

America in Bloom 2012 EVALUATION FORM



Municipality: Racine, Wisconsin

Population Category: 50,001 – 100,000

Visiting Dates: 7/19/12 – 7/20/12

Judges Names: Lead Judge, Bruce K. Riggs, Judge, Marlborough Packard

America in Bloom promotes nationwide beautification through education and community involvement by encouraging the use of flowers, plants, trees and other environment and lifestyle enhancements.

All judging criteria will be adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the municipality.

The judges' report is based on efforts in management, planning, maintenance, improvement, and innovation of each of the following criteria:

Criteria	Actual Points	Possible Points
1. Floral Displays	146.50	175.00
2. Landscaped Areas	141.50	175.00
3. Urban Forestry	141.25	175.00
4. Environmental Efforts	141.50	175.00
5. Heritage Preservation	149.50	175.00
6. Overall Impression	106.50	125.00
Total	826.75	1000
%	82.67%	
Bloom Rating	4	

Five blooms = 85% Four blooms = 72.50–84.95% Three blooms = 60.00–72.45% Two blooms = 45.00–59.95% One bloom = <45.00%

The new evaluation form should not be compared directly with past or future years. Each year new judges see your community in a different way.

Community representatives met: (including email)

Name: Melissa Kaprelian-Baker Title: co-chair, Alderman, Email: Melissa.Kaprelian-Baker@cityofracine.org,

Name: Thomas Friedel Title: City Administrator Thomas.Friedel@cityofracine.org

Name: Robert Mozol Title: Retired City Employee, Alderman, Robert.Mozol@cityofracine.org

Name: Chris Flynn, co-chair, Environmental

Name: Deborah L. Embry, Title: Grants Facilitator, Office of the Mayor, Debbi.Embry@cityofracine.org (by phone and email)

General Comments and Suggestions:

Suggestions are indicated in italics.

Congratulations on your first year of participating in the America in Bloom national awards program. Welcome to the America in Bloom family of towns and cities that are working hard to improve quality of life for their residents.

The City of Racine, Wisconsin in the past decade has transformed a declining downtown into a vibrant economic and social node. The harbor has morphed from a commercial center into regional recreational hub. Many new businesses have located downtown and the marina is a focal point for many Lake Michigan recreational events. The lake edge trail serves cyclists, pedestrians and boaters. Just off the shoreline the city offers a diversity of food and other commercial offerings. In addition to the commercial offerings the city center offers multiple cultural and heritage based amenities, 82 parks, and multipurpose natural areas. Indeed, Racine is a must go to destination.

Racine is much more than a well-planned and redeveloped city center, the residential areas are well maintained, tastefully landscaped and offers welcoming neighborhoods that span the past century. Affluent communities and humble enclaves seamlessly blend and affirm that this is a real place, this is Racine.

Many redevelopment experts debate the term “authenticity” when referring to redevelopment of urban environments. Racine is an exemplar of what that term means; it is real and demonstrates what true public and private cooperation can produce.

All tours and attendant printed material were first class. Every representative of Racine was welcoming and sure in his or her mission.

The judges thank all of the participants in Racine's America in Bloom experience. We know how hard everyone worked to make this commitment to your community and to make our visit pleasant, meaningful and educational. We were impressed with the number of businesses involved in AIB and hope even more will become involved in the future.

The first year of participation is always the most difficult. America in Bloom is a process and community growth is exponential with continued participation. The judges know that future judges will have a most extraordinary experience in Racine. You should be rightfully proud of your Four Bloom rating. The judges look forward to another AIB tour in the future and will envy next year's judges.

The judges applaud your efforts and thank everyone who made our visit a very pleasant experience. The timing of our tours was right on the mark and every site visited was meaningful and focused on the judging criteria. Your continued efforts in the future could ultimately lead to a place in the International Competition and we urge you to consider that as a viable course of action. We look forward to your participation in 2013.

Special thanks to Pastor Bill Tompkins, Matt Koepnick, Matt Sadowski, Sam Cicero, Rose Woodfuff, Corine Merry, and all of the other Racine boosters who made our visit special.

