



West View Cemetery  
Master Plan Update  
March, 2003



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Prepared for the  
Town of Blacksburg, Virginia



HILL  
STUDIO

Prepared by  
Hill Studio, P.C.  
120 W. Campbell Ave. SW  
Roanoke, VA 24011  
tel: 540-342-5263  
fax: 540-345-5625

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## Executive Summary

West View Cemetery is an important environmental, historic, aesthetic, and passive recreational resource in the heart of Blacksburg. It is a very early example of a “Park Cemetery,” and features grave-sites of many of the town’s most noteworthy citizens. In addition to continuing to serve as one of the community’s primary burial grounds, West View is a popular destination for strolling, and still graces the town with its natural beauty.

The March 2003 West View Cemetery Master Plan Update allows the Town to clearly identify its current needs with respect to the cemetery. The plan was initiated mainly due to the necessity for expansion to satisfy the projected demand for conventional grave-sites. However, other key needs identified were provision of a columbarium and the desire for a modest cemetery administration/sales office combined with an upgraded cemetery maintenance facility. Additionally, it was felt that the traditionally black, Lee Street cemetery district should be better embraced by, and integrated within, the larger West View Cemetery without sacrificing its unique sense of place and historical time. Finally, the cemetery needs to be made safer and more easily navigable for both vehicular traffic and pedestrians. These needs were woven into a set of four broad Action Strategies. Each Action Strategy is accompanied by specific recommendations on how to carry out the Action Strategies. The Action Strategies and their associated recommendations are:

Action Strategy 1: Preserve the natural and historic character of the cemetery.

- A. Plant additional trees and shrubs on the cemetery grounds.
- B. Develop a landscape management plan.
- C. Provide site furnishings using a standard palate to create consistency.
- D. Provide for the interpretation of the natural and historic character of the cemetery.
- E. Bury the electrical line paralleling East Roanoke Street.
- F. Remove the unneeded length of guardrail on Owens Street and conceal the remaining section with an evergreen hedge.
- G. Create a trail system in the cemetery.

Action Strategy 2: Expand the cemetery to available land.

- A. Blend the new expansion area harmoniously with the adjacent districts.
- B. Provide a columbarium wall.
- C. Build a Cemetery Reception/Service Building.
- D. Sequester the Public Works Department facility in the corner formed by the rear property hedgerow and existing white pine buffer, as hidden as possible from East Roanoke Street and the new expansion entrance.

Action Strategy 3: Form a more harmonious relation between the West View and Lee Street portions of the cemetery.

- A. Apply design principles to mitigate separateness.
- B. Avoid planting a screening buffer or regular street trees where the cemeteries adjoin on Roanoke Street.
- C. Refer to both cemeteries as the West View Cemetery.
- D. See Action Strategy 1, Recommendation D.
- E. See Action Strategy 4, Recommendation B.

Action Strategy 4: Provide a clearer and safer circulation system for both cars and pedestrians.

- A. Convert the present primary public entrance on Owens Street to a minor entrance, making it one-way into the cemetery.
- B. Revise the intersection of Owens Street and East Roanoke Street such that East Roanoke Street meets Owens at a 90 degree angle.
- C. Transform the current northernmost entrance on East Roanoke Street into the primary entrance to the cemetery, and identify it as the entrance to the cemetery office.
- D. Retain the two minor entrances on East Roanoke Street, but downplay them.
- E. Restore the initial cemetery entrance on East Roanoke Street.
- F. In the Lee Street section of the cemetery, provide pedestrian and limited vehicular access.

## Introduction

The Town of Blacksburg's cemetery is a large tranquil open-space in the Downtown Eastside neighborhood. It consists of what is currently known as the West View Cemetery as well as a smaller adjacent cemetery historically used by the black community. In addition to serving as a primary burial ground for the community, West View is popular for passive forms of recreation including walking, bird-watching, gravestone rubbing, and plant identification. Further, a portion of the land serves as an important satellite maintenance facility for the Town's Department of Public Works. The growth and development of the Town's cemetery are reflective of the Town's notable, 200 year long history, which extends from frontier days to the present age.

## Purpose

The Town of Blacksburg 2046 Master Plan of 2001 recommends that within 25 years the Town should study expansion of West View Cemetery. However, the lack of space in the cemetery dictated that the Town take more immediate action to alleviate the space challenge. Thus, the March, 2003 West View Cemetery Master Plan Update identifies how the space available at the north edge of the Cemetery may best be utilized, and also recommends actions to meet other identified needs with respect to the cemetery.

## Site Description

### Topography

A person standing at the intersection of Owens Street and East Roanoke Street and facing northeast, will find the main portion of the West View Cemetery to the left of East Roanoke Street. This section of the cemetery consists of three contiguous parcels of land that together total 15.5 acres. (The Tax Map Numbers for these parcels are 070046, 070337, and 070047.) The terrain descends from northeast to southwest with a change in elevation of approximately 80 feet. Approximately one half of the property, the mid-portion, occupies the spine of a northeast/southwest-aligned ridge.

From the same Owens Street/East Roanoke Street vantage point, one can also view the smaller, Lee Street portion of West View Cemetery lying to the right of East Roanoke Street. This part of the cemetery is one of three Blacksburg area cemeteries traditionally used by the black community. It is most easily accessed from Lee Street and consists of 1.3 acres. (Tax Map Number 070102.) The property rises to the crest of a ridge running parallel to the ridge underlying the West View section of the Cemetery.

In both sections of the cemetery, the land that isn't occupying the ridges falls in broad adjoining swales. The overall site is generally hilly with slopes



*View from the ridge in the Lee Street portion of the Cemetery.*

averaging five to ten percent. The gentlest grades of both the West View and Lee Street sections reside in the oldest developed portions.

## Views

### From the Cemetery

If one faces west while on the highest part of the Lee Street cemetery, the dramatic distant views of the Allegheny Mountains are inspiring. Similar but less breathtaking views are also available from the highest elevation of the main portion of the cemetery grounds. Middle distance views of the surrounding townscape are also attractive and soothing.

Some sections of the cemetery's perimeter are thoroughly screened, hiding nearby structures, while others are fully exposed. Sections that are exposed, such as the southwest corner of the cemetery adjacent to Harding Avenue, yield disconcerting, incompatible views of neighboring student row-housing.

