



City of Santa Barbara

Suggested Parkway Plantings

In order to sustain the health of street trees, parkways must only contain street trees, plants whose maximum height is less than 8 inches tall, and/or organic mulch/wood chips. Concrete, asphalt, brick, gravel, decomposed granite, synthetic turf, or otherwise filling up the ground area around any tree so as to substantially shut off air, light or water from its roots is not allowed (SBMC 15.20.150 and SBMC 15.20.040). Below, you will find several suggested species of groundcovers and other perennials that may be a good choice, depending on the environmental conditions in your parkway. This list is not intended to be limiting or comprehensive, but rather a starting point for planting ideas.

If you have any questions about parkway plantings or groundcovers, or if you are interested in planting, modifying or removing City street trees, please contact the Parks Division at (805) 564-5433 and visit www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/UrbanForest

***Muehlenbeckia axillaris* (Creeping Wire Vine)**

DESCRIPTION: Evergreen ground-hugging vine 2-6" tall. Can be mowed occasionally. Forms a tight mat, spreading by underground stems. Tiny 1/8 in. long, dark glossy green leaves and translucent white fruits. Stands up to foot traffic well. Best in small areas or rock gardens.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Full sun to part shade. Tolerates poor soils but prefers well draining soils. May need some summer water but is drought tolerant once established.

***Dymondia margaretae* (no common name)**

DESCRIPTION: Evergreen perennial 2-3" tall, spreading but not invasive. Forms a tight, weed-resistant mat. Leaves are narrow, gray-green, with edges rolled up. Flowers are small yellow daisies tucked into foliage, in

summer. Fast growing. Stands up to light to moderate foot traffic well.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Sun. Drought or occasional watering. No fertilizer. Almost any soil. No pests or diseases. No pruning.

SPECIAL REMARKS: A very tough plant. Best-looking when out of bloom.

***Cotoneaster dammeri*, *Cotoneaster salicifolius* 'Repens' (Bearberry Cotoneaster)**

DESCRIPTION: Low evergreen groundcover, 6-10" tall. Spreading via trailing stems that root. White flowers in spring, red berries in summer/fall.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Full sun to part shade; enjoys sun. Water infrequently.

***Lessingia filaginifolia* 'Silver Carpet' (no common name)**

DESCRIPTION: Evergreen perennial 4 – 10" tall, 4-5 ft. wide. Leaves are fine-textured, white, woolly. Flowers are lavender-pink daisies to 1 in. wide. Fast growing. Stands up to light foot traffic.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Sun. Little or no water. No fertilizer. Grows in almost any well-drained soil. No pests or diseases.

***Teucrium chaemadrys* (Dwarf/Nanum cult.) and *Teucrium cossonii* (Dwarf Germander and Majorcan**

Teucrium)

DESCRIPTION: Evergreen subshrub genus, of which certain dwarf varieties and species grow to just 4-8 in. tall, spreading to 2-3 ft. wide. Leaves are small, toothed, dark green. Flowers are small, reddish-purple, in summer. Fast growing. The standard *T. chamaedrys* grows to 24", and as such is not permitted!

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Sun. Occasional watering. Little or no fertilizer. Most well-drained soils. No pests or diseases. Cut back 1-2 times a year to keep compact.

SPECIAL REMARKS: *T.c.* 'Prostratum' grows 4-6" tall by 3 ft. wide.

***Juniperus procumbens* 'Nana' (Japanese Garden Juniper)**

DESCRIPTION: Slow growing evergreen groundcover, grows to 6-8" tall with several foot spread.

Branches radiate in all directions. Aromatic, and may gain a reddish or purplish tint to leaves in winter. Insignificant blooms and fruits. Does well on slopes, rocky areas.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Full sun to part shade. Minimal watering (none in winter). Salt tolerant, very drought tolerant.