1. Floral Displays Flower beds, containers, baskets, window boxes. Arrangement, originality, distribution, location, diversity, balance, harmony, quality of maintenance. Use and integration of annuals, perennials, ornamental grasses, bulbs, and seasonal flowers.	Max points	Actual Score
Municipal		
Leadership and plan of action for floral displays	20	17
Concept and design, variety of plantings, overall effect	20	18
Maintenance and quality of displays	20	18
Design for all seasons	15	12.5
Business		
Concept and design, overall effect	15	11
Maintenance and quality of displays	15	12
Residential		
Concept and design, overall effect	15	12.5
Maintenance and quality of displays	15	12.5
Community Involvement		
Volunteer involvement in design, planting, and maintenance of floral displays	20	16
Financial and in-kind contributions to floral displays	20	17
Total (the fields automatically calculate – do not type in them)	175.00	146.50

Comments and suggestions:

Downtown Racine is filled with large sidewalk planters and many hanging basket floral displays. All of these containers were fresh, bright and very attractive. The central square was expertly planted and inviting. Many of the business areas of Racine were also attractively planted. The municipal and business floral displays were almost weed- free. Residential floral displays were widespread in Racine. Some of the residential displays were traditional designs and very well maintained. Other residential displays focused on a naturalized theme. All displays evidenced the dedication and hard work of the Racine community.

The following suggestions should be considered.

Consider adopting a citywide theme that can be advertised and promoted through the local nurseries and press.

Develop best floral displays for all categories. Municipal sites can include the firehouses, parks, and administration buildings. The City should lead by example. A business competition can be broken down into various categories such as banks, car dealers, restaurants, or bars. Get the churches more involved in plantings.

Homeowners' properties should be recognized almost weekly. Give out certificates of achievement so everyone can proudly exhibit the,. Make sure America in Bloom signage is distributed throughout the city.

Look into "Bloom Master" containers www.bloommaster.com as a container for decorating the beautiful bridges in town. Master Gardeners might be able to take this on as a project. If possible install irrigation.

Develop an Alderman competition. Purchase sizeable containers for a site for the competition and each Alderman can then plant the container themselves or hire someone to do it. Make this contest into a fun and humorous project. Make sure the press is covering the event.

Consider in next year's residential completion to have various categories such as annual plants, best mix, best use of the theme, perennial floral display, best front porch effort etc.

Everyone loves to be awarded and each award can be computer printed. Make sure to date the award so awardees can develop a series of yearly awards.

2. Landscaped Areas	Max points	Actual Score
Overall design and suitability of landscape, turf and ground covers. Use of native plants. Overall design and suitability for location/use; good use of design principles (i.e., balance of plant material and constructed elements, harmony, color, texture, shape, etc.). Sustainability. Integration of hardscapes, lighting, site features, sculpture. Maintenance (weeds, mulching practices, edging); site rejuvenation and rehabilitation. Efforts in strategic planning. Community gardens, children's gardens, public gardens and zoos.		
Municipal		
Overall design and planting of landscape, turf and groundcovers	15	12.5
Environmental management of sports fields and turf	15	10
Quality of landscape maintenance	15	11
Sustainable management, naturalization and eco-design	15	12.5
Business		
Overall design and planting of landscape	15	11.5
Environmental management of turf and groundcovers	10	7
Quality of landscape maintenance	15	12.5
Residential		
Overall design and planting of landscape	15	12.5
Environmental management of turf and groundcovers	15	12.5
Quality of landscape maintenance	15	13.5
Community Involvement		
Volunteer involvement in funding, planting, and maintenance of landscaped areas	15	13
Participation in future planning (committees, councils, and advisory boards.)	15	13
Total (the fields automatically calculate – do not type in them)	175.00	141.50

Comments and suggestions:

The city is fortunate to have two garden clubs and over a hundred Master Gardens who help beautify the landscape.

