

GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION:

Communities are required to provide the following prior to evaluation:

- Community Profile – Organized to follow the criteria and metrics. For repeat communities, call out what is new and/or implemented due to judges' recommendations. Complete the Community Information pages - general information, metric implementation checklist and contacts with emails of community members that will meet the judges.
- Evaluation Tour Itinerary with start and finish times for each day
- Community Map with boundaries and the tour route

The areas to be scored:

Judges will review Community Profiles, Community Maps and Evaluation Tour Itineraries to confirm the appropriateness of the areas to be evaluated and contact communities prior to the tour so adjustments can be made.

- All areas (municipal, commercial and residential) to be scored must be within the boundaries of the entrant's community/municipality (except as noted below) and a representative portion of all areas must be included.
- Property to be scored, whether public or private, must be subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant's community/municipality.
- When a property does not meet these requirements, but the community's volunteers significantly impact the areas with labor and/or funding, then judges may include in their scoring the property not subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant community.
- A community may request recommendations for areas toured but not scored.

Metrics are noted with unique codes based on the criteria. Ratings include:

N/A (Not Applicable): Communities should strive to implement all metrics; however, judges will use N/A when a metric is not scorable in a community. An NA metric is not included in the point totals and does not affect percentages.

Examples when NA may apply in a metric: commercial/business areas do not exist; state or county statutes prevent implementation of a metric.

Not Meeting (0 pts.): Programs or procedures are not in place.

Approaching (1 pt.): Programs or procedures are in place but not fully realized.

Meeting (2 pts.): Programs or procedures are implemented but need significant improvement.

Exceeding (3 pts.): Programs or procedures are implemented but could use some improvement.

Excelling (4 pts.): Programs or procedures are exceptional.

NS (Not Scored): Shown in a point box when the rating of that metric applies only to Not Meeting or Meeting.

Judges' Discretion (0-4 pts.): Judges may add and score an item not in the metrics. This item may be an unusual or newly implemented project or program.

Other:

- This Evaluation Report's scoring, general observations and general and criteria recommendations are based upon the community's efforts in each of the criteria.
- Future projects and programs are not scored.
- The scoring for the seven evaluation criteria is adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community's location.

General Observations and Recommendations (recommendations are indicated in italics):

Flowers Criterion Definition						
1. FLOWERS (FL): Flowering annuals, perennials, bulbs, tropical plants, flowering topiaries, and colorful foliage and/or cut plant material for season-round interest in containers, hanging baskets, window boxes, raised planters, trellises, and in-ground beds	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
FL.01 - Management of flower display programs						
Plan of Action						
FL.02 - Action plan developed each season for procurement, scheduling, planting, and maintenance of flower displays						
Design						
FL.03 - Unity and Variety: Plant combinations create visual interest and dramatic effect while appearing coordinated						
FL.04 - Suitability of Plant Selections: Plants selected for environmental conditions and flourishing together						
FL.05 - Distribution and Location: Displays found throughout the community and at key locations						
FL.06 - Seasonal Displays: Seasonal displays with spring, summer, fall, and/or holiday displays						
Maintenance						
FL.07 - Watering program to maintain growth in place						
FL.08 - Fertilization: Appropriate fertilization program using slow-release, liquid fertilizers, and/or soil amendments						
FL.09 - Grooming: Regular pruning, dead-heading, removal and replacement of dead plants						
FL.10 - Plant Health Programs in place to monitor and manage pests and diseases (IPM/Integrated Pest Management)						
FL.11 - Health and Vigor: Plants are robust and floriferous						
Community Involvement						
FL.12 - Flower displays are funded all or in part by volunteer contributions						
FL.13 - Volunteers participate in the design, planting, and/or care of flower displays						
FL.14 - Civic groups, garden clubs, Master Gardeners, school programs, etc. sponsor plant sales, plant swaps, or educational sessions that contribute to the quality and implementation of the community's flower displays						
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
FL.15 - Judges to enter text below						
Totals:						
1. Flowers (FL)		Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage		

Flowers (FL) Recommendations:

Landscaped Areas Criterion Definition						
2. LANDSCAPED AREAS (LA): Plants and related programs for the leadership, design, installation, and maintenance of landscape (shrubs, ornamental grasses, vines, evergreen topiaries), turf, and groundcovers	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
LA.01 - Management of planting of public landscaped areas						
LA.02 - Municipal landscape ordinance requires landscaping and maintenance for new and/or improved commercial development						
Plan of Action						
LA.03 - Planning for restoration of natural areas						
LA.04 - Program for management of invasive plants						
LA.05 - Promotion and installation of demonstration/display gardens with interpretive signage; i.e. pollinator, wildlife, native, low-water use						
LA.06 - Recognition program for attractive landscapes in place						
Design						
LA.07 - Unity and Variety: Plant combinations create visual interest while appearing coordinated						
LA.08 - Suitability of Plant Selections: Plants selected for environmental conditions and are flourishing together						
LA.09 - Distribution/Locations: Landscaping found throughout the community and at key locations						
Maintenance						
LA.10 - Grooming: Pruning of plants, removal and/or replacement of dead plants						
LA.11 - Plant Health: Programs such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management) in place to monitor and manage diseases and pests						
LA.12 - Weed Management: Programs in place to manage weeds (removal, mulching, etc)						
LA.13 - Health and Vigor: Plants are robust						
LA.14 - Turf Care: Regular mowing, edging, and removal/replacement of dead turf						
LA.15 - Turf Health: Programs such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management) in place to monitor and manage diseases, pests, and weeds						
Community Involvement						
LA.16 - Volunteer donations contribute to funding landscaped areas in public areas						
LA.17 - Volunteers assist in design, installation, and care of landscaped areas and turf in public areas						
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
LA.18 - Judges to enter text below						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
2. Landscaped Areas (LA)						

Landscaped Areas (LA) Recommendations:

Urban Forestry Criterion Definition						
3. URBAN FORESTRY (UF): Trees and related programs for the leadership, management, design, installation, and maintenance on public and private lands	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
UF.01 - Qualified personnel on staff or access to trained individuals						
UF.02 - Tree board/commission is active						
UF.03 - Municipal ordinance(s) enacted/enforced for tree preservation on public and private property						
UF.04 - Municipal ordinance(s) enacted/enforced for protection of trees during construction						
UF.05 - Currently a Tree City USA community and/or has the Growth Award designation						
Plan of Action						
UF.06 - Tree inventory for public areas is complete and current						
UF.07 - Annual tree planting program for public areas						
UF.08 - Management program for dead, imperiled, and/or invasive trees						
UF.09 - Recognition and protection of heritage trees						
UF.10 - Effective communication to residents of recommended trees, proper planting, "Right Tree in the Right Place," and/or maintenance						
Design						
UF.11 - Variety: Appropriate selection of tree species planted						
UF.12 - Placement: Appropriate spacing and planting area for optimal root and canopy growth						
UF.13 - Planting: Correct planting depth (root flare at/above grade)						
UF.14 - Arboretum in place with labels and descriptive signage						
Maintenance						
UF.15 - Tree Health: Program in place to monitor and manage diseases and pests						
UF.16 - Watering, Mulching, and Pruning: program for watering new trees; proper mulching (i.e., no volcano mulching); appropriate pruning, removal of dead limbs and canopies raised adequately above vehicle and pedestrian areas						
Community Involvement						
UF.17 - Volunteer donations contribute to funding tree planting in public areas						
UF.18 - Residents participate in Arbor Day activities						
UF.19 - Volunteers assist in tree planting and care						
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
UF.20 - Judges to enter text below						
Totals:						
	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
3. Urban Forestry (UF)						

Urban Forestry (UF) Recommendations:

Environmental Efforts Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
4. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS (EE): Environmental leadership, policies, plans and programs for resource conservation; pollution control; trash, recycling, and reuse; and alternative transportation	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
EE.01 - Environmental Advisory Board or Green Team in place						
EE.02 - Pet waste policies developed and enforced						
EE.03 - Electric/alternative fuel vehicle(s) used by municipality						
EE.04 - Electric vehicle charging station(s) provided						
EE.05 - Stormwater management program in place						
Plan of Action						
EE.06 - Litter and/or environmental clean-up programs in use						
EE.07 - Brownfield clean-up programs in place						
Resource Conservation						
EE.08 - Buildings are LEED certified and/or follow the standards						
EE.09 - Rain gardens and/or bio-swales in place						
EE.10 - Home energy audit program available			NS		NS	NS
EE.11 - Rain barrel program offered			NS		NS	NS
EE.12 - Low-flow water device incentives available			NS		NS	NS
Trash, Recycling, and Reuse Management						
EE.13 - Curbside recycling collection available			NS		NS	NS
EE.14 - Yard waste composting available or offered			NS		NS	NS
EE.15 - Prescription drug drop-off offered			NS		NS	NS
EE.15 - Hazardous waste and/or electronics waste collection or drop-off offered						
EE.17 - Plastic bag and/or foam container collection available						
Community Involvement						
EE.18 - Participation in Earth Day celebrations, Bike to Work Days, Walk to School Days and similar opportunities enhance public awareness of environmental issues						
EE.19 - Garden clubs, Master Gardeners, school curricula, and/or Soil and Water Conservation District, etc. provide educational opportunities for rain barrel usage, backyard habitats, and other environmental initiatives						
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
EE.20 - Judges to enter text below						
Totals:						
	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
4. Environmental Efforts (EE)						

Environmental Efforts (EE) Recommendations:

Celebrating Heritage Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
5. CELEBRATING HERITAGE (CH): Recognition, designation, protection, commemoration, and celebration of historical, cultural, natural, agricultural, and industrial resources	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
CH.01 - Historic preservation ordinance provides designation and/or protection from demolition						
CH.02 - Incentives offered to promote preservation: tax credits, waived permit fees, eased setbacks, available rebates, etc						
CH.03 - Effective communication about ordinances, policies, and restoration methods						
CH.04 - Land trusts and/or conservation easements are available			NS		NS	NS
CH.05 - Historic Preservation or Architectural Review board in place			NS		NS	NS
CH.06 - Historical Society is active			NS		NS	NS
Plan of Action						
CH.07 - National Register of Historic Places district and/or individual designations in place						
CH.08 - Natural and/or agricultural areas are protected						
CH.09 - Archives, artifacts, cemetery records, and oral histories in place and properly stored						
CH.10 - Historical publications/websites, interpretive signage, and programs in place						
Commemoration						
CH.11 - Signage in place for historic neighborhoods and/or structures						
CH.12 - Historical museum(s) and/or interpretive displays maintained						
CH.13 - Cemeteries, monuments, and/or plaques in place and well maintained						
CH.14 - Community heritage promoted through tours (guided or self), brochures, Smartphone apps, etc						
CH.15 - Parades, festivals, and other events commemorating a community's heritage are held						
Community Involvement						
CH.16 - Volunteers participate in planning and implementing recognition of a community's heritage through historical tours, parades, festivals, etc						
CH.17 - Volunteer participation in maintaining historical sites and structures						
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
CH.18 - Judges to enter text below						
Totals:		Possible Points	Actual Points		Percentage	
5. Celebrating Heritage (CH)						

Celebrating Heritage (CH) Recommendations:

Community Vitality (CV) Criterion Definition						
6. COMMUNITY VITALITY (CV): Policies, programs, and outdoor activities and facilities that lead to a vibrant community and a sense of well-being. Includes parks, playgrounds, dog parks, sports fields, water activities, trails, and other outdoor recreational opportunities	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
CV.01 – Clean Air policies implemented						
CV.02 - Master plan in place for public green space and parks						
CV.03 - ADA accessibility in public outdoor areas including playgrounds						
Outdoor Facilities and Events						
CV.04 - Outdoor recreation facilities meet community needs						
CV.05 - Walking, biking, and exercise trails exist						
CV.06 - Outdoor performances/events for art, dance, theatre, music, and/or cinema						
CV.07 - Run/walk/bike races and marathons held						
CV.08 - Benches and seating available near walking, exercise, and playground areas						
CV.09 - Trees or shade sails are in proper areas to provide shade for spectators and/or participants						
CV.10 - Playground equipment exists and age-appropriate ranges are offered						
CV.11 - Farmers' Markets are available						
Community Involvement						
CV.12 - Community gardening sites are being used						
CV.13 - Volunteer involvement in planning, funding, and/or implementing civic events such as organized runs, walks, etc						
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
CV.14 - Judges to enter text below						
Totals:						
	Possible Points	Actual Points		Percentage		
6. Community Vitality (CV)						

