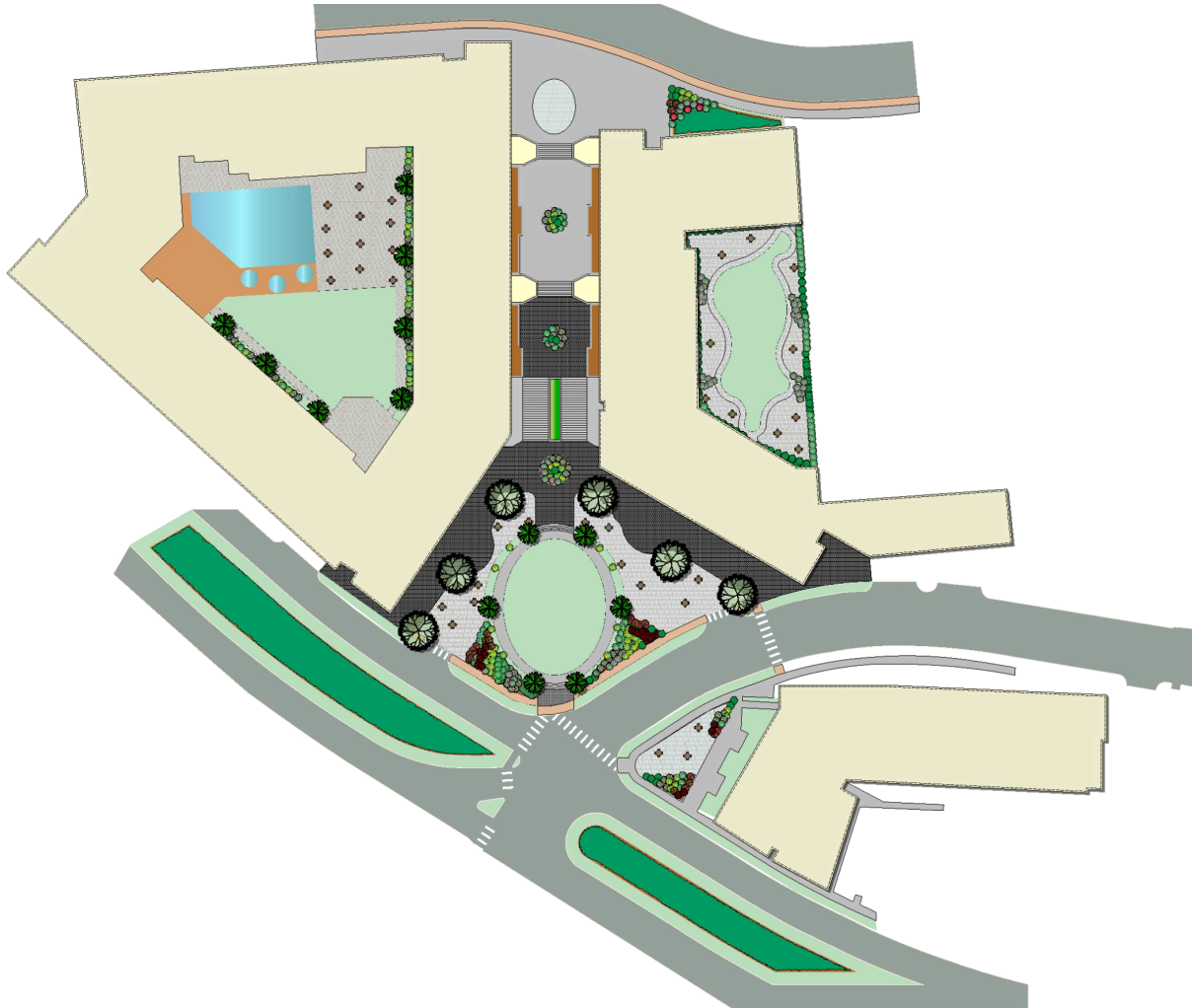# SITE DESIGN
LANDSCAPE AREA SETTINGS

In this chapter, we are going to explore Landscape Area settings. We'll take a look at how to configure tag, graphics, and plant distribution settings.

