



2011 EVALUATION FORM

Municipality: Washington, MO

Population Category: 10,001 – 15,000

Bloom Rating: 3

The municipality will be judged based on efforts in management, planning, maintenance, improvement, and innovation of the following:

Category	Points	Possible points
1. Tidiness effort	108.50	125
2. Environmental Effort	80.00	125
3. Community Involvement	110.50	125
4. Heritage	108.50	125
5. Urban Forestry	73.00	125
6. Landscaped Areas	77.50	125
7. Floral Display	71.50	125
8. Turf and Ground Cover Areas	79.00	125
Total	708.5	1000
%	70.85%	
Bloom rating	3	

Municipality's representatives met:

- Sandy Lucy – Mayor
- Dave Wehmeyer - Hillermann's Garden Center
- Mike Smith – Forestry Commission Chairman
- Sylvia Czechin – Garden Club President
- Marc Houseman – Historical Society
- Kevin Quaethem – Water Treatment Plant Supervisor
- Ralph Guidehaus – Committee member

And many others

Judges' signatures *Evelyn Alemanni and Diana K. Weiner*

Visiting date July 7 and 8, 2011

General Comments and Suggestions:



Congratulations to Washington, MO on your first year of participation in America in Bloom and welcome to the America in Bloom family of towns and cities that are changing the face of America for the better. We applaud your vision and efforts toward a vibrant future and hope that this evaluation will be helpful to you in planning your entry for 2012.

Your tour was very well organized and the itinerary appropriate. We appreciated the walking tour as an opportunity to perceive the town closeup at a slower pace.

Time and again during our visit to Washington, we heard that the best thing about Washington is the volunteer spirit of its residents, the people whose “can do” attitude makes enormous projects possible, people who are undaunted by challenges. The collaboration and cooperation among residents, municipality, and businesses creates a sense of family, belonging, and community. The proof of this is that young people want to return home after college and build a life right in their hometown.



Washingtonians have such an ingrained sense of neatness and orderliness that they have coined a term for it, “Scrubby Dutch.” Homes, gardens, and businesses reflect pride and unending efforts in these areas.

The volunteers are always busy – whether it’s helping with the Town and Country fair, taking disabled residents for a walk on the Riverfront Trail, planting trees and shrubs, or helping with the many events in town. We commend the city for its efforts to engage and empower residents; particularly noteworthy is the “Mayor’s Action Center” section of the city website where people can share their thoughts with the mayor.



Your community profile book was very well written and the graphic representation is among the best that we’ve seen. It is a concise document that showcases much that is happening in Washington today. Consider placing a copy in city hall, the library, the historical society, Chamber of Commerce and Visitor’s Center. You will find that it can be an important economic development tool as well. Realtors might even be interested in advertising in it.

This year you have made a well-organized start and important progress toward next year’s program. The good news is that the hardest work is behind you. You have laid the groundwork, assembled a committee of dedicated, smart, proactive people and

created a network. You have engaged the media and service groups.



What makes Washington's AIB efforts stand out is the involvement, enthusiasm, and commitment of the mayor. The collaboration with Hillermann's Nursery and Florist is positive and productive, leading to visible changes.

To help promote tourism, consider submitting an article to Amtrak magazine detailing opportunities for visitors.

We offer a few suggestions to make the evaluation process even better:

- It is helpful if the people the judges meet wear nametags.
- Please include contact information for the people the judges meet in the profile book.

Specific comments appear in the following sections.

We are looking forward to your participation in the years ahead. Our best wishes for a bright and vibrant future.

Suggestions are indicated in italics.

Coordinator's Signatures

Evelyn Alemanni and Diana K. Weiner

1. Tidiness Effort Green spaces, medians and boulevard strips, streets, sidewalks, curbs, ditches, road shoulders, signage (in good repair, sufficient, etc.), scrap yards, unattended and vacant lots, buildings, garbage receptacles and disposal, lack of weeds and noxious weeds, litter, dog fouling, notices/posters, graffiti, vandalism, general maintenance of the hardscape (such as lamp posts, benches, etc.).	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Actual Score
<i>Municipal Sector</i>					
Tidiness, order and cleanliness	11	15	19	23	20.5
Maintenance of public roads and shoulders	12	15	18	21	18.5
Condition of buildings	5	7	9	11	9.5
Volunteer efforts	2	4	6	8	7.5
<i>Commercial Sector</i>					
Tidiness, order and cleanliness	9	12	15	18	14
Condition of buildings	7	9	11	13	10.5
<i>Private properties/Citizens</i>					
Tidiness, order and cleanliness	9	12	15	18	16.5
Condition of buildings	7	9	11	13	11.5
<i>Total</i>					108.50
<i>POSSIBLE POINTS (Adjust field if point splitting is necessary)</i>					125

Comments and suggestions:

Municipal



Washington is so neat and clean that residents have a name for it, “Scrubby Dutch”. The tidiness ethic, they say, is hard-wired into their DNA from their German ancestors. Streets are clean and swept, no litter was observed, “doggie bags” are easily available in parks and along trails, waste receptacles are stationed in all areas where they would be expected.