The Racine Urban Garden Network is making a very positive impact on the city. Besides converting an ugly parking lot into productive and attractive vegetable gardens you have brought people together for a common cause. The West Park project has made a great start improving the Park and uniting the neighborhood to improve itself. It has also fostered a sense of pride and has changed the social fabric of the area. The Root River Environmental Education Community Center landscape has been improved with the addition of rain gardens, native plantings and bank stabilization. Now visitors can appreciate the site and see examples and interpretation of environmentally conscience landscaping.

The central jewel of downtown Racine is the Sam Johnson Parkway and the Laurel Clark Memorial Fountain. Kudos to the landscapers and caretakers of this area as it showcases what can be done to exhibit top rate landscaping. The mature landscape plantings of Dekoven Center exhibit what proper design and continual care of a landscape can attain. The mature trees and shrubs accented by attractive perennials and sculpture show how they all work together to produce a top-notch landscape.

Thank you to Corrine Merry, Anna and Joey LeGath and Sister Janet Weyker for inviting the judges to their homes to share their wonderful landscapes.

The garden clubs and the Master Gardeners have made a significant and positive impact on the beauty of Racine and the judges salute their efforts.

The following suggestions should be considered:

It was hard to tell where the city of Racine boundaries were. Consider installing themed entrance plantings around each sign using native prairie plants. Volunteers will need to be enlisted to help care for these landscape plantings. Put the name of the volunteer group on the sign so they are recognized.

Consider reducing the amount of turf parkwide and converting it to prairie plantings. Island Park/Horlick Drive has vast areas of mowed turf which would be much more attractive as prairie. The environmental benefits would be much greater as more birdlife would be able to nest and feed and the insects would have habitat.

The Batten International Airport is a gateway to the city and it needs to look better for visitors to the region. Landscaping and floral displays need to be added inside and out.

The lake at Horlick Park could be improved by changing the way it is cared for. Do not mow to the shoreline but leave an 8 to 12 foot unmowed margin. Over time native trees could be added there and the vegetation will serve as a riparian buffer. Geese will be less likely to inhabit the lake especially if a short fence is also considered. The trees will provide shade for the fish and other aquatic life and the fishing will improve.

The City of Racine should provide a permanent water source in West Park to care for the plantings and to give park goers refreshment. The judges recommend that the vines be replaced on the pergolas in this park. Perhaps the horticulture students at Gateway Technical College could undertake this project. Hydrangeas in the central area of West Park would be a low maintenance shrub and could even be planted in the raised bed areas.

Markers and signage on the burial mounds in Mound Cemetery would make the features more understandable to visitors.

3. Urban Forestry		
Distribution, variety and suitability of trees; new plantings; urban tree program; qualified personnel or access to trained individual(s); inventory or database; frequency of tree surveys; care and maintenance programs; preservation of heritage trees and woodlots; scheduled succession plantings. Efforts in management, planning, maintenance, improvement, and innovation. Written policies, by-laws and regulations, long and short term plans.	Max points	Actual Score
Municipal		
Overall plan of action, tree planting programs, variety of species, inventory	20	18
Tree maintenance	15	11.5
Preservation and restoration of natural areas	15	12
Tree protection/planting regulations and by-laws	15	12.75
Business		
Overall planting program	20	16
Tree maintenance	15	13
Residential		
Overall planting program	20	15
Tree maintenance	15	11
Community Involvement		
Volunteer involvement in funding, planting, and maintenance of trees	20	16
Volunteer involvement of youth in tree programs (i.e., Arbor Day, etc.)	20	16
Total (the fields automatically calculate – do not type in them)	175.00	141.25

Comments and suggestions:

Racine has just embarked on a comprehensive urban forestry program. The size of the urban forest and deferred maintenance makes this new emphasis a challenge. The planning and focus seems to be right on target. The program is incremental and each of the increments in the program appears attainable. The City Forester is well trained and current in his understanding of the challenges presented by Racine’s urban forest.

A large force of volunteers is active in tree planting and riverside cleanup activities and the judges commend their efforts. Try to involve more youth to all planting activities.