When setting up a Landscape Area, we can either preconfigure the Landscape Area settings by clicking on the Preferences button in the Tool Bar or by editing the settings of Landscape Area that has already been created.

Before we continue, let's discuss the differences between editing the Landscape Area Tool Preferences and editing the Settings of a Landscape Area object. If we activate the Landscape Area tool and click on the Preferences button in the Tool Bar, we are configuring the placement options for the Landscape Area tool itself.

After making changes in this dialog, all new Landscape Areas created using either the tool or the Create Objects from Shapes command will use these settings.

Double clicking on a placed Landscape Area or clicking on the Landscape Area Settings button in the Object Info Palette will edit the settings of only the selected Landscape Area. No other Landscape Areas will be affected.

Now that we know where to go to configure the Landscape Area tool and where to go to edit the settings of a specific Landscape Area, let's take a close look at those settings. We will start by configuring the Landscape Area Tool Preferences. Clicking on the Preferences button in the Tool Bar will open the Landscape Area Settings dialog.


The majority of the Landscape Area settings are controlled through this dialog. Let's start with the Tag Information. Landscape Areas can be tagged in a nearly identical manner to individual plant objects with a few important differences. At the top, we can give the Landscape Area a unique name. This will be helpful later for scheduling.
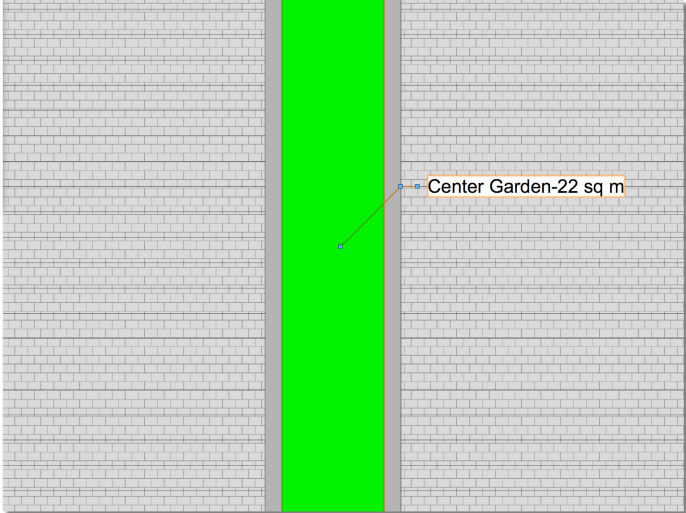
Next, we look at the Tag Display option. This determines whether the tag will be shown or not and which direction it will be drawn. Tag Class controls what class is used for the tag. Placing the tag in a separate class gives us visibility control for the tags separate from the overall Landscape Area.
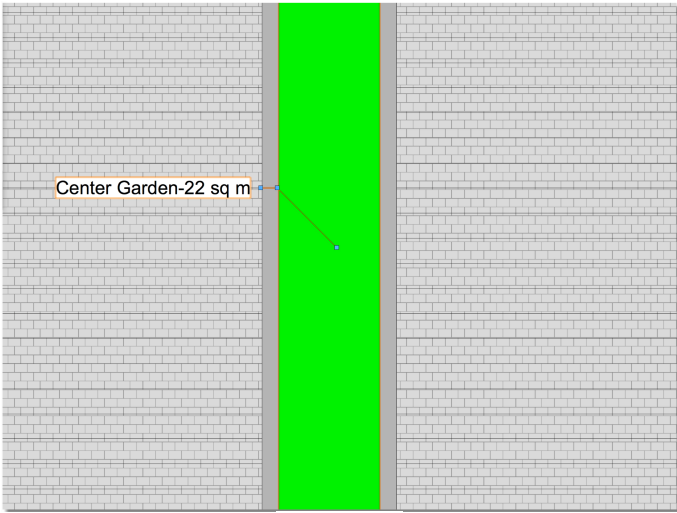
(Tag - Left)

(Tag - Right)

Tag Line Angle and Tag Text Angle will set the default angle for the tag line and text respectively. These can be adjusted later as well. Both through the settings dialogue as well as manually, using the control handles.