### Within the Cemetery

Views of the original, historic portion of the cemetery grounds, with its picturesque tombstones and mature treescapes, are very appealing. In the modern sections, the rolling topography generally gives relief to the unbroken, treeless grid formed by the gravestones. The most disconcerting views within the modern cemetery are those where two styles of burial markers, those flush with the ground and those with vertical stone monuments, are starkly contrasted.

### From Outside the Cemetery Looking In

Views from the streets surrounding the cemetery are generally pleasing. However, the immediate proximity of the scarred guardrail on Owens Street to historic grave markers is jarring. In addition, the narrow East Roanoke Street frontage is compromised by an unsightly electrical line and failing Hemlock trees. Another aesthetic challenge is created by the tall utility light poles sitting in the middle of an otherwise unbroken view of the cemetery hillside. The contrast in height between the grave markers and the light poles draws attention to the light poles.

## Circulation

### West View Section

The ceremonial vehicular entrance for the West View section of the cemetery is on Owens Street. Three lesser vehicular entrances are spaced along East Roanoke Street. The northernmost of these three provides access to the City's maintenance facility. It has also served, by legal easement, as a point of egress for the parking lot of the Catholic Church that lies northwest of the cemetery. The Town has the option of not renewing this arrangement if the property is sold. The roads in the cemetery are fairly evenly spaced throughout



*Distant views of the mountains from the high elevations in West View Cemetery*



*Picturesque tombstones in the older portions of West View Cemetery*



*Guardrail on Owens Street.*



*The current cemetery entrance on Owens Street.*

the cemetery and run either parallel or perpendicular to East Roanoke Street. Most are narrow, single-lane roadways. There are no signs directing traffic within the Cemetery. In addition, there are no paved pedestrian paths in the cemetery.

### Lee Street Section

The only road or pathway currently serving the Lee Street section of the cemetery is a barely discernible, grassed-over service way. This path extends from Lee Street at the southernmost corner of the property straight into the cemetery and then turns and runs roughly parallel to East Roanoke Street. When it reaches the northernmost corner of the property it turns once more and drops steeply to East Roanoke Street. The last 20 feet is a paved apron.

## **Vegetation**

### West View Section

The cemetery is not heavily landscaped. The one truly-outstanding landscape specimen is the large Sugar Maple near the old section in the main portion of the cemetery. It has good form and a commanding presence, especially when it changes to its bright orange and yellow fall colors. The maple is approximately 150 years old. Several smaller maples are approximately 30 years old. Most of the boxwood, arborvitae, spruce, and cedar appear to be between 40 and 70 years old. The rest of the plant material has likely been planted in the last 15-20 years.

The plants seem to have been left largely on their own, with minimum maintenance. The boxwoods and arborvitae have been allowed to overgrow the nearby gravestones. Many of the trees have reached maturity and have begun to lose some of their vigor. Several of the cedars have evidence of lightning strikes. One of the large Norway Spruces was topped in a windstorm. The lower branches of this same specimen cover the headstones around its base. A mid-age row of White Pines separates the developed parcels of the cemetery grounds from the undeveloped portion. Of these, the pines adjacent to the city's cemetery maintenance facility are clearly inferior to those adjacent to the public vegetable gardens. The cause of this discrepancy may lie in the fact that the former have been subjected to repeated crossings by maintenance traffic, while the latter have benefited from the watering and nourishment of the vegetable plots.

Overall, the plants seem fairly healthy and display only minor disease and insect problems. Woolly adelgids have infested the hemlocks, and some of the arborvitae have bag worms. The Boxwoods near the road have died back due to winter breakage and salt damage from plowing.



*The large Sugar Maple in the older section of the cemetery.*



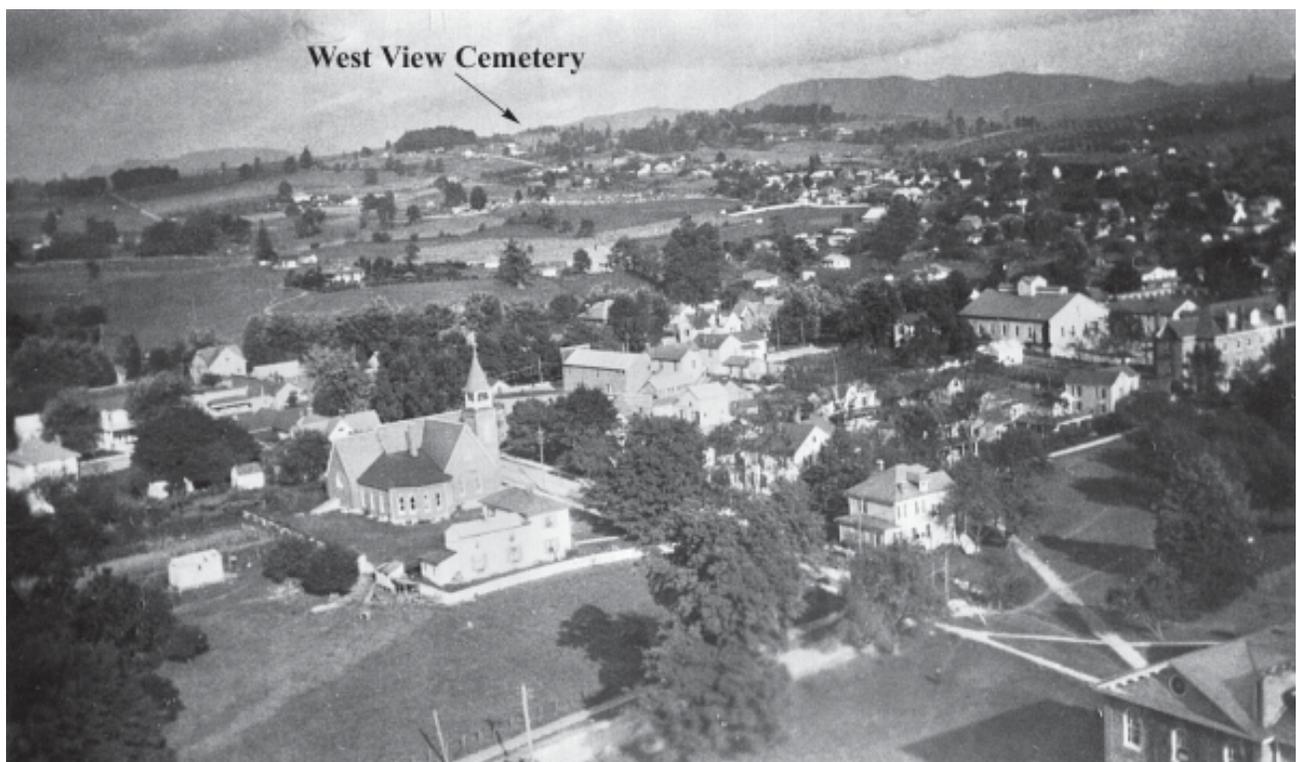
*Damaged Boxwoods in West View Cemetery*

### Lee Street Section

Other than trees planted along the edges of the property, there is no significant landscaping associated with the Lee Street section of the cemetery. A row of large White Pines runs from East Roanoke Street to Lee Street along the southern border of the property, and Canadian Hemlocks border Lee Street for a short distance. The remainder of the property lines presents a mixture of tree species. No trees border East Roanoke Street.



