



# Beautification and Public Art Committee

Monday, April 21, 2025  
4:30 PM  
Elk River City Hall

## Special Meeting Agenda

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1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. CONSIDER AGENDA
3. CONSIDER MINUTES
  - 3.1 02-18-2025 BPA Minutes
4. GENERAL BUSINESS

Items in which the information is presented by city staff or consultants, then deliberation and action occur. General Business items are not opportunities to receive or provide public input. However, the presiding officer may, at its sole discretion, solicit public feedback.

  - 4.1 Garden Gem Awards Discussion
  - 4.2 Public Art Discussion
  - 4.3 Beautification Award Update
  - 4.4 General Updates
5. ADJOURNMENT



**Meeting of the Beautification and Public  
Art Committee  
Held at the Elk River City Hall  
Tuesday, February 18, 2025**

Members Present: Committee Member Deb Hjermsstad, Committee Member Ryan Hardin,  
Committee Member Nic Hahn, Councilmember Cory Grupa

Members Absent: Committee Member Melissa McAlpine, Councilmember J. Brian Calva

Staff Present: Economic Development Specialist Josh Mollan

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the meeting was called to order at 3:37 p.m. by Josh.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

The committee went around the table and introduced themselves.

Josh shared background on the committee and what the past vision has been.

3. CONSIDER AGENDA

**Moved by Ryan and seconded by Nic to approve the agenda. Motion carried 4-0.**

4. CONSIDER MINUTES

4.1 January 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes

**Moved by Ryan and seconded by Nic to approve the January 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes.  
Motion carried 4-0.**

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

5.1 2025 Committee Activities

Potential Public Art Grant

Josh shared a draft public art grant guideline document for committee review.

Ryan suggested clearing up the language in the grant amount section. He also suggested looking into adjusting the language to allow individual artists as recipients of the grant. Additionally, he wanted further consideration for who owns the art specifically if the piece was completed on public property.

Josh shared that staff discussed and thought a quarterly or similar cadence would be beneficial to create a merit-based approach rather than first-come-first-served. Additionally, he shared that there should be extra consideration for language revolving projects that are primarily religious in nature.

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Ryan also suggested making a consideration for language that covers possible indecency.

#### Potential Landscape Award

Josh shared details from the Brooklyn Park Summer Blossom Awards Program.

The committee was favorable in moving forward with a similar program for the City of Elk River.

Deb shared that the Sherburne County Master Gardeners may be open to assisting in some fashion. She will talk with her board and report back.

Cory shared positive remarks, noting community participation and engagement.

Josh advised that he will write up an Elk River specific guideline document to review in March.

Deb suggested that if we were to go live with a program like this, it should be announced by April to give enough time for landscapers to prep.

Ryan asked if the commercial side of this award would overlap with the existing Beautification Award.

Josh advised that he will consider this as he drafts the guidelines. Additionally, he suggested the committee brainstorm some potential name ideas for the program.

#### 5.2 Beautification Award Policy Review

Josh shared the redlined Beautification Award policy noting the most significant change being the removal of verbiage around interior improvements. He stated that while interior projects are still beneficial for the community, the exterior improvements make the largest visual impact to Elk River residents and visitors and greatly improve the beautification of the area.

**Moved by Nic and seconded by Deb to approve the suggested revisions to the Beautification Award policy. Motion carried 4-0.**

#### 5.3 General Updates

Josh shared that staff wanted to shoot a marketing video for the Beautification Award and asked the committee if they were okay if Jake, Senior Multimedia Specialist, shot b-roll at next month's meeting.

The committee was okay with Jake coming by next month.

Nic asked for a status update on finding local guidance on public art programming.

Josh shared that he connected with Rum River Art Center and is awaiting a response. Additionally, he met with the Elk River Library Director, Marot Barry, noting various locations in the library that would be suitable for public art.

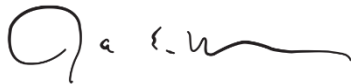
Nic advised that her friend and colleague shared that after an organization receives a grant, there is a good chance of receiving future grants if the vision is to build upon past pieces/programs.

Deb shared that the last three times she has been to FT Center, there has been a table in front of the newly installed public art piece.

Josh said he will inquire further with FT Center staff.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Josh adjourned the meeting at 4:24 p.m.



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Josh Mollan, Recording Secretary



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Tina Allard, City Clerk

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## Elk River Garden Gem Awards Program Guidelines

### Program Overview

Established in 2025, the Elk River Garden Gem Awards highlights exceptional gardens and landscaping in Elk River. Each year the Elk River Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), with recommendations from the Beautification and Public Art Committee, recognizes residents, neighborhoods, and businesses who have maintained beautiful gardens or landscapes, therefore adding to the overall beauty and attractiveness of the city.

