

**Volunteer**

**Professional**

**Volunteer + Professional**

# Party Lot

Image Source: Magnus Manske, "Lilac." N/A Date via Wikimedia CC BY 1.0.





**The Party Lot brings new activity to a neighborhood by providing a small pocket park, family gathering space, or community hub.**

**The Party Lot is best installed across multiple lots. When joined together, the perennial beds create outdoor rooms and spaces that can be used for a variety of activities, such as graduations, weddings, or birthday parties, family reunions, and other community get-togethers.**

**For more information refer to [DFC-lots.com](https://dfc-lots.com)**

### What is the lot design likely to cost?

The estimated cost of the Party Lot is moderate (\$1,000 – \$2,500) and based on utilizing volunteer labor and the potted plants. To save money, you can buy smaller pots or plugs. The cost assumes that residents or volunteers have access to basic safety gear and garden tools.

### How much upkeep will this lot design require?

This is a medium maintenance lot design. Maintenance will include watering plants and newly planted trees, particularly during times of drought and excess heat.

### Will the installation of this lot design require a professional?

The installation of this lot design should not require professional assistance if you, with the help and support of friends, family, or neighbors, would like to construct this lot design. Please refer to the Step-By-Step section for guidance. If you do not have the required support or feel unable to tackle this lot design, please seek professional assistance.

### How long will it take to install this lot design?

While people tackle projects in different ways and at different speeds, the Field Guide estimates installation time of this lot design to be one full weekend with the help of at least three to five healthy adults or youth. The Field Guide assumes the lot is ‘construction ready,’ and all equipment and materials required for lot design have been acquired and are ready to use.

<b>Cost</b>	\$50 - 1,000	<b>\$1,000 - 2,500</b>	\$2,500 - 5,500	\$5,500 +
<b>People</b>	<b>Volunteer</b>	Professional	Volunteer + Professional	
<b>Experience</b>	Beginner	<b>Intermediate</b>	Advanced	
<b>Upkeep</b>	Low	<b>Medium</b>	High	
<b>Stormwater</b>	<b>Good</b>	Better	Best	
<b>Location</b>	<b>Across Multiple Lots in Full Sun or Part Sun</b>			

# Party Lot

## Example of Party Lot Plantings



2 - Lilac



3 - Periwinkle

## Section



## Where Do I Grow?



The Party Lot can be installed on a single lot or extended across multiple lots. It is also suitable for corner properties.

- Evergreen Tree
- Shade Tree and Shrub
- Groundcover
- Grass or Optional Groundcover

## Before You Start

### 'Construction Ready'

This lot design assumes that you have prepared the lot to a 'construction ready' state.

'Construction Ready' refers to a lot that is clean and clear of trash, hazardous objects, unwanted trees, brush and vegetation, fences, and other unwanted structures.

It may be necessary to remove grass in preparation for your lot design. Refer to the Remove Your Grass box located on the right hand side of this page for more information.

Is there an available water source near your lot? Consider how and where you will access water during and after construction to ensure that your plants can establish.

If your lot is not ready for construction, refer to the [Clean + Green](#) lot design.

You can find the lot design at [DFC-lots.com](http://DFC-lots.com).

### Call Before You Dig

Locate underground utilities before beginning your lot design. MISS DIG provides a free service to Michigan residents by locating and marking utilities on requested properties. Call (800) 482-7171 or 811 at least three days before you plan to start digging on your lot.

### Test Your Soil

Harmful pollutants have made their way into many urban soils. To proceed with awareness, consider having your soil tested before construction. Two great options are available:

Soil testing is free to members of Keep Growing Detroit's Garden Resource Program. Call (313) 757-2635 for more information or visit [detroitagriculture.net](http://detroitagriculture.net).

If you are not yet a member, you can work directly with Michigan State University's (MSU) Extension Program. They have a Home Lawn and Garden Soil Test Mailer for \$25. For more information call (888) 678-3464 or visit [msusoiltest.com](http://msusoiltest.com).

If you are concerned about the presence of lead or other contaminants in your soil, call the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at (866) 691-5323 or (800) 424-LEAD.

