

Resolution authorizing the Public Works Department to proceed with the implementation of a permit process to allow decorative crushed stone and low, non-woody landscape plants in the public right of way.

Three Common Swale Conditions:

1. Single family home where grass will grow with proper maintenance:

Solution for Condition 1: Maintain as grass or other non-woody (herbaceous) groundcover plants.

2. Apartment building, duplex, condo, townhouse, or higher density areas where conditions are impractical for growing grass:

3. Areas under Banyan trees and single family home areas where conditions are impractical for growing grass:

Solution for Conditions 2 and 3: Alternative solutions such as decorative crushed stone and other non-woody (herbaceous) groundcover plants.

Considerations for Alternatives to Grass Swales:

1. **Aesthetics:** Preserve the lush, green, vegetative character of our neighborhood City swales, and enhance unsightly areas.
2. **Stormwater Management:** Maintain the capacity of the swales to continue to percolate rainwater as a vital part of the City's stormwater management system.
3. **Consistency:** Create guidelines and a process that will allow for a consistent and methodical process for reviewing and approving alternative swale solutions.

Staff Recommendations for Alternative Swale Solutions:

1. Allow 100% of the swale area to be planted with low 18"-24" tall non-woody (herbaceous) groundcover plants that are limited to Wart Ferns, Philodendron 'Burle Marx', Liriope, Variegated Liriope, Flax Lily, and Red Congo.
2. Allow parallel or head-in parking spaces to be created in the swale using a limited number of pre-approved decorative crushed stone types and low 18"-24" tall non-woody (herbaceous) groundcover plants.

Staff Recommendations for Alternative Swale Solutions: Plant Design Guidelines

1. Plantings must extend fully from the sidewalk (or property line where no sidewalk) to the edge of the road. Creating a hedge along the road or sidewalk is not permitted.
2. Swale plantings are intended as an alternative to grass where grass cannot grow. As such, plantings beyond a 3-foot ring around street trees are limited to a single plant type in the swale along each property. Within a 3-foot ring around street trees, residents will still be able to plant non-woody (herbaceous), low growing plants of their choice as long as the plants are maintained at a maximum height of 24”.

Staff Recommendations for Shade-tolerant, non-woody (herbaceous), low growing plants for right of way swale plantings:

- Best and lowest maintenance plants for over tree roots with very little soil: Wart Ferns and Philodendron 'Burle Marx'.



Wart Ferns



Philodendron 'Burle Marx'

Staff Recommendations for Shade-tolerant, non-woody (herbaceous), low growing plants for right of way swale plantings:

- Good, low maintenance plants that require more soil and must be planted in between tree roots: Liriope, Variegated Liriope, and Flax Lily.



Liriope



Variegated Liriope



Flax Lily

Staff Recommendations for Shade-tolerant, non-woody (herbaceous), low growing plants for right of way swale plantings:

- Only plant to be allowed for use under Banyan trees: Red Congo



Red Congo

Alternative Swale Solutions: Decorative Crushed Stone Design Guidelines

1. Decorative Crushed Stone Dimension Requirements:
 - Minimum Width: 8' for head-in or parallel parking space
 - Maximum Width for Single Family: 20' for head-in or parallel parking space
 - Maximum Width for Multi-family or Commercial: 36' for head-in or parallel parking space
2. Swale plantings around trees will be required for all decorative crushed stone installations and must extend from the sidewalk to the edge of the road and at least 3' from the tree trunk on each side.

Staff Recommendations for Decorative Crushed Stone Options for Use in the Right of Way:

1. Crushed Oolite
(Light grey/white color)
2. Crushed Coquina
(Beige color)
3. Crushed Granite
(Dark grey/blue color)

Installation requires minimum 3" depth of crushed stone over a layer of filter fabric.



Oolite



Coquina



Granite

Swale Alternative Permit Process:

Step 1: Applicant submits a Public Works Landscape Encroachment in Right of Way Permit Application with proposed alternative swale materials and proposed layout.

Step 2: Public Works Staff Reviews and Processes Permit.

Conditions of all Public Works Encroachments in Right of Way Permits:

- The adjacent property owner maintains the encroachment in good repair at all times and at the owner's expense.
- The City of Coral Gables reserves the right to remove, add, maintain or have the owner remove any of the improvements within the right-of-way.
- The owner executes a Hold Harmless Restrictive Covenant Agreement.