

Volunteer

Professional

Volunteer + Professional

Urban Edge

Image Source: Manuel., "jardin Botanico de Madrid" 18 September 2012 via Flickr CC BY-SA 2.0





The Urban Edge lot design uses perennials, shrubs, and trees to create a clean and beautiful perimeter on residential blocks. This design may be installed on a single lot but will have more impact if used on multiple and contiguous lots.

The planted border introduces seasonal interest and color through plants that are hardy and salt-tolerant. The Urban Edge can also help prevent illegal dumping on your lot by creating a planted, visual barrier between the road and the lot.

This easy-to-build lot design will introduce a clean, intentional edge to your lot and to your block.

For more information refer to [DFC-lots.com](https://dfc-lots.com)

What is the lot design likely to cost?

The estimated cost of the Urban Edge is moderate (\$1,000 – \$2,500) and based on 1.5 inch diameter trees, potted plants and utilizing volunteer labor. To save money, you can buy smaller trees or pots. The cost assumes that residents or volunteers have access basic safety gear and garden tools.

How much upkeep will this lot design require?

The Urban Edge is a low-maintenance lot design. Maintenance will include watering plants and newly planted trees, particularly during times of drought and excess heat.

Will the installation of this lot design require a professional?

The installation of this lot design should not require professional assistance if you, with the help and support of friends, family or neighbors would like to construct this lot design. Please refer to the Step-By-Step section for guidance. If you do not have the required support or feel unable to tackle this lot design, please seek professional assistance.

How long will it take to install this lot design?

While people tackle projects in different ways and at different speeds, the Field Guide estimates installation time of this lot design to be one full weekend with the help of at least three healthy adults or youth. The Field Guide assumes that the lot is 'construction ready,' and all research, equipment and materials required for lot design have been acquired and are ready to use.

Cost	\$50 - 1,000	\$1,000 - 2,500	\$2,500 - 5,500	\$5,500 +
People	Volunteer	Professional	Volunteer + Professional	
Experience	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	
Upkeep	Low	Medium	High	
Stormwater	Good	Better	Best	
Location	Single or Multiple Lots in Full Sun to Part Sun			

Urban Edge

Examples of Urban Edge Plantings



1 - Flowering Viburnum

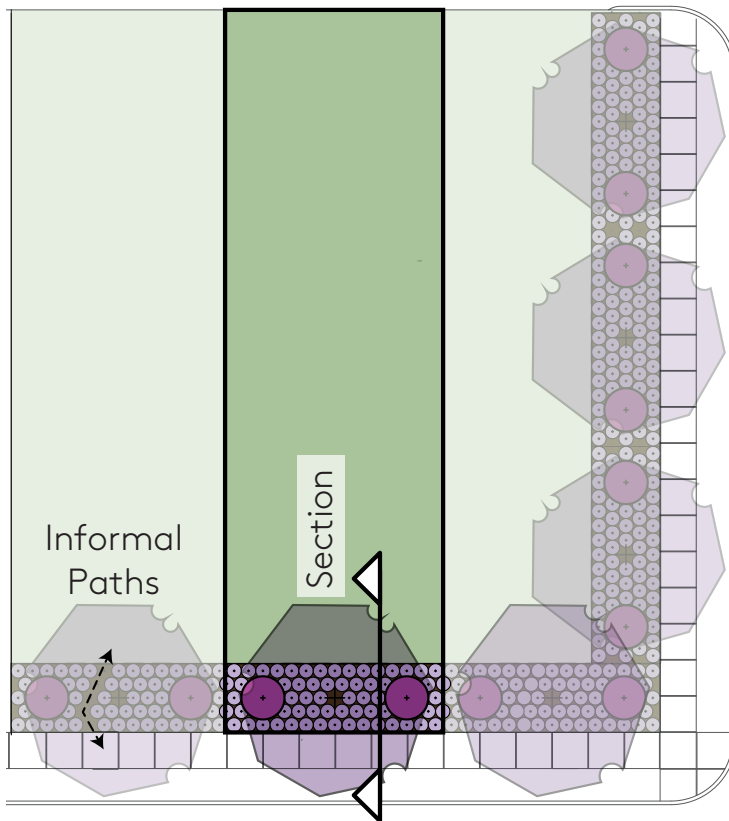


2 - Lilly Turf





Section



Where Do I Grow?