Particularly noteworthy are the railroad sidings, which are neatly mowed and free of debris. In this regard, Washington offers an example that other towns can follow. Even the city hall has a boot scrubber at the front door so that people can clean their shoes before they enter.

Consider asking veterinarians to sponsor doggie bags.

Municipal buildings are in good condition and maintained with pride. As one city employee stated, “We do this for the entire community.”

Minimal litter was observed; the Riverfront Trail was spotless. Municipal buildings are immaculate and well-organized.

Only one incident of graffiti was noted; ironically, it said “Wash me” or perhaps it was “Wash, Mo”?



Many of the trash cans in parks would benefit from a fresh coat of paint. The same is true for fire hydrants around town and the flagpole at the lovely Lucile Mauntel Memorial Garden. Painting these items would be a good project for a youth group or Scouts to undertake.

When funding becomes available, you might look into the purchase of attractive surrounds for the 55 gallon metal drums that are used as trash receptacles. In busy downtown areas, you might consider installing a solar-powered trash compactor which would reduce the number of trips to empty the trash can. Grants are often available for their purchase.

Also, particularly at sports fields, consider designating containers for recyclables.

Consider wrapping utility boxes with graphics or wayfinding signs to enhance their appearance.



Utility box as is (left) and simulation of wrapping (right).

On several of the downtown streets, curbs would benefit from a fresh coat of paint.

Commercial

Downtown businesses are generally neat and inviting. Signage is tasteful and uncluttered.

In some areas, weeds were growing in the sidewalk cracks and curbs. *These can be easily eradicated with an herbicide, pressure washer, or flame.*

Residential

Residential areas are maintained with pride in every respect.

TIDINESS EFFORT TOTAL: 108.50/125

2. Environmental Effort Sustainable development: Policies and by-laws, waste reduction, sanitary landfill, hazardous waste collection (oil, paint, chemicals, used batteries, etc), sewage disposal, transfer/recycle stations, recycling (paper, glass, metal, plastic, electronics, etc), composting, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), water source and conservation, naturalization, air quality issues, environmental clean up activities, controlled burns, environmentally friendly transportation.	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Actual Score
Municipal Sector					
Environmental services (waste handling, water treatment, air, etc.)	7	11	15	19	17
Incentive programs, training and information programs	7	9	11	13	7
Integrated pest management - timing, policy, by-laws	8	10	12	14	8
New programs - improvement and innovation	6	7	8	9	7
Commercial Sector					
Participation in the environmental effort	8	11	14	17	8
New programs - improvement and innovation	8	11	14	17	8
Private Properties/Citizens					
Participation in the environmental effort	9	12	15	18	13
Support/direction to municipality	9	12	15	18	12
Total (the field automatically calculates – do not type in it)					80.00
POSSIBLE POINTS (Adjust field if point splitting is necessary)					125

Comments and suggestions:

Municipal

Located on the Missouri River, Washington is so fortunate to have the Riverfront Trail to protect the land from erosion and preserve the native plants and wildlife that thrive in this 3 mile sanctuary.



A trails Master Plan is suggested. In the plan, stipulate that new subdivisions add trails to their plan at time of application. You might work toward using trails to link housing developments with schools, parks, and shopping areas.

The judges noticed many Poison Ivy plants beside Riverfront Trail. Signage could be placed at both ends describing what it looks like and urging those sensitive to stay on the trail.

It was wonderful to see recycle bins at schools and churches. *Recycle bins are needed downtown, especially near the Farmer's Market. Place them right next to the trash cans.*

Educate the public about recycling options for metal and stress the financial benefits of bringing items to commercial recycler versus having items hauled away.

At the recycling facility, consider adding a "freestore" where people can drop off usable items that people can pick up at no charge.

We commend you for using motion sensor lights, faucets, etc. in the Farmer's Market bathrooms. Other forms of energy efficiency should be considered throughout the city.

Consider electric cars for municipal employees.

Consider having police patrol the downtown area on bicycles.

There are many public parks in the city. The judges commend the city for using little or no pesticides in these areas except for seasonal mosquito spraying. The method used to reduce weeding under trees has been the application of the herbicide Roundup™. *Be sure to use the herbicide Rodeo™ near lakes, ponds and the river.*

Protect the Missouri River! Educate the public to not dump polluting liquids down storm drains. Paint or apply decals at storm drains that inform residents that items dumped in them drain to the river.

