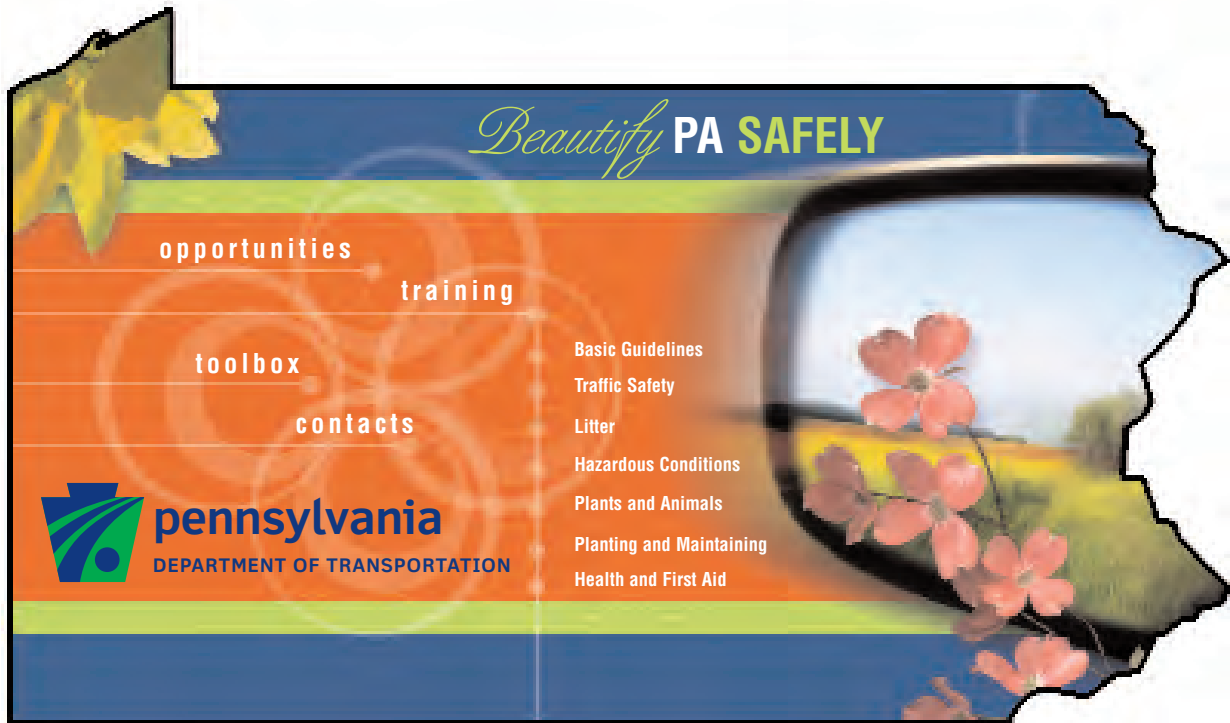


ROADSIDE BEAUTIFICATION OVERVIEW & APPLICATION



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INTRODUCTION

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) thanks you for your interest in Roadside Beautification. This document provides information on how you can use the roadside to improve your community, business and neighborhood and what you will need to make these improvements. You will find planting guidelines, sample planting plans, and possible resources. For additional information, please reference [Publication 461 \(Roadside Planting Guidebook\)](#) at www.dot.state.pa.us. Select the Forms & Publications link in the top right corner of the computer screen. Click on FORMS & PUBLICATIONS LIST. Scroll to [PUB 461](#). Click on [PUB 461](#).

WHY BEAUTIFY ROADS AND HIGHWAYS?

Landscaping roads and highway right-of-ways (R/W) serves many purposes for the people who live in, work in, and visit the Commonwealth. There are four main reasons for enhancing these landscapes: aesthetics, safety, roadway enhancement, and environmental management. The main focuses of this booklet are aesthetics and roadway enhancement.