### Remove Your Grass

Need to remove grass in areas where you are constructing your lot design?

There are many ways to remove unwanted grass. The first is to remove the grass and its root system by digging up the grass. Another option is to cover your lot with cardboard or a plastic tarp to smother your grass in darkness. It will take several weeks, but after being covered, the dead grass will be easier to remove.

### Till Safely

Before you till, inspect your lot for signs of buried concrete or rubble that was not removed during the cleanup stage. Large debris can ruin tiller blades.

When tilling, wear appropriate safety gear, such as covered boots with socks, long pants, safety glasses, dust mask, and ear protection. Make sure you understand the safe operating procedures of your tiller. Refer to the user's manual.

# What You Need: Shopping List

## Shopping List

The shopping list provides a breakdown of potential materials, tools, and resources required to construct this lot design.

**This shopping list is designed for a single lot (30 by 100 feet); however, the Party Lot is best installed on multiple lots.**

## Tools + Resources

### Suggested Tools

- Marking Paint and Tape Measure
- **Safety Gear:** Gloves, heavy work boots, tall socks, pants, long sleeve shirts, dust masks, protective eye wear, ear plugs, and hard hats (if using heavy machinery)
- **Garden Tools:** Spades, shovels, rakes, trash bags, and wheelbarrows

### Potential Water Sources

- Garden Hose with potential extension hose
- Sprinkler
- Rain Barrel in addition to other water source

### Field Guide Resources

Resources are available on the Field Guide's web site.

- Clean + Green
- Tree Planting Detail
- Perennials + Grasses Planting Detail
- Bulb Planting Detail

## Materials List

### Materials

- Mulch or Wood Chips, 5 cubic yards

### Planting

- Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry, 1 pot
- Yellowwood, 2 pots
- Bruns Serbian Spruce, 1 pot
- Sunny Knockout Rose, 11 pots
- Common Lilac, 2 pots
- Periwinkle, 240 plugs

## Remaining Lot (Optional)

### Groundcover

- Low-Maintenance Fescue Mix, 12 pounds of seed
- Germination Blanket, 3 rolls (8 by 112.5 feet)

## Party Lot Step-By-Step

### Let's Start

**Want to create the Party Lot but don't want to hire a professional? Here are a few guiding principles to help you construct your lot design.**

- Check off tasks as you go along.

### Lot Design Steps

#### Volunteer Opportunities:

- Prepare Your Lot**
- Plant Trees**
- Plant Perennials**
- Maintain Your Lot Design**
- Sow Remaining Lot**

### **Prepare Your Lot**

This lot design utilizes a full 30 by 100 foot lot; however, the Field Guide recommends implementing the design on multiple lots to create a larger, more usable community space.

Select the best location for the Party Lot perennial beds. Use marking paint and a tape measure to map out the size, shape, and dimensions of your design.

Minimal grass removal is required for your lot design. The Field Guide recommends removing the grass and its root system by digging the grass up. If implementing the design across multiple lots, a different grass removal method may be required. Refer to Remove Your Grass on page 4 for more information.

### **Plant Trees**

The Field Guide recommends planting 1.5 inch diameter trees; however, you can plant smaller or larger trees if you prefer. Trees can be purchased in pots or balled and burlapped. If you decide to plant larger trees, speak with a professional or an educational group as older trees can be more difficult to establish.

Plant trees as soon as possible after purchasing. If you cannot plant them the same day, do not leave unplanted trees in direct sunlight. Keep them in shade and well watered until you can plant them. (Trees dry out fast!)

Identify the location where you wish to plant the trees. Dig a hole three times the width of the root ball and equal to the depth.

Pots should be removed before placing the tree in the planting hole. Balled and burlapped root balls should remain wrapped until placed in hole. Unwrap the top 1/3 of the root ball and peel back the burlap once planted. Remove any twine, nails, or stakes. The root flare should be level with the ground when you place the tree in the hole.

## Party Lot Step-By-Step

Water the root ball, then backfill the hole with the soil previously removed from planting. Add water to the tree every six inches as you backfill the hole. Compact the soil lightly after each watering until the hole is filled with soil and level with the adjacent ground.

