

America in Bloom 2019 Evaluation Report



Community: Dyer, Indiana
Population: 16,000
Population Category: 14,000-17,000
Evaluation Dates: July 11-12

Lead Judge: Barbara Vincentsen
Co-Judge: Steve Zwiep

America in Bloom envisions communities across the country as welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play – benefitting from colorful plants and trees; enjoying clean environments; celebrating heritage and planting pride through volunteerism.

Seven Criteria (Codes)	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage
1. Community Vitality (CV)	80.00	44.00	55.00%
2. Flowers (FL)	88.00	36.00	40.91%
3. Landscaped Areas (LA)	76.00	38.00	50.00%
4. Urban Forestry (UF)	84.00	43.00	51.19%
5. Environmental Efforts (EE)	92.00	51.00	55.43%
6. Celebrating Heritage (CH)	72.00	26.00	36.11%
7. Overall Impression (OI)	80.00	45.00	56.25%
Other			
8. Evaluation Tour Preparation & Actions (ET)	13.00	11.00	84.62%
Scoring			
Total Points and Percentage	585.00	294.00	50.26%

Star ratings are based on overall percentage.

1 star = 0% - 9.99%	2 stars = 10% – 10.99%	3 stars = 20% – 29.99%	4 stars = 30% – 39.99%	5 stars = 40% – 49.99%
6 stars = 50% – 59.99%	7 stars = 60% – 69.99%	8 stars = 70% - 79.99%	9 stars = 80% – 89.99%	10 stars = 90% - 100%

Community representatives to receive the Evaluation Report (three minimum)		
Name	Title	Email
Mary Tanis	Council Member	mtanis@townofdye.com
Tom DeGiulio	Dyer Town Manager	tdegulio@townofdye.com
Jessica Chick	Dyer Administrative Analyst	jchick@townofdye.com

GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION:

Communities are required to provide the following prior to evaluation:

- Community Profile organized to follow the criteria and metrics. For repeat communities, call out what is new and/or implemented due to judges' recommendations.
- Evaluation Tour Itinerary with start and finish times for each day
- Community Map with community boundaries and the tour route
- Communities are responsible for addressing the metrics in the Community Profile, Evaluation Tour Itinerary, and during the Evaluation Tour.

The areas to be scored:

Judges will review Community Profiles, Community Maps, and Evaluation Tour Itineraries to confirm the appropriateness of the areas to be evaluated and contact communities prior to the tour so adjustments can be made.

- All areas (municipal, commercial and residential) within the boundaries of the entrant's community/municipality (except as noted below) are scored and a representative portion of all areas must be included.
- Property to be scored, whether public or private, must be subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant's community/municipality.
- When a property does not meet these requirements, but the community's volunteers significantly impact the property with labor and/or funding, then judges may include in their scoring the property not subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant community.
- A community may request recommendations for areas toured but not scored.

Metrics are noted with unique codes based on the criteria. Ratings include:

N/A (Not Applicable): Communities should strive to implement all metrics; however, judges will use N/A when a metric is not scorable in a community. An N/A metric is not included in the point totals and does not affect percentages. Examples when N/A may apply in a metric: commercial/business areas do not exist; state or county statutes prevent implementation of a metric.

Not Started (0 pts.): programs or procedures are not in place.

Launched (1 pt.): programs or procedures are in place but not fully realized.

Achieved (2 pts.): programs or procedures are implemented but could be improved.

Surpassing (3 pts.): programs or procedures are well-implemented.

Excelling (4 pts.): programs or procedures are exceptional.

NS (Not Scored): preset in the Judges' Discretion metric's point box for when a score there is not appropriate.

Judges' Discretion (N/A, 3-4 pts.): judges may add and score an item not in the metrics. This item must be an unusual or newly implemented project, program, or initiative that can be repeated in other communities and perhaps used as a future metric.

Other:

- This Evaluation Report's scoring, general observations, and general and criteria recommendations are based upon the community's efforts including its levels of participation in, or implementation of the metrics in each of the criteria.
- Future projects and programs are not scored.
- The scoring for the seven evaluation criteria is adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community's location. Make sure the judges are made aware of any challenges that were faced during the year.