Aesthetics – Roadside beautification sites softens structures, improves appearances which invites tourism, businesses and their customers, breaks up the linearity of the R/W, provides a variety of color, texture and scale, frames a vista or significant off-road feature, blends with the adjacent plantings, and screens undesirable off-road elements.

Safety - Roadside beautification sites can increase driver alertness, provide windbreaks and reduce headlight glare.

Roadway Enhancement - Well placed roadside beautification sites can reduce the amount of land that requires mowing.

Environmental Management - Roadside beautification sites can vegetate steep slopes and remote areas, along with re-vegetating construction areas.

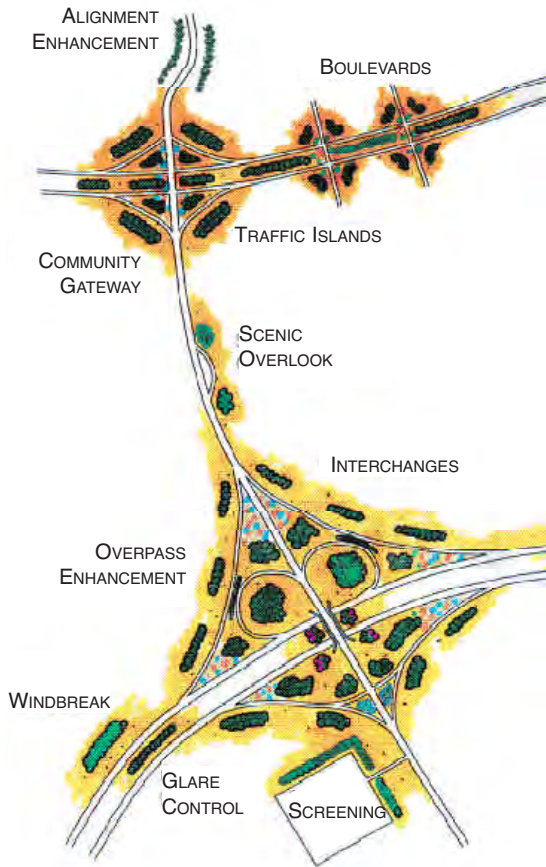
WHO MAINTAINS BEAUTIFIED ROADS AND HIGHWAYS?

Sponsor Groups

To beautify our roads and highway R/W, volunteer groups, called sponsor groups are essential to the success of this effort. This is because PennDOT will not invest their funds in beautifying a site unless a sponsor group is first willing to maintain it for years to come.

Maintaining a beautification site is a rewarding experience. At the same time, maintaining a beautification site means a sponsor group is making a serious, long-term commitment to work hard along a highway R/W which is hazardous in nature. Therefore, all participating members must be trained to maintain a beautification site and know and follow the rules outlined in a maintenance contract with PennDOT. Each sponsor group member is required to view an interactive training compact disc entitled *Beautify PA Safely* that will acquaint him/her with the basic guidelines on supplies and dressing properly, traffic safety, hazardous conditions, health and safety and other information. Contact your District Roadside Specialist for more information; see page 13 for contact phone numbers.