The Field Guide recommends three foot diameter by three inch depth of mulch or wood chips around trees, keeping it a few inches away from tree trunks.

For more guidance on tree planting refer to the [Tree Planting Detail](#).

### ○ Plant Perennials

Sunny to partly sunny plantings are recommended for the Party Lot. If your lot is in shade, seek alternative planting options.

Place plants in the desired location, then remove plastic pots, loosen roots, and plant.

**The Field Guide recommends three inches (5 cubic yards) of mulch or wood chips to the three planting beds, as shown on plan.** Adding mulch or wood chips will help suppress weeds.

For more guidance on planting perennials refer to the [Perennials + Grasses Planting Detail](#).

### ○ Maintain Your Lot Design

Trees and shrubs are relatively low-maintenance. Water and weed plants while they are getting established. Once your shrubs and groundcover are established, they will shade out the majority of any weeds. Rose can be pruned in late winter as well as lilac after it is done flowering.

Add mulch or wood chips annually to areas without groundcover to help suppress weed growth.

## Party Lot Step-By-Step



**Visit the Resources page on the Field Guide's web site (DFC-lots.com) to discover other vendors and places to purchase plants.**

### Average Height of Plants



Trees, Shrubs, and Groundcover

### ○ Sow Remaining Lot

If you are seeking a lower maintenance alternative to a traditional lawn, the Field Guide recommends a fescue seed mix. **If you follow the Party Lot lot design you will need approximately 12 pounds of fescue seed mix for the remaining lot and three 8 by 112.5 foot rolls of single net germination blankets.**

This family of floppy grasses is drought-resistant and requires one cutting (in August or September) per year. Fescue can be established in full sun to shade and should be seeded in spring (mid-March to mid-May) or fall (August to September).

Soil should be prepared for seeding by scarifying, raking, or tilling the soil four to six inches deep to loosen any compaction, allowing for easier seed germination and better water infiltration. Apply seed mix to a damp lot.

Sow seed across the remaining lot by using a seed spreader or by hand. A seed rate of five pounds per 1,000 square feet is recommended. Gently water seedlings daily until they are four to six inches in height. Placing a thin layer of straw or a germination blanket over seeded areas will help ensure that your seed establishes by keeping seeds from blowing away and protecting them from birds. Germination blankets or straw can be purchased at most nurseries and garden stores.

Once established, grass will not require supplemental watering except during unusually dry periods. Eco-Turf Low Maintenance Fescue Mix is one recommended seed mix and can be purchased through the Michigan Wildflower Farm.