*Looking up into the Lee Street portion of the Cemetery from East Roanoke Street*



## History

Blacksburg was a budding young town with a future as a trading center when West View Cemetery was established. A few acres for the purpose of creating a cemetery were deeded to trustees of the Town by William Black in 1832. Black must have intended the cemetery to be distant because even as late as 1927 the cemetery was located in the far reaches of the town.

The town fathers became the caretakers of the cemetery in 1880. Evidently maintenance was not consistent: in 1895, a local citizen recorded in her diary that the cemetery was overgrown with briars and bushes. The Town

*This photo of Blacksburg, showing West View Cemetery in the background (approximately one inch from end of arrow) was taken in 1917. (Photo: VPI, University Libraries, digital archives)*

subsequently set aside a day for the cemetery's clean-up, with citizens dutifully turning out to help. (Bodell, Social Life 12-13)

The cemetery expanded in 1900 when Alexander Black (who was subsequently buried in the cemetery) sold 1 ¾ acres to the Town for one dollar. In exchange for the donation, the Blacks became de facto governors of the cemetery. They established a five dollar fee for plots, and required that the money be used in the upkeep of the grounds. Among the other dictated improvements was the addition of a perimeter fence. (Bodell, Social Life 13)

In 1902, a monument to Confederate dead was placed in the cemetery by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, who had held multiple fund-raisers to raise the money to make the monument possible. The canons on either side of the monument were added in 1920. They had been cast in 1895 and were originally used by the cadets at VPI for training. The monument and canons remain today. (Bodell, Social Life 13)



*The monument to the Confederate dead sitting on a small knoll*

### Prominent Citizens

The West View Cemetery is eternal home to some of Blacksburg's more memorable personages. Appropriately, one of William Black's descendants, Harvey Black, was buried at West View in 1888. Black was a doctor before the Civil War and, during the war, he served in the 4<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment as a brigade surgeon. He went on to head the Field Hospital, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps, Army of Northern Virginia. It is reported that he was present during the amputation of Stonewall Jackson's arm. Later in life, Dr. Black lobbied to bring Virginia A & M to Blacksburg. Another Civil War veteran, Colonel Charles Ronald, led the 4<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry Regiment at the battle of Cedar Mountain. He survived the war, and died on July 1, 1898. Both men are buried in the oldest section of the cemetery. (Bodell, Civil War 9-10) Another notable person in the older portion of the cemetery is Germanicus Kent. He died in 1862, and the inscription on his grave indicates he was a pioneer and founder of Rockford, Illinois.

### Art in the Cemetery

Both artists and craftsmen have been a part of the cemetery's history. In the early days of the cemetery, Tip Evans, a cabinetmaker, constructed wooden coffins for burial. Fittingly, Mr. Evans is buried in the cemetery. Poor people, who could not afford headstones, used wooden planks or found stones as grave markers.

Many of the headstones are much more than a simple marker. B. F. Spyker, a locally famous sculptor, carved a number of the early stone monuments in both wood and stone. Spyker began working in the 1820s, and, according to one architectural historian, J. Daniel Pezzoni:

Spyker's monuments have the flavor of illuminated German fraktur manuscripts, with robustly carved flowers and foliage filling every square inch of surface. Popular motifs such as covered urns and weeping willows appear, as do Greek Revival floral devices and, on one stone, an archway supported by columns with stylized Ionic



*Colonel Ronald's Tombstone*



*A grave marker for Germanicus Kent, founder of Rockford, Illinois*

volutes... The Spyker monuments often use the common antebellum discoid form, with a round “head” on top of a rectangular “body”—perhaps at some point in the distant past an intentional and meaningful anthropomorphism (4).

Pezzoni also indicated that: “As the nineteenth century progressed, the vernacular exuberance of Blacksburg’s antebellum gravestones came to be replaced by standardized forms and ornament typical of cemeteries in other parts of the nation” (4).

### **West View as a Rural Garden Cemetery**

In 1832, the year the first piece of land for West View Cemetery was deeded to trustees of the town, Blacksburg was not yet incorporated, and the cemetery lay about half a mile from the central settlement area. The location of the cemetery, removed from the town, may indicate the intention to establish a rural cemetery, rather than the traditional pre-19<sup>th</sup> century churchyard cemetery. It is possible that Boston’s popular Mount Auburn Cemetery (founded in 1831) influenced the placement of the much smaller West View Cemetery. The rural or garden cemetery “innovation” was a reaction to overcrowded, unsightly, evil smelling and unhealthy cemeteries in the country’s larger cities, and allowed burial grounds to be spacious, serene, and garden-like. The West View Cemetery, intentionally set away from the original town grid, seems to have been founded with these considerations in mind. Also, in contrast with churchyard cemeteries, West View is nondenominational.



A view in Arlington National Cemetery, a good example of a Garden Cemetery.

### **Lee Street Cemetery: the African-American Cemetery**

The Lee Street Cemetery lies across East Roanoke Street from the main cemetery, and it is one of approximately three cemeteries that have been used by the local black community. Much of its history has been lost.

From piecing together the stories of several members of Blacksburg’s black community with information from land records, we know that land was donated to trustees of the Blacksburg Colored Graveyard Association in 1909 for the purposes of a cemetery. In order for a person to be buried in this cemetery, he or she had to be a Blacksburg resident. “Resident” was defined as someone who had been born in Blacksburg. Additional land was evidently deeded in 1959.



A broken headstone in the Lee Street section of the Cemetery.