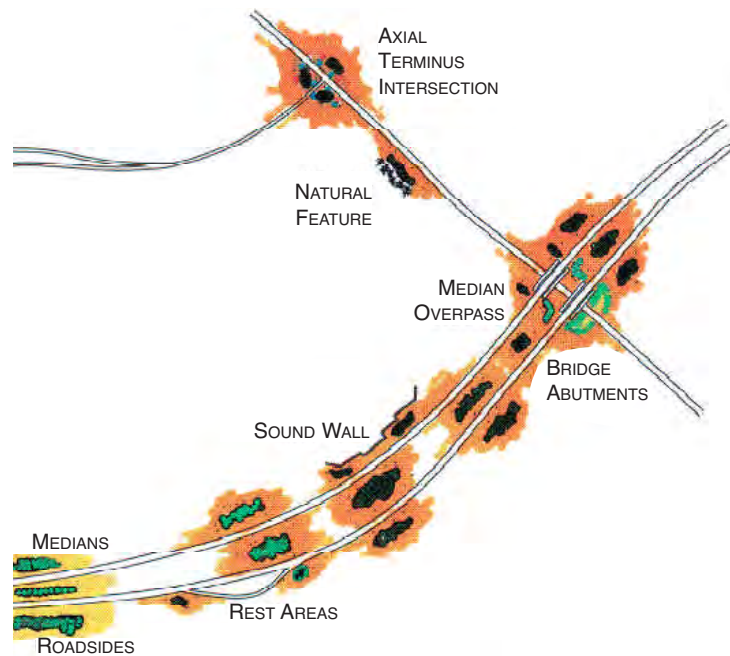
WHERE PLANTING OPPORTUNITIES ARE



PennDOT maintains over 40,000 miles of highway which varies from narrow 33 foot wide R/W two lane roads with little or no shoulder, to urban streets, to interstate highways several hundred feet wide having interchanges that may involve as much as 35 acres.

The Department’s responsibility goes beyond maintaining the actual pavement and includes structures necessary for over and underpasses, drainage, lighting, and safety-related equipment and facilities.

While maintaining the infrastructure of our highways is the primary mission of PennDOT, it is also important to provide attractive, diverse, and well-maintained roadside areas throughout the Commonwealth.



WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE PLANTING

Evaluations and Considerations

An evaluation of the prospective planting site will tell you what plants will grow in that area and the site amendments that may be required. See [Publication 461](#) for more comprehensive information. Take the following factors into account when creating a landscape design and choosing plants.

Ground

Soil

The amount of oxygen and water, along with the level of acidity and fertility, affects which plants will thrive. All compacted soil should be loosened and the pH level could be tested for optimal plant growth.

Drainage

The type of drainage at the beautification site determines the amount of moisture plants will receive. Slightly sloping ground drains well and allows moisture to remain on the surface long enough to soak in. This type of location is ideal for most plants.

A swale, intended to convey storm water, is not to be used for plantings. Planting in swales hinders the drainage of water from road surfaces. Confine plantings to areas outside the swales.

Sites that are crowned or steeply mounded will drain well but will not retain much moisture. Use plants that prefer dry conditions in these areas.

Slope

If the beautification site has a slope, take note to the direction the slope faces. South and West facing slopes tend to be sunny, hot, and dry. North and East slopes often do not receive full sun all day and retain moisture longer.

Site Parameters

Know the dimensions of the beautification site. Measure out the desired area to obtain the square footage information for the Roadside Beautification Application located in the back of this publication.

Plants

Existing Plants

The site may presently be vegetated with worthwhile and appropriate species. Consider enhancing the existing plants through thinning, additions or introducing new species.

Climate

To be sure the selected plants will thrive, check the hardiness zone in which the beautification site is located. Compare the plants with the plants' hardiness level. A Pennsylvania Plant Hardiness Zones Map is located on page 12 of this publication.

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE PLANTING (cont.)

Plants (cont.)

Salt and Wind

Salt is used on roads to melt ice and snow. An area of at least 30 feet from the edge of the pavement is subject to salt (water) spray from passing vehicles. Because this spray is harmful to plant vigor, refer to [Publication 461](#) for a list of salt tolerant plants.

Road areas are windy as a result of their open nature and from passing vehicles. The drying effects of these winds and the excessive dirt and debris blown onto plants reduce plant vigor. Plants that are hardy and wind tolerant need to be planted along roadways.

Design with Speed in Mind

Use larger plants and plant groupings along higher speed roads. Flowering trees or shrubs must have a very vivid display to be seen by motorists moving at high speeds. Save the smaller flowering and subtle colored plants for slower speed viewing. Consider large shrub groups (i.e., 25 or more Forsythia, or seven or more flowering trees).

Traffic Recovery Zones

For safety reasons, planting is restricted in the “recovery zone” along a road. A recovery zone is the area adjacent to the roadway that allows avoidance and recovery maneuvers for vehicles. Determine if any area in your beautification site is a part of a recovery zone and plan accordingly. Barriers such as curbing and guiderails preclude recovery zones.