With the river such an asset in the city storm water should be diverted before it heads downhill.

*Rain gardens should be considered at municipal buildings, schools and churches to demonstrate to the public their use and effectiveness. Information is available from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. "**Rain Gardens: A How-to Manual for Homeowners**". The link is*

www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/documents/rgmanual.pdf



Excess rainwater can be harvested from roofs and used to irrigate plantings around the city's buildings. Green roofs would also be an ideal way to slow down water heading to the river and beautify views from residences and businesses that look down on them from buildings higher on the hill.

Consider giving an incentive of a percentage reduced from residents/commercial water bills for installing a rain garden.

We commend the city in reducing the use of nitrogen fertilizers. Phosphorus is also a troublesome element that enters and remains in the water cycle. *Start educating residents by starting a low or no phosphorus fertilizer use program. Work with hardware stores and garden centers that sell these products and offer alternative products.*

At the closed landfill, the judges were concerned about leachate and methane emissions. Please check with the state regarding the length of time that closed landfills must be monitored and be sure that you are receiving all the reports. If sufficient methane is present, you might consider converting it to energy, for example, to heat a greenhouse.

If leachate is present, look into phytoremediation onsite. Many communities have benefited from planting beech trees around landfills; they thrive on leachate, dramatically reducing or even eliminating the leachate that must otherwise be trucked offsite in tankers. The Missouri Botanical Garden offers some excellent information on this at <http://www.mobot.org/jwcross/phytoremediation/>.

The judges were surprised at the water usage stated in the profile book. Three million gallons per day for 15,000 people works out to 200 gallons per day per person. This is twice the national average use of 80-100 gallons per day. (Source: <http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/qahome.html>). When you consider the cost of acquiring, operating, and maintaining the wells, pumps, and water treatment facilities, it is obvious that reducing the amount of water use has the potential to extend the economic life of these facilities dramatically. Although you are next to a river and have plenty of rainfall, plentiful clean water cannot be taken for granted. You might start an education program to get people to use less water. Offer a rainbarrel program, rebates for low flow shower heads, low water use toilets and appliances. Offer contests to see who can reduce their water use the most. Design a brochure and have information on the town website.

Commercial

Commendations go out to Rhine River Development on their riverfront townhomes project that recycled concrete from the concrete company that was located on the site and had previously relocated. This practice saves money in terms of trips to the landfill, tipping fees, and the resulting materials cost far less than new materials. The material was crushed and reused to make blocks to create a huge retaining wall behind the homes.

Kudos are showered to Hillermann's Nursery and Florist for their plastic pot recycling program in partnership with the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Encourage more businesses to recycle. Provide information through the Chamber of Commerce.

There are still many acres of available land to expand. The city plans to annex neighboring land in the future. *Because of this, there is a critical need for ordinances to protect existing vegetation by creating green barriers that will enhance future projects.*

Encourage more businesses to explore planting green roofs, especially those located close to the river.

Residential

The municipality has an excellent compost product available free to residents. They will load it onto vehicles as well at no cost.

Encourage backyard composting to save 2 trips for residents, one to bring the waste to the recycling area and another to pick up the finished product to use in their landscape. Set up a compost demonstration site at a community garden.

Consider starting a Community Supported Agriculture type garden for apartment and townhouse dwellers who wish to grow vegetables. One ideal spot may be in the industrial area of the city where there is plenty of acreage that is currently mowed turf.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORT TOTAL: 80.00/125

3. Community Involvement Citizen's involvement in projects for the betterment and enjoyment of the entire community; AIB committee, horticulture/garden clubs, 4-H, school children, seniors, service groups, etc.; volunteers involved in long and short term projects & recreational programs (e.g., Family Day, Clean-Up Day, etc.).	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Actual Score
<i>Municipal Sector</i>					
Support for volunteer activities	13	17	21	25	24
Information and education programs	9	12	15	18	10
Improvement and innovation	6	8	10	12	11
<i>Commercial Sector</i>					
Involvement in community	5	10	15	20	18
Sponsorship of programs/activities	3	7	11	15	14
<i>Private Properties/Citizens</i>					
Involvement in community	5	10	15	20	19.5
Service groups/society sponsorships	3	7	11	15	14
<i>Total (the field automatically calculates – do not type in it)</i>					110.50
<i>POSSIBLE POINTS (Adjust field if point splitting is necessary)</i>					125

Comments and suggestions:

Municipal



The judges seldom see towns where so much of the population is actively engaged in volunteer efforts. It was clear that the city government and staff are ardent supporters of volunteer activities and genuinely work to engage and empower residents to work on civic improvement projects. However, most of this effort is word of mouth.

The city website is one option to link all the service groups. Perhaps you could add a page for volunteer opportunities. You might also want to emulate what North

Manchester, IN has done at <http://www.nmbridge.org/>, creating a site with information for all the town's service groups.

