

PROGRESS

The power of landscaping

"Beautify with trees."

This was the theme of 1969's International Shade Tree Conference, as reported in the November 1969 issue of *Weeds, Trees & Turf*, which is known today as *Landscape Management*.

The group met at the Portland Hilton Hotel in Oregon. To "capture the atmosphere and interest of a particular area ... to design in a way that fits the region's historical background," the hotel chain incorporated a park with 70 trees, more than 100 shrubs, a dozen different ground covers, several thousand flower bulbs, a number of ferns and vines, a swimming pool and the usual tables and chairs on its second story.

There was a concern when the hotel was being planned in 1960 "about what was going to happen to downtown as outlying shopping centers became more numerous." They realized using trees, turf, shrubs and flowers in the downtown shopping centers was bringing people in. "Lots of landscaping seems to capture people's fancy," explained Ford Montgomery, Portland Hilton general manager, at the time. "People feel a close relationship with living things."

In 42 years, that hasn't changed.

Portland is proud of its parks and its legacy of preserving open spaces. And so are numerous other large metropolitan cities across the U.S.

In fact, the environmental, lifestyle and economic benefits of green spaces have not only been researched and logged thoroughly, they are the reasons many urban environments continue to add green spaces within their boundaries.

Statistics recorded over the years by many groups, including Project Ever-

Green, have shown landscaping's positive effects.

► Trees in a parking lot can reduce on-site heat buildup, decrease runoff and enhance nighttime cool downs. A test in a mall parking lot in Huntsville, AL showed a 31-degree difference between shaded and unshaded areas. Lawns are 30 degrees cooler than asphalt and 14 degrees cooler than bare soil in the heat of summer. In Atlanta, temperatures have climbed 5 to 8 degrees higher than surrounding countryside where developers bulldozed 380,000 acres between 1973 and 1999, according to NASA. Scientists predict the heavily developed corridor between Boston and Washington will be the next big hot zone.

► The Virginia Cooperative Extension

says a dense cover of plants and mulch holds soil in place, keeping sediment out of lakes, streams, storm drains and roads, and reducing flooding, mudslides and dust storms.

► Trees, shrubs and turf remove smoke, dust and other pollutants from the air. Every tree that's subtracted from a city's ecosystem means some particulate pollution remains that should have been filtered out. In Washington, that amounts to 540 extra tons each year, according to *Time Magazine*. One tree can remove 26 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere annually, equaling 11,000 miles of car emissions. One Virginia Cooperative Extension study showed that 1 acre of trees has the ability to remove 13 tons of particles and gases annually.

Ah, the power of landscaping. In 1969, the Portland Hilton sacrificed income-producing rooms to make space for \$50,000 worth of it. And, says Montgomery, "we cannot afford *not* to have it now."

The atmosphere landscaping creates, Montgomery adds, is where people will go. In 50 years, some things don't change; in fact, they grow.



▲ THEN & NOW ►

Today, trees, shrubs and plants are important assets to the city of Portland, OR just as they were in 1969.