Clear Zones

For safety reasons, avoid planting in the “clear zone” along a road. A clear zone is the area adjacent to the roadway that allows avoidance and recovery maneuvers for vehicles. The clear zone area can vary from 10’ to 30’ and it is determined by the traffic volume, the design speed and embankment slope.

The PennDOT District Traffic Section or their designee will provide the general approximation of the recovery zone for the beautification site. The sponsor group will need to determine if any area of their intended beautification site is part of the recovery zone and plan accordingly.

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE PLANTING (cont.)

Traffic Conditions

Determine the speed limits of the roads around the site and observe the amount of traffic at different times of day.

Clear Sight Lines

Drivers must be able to see oncoming or crossing traffic in certain situations. Planting within these lines of sight is restricted to those species that do not grow higher than three (3) feet tall. Find out if clear sight lines affect your site by contacting your PennDOT District Roadside Specialist.

Pull Off Areas

To maintain the beautification site, access to the area is needed. Choosing a site with an area to pull off and park is highly recommended.

Beautification Designs

Planting Patterns

There are two main looks for garden layouts - naturalistic and geometric/symmetrical. Naturalistic gardens typically have curved line plant placement with various spacing and odd numbered groupings. Plant groupings also may have multi-level heights and staggered placement in the garden layout. Geometric/symmetrical gardens have a more formal appearance.

Plant Choices

Evaluations and considerations of the ground, plant treatment, traffic and your group are several determining factors in choosing the right plants for your garden. Check out [Publication 461](#) for a list of plants and their descriptions after you have evaluated all the factors.

WHAT IT TAKES

Maintenance Requirements

A crucial part of beautifying Pennsylvania is to ensure that each site, once beautified, is maintained for years to come. Maintaining a beautification site requires the sponsor group to make a long-term commitment to perform regular annual maintenance by signing a Roadside Beautification Maintenance Contract. A beautification site includes the entire location -- the bedding plot(s) as well as the grassy area that surrounds the actual plot(s).

The Maintenance Contract is signed by an authorized signatory for the sponsor group and authorized PennDOT representatives. Attached to the contract is a Safety Addendum that each participating member of the sponsor group is required to sign before participating in maintenance efforts. In addition, all participating members must view an interactive CD entitled *Beautify PA Safely* and read the related safety information. Entering into this contract permits the sponsor group to contribute toward Pennsylvania's beautification efforts.

Before a sponsor group commits to maintaining the beautification site for a minimum of three years, consider the availability of the group members in meeting the annual maintenance requirements. **Typically, a site will need on average 8-13 maintenance visits annually.** Types of maintenance activities to be performed are listed below, but not limited to:

- Mowing 5-8 times annually
- Weeding as needed
- Fertilizing 2 times annually
- Watering as needed
- Removing Litter as needed
- Pruning 2 times annually
- Replanting as needed
- Mulching as needed

WHAT IT TAKES (cont.)

The following pictures are examples of beautification sites to be considered when determining the group's availability to commit to the maintenance requirements for sites ranging from a small project to a larger project.



Small Scope:

Approximate Square Footage -
9,048 square feet

Minimum Maintenance
Requirements for a Small
Scope:

- 8-13 times annually;
- 2-5 people for approximately
- 2-4 hours each visit



Medium Scope:

Approximate Square Footage -
28,000 square feet

Minimum Maintenance
Requirements for a
Medium Scope:

- 8-13 times annually;
- 3-6 people for approximately
- 3-6 hours each visit



Large Scope:

Approximate Square Footage -
49,750 square feet

Minimum Maintenance
Requirements for a
Large Scope:

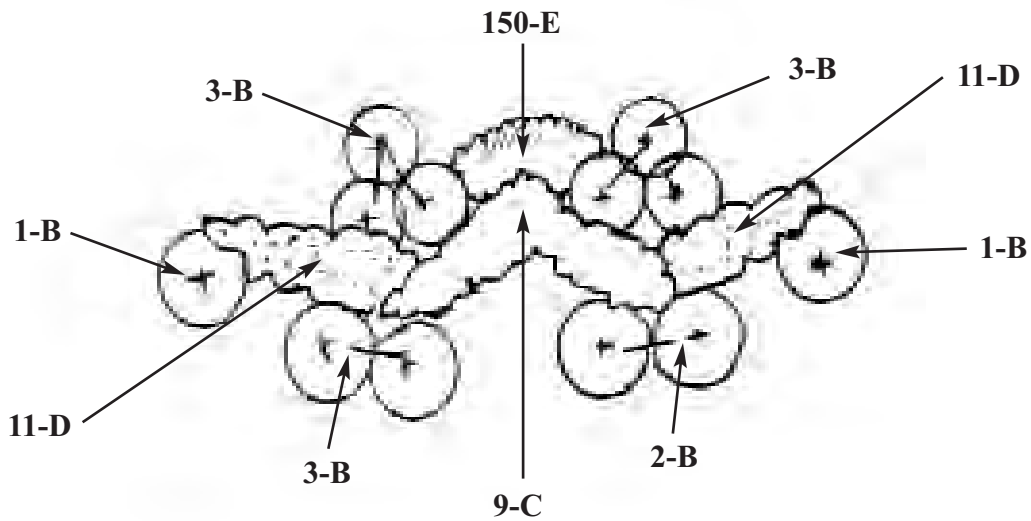
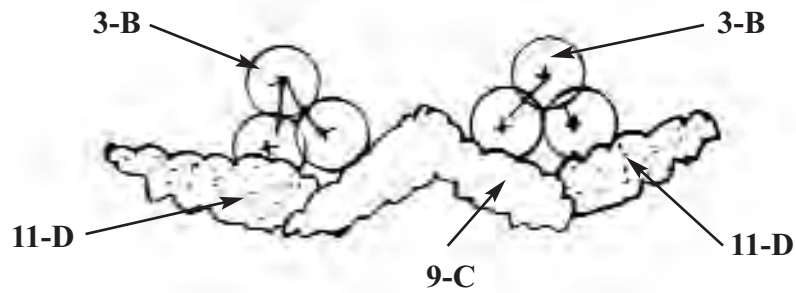
- 8-13 times annually;
- 5-8 people for approximately
- 3-6 hours each visit

PRELIMINARY DESIGN EXAMPLES

After the Design/Build Contractor designs the beautification site, the BSG will receive a Preliminary Design. These sketches are examples of how a Preliminary Design may look.

Planting Legend

- A Medium Trees 25 to 60 feet
- B Small Trees 15 to 25 feet
- C Large Shrubs 6-15 feet
- D Small shrubs 3 to 6 feet
- E Perennials 6 to 30 inches
- F Ground Cover, vines . . . Less than 1 foot



POTENTIAL RESOURCES

Federal

- PennDOT Transportation Enhancements and Hometown Streets
<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/pennDOT/bureaus/cpdm/prod/saferoute.nsf>

State

- Growing Greener
<http://www.growinggreener2.com/>

Value-added Grants

- Urban & Community Forestry Council
<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/pucfc/grants.html>