What's New this Year in the even more vibrant Evaluation Report. Thank you for your feedback.

- The Community Vitality criterion leads off the Evaluation Report.
- Metrics were added, deleted, or edited in all criteria. Some metrics stayed the same.
- Some metric ratings columns have new headings that better describe the scoring.
- Metric codes are more specific so future changes in them will be minimized.
- NS - Not Scored is only used in the Judges' Discretion metrics

General Observations and Recommendations (recommendations are indicated in italics):

Congratulations to Dyer, Indiana, for your 4th year of involvement in the America in Bloom National Awards Program. Your important efforts in improving your community are highly visible and are resulting in a better quality of life for all residents of Dyer.

Under the direction of your able Town Manager and others within the municipal government, Dyer has worked to improve funding for town-wide projects. Starting in 2018, Dyer began a capital program with the first annual \$2MM bond issue, anticipating paying off this debt in 2-3 years. With this initiative in place, the General Fund now has the resources for important community-wide infrastructure improvement projects and the town is playing catch-up after years of neglect in critical areas of maintenance. The most important capital projects in need of improvement have now been identified and prioritized and work has begun.

One of the most significant new developments in Dyer is the anticipated arrival of a new commuter rail line which will connect Dyer to downtown Chicago. Planning for this development has been ongoing for decades, and final approvals and federal funds to implement the project are now in hand, with expected completion in 2024. Working with the neighboring communities of Munster and Hammond, specifics of local involvement are being hammered out. Currently, the rail line will terminate in Munster at the border with Dyer, with the station in Munster and parking in both Dyer and Munster. Further, Main Street will be widened and extended for approximately 3 miles as part of the commuter transportation district upgrade. *As all involved are aware, this development is a game changer. With a direct commute to Chicago conveniently located near Dyer, both*



residential and commercial development will accelerate. Planning for this eventuality will be most effective if it is proactive, not reactive, as Dyer appears to be well aware.

Dyer is a town being challenged by rapid development. We commend you for facing these challenges head-on by working on a new Comprehensive Plan with revised Town Ordinances to address current needs, outline goals, and develop strategies to meet these goals.

Revisions to the current zoning regulations will be an important component of this revision, especially in light of the anticipated commuter rail connection to Chicago. This Plan, still in its infancy, will include a Land Use Plan and total overhaul of the Zoning Ordinance. The plan will focus on the increasing density of the town, including the expansion of rental units and multifamily housing options as well as commercial development. *We urge you to include in your new plan a mandatory review every five years to keep the document relevant as you move into the future. With the anticipated arrival of the South Shore train extension, many changes will be introduced to Dyer. By anticipating these changes and adopting a master plan to direct the growth and changes into the future, Dyer will continue to evolve into a community loved by its residents.*

This is an important time in the life of Dyer, Indiana. We thank you for being such a vital participant in the America in Bloom family. We look forward to your participation next year and wish you continued success in your civic endeavors.

Community Vitality (CV) Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
COMMUNITY VITALITY (CV): policies, programs, activities, and facilities that lead to a vibrant community and a sense of well-being. Includes libraries, community centers, arts/cultural museums; and parks, playgrounds, dog parks, sports fields, water activities, trails, and other outdoor recreational opportunities	Not Applicable N/A	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
a. Leadership and Policy						
CV.a.01 - Municipal volunteer boards are in place					X	
CV.a.02 - Municipality offers grants to neighborhood associations for enhancements		X				
CV.a.03 - Master plan in place for public green space and parks					X	
CV.a.04 - ADA accessibility in public outdoor areas including play equipment				X		
CV.a.05 - Promotion of alternative transportation: pedestrian, bicycling, car/van pools, ride sharing, and/or mass transit				X		
b. Facilities and Events						
CV.b.01 - Outdoor recreation facilities meet community needs: parks, playgrounds, splash pads, dog parks, sports fields, sports courts, swimming pools, golf courses, kayak/canoe trails, public access to water bodies, etc.					X	
CV.b.02 - Walking, biking, and exercise trail network in place				X		
CV.b.03 - Performances/events for art, dance, theatre, music, and/or cinema					X	
CV.b.04 - Run/walk/bike/kayak/canoe events are held				X		
CV.b.05 - Benches and seating available near walking, exercise, and playground areas				X		
CV.b.06 - Structures, shade sails, or trees provide shade for spectators and/or participants				X		
CV.b.07 - Playgrounds exist and age-appropriate ranges of equipment are offered					X	
CV.b.08 - Public library/resources center is available					X	
CV.b.09 - Community center is available				X		
CV.b.10 - Farmers' Market(s) is available	X					
c. Community Involvement						
CV.c.01 - Community gardening sites are in use		X				
CV.c.02 - Level of participation in food banks, hunger-relief, Plant a Row for the Hungry (GardenComm initiative), etc.					X	
CV.c.03 - Participation in civic events such as Bike to Work Days, Walk to School Days, etc.			X			
CV.c.04 - Voluntary (non-mandated HOA) neighborhood organizations in place					X	
CV.c.05 - Recognition programs for volunteers			X			

d. Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
CV.d.01 - Judges to enter text below		NS	NS	NS		X
22 Parks with over 200 acres. 5 recently renovated and 2 new ones being constructed						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
1. Community Vitality (CV)	80	44	55.00%			

Community Vitality (CV) Recommendations:

The town of Dyer has much to offer the community to increase the quality of life through seven volunteer municipal boards, a master plan for public green space with 200 acres within 22 parks for active and passive recreation. There are many opportunities for recreational pursuits, summer outdoor concerts and playgrounds for children.

For those who want to pursue a quieter form of recreation, the Lake County Regional Library is located three miles east of Dyer in Shereville. Dyer supports the library through a county assessment along with other nearby communities. Through their support Dyer residents have access to a library with greater resources than one that they could maintain on their own. But if you do not want to travel the three miles to Shereville there are five “free” little libraries throughout the town, all maintained by a local Girl Scout troop. These little libraries are popping up all over the mid-west in communities like Dyer, providing opportunities for residents to read and exchange books.



Dyer has recently completed a renovation of five municipal parks in the past two years. In addition, they are also busily constructing two new parks. There are playgrounds in 15 of the parks that have ADA playground accessibility, but there is no ADA approved playground equipment in the parks other than swings. *We recommend in planning for renovations or a new park that you consider installing inclusive playground equipment. This will enable those that have physical limitations to interact with others their age and to enjoy your parks and the outdoors. Examples of inclusive playground design can be found through Gametime.com, playgroundequipment.com or playlsi.com/ada.*

Throughout your community we discovered many residential developments. Some are older, more established neighborhoods, but most are new developments. Dyer, once a farming community, had farm fields incorporated into the town limits and these are now being transitioned into new housing developments. In developing these fallow fields for residential housing, horticultural plantings were largely ignored. While the turf in these areas looked healthy, the absence of landscaping and trees make these developments look barren. *We would encourage the town to adopt ordinances that require a minimum standard of landscaping and trees for new or redevelopments. This can also be accomplished through a Homeowners Association (HOA) by asking them or requiring them to set landscaping standards instead of just settling for minimal landscaping and maximum turf. Doing so would add interest for the residents, make the development more attractive and increase property values.*



Castlewood is a good example where attractive landscaping has been incorporated into the development. *If there are codes already in existence that require landscaping standards, consider strengthening the ordinances with stricter enforcement.*

Construction will begin on your new transit station within a couple of years as discussed in the General Observations section. *We recommend as part of that construction that you consider planning for bike lanes at the station. Bike commuting to the station would help relieve vehicle congestion on the roads and at the parking lots. Not only is this a viable form of transportation, it is also a healthy one! It may even be possible for the bike commuter to board the train with their bike and use it to reach their final destination. Instituting this idea may even lead to other biking opportunities in your community such as a “bike to work” or “bike to school” day.*