For many years, the cemetery was administered by a committee consisting of five gentlemen from St. Paul A.M.E. Methodist Church and First Baptist Church. (These gentlemen were most likely the trustees for the Blacksburg Colored Graveyard Association.) The committee maintained a treasury for upkeep of the cemetery, and once a year, on Memorial Day, organized a community cleanup of the cemetery. Often the cleanup would involve burning off brush. One nearby resident remembers “the whole thing on fire.” After many years, all but one of the five members of the committee had died, and the remaining committee member, Mr. John Holt, requested that the Town take over the care of the cemetery. The town did take over maintenance of the

cemetery; however, it was not until 1998 that the land was formally deeded to the Town of Blacksburg.

The Lee Street Cemetery was never formally divided into plots. As a result, it is impossible to know (with a few exceptions) who is buried in the cemetery or where. General consensus is that the cemetery has nearly reached capacity. However, local undertakers are aware of a few spots that are still available.

## Process

This document represents the culmination of a year's effort by Town of Blacksburg staff and Hill Studio, P.C. to analyze the Town cemetery's past and present conditions and to formulate recommendations for its future preservation, upkeep, and growth. The process involved a series of site visits, document research, and meetings with Community representatives, City Staff, and the full West View Cemetery Committee. Issues such as the desirability of planting additional trees, the appropriateness of closing the Owens Street entrance, the nature of site furnishings, and the site of a future columbarium garden were discussed and deliberated at length. The consensus of all involved is represented in this Master Plan document.

## Findings

The following list of findings, as determined through field visits and interviews, is presented in the form of strengths and challenges. These issues were used to formulate the action strategies and recommendations in this Master Plan.

### Strengths

#### Tranquil Setting

- ❖ The West View Cemetery remains a tranquil retreat in the midst of the bustle of town life.
- ❖ Distance and middle distance viewsheds are pleasing.
- ❖ The northern most portion of the property, which is 4.39 acres in size and is currently used as a community garden and a public works substation, provides the opportunity to expand the cemetery.

#### History

- ❖ The Cemetery and those buried in it reflect the history of the Town of Blacksburg; thus, over the years it has increased in significance as a rare vestige of earlier times.



*Checking the condition of the existing vegetation.*



*Tranquil Cemetery Views*

## Challenges

### Landscaping

- ❖ Overall, landscaping in the Cemetery is sparse, with mature tree and shrub specimens.
- ❖ Lots in the later portions of the cemetery were laid out in a dense pattern with many of the lots very close to the public street edge. This limits opportunities for landscaping.

### Utilities

- ❖ The dusk to dawn lights in the Cemetery are unattractive utility lights mounted on pressure-treated wooden utility poles.
- ❖ An overhead electric line paralleling East Roanoke Street both severely mars the garden cemetery character of the cemetery and contributes to the sense of separation between the Lee Street and West View portions of the cemetery.
- ❖ An eight inch sewer line runs diagonally through the northern “expansion” zone of the Cemetery, requiring a ten foot setback for graves or any other structure.

### Furnishings

- ❖ There are no furnishings such as benches on the site. The trash receptacles on the site present an aesthetic challenge.

### Administration and Maintenance

- ❖ The cemetery needs a small administrative office and public reception office, as well as an updated maintenance office complete with a staff lounge and restrooms. The necessity for this facility has increased since the Department of Public Works moved its main base to the periphery of town.

### Capacity

- ❖ The cemetery is approaching full capacity.

### Separation of the West View and Lee Street portions of the Cemetery

- ❖ The West View and Lee Street portions of the cemetery are separated, both geographically and historically.

### Entrances

- ❖ The present main entrance to the West View section is seriously flawed. It sits dangerously close to the juncture of Roanoke and Owens Streets, is flanked by unsightly metal guardrails, and is



*Sparse landscaping in the West View Cemetery, with mature trees and shrubs.*



*Unattractive utility poles in cemetery.*



*The current Cemetery entrance on Owens Street*

obscured by overgrown foundation plantings. Further, the stone walls of this entrance interfere with site lines, exacerbating hazardous conditions, and are failing structurally. A redeeming feature of this entrance is that it frames an attractive view of the southwest corner roundabout.

- ❖ The remaining three entrances off of East Roanoke Street are obscure, unmarked and unremarkable in terms of their respective viewsheds.
- ❖ The entrance to the cemetery at Lee Street is unmarked and heavily obscured by an overgrown screening hedge.

#### **Traffic Patterns and Circulation**

- ❖ The present convergence of Owens Street and East Roanoke Streets at the southwest corner of the cemetery grounds creates an awkward and hazardous condition. Anyone heading north who is unfamiliar with the traffic pattern is unsure whether the primary artery continues ahead on East Roanoke Street or veers to the left onto Owens Street.
- ❖ There is no paved road in the Lee Street section of the cemetery.



*Looking south toward the convergence of East Roanoke Street and Owens Street*

## Action Strategies and Recommendations

The following four broad action strategies were developed in response to the issues listed in the previous section, and form the skeleton of the Town of Blacksburg West View Cemetery Master Plan.

1. Preserve the natural and historic character of the cemetery.
2. Expand the cemetery to available land.
3. Form a more harmonious relationship between the West View and Lee Street portions of the cemetery.
4. Provide a clearer and safer circulation system for both cars and pedestrians.

For each of these action strategies, a number of specific recommendations have been developed. In the list that follows, each action strategy is followed by supporting information, as well as the recommendations which apply to it.

### **Action Strategy 1: Preserve the natural and historic character of the cemetery.**

The West View Cemetery is a valued cultural and environmental resource of the Blacksburg community and merits thoughtful preservation.

#### **A: Plant additional trees and shrubs on the cemetery grounds.**

Nothing stands to improve the general beauty and ambience of the cemetery more than planting additional shade trees and ornamental trees and shrubs. The notion that tree and shrub roots invade the burial vaults is unfounded. Burial vaults, today by code, and from earliest times by custom, are positioned a minimum of two feet below finish grade. Few spreading tree roots penetrate beyond 2' to 3' depth. Feeder roots extending laterally from the tree root base are generally quite shallow, rarely extending greater than 18" depth. Roots of mature trees may on occasion disrupt surface mounted grave markers. If absolutely required, the lateral spread of roots may be controlled by means of root barriers. (A thorough and up to date compilation and evaluation of tree barrier alternatives is provided by the International Society of Arboriculture's publication "Landscape Below Ground II." A portion of this publication is reprinted on the internet, and may be found by visiting [www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com) on the web.)

- 1: Plant trees or shrubs, where possible, in unsold lots and on unneeded secondary walkways.**

Trees are the preferred form for planting in unsold lots since they have greater visual impact than shrubs. However in conditions where space does not permit trees, such as secondary walkways, shrubs should be considered.

