



Favorite Native Plants for a Sunny Boulevard Garden

Selecting plants for a boulevard garden (often called a “hellstrip garden”) can be challenging.

The tough conditions between the road and sidewalk can be a stressful environment for an urban garden. Road salt, soil compaction, snow mounds, pollution, human and pet traffic, and more, make it necessary to plant resilient native vegetation that can fend for itself.

- First, learn your municipality’s rules about planting in a boulevard.
- Then make sure there is no underground infrastructure or sensitive tree roots to restrict a planting.
- Next, investigate soil conditions and prep the soil —which can entail removing or smothering grass and reducing soil compaction.
- **Now you are ready to plant!**

* Ensure that the plants you choose will work with your boulevard’s soil type.

*Here are a few of our favorites for dry sunny conditions**

Forbs

- Anise Hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*)
- Prairie Onion (*Allium stellatum*)
- Thimbleweed (*Anemone cylindrica*)
- Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)
- Butterfly-weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
- Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*)
- Prairie Coreopsis (*Coreopsis palmata*)
- White Prairie Clover (*Dalea candida*)
- Purple Coneflowers (*Echinacea angustifolia, pallida & purpurea*)
- Rattlesnake Master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*)
- Rough Blazing Star (*Liatris aspera*)
- Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)
- Spotted Horsemint (*Mondarda punctata*)
- Large Beardtongue (*Penstemon grandiflorus*)
- False Goldenaster (*Heterotheca villosa*)
- Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)
- White Upland Aster (*Solidago ptarmicoides*)
- Stiff Goldenrod (*Solidago rigida*)
- Showy Goldenrod (*Solidago speciosa*)
- Smooth Blue Aster (*Symphyotrichum leave*)
- Aromatic Aster (*Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*)
- Ohio Spiderwort (*Tradescantia ohioensis*)
- Hoary Vervain (*Verbena stricta*)
- Golden Alexanders (*Zizia aurea*)
- Heart-leaved Alexanders (*Zizia aptera*)

Groundcover plants

- Common Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)
- Pasque Flower (*Anemone patens*)
- Field Pussytoes (*Antennaria neglecta*)
- Harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*)
- Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*)
- Wild Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*)
- Prairie Smoke (*Geum triflorum*)
- Prairie Alumroot (*Heuchera richardsonii*)
- Golden Ragwort (*Packera aurea*)
- Prairie Phlox (*Phlox pilosa*)
- Bird’s Foot Violet (*Viola pedata*)

Grasses and sedges

- Side-oats Grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)
- Blue Grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*)
- Hairy Grama (*Bouteloua hirsuta*)
- Kalm’s Brome (*Bromus kalmii*)
- Pennsylvania Sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*)
- Purple Love Grass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*)
- June Grass (*Koeleria macrantha*)
- Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
- Prairie Dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*)

Low-growing shrubs

- Leadplant (*Amorpha canescens*)
- Sweet Fern (*Comptonia peregrine*)
- Dwarf Bush Honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*)
- New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*)



Photo by Hannah Texler