Because of the city's commitment to the America in Bloom program, you might also post the city's profile book and tour itinerary on the city website and also use it as a spot to announce related volunteer opportunities.

Many cities have started Facebook pages related to their AIB efforts. It's a great way for people to say what they're doing in support of the program.

The city might consider honoring a volunteer of the year.

Consider offering a photography contest for various age groups. Select a theme, for example, sunrise on the river, Christmas in Washington, etc. and hang all entries in the city hall or library. Publish the winning photos in the newspaper. It's a great way to get people outside and looking at the town in a new way. The photos will become assets for the Historical Society in years to come.

Commercial



Businesses are strong supporters of the annual Town and Country Fair. This innovative fair is unique in that it is all-volunteer and proceeds go directly back to community groups. The fair has a \$1.8 million dollar economic impact; business sponsorships are ~\$275,000.

Businesses encourage their personnel to be active in civic and service organizations. The Chamber of Commerce presents a variety of events during the year and names a citizen of the year.

Congratulations to Washington Bank for offering to deposit \$100 into new accounts opened by graduating high school seniors. What a great way to help young people build a banking relationship.



Kudos to Hillermann Nursery and Florist and the Garden Club for starting a yard of the month program. *You might want to augment this program with door hangers that could be given to mail carriers, UPS drivers, even a pizza delivery person to hang on the doors of homes with well-kept gardens.*

Residential



Residents and businesses are commended for taking the initiative to adopt parks and provide cleanup and pruning services.

Many residents wear several volunteer hats and are active in several service organizations. *Some organizations collect data on the number of volunteer hours. It would be exciting to collect and summarize this data from all organizations; it is especially useful in grant applications where it can sometimes be used as in-kind services for matching funds.*

If it isn't already being done, consider having a volunteer fair where the many groups can have displays and meet potential new volunteers.

Also, consider hosting an annual service group roundtable so that groups can share their plans and initiatives with each other, perhaps partnering on similar projects.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TOTAL: 110.50/125

4. Heritage Museums, archives, history books & interpretative programs; policies & by-laws; resource availability; preservation & restoration of buildings, homes, churches, cemeteries; heritage sites and/or monuments; heritage parks, gardens & trees; artifacts; historical society; heritage advisory committee, etc.	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Actual Score
<i>Municipal Sector</i>					
Preservation and restoration programs	10	15	20	25	23
Information programs	7	11	15	19	17
New programs and incentives	5	8	11	14	11
<i>Commercial Sector</i>					
Conservation and restoration of properties	5	9	13	17	15.5
Participation in heritage activities	3	5	7	9	7
New programs, innovative ideas	2	4	6	8	6
<i>Private Properties/Citizens</i>					
Preservation and restoration of private properties	9	12	15	18	16
Participation in community projects and programs	9	11	13	15	13
<i>Total (the field automatically calculates – do not type in it. Put cursor in cell and press F9 to recalculate)</i>					108.50
<i>POSSIBLE POINTS (Adjust field if point splitting is necessary)</i>					125

Comments and suggestions:

Municipal



Washington treasures its heritage. The city has been instrumental in saving several old buildings and supporting other organizations in their efforts to restore some of the older buildings. The downtown has two historic districts and many homes on the National Register of Historic Places. A brochure with a walking tour of historic homes is offered; signage is easy to find, and some of the heritage homes and businesses are identified with plaques that offer a short history. Design of new buildings downtown has sensitively incorporated heritage elements so the buildings blend well with existing structures.



Membership in the Historical Society has increased dramatically in the last few years and the museum offers tastefully curated displays of life and commerce in Washington. *The judges would have appreciated seeing some of the books written about the town. It would be nice to offer some of those books for sale at the visitors' center.*

Krog Park was created from an old cemetery that was simply covered with soil, leaving headstones in place. *Coinciding with the current project to find the headstones, consider unearthing them and using them to make a labyrinth. It would create a meaningful walking meditation as people read the names and inscriptions on the headstones. It would also provide a greater sense of history, transforming the park from a war memorial to a "people" memorial.*

Work with local artists to create heritage-themed murals throughout the downtown to add excitement and visual interest. To reduce the cost, have the artist create a small painting, then have it printed in wide format and applied to a wall.

Consider offering monthly "talk about Washington" talks at the library. People could talk about their remembrances of "the old days". These talks could be recorded and transcribed, becoming an important part of Washington's archives.

Commercial



Many downtown businesses are in buildings that are more than 100 years old. Many have been tastefully and skillfully restored. Some of the businesses have taken advantage of façade grants to restore their building fronts. Notable projects include the Farmers Market, train depot, and the post office restoration.

