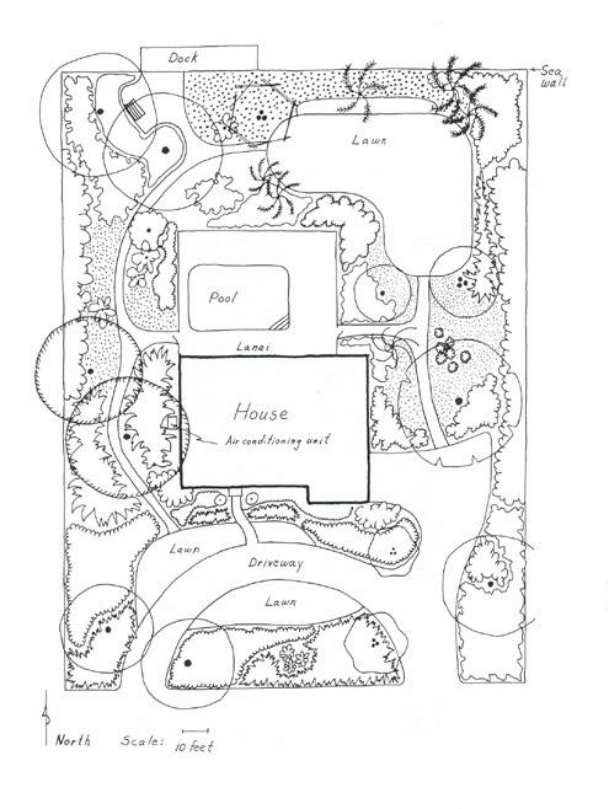


Cost Effective Design

See how beautiful waterwise can be

Landscape Smart

Traditional thinking says you should expect to pay anywhere from 5% to 15% of your home's value on landscaping. Even at the low end of that range, you're looking at spending $10,500 if you live in the median-value American home worth $213,000.

Get the most visual bang for your buck:

First of all, realize that budget landscaping can still be beautiful. Let's say you've got less than $1,000 to spend. The first things you should focus on are improving your soil and adding trees. "You can spend $500 on plants, but they're not going to perform well in clay or sand,". Amending your soil with compost and other ingredients to improve its quality. Buying soil, in comparison, can cost as much as $50 a yard plus delivery.

Avoid costly mistakes:

Really think about how you're going to use your outdoor space. If you plan a water feature but are annoyed by the noise of babbling brooks, you're going to spend more money ripping it out and replacing it with something else later. Take the time to educate yourself and you'll avoid common pitfalls such as planting a tree too close to your house.

Know when to hire the pros:

There are times when it makes sense to hire a pro. Hiring help for jobs that take more muscle or design skill than you have, such as creating hardscapes, while you take on more manageable tasks such as planting small shrubs and perennials

Take a phased approach:

Divide your plan into phases and pay as you go with funds on hand. You'll save on loan or credit costs and be able to evaluate your progress and adjust plans before moving to the next phase.

Time your purchases:

Buy trees, shrubs, perennials, soil and mulch late in the season when retailers want to be rid of them. Depending on your region that could be early fall, a great time for planting because it gives the plant time to develop roots before the summer heat arrives.

Be water smart:

According the Environmental Protection Agency, outdoor water use constitutes almost 20% of total home water use. Look for plants that are drought-tolerant to save on your water bill.

Plan and design landscaping comprehensively.

A. Start with an inventory and analysis plan of the site that identifies "existing conditions." Conditions such as drainage areas, sun exposure, soil types, good views, existing plants, etc. will affect how the site is used (Figure 1). Next develop a list of activities and areas, also called a "program," expected to occur on the site. For example a backyard program might include a lawn play area, dog run, dining patio, barbecue grill, shade trees and shrub beds. Continue by diagramming possible locations for the program activities, while also providing access and traffic patterns or screening as needed. Finally, use this information to develop a plan that integrates plants into the overall scheme (Figure 2).

