

ADOPT-A-MEDIAN APPLICATION PACKET

The Adopt-A-Median Program was originally established in 1988, under the authority of the Board of Public Works. The program was designed as a way to empower neighborhoods to engage in community beautification efforts. As part of the Office of Community Beautification (OCB), the program has evolved into a tool for the community to:

- Beautify and increase the quality of life in neighborhoods;
- Promote community involvement through landscape and streetscape projects;
- Promote a sense of ownership by community members through “sweat equity” on their projects; and
- Infuse the landscape of the City of Los Angeles with color, culture, and creativity.

CRITERIA

The following criteria has been established in order to better assist community members in determining whether or not their project qualifies under the Adopt-A-Median Program:

1. Project is sponsored and submitted by a neighborhood-based organization such as Homeowners Associations, Neighborhood Councils, Improvement Associations, Block Clubs, Neighborhood Watch Groups, Chambers of Commerce and Beautification Committees, and City Council Offices.
2. Project is under \$100,000 in total cost.
3. Project will maintain structures below 36” in height from road surface for freestanding objects, such as street furniture or signage. Acceptable exceptions to this requirement include, but are not limited to, murals on existing walls and/or new trees.
4. Project is free of improvements that require extensive technical review such as: alterations to the horizontal alignment of the street (i.e. changes to the street width, curbs, gutters, median locations/shapes, or traffic lanes), alterations to the water drainage patterns on the street, alterations to traffic lane alignment(s) or street parking, high voltage (120V) electrical equipment drawing in excess of 330 watts, fountains/water features requiring pump equipment, etc.

If you do not meet the above criteria, please contact the Bureau of Engineering office in your district for information on the permitting process.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
BUREAU OF ENGINEERING
Internet: <http://eng.lacity.org>

ADOPT-A-MEDIAN APPLICATION PACKET (continued)

GUIDELINES

Please read the following before you submit your package. Be sure that your plans adhere to the following:

In order to consider the application complete, please submit **three (3) sets** of the application packet *including* all attachments. The attachments include:

1. A completed “Adopt-A-Median Neighborhood Beautification Partnership” Agreement
2. A completed Maintenance Agreement
3. A completed Waiver and Release of Claims form
4. A letter of support from the Council Member presiding over the project location on City letterhead
5. A letter of support from the Neighborhood Council (NHC) presiding over the project location on NHC letterhead
6. Current photographs of the project site from multiple angles
7. A cost listing of the materials (costs can be estimated) that will be used for the proposed improvement, i.e. plant listing for a landscaping project including plant species, quantities, container sizes and spacing, irrigation equipment/system components, decorative paving materials, street furniture, community signage, etc.
8. Scaled (measurable) project plans showing the proposed encroachments and/or improvements in relation to property lines and existing infrastructure, such as: power poles, light poles, traffic signals, utility boxes, sidewalks, curbs, storm drains, trees, etc. Proposed improvements such as decorative paving, community signage, or furniture will require additional detail drawings or instructions that show or note how these proposed elements will be secured to the site.

If any of the above mentioned items are missing from the application at time of submittal, applications will be placed on a pending status until all necessary items are received.

All projects will require a revocable permit and either an “A” or “B”-permit. The Revocable permit and an A-permit shall be obtained on your behalf by Board of Public Works, Office of Community Beautification (OCB) staff. All fees associated with a revocable permit and an A-permit shall be waived. **For projects requiring a B-permit, your organization is required to apply for a B-permit and pay all applicable permit fees.**

Please allow a minimum of 3 months for the processing, review, and approval of your project. Once you receive permits and all conditions are met, contact the Bureau of Contract Administration prior to commencing work, for inspection. If the improvements involve digging, please contact DIG-Alert prior to digging. Please refer to the reverse side of the A permit for further instructions regarding this.

For further information, please contact the Office of Community Beautification, Adopt-A-Median Program Manager, Gerry Valido, at (213) 978-0225.



**“ADOPT-A-MEDIAN”
NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**



This agreement between the City of Los Angeles and _____
(Community Group)

is to provide a means of improving, beautifying and maintaining City owned property (median strip or other public right of way) located at _____
(Location)

Please describe the proposal below, including means to complete the project and expected completion time. If additional space is required, continue on reverse side of paper. Please include a plans or sketches detailing the work to be done.