Generally the trees in Racine were healthy and well tended. The focus at this time seems to be on damaged and diseased trees including those affected by Emerald Ash Borer. A strong tree-planting program is underway and promises to become even more robust in the future. The judges applaud the effort to renew the forest and urban tree plantings in Racine. The forestry approach in Racine values the specimen trees in the parks as well as the natural forests within the city.

Many of the utility lines in Racine are placed to the rear of residential properties and over time trees have grown into them. Wind and ice can topple these trees and cause severe disruption of service.

A program using the skill and resources of the city, the utility providers and the residents could over time

eliminate the problem trees and replace them with species more suitable for growth beneath utility lines.

Qualified personnel need to be on staff to care for the trees. Currently there is only one certified arborist and new hires should be certified arborists. This is best accomplished by filling positions with a written and practical exam. There is a substantial investment in the trees of Racine and they need to be properly cared for. One major accident because of neglect by the city and the insurance costs could be extraordinary. Consider creating a position of Tree Climber. In the future, funds from an existing arborist job could be used to fund the Climber position.

A financial analysis should be carried out evaluating current tasks of the existing tree crew. Is it the best use of resources for two men to put up flags on the flagpole using the boom truck, which probably took more than an hour? Maybe the American Legion or Veterans groups could take this important job on. Is it necessary for the dump truck to pull the water wagon or lawn mower (as we saw) when a small pickup or electric cart would be more energy and cost efficient? Further, an energy audit similar to the program in effect at the city offices could be financially beneficial to the city of Racine.

The city needs to better use their own wood chips to mulch their park trees. This would help reduce weed whip damage. Volunteers could apply mulch.

The trees in Mound Cemetery are extraordinary and should be labelled. The Gateway Technical College horticulture students could do this as a project or it could be an Eagle Scout Project. Make sure the identification is checked before the label is hung.

Green space is important in new developments. The city's development plan needs to include green space provisions for new construction which includes tree planting and the maximum use of permeable surfaces and other runoff controls. Rain gardens will help alleviate the need for irrigation in some areas.

Look into the structured soil mix developed by Cornell University for urban tree plantings and difficult sites.

When bidding on trees be very specific as to quality and size. Require guarantees that the product will be viable over a set period of time. Lowest bid is not necessarily the most cost effective way to purchase trees if the trees do not survive.

The trees and other plants at Wustum Center should be labeled.

4. Environmental Efforts Sustainability practices. Recycling (paper, glass, metal, plastic, electronics, etc.), policies and by-laws, sustainable development strategies, waste reduction, hazardous waste minimization and collection (oil, paint, chemicals, used batteries, etc.), water quality and conservation, energy conservation, environmental cleanup activities, reducing carbon footprint, environmentally friendly transportation, LEED certification, air, noise and light pollution, rain gardens and rain barrels, composting, energy efficiency, youth programs, etc. Events such as Earth Day, Recycling Days, Bike to Work Days, etc.	Max Points	Actual Score
Municipal		
Leadership in environmental initiatives	25	20
Effective communication of environmental strategies and initiatives	25	20
New programs, improvement and innovation	25	20
Business		
Participation in environmental efforts	20	16.5
New programs, improvement and innovation	10	8
Residential		
Participation in environmental efforts	20	16.5
New programs, improvement and innovation	10	6.5
Community Involvement		
Volunteer involvement in environmental efforts	20	17
Youth participation in environmental activities	20	17
Total (the fields automatically calculate – do not type in them)	175.00	141.50

Comments and suggestions:

The city and its residents are doing a considerable number of environmentally beneficial programs and you should be applauded for all that you have done. A number of businesses are also very involved and concerned and are doing their part as well. Congratulations.

The judges were almost brought to tears by the presentation given by the students of the 21st Century Preparatory School at the garden in Randolph Park. These students now understand more the importance of caring for the environment and that they can make a difference. In addition to learning how to build a garden, work together for a common cause, improve the neighborhood and develop public speech writing and speaking skills these students made an impact on the lives of a number of people.