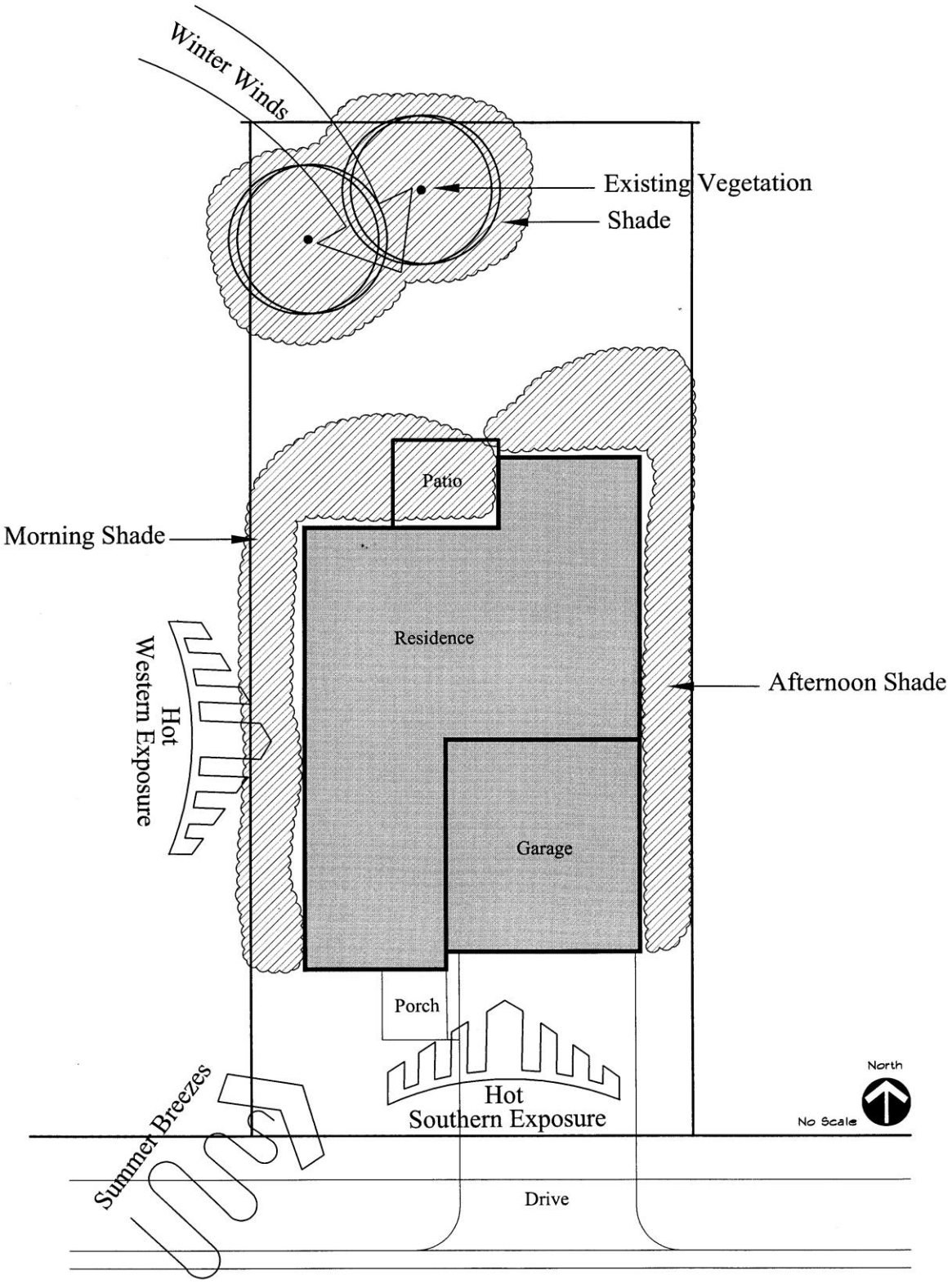
B. Now with your overall plan, consider options on how you would like to conserve water. Several recommendations for water conservation are addressed throughout this document.