Private Sector

- Foundations
<http://fdncenter.org/learn>

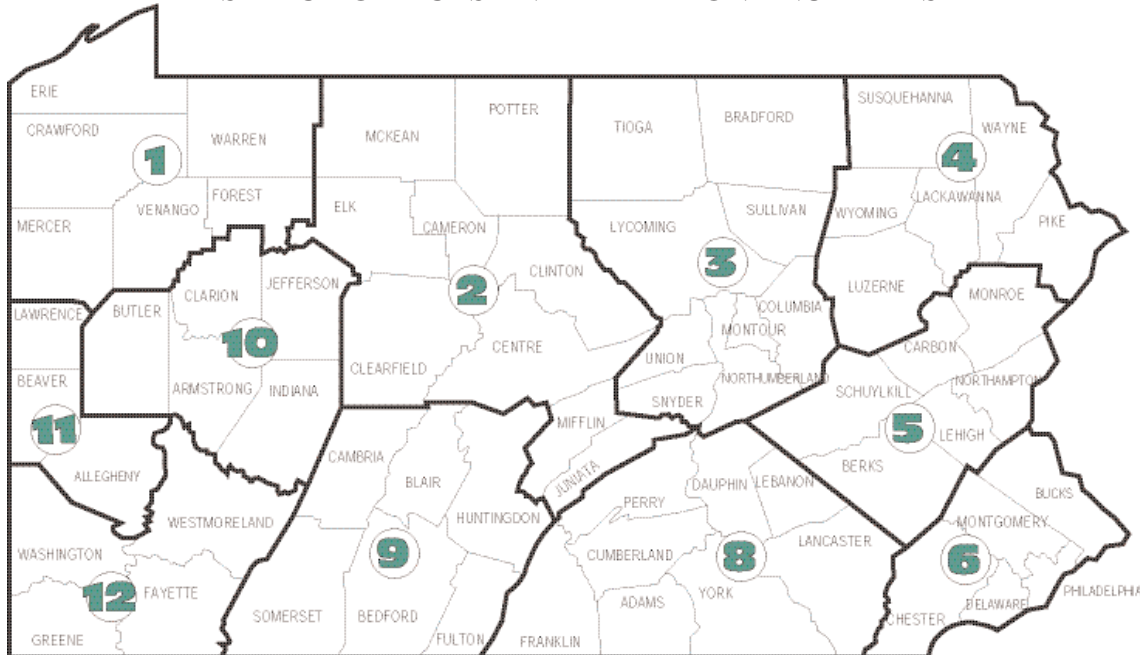
Disclaimer: The information on this page is for informational purposes only. *Information is provided "as is" without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied that funding is or will be available.* This information could include technical inaccuracies or errors of omission. Changes may be periodically made to the information herein.

ROADSIDE BEAUTIFICATION CHECKLIST

- Select a beautification site within the road and/or highway R/W.
When selecting a site to beautify, the following must be considered:
 - Safety considerations for installation and maintenance
 - Area available for beautification site
 - Visibility to motoring public
 - Long-term sponsorship to maintain site
 - Funding requirements
- Complete a Roadside Beautification Application
 - Include location and approximate dimension of site
 - Include a list of preferred plants
- Submit Roadside Beautification Application to the PennDOT District Roadside Specialist for review and approval
- Complete a Roadside Beautification Maintenance Contract and Safety Addendum
 - Include the names of the group members that will be responsible for maintaining the site
- Beautification Sponsor Group volunteers must review the *Beautify PA Safely* compact disc

PENNDOT ENGINEERING DISTRICT MAP

DISTRICT OFFICES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS



Engineering District 1
 255 Elm Street
 Oil City, PA 16301
 (814) 678-7085

Engineering District 5
 1002 Hamilton Boulevard
 Allentown, PA 18101
 (610) 871-4100

Engineering District 10
 2550 Oakland Avenue
 Indiana, PA 15701
 (724) 357-2800

Engineering District 2
 1924-30 Daisy Street
 Clearfield, PA 16830
 (814) 765-0400

Engineering District 6
 7000 Geerdes Boulevard
 King of Prussia, PA 19406-1525
 (610) 205-6700

Engineering District 11
 45 Thoms Run Road
 Bridgeville, PA 15017
 (412) 429-5000

Engineering District 3
 715 Jordan Avenue
 Montoursville, PA 17743
 (570) 368-8686

Engineering District 8
 2140 Herr Street
 Harrisburg, PA 17013-1699
 (717) 787-6653

Engineering District 12
 825 N. Gallatin Ave, Ext.
 Uniontown, PA 15401-2105
 (724) 439-7315

Engineering District 4
 55 Keystone Industrial Park
 Dunmore, PA 18512
 (570) 963-4061

Engineering District 9
 1620 North Juniata Street
 Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
 (814) 696-7250