The solar panels at the city annex were impressive and you should be congratulated for taking this on. The Facilities Manager Bill Miller and his crews are making a considerable difference in conservation. This was the first time we had seen the small delay relay which prevents the on and off cycling of the water fountain when not needed. We are sure there are other examples. The use of the basement for the Toys for Tots program, which is really extreme recycling of used children's toys, was very impressive.

The following are suggestions are offered:

More city vehicles need to use alternative energy sources. They should be specified in the purchasing cycle.

More lighting needs to be put on motion and light sensors to reduce the unnecessary use of energy.

More recycling containers need to be used in public areas. The city needs to lead by example.

Yard waste and organic tree materials generated by the city's parks and trees should be properly composted by the city and used in the city parks. A cost analysis should be done to see the benefits of not having to truck the waste to its current destination and the use of the new compost as an amendment in plantings.

The city has two golf courses and they should adopt more environmentally friendly practices. The Audubon Society has a program whereby golf courses can be certified if they meet certain environmentally friendly guidelines. Consider this program as a way to increase visitations and develop multiple uses of the land.

Considering the proximity to a source of prevailing winds, the city should explore the possibility of wind power in addition to the existing solar system.

Gateway Park could be planted with native aquatic and wetland plants to restore a shoreline wetland environment benefitting both fish and fowl. Again the nearby students of Gateway Technical College might take this on as a project. This could be a very doable grant request. Consider contacting the Norcross Foundation.

Consider adding an area on city water bills whereby a donation to plant trees or purchase land is possible. Make sure it really is done and feature it in the letter from the utility.

The city needs to supply more recycling containers so less waste will enter the landfill. Better records need to be established citywide to track what percentage of waste is recycled and what is not.

5. Heritage Preservation Historical, natural, agricultural, and cultural heritage. Preservation and restoration of buildings, homes, churches, cemeteries; heritage sites and/or monuments; heritage parks, historical gardens and heritage trees; artifacts; historical society; heritage advisory committee, museums, archives, history books, and interpretative programs; ordinances and policies. Resource availability. Farmers markets, festivals and parades.	Max Points	Actual Score
Municipal		
Leadership in preservation and restoration initiatives	25	22
Legal protection of heritage sites	25	20
Resource availability for preservation and restoration	25	22
Business		
Conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of properties	15	13
Participation in and support of heritage/cultural activities	15	13
Residential		
Conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of properties	15	12.5
Participation in and support of heritage/cultural activities	15	12.5
Community Involvement		
Volunteer involvement in cultural, historical, and natural heritage activities	20	17.5
Youth involvement in heritage activities	20	17
Total (the fields automatically calculate – do not type in them)	175.00	149.50

Comments and suggestions:

Racine is filled with a rich and varied heritage. Native American, French, Danish, Armenian and many other cultures have all contributed the fabric of the city. The natural surroundings from prairie to vast Lake Michigan shaped the culture of Racine. All of the natural elements combined with the human cultural traditions give Racine a real sense of place and authenticity. The historic built environment is respected, renovated, restored and repurposed with skill and care. Places like the Eco-Justice Center blend the traditions of rural life with a deep respect for the natural environment. The architecture of Racine is kept in good repair and the character defining elements have not been lost to ill-conceived modernization.

Youth involvement in heritage activities is widespread and enthusiastically embraced by the children of Racine. The legacy of the Johnson family in Racine is awe-inspiring. The campus of the Johnson Headquarters, Wingspread and the Sam Johnson Parkway are significant tangible contributions to the heritage of Racine. The Wind Point light house and gardens are a wonderful museum of history for the region. The DeKoven Center has made excellent use of the former college campus and buildings.

The following recommendations are offered in the area of heritage preservation:

With so many historic districts and resources the judges were unable to discern the boundaries of each district. Signage at each entry point to the districts would inform the residents and visitors when they entered a special place. Each sign design should be distinct but contain enough similarity to keep the historic brand.