We have controls for what is displayed in the tag. There are two parts of the tag: the Tag Header and Tag Body.

The Tag Header determines what shows at the top of the Landscape Area's tag. The header can be set to display the Name and/or Area.

The Tab Body can display any information about the plants within the Landscape Area. Just like Plants, any information about the plant can be displayed; from ID and Common Name to Soil and Water needs. Images of Plants can also be displayed. All plants contained within the Landscape Area will have their information displayed on a separate line.

Typically, the plant percentage or rate as well as a combination of Name, ID, and Quantity tags are displayed. The Area Units can be specified as well. These unit settings are independent from the document units.

The last option under Tag Informaton is Display Tag Line Marker. This option enables or disables the marker at the end of the tag line touching the landscape area.
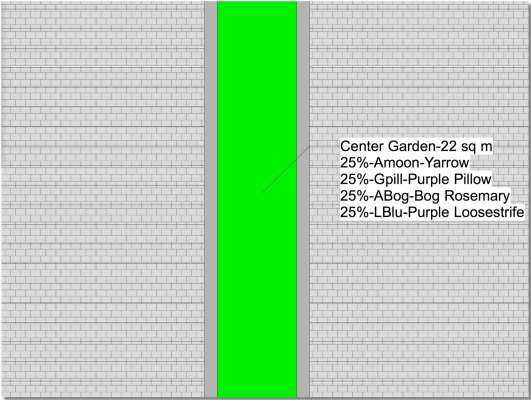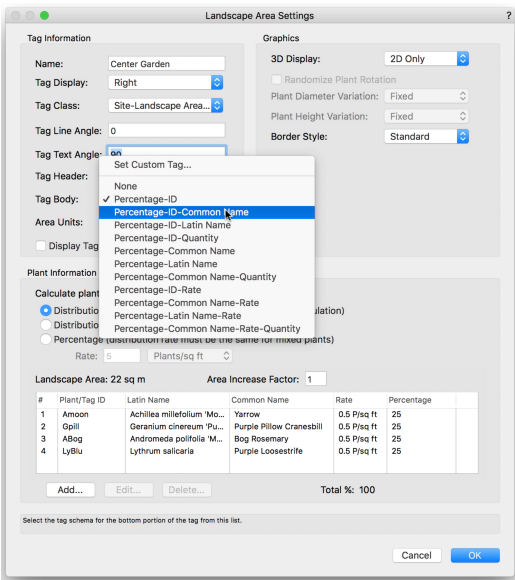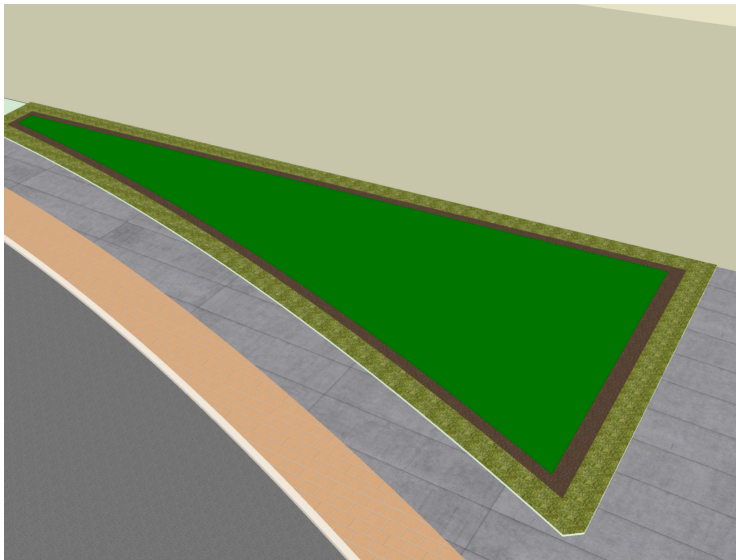
Now, lets take a look at the Graphics section. In this section, we can control how the landscape area will be displayed.