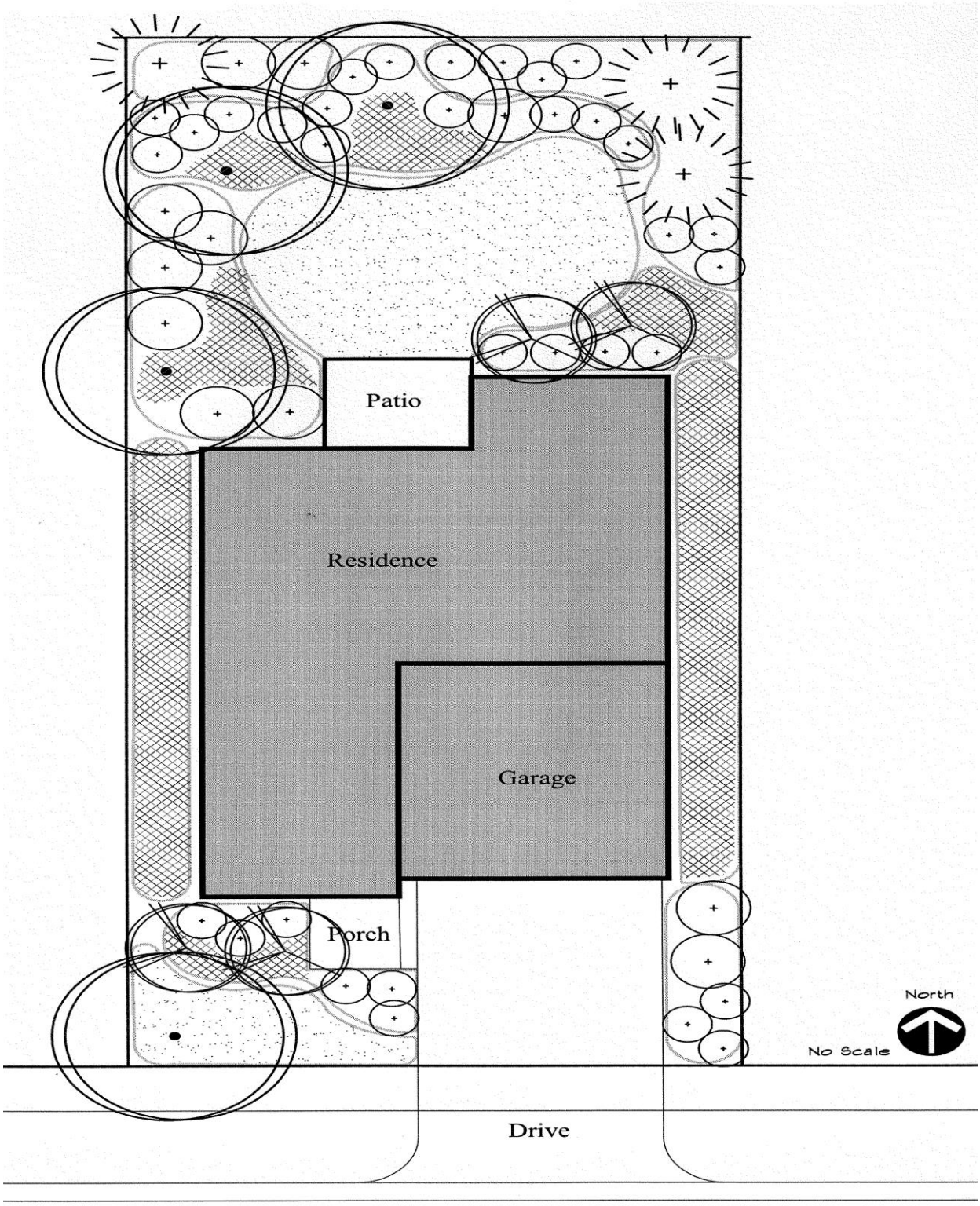
C. Calculate the water requirements for your landscape using the Water Budget Worksheet provided in Section Seven of this manual. Try not to exceed an average total of 15 gallons per square foot annually.

D. Incorporate trees into the landscape to provide shade, reduce stormwater runoff, stabilize soil and protect against wind. If considering the gross site area, a minimum goal of 20 percent tree canopy coverage (at trees' maturity) for Front Range communities is recommended.

E. When designing plant placement on slopes, place lower-water demand plants at the tops of slopes and higher-demand plants at the bottom.

F. Artificial flowers and grass are discouraged. Exceptions may be granted for special use areas such as synthetic turf athletic fields.


Winter Winds
Existing Vegetation
Shade
Patio
Morning Shade
Residence
Afternoon Shade
Hot
Western Exposure
Garage
Porch
Hot
Southern Exposure
North
No Scale
Summer Breezes
Drive