Roadside Beautification Application

Detach, Complete, and Forward Application To District Roadside Specialist

GROUP NAME		FEDERAL ID NUMBER	
ADDRESS #1		CITY	
ADDRESS #2		ZIP CODE	
CONTACT NAME		CONTACT TITLE	
CONTACT PHONE #		CONTACT EMAIL	
COUNTY	TWP OR BOROUGH	STATE ROUTE	
PAST PROJECTS <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	ORIGINAL APPLICATION <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	SIGN REQUESTED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	REVISED APPLICATION <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Description of Work

Location of Work

Note* PLEASE attach a separate sketch or photo (If Available) to help describe your planting proposal

Planting Area Please check one area	<input type="checkbox"/> Along the Side of Highway	<input type="checkbox"/> In an Infield or Traffic Island within an Intersection
	<input type="checkbox"/> In the Middle of Highway	<input type="checkbox"/> Along the side of a Street in Urban Area

Planting Category - See Booklet Small Medium Large

Please check one and the Roadside Specialist will review your plan

_____ Applicant Signature _____ Date

PHONE NUMBERS FOR PennDOT ENGINEERING DISTRICT OFFICES

District 1: (814) 678-7085	District 4: (570) 963-4061	District 8: (717) 787-6653	District 11: (412) 429-5000
District 2: (814) 765-0400	District 5: (610) 871-4100	District 9: (814) 696-7250	District 12: (724) 439-7315
District 3: (570) 368-8686	District 6: (610) 205-6700	District 10: (724) 357-2800	

PennDOT USE ONLY

RPMC #

tear here

Effective Date: _____
(DEPARTMENT will insert)

RPMC#: _____

ROADSIDE PLANTING MAINTENANCE CONTRACT AND SAFETY ADDENDUM

FOR
BEAUTIFICATION SPONSOR GROUPS

INTRODUCTION:

In order to beautify our state highway right-of-ways, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) has established a pilot beautification initiative known as the Pilot Roadside Beautification Project. Volunteer groups, hereafter referred to as Beautification Sponsor Groups (BSGs) are essential to the success of this Project because garden sites cannot be planted unless a BSG is willing to maintain a site on an ongoing basis.

Maintaining a garden site is a rewarding experience. At the same time, maintaining a garden site means a BSG is making a serious, long-term commitment to work hard along a state highway right-of-way which is hazardous in nature.

The following contains a Maintenance Contract to be signed by an authorized signatory for the BSG and authorized PennDOT representatives. Attached is a Safety Addendum that each participating member of the BSG is required to sign before participating in maintenance efforts. In addition, all participating members must attend a safety training session and agree to read the related safety information.

MAINTENANCE CONTRACT:

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, hereafter referred to as PennDOT and the Beautification Sponsor Group _____ hereafter referred to as the BSG, recognize the need to beautify Pennsylvania's highway right-of-ways. Entering into this Contract permits the BSG to contribute toward Pennsylvania's beautification efforts as part of the Pilot Roadside Beautification Project. A crucial part of beautifying Pennsylvania is to ensure that each site, once beautified, is maintained for years to come.

By signing below, the BSG agrees to implement the following Maintenance Contract Terms:

- 1) Accept the responsibility for maintaining the site location indicated at this highway _____ for a required three-year period. The BSG will assume responsibility for maintaining this site location upon the cessation of the contractor's one-year period of establishment. The three-year performance period will begin one day after the cessation date of the period of establishment. The BSG will be notified when the period of establishment begins and the date they are to take over maintaining the site location.