3D Display controls the 3D representation of the Landscape Area.

2D Only will show only a basic 2D polygon. This is a planar object that will also appear in 3D views, but it will be flat along the ground plane. When creating an initial conceptual plan, this option is useful.
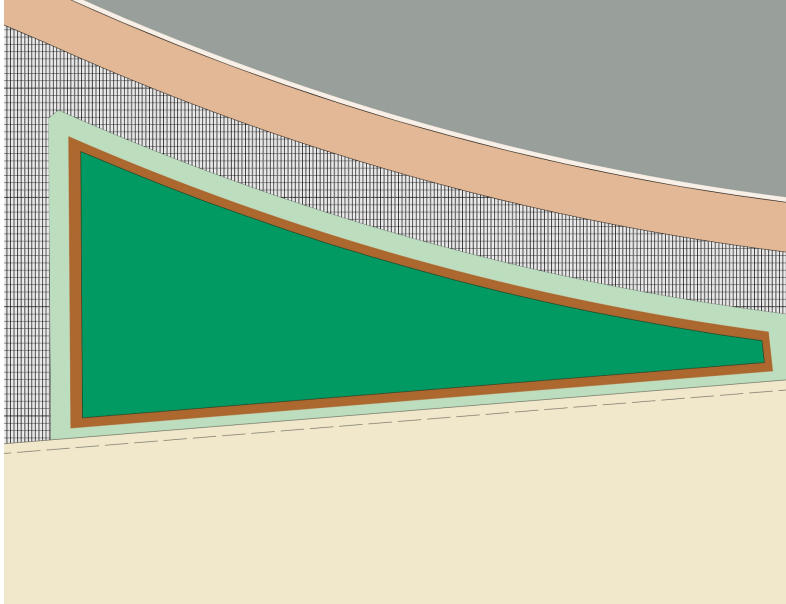
3D Poly will show a 3D Polygon when in 3D views. 3D Polygons can show no fill, a solid color, or a texture. This option is useful when using a Landscape Area to represent ground cover or a planting bed and would like to see a 3D representation.

3D Plants will show the polygon when in a Top/Plan view, but it will show the 3D geometry or image prop of the included plants when in a 3D rendered view. When this option is enabled, additional randomization options are enabled.

The rotation of each plant can be randomized using the Randomize Plant Rotation check box.

Also, the Plant Diameter and Height can be varied. The variation can be set to Fix, Random at 5%, Random at 10%, or Random at 15%. These adjustments will make the 3D plants appear less similar and more natural.

The Texture Bed option applies a textured area to a Site Model. This option is great for representing a planting bed or ground cover on a Site Model. This option is great for representing a planting bed or ground cover on a Site Model. This uses a Texture Bed Site Modifier. This applies to the Proposed Site Model and the texture is set through the Render tab of the Object Info Palette. The Site Model will need to be updated before the Texture Bed will render. For more information on Texture Beds and Site Models, see the Site Model Chapters.