While plaques are offered for register and landmark homes, no formal designation is offered for the

surrounding homes of similar vintage. A program offering plaques to owners of historic homes is a good source of funds. This sort of program offers research into the original owner, the builder, architect and year of the house with the logo or other identifier of the issuing agency. Typically these can be offered at about \$185.00

Similar plaques could also be offered to commercial properties with appropriate messages for a bit higher fee.

A walking tour of historic neighborhoods could be developed and offered in both print and online versions. A virtual tour of Racine posted online would give prospective visitors (or business or home buyers) a chance to consider a visit to your community.

The audio recordings which were done of firemen and saved on reel-to-reel tapes need to be copied to the web and copies given to the city or the historical museum and kept secure. Additionally oral histories should be done for those people from the past that have valuable memories of events regarding Racine.

6. Overall Impression	Max points	Actual Score
Cleanliness, lack of litter and graffiti. Maintenance of public open spaces, medians and boulevard strips, streets, sidewalks, walking and biking trails, curbs, ditches, road shoulders, unattended and vacant lots, buildings, garbage receptacles; lack of weeds, dog waste policies and receptacles, notices/posters appropriately displayed, vandalism not evident. Maintenance of the hardscape: walls, lamp posts, benches, playgrounds, etc. Appropriate use and placement of graphic elements such as banners, signs and murals.		
Municipal		
Overall cleanliness	10	9
Maintenance of public roads and shoulders	10	8.5
Condition of public buildings and properties	10	8.5
Impact of graphic elements - banners, signs, murals, etc.	10	8
Business		
Overall cleanliness	20	17.5
Condition of buildings and properties	20	17
Residential		
Overall cleanliness	10	8.5
Condition of buildings and properties	10	8.5
Community Involvement		
Participation in clean up efforts, adopt-a-spot, annual cleanup days, etc.	15	13
Recognition of volunteer efforts	10	8
Total (the fields automatically calculate – do not type in them)	125.00	106.50

Comments and suggestions:

Racine is a wonderful city with great potential to become even more attractive. The judges were amazed at what the city has to offer to both visitors and the denizens. There is a rich and varied cadre of citizens who help support the municipality in its endeavors. A significant number of businesses provide help as well as gifts in kind and they are strong supporters in keeping the Belle City looking great. We really noticed businesses and volunteers were involved in your AIB endeavor. Taking us to an awards ceremony as our first introduction to your city where volunteers and businesses were recognized and to have it hosted by municipal representatives of the city was first rate. It showed to us the diversity of your program and how much the whole city is involved in improving your community.

Racine, Wisconsin is neat, clean and supports well maintained public buildings and spaces. The community is strongly involved in making this “jewel on the lake” ever better

Racine is a beautiful place with attractions that make it a natural destination for tourists and sportsman but beyond that aspect, the friendly, welcoming people of Racine make a visit very special. Nothing about Racine is “been there done that”.

As we toured the city we rarely saw litter and did not notice graffiti of any consequence. We liked the bluish green color the bridges were painted which seemed to unify the community and give it a special character. Whatever color you do choose needs to be used throughout the city.

The city is recovering from the loss of some major companies but the empty or abandoned properties are being repurposed or redeveloped into attractive and useful businesses and attractions. The current economic challenges have stymied some of the redevelopment but not stopped the progress the municipality is making. Meanwhile, more plans are in the making to transform Racine into an even more enticing municipality.

Citywide the practice of mowing the grass so short is to the detriment of the landscape. Mowers need to be adjusted so that the final cut is at least 3 inches and can be even moved up to 4 inches. Taller grass retains water better and reduces the growth of weeds. The cost effectiveness is that fewer chemicals need to be used and there is a reduction in mowing so workers can be assigned to other tasks and machinery will need less maintenance. The trees will also benefit, which grow above the turf, as there will be more water available and less soil compaction. Along that line do not allow vehicles to drive on the grass or park under trees, as over time it will kill them from compaction. Scheduled turf aeration is import as well and should be a part of your program.