The Urban Edge can be installed on single or multiple lots and is suitable for corner lots. When built on multiple lots, the design creates a consistent urban edge along roads or alleyways. A few plants can be removed to create a pathway into the lot if desired.

-  Perennial
-  Large Shrub
-  Mulch
-  Grass or Optional Groundcover

Before You Start

'Construction Ready'

This lot design assumes that you have prepared the lot to a 'construction ready' state.

'Construction Ready' refers to a lot that is clean and clear of trash, hazardous objects, unwanted trees, brush and vegetation, fences, and other unwanted structures.

It may be necessary to remove grass in preparation for your lot design. Refer to the Remove Your Grass box located on the right hand side of this page for more information.

Is there an available water source near your lot? Consider how and where you will access water during and after construction to ensure that your plants can establish.

If your lot is not ready for construction, refer to the [Clean + Green](#) lot design.

You can find the lot design at DFC-lots.com.

Call Before You Dig

Locate underground utilities before beginning your lot design. MISS DIG provides a free service to Michigan residents by locating and marking utilities on requested properties. Call (800) 482-7171 or 811 at least three days before you plan to start digging on your lot.

Test Your Soil

Harmful pollutants have made their way into many urban soils. To proceed with awareness, consider having your soil tested before construction. Two great options are available:

Soil testing is free to members of Keep Growing Detroit's Garden Resource Program. Call (313) 757-2635 for more information or visit detroitagriculture.net.

If you are not yet a member, you can work directly with Michigan State University's (MSU) Extension Program. They have a Home Lawn and Garden Soil Test Mailer for \$25. For more information call (888) 678-3464 or visit msusoiltest.com.

If you are concerned about the presence of lead or other contaminants in your soil, call the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at (866) 691-5323 or (800) 424-LEAD.

Remove Your Grass

Need to remove grass in areas where you are constructing your lot design?

There are many ways to remove unwanted grass. The first is to remove the grass and its root system by digging up the grass. Another option is to cover your lot with cardboard or a plastic tarp to smother your grass in darkness. It will take several weeks, but after being covered, the dead grass will be easier to remove.

Till Safely

Before you till, inspect your lot for signs of buried concrete or rubble that was not removed during the cleanup stage. Large debris can ruin tiller blades.

When tilling, wear appropriate safety gear, such as covered boots with socks, long pants, safety glasses, dust mask, and ear protection. Make sure you understand the safe operating procedures of your tiller. Refer to the user's manual.

What You Need: Shopping List

Shopping List

The shopping list provides a breakdown of potential materials, tools, and resources required to construct this lot design.

This shopping list is designed for a single lot (30 by 100 feet); however the urban Edge is best

Tools + Resources

Suggested Tools

- **Marking Paint and Tape Measure**
- **Safety Gear:** Gloves, heavy work boots, tall socks, pants, long sleeve shirts, dust masks, protective eye wear, ear plugs, and hard hats (if using heavy machinery)
- **Garden Tools:** Spades, shovels, rakes, trash bags, and wheelbarrows
- **Ball Cart**, for moving heavy trees

Potential Water Sources

- Garden Hose with potential extension hose
- Sprinkler
- Rain Barrel in addition to other water source

Field Guide Resources

Resources are available on the Field Guide's web site.

- Clean + Green
- Tree Planting Detail
- Perennials + Grasses Planting Detail
- Bulb Planting Detail

Materials List

Materials

- **Mulch or Wood Chips**, 3 cubic yards

Planting

- Lily Turf, 20 pots
- Silver Dragon Lily Turf, 19 pots
- Big Blue Lily Turf, 19 pots
- Tapertip Allium, 100 bulbs
- Oneleaf Allium, 100 bulbs
- Mapleleaf Viburnum, 2 pots
- Chinkapin Oak, 1 pot or balled and burlapped

Remaining Lot (Optional)

Groundcover

- **Low-Maintenance Fescue Mix**, 15 pounds of seed
- **Germination Blanket**, 4 rolls (8 by 112.5 feet)

Urban Edge Step-By-Step

Let's Start

Want to create the Urban Edge but don't want to hire a professional? Here are a few guiding principles to help you construct your lot design.

- Check off tasks as you go along.

Lot Design Steps

Volunteer:

- Prepare Your Lot
- Plant Trees
- Plant Perennials
- Maintain Your Lot Design
- Sow Remaining Lot

Prepare Your Lot

Decide on the best location for your hedge. Use marking paint and a tape measure to map out the size, shape, and dimensions of your design. **The Field Guide recommends one planting bed approximately 10 feet by width of the lot (30 feet).**

Minimal grass removal is required for your lot design. The Field Guide recommends removing the grass and its root system by digging the grass up.

