

Maintenance and Spacing Are Key

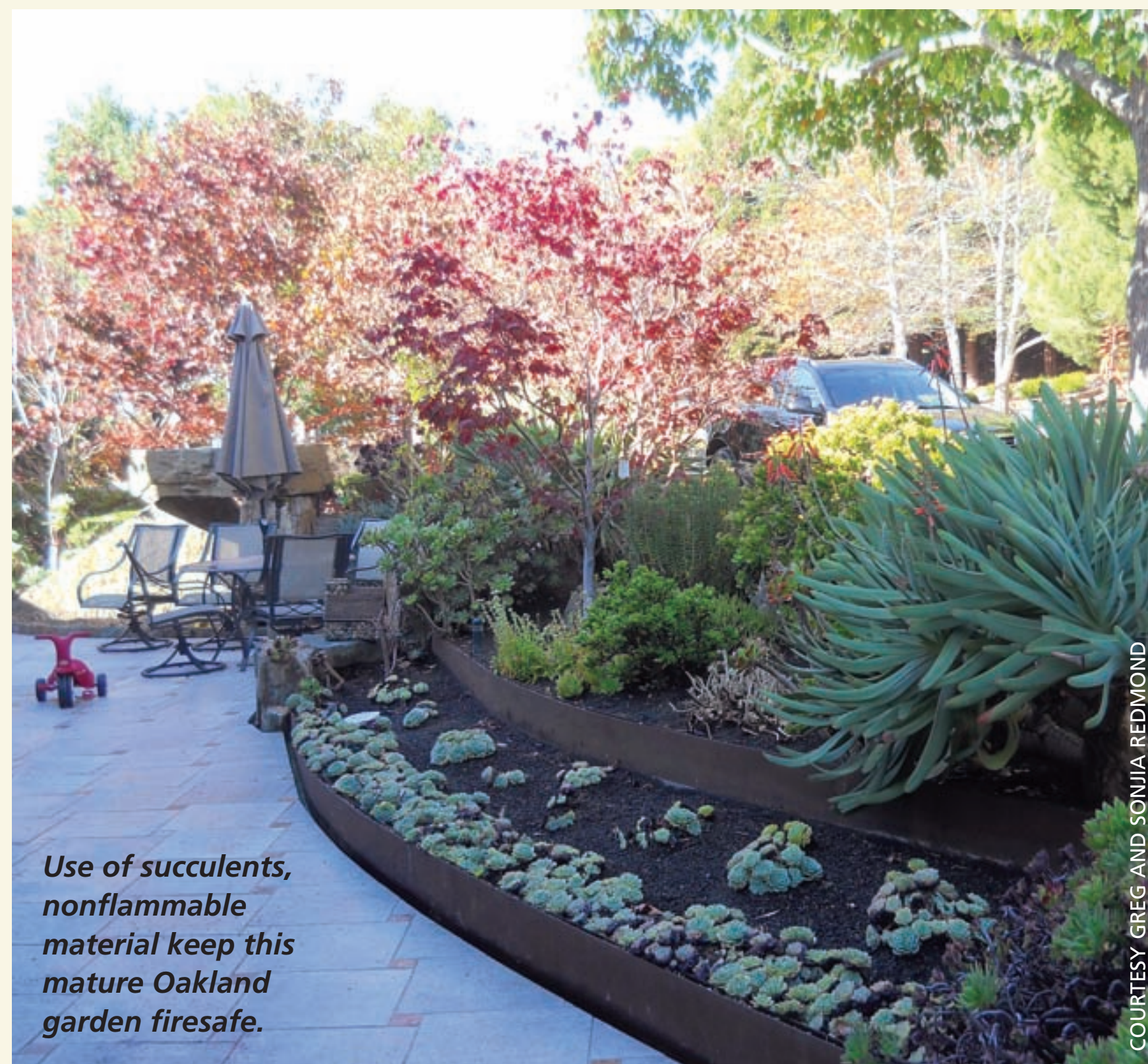


Fire-wise Plants

All plants burn under the right conditions.

Plants with low moisture content and high oil content are more likely to burn. A plant's ability to resist fire is strongly influenced by arrangement, spacing, density and dryness of the vegetation, more than the type of plant.

In the City of Oakland, property owners are required to maintain defensible space 365 days a year.



COURTESY GREG AND SONJIA REDMOND

Use of succulents, nonflammable material keep this mature Oakland garden firesafe.

Fire-wise Landscape Design

- Break up the vertical and horizontal fire path by leaving at least 6 feet clearance from ground to tree limbs and 3x the height of the shrub between the shrub and tree above to reduce the spread of wildfire.
- Create a defensible space around the house with patios, walks, walls, and low groundcovers.
- Plant taller shrubs and trees away from the house in widely spaced groups with mulch or low groundcovers below them.
- Break up wood fences, trellises, decks and other flammable structures with non-burnable elements so that they do not create a continuous path for fire. Choose metal and other non-burnable material when possible.