Flowers Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
2. FLOWERS (FL): flowering annuals, perennials, bulbs, tropical plants, flowering topiaries, and colorful foliage and/or cut plant material for season-round interest for displays in containers, hanging baskets, window boxes, raised planters, trellises, and in-ground beds	Not Applicable N/A	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
a. Leadership and Policy						
FL.a.01 - Public or private management of flower displays				X		
b. Plan of Action						
FL.b.01 - Action plan developed each season for procurement, scheduling, planting, and maintenance of flower displays				X		
FL.b.02 - Recognition program in place for attractively planted containers		X				
FL.b.03 - Demonstration/display garden(s) with labelled flowers in place and promoted		X				
FL.b.04 - Effective communication about selection and care of flowers for beautification		X				
c. Design						
FL.c.01 - Unity and Variety: plant combinations create visual interest and dramatic effect while appearing coordinated				X		
FL.c.02 - Suitability of Plant Selections: plants selected for current and expected environmental conditions				X		
FL.c.03 - Distribution and Location: displays found throughout the community				X		
FL.c.04 - Location: displays are located to serve as focal points			X			
FL.c.05 - Seasonal Displays: seasonal displays with spring, summer, fall, and/or holiday displays			X			
FL.c.06 - Scale: if hanging baskets are in use, their size is in scale to their surroundings	X					
FL.c.07 - Scale: if containers are in use, their size is in scale to their surroundings				X		
FL.c.08 - Plant height: flower displays are designed with mature plant heights in mind				X		
FL.c.09 - Color: pleasing color combinations (monochromatic, analogous, and/or complementary) are used				X		
FL.c.10 - Form: spiky, rounded, and/or cascading flower forms are used in pleasing combinations				X		
d. Maintenance						
FL.d.01 - Watering procedures to maintain growth in place				X		
FL.d.02 - Fertilization: appropriate fertilization procedures using slow-release, liquid fertilizers, and/or soil amendments				X		
FL.d.03 - Grooming: regular pruning, dead-heading, removal and replacement of dead plants				X		
FL.d.04 - Plant health strategies in place to monitor and manage pests and diseases (IPM-Integrated Pest Management)				X		
FL.d.05 - Health and Vigor: plants are robust and floriferous				X		

e. Community Involvement						
FL.e.01 - Volunteers provide donations and/or funds and/or participate in the design, planting, and/or care of flower displays			X			
FL.e.02 - Civic groups, garden clubs, Master Gardeners, school programs, etc., sponsor plant sales, plant swaps, provide information, or educational sessions that contribute to the quality and implementation of the community's flower displays			X			
f. Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
FL.f.01 - Judges to enter text below		NS	NS	NS		X
A number of the residential homes had good color, design and variety of flowers in their yards						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points		Percentage		
2. Flowers (FL)	88	36		40.91%		

Flowers (FL) Recommendations:



In going through the older, established neighborhoods, we observed some great examples of flower displays rich in color, variety, and design. The Town Hall plantings and the entrance to Elmer Miller Park all had beautiful displays of annuals and perennials.

Not to be outdone, some of the commercial establishments on U.S. 30 also had beautiful displays along the frontage of Route 30, especially by the banks. These businesses must realize the power of flowers as a way to entice customers to do business within. What we saw in these areas created visual appeal and dramatic effect; for the most part appropriate plants were selected for their location. Most plantings were thriving and were well cared for. *These establishment should be recognized for their efforts of floral and landscape design – perhaps with a “curb appeal” or “business of the month” sign placed by the DIB (Dyer In Bloom) group. In addition to recognition for the business, the signs could generate interest in DIB and leverage the exposure to attract volunteers to the organization..*

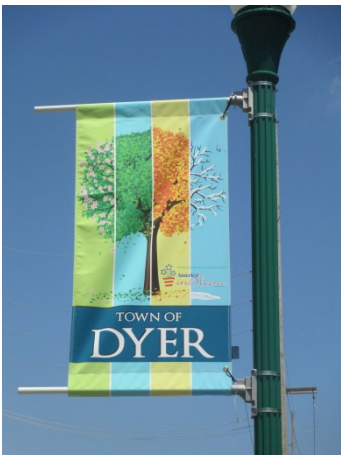




The same concept could also work in the residential areas, recognizing those homes with curb appeal for their front lawns. *After coming up with design and color standards, select those residences that meet your criteria and place the sign in the yard that declares that the property is an example of a beautiful home. For example, the sign could read, "Congratulations! DIB Curb Appeal 2020." Start off with 25-30 homes and record the addresses. In the future you could use the information as a springboard to ask for volunteers to join DIB.*