While we are on the subject of Site Models, one additional benefit to placing a Landscape Area over a Site Model is that the area calculation will update to account for the current proposed contours of the Site Model. This will report a more accurate area as it will account for any changes in slope or elevation rather than simply calculating a flat area value.
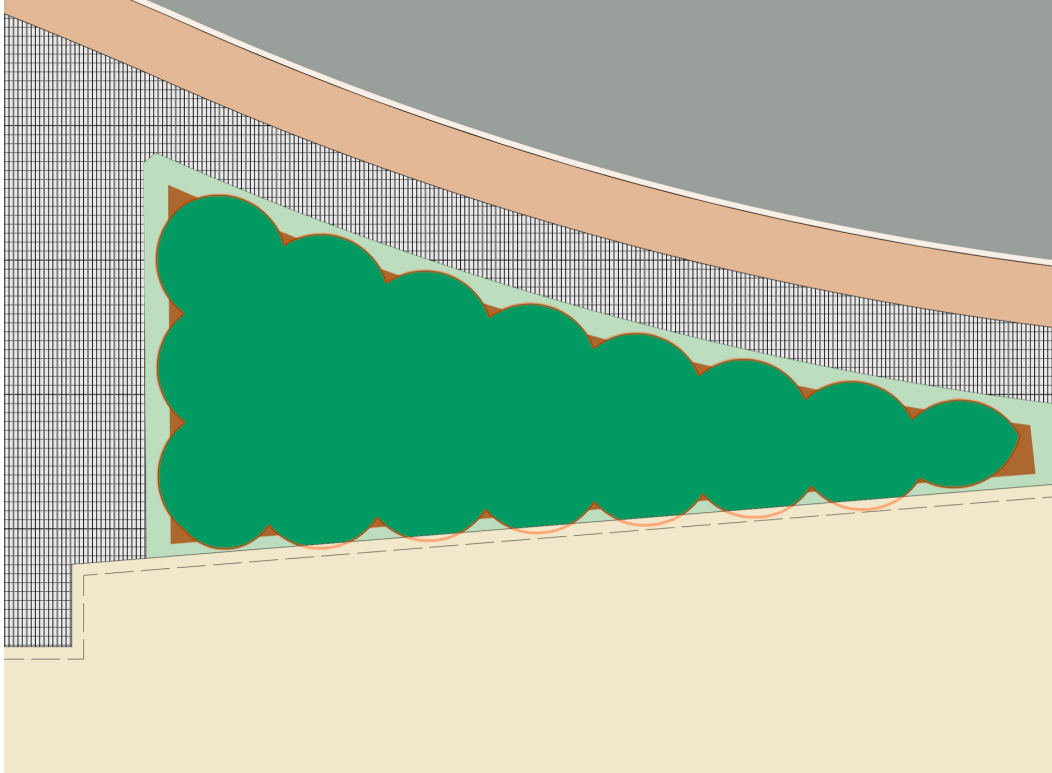

Next up in the Landscape Area Settings dialog, we have Border Style. Border Style controls the 2D appearance of the Landscape Area Border.

Standard sets the border to a single line. This is the simplest representation.
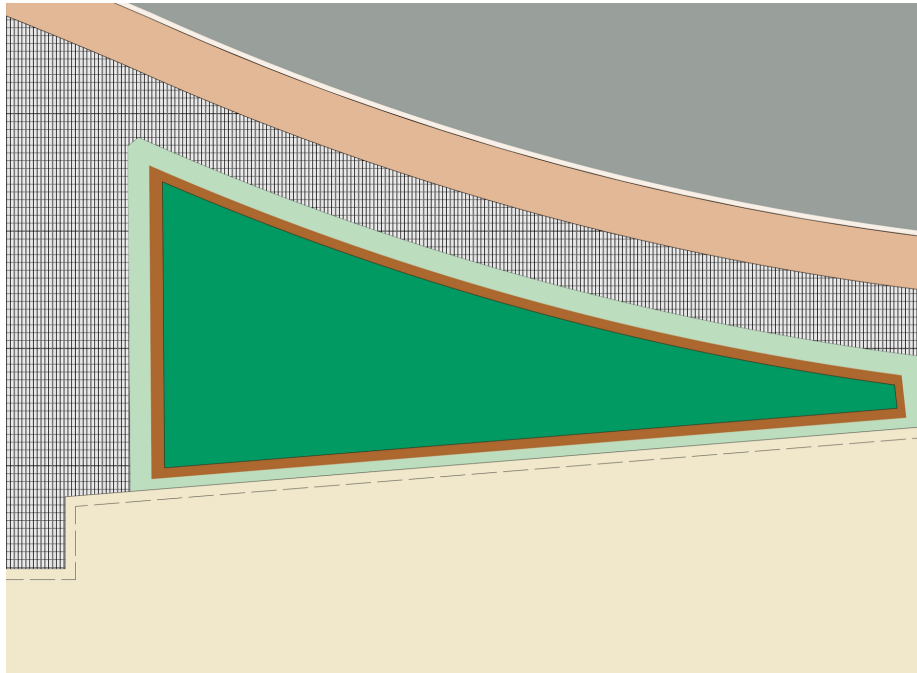
Point Cloud creates a curved or bubbly border, similar to a massed plant group with a number of configurable options for size, variability, and shape.