The Community Group agrees to:

- Provide the labor and materials required to improve the adopted area, and further to maintain and water the area following completion of the project.
- Follow the plan as approved by the City with any special conditions or requirements.

The City of Los Angeles/Department of Public Works agrees to:

- Help the Community Groups with the process of obtaining approval of this proposal.
- Pay for costs incurred by the City to investigate this proposal.
- Waive any associated Public Works permit fees for revocable permit and A-permit.
- Loan hand tools to the group working on the beautification project. Such items may include rakes, brooms, shovels, hoes, etc.
- Provide liability coverage through the City of Los Angeles SPARTA INSURANCE PROGRAM: Commercial general liability-Hazard 2. Coverage applies to all facets of the project approved by the City of Los Angeles.
- Consider performing such jobs as the situation may require, to the extent that resources are available.

For Community Group (Title) Date

For City of Los Angeles (Title) Date

**ATTACHMENT I
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
AGREEMENT ASSUMING RISK OF INJURY OR DAMAGE
WAIVER AND RELEASE OF CLAIMS
BY PARTICIPANTS**

In consideration of the City of Los Angeles (hereinafter "City") permitting (check one):

ME (an individual)

the GROUP, known as:

(Name of Participant Adopting the Project)

(Name of Group Adopting the Project)

to participate in the Board of Public Works, Adopt-A-Median Program, I do hereby agree for myself, my heirs, executors, assigns and administrators:

That the City, its officers, agents, and employees shall not be responsible or liable for any injury, damage, loss or expense either to me/our group or my/our property incurred while I/we am cleaning, raking, shoveling, planting, or otherwise improving and beautifying public parkways and median strips, or engaged in similar activities.

I/We further agree to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City, its officers, agents and employees from all injuries, damages, costs and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) that may arise out of, result from, or in any way be connected with the issuance of this permit for purposes described above. This waiver does not apply to injuries and damages that are solely due to the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the City or its officers, agents or employees.

I/We hereby represent that I/we have carefully read and understand the contents of this document and sign the same of my/our own free will.

Signature of Representative on Behalf of Group: _____

Signature of Individual: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian if Participant is under 18 y/o: _____

Date: _____

City of L.A. Office Use Only:

Cognizant City Department: _____

Department Contact: _____

**LANDSCAPE/STREETSCAPE GUIDELINES
FOR
ADOPT-A-MEDIAN PROGRAM**



I. Drawings submitted to the City for approval should contain the following:

1. Site Plan drawn at 1/4" or 1/8": min. scale showing what you want to do.
 - a. Identify plants with symbols plus botanical and common names (use Sunset Western Garden Book).
 - b. Label Materials: Boulders, stepping stones, stamped concrete, brick, gravel, benches, etc.
 - c. Show mound limits and heights.
 - d. Indicate plant sizes.

We recommend:

Trees	15 gal. min. size
Shrubs	5 gal. min. size
Accent or Flowering Plants	1 gal. min. size
Ground Covers	Flats

2. Identify the project in the Title Block (i.e., "Landscape Traffic Median on La Brea between Coliseum Street and Veronica Street). Also, list "submitted by" with name, address and phone number of contact person and date.
3. Include a small scale vicinity or location map (see illustration).
4. Plant and material list (see illustration).
5. Required Notes: See "Note Sheet" for common notation for use as necessary.

II. Technical Considerations:

1. All planting will require soil amendments (fertilizers and mulches) refer to "Note Sheet" for our recommendation.
2. Many City medians have been treated over the years with herbicides, so you must test the soil to make sure that plants will grow. Contact the Streetscape Section at (213) 847-0881 for soil testing information and ideas.

LANDSCAPE/STREETSCAPE GUIDELINES

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3. Where plant life is involved water will be required. Even for “drought-tolerant” and/or “native” plant species, supplemental water will be required for the first on to three growing seasons before the plant materials can survive on just annual rainfall. Give special thought to how plants are to be watered and by whom.

We highly recommend an automatic irrigation system with battery or solar operated timer. We strongly advise against running hoses across streets or depending on citizens to cross streets to water.

4. Remember, SAFETY FIRST! Be careful not to obstruct traffic sight lines or distract drivers.

Traffic sight lines refer to that area 3 ft. above road surface to 10 ft. to bottom of tree overhang – 50 ft. back from any intersection.

Streetscape is best viewed from moving traffic at 30°.