You might consider having an annual "open doors" day when people are invited to enjoy the restored interiors of businesses.

Residential



Many private residences have been lovingly restored. The judges appreciated visiting Sally Bocklage's home and admiring her vintage clothing collection during the fashion show at lunch.

Volunteers created a lovely memorial to Lucile Mauntel in one of the parks. It features a lovely plaque. *It would be appropriate to include the date the memorial was created on the plaque.*

Washington has a strong German heritage. In fact, German was spoken in town until the 1920s. It would be nice to create a celebration of this heritage, featuring people in traditional German attire such as dirndls and lederhosen, and offer German food. Perhaps this celebration could take the form of a traditional German Christmas market. You could work with your sister city, Marbach, Germany on some ideas.

HERITAGE TOTAL:	108.50/125
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5. Urban Forestry Written policies, by-laws & regulations, long & short term plans; distribution, variety & suitability of trees; new plantings; urban tree program; qualified personnel or access to trained individual(s); inventory or database; frequency of surveys; care & maintenance programs; preservation of heritage trees & woodlots; scheduled succession plantings.	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Actual Score
<i>Municipal Sector</i>					
Plan of action, planting program	3	5	7	9	5
Inventory, variety of species	2	4	6	8	4
Specifications - maintenance and planting	3	6	9	12	5
Naturalization, preservation of woodlots	2	4	6	8	6.5
Policies, regulations/by-laws	3	6	9	12	3
Qualified personnel and training	3	5	7	9	5
<i>Commercial Sector</i>					
Concept, design, planting	3	5	7	9	4
Maintenance	3	6	9	12	9.5
Conservation	3	5	7	9	3
<i>Private Properties/Citizens</i>					
Design and plantings	4	8	12	16	11
Maintenance	3	6	9	12	10
Community involvement in tree planting programs and conservation	3	5	7	9	7
Total (the field automatically calculates – do not type in it)					73.00
POSSIBLE POINTS (Adjust field if point splitting is necessary)					125

Comments and suggestions:

Municipal



Washington benefits from the presence of an old urban forest that has been enjoyed by generations. The vast majority of the trees is in good condition, but may be approaching the end of their lifespan in the next 20 years.

We applaud the planting of native trees and shrubs at the water tower – this is an important demonstration project that will help residents’ select tough and attractive plants for use in their own gardens.

A memorial tree program along the creek is a wonderful way to honor people on various occasions. The judges weren’t able to find information about the program on the city website; *it would be good to publicize this opportunity.*



The community profile book mentioned a tree inventory, but the judges were not provided any details. *An extensive, up to date, tree inventory is essential, as it can help develop maintenance and planting programs as well as a budget.*

You might want to look into using i-Tree software which calculates the economic and environmental benefits of trees. It is available at no cost from the U.S. Forest Service.

The profile book mentioned a recommended trees brochure; *the judges would have liked to have seen it. It would be helpful to make it available on the city website.*

It is essential to develop ordinances related to trees. Topics to include are:

- *A list of undesirable trees that SHOULD NOT be planted*
- *Requirements for preservation and protection of trees during construction*
- *Requirements to replace trees that must be removed to accommodate construction*
- *Requirements for tree planting in new subdivisions and shopping centers*
- *Specifications for planting and maintenance*
- *Regulations for tree removal*

Several young trees in the parks showed trunk damage from weed whacking. Consider using more mulched rings around trees and shrub plantings. Woodchips should be spread out to the drip line of trees and be 2-3" thick in a saucer shape to catch and hold rain and irrigation water. This will reduce herbicide use and damage from weed whackers.

“Volcano mulching” was noticed in many areas across all sectors – municipal, residential and commercial. The mulch is piled too high on the tree trunk. This is detrimental as it can provide a home for rodents, cause roots to grow above the soil level and kill off deeper roots in the soil, and even rot the tree trunk. Mulching is an important way to protect trees but it must be done properly. *Be sure that your landscapers are trained in proper mulching techniques, pull mulch several inches away from the tree trunk. A good resource for mulching information is <http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/factsheets/mulch/toomuch.html>.*



A program popular in other towns is identification of the largest, oldest and historically significant trees. This would be a nice project for elementary school students and/or Scouts under the guidance of the Tree Commission.

Consider planting a community orchard that features fruit trees suited to the region.

A good resource for selecting trees is from the Missouri Department of Conservation - MDC Library – the annually updated listing of Missouri Urban Trees: This booklet contains photos and descriptions of trees

<http://mdc4.mdc.mo.gov/applications/MDCLibrary/MDCLibrary2.aspx?NodeID=147>

Commercial

Trees at commercial sites are generally well-maintained. It is important to prune regularly to help minimize damage from the storms frequent in Missouri.

Residential

Trees in the residential areas appear well cared for and healthy.