**2: Plant trees, where possible, in the oldest portions of the cemetery.**

It appears that the earliest developed parcels of the cemetery were not lotted as densely or efficiently as the modern sections. Consequently, the town may be able to be more liberal in introducing new trees to the oldest areas.

Please see Appendix 1 for a list of recommended cemetery grounds trees.

**3: Establish a cemetery policy permitting owners of cemetery plots to voluntarily forego the use of burial lots in favor of planting trees.**

**4: Renovate the landscape associated with the Lee Street portion of the Cemetery.**

Landscape associated with the arrival area, street frontage, and side boundaries of the Lee Street district is past its prime and due for an overhaul. What remains of the White Pine buffer bordering the northern property edge – volunteer seedlings from a now-deceased row - is uneven and scraggly in appearance. It is recommended that this row be replaced with a mix of Cedar and Holly trees planted in a way so as to avoid an overly rigid, modern screen appearance. It is recommended that the existing dense planting of Hemlocks along Lee Street be largely replaced with a lower-growing, more manageable evergreen hedge such as Inkberry or Laurel (height not to exceed four feet).

**5: Consider a buy-back program through which the Town may offer to repurchase lots for the express purpose of planting trees.**

A minimum of two adjacent family lots are required to plant a large shade or evergreen tree. (A family lot is defined as four adjacent grave-sites measuring a total of ten by 16 feet.) A single family lot permits planting a small, ornamental tree.

**6: Consider establishing a Street Tree Incentive Program for adjacent properties on East Roanoke Street, Owens Street and Harding Avenue.**

See Appendix 1 for a list of recommended street trees.

**7: Plant both flowering and nonflowering small-scale trees along the Harding Avenue frontage.**

Recommended species for this edge are Flowering Crab Apples and Amur Maples.

**B: Develop a landscape management plan.**

The opportunity to plant new trees is both extremely limited, due to the scarcity of unsold cemetery plots, and costly, due to the expense of sacrificing any unsold plots. Therefore, it is imperative that every available measure be taken to ensure the health of existing plant materials. Strategies must be developed for monitoring trees, fertilizing, spraying for diseases or pests, watering in times of drought, and avoiding undue harm by maintenance practices such as weed whipping or compaction of tree root systems.

**1: Where possible, establish mulch rings around trees.**

A highly effective way of protecting the base and trunks of trees from maintenance damage and of providing a healthier surface condition for the root system is to establish mulch rings surrounding trees. Care should be taken, however, to ensure that mulch is not piled above the tree root-flare. Covering the root-flare will result, over time, in basal rot and insect damage, eventually causing the decline, or even death, of the tree.

**C: Provide site furnishings using a standard palate to create consistency.**

Site furnishings should present a unified theme. Further, they should be sturdy, uniform in style, simple and dignified in appearance, compatible with the natural landscape, and require minimal upkeep and maintenance. Coated metal is recommended above wood because of its durability and resistance to vandalism.

**Benches and Waste Receptacles:**

The City of Blacksburg has its own line of street furnishings manufactured by Victor Stanley, Inc. Benches are Product Number CBF-12, while the trash cans are Product Number S-20. (See next page for illustrations.)

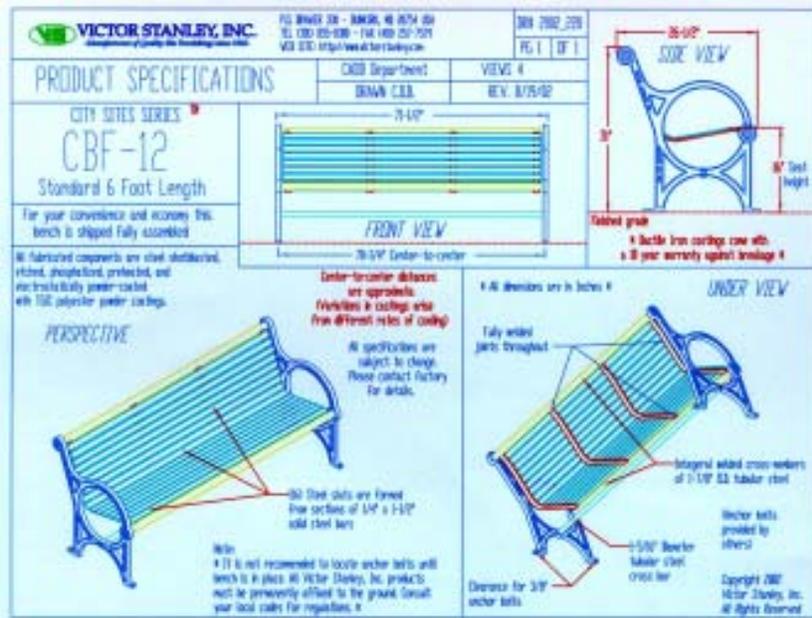
**Lights:**

The recommended type of light is a Washington Luminaire on a Florentine Base and Pole, from King Luminaire.

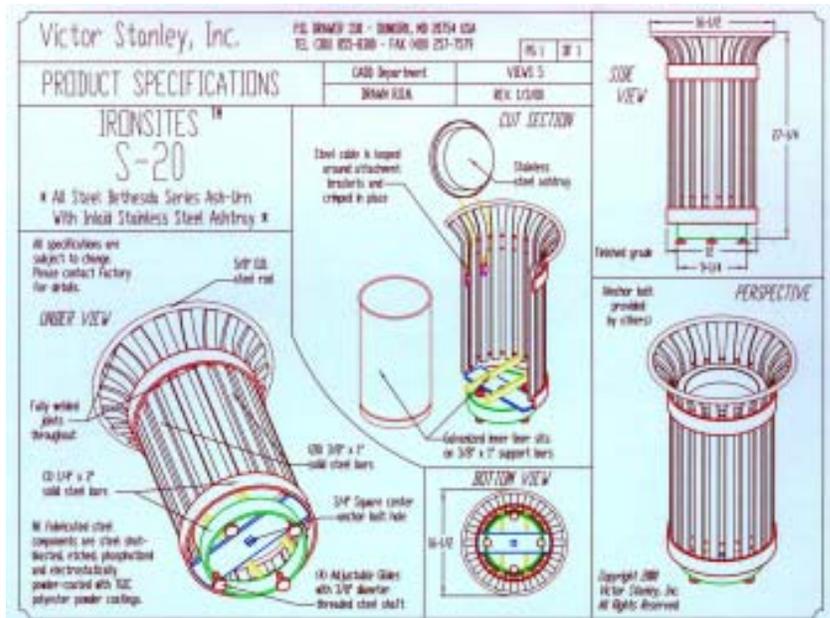
**D: Provide for the interpretation of the natural and historic character of the cemetery.**