Plant Trees

The Field Guide recommends planting 1.5 inch diameter trees; however, smaller or larger trees can be planted if preferred. Trees can be purchased in pots or balled and burlapped. If you decide to plant larger trees speak with a professional or an educational group as older trees can be more difficult to establish.

Plant trees as soon as possible after purchasing. If you cannot plant them the same day, do not leave unplanted trees in direct sunlight. Keep them in shade and well watered until you can plant them. (Trees dry out fast!)

Identify the location where you wish to plant the trees. Dig a hole three times the width of the root ball and equal to the depth.

Pots should be removed before placing the tree in the planting hole. Balled and burlapped root balls should remain wrapped until placed in hole. Unwrap the top 1/3 of the root ball and peel back the burlap once planted. Remove any twine, nails, or stakes. The root flare should be level with the ground when you place the tree in the hole.

Water the root ball, then backfill the hole with the soil previously removed from planting. Add water to the tree every six inches as you backfill the hole. Compact the soil lightly after each watering until the hole is filled with soil and level with the adjacent ground.

Urban Edge Step-By-Step

The Field Guide recommends adding three foot diameter by three inch depth of wood chips or mulch around trees. Keep wood chips or mulch a few inches away from tree trunks.

For more guidance on tree planting refer to the [Tree Planting Detail](#).

○ Plant Perennials

A sunny to shade planting option is recommended for the Urban Edge.

Place plants in desired location, then remove plastic pots, loosen roots, and plant.

The Field Guide recommends adding three inches (three cubic yard) of wood chips or organic mulch to planting beds. Adding wood chips or mulch will help suppress weeds.

For more guidance on planting perennials refer to the [Perennials + Grasses Planting Detail](#).

○ Maintain Your Lot Design

Trees and plants require care and attention to thrive. Planting beds are low-maintenance but trees and perennials will need water and weeding while they are establishing.

Once your perennials are established, they will shade out the majority of the weeds.

Trees must be watered, especially in the first year. Water weekly or as needed.

Urban Edge Step-By-Step



Visit the Resources page on the Field Guide's web site (DFC-lots.com) to discover other vendors and places to purchase plants.

Average Height of Plants



Large Trees, Large Shrub, and Small Perennials

○ Sow Remaining Lot

If you are seeking a lower maintenance alternative to a traditional lawn, the Field Guide recommends a fescue seed mix. **If you follow the Urban Edge lot design you will need approximately 15 pounds of fescue seed mix for the remaining lot (2,700 square feet) and four 8 by 112.5 foot rolls of single net germination blankets.**

This family of floppy grasses is drought-resistant and requires one cutting (in August or September) per year. Fescue can be established in full sun to shade and should be seeded in spring (mid-March to mid-May) or fall (August to September).

Soil should be prepared for seeding by scarifying, raking, or tilling the soil four to six inches deep to loosen up compaction, allowing for easier seed germination and better water infiltration. Apply seed mix to a damp lot.

Sow seeds by using a seed spreader or by hand across the remaining lot. A seed rate of five pounds per 1,000 square feet is recommended. Gently water seedlings daily until they are four to six inches in height. Placing a thin layer of straw or a germination blanket over seeded areas will help ensure that your seed establishes by keeping seeds from blowing away and protecting them from birds. Germination blankets or straw can be purchased at most nurseries and garden stores.

