

Floral Displays

Flowerbeds. Are there many? Is there a theme? Are they striking to look at? Does the flowerbed fit the space? Is it sited properly? Designed? Can it be maintained easily? Does it need to be changed too often?

Containers. Are they attractive or interesting? Does the container size seem appropriate or is it too small for the location? Do they have drainage holes? How is it fertilized? Is the soil the proper mix? Is too tall a plant in too short a container or vice versa? Is the right plant in the right place? Color of container/plant appropriate?

Baskets. Are they attractive or interesting? Are they large enough for the space and so they do not have to be watered too frequently? Are they positioned so they can be watered easily, not in the way, high enough so tall people do not hit their heads? Does it drip where it shouldn't? Are the plants appropriate for a basket? Are they secured? Is the basket ugly when seen from below?

Window boxes. Are they attractive or interesting? Does the box seem appropriate to the building's architecture? Is it grown well with appropriate plants for the sized box? Can it be maintained easily? Are there enough for the building? Are they secured? Seasonality?

Arrangement. Are they attractive or interesting? Is there a diversity of plant material? Is it color coordinated including foliage plants? Does it match or compliment nearby plantings? Is the right plant in the right place? Is it seasonally appropriate?

Originality. Does it have a wow factor? Can it be duplicated or is one enough?

Distribution. Are there enough floral displays throughout the community? Has the community made an effort to unify the plantings throughout by stating a theme? Are all the seasons covered? Should there be more throughout all of the community? Are underprivileged areas included?

Location. Are the plantings in a good spot so they do not impede pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic? Are they sited in too much sun or too much shade? Can they be maintained easily? Is water nearby? Are staff or volunteers trained to care for them? Is the snowplow or lawn mower going to damage them? Are they under an eave or overhang? Can they be seen and appreciated?

Diversity. Sometimes keep it simple stupid is better but is there a considerable number of different types of plants, different colors, different foliage and seasonality? Is the plant diversity really available....sometimes it is not or the facilities, resources and staff to raise different plants is not an option.

Balance. Are the plantings attractive and is there symmetry in the plantings if needed? Are all the hot colors to one side, does the mulch color conflict with the plantings colors?

Harmony. Is there a unified feeling in the planting? Does it have **Balance**? Does it fit into the space or does it conflict?

Quality of maintenance. Great maintenance shows regular watering, weeding and feeding. When necessary fungi and insects are reduced so that the plantings prosper. Plants have to be deadheaded if needed. Are the planting beds edged appropriately? Is the basket or container full of flowers and foliage based on the season? Did something die and not get replaced?

Use and integration of annuals, perennials, ornamental grasses, bulbs, and seasonal flowers. Is it done when appropriate to the planting?

Floral Display – Key Questions

Judging Criteria

- A. Distribution/Location
 - a. Are Floral Displays found throughout the community?
 - b. Does floral color only occur in isolated pockets?
 - c. Are there obvious spaces where floral displays could easily be added? What would the impact be on the streetscape?
- B. Arrangement/Design
 - a. Does plant selection and placement makes sense in terms of survivability?
 - i. Exposure: sun vs shade
 - ii. Soil conditions
 - iii. Site restrictions
 - b. Does plant selection and placement make sense in terms of public viewing?
 - i. Plant height vs location in planter or bed.
 - ii. Visual mass vs location in planter or bed.
 - c. Was the quality of plants used suitable to create a full display?
- C. Diversity
 - a. Has there been an attempt to use a broad pallet of plants within the community?
 - b. Has there been an attempt tp incorporate newer cultivars or varieties of annuals or perennials into floral displays?
 - c. Has plant diversity been used as a mechanism for increasing the ornamental value of floral displays?
 - d. Has there been an effort to incorporate native plants in either traditional or non-traditional ways?
- D. Horticultural Excellence/Maintenance
 - a. Have the cultural needs of the plants used in the floral display bee met?
 - i. Water
 - ii. Fertilization
 - iii. Pest Control
 - iv. Dead-Heading/Pinching/Prune where appropriate
 - b. Are there weeds present?
 - c. If appropriate has the bed been mulched?
 - d. If appropriate has the bed been edged?
 - e. Are there dead plants present?
 - f. What is the overall look or appearance of the display? Or how happy do the plants look?
- E. Seasonality
 - a. Are displays designed to provide color or textural interest over the course of the growing season?
 - b. Is there a seasonal planting schedule?
- F. Community Participation
 - a. Who does what?

- b. What is the relationship between the government/business/ and private citizens?
- c. Is there a desire to identify resources and develop a plan to plant, maintain and recognize the value that floral displays add to the cityscape or townscape?

Intangibles

- G. Uniqueness/Creativity
 - a. What is different?
 - b. What have I seen that is truly unique that adds a special flair or feeling?
 - c. What opportunities for creative solutions exist but have not been taken?
- H. Supportive Materials/Documentation
 - a. With whom did you meet?
 - b. What information has been provided by the community to you as an advisor?
 - c. What type of interpretative information is presented to the community at large?
- I. Personal Taste
 - a. Do you have to like the combinations of plants used in order for high marks to be awarded?

Comments and Suggestions

- a. Comments and suggestions made by the advisors must be reflective of scoring.
- b. Comments and suggestions are the mechanism has to validate their scores.
- c. In other words, it is incumbent upon the advisor to explain why.
- d. Reasonability
 - a. Given it resources what can a community reasonably do?
 - b. There is no standard. You are evaluating a community against itself and its potential.
- e. Community agenda – Assist a community in pushing a program or project.
- f. Your comments and suggestions set the stage for the future. They go a long way to determine how a community will feel about America in Bloom.

❖ BE POSITIVE

❖ BE SENSITIVE

❖ ENCOURAGE