

Just How Cheap is That “Cheap” Job??

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. 5000 square feet actual area; planting & irrigation only (no hardscape).
2. 20 year lifespan of project before re-landscaping is necessary.
3. Prices are not adjusted for inflation.

Design & Installation

	THE “CHEAP” JOB	THE “EXPENSIVE” JOB
Professional Design	\$0.00 (who needs it?)	\$2,000.00 (do it right the 1st time)
Materials	\$5,000.00 (the cheap stuff from Home World)	\$7,000.00 (shop where the pros shop)
Labor	\$5,000.00 (some guys from the day labor line)	\$7,000.00 (licensed contractor with trained staff)
Demolish Failed Work	\$2,000.00 (oops!)	(not necessary)
Redesign	\$2,000.00 (back to square one)	(ditto)
Relandscaping	\$14,000.00 (older & wiser now...)	(ditto)
TOTAL	\$28,000.00	\$16,000.00
COST DIFFERENCE		\$12,000.00 LESS

Maintenance

	THE CONVENTIONAL GARDEN	THE SUSTAINABLE GARDEN
ORIGINAL DESIGN & INSTALLATION	5000 sq. ft. @ \$2 = \$10,000	5000 sq. ft. @ \$2 = \$10,000
MAINTENANCE LABOR	5000 sq. ft. @ \$0.03/mo. x 20 years = \$36,000	5000 sq. ft. @ \$0.01/mo. x 20 years = \$12,000
DUMP FEES	\$10/mo. x 20 years = \$2,400	\$2/mo. x 20 years = \$480
PESTICIDES, ETC.	\$10/mo. x 20 years = \$2,400	\$2/mo. x 20 years = \$480
WATER	10 units/mo. @ \$5 (inc. sewer charges & tax) x 20 years = \$12,000	3 units/mo. @ \$4.50 (inc. sewer charges & tax) x 20 years = \$3,240
REPLACEMENT OF SHORT-LIVED PLANTS	10/year @ \$40.00 inc. removal & disposal x 20 years = \$8,000	none
TOTALS	\$70,800	26,200
MAINTENANCE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL COST	86%	62%
COST DIFFERENCE		\$44,600 LESS