Fire-wise Maintenance

- Prune trees and shrubs to thin and eliminate dead branches. Cut back groundcovers periodically to renew. Remove dead plants.
- Remove leaves and needles from roofs, eaves and gutters, and under bushes.
- Keep fences and structures cleared of ivy, vines, grasses, and windblown debris.
- Water according to each plant's need. Too much or too little water can make plants more vulnerable to fire.

MINIMUM VERTICAL CLEARANCE

VERTICAL SPACING

Remove all tree branches at least 6 feet from the ground.

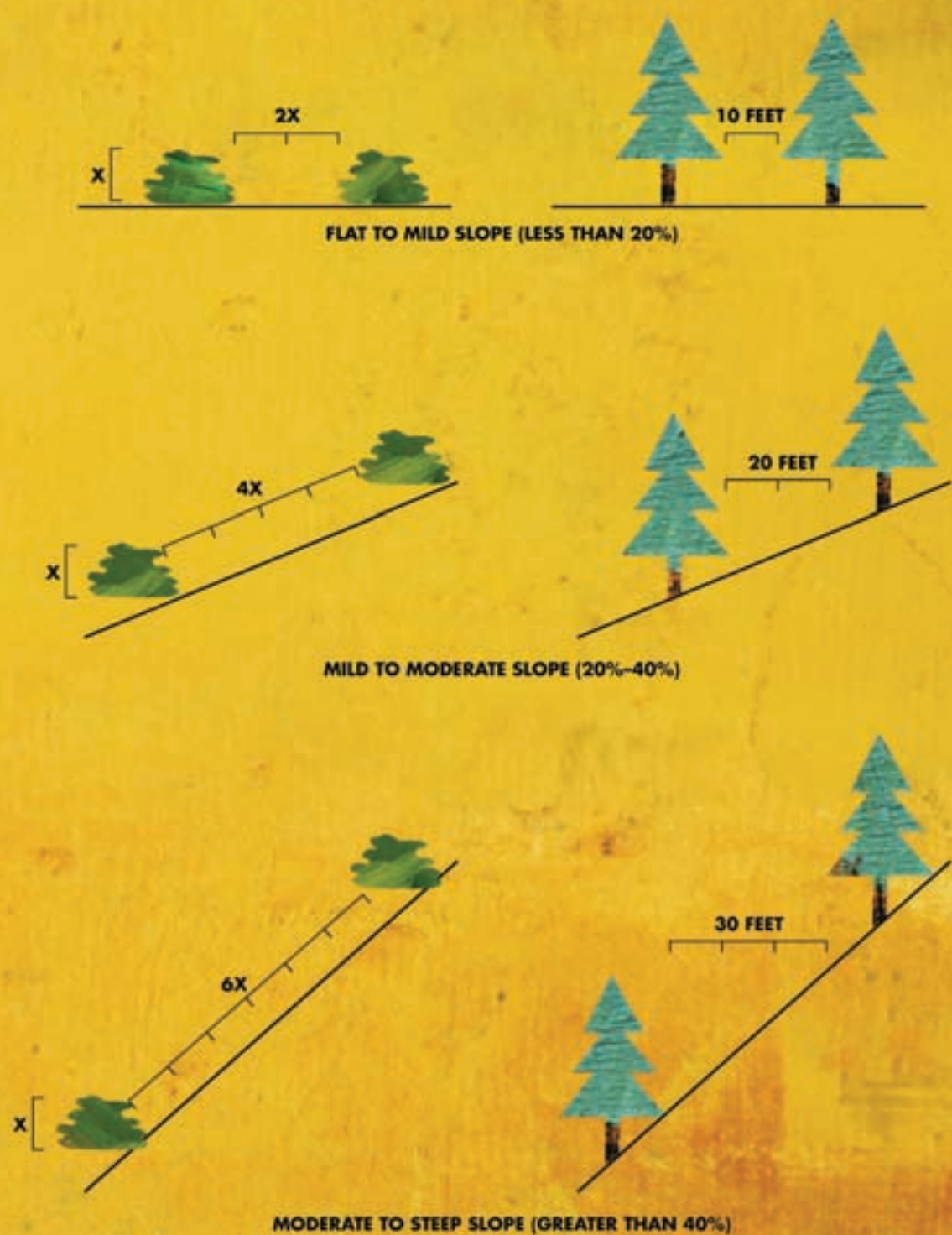
If shrubs are under trees, additional vertical space is needed. Lack of vertical space can allow a fire to move from the ground to the shrubs to the treetops like a ladder.



MINIMUM HORIZONTAL CLEARANCE

MINIMUM HORIZONTAL SPACING FOR TREES AND SHRUBS

Horizontal spacing depends on the slope of the land and the height of the shrubs or trees. Check the diagrams below to determine spacing distance.



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