Residents have been active in tree planting programs, notably along the Riverfront Trail.

Encourage Master Gardeners or the Tree Commission to offer tree pruning workshops.

URBAN FORESTRY TOTAL:	73.00/125
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6. Landscaped Areas Overall design & suitability for location/use; native & introduced materials; good use of design principles (i.e., balance of plant material & constructed elements, (harmony, color, texture, shape, etc.); tasteful integration of hardscapes; lighting; art elements; high standards of maintenance (no weeds, good mulching practices, clean edges); site rejuvenation & rehabilitation.	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Actual Score
Municipal Sector					
Plan of action, distribution through community	3	6	9	12	8
Concept and design	3	6	9	12	8
Specifications – maintenance and planting, variety of species	4	8	12	16	4
Sustainable development, naturalization and eco-design	2	4	6	8	3
Site rejuvenation and rehabilitation	2	4	6	8	6
Qualified personnel and training	3	5	7	9	5
Commercial Sector					
Concept, design, planting	4	6	8	10	7
Maintenance	4	6	8	10	7
Rejuvenation and rehabilitation, naturalization and eco-design	3	5	7	9	4
Private Properties/Citizens					
Design and planting	6	8	10	12	9
Maintenance	4	6	8	10	8
Involvement in development and maintenance of public areas	3	5	7	9	8.5
Total (the field automatically calculates – do not type in it)					77.50
POSSIBLE POINTS (Adjust field if point splitting is necessary)					125

Comments and suggestions:

The judges commend the city for investing in light poles and trash cans in phase one of the downtown revitalization. Coordinated, well-planned streetscape elements create the backdrop for future plantings.

The Woody Plants of the Northern Ozark’s Park at the Water Tower will be an excellent tool to use to teach residents about native plant choices. Having cross-generational help in creating the garden is an excellent way to pass on the knowledge of elders to our young citizens. Having the Eagle Scouts build a picnic area at the park is one way to make it a destination for people to come and use it. *With such a large area beautifully designed and devoted to Native Plants, you might want to develop more ways to use it as a teaching tool for both adults and children. Place a sign at the visitor’s center inviting people to go out and visit the garden.*

Installing hardscaped paths would better define where to walk and would outline the design of the garden.

The tree and shrub planting will benefit from the mixed perennials that are planned in the design. *Begin that next phase to make the garden a more interesting area to visit by luring passersby with plants blooming throughout the growing season.*

Use the no dig/no till method of mulching by laying a single piece of cardboard or several layers of black & white print newspaper over the bare soil or wood chipped area that needs refreshing and place a 2-3" layer of chips on top of it. Visit <http://sites.google.com/site/everyonecangarden/> for more information on this method.

Many new buildings within the downtown had landscape beds installed and were well maintained. This is an ideal way to teach residents how they can use hardy, native and low maintenance plants in their own landscapes.



Consider using a wider palette of plants in the beds. There are many choices available for these tough urban spots. Consider what the areas will look like after frost and until the following spring. In the existing and future streetscape beds, plant more shrubs and small ornamental trees with interesting bark and fruit for winter interest. Ask Master Gardeners to teach beginner landscape design courses.



Commercial

Both medical facilities: Patients First and St. John's Mercy Hospital Doctors' Building are great examples of landscapes with four-season interest.

The judges noted that there were few pieces of sculpture in the downtown area or in the parks. *Consider charging a fee to developers of new projects to purchase sculpture in public spaces.*

Residential



The “Yard of the Month” contest is an excellent way to advertise your AIB participation and get people excited about the program. The lawn signs were a great way to get residents and visitors to notice the effort.

Next year you might expand the program to have a “Yard of the Week”. Be sure the winners get lots of publicity. You might want to hold an awards luncheon in the fall to honor them.

LANDSCAPED AREAS TOTAL: 77.50/125

7. Floral Displays Arrangement, originality, distribution, location, diversity, balance, harmony, high quality maintenance, flower beds, carpet bedding, containers, baskets, window boxes, good use and integration of annuals, perennials, bulbs, and ornamental grasses.	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Actual Score
<i>Municipal Sector</i>					
Plan of action, distribution through community	5	9	13	17	8
Concept and design and/or eco-design	4	8	12	16	7
Types of plantings and variety of species	7	9	11	13	9
Maintenance/quality	5	10	15	20	14
Qualified personnel and training	3	5	7	9	5
<i>Commercial Sector</i>					
Concept and design	2	4	6	8	3.5
Plantings	2	4	6	8	3.5
Maintenance	2	4	6	8	3.5
<i>Private Properties/Citizens</i>					
Design and plantings	2	4	6	8	4.5
Maintenance	3	5	7	9	7.5
Involvement in development and maintenance of public areas	3	5	7	9	6
<i>Total (the field automatically calculates – do not type in it)</i>					71.50
<i>POSSIBLE POINTS (Adjust field if point splitting is necessary)</i>					125

Comments and suggestions:

Municipal

The judges commend the city for investing in light poles and trash cans in phase one of the revitalization of the downtown.