III. Design:

1. Start your design with the selection and placement of trees. Trees are best grouped in odd numbers (3, 5) or they can also be evenly spaced. Trees are always your strongest element especially if they are of the flowering type. Tree species selection shall be in consultation with the Urban Forestry Division (213) 847-3077. Tree spacing in the public right-of-way shall be determined by the Urban Forestry Division. Trees in limited planting areas will require root barriers.
2. Next, design your ground plane. Whatever you put on the ground can be emphasized with landforms (mounds).

Total blanket ground covers will require more water than a combination shrub, tree, and groundcover mix. We recommend limiting the use of lawns or not using lawn as a groundcover altogether because of the required maintenance and water.

Since the ground plane requires the most maintenance and water, we highly recommend you consider using textured or patterned concrete, brick or even river run stone. Decomposed granite is an acceptable pavement option, but is not as desirable as the more permanent hard surfaces. Any decorative paving used must be properly secured to the site; use mortar to secure any stone or brick that otherwise might be thrown or come loose and end up in the street. Use of a decorative paving material at ends of medians/to the noses is strongly recommended due to the abuse these areas receive from both pedestrian usage and vehicular accidents alike. Similarly, using decorative paving materials in smaller medians (areas less than 1,000 square feet) or

narrow parts of larger medians (where the median is less than five (5) feet in width) is strongly recommended due to the difficult nature of watering and maintaining plant materials in these situations.

3. Middle height (1ft. to 3ft.) or accent points: A few scattered shrubs such as Raphiolepis, Pittosporum, Oleander, Agapanthus, Day-Lilies, Nandina, Junipers, etc., can work to highlight or accent the landscape.

However, the middle heights are the most difficult to maintain and design. That range of plants requires continuous pruning. If you have a strong tree design and the ground plane is acceptable, you will not need to deal with the middle height areas.

Boulders, railroad ties, and other decorative landscape materials may be used to provide additional middle height accents; these types of elements must be properly secured to their site and positioned in a manner that will minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic (in sidewalk areas) as well as minimize vehicular damage (within medians) should an accident occur. A minimum longitudinal set-back of fifty (50) feet from the nose or ends of median islands is required for the placement of these elements. Boulders and other rigid decorative landscape materials must also have a minimum lateral set-back of two (2) feet away from any curb or edge of roadway.

Street furniture (benches, trash receptacles, planter pots, bollards, community signage, etc.) are also considered middle height streetscape elements and may be placed within sidewalk areas and in certain limited situations, large medians. We recommend that any and all furniture elements are selected so that they match each other in color and style, as well as any existing street furniture, to provide a unified design statement. Other considerations to be made when selecting these furniture elements include ease of cleaning, replacement, and long-term durability.

Street Furniture siting related challenges to consider when developing your project design or proposal are clearances for disabled accessibility, and possible conflicts with existing street elements such as driveways, alleys, business/residence windows, doorways, signage, utility boxes, utility/lighting poles, storm drains, fire hydrants, street trees, etc. All street furniture must be properly secured to their proposed sites with bolts, epoxy adhesives, concrete footings, etc. to prevent them from tipping over, being arbitrarily moved, or stolen. Street furniture installations should not be located within forty five (45) feet of a street corner, nor within existing bus stop zones, and must be located a minimum of 2 feet away from any curb or edge of the street.

4. Finally, overall design must be compatible with the surrounding area—look around! What trees or plants are already in the area or neighborhood? What are types of

LANDSCAPE/STREETSCAPE GUIDELINES
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materials and colors being used on existing items like street light poles, sidewalks, transit shelters and adjacent buildings? Try to imagine what your new planting and the streetscape environment will look like in three (3) to five (5) years. Can others key off your improvement? Use your imagination by trying to visualize what your project will do for your area. Think, Organize and Commit! And of course, the Streetscape Staff is available to assist you at (213) 847-0881.