- 2) The maintenance contract may be extended in two-year increments if agreed upon in writing by both parties.
- 3) Agree that no member or other person shall participate in the maintenance of these sites unless and until such person, or person's guardian, has signed the Safety Addendum.
- 4) In the event the BSG must abandon the maintenance of the site prior to the expiration of the Maintenance Contract, it must provide 30 days written notice to the District Roadside Specialist identified as the contact person below.
- 5) In the event the BSG wishes to assign this contract to another BSG, it must obtain the prior written approval of PennDOT.
- 6) In the event the BSG wishes to obtain sub-sponsors to assist them with their obligations, it must obtain the prior written approval of PennDOT. The BSG will continue to have full primary responsibility for all obligations under this agreement.
- 7) Agrees to submit updated Safety Addendums when any new person/member wishes to participate with those new persons' signatures and agreements thereto.
- 8) Agrees to release and hold harmless the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Transportation, from any liability associated with the risks involved with participating in the Pilot Roadside Beautification Project.
- 9) Agrees to participate and require its participating members to attend safety training offered by PennDOT or its representative.
- 10) The following designated contract provisions are hereby incorporated by reference as if physically attached to this Contract:
 - Contractor Integrity Provisions dated December 20, 1991.
 - Provisions Concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act dated January 16, 2001.

PennDOT will provide the BSG the following:

- 1) Access to written materials on landscaping and planning at <http://www.dot.state.pa.us> under Forms and Publications.
- 2) Access to a design/build contractor, if needed, who will train a BSG on how to maintain a beautification site.
- 3) Safety vests, gloves, traffic control signs, and trash bags.
- 4) Access to the Agility Center, Bureau of Maintenance Operations (BOMO), and District Roadside Specialists to answer questions.
- 5) A safety training session and/or safety education materials.
- 6) If in the sole judgment of PennDOT it is found that the BSG is not meeting the terms and conditions of this Contract, the Contract may be terminated.
- 7) PennDOT reserves the right to modify or cancel the Pilot Roadside Beautification Project at any time as a result of convenience or lack of funding.

In witness whereof, the parties have executed this Maintenance Contract.

Name of BSG
(Please Print)

BSG Contact Person, Title

Federal ID Number

Contact Person's Signature, Title and Date

PennDOT District Executive or Designee
(Please Print)

Signature and Title

Date

By _____
Chief Counsel Date

Funds Commitment Doc. No. _____

Certified Funds Available _____

Under SAP No. _____

SAP Cost Center _____

By _____
Deputy General Counsel Date

GL. Account _____

Amount _____

By _____
For Comptroller Date

By _____
Deputy Attorney General Date

Effective Date: _____
(DEPARTMENT will insert)

RPMC#: _____

SAFETY ADDENDUM

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation hereafter referred to as PennDOT and the Beautification Sponsor Group named _____ have entered into the attached contract, hereafter referred to as the BSG Contract. Both parties recognize the need to beautify Pennsylvania's highway right-of-ways. Entering into this Contract permits the group to contribute toward the effort to beautify Pennsylvania as part of the Pilot Roadside Beautification Project. A crucial part of beautifying Pennsylvania is to ensure the health and safety of each participating BSG member participating in the Program.

By signing below, each participating BSG member acknowledges the hazardous nature of the work and agrees to the following terms and conditions:

- 1) Participating members of the BSG agree to abide by all laws and regulations relating to safety and such terms and conditions as may be required by PennDOT for such special conditions on a particular highway right-of-way.
- 2) No one under the age of 8 will be allowed to participate.
- 3) All 8 to 17-year-old participating BSG members must be supervised by adults 18 years of age or older in the ratio of two adults per eight participants between the ages of 8 and 17. In no event will there be less than two adults supervising any group with participants between the ages of 8 and 17.
- 4) No person under the age of 16 will be permitted to work on any highway which is part of the interstate system.
- 5) A signature is required from a Parent or Guardian if the member is under the age of 18.
- 6) Members shall not stop or park vehicles on the roadway. Vehicles must be parked well clear of roadways. Members shall not park vehicles on curves or other areas with obstructed views. Members shall make efforts to minimize the number of vehicles parked beside the roadway.
- 7) Individuals must wear department-supplied and approved safety vests while working on the highway right-of-way.
- 8) Unused materials and supplies furnished by the Department or the Department's representative shall (1) be returned to the Department within two work days following a maintenance activity or, (2) permission will be obtained from the District Roadside Specialist to retain the materials for the duration of the Contract period.