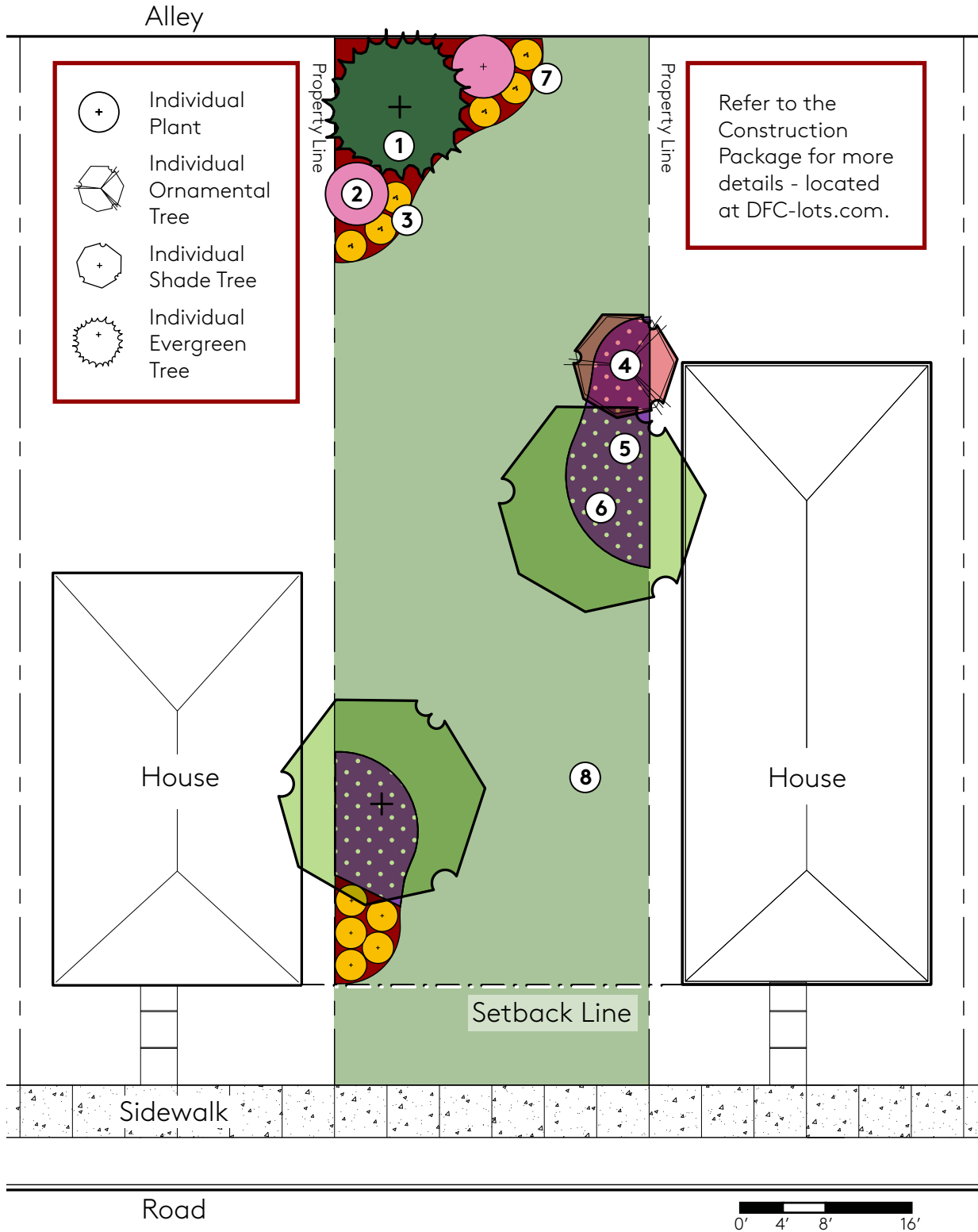
**Other Field Guide lot designs can be used as groundcovers. Check out the web site for additional options and ideas.**

**Next Level:** If you would like to bring additional color to your grass, you can plant bluebells, crocuses and/or daffodils to create a decorative show in spring. Bulbs should be planted in the fall.

**For more guidance on bulb planting refer to the [Bulb Planting Detail](#).**



# Party Lot Lot Design



- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p><b>1</b> Evergreen Tree (Serbian Spruce)</p> <p><b>2</b> Flowering Shrub (Lilac)</p> | <p><b>3</b> Flowering Shrub (Rose)</p> <p><b>4</b> Ornamental Tree (Serviceberry)</p> | <p><b>5</b> Groundcover (Periwinkle)</p> <p><b>6</b> Shade Tree (Yellowwood)</p> | <p><b>7</b> Mulch</p> <p><b>8</b> Grass or Optional Groundcover</p> |
|---|---|--|---|

# Planting: Full Sun to Part Sun



**Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry<sup>1</sup>**  
*Amelanchier x grandiflora*  
 25' Height x 15' Width  
 Blooms April  
Quantity: 1 pot