As you look up from the Visitors Center there is an opportunity to lure and attract tourists up the steep hill and into the cross streets in the business district by adding colorful flowering baskets and placing seasonal banners on light poles. Although the street shown below is a different one, it gives you an idea of the impact hanging baskets, banners, and planters to make an area more inviting and exciting.



Simulation of the addition of banners, baskets, planters, flags and window boxes to downtown.

Plant native meadow flowers in large pots (i.e. monarda, rudbeckia and coneflowers at the visitors' center and advertise visiting the Riverfront Trail meadow, the Water Tower Woody Plants of the Northern Ozarks Garden and other areas where wildflowers will be grown.

The containers near the Washington Statue were very attractive.

The pots and planters near the Farmer's Market could benefit from the same planting design.



Commercial

A few businesses had lovely containers in front of their businesses. This effort should be expanded to more businesses throughout town.

Work with the Chamber of Commerce and Hillermann Nursery and Florist to reintroduce the pot program for businesses in the downtown district. Use large pots and design planting recipes that are similar in color and texture to unify the look throughout the town. Offer the recipes to the public.

Coordinate pot designs with similar flowers planted in the hanging basket for a coordinated pleasing display.

Residential

Members of the Washington Garden Club and the Master Gardeners donate so much time,

energy and expertise to planting and maintaining the Historic District, the VFW home and Lafayette Park. The Lucile Mauntel flag planting is a great project that memorializes a special woman who went beyond her local garden club and served nationally, bringing her floral expertise to many.

Hold an America in Bloom plant sale in the spring to bring attention to the program and sign up new volunteers. Hold a spring flowering bulb sale this fall. Information can be found on the America in Bloom website.

FLORAL DISPLAYS TOTAL:	71.50/125
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8. Turf and Ground Cover Areas Quality of turf as well as use of naturalization, ground covers and wildflowers; good turf management practices (maintenance, mowing height/frequency, use of Integrated Pest Management [IPM], fertilization program, irrigation, water restrictions, etc.); sport fields, athletic parks, and other active & passive recreation areas maintained to appropriate specifications.	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Actual Score
<i>Municipal Sector</i>					
Plan of action - distribution of turf areas and ground covers	3	6	9	12	8.5
Concept and eco-design	2	4	6	8	4.5
Diversity of species, type of plantings	2	4	6	8	5
Quality of maintenance	4	8	12	16	14
Turf management/Integrated pest management (IPM)	4	7	10	13	6.5
Site naturalization and rehabilitation	2	3	4	5	3.5
Qualified personnel and training	3	5	7	9	5
Information and education programs	3	5	7	9	4
<i>Commercial Sector</i>					
Concept and types of covers	2	4	6	8	3
Maintenance	3	6	9	12	10.5
Site naturalization and rehabilitation	3	5	7	9	3.5
<i>Private Properties/Citizens</i>					
Design of turf and ground cover areas	2	4	6	8	4
Maintenance	2	4	6	8	7
<i>Total (the field automatically calculates – do not type in it)</i>					79.00
<i>POSSIBLE POINTS (Adjust field if point splitting is necessary)</i>					125

Comments and suggestions:

Municipal

Turf on municipal properties, parks and schools appear neatly mowed and healthy. Currently, city staff and summer employees handle mowing. *In case mowing may be contracted out in the future, it would be wise to establish turf care standards.*

Turf does not slow down stormwater as effectively as low-growing groundcovers, *so consider adding these in strategic locations to help protect water quality in the river.*

With 250 acres of parkland in Washington, there is a huge amount of mowing being done in the public spaces. Native sedges could be planted at the periphery of the tree lines to eliminate much turf that has to be maintained.

At the fairgrounds and at schools, grass around fencelines has been treated with herbicide to keep the fencelines neat. This is a worthwhile effort, as it dramatically reduces maintenance and damage from mowing while keeping a neat appearance.

Groundcovers include plants, gravel, rocks, and mulch. Gravel mulch was noted in several locations and it is an attractive, cost effective approach that results in reduced maintenance. *The concept of using gravel as a groundcover/mulch adjacent to areas like the landscape we saw at St. John's Mercy Hospital Doctor's Building could be replicated in areas to reduce mowing in tight spots and in areas where the public does not go. Also, you can eliminate having to weed whack in small spaces where turf isn't necessary. Examples are: around the rest rooms, at the edges of asphalt trails, at the water towers, well houses and sewer lift stations.*

Planting winter creeper as a groundcover in right of ways is already being practiced. *Continue to plant low groundcovers throughout the city proper and parks. For more information on selection and care see the publication from the University of Missouri Cooperative Extension NCR400, Ground Covers for the Midwest and Selected Ground Covers for Missouri - <http://extension.missouri.edu/explorepdf/agguides/hort/q06835.pdf>*

The judges were not told about periodic training for parks staff. *Look into opportunities for in-service training that might be offered by local colleges and universities, perhaps even online.*



The Riverfront Trail is one of Washington's treasures and the prairie created alongside is a great example of a turf alternative that offers bird and butterfly habitat.