Plant Line creates a freehand with a natural looking edge. The Plant Line has configurable options as well. Both the Segment Length and Thickness can be adjusted. The Plant Line option is great for representing a general plant mass.
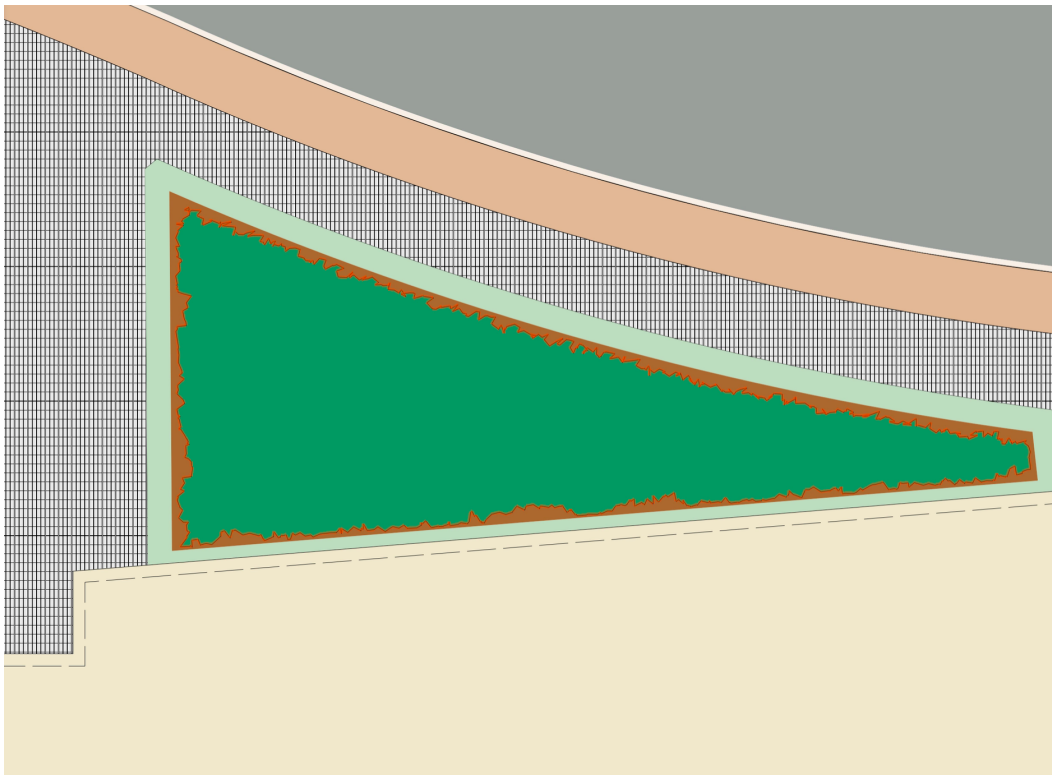
Now, lets take a look at the Plant Information section. Here we can control how the distribution of plants is calculated and which plants are included in the Landscape Area.

Plant Information

Calculate plant quantities based on:

- ● Distribution Rate (automatic coverage area percentage calculation)
- ○ Distribution Rate (custom coverage area percentage)
- ○ Percentage (distribution rate must be the same for mixed plants)

Rate: 0.5   Meters on ce... ⇕

Area Increase Factor: 1

#	Plant/Tag ID	Latin Name	Common Name	Rate	Percentage	

Add...   Edit...   Delete...   Total %: 100

There are three main distribution modes: Distribution Rate - Automatic, Distribution Rate - Custom, and Percentage.