**Yellowwood<sup>2</sup>**  
*Cladrastis kentuckea*  
 40' Height x 40' Width  
 Blooms May  
Quantity: 2 pots



**Bruns Serbian Spruce<sup>3</sup>**  
*Picea omorika 'Bruns'*  
 30' Height x 10' Width  
Quantity: 1 pot



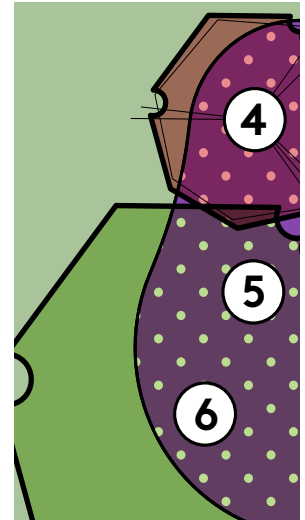
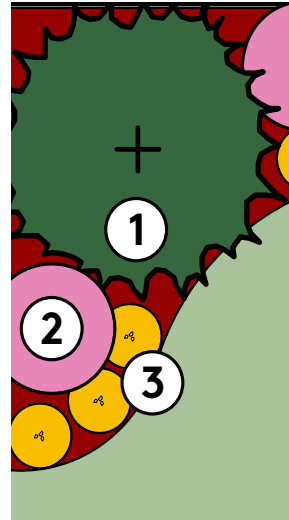
**Sunny Knockout Rose<sup>4</sup>**  
*Rosa x 'Sunny'*  
 3' Height x 3' Width  
Quantity: 11 pots



**Common Lilac<sup>5</sup>**  
*Syringa vulgaris*  
 12' Height x 9' Width  
Quantity: 2 pots



**Periwinkle<sup>6</sup>**  
*Vinca minor*  
 6" Height  
Quantity: 240 plugs



**Key**

- 1 **Bruns Serbian Spruce**
- 2 **Common Lilac**
- 3 **Sunny Knockout Rose**  
(Space approximately three feet apart.)
- 4 **Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry**
- 5 **Periwinkle Groundcover**  
(Space plugs approximately one foot apart.)
- 6 **Yellowwood**

## Plant Sizes



**Pots:** Plants can be purchased in one to five gallon pots. The size of pots can change based on availability. 1.5 inch diameter trees are available at commercial landscape supply stores in pots or balled and burlapped (B & B).



**Plugs:** Plants can be purchased in plug form as a less expensive alternative to pots. Plant one plug per square foot.

Image Source: 1) Paul Woods, "Amelanchier in bloom 1." 13 April 2013 via Flickr, CC BY-NC- SA 2.0; 2) Chhe, "Cladrastis kentuckea." 06 June 2009 via Wikimedia, public domain; 3) Rasbak, "Picea omorika." 08 September 2004 via Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0; 4) Tvaubtzku1234, "Rose Sunny Sky." 2013 via Wikimedia, CC0 1.0; 5) LtPowers, "Syringa vulgaris (common Lilac) cultivar 'Flower City.'" 15 May 2013 via Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0; 6) H. Zell, "Vinca minor, Apocynaceae, Lesser Periwinkle, habitus; Karlsruhe, Germany." 14 April 2009 via Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0.

## Did You Know?

### Professionals Can Help!

The **Field Guide to Working With Lots** provides a **Construction Package** for each lot design. The **Construction Package** includes information and details required for a professional to construct this design. On the **Field Guide** web site, use the **Construction Package** link located near the top of this lot design page to download and print. Your selected professional will then be able to provide a cost estimate and schedule based on the condition of your lot and the design you select.

### Want to Hire Locally?

**DFC-lots.com** has a growing list of **Detroit-based professionals and suppliers of landscape materials and services.**

**Still unsure of where to start?**

**Call (313) 294-LOTS or email [fieldguide@detroitfuturecity.com](mailto:fieldguide@detroitfuturecity.com) for assistance.**

