

## Process for Approving “Enhanced Landscaping” and “Enhanced Streetscaping” within and along Public Right-of-Way Areas

### **Purpose and Intent**

Basic streetscape treatment of Lincoln rights-of-way includes concrete sidewalks, wooden streetlight poles and lights selected by LES, turf "parking" areas, and street trees per city design standards. Landscape medians within arterial streets will generally be planted with low maintenance, drought-tolerant turf accented with groupings of ornamental trees and/or ornamental grasses ("basic landscape type").

In certain, limited areas within the community landscaping within and along arterial streets and other high-profile locations may be enhanced beyond the basic streetscape type, as proposed and developed by staff in consultation with interested citizens, and reviewed by Urban Design Committee. In each proposal to Urban Design Committee, staff will identify and describe the rationale for enhancing this specific location, and the Committee review and advice to City Council will include endorsement or discussion of this rationale, from an urban design perspective.

This "enhanced streetscape" may be appropriate

- \$ within certain commercial districts,
- \$ at entrances to and gateways within the community,
- \$ in locations associated with the Capitol or other very prominent community assets,
- \$ and other high profile transportation corridors.

The purpose of this resolution is to provide direction in identifying and selecting transportation corridors where "enhanced streetscapes" will be established and maintained.

### **Process**

Prior to implementation of enhanced streetscapes within and/or along arterial streets or other prominent rights-of-way, the City Council shall approve a resolution authorizing such improvements. Department staff will provide information regarding the proposed landscape design, accompanied by a recommendation from the Urban Design Committee to the City Council for their consideration.

Review of enhanced streetscapes shall consider their value in enhancing the identity and character of the community, placement within the community as an entrance or gateway feature, and significance of the corridor or location within the overall urban fabric of the community. It is understood that enhanced landscape improvements will be reserved for special places and corridors within the community due to ongoing costs associated with maintenance.

The resolution authorizing enhanced streetscapes shall identify the source of funds for establishment of landscape plantings and other features, and for their ongoing maintenance. The resolution will direct funds for ongoing contractual maintenance of landscape plantings, replacement plants, water costs, and repair and maintenance of the irrigation system, and other improvements into an account created for this purpose and managed by the Finance Department. It is generally understood that enhanced landscaping benefits surrounding properties. Therefore, surrounding properties will typically participate financially in ongoing maintenance of enhanced streetscapes through an assessment process. The resolution will establish the method of participation by surrounding property owners, and cost shares between benefited properties and the City.

## **Design Principles**

Enhanced streetscapes within public right-of-way areas should be guided by the following principles:

- 1) Low water consumptive plants should be selected. Use of native prairie plants and selected varieties of native plant species should be emphasized.
- 2) Plants should be selected for low maintenance requirements and durability over time to minimize the need for landscape maintenance activities within center medians of heavily trafficked arterial streets.
- 3) Planting design should take into consideration the need for snow storage on center medians during winter months.
- 4) It is understood that supplemental irrigation will be required during plant establishment, and during periods of seasonally dry weather to keep the plants in healthy, viable condition. Durable, commercial-grade irrigation systems with automated controllers will be required. Irrigation heads should be set back from the perimeter of the planting where possible to minimize the potential of damage by vehicles travelling over the curb and returning to the travel lane.
- 5) Streetscape elements such as lights, special pavements, benches, and other "furniture" should be selected for durability, ease of maintenance and replacement, and design quality.