Walk behind propane weed burners are available and would make sidewalk weed eradication much easier.

Volunteers abound throughout the city but there is no central person who coordinates them. A full time volunteer coordinator could make the system even more efficient. The coordinator could parlay gifts of in-kind time to grant applications thereby doubling the value of the time volunteered.

An up to date wish list of what is needed for all the various projects should be compiled. This should then be made available to the public to allow for a variety of donation levels, everyone can "Make a Difference". The new volunteer coordinator could take this on and it could soon help pay their salary.

The judges attended a small awards recognition program for landscaped homes and one person received recognition for their landscaped property. More awards need to be given for all the volunteer projects that exist.

A concerted effort needs to be made to get rail service to Racine. Additionally there should be an effort to attract additional hotels in the downtown. Each effort would complement the other and bring even more business to the city, raise real estate values and subsequently bring solvency to the tax digest leading to even more positive growth and affordable amenities for all.

Develop a "Done in a Day" work program for small projects. People often volunteer for such time limited projects. Keep track of what is accomplished, who volunteers and publish these efforts in the media, promote the next project and provide contact information to potential volunteers. Make sure supplies are on hand to ensure a rewarding experience for volunteer efforts.

Checklist for Judges and Communities:

Yes No N/A

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Were the judges given a community profile, itinerary, and map prior to their arrival? |
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did the itinerary provide for seeing a representative cross-section of the community? |
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Were the guides knowledgeable about the community and horticultural aspects? |
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Were the judges able to modify the schedule if needed? |
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did the judges meet with the media? |
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did the judges meet with municipal leaders? |
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Were the judges asked to give presentations? |
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Were the judges able to meet with and talk to volunteers? |
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was enough time allotted to complete the evaluation form in a quiet place? |

Comments:

Racine businesses, residents, and city employees are rightly proud of their city. Attractive landscapes, floral displays and lakefront properties abound. A number of former businesses have been repurposed and others are in the planning stages. The majority of the housing stock is well cared for and many are historically important. The Root River and the Lakefront are being cared for in a positive manner and are being enhanced as destinations that will bring in added revenue to the city.

DEFINITIONS

Municipal: City hall and other municipal properties, parks and open spaces, roads, roadsides, sidewalks, cemeteries, schools and sports facilities, empty lots and brownfields, libraries, hospitals, assisted living, churches, universities, and colleges

Business: Commercial and industrial sectors, shopping centers, stores, office buildings, restaurants, mixed use developments, service stations, railway and bus stations, plant nurseries/garden centers

Residential: Single family residences, condominiums, town houses, planned communities, apartment buildings, gated communities, manufactured home communities, trailer parks, residential developments, neighborhoods, graduated care facilities

Community Involvement: Volunteer efforts by individuals, clubs, youth groups, church groups, civic organizations, and social clubs for community enhancement



2012 Special Mention

Municipality: Racine, Wisconsin

General description of the recognized criterion (200 words max)

Recognized Criterion: Community Involvement

The judges were almost brought to tears by the presentation given by the elementary school students of the 21st Century Preparatory School at the garden in Randolph Park. These students now understand more the importance of caring for the environment and that **they can make a difference**. In addition to learning how to build a garden, work together for a common cause, improve the neighbourhood and develop public speech writing and speaking skills, these students made an impact on the lives of a number of area residents. Their teachers and mentors are congratulated for all they did to make this environmental project a multifaceted success. It was also interesting to note that the students who created the garden were **very** concerned that the next generation of students take the garden on in a responsible manner and that they wanted to be involved in the student selection process.

Special Project or Initiative (50 words max)

Storm sewer runoff into Lake Michigan can be a problem. Racine has attacked this problem head on by installing a capture system whereby sediments are contained in a cleanable well and the overflow is filtered through underground porous pipes before it enters the lake and adjoining public beaches. Above the pipes is planted a "Rain Garden" to help filter the water and increase the water quality. Great job.

America in Bloom ... Planting Pride in Our Communities
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