*Recommended King Luminaire Light Fixture*



Victor Stanley Fixtures



**1: Install discreet plaques at three locations: at the entrance to the new portion of the cemetery office/service building, the entrance on Owens Street, and in the Lee Street portion on the hillside adjacent to East Roanoke Street.**

**2: Consider applying for a sign with the Virginia Historical Highway Markers program.**

The cost of such signs is \$1,225. Information concerning obtaining a Virginia Historical Highway Marker can be obtained from:  
[www.dhr.state.va.us/hiway\\_markers/hwmarker\\_infor.htm](http://www.dhr.state.va.us/hiway_markers/hwmarker_infor.htm)

**3: Make a low cost brochure available at the cemetery office providing information on cemetery history.**

**4: Provide identification tags for unique trees.**

The Virginia Tech Horticulture Department could be contacted to see if they might be interested in providing the tags.

**E: Bury the electrical line paralleling East Roanoke Street.**

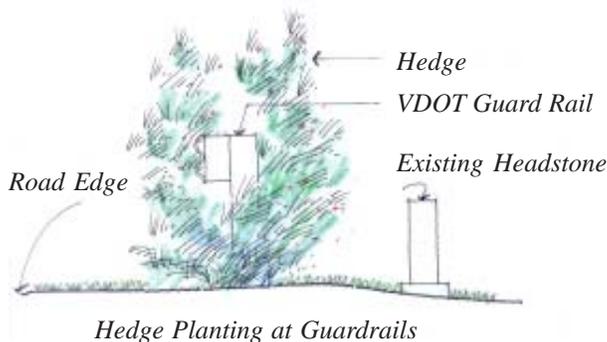
This would dramatically improve the general appearance of the cemetery and facing residential properties.

**F. Remove the unneeded length of guardrail on Owens Street and conceal the remaining section with an evergreen hedge.**

The guard rail protecting the cemetery corner where Roanoke Street merges with Owens Street extends farther than absolutely required. The portion of the guard rail necessary to protect the adjacent gravesites from cars failing to negotiate the abrupt turn needs to be retained. However, it should be effectively screened by a durable, low, evergreen, non-thorny hedge. Where the guard rail is not required, it should be removed and replaced by an extension of the same evergreen hedge. This revision should greatly enhance the appearance of the most frequently viewed edge of West View Cemetery. (See diagram below.)



*Looking north into the main section of the Cemetery from the Lee Street side. Note the utility lines along East Roanoke Street.*



**G: Create a trail system in the cemetery.**

The popularity of the cemetery for neighborhood walking might be significantly increased by establishing a central, western pedestrian access point and by developing a trail linking the Lee and West View sections of the cemetery. The Lee Street portion of the trail must be aligned to traverse the slope allowing a gradual climb while interfering as little as possible with existing grave sites. It may follow the present grassed service lane.

**Action Strategy 2: Expand the cemetery to available land.**

The cemetery is now approaching full capacity and the time has come to begin planning for utilization of the remaining available land. City-owned property on the north edge of the cemetery will be used as an expansion area. It is currently in use as a staging area by the city Public Works Department and for a community vegetable garden.

The expansion area can accommodate a number of needs. Most importantly, it will provide additional grave sites as well as space for a columbarium. The cemetery also has been in need of a small administration and public reception office, designed to be inviting and comforting to visitors, and an updated maintenance office complete with a staff lounge and restrooms. These needs can also be accommodated.

**A: Blend the new expansion area harmoniously with the adjacent districts.**

The expansion area is too limited in size and too visually associated with neighboring areas to take on a significantly different development pattern and character.

**B: Provide a columbarium wall. (See illustration on next page.)**

- 1: Site the wall so as to interfere as little as possible with existing vegetation and the current pattern of grave-sites.**
- 2: Design the wall to reinforce the definition of the cemetery edge in the new addition.**
- 3: Configure the wall to allow phased construction.**
- 4: Place the wall so it offers pleasing views, both near and distant.**
- 5: Embellish the columbarium with strategically placed shade and ornamental trees.**



*Examples of columbarium walls.*





*Top: Current view from East Roanoke Street toward site of future columbarium. Bottom: East corner of proposed columbarium garden.*

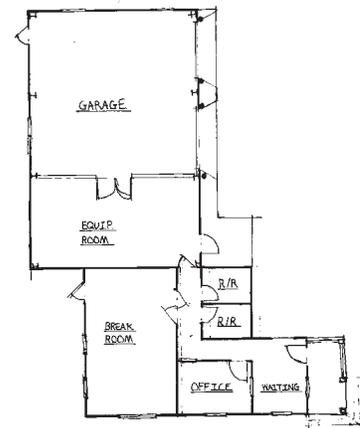
- 6: Provide a hard-surfaced walkway allowing access to the wall.
- 7: Design the wall to match well with, and regularize, existing land contours.
- 8: Design the wall to not to exceed five feet in height in order to prevent it from appearing oppressive.

**C: Build a Cemetery Reception/Service Building.**

Combining service and office facilities seems to be a common practice for public cemeteries. Salem, Roanoke, and Lexington City, for example, all share this approach. Hill Studio's preliminary design for this facility is based on a program provided by the City Manager's Office.

- 1: Design the building to be a style of architecture that is either consistent, or compatible with, the adjoining townscape, which presents a local, vernacular southwest Virginia style.

Such a style would include features such as a porch; a pitched, metal, seam roof; a rich garden landscape; and painted wood siding.



FLOOR PLAN  
1/4" = 1'-0"

*Artist's Conception of Recommended Reception/Service Building and its Floor Plan*

**2: Site the building so as to screen the Public Works building from visitation areas.**

**D: Sequester the Public Works Department facility in the corner formed by the rear property hedgerow and existing white pine buffer, as hidden as possible from East Roanoke Street and the new expansion entrance.**

**1: Retain the portions of the existing white pine buffer needed to help screen the Public Works Department facility and take measures to restore this portion to health. Selectively thin the remaining portion to soften its linear nature.**

Measures to protect the health of the section to be retained should include restricting the back and forth flow of maintenance equipment to one prescribed route, and establishing a watering, root-feeding, and pest spraying regimen for these trees.