Nominations may be submitted by anyone including neighbors, contractors, friends, or the gardeners themselves.

### Eligible Categories

- Single Family built before 2000
- Single Family built in 2000 or later
- Townhome
- Neighborhood – Resident/volunteer managed monument sign landscape, cul-de-sac landscape, or community garden
- Commercial – Professionally managed business, or retail/business park monument sign landscape

### Requirements

- Garden/landscape must be located in Elk River
- Garden/landscape must primarily feature flowering plants, trees, shrubs, ground cover, perennials, retaining walls, arbors, or water features to create a visually significant summer long display
- Garden/landscape must be well maintained through the growing season
- Garden/landscape must have a positive visual impact on the neighborhood by being substantially visible from the right-of-way
- Previous winners are ineligible to win in the subsequent two years

### Program Timeline

- Nomination period: May 1 to July 31
- Judges tour and evaluate gardens: August
- EDA and HRA formally recognizes winning gardens: September

### Judging Criteria

Each garden/landscape nominated is visited and judged based on the following criteria:

- Overall attractiveness
- Design
- Plant variety
- Environmental impact
- Creativity
- Appropriate maintenance

## **Awards**

Winners in each category receive:

- A personalized garden keepsake
- An additional award as determined by the EDA and HRA
- Formal recognition at an Authority meeting
- Award yard sign in garden/property for six weeks

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# Elk River Garden Gem Awards

## Judging Rubric

Criteria										Score	
<b>Overall Attractiveness</b>											
There is curb appeal with color, contour, and texture. The landscape/garden is pleasing and inviting that enhances the neighborhood's beauty.											
<b>Design</b>											
The garden/landscape has a thoughtful arrangement of plants and features within the landscape. The design complements the property and surrounding environment.											
<b>Plant Variety</b>											
There is a diversity of plants used in the garden/landscape.											
<b>Environmental Impact</b>											
The garden/landscape features sustainable elements such as water conservation, native plants, pollinator support, composting, and solar lights.											
<b>Creativity</b>											
There is a variety of plant materials and/or ornamental elements such as a water feature, trellis, bird house, bird bath, arbor, or statue.											
<b>Appropriate Maintenance</b>											
The garden/landscape is well-cared and watered. Weeds are kept to a minimum.											
Poor			Fair			Good			Excellent		<b>Total</b>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		



## Elk River Economic Development Authority Public Art Grant Guidelines

### Program Overview

The Elk River Economic Development Authority (EDA) is committed to enhancing the vibrancy and cultural landscape of Elk River through public art. This grant program supports local organizations in creating, purchasing, or maintaining public art installations within the City of Elk River. We believe that public art enriches our community, fosters creativity, and enhances the quality of life for residents and visitors.

### Program Outcomes

1. Enhance community engagement through public art
2. Improve preservation of existing public art
3. Stimulate Elk River's creative economy
4. Support Elk River's charming identity attracting residents and visitors

### Grant Amount and Disbursement

The EDA will award individual grants of up to \$2,000. Each award period will have a maximum disbursement of \$2,000 which may be split among multiple grants. Grantees must provide a matching contribution of at least 50% of the grant amount. Grant funds will be disbursed upon execution of a grant agreement between the EDA and the grantee. Payment may be made in installments, as determined by the EDA.

### Eligible Applicants

- Applicants must be individuals, businesses, or non-profit organizations located in the City of Elk River.
- Projects must be located within the City of Elk River.
- Proposed art must be openly accessible without security or cost restrictions.
- Projects must be completed within one year of grant award.

### Eligible Projects

The following types of projects are eligible for funding:

- **Creation of new public art:** This includes, but is not limited to, murals, sculptures, installations, and other forms of visual art.
- **Purchasing and installation of public art:** This includes completed art ready for installation.
- **Maintenance of existing public art:** This includes cleaning, repairing, and restoring existing public art installations.

The following types of projects are *not* eligible for funding:

- Projects that primarily serve a commercial purpose (e.g., signage).
- Projects that are primarily religious or political in nature.
- Projects located on property not readily accessible to the public.
- Projects that pose a safety hazard.
- Projects that do not comply with local ordinances and regulations.

## Timeline

There are two award periods annually. Applications can be submitted year-round. Applications will be reviewed in the earliest available review period.

