

A range of pathway types that have been chosen for their environmental soundness and simplicity, not for looks alone. Enjoy your visit and see what each of the pathways has to offer.

Why Pathways?

Pathways provide a framework for accessing the many features of The Green Zone and are crucial to enjoying the site. The majority of the path types provide alternatives to concrete and asphalt pavement. The alternative pathways minimize water run-off and erosion, and allow water to percolate to life in the soil beneath the paths. Even the brick pathway allows some water to percolate through the sand joints. The stabilized crushed stone path is impermeable but has other environmental benefits.

#1 - Stabilized crushed stone

This first section of pathway is made from an original and natural non-toxic binder called Stabilizer T/M. It binds decayed granite rock with a derivative developed from cactus plants found in Arizona. The materials are all natural and non-toxic and do not contaminate the soil as asphalt and concrete will do. This product can be used for pathways in gardens, parks and even as driveways and can be purchased from area nurseries. First, the area needs to be leveled and compacted. Borders can be used, but are not necessary. For pathways use a 1.5-inch application of material; finish by using a plate compactor. For driveways use 3.0 inches of material; compact and smooth the product using a commercial weight roller.

#2 - Bark/wood chip mulch

Continuing south from the Compost Demo Area (#6), the pathway changes to bark and wood chip mulch. Sod removal is optional. The section was covered first with a layer of reused cardboard and newspaper, and then thoroughly soaked. If sod is not removed, this barrier may go directly

on the sod, and over time will decompose the sod. Several inches of bark and wood chips were spread and are settling in and firming up as the section is used over time.

#3 - Pine needle mulch

Pine needle mulch was used on the pathway that continues to the southernmost wetland. Several inches of pine needles were spread on top of a wet layer of cardboard/newspaper. Sod removal is optional. The pine needles settle in and the pathway surface firms up with foot traffic or use.

#4 - Deciduous leaf mulch

This section runs north from the Pine Needle mulch along the Ornamental Grass Bed (#8). Sod removal is optional. Cardboard and newspapers were soaked and used as the weed barrier. Additional layers of leaves will be applied annually as the old ones decompose.

#5 - Gravel

The gravel section continues to the south, looping around the spruce tree. The sod was removed and the bare ground covered with a weed barrier of some kind (commercial fabric or

Pathways on Display

From the "Welcome" sign, walk west on the right-hand path toward the Compost Demo Area(#6) and continue around the site. Pathway materials are described below.

newspaper or cardboard). A four-inch deep layer of 5/8-inch and finer gravel was spread. Using crushed rock gravel, rather than round stone gravel, helps the path material interlock and provide a firmer walking surface. Wet the gravel to help material settle and allow walking to firm it up over time.

#6 - Concrete pavers

The pathway loop comes back toward the "Welcome" sign – this section is concrete pavers, but bricks or natural stone would work as well. The soil in this section was cut down slightly deeper than the other sections and covered with compacted gravel before the pavers were set in a pattern. This is the most labor-intensive material demonstrated here, but it has both a natural and finished look.

Pathway Construction

See page 2 for tips.

The Green Zone map is on page 2.

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The Pathway exhibit is a series of trail sections throughout the Arboretum on The Green Zone map. The Green Zone is located at the Spokane Conservation District and WSU/Spokane County Extension, 210 & 222 N. Havana, Spokane WA 99202. (509) 535-7274 (SCD) (509) 477-2048 (WSU)

Pathway Construction Tips

Preparation

All pathway sections were first prepared by removing existing sod (optional for some materials) to a depth of about four inches. This can be done manually with a flat bladed shovel or mechanically with a rented sod-cutter. When using a shovel, score the edge of the pathway and then lift and roll up the sod for use elsewhere. All sections were lightly treated with an herbicide to minimize weed growth and edged with a material made of recycled plastic.

What to do with the sod?

The removed sod can be used to repair a grass area, as sheet mulch or composted by itself. The Green Zone used the sod to build a berm on the north side of the site between the parking lot and the stabilized crushed stone section of the pathway.

The sod was placed in layers, root side up, and then covered with a thick layer of newspaper to kill the grass -- sheet mulching. During the construction of the natural material pathways, there was enough wood chip mulch left over, that the newspaper berm was completely covered with the mulch. The sod will decompose under these layers, and then be ready for planting.

Create Defensible Space

Remember that natural materials (needles, bark or chipped material) are flammable. Department of Natural Resources recommends a break of 3 feet between the buildings, decks, fences, sheds, etc., and the combustible ground cover. Use non-combustible materials (rock, block, bare soil) next to improvements. This applies to urban areas as well as rural settings.

This informational pamphlet is one of a series.

