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PlantAmnesty's Recommended Homeowners Association (HOA) Maintenance Contract Language

To ensure the lowest possible maintenance costs, and to increase sustainability, use the following wording:

Selective Pruning

- A. All shrubs shall be pruned selectively, not sheared. Exceptions are: shearing done to maintain plants designated as formal hedges in the design plan, and plants that have been previously sheared.
- B. The company doing the work shall have a crew lead who is a WSU master gardener, has a horticultural degree from a community college or technical school, or is a PlantAmnesty-certified Master Pruner.
- C. Any crew on the site shall have a crew lead who knows the botanical names, as well as common names, of the plants, and who has knowledge of the selective pruning technique.
- D. Contract shall include 80 hours of labor in the off season for design modification to lesson maintenance costs. Design modification activities include, but are not limited, to bed enlargements, transplanting, unshearing shrubs, plant removals, and additions of more appropriately sized shrubs as measured by size at maturity.

Optional Sections

Weeding

- A. The majority of weeding shall be done by hand, not by hoe. Spot use of glyphosate (Roundup) is allowed in moderation. Pre-emergent herbicides such as Preen and Casoron, shall only be applied to fence lines, rock or gravel areas, sedum beds, or where horsetail or morning glory are prevalent.
- B. A fine-particle mulch shall be kept at a thickness of 2-4" throughout the landscape. Bark shall not be used as a mulch material. Care shall be taken not to cover the crowns of shrubs and perennials by more than ½". Light raking, light blowing, and hand raking shall be used to reduce the amount mulch removed with debris. Aside from spot mulching bed edges, and areas of soil disturbance, reapplication of mulch should thus be required only every 3-5 years.

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Composting on Site

A. To save on hauling costs, an on-site compost system shall be installed in an unobtrusive area that receives rainwater. It shall be easily accessed by crew, but not publicly visible. It shall have a floor of thick polyethylene sheeting, such as Visqueen, to prevent tree root access.

B. The compost system shall be used solely for leaves, sod, and perennial foliage. It shall not contain grass clippings, weeds, fern fronds, or sticks larger than 1/8th inch. Once every other year compost shall be completely removed from one bin and spread on site.