

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
RAPID CITY BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE**

To: The Honorable Jerry Munson, Mayor and Members of City Council

Pursuant to Section 10 of the Bylaws of the Beautification Committee, approved by the City Council this past fall, the Beautification Committee is required to prepare and present an annual report updating City Council on the current status, accomplishments and future direction of the Committee. Therefore, please accept this annual report for the purposes intended. Should you have any questions or should you desire to have the Chairman of the Committee address the City Council in person to discuss this report, please advise.

Attached you will find a copy of the Committee's prioritized project list and a copy of issues identified by the Beautification Committee. These two documents set forth what the Committee would like to accomplish in future years. These two documents have been approved by a majority vote of the Committee.

The Committee notes that it has achieved some recent but limited success on at least one project.¹ That is, the landscaping of the reconstructed I-190 and the reconstructed intersection of I-90 and Haines Avenue. Our Committee met with the South Dakota DOT and was helpful, if not instrumental, in urging landscaping for these areas. We selected the colored concrete under the bridges on I-90 and we selected the landscaping which will be installed this next spring. The landscaping at the intersection of I-90 and Haines Avenue will be irrigated, thus ensuring its survivability. The landscaping on the reconstructed I-190 was selected with the understanding that irrigation would not be possible or practical. We are hopeful that the landscaping will achieve survivability. Obviously, we could not have achieved any success on this project without the cooperation of the DOT.

Recently, we have requested the DOT to consider similar improvements at the bridge scheduled for construction over Highway 44 East. The bridge will cross 44 and be part of the Southeast Connector. Your support for similar improvements would be greatly appreciated.

Our Committee has also been involved in the Omaha Street reconstruction project scheduled for 2003. We have met with the DOT on a number of occasions. The purpose of our involvement is to encourage the placement of landscape media within the islands planned on Omaha Street. We are also concerned regarding existing landscaping in Memorial Park.

You are fully aware of our efforts in past years regarding that part of Memorial Park at the intersection of West Boulevard and Omaha. We have proposed landscape improvements to the northeast corner of that intersection. Our efforts have been unsuccessful whenever we requested approval from the City Council. Currently, we are awaiting an application for a grant by the Planning Department. If successful, we are

¹ We assume the City Council is aware of previous Beautification Committee projects such as the northwest corner of Omaha and West Boulevard and the northeast corner of Omaha and East Boulevard, just to name two.

wiling to use \$66,907.12 which represents most of our remaining funds as a part of a project at that intersection. Subsequent to the use of these funds, our Committee will have a balance of \$4,666.06. For those of you who are not familiar with our funding source, we would advise that our funds are donated funds and are not funds received from the City.

This raises a perpetual question which our Committee faces. That is, the need to raise additional funds to support Beautification Committee projects. We are caught in a dilemma of having great difficulty getting our projects approved by the City Council. For example, the West Memorial Park Project referred to above. This lack of success does not help us obtain donated funds. A permanent funding mechanism could greatly assist our Committee as well as be a catalyst for the generation of donated funds.

Finally, and in conclusion, we would urge the City Council to take a more active role in city-wide beautification efforts. We would urge the City Council to enact more stringent billboard regulations and controls. We would urge the City Council to adopt more comprehensive landscaping requirements for commercial and industrial properties which will be brought to the City Council early in 2002. This is a project currently underway by a subcommittee established by the Rapid City Planning Commission.

We look forward to answering any questions you might have and we offer our help and assistance on beautification issues in Rapid City.

Approved by the Rapid City Beautification Committee Wednesday December 19, 2001.

Craig D. Grotenhouse, Chairman

**RAPID CITY BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE
PRIORITIZED PROJECT LIST - December 2001**

- 1 Omaha Street widening/landscaping project (12th Street to East Boulevard)
- 2 West Memorial Park Master Plan / Landscape Design
- 3 St Joseph Street Street Trees (6th Street to East Boulevard)
- 4 Mt Rushmore Road Street Trees (Omaha Street to Kansas City Street)
- 5 St Joseph Street Street Trees (West Boulevard to 7th Street)
- 6 Main Street Street Trees (7th Street to West Boulevard)
- 7 I-90 East Welcome Sign
- 8 Omaha Street Landscaping (north side of Omaha Street from East Boulevard to Omaha Street bridge)
- 9 East Boulevard Corridor Master Plan (developed and approved) – Section II (Philadelphia Street south to St. Joseph Street)
- 10 East Boulevard Corridor Master Plan (developed and approved) – Section III (St. Joseph Street south to top of Signal Hill Drive)
- 11 East Boulevard Corridor Master Plan (developed and approved) – Section I (Madison Street south to Philadelphia Street)
- 12 West Boulevard Landscape (proposed) Master Plan (Omaha Street south to St. Joseph Street)
- 13 Omaha Street Landscape (proposed) Master Plan (West Boulevard to Mt View)
- 14 Mt Rushmore Road Landscape (proposed) Master Plan (Kansas City to Cathedral)
- 15 East North Street Landscape (proposed) Master Plan
- 16 West Chicago Landscape (proposed) Master Plan (Mt View to South Canyon Road [city limits])
- 17 East Main Street Landscape (proposed) Master Plan (Steele Street to Minnesota Avenue)

Projects in Process

- 1 Downtown Node Improvement Project
- 2 Canyon Lake Chimney Shelter and Bank Stabilization
- 3 Haines/I-190 Interstate Landscaping

**RAPID CITY BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE
BEAUTIFICATION ISSUES LIST - December 2001**

High Priority Issues:

- Convince the City to dedicate adequate resources to maintain the public areas (parks, parkways, floodway tracts, traffic islands/medians) to an aesthetically pleasing level commensurate with the City's desire for Rapid City to become a successful tourist and convention destination city. Additionally, convince the City to dedicate adequate resources for the Code Enforcement Division to cause private property, including railroad right-of-way, to be maintained to aesthetically pleasing levels in line with present and future ordinances.
- Pursue elimination of off-premise billboards inside the City limits of Rapid City.
- Get the existing Landscape Ordinance for Commercial property updated (including street tree and irrigation requirements).
- Convince the Council to provide funding to the Beautification Committee as a yearly budget item.

Other Issues:

- Have the City hire a landscape architect on staff to assist the Beautification Committee and Parks Department and to coordinate all activities relating to the visual aesthetic issues relating to City business.
- Update outdated streetlight and traffic signals systems along major streets with modern equipment and underground electrical systems.
- Work toward the removal, relocation, or burial of overhead power lines along the major streets to enhance the appearance of these streetscapes.
- Cause the City Council to address the "grandfather clause" issue as it relates to unpaved parking lots inside the City limits. Possibly develop an "out of the dust" program for these lots where the City will pay a portion to get these lots paved and landscaped. In conjunction with this program, a master list of private properties in need of parking lot and landscaping improvement should be established.
- Continue an aggressive "out of the dust" program for streets and alleys.
- Convince the City Council to recreate the position of Volunteer Coordinator.
- Establish a Beautification Committee public relations/education program (encompassing things such as a column in Rapid City Journal, letters to the editor, etc.)
- Develop and adopt an Appearance Code/Architectural Standards for buildings.