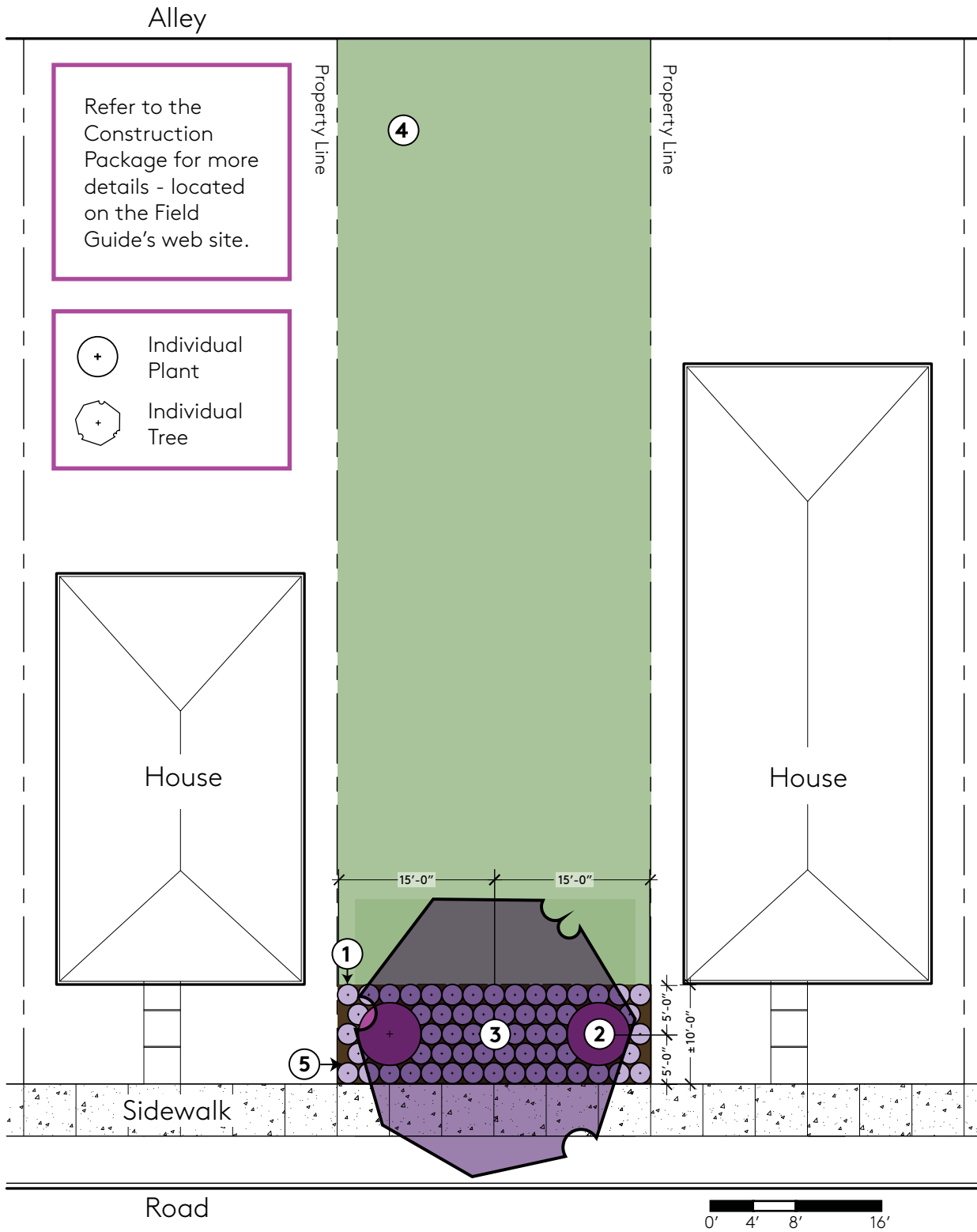
Once established, grass will not require supplemental watering except during unusually dry periods. Eco-Turf Low Maintenance Fescue Mix is one recommended seed mix and can be purchased through the Michigan Wildflower Farm.

Other Field Guide lot designs can be used as groundcovers. Check out the web site for additional options and ideas.

Next Level: If you would like to bring additional color to your grass, you can plant bluebells, crocuses and/or daffodils to create a decorative show in spring. Bulbs should be planted in the fall.

For more guidance on bulb planting refer to the [Bulb Planting Detail](#).

Urban Edge Lot Design



Refer to the Construction Package for more details - located on the Field Guide's web site.

- + Individual Plant
- + Individual Tree

- 1 Groundcover (Lily Turf & Allium)
- 2 Shrub (Mapleleaf Viburnum)
- 3 Large Tree (Chinkapin Oak)
- 5 Mulch
- 4 Grass or Optional Groundcover

Planting: Full Sun to Part Sun



Lily Turf¹
Liriope spicata
 1' Height x 2' Width
 Blooms June - August
 Salt Tolerant
Quantity: 20 pots



Silver Dragon Lily Turf²
Liriope spicata 'Silver Dragon'
 1' Height x 2' Width
 Blooms June - August
 Salt Tolerant
Quantity: 19 pots



Big Blue Lily Turf³
Liriope muscari 'Big Blue'
 1' Height x 2' Width
 Blooms June - August
 Salt Tolerant
Quantity: 19 pots