**STREET TREE GUIDELINES
FOR
ADOPT-A-MEDIAN PROGRAM**



BROADHEAD TREES:

- 1) The trees shall be trimmed one time per year, sprayed, removed and replaced as needed by Owner to meet the satisfaction of Urban Forestry Division of the City of Los Angeles, the Bureau of Street Services and Board of Public Works.
- 2) All trees shall be watered once every twenty (20) days with a minimum of twenty (20) gallons of water per tree in the summer and otherwise in sufficient quantity to maintain proper root moisture.
- 3) All trees shall be staked with a “Ready Stake” or equivalent stake and tied properly at all times. Stakes and ties shall be removed within two years or after trees can support themselves, whichever comes first. All tree ties shall be checked regularly to prevent girdling of the tree trunk.
- 4) The trees shall be trimmed within 30 calendar days after planting to the American National Standards Institute’s (ANSI) A300 standards and to International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) guidelines for young trees in order to increase the trunk and root system stability, and to ensure public safety at all times and as required by the Street Tree Division.
- 5) If any emergency of any kind should occur, such as the tree uprooting, or a limb falling onto private property or into the street area, it shall be the responsibility of the property owner to eliminate all debris at no cost to the City of Los Angeles. This shall also include all damages or injury costs if any should occur.
- 6) Any tree removal shall be approved by the Board of Public Works.
- 7) All future pruning shall conform to ISA and ANSI A300 standards as well as Los Angeles Municipal Code.

LANDSCAPING:

- 1) All costs of said planting and removal, maintenance and/or repair of such landscaping and irrigation system located in the public way shall be at the property owner’s or agent’s expense.
- 2) All weeds and debris shall be removed and hauled away as required by the Urban Forestry Division.

STREET TREE GUIDELINES

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- 3) All sprinklers and the irrigation lines shall be maintained as required by the Urban Forestry Division.
- 4) All dead plants shall be removed and replaced as required by the Urban Forestry Division.
- 5) All vegetation shall be trimmed to provide clearance of the street and sidewalk at all times as required by the Urban Forestry Division.
- 6) All vegetation shall be trimmed and maintained to a height of less than 36" above the street at all times as required by the Urban Forestry Division.
- 7) All vegetation shall be watered and fertilized to assure survival of all vegetation.
- 8) Control pests and disease to provide a healthy environment for plants and public.
- 9) Any future modifications to the landscape plan shall be approved by the Urban Forestry Division.

PALM TREES

- 1) The Palm trees shall be pruned and once annually. Tree removal shall be performed as necessary with the approval of the Urban Forestry Division, Bureau of Street Services, Department of Public Works.
- 2) Palm tree pruning shall NOT be performed during the months March, April, May, or June.
- 3) Pruning shall occur during seed head maturity.
- 4) The public way shall be maintained in a safe condition at all times.
- 5) The public way shall be kept free of seeds, fruit, and flowers at all times.
- 6) Palm tree replacements shall be a minimum eight (8) feet brown trunk.
- 7) Tree removals require approval by the Board of Public Works.

STREET TREE GUIDELINES
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OAK TREES

- 1) Any paving in the drip line requires prior approval by the Urban Forestry Division and shall be of a permeable type.
- 2) Soil excavation in the vicinity of an Oak tree shall be by hand where necessary to avoid excessive damage to the root system. The root protection zone shall be defined as the drip line PLUS ten feet.
- 3) Excised roots and exposed roots shall be properly protected until trenches and other excavations are backfilled.
- 4) No herbicides shall be used within 100 feet of any Oak trees dripline.
- 5) Pruning of Oak trees shall require a pruning permit by the Urban Forestry Division and shall be performed by a Certified Arborist.
- 6) Oak trees are fragile when there is a change to their environment. Therefore, a maintenance program shall be established to ensure the trees receive proper care.
- 7) No ornamental ground cover shall be placed within the dripline of Oak trees. Planting material within the dripline shall be of a native variety compatible with Oak species and be approved by the Urban Forestry Division.
- 8) As per the Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 46.01, any Oak tree removal or pruning requires a permit from the Board of Public Works or its agent.
- 9) No landscaping or construction shall occur within the Oak trees protected root zone without the approval and permission of the Urban Forestry Division.

**TRAFFIC-RELATED GUIDELINES
FOR
ADOPT-A-MEDIAN PROGRAM**



Landscaping - Plantings on an island are to be limited to a maximum mature height of 3 feet when driver visibility is required, particularly near traffic signals or other traffic controls. A minimum 3 foot walking path on an island is required for pedestrians to access the existing crosswalks. All planting proposals require the approval of the Department of Transportation to ensure that minimum visibility requirements are met.