**2: Retain at least 1/2 acre for continued use as a Public Works Department service and staging ground.**

**3: Design the service yard to accommodate several pickup trucks, a dump truck, a backhoe, and a four wheel drive Gator Vehicle.**

### **Action Strategy 3: Form a more harmonious relation between the West View and Lee Street portions of the cemetery.**

**A: Apply design principles to mitigate separateness.**

Historically the black and white portions of the cemetery have been separate. This separateness can be mitigated through design with the conscious, skillful use of the recommendations in this Master Plan. Examples would be providing the same sorts of signs, site furnishings and plantings in both sections, and having the pedestrian path in the Lee Street portion of the cemetery be an obvious continuation of one in the West View portion.

**B: Avoid planting a screening buffer or regular street trees where the cemeteries adjoin on Roanoke Street.**

This will maintain the sense of an unbroken, green open space.

**C: Establish one name, West View Cemetery, for both portions.**

Applying one name for these historically separate cemeteries will help associate them in people's minds.



*A View of the Lee Street Section of the Cemetery*

**D:** See Action Strategy 1, Recommendation D.2.

**E:** See Action Strategy 4, Recommendation F.

### **Action Strategy 4: Provide a clearer and safer circulation system for both cars and pedestrians.**

**A:** Convert the present primary public entrance on Owens Street to a minor entrance, making it one-way in.

The primary street artery bounding the West View Cemetery is East Roanoke Street continuing to Owens Street continuing to Harding Avenue.

**1:** Provide necessary signage to direct cemetery traffic out the new entrance mentioned in Action Strategy 4, Recommendation E, and to discourage exiting via the Owens Street entrance.

**2:** Erect a “West View Cemetery, Established 1832” sign on Owens Street.

**3:** Refurbish the plant materials now concealing the handsome existing stone entrance.

**B:** Revise the intersection of Owens Street and East Roanoke Street so that East Roanoke Street meets Owens at a 90° angle. (See photo and illustration on next page.)

Making East Roanoke Street secondary to Owens at this point presents an opportunity to make East Roanoke Street “extended” an implied primary gateway to both the Lee Street and main cemetery sections, thereby linking them better.

**1:** Provide a richly planted island to segregate traffic lanes entering and exiting the extended portion of East Roanoke Street.

Serving as a visual terminus to the southward length of Roanoke Street, this improvement would significantly enhance the appearance of the street. Further, it will provide an effective visual clue for arrival or departure from the Cemetery and act as a traffic calming measure.

**C:** Transform the current northernmost entrance on East Roanoke Street into a primary entrance to the cemetery, and identify it as the entrance to the cemetery office.



*Current Owens Street Entrance*



*Top: Current view looking down East Roanoke Street toward the cemetery. The flat-topped pine tree in the distance sits at the corner of East Roanoke Street and Owens Street. Bottom: Same view in the future with landscaping to revise traffic flow.*

There are two advantages to establishing this entrance as primary. First, this entrance will lead directly to the proposed Cemetery Reception Office. Second, because this portion of the cemetery is not yet developed, it is where the most latitude exists for developing an entrance statement unhindered by the presence of either existing amenities or grave-sites. Ornamental trees and evergreen shrub accents may be employed together with tasteful signage to highlight this entrance.

**D: Retain the two minor entrances on East Roanoke Street, but downplay them. (Please see the photo and illustration on the next page.)**

Retaining these two entrances will help with ingress and egress to the cemetery. However, visually downplaying them will give more emphasis to the main entrance. To accomplish this:

1. **Extend the existing offset evergreen buffer to either side of the entrance drive, bracketing this buffer with planting of a large, flowering shrub such as Viburnum or Forsythia.**
2. **Maintain the current, narrow one-way width of these roads.**
3. **Remove existing miscellaneous ornamental plantings that may not be of significant value or in prime condition.**

**E: Restore the initial cemetery entrance on East Roanoke Street.**

At one time, several exits from the cemetery radiated out from the circular drive area in the southern end of West View Cemetery. Restoring the exit on East Roanoke Street enables closing the unsafe exit onto Owens Street.

**F: In the Lee Street section of the cemetery, provide pedestrian and limited vehicular access.**

1. **To accommodate pedestrians, provide two sets of steps on the bank that parallels East Roanoke Street, one to the north and one to the south.**
2. **Provide a short, single-lane access way extending from Lee Street to the crest of the hill, terminating at a turnaround area for hearses.**

A porous, reinforced turf system is preferable to a hard paved lane. There are several manufacturers of porous grass paving systems including Invisible Structures, Inc.; Permaturf



*Top: Current view of one of the two East Roanoke Street entrances to be downplayed. Bottom: Future view with landscaping.*

Company; and RK Manufacturing. Also referred to as grass rings, these systems entail honeycomb like panels of reinforced plastic. Installed on a compacted sand and gravel base, and filled with fertile topsoil, these panels are able to carry the load of a fire truck while appearing similar to a lawn. A row of edging granite cobble setts will serve to clearly define the edge of the access way. If cost dictates, precast concrete blocks simulating cobbles are an acceptable alternate.