Tapertip Allium⁴
Allium canadensis^{*}
 3' Height x 3' Width
 Blooms in May
 Salt Tolerant
Quantity: 100 bulbs



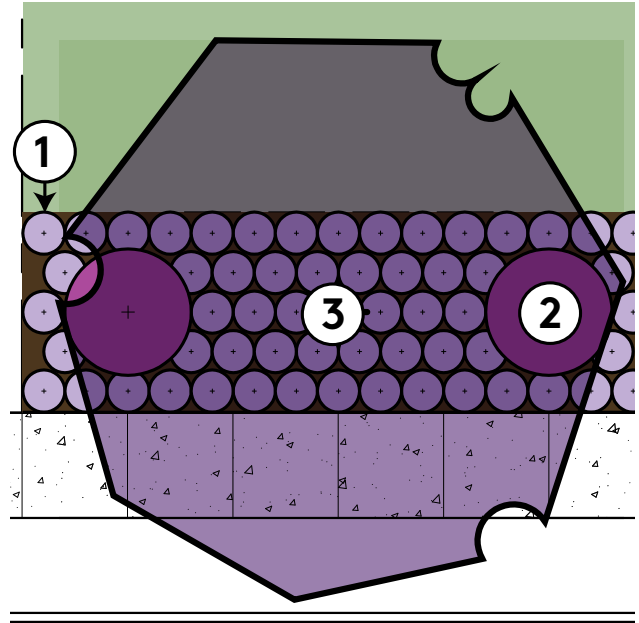
Oneleaf Allium⁵
Allium unifolium^{*}
 Blooms May
 Salt Tolerant
Quantity: 100 bulbs



Mapleleaf viburnum⁶
Viburnum acerifolium^{*}
 10' Height x 10' Width
 Blooms April - August
 Salt tolerant
 Prune after Blooming
Quantity: 2 pots



Chinkapin Oak⁷
Quercus palustris^{*}
 60' Height x 40' Width
Quantity: 1 pot or B & B



Key

- 1** Lily Turf, Silver Dragon Lily Turf, Big Blue Lily Turf, Tapertip Allium & Oneleaf Allium
 (Space approximately two feet apart and mix evenly.)
- 2** Mapleleaf Viburnum
 (Space five feet from property line and approximately 20 feet apart.)
- 3** Chinkapin Oak

Plant Sizes

Pots: Plants can be purchased in one to five gallon pots. The size of pots can change based on availability.

1.5 inch diameter trees are available at commercial landscape supply stores in pots or balled and burlapped (B & B).

Image Source: 1) Manuel., "jardin Botanico de Madrid" 18 September 2012 via Flickr CC BY-SA 2.0; 2) Va.Rose, "101_0252." 26 August 2013 via Flickr CC BY-ND 2.0 3) Leonora Enking, "Liriope muscari." 20 October 2013 via Flickr CC BY-SA 2.0; 4) Clarence A. Rechenhthn, "Allium_canadense.jpg." 20 September 2012 via Wikimedia Public Domain; 5) Toedrifter, "Alliumunifoliumbloom.jpg." 22 April 2009 via Wikimedia CC BY-SA-3.0; 6) Kenpei, "Viburnum_plicatum_var_plicatum1.jpg." 01 May 2008 via Wikimedia CC BY 2.1; 7) Kim Scarborough, "Chinkapin_oak.jpg." 01 July 2006 via Wikimedia CC-BY-SA-2.5.

Did You Know?

Professionals Can Help!

The Field Guide to Working With Lots provides a Construction Package for each lot design. The Construction Package includes information and details required for a professional to construct this design. On the Field Guide web site, use the [Construction Package](#) link located near the top of this lot design page to download and print. Your selected professional will then be able to provide a cost estimate and schedule based on the condition of your lot and the design you select.

Want to Hire Locally?

DFC-lots.com has a growing list of Detroit-based professionals and suppliers of landscape materials and services.

Still unsure of where to start?

Call (313) 294-LOTS or email fieldguide@detroitfuturecity.com for assistance.