Tree Installations - Trees shall be located to minimize the potential for being struck by errant vehicles. When islands are near intersections, trees shall be planted no closer than 50 feet to the nose of the island. Islands that are located downstream from an intersection shall have trees planted no closer than 25 feet from the nose of an island. Trees should be planted centered between the two sides of an island. All trees shall be located so that the visibility of traffic signals meet minimum required distanced when mature. Sight lines between drivers and signal heads shall be assured in the planting plans for island installations. For purposes of illustration, a driver is required to have continuous visibility of traffic signal heads for a minimum distance of 325 feet to the stop line at that intersection for speeds of 25 mph.

Fixed object installations other than trees - Median projects which propose fixed object installations, such as monument signs, architectural enhancements, etc. shall have these objects located in the same manner as described for trees. Whenever practical, the object shall be breakaway or crushable, to minimize risk to a driver of an errant vehicle. The fixed object shall be a maximum height of 3 feet and shall have a minimum 2-foot distance from the side to the adjacent island curb.

Lighting - It is preferred that fixed objects on islands be illuminated by permanent, ground mounted, upward lighting. Lighting shall be steady when used on the median, with no repeating on/off operation which could distract motorists.

NOTE SHEET

Topsoil: Shall be of a uniform composition and structure, fertile and friable sandy loam containing an amount of organic matter normal to the region, and be free of roots, clods and stones larger than 1" greatest dimension, pockets of coarse sand, noxious weed, sticks, brush and other litter. It shall not be infested with nematodes or other undesirable insects and plant disease organisms. Topsoil shall be capable of sustaining healthy plant life.

Soil Amendments: Fill into the top 6" of topsoil the following amounts of organic soil amendments per 1,000 square feet of planting area:

- a. 3 cu. Yards of Nitrohumus
- b. 2 cu. Yards of Nitrogen Fortified Redwood Mulch
- c. 100 lbs. Of Agricultural Gypsum
- d. 30 lbs. Of an All-Purpose 8-8-4 Commercial Fertilizer

Planting Hole Backfill Shall Consist Of:

- a. 33% Specified Topsoil
- b. 33% Nitrohumus
- c. 33% Nitrogen Fortified Redwood Mulch
- d. Plus the following amounts of an All-Purpose 8-8-4 Commercial Fertilizer:
 1. 1 gal. can – 2 tablespoons
 2. 5 gal. can – 1/2 cup
 3. 15 gal. can – 1-1/4 cups
 4. 24" box – 1 coffee can (1 lb.)
 5. 36" box – 3 coffee cans (1 lb.)
 6. 48" box – 5-3/4 coffee cans (1 lb.)

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Contour Mounds: Construct with specified topsoil and soil amendments. Mounds shall be placed and water settled to the satisfaction of the owner/Landscape Architect, and shall be constructed in a manner to minimize settlement and/or erosion and to provide adequate footing for placement of boulders when specified. Mound contour dimension refers to height above finish grade.

Boulders: Boulders shall be characteristic of local native materials or river run granite with black strata throughout unless otherwise indicated. Natural irregularities in boulder shapes are desirable. Boulder selection shall be approved by the Landscape Architect prior to purchase. Boulder placement shall be under the supervision of the Landscape Architect/owner.

Plant Materials:

- a. Quantities and Types: Provide quantities, and spacing as shown or noted for each location. Provide plants of the species, kinds, sizes, etc., as noted on the drawings.
- b. Plants shall be symmetrical, typical for variety and species, sound healthy, vigorous, free from plant disease, insect pests or their eggs, and shall have healthy, normal root systems, well filling their containers, but not to the point of being rootbound.
- c. Watering Basins: Construct a mound of soil around each tree and plant to form a watering basin 3" above finish grade.
- d. Replace as soon as possible, plants that show signs of failure to grow or those plants so injured or damaged so as to render them unsuitable for the purpose intended. Furnish plant and fertilizer as specified.

Tree Stakes: Tree stakes shall be 2" diameter x 10' long lodgepoles capable of standing in the ground at least two years, located on the windward side of the tree 30" into the ground unless otherwise indicated.

Tree Ties: Tree ties shall be Cinch Tie or approved equal, located in two places.

If irrigation does not exist at project location and is needed, irrigation plans should be included with package. Contact the Department of Water and Power (DWP) at (213) 367-2130 for information on installing a water meter if there is not currently one at the site. The approximate cost will range between \$1,200 and \$2,160 depending on the size of the pipe.

Please consider the use of xeriscape or drought tolerant plants to conserve water.

For projects proposing signage, signs must have a collapsible base and must not be over 3 feet in height.