Community Vitality (CV) Recommendations:

Overall Impression (OI) Criterion Definition						
7. OVERALL IMPRESSION (OI): Adequate and effective amenities are provided in good condition, and the community is welcoming and beautiful	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
OI.01 - Signage ordinances enacted and enforced						
OI.02 - Ordinances in place to address overgrown lots, abandoned vehicles, unscreened dumpster, public nuisances, etc						
OI.03 - Code enforcement or compliance officer on municipal staff and making a difference						
Amenities						
OI.04 - Site furnishings in place: water features, lamp posts, benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, trash and recycling receptables, containers, planters, and cigarette receptacles						
OI.05 - Crosswalks well marked						
OI.06 - Public restrooms available						
OI.07 - Effective community gateway entry features						
OI.08 - Effective use of banners, murals, and/or public art						
OI.09 - Effective wayfinding signage						
OI.10 - Effective use of non-plant seasonal decorations (i.e., lights, ornaments)						
Condition and Maintenance						
OI.11 - Condition of structures, buildings, decks, patios related to lack of vandalism, graffiti, peeling or faded paint and rust						
OI.12 - Condition of infrastructure: roadways, road shoulders, curbs, medians, sidewalks crosswalks/pavement markings, transformers and utility poles related to lack of weeds, vandalism, litter, graffiti, peeling or faded paint and rust						
OI.13 - Condition of signs and site furnishings: water features, lamp posts, benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, trash and recycling receptables, containers, planters, and cigarette receptacles						
OI.14 - Condition of vacant lots, stormwater retention ponds, swales						
OI.15 - Lack of snipe/stake signs, billboards, and posted flyers						
OI.16 - Regularly scheduled street sweeping						
Community Involvement						
OI.17 - Volunteer funding and participation in community revitalization and improvement programs, such as river sweep, home repair programs (CHIP), disaster relief, clean-up days, etc						
OI.18 - Programs are available for residents to fund public amenities such as memorial benches, brick pathways, etc						
OI.19 - Volunteer involvement in Adopt-A-Spot Programs, Habitat for Humanity Projects, River Sweep, etc						
OI.20- Recognition programs for volunteers						
OI.21 - Volunteer hours recorded						
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
OI.22 - Judges to enter text below						
Totals:						
	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
7. Overall Impression (OI)						

Overall Impression (OI) Recommendations:

Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET) Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)		
	N/A	Unmet (0 pts)	Met (1 pt)
8. EVALUATION TOUR PREPARATION AND ACTIONS (ET): Community's readiness prior to and the action during the Evaluation Tour			
Prior to the Evaluation Tour			
ET.01 - Community Profile provided to judges at least two weeks prior to their arrival			
ET.02 - Community Profile includes contacts with emails			
ET.03 - Community Profile from a returning community makes it clear what is new and/or implemented from judges' recommendations (scored as N/A for a new community)			
ET.04 - Evaluation Tour itinerary and Community map with boundaries provided to judges at least two weeks prior to their arrival			
During the Evaluation Tour			
ET.05 - Evaluation Tour provided a representative cross-section of the community			
ET.06 - Judges met with municipal leaders			
ET.07 - Judges met with the business and/or non-profit community			
ET.08 - Judges met with the media			
ET.09 - Judges met with volunteers			
ET.10 - Judges were asked to give a presentation(s)			
Final Wrap-Up			
ET.11 - Enough time was allotted for judges to work on the Evaluation Tour Report in a quiet place with adequate WiFi availability			
ET.12 - Community participated in a wrap-up session at the end of the Evaluation Tour			
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note			
ET.13 - Judges to enter text below			
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage
8. Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET)			

Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET) Recommendations:

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