## Appendix 1: Recommended Trees and Shrubs

Street Trees			Cemetery Shrubs		
Common Name	Common Name	native	Common Name	Common Name	native
Acer rubrum	Red Maple	yes	Aronia arbutifolia	Red Chokeberry	yes
Nyssa sylvatica	Black gum	yes	Azalea species	Azalea	no
Quercus shumardii	Shumard Oak	no	Buxus var. koreana	Korean Box	no
Ulmus parviflora	Lacebark Elm	no	Callicarpa americana	American Beautyberry	yes
Cemetery Trees			Cemetery Shrubs		
Common Name	Common Name	native	Common Name	Common Name	native
Acer buergeranum	Trident Maple	no	Cephalanthus occidentalis	Buttonbush	yes
Acer campestre	Hedge Maple	no	Clethra alnifolia	Sweet Pepper-bush	yes
Acer ginnala	Amur Maple	no	Cotoneaster species	Cotoneaster	no
Acer griseum	Paperbark Maple	no	Forsythia species	Forsythia	no
Acer rubrum	Red Maple	yes	Hamamelis virginiana	Witch Hazel	yes
Acer saccharum	Sugar Maple	yes	Hydrangea arborescens	Smooth Hydrangea	yes
Amelanchier arborea	Downy Serviceberry	yes	Ilex glabra	Inkberry	yes
Amelanchier canadensis	Canada Serviceberry	yes	Ilex verticillata	Winterberry	yes
Amelanchier laevis	Smooth Serviceberry	yes	Itea virginica	Virginia Willow	yes
Betula nigra	River Birch	yes	Kalmia latifolia	Mountain Laurel	yes
Cercidiphyllum japonicum	Katsura Tree	no	Myrica pensylvanica	Northern Bayberry	yes
Cercis canadensis	Redbud (Eastern)	yes	Pieris floribunda	Evergreen Mountain Fetterbush	yes
Chionanthus virginicus	Fringetree	yes	Prunus laurocerasus	English Laurel	no
Cladrastis kentukea	Yellowwood	no	Pyracantha species	Firethorn	no
Cornus florida	Flowering Dogwood	yes	Rhododendron alaticum	Dwarf Azalea	yes
Cornus kousa	Kousa Dogwood	no	Rhododendron calendulaceum	Flame Azalea	yes
Cryptomeria japonica	Japanese Cryptomeria	no	Rhododendron catawbiense	Catawba Rhododendron	yes
Fagus grandifolia	American Beech	yes	Rhododendron prinophyllum	Rose Azalea	yes
Fraxinus americana	White Ash	yes	Viburnum dentatum	Southern Arrow-wood viburnum	yes
Fraxinus pensylvanica	Green Ash	yes			
Ginkgo biloba, male only	Maidenhair Tree	no			
Gleditsia triacanthos	Honeylocust	no			
Halesia tetraptera (H. carolina)	Common Silverbell	yes			
Ilex opaca	American Holly	yes			
Koelreuteria paniculata	Goldenrain Tree	no			
Liriodendron tulipifera	Tulip tree, Tulip Poplar	yes			
Magnolia acuminata	Cucumber Magnolia	yes			
Magnolia virginiana	Sweetbay Magnolia	yes			
Malus species	Crabapple	no			
Nyssa sylvatica	Black Gum	yes			
Ostrya virginiana	Eastern Hop-hornbeam	yes			
Oxydendrum arboreum	Sourwood	yes			
Picea abies	Norway Spruce	no			
Platanus occidentalis	Sycamore	yes			
Prunus species	Flowering Cherry	no			
Quercus alba	White Oak	yes			
Quercus bicolor	Swamp White Oak	yes			
Quercus coccinea	Scarlet Oak	yes			
Quercus falcata	Southern Red Oak	yes			
Quercus phellos	Willow Oak	yes			
Quercus rubra	Northern Red Oak	yes			
Quercus velutina	Black Oak	yes			
Sassafras albidum	Sassafras	yes			
Taxodium distichum	Bald Cypress	yes			
Thuja occidentalis	White Cedar/Arborvitae	yes			
Tilia americana	American Basswood	yes			
Zelkova serrata	Japanese Zelkova	no			

*Note: Determination of native vs. non-native plant material based upon lists published by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Virginia Native Plant Society.*

## Appendix 2: Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate

	ITEM	QTY	UNIT	PRICE	SUBTOTAL	CAT TOTAL
DEMO:	Selective clearing	1	ls	10,000.00	\$10,000.00	
	Demolish old building	1	ea	6,000.00	\$6,000.00	
	Remove roads	2100	sf	0.66	\$1,386.00	
	Remove pavement	2090	s.y.	4.15	\$8,673.50	
	Remove guardrail	240	lf	8.00	\$1,920.00	\$27,979.50
HARDSC:	New curb	410	lf	18.00	\$7,380.00	
	New guardrail	110	lf	25.00	\$2,750.00	
	Misc. grading	1	l.s.	10,000.00	\$10,000.00	
	New roadways	355	lf	110.00	\$39,050.00	
	Restore existing stone entrance wall	20	lf	100.00	\$2,000.00	
	New paved maint. lot	13200	sf	2.00	\$26,400.00	
	New islands	3500	sf	1.50	\$5,250.00	
	New 6' vinyl-clad fence	410	lf	15.00	\$6,150.00	
	New gate	1	ea	2,500.00	\$2,500.00	
	New steps (2 sets)	240	sf	25.00	\$6,000.00	
	New conc. walks	2460	sf	4.00	\$9,840.00	
	Conc. sidewalk, in place	2340	sf	4.14	\$9,687.60	
	New crosswalks - painted	500	sf	0.50	\$250.00	
	Porous grass paving (Lee St. portion)	1500	sf	5.75	\$8,625.00	
	Precast concrete edging for above item	280	lf	10.75	\$3,010.00	
	2 new paver patios	500	sf	12.00	\$6,000.00	
3 new parking spaces	3	ea	900.00	\$2,700.00	\$147,592.60	
PROGRAM:	New headquarters building	1525	sf	125.00	\$190,625.00	
	New equipment shed	2200	sf	55.00	\$121,000.00	
	Columbarium wall	210	lf	250.00	\$52,500.00	
	Signage allowance	1	ls	15,000.00	\$15,000.00	
	Highway sign, in place	1	ls	2,000.00	\$2,000.00	
	New dec. lighting fixtures, in place	14	ea	3,500.00	\$49,000.00	
	Repair cannon	1	allow	2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$432,125.00
PLANTING:	Street trees - adjacent lands	36	ea	250.00	\$9,000.00	
	Street Trees - cemetery lands	20	ea	250.00	\$5,000.00	
	Flowering trees - adjacent lands	5	ea	175.00	\$875.00	
	Flowering trees - cemetery lands	42	ea	175.00	\$7,350.00	
	Canopy and specimen trees - cemetery lands	45	ea	350.00	\$15,750.00	
	Ornamental Shrubs	125	ea	40.00	\$5,000.00	
	530 lf new hedge plantings	212	ea	35.00	\$7,420.00	
	Buffer screen plantings	100	ea	75.00	\$7,500.00	
	Supplement pines	12	ea	150.00	\$1,800.00	
	Entrance shrub beds	200	ea	35.00	\$7,000.00	
	Prune and fertilize exist. trees	1	allow	5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
	New lawn areas	51000	sf	0.50	\$25,500.00	\$97,195.00
SUBTOTAL CEMETERY IMPROVEMENTS					\$704,892.10	
Design and contingency @ 15%					\$105,733.82	
RECOMMENDED BUDGET FOR IMPROVEMENTS					\$810,625.92	

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## Appendix 3: References

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