***Myoporum parvifolium* (Creeping Myoporum)**

DESCRIPTION: A very prostrate shrub, 6-8" high, spreading 12-15 ft. across and more. Foliage is comprised of small, medium green leaves, to ½ in. long, 1/8 in. wide. Numerous white flowers occur in clusters along branches in early spring and intermittently all year.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Sun. Minimal to no watering. It tolerates heat and frost.

***Sedum* spp. (various stonecrop and sedum succulents)**

DESCRIPTION: Many low sprawling species of sedum grow to 6-8" or less at maturity, and spread well albeit slowly. Various green to yellow-green to reddish leaves/stems, with variously colored blooms (often white to yellow to pink). Contact local suppliers for information on Sedum availability.

Examples include *S. palmeri*, *S. clavatum*, *S. nussbaumerianum*, *S. furfuraceum*, *S. graptosedum* or 'Vera Higgins', etc.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Full sun to light shade with very minimal watering. Prefers draining soil.

***Aptenia* 'Red Apple' (Baby Sun Rose)**

DESCRIPTION: A low growing succulent perennial, 6-8" high, spreading more than 2 ft. wide. Fleshy, heart-shaped leaves are light green to bright green in sunnier conditions. Prefers full coastal sun to light shade. Showy purple-red flowers being in spring and continue through fall.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Sun. Minimal watering. It tolerates salt spray. Does best in well drained soils and tolerates poor soils. This plant can be invasive- please do not plant near creeks, drainages or anywhere it can spread into such areas.

***Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* (Manzanita, Bearberry)**

DESCRIPTION: A pretty, prostrate shrub, 4-8" high and spreading as much as 10-12 ft. Glossy green leaves attach to dark red-brown branches; flowers are white to light pink in late winter and early spring, with bright red to pink berries.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Sun. Occasional watering. Clay to moderately draining soils preferred with good organic content. No center dieback, unlike many Manzanitas.

SPECIAL REMARKS: Native plant, berries enjoyed by birds. Very hardy once established.

***Arctotis acaulis* 'Magenta' (African Daisy)**

DESCRIPTION: Spreading stemless, gray-green leaves in clumps with magenta flowers in profusion. Grows 6"-8" high.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Full sun, little water.

SPECIAL REMARKS: Good striking contrast in flower and gray foliage.

***Gazania rigens leucolaena* (Trailing Gazania)**

DESCRIPTION: Grows to about 8" tall (some blooms may peek above 8"). Spreads rapidly by long trailing stems. Gray-green foliage with flowers in varying colors of yellow, white, orange, bronze depending on variety. 'Sunglow' = yellow flowers, 'Mitsuma White' = white flowers.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Grows in any soil, fertilize once a year is helpful but not a necessity.

SPECIAL REMARKS: New hybrids have larger flowers & are resistant to die back, bloom longer. Good on banks or level ground.

***Crassula multicava* (Fairy Crassula)**

DESCRIPTION: Succulent green circular leaves with delicate light pink flowers that sit several inches above foliage. Rarely exceeds 8". Blooms late winter-early spring. Rampant, but not invasive.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Grows in sun or shade in any soil, takes very little water.

***Lampranthus spectabilis* (Trailing Iceplant)**

DESCRIPTION: 6"-10" tall, not invasive, but spreads easily. Comes in red, rose, magenta, light pink floral colors. Covered in flowers giving a "carpet" like color in spring.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Grows in full sun in any soil, little water. Please avoid planting adjacent to drainages and creeks!

***Drosanthemum floribundum* (Rosea Iceplant)**

DESCRIPTION: Small, silvery green foliage that hugs the ground to 6" tall. Pale pink flowers. *Drosanthemum floribundum* grows 4 -10" tall by 3 ft. wide with purple flowers in late spring and early summer.

CULTURAL CONDITIONS: Grows in any soil, little to no water, attracts bees.

Other succulents- there are many succulent species that grow to 8" or less, take very little water or maintenance, and often have beautiful and interesting foliage and blooms.

Check with local nurseries or with your landscaper for more ideas on low-growing, low-water, low-maintenance plants that fit the City's parkway requirements!