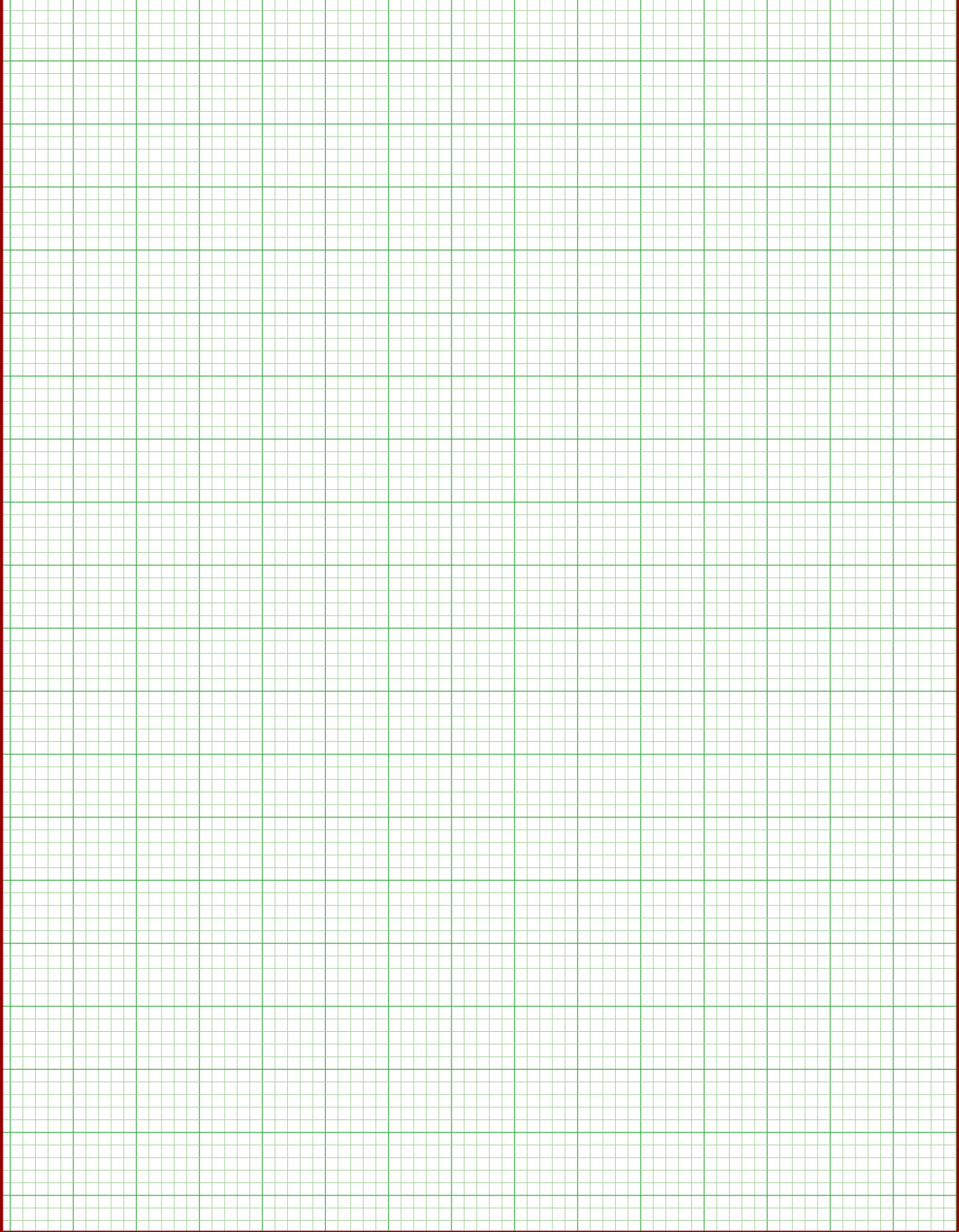
### Helpful Facts

- The plant species recommended for this lot design will flower in the spring and provide a mix of bright fall colors.
- Landscape areas can provide habitat for a variety of birds.

### Planting Tips

- Call ahead to be sure the nursery or garden store has the plants you need for your lot design.
- The best time to plant trees and shrubs is the spring or fall.
- Do not plant in extreme heat.
- Water after planting and as needed. Do not let plants dry out.
- Weed weekly or as needed.
- Mulch and wood chips help protect trees and plants from mowers and conserves water.
- If you decide to plant larger trees, speak with a professional or an educational group as older trees can be more difficult to establish.

# Draw Your Lot



## Party Lot Field Notes



**DETROIT  
FUTURE  
CITY**

**working  
with lots**  
A FIELD GUIDE

**Visit [DFC-lots.com](https://dfc-lots.com)  
#DFClots**

Image Source: H. Zell. "Vinca minor, Apocynaceae, Lesser Periwinkle, habitus; Karlsruhe, Germany" 14 April 2009, via Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0