- First award period
  - Application deadline: January 7
  - Committee review: January
  - EDA consideration: February
  - Award notification: March
- Second award period
  - Application deadline: July 7
  - Committee review: July
  - EDA consideration: August
  - Award notification: September

## Application Process

Applicants must submit a complete application package, which includes the following:

1. **Application Form**
2. **Project Proposal:** A detailed description of the proposed project, including:
  - Type of art
  - Location of the art
  - Artist information (if applicable)
  - Timeline for completion
  - Maintenance plan
  - Community engagement plan (if applicable)
3. **Budget:** A detailed budget outlining all project expenses and the source of matching funds.
4. **Supporting Materials:** This may include sketches, renderings, photographs, or other visual representations of the proposed art. Letters of support from community partners are also encouraged. This also includes appropriate approval from property owner, if different than applicant.

## Review and Selection Process

Applications are reviewed by the EDA Beautification and Public Art Committee which is comprised of EDA members and community representatives. Projects are evaluated based on the following set of criteria:

- **Community Impact (25 %):** The project has potential to enhance the community and engage residents and visitors.
- **Demonstrated Need (20%):** Community support has been demonstrated toward the project.
- **Artistic Merit (15%):** The artwork is high-quality, original, and creative.
- **Feasibility (15%):** The project likelihood of project completion within the proposed timeline and budget.
- **Accessibility (10%):** The artwork is free and accessible to a diverse audience.
- **Maintenance Plan (10%):** The adequacy of the plan for long-term maintenance of the art.
- **Existing Piece (5%):** The artwork an existing piece in need of maintenance or repair.

## Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit a final report upon completion of the project, including documentation of expenses and photographs of the completed artwork.

**Contact Information**

For questions regarding this grant program, please contact the Elk River EDA staff at 763-635-1000. Application forms and further information can be found on the EDA website at [EconDev.ElkRiverMN.gov](http://EconDev.ElkRiverMN.gov).

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## Elk River EDA Public Art Grant Judging Rubric

Criteria	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Score	Weight	Weighted Score
	1	2	3	4	5			
<b>Community Impact</b>							25%	
The project has potential to enhance the community and engage residents and visitors.								
<b>Demonstrated Need</b>							20%	
Community support has been demonstrated toward the project.								
<b>Artistic Merit</b>							15%	
The artwork is high-quality, original, and creative.								
<b>Feasibility</b>							15%	
The project is likely to be completed within the proposed timeline and budget.								
<b>Accessibility</b>							10%	
The artwork is free and accessible to a diverse audience.								
<b>Maintenance Plan</b>							10%	
The artwork has an adequate long-term maintenance plan.								
<b>Existing Piece</b>							5%	
The artwork is an existing piece in need of maintenance or repair. (0 or 5)								
								<b>Total</b>



BEAUTIFICATION  
AWARD

# ENTER TO WIN THE 2025 BEAUTIFICATION



FOR THE CITY OF ELK RIVER

• **Apply by: SEPT 30<sup>th</sup>**



## WHAT IS THE BEAUTIFICATION AWARD?

Established in 2017, the Beautification Award aims to recognize businesses who have made improvements to their property that enhance the image and economic vitality of the City of Elk River.

## WHO QUALIFIES FOR THE AWARD?

- Businesses in the City of Elk River
- Exterior improvements
- Once occupied, new construction projects are considered

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Grand prize for award winner
- Public recognition at a city meeting
- FREE promotion for the business
- Bragging rights

## HOW DOES A BUSINESS GET NOMINATED?

- Nominate your favorite qualifying business
- Nominate yourself

## WHERE DO YOU APPLY?

[tinyurl.com/beautificationawardapplication](https://tinyurl.com/beautificationawardapplication)

2024 AWARD WINNER  
WAYNE SWART · STATE FARM



Former EDA President Dan Tveite presented the Beautification Award to State Farm owner Wayne Swart who was joined by his family and staff members.





# DOWNTOWN CLEAN UP

Join us for a downtown cleanup event and make a difference in our community! DERBA is partnering with the City of Elk River Beautification and Public Art Committee to improve our shared spaces. Volunteer if able to help keep our city clean, vibrant, and beautiful! Your participation matters!

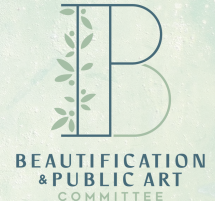
**PROTECT THE EARTH. PRESERVE OUR FUTURE.**

# EARTH DAY

APRIL 22

9:00 - 11:00 AM

RIVERS EDGE COMMONS  
DOWNTOWN ELK RIVER



Supplies and water will be provided.



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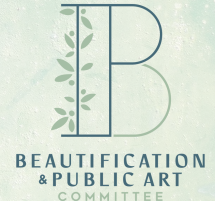
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