Along most of the trail, both sides feature approximately ten feet of mowed turf. *Consider either gravel or mowing a much smaller strip along the trail – perhaps 1 – 2 feet, and converting the rest to wildflowers or meadow. This will reduce labor costs and wear and tear on equipment.*

Evaluate the amount of turf in the parks and determine where mowing can be reduced. Perhaps there are additional areas that could become meadows, a community orchard, or even a community garden.

Commercial

Most downtown businesses did not have turf, but the businesses at the industrial park featured acres of mowed turf. The Sisters of Mercy Data Center had a small patch of native grasses at its entrance. This could be expanded to the entire campus. The Albericci facilities in St. Louis offer a good example of what can be done with native landscaping.

In Springfield, Ohio, businesses in a similar industrial park planted vegetables onsite. This became part of the employee's wellness program and many were happy to come early and stay

late, or spend their lunch hour working in the garden. The produce was donated to the local food bank.



The prairie meadow at Riverfront Park is an example of how you can take a large area and plant it with native grasses and forbs. This gives a huge visual impact to the landscape while reducing the amount of fossil fuels used for upkeep and the expense of maintenance yearly vs. the initial expense of installation.

Residential

Residential turf is generally neatly maintained and healthy. *Perhaps the Master Gardeners or Garden Club could develop a demonstration plot showing the benefits of various types of groundcovers. For more information visit: <http://extension.missouri.edu/p/G6835>*

Encourage homeowners to use turf-type tall fescue blends of grasses. They can be mowed higher, require less fertilizer and are very disease and insect resistant.

TURF AND GROUND COVER AREAS TOTAL	79.00/125
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Questions on organization:

Yes No N/A

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Were the judges provided with the completed 'Municipal Information Form' prior to their arrival? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Was there an initial orientation meeting with introductions? |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Was this with the mayor and/or members of council? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | or the AIB committee? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Were the judges given a schedule and map of tour at first meeting? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Did the itinerary provide for seeing about 80 percent of the community? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Was the guide knowledgeable about the community and horticultural aspects? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Were the judges able to ask questions and modify the schedule if they felt there was not enough time spent on a judging criteria? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Did the judges meet with the media? |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Were the judges asked to give presentations? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Were the judges able to meet with and talk to volunteers? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Was enough time allotted to view the community? |
| x | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Was enough time allotted to complete the evaluation forms in a quiet place? |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | x | Were the judges given an opportunity to contact the next municipality? |

DEFINITIONS

-- **Municipality/Public properties:** Parks and open spaces, roads, roadsides, sidewalks, cemeteries, schools and sports facilities, empty lots and brownfields. (*Municipal employees*). Includes -- **Institutional:** hospitals, churches, military bases, assisted living, universities & colleges

-- **Commercial Sector:** shopping centers, stores, office buildings, restaurants, service stations, railway and bus stations (*Owners/staff*). Includes - **Industrial:** refineries, chemical and manufacturing plants, mining, etc.

-- Private **properties/Citizens:** Residences, condominiums, town houses, planned communities, apartment buildings, gated communities, manufactured home communities



2011 Special Mention

Municipality: Washington, MO

Population Category: 10,001 – 15,000

Criteria Being Recognized: Community Involvement **Bloom Rating:** 3

General description of the special mention

Community involvement is a highlight of life in Washington, MO. Tens of thousands of hours of community service work is donated annually by residents to enhance quality of life in this charming town. The “can do” spirit is supported and encouraged by a city council and mayor who are open to new ideas and gladly partner on projects. The annual Town and Country Fair is a perfect example of the giving spirit. The Tree Commission, Master Gardeners and the Garden Club are among the volunteers who are making a visible difference in the town. Also commended is the group that is restoring and reusing old buildings in the historic downtown.

Special Project or Initiative

The Town and County Fair, an all-volunteer effort by the city’s service groups, is recognized internationally for providing a multi-faceted entertainment opportunity that draws visitors from other states and countries. It is one of only three in the US that is run entirely by volunteers. Funds generated from the event go directly back to the community’s service groups and Chamber of Commerce. The event’s economic impact approaches \$2 million, a remarkable sum for a town of 14,000 people.

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