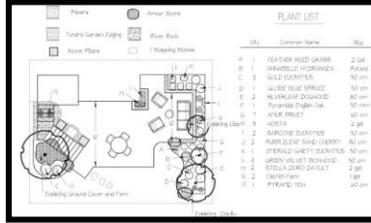


The Process



Here are some helpful **TIPS** to keep you focused when searching for a Landscape Contractor:



CONSULTATION

- This segment of the process should be collaborative. It should take place at the site where the work is being considered and should be a time for both the client and potential contractor to ask relevant questions.
- Be prepared to share any plant and building material preferences that you may have as well as any ideas for the yard space under consideration. This will increase the likelihood of receiving a successful design.
- You may already possess a working drawing / design (containing enough specific information to start and complete the project) that you are happy with. If so, you should complete the consultation process before handing over a copy to any potential contractor.
- Take this opportunity to ask questions of the contractor that may be “deal breakers”. These could include confirmation of insurance and WSIB coverage, warranty policy and available start dates. Take the time to confirm that the prospective contractor starts and finishes their projects without any extended absences from the job site.
- You will need to confirm if a contractor charges for consultation and/or their design. This policy varies from company to company and the fees can be considerable.
- Do not be afraid to discuss budget at this stage; assuming your intention is to select a reputable contractor, offering a “ballpark” budget will expedite the process. A good Landscape Contractor will not be persuaded to provide a low quote – it is the competitive process that will keep the quotes in line.
- Share any traits or anomalies specific to your property. These may include drainage issues, easements, basement leaks, etc.

PRESENTATION

- This will be the second meeting with potential contractors. You may schedule meetings with all of the companies who consulted with you or only the one(s) that satisfied your **criteria**.
- Confirm with the selected contractor(s) at consultation that they will be providing you with a quote. 5-10 business days from consultation to presentation is reasonable depending on the scope and complexity of the project.
- An effective presentation will include a scale **2D Drawing** of the yard space to be landscaped. Some contractors will use **3D Technology** to enhance their presentation; this can be of great value as many people struggle to comprehend 2D layouts.
- You should expect a thorough explanation of what the potential contractor has suggested in their design and how they plan to go about the installation. Ask if permits are required and confirm that the design complies with applicable local by-laws (drainage, setbacks, easements, etc.).
- Included with any presentation will be the quote itself. This document should clearly describe what is **included** in the proposal and what is **not**. Contractors will have considerable time invested in the process by this point. You should feel comfortable asking for **changes to the design** to meet budget constraints or to address a design preference. Most contractors would appreciate the opportunity rather than be dismissed based on minor issues or initial pricing.
- To **support** the design and quote, a contractor should be able to provide photos of their work, provide references and testimonials, and carry brochures detailing the proposed building materials.



AWARD

- Consultations and presentations have been completed with the prospective contractors. You have selected the **winning company** because of their timely and appealing design which is within your price range and has met your criteria of professional diligence and compliance. What next?
- Confirm your **start date**. Recognize that weather and unforeseen issues may affect the exact date but a good contractor will be reasonably accurate.
- **Sign** a contract. This is of **mutual benefit** to both customer and contractor. The contract should include a detailed description of what is included in the project, warranty obligation and payment terms.
- Beware of front loaded **payment terms**. 5%-10% deposit to book your start date and another 40%-50% once the project is underway is fair. This leaves a balance payable upon completion that provides you with leverage if concerns arise. For large projects progress installments may be required – but only comply if “progress milestones” are met and the work completed is to your satisfaction.
- **Insist** that a service locate (gas, hydro, etc.) is obtained for any work being completed at the front or side of your home or near a meter.
- **Help** the process along by confirming materials, colour and plant material selections in a timely manner.

Step 2: You've chosen MPS to create a beautiful outside landscape and now the work begins!



With us, you'll get a professional, top-quality job based on our 25 years of experience. Prior to breaking ground on your project, here are a few things which will happen so that your project goes off without a hitch.

CONSTRUCTION

1. **Stakeout**. MPS will call “Ontario One Call” to mark out any underground utilities (gas, hydro, etc.). They may place flags and a mark on your property with paint. They will also send us a map locating

these services. Bell and Rogers Cable do not provide locates. They bury the lines very shallow and repair them if they are accidentally cut, as it is cheaper for them this way. If your phone or cable lines are cut during our excavation please let the crew know immediately and we may be able to repair the damage temporarily.

2. **Material selections.** We will provide you with interlocking brick samples to help you choose style and colour. It is important that this decision is made in a timely manner so we may order the product. If it is backordered, it is much better to delay the start of the project rather than have the project stall midstream.
3. **Bylaws / Permits.**
4. **Lawn sign.** At the start of your project, or a few days earlier, we'll place an MPS lawn sign on your property. It will help us generate new leads and will allow you to make your neighbors jealous that you are getting a great MPS landscape!
5. **Construction.** We will typically call you 2-3 days in advance of start-up to confirm the date and time. This will allow you to discuss any issues which may be relayed to your neighbors, as well as to make arrangements if access to part of your house may be compromised.
6. **Weather.** As our work is outdoors, our work crews are often affected by things such as rain and extreme heat. This can delay us from completing the project prior to yours, and may push back the start date. Or, it may force us to pull out of your work site until the conditions improve. Typically though, we will work straight through from the start of the project until completion, working roughly from 7:00 am – 4:30 pm. This way, we try to minimize your disruption and allow you to enjoy your completed landscape sooner. The crew will leave your site in a tidy, safe condition each evening.
7. **Final inspection.** When your project is complete, we will walk through the final product to make sure that you are completely satisfied. You can ask any questions about the project, or begin to set the stage for the next one! Of course, at this time, we'll also look for the final payment to close the project.
8. You get to enjoy your top quality MPS landscape project! Please remember to tell your friends and neighbors who installed it. We'll send you a \$100 gift card for any successful referral that you send our way.