Distribution Rate - Automatic:
With this mode enabled, the specified rate per plant is used to calculate the quantity of plants placed within the area. The percentages will be calculated for each plant automatically in order to maintain a 100% distribution. For Instance, if we add a plant by clicking the Add button, we can choose a plant using the Resource Selector. Then set a distribution rate. The rate can either be per area or from center. After clicking OK, the chosen rate will be displayed and the percentage of that plant will be set to 100% because there is only one plant. If a second plant is added, the percentage is rebalanced automatically, based on the set rate for each plant.

Distribution Rate - Custom:
Allows the distribution rate and the percentage to be specified. The total coverage of the area can be more or less than 100% if desired. We currently have plants added to the Landscape Area. The Distribution percentage adds up to 100% because we added them with the Automatic Distribution Rate option enabled. With the Custom option enabled, we can manually adjust the percentage for each plant in addition to the rate. Just select a plant from the list and click the Edit button. Here we can decrease or increase the distribution percentage affecting the final distribution rate of the plant. For example, if we create a 10 square meter Landscape Area and place one plant with a 1 meter on center rate at 100% distribution and a second plant with the same rate, but a 50% distribution, we get 10 plants within the Landscape Area from the plant with 100% distribution and we get 5 plants from the plant with the 50% distribution.

Percentage:
Calculates the distribution based on the percentage entered for each plant individually. The distribution rate is the same for all plants. The percentage determines the total number of plants placed within the Landscape Area. This mode requires the total percentage to equal 100%.
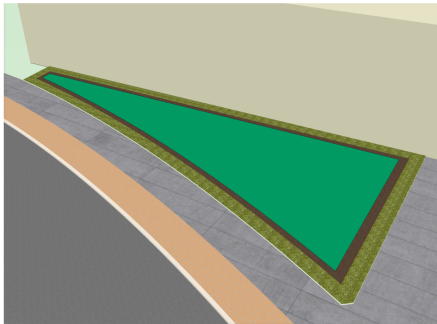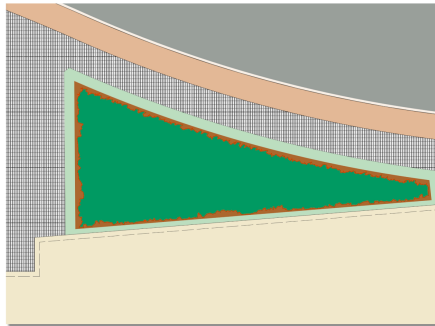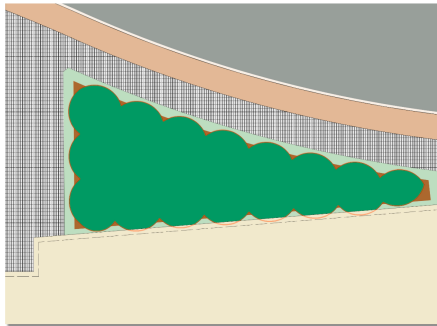
As we added plants in the earlier example, they appeared in the Plant list. This list displays the plants that will be included in this particular landscape area. The Add button is used to select the plants included in the Landscape Area. Plants can be selected from both your current active document as well as various library files. If any changes need to be made to a plant added to the list, just select the plant from the list and click edit. Delete removes a selected plant from the list.

That covers all of the options available in the Landscape Area Settings Dialog. Adjustments to Landscape Areas can also be made in the Object Info Palette.

There are a couple options that can only be set in the Object Info Palette directly. Under Information, a Unit Price and Price Code can be assigned to the Landscape Area.

This information can be used later for costing purposes. For example, if the area is representing a mulch bed. the price per area for mulch could be entered. This will allow for cost estimates.

Landscape Areas can save you a large amount of time when covering large areas with a variety of plants. Not only do they provide many different visual configurations, but they also allow for quick and accurate plant counts for an area.