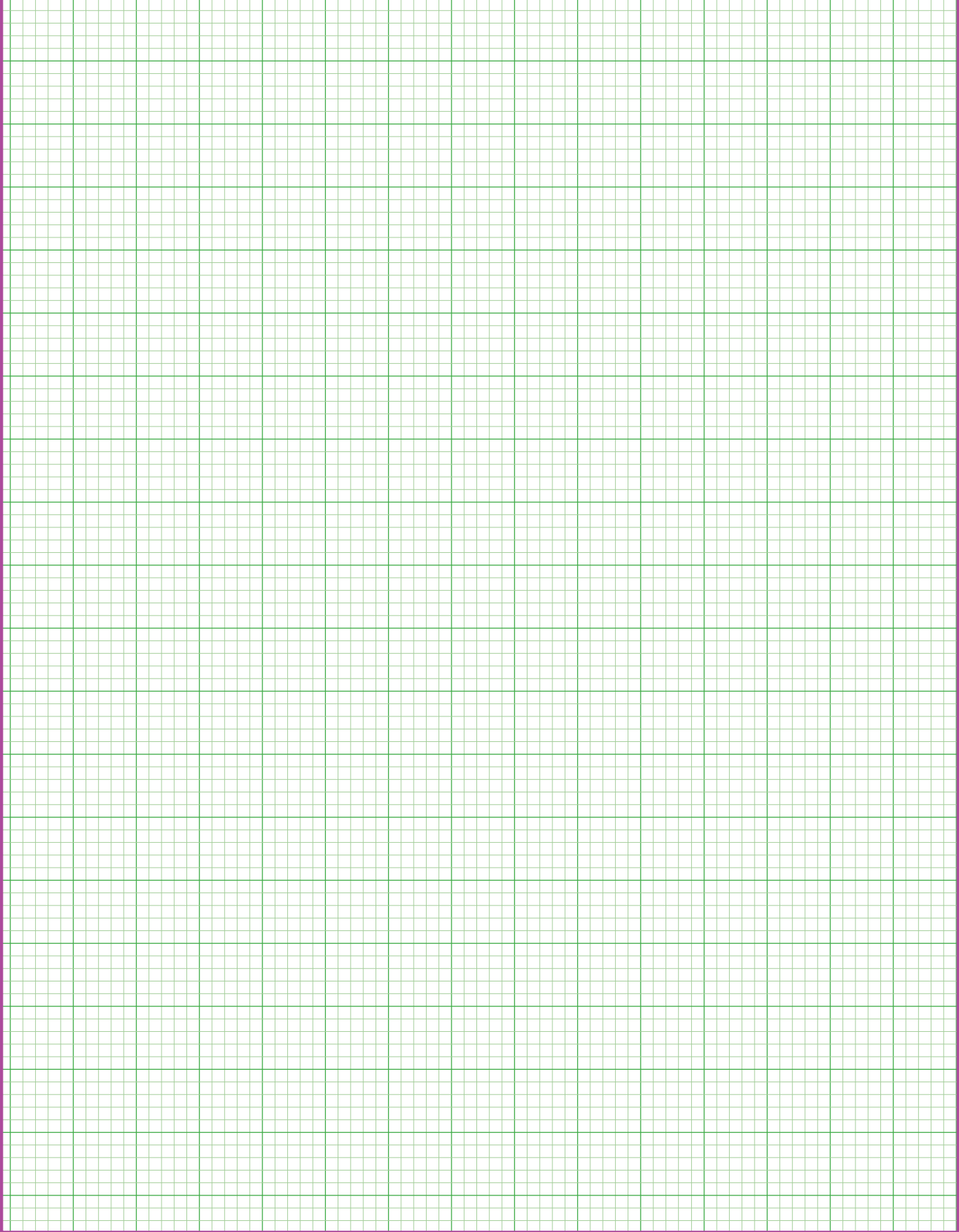
Helpful Facts

- Mapleleaf Viburnum produces fruit that is enjoyed by a variety of songbirds.
- Chinkapin Oak is a highly durable street tree that is currently less planted than other species along Detroit's streets. The Field Guide advocates for a diversity of species in our urban canopy!

Planting Tips

- Call ahead to make sure the nursery or garden store has the plants you need for the lot design.
- Inspect trees before purchasing. Be sure they are healthy and well formed. This will help you select trees that are more likely to survive.
- The best time to plant is in spring or fall.
- Do not plant in extreme heat.
- Water trees during planting and as needed.
- When mulching around trees, do not place too close (less than three inches) to the tree trunk. This will help keep the tree free of disease.

Draw Your Lot



Urban Edge Field Notes

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick purple border, intended for field notes. The box is centered on the page and occupies most of the page's area below the header.



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A FIELD GUIDE

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