plants are round while some are column-like. In addition to form, the texture provided by a plant is important. Is the plant course, medium or fine in texture? While texture and form are more important than color, color is still a significant consideration. Color changes throughout the year and may include not only flowers, but also the features of foliage, bark and fruit. Texture and color can combine where warm colors and coarse texture make a space feel small. In contrast, dark colors and coarse texture make a plant look larger.

(Continued on page 2)

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Putting the right plant in the right place is certainly good advice when it comes to awareness of the eventual size and appearance of that plant in a mature landscape. Knowing the mature size of a plant is essential so that it does not outgrow the site. Spacing must also be taken into consideration at planting time so that a plant is kept well away from the side of a house, an AC unit or its neighboring plant. Proper spacing in advance can also reduce the need for maintenance pruning.

Above all, be a good steward of your landscape. Select resource-efficient, Florida -friendly plants that conserve water, use minimal nutrients and are pest-resistant and hardy for the area. Also look at what existing plants can be salvaged and transplanted to a better location. Make water conservation an important part of your design which includes a rainwater catchment system such as a rain barrel. This system can be attractive and fit right into the landscape design. Be considerate to your budget as well and reuse materials as often as possible.

Again, I want to invite you to look at a new UF/IFAS EDIS publication "Landscape Design: Ten Important Things to Consider" by Gail Hansen from the Center of Landscape Conservation and Ecology at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP375.

Resources:

- *Hansen, G. (2009) Landscape Design: Ten Important Things to Consider. The Center of Landscape Conservation and Ecology, UF/IFAS Extension Service.*

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contact a
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You can also visit them at one of our many Plant Clinics around the county: http://charlotte.ifas.ufl.edu/PlantClinics.pdf

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