

# Stormwater Friendly Driveways: Ribbon Driveways

Ribbon or “Hollywood” driveways became popular in the 1920s and consist of two parallel strips of concrete, mortar-set stone or brick, or solid or turf pavers with an open, unpaved space in between. The strips in a ribbon driveway should be at least two feet wide and located so they are separated five feet on center (see schematic on the following page). The space between the ribbons may be planted with grass or another ground cover, or filled with landscaping rocks or gravel. Ribbon designs are best suited to shorter, straight driveways, and can become impractical where driveways are long or curved.

**LOWER COST:** Ribbon driveways require far less material and installation time than fully paved driveways. Ribbon driveways can be contoured and designed to fit most any space.

**CURB APPEAL:** Ribbon driveways provide great opportunities for landscaping, with many design and pattern options. Ribbon driveways can be combined with porous pavement, permeable pavers, bricks, or turf pavers. Ribbon driveways can be incorporated into historical restoration or used to add quaint charm and character to your home.

**WATER QUALITY:** Ribbon driveways typically contain 60-70% less impervious surface than a full width driveway, allowing more water to drain into the ground below and reducing runoff.

**DURABILITY:** Ribbon driveways are able to respond more dynamically to frost and thaw cycles than fully paved driveways and are less prone to cracking. If needed, replacement of ribbon driveways is easier, quicker, and less costly.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** Ensure that the ground doesn’t become compacted when tires miss the strips—consider placing small markers to avoid driving off the paved areas. The center open ribbon may need annual maintenance to top off gravel, or keep vegetation healthy after each winter snowplowing season. If ground cover or grass is selected for the open ribbon, parked vehicles must be moved periodically so that a single location is not continuously shaded. Snow-blowers work well with ribbon driveways.

As of December 2013, ribbon driveways are the only layout that receives coverage credit under the zoning regulations, as only the paved strip portion (beyond the required 38 feet of parking space) is counted in calculating lot coverage.



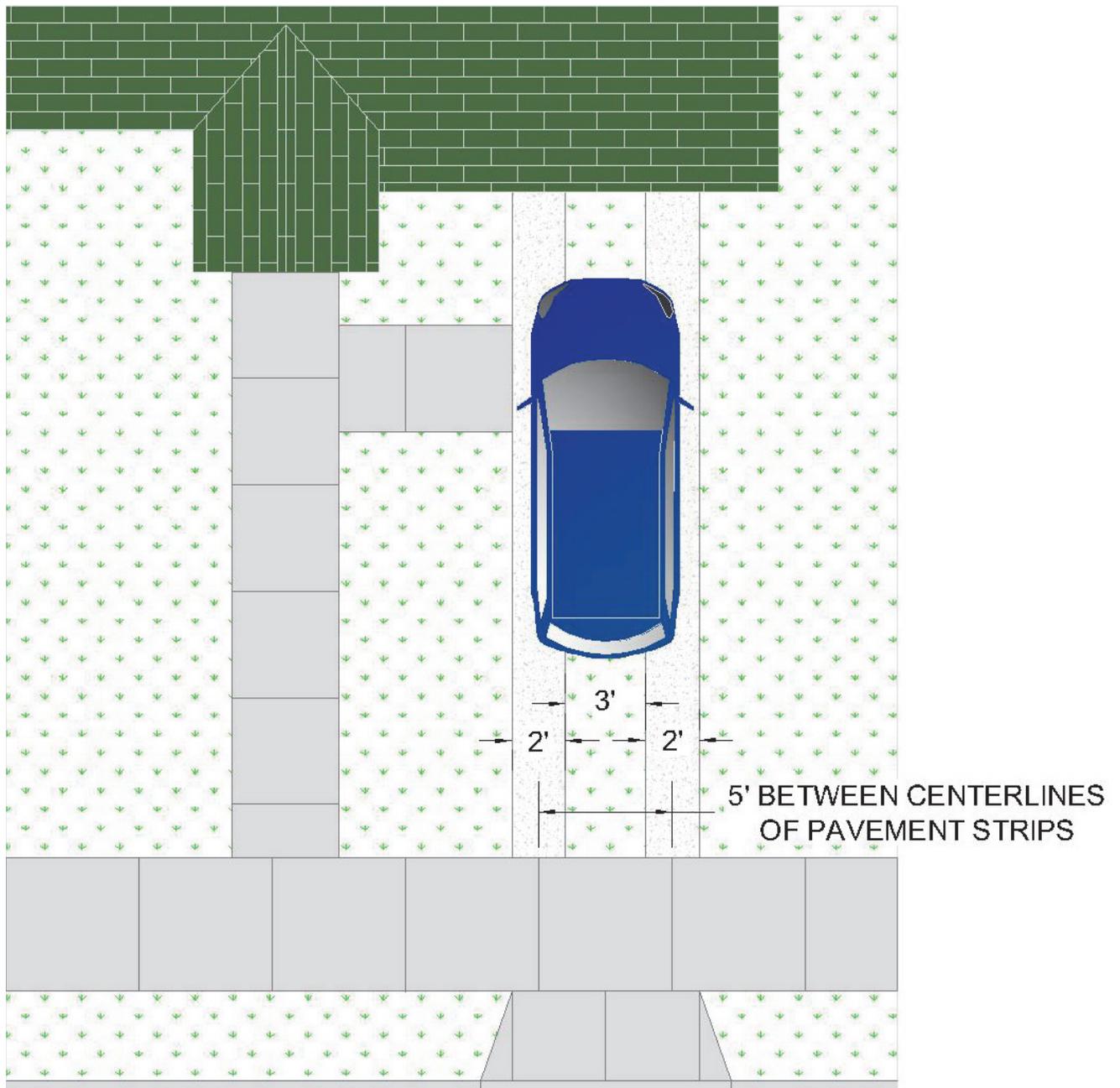
*A concrete ribbon driveway in Burlington.*



*A concrete paver ribbon driveway in Burlington.*



# Ribbon Driveways: Schematic Drawing (not to scale)



## NOTES:

- (1) Refer to the companion Local Vendors List for locally available products.

*The typical cross sections provided herein are conceptual only and are not intended for use as construction documents. Refer to manufacturer for installation and maintenance requirements for all products. Modifications to the typical sections may be necessary based upon soil conditions and site suitability. Contact a qualified professional to verify suitability for each application.*