Patio
Residence
Garage
Porch
North
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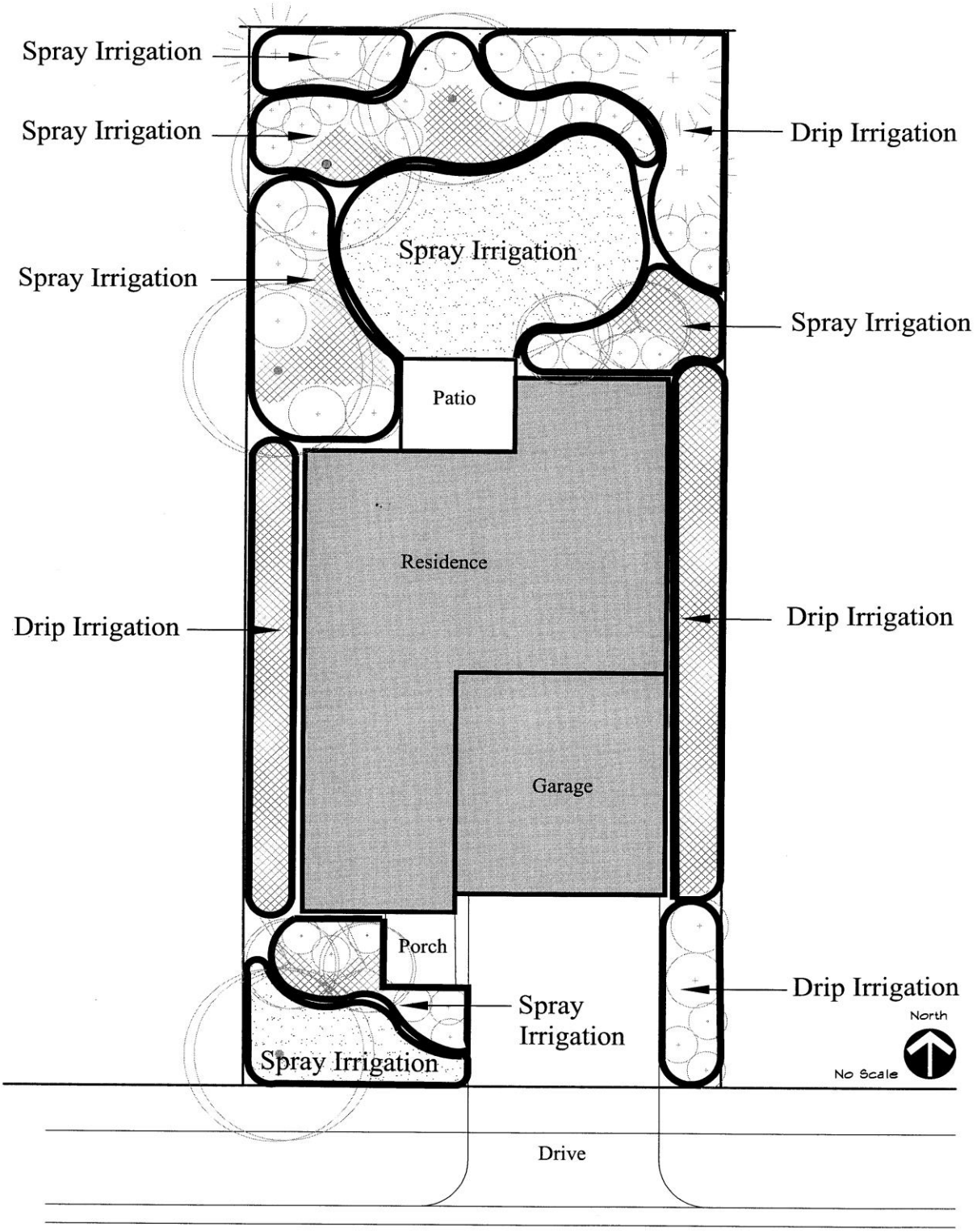
Drive


Spray Irrigation
Spray Irrigation
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Drip Irrigation
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Patio
Residence
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Garage
Porch
Drip Irrigation
Spray Irrigation
Spray Irrigation
North
No Scale
Drive

Create efficient turf areas.

A. Include turf areas where they provide defined functions (i.e., recreation, traffic areas, etc.). Plantings of trees, shrubs, ground covers and flowers are best separated from grass so they can be watered separately. Often, portions of turf areas can be replaced with more water-efficient ground covers and mulches (Figure 4).

B. When selecting turfgrass, consider the use, aesthetic and design goals of the site, estimated water use and maintenance budget. Alternative grass types, such as tall fescue, buffalograss, blue grama and wheat grass, may provide lower water and maintenance needs than bluegrass. In areas where irrigation is not planned for instance, a mix of mainly native bunch and sod-forming grasses might be used. (See Section Four for native seed mix options.)

C. Avoid using turf in areas less than 8 feet wide and on slopes steeper than 3:1. These areas require inefficient irrigation sprays. Consider using drip-irrigated shrubs or groundcovers with Low or Very Low water requirements as alternatives. A special exception may be streetscape tree lawns, where turfgrass may be most appropriate with careful consideration and monitoring of potential irrigation inefficiencies.

D. Some sites and turf areas with difficult irrigation or maintenance concerns may perform better with low water grass types or groundcovers. Consider street rights-of-way, industrial sites, drainageways and natural areas for such alternative grasses.