By recognizing good landscaping and floral display throughout the community, you help bring pride to a community. *Make a show of the Business of the Month and Curb Appeal signs by presenting these achievements before town hall meetings or other prominent venues. You could also use this leverage to approach businesses for donations to expand floral displays in Dyer.*

It is commendable that the garden groups and DIB in Dyer are active and are working to maintain the plantings at Town Hall. *Also consider larger plantings at city park entrances to make the parks more attractive and inviting to visitors. This can be accomplished by either creating new beds or by placing large containers – two per entrance. Using containers is an excellent way to increase floral display for your park entrances. Ask a local greenhouse to plant them for you using the "thriller, filler, spiller" concept four to six weeks prior to placing them in the park entrances. Place a sign in each pot stating the greenhouse that grew them ... the local greenhouse may just plant and grow them and donate the labor and plant materials for the free advertising. Sources for containers can be found at potsplanterandmore.com, wayfair.com, or hayneedle.com/outdoor/planters. Once the containers are placed in the parks, amend your contract with Lakeshore Landscaping to include the watering and maintenance of the containers.*



Along Hart Avenue, from Plum Creek to U.S. 30 and Town Hall, there are light poles with banners attached to them. *Consider putting up hanging baskets below each of the banners to help with the planned renovation along Hart Avenue. It will bolster your commitment to the area improvements. A good source for hanging baskets is the Eckert H2O Labor Saver at h2olaborsaver.com. Again, after installing the baskets, Lakeshore Landscaping can water and maintain them.*

Landscaped Areas Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
3. LANDSCAPED AREAS (LA): plants and related programs for the leadership, design, installation, and maintenance of landscape. Includes shrubs, ornamental grasses, vines, evergreen topiaries, turf, and groundcovers	Not Applicable N/A	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
a. Leadership and Policy						
LA.a.01 - Management of planting public landscaped areas				X		
LA.a.02 - Municipal landscape ordinance requires landscaping and maintenance for new and/or improved commercial development				X		
b. Plan of Action						
LA.b.01 - Planning for restoration of natural areas				X		
LA.b.02 - Strategy for management of invasive plants				X		
LA.b.03 - Demonstration/display gardens with interpretive signage (pollinator, wildlife, native, low-water use, etc.) in place and promoted			X			
LA.b.04 - Effective communication of "Right Plant in the Right Place" and/or invasive plant issues			X			
LA.b.05 - Recognition program for attractive landscapes in place		X				
c. Design						
LA.c.01 - Unity and Variety: plant combinations create visual interest while appearing coordinated				X		
LA.c.02 - Suitability of Plant Selections: plants selected for existing and anticipated environmental conditions				X		
LA.c.03 - Distribution/Locations: landscaping found throughout the community and at key locations				X		
d. Maintenance						
LA.d.01 - Grooming: pruning of plants, removal and/or replacement of dead plants					X	
LA.d.02 - Plant Health: strategies such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management) in place to monitor and manage diseases and pests				X		
LA.d.03 – Organic mulch from renewable and sustainable sources is used by the municipality in appropriate places				X		
LA.d.04 - Weed Management: strategies in place to manage weeds (removal, mulching, etc.)				X		
LA.d.05 - Health and Vigor: plants are robust				X		
LA.d.06 - Turf Care: proper mowing, edging, and replacement of dead turf					X	
LA.d.07 - Turf Health: procedures such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management) in place to monitor and manage diseases, pests, and weeds					X	
e. Community Involvement						
LA.e.01 - Volunteers assist in funding, design, installation, and/or care of landscaped areas and/or turf in public areas			X			

f. Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
LA.f.01 - Judges to enter text below		NS	NS	NS		X
The great landscaping in the commercial districts, especially the banks.						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points		Percentage		
3. Landscaped Areas (LA)	76	38		50.00%		

Landscaped Areas (LA) Recommendations:



The landscaping throughout the neighborhoods of Dyer was very pleasing. Visiting three different homes in three different neighborhoods proved to be a delight with a palette of combinations of perennials and annuals! Most of the commercial enterprises along the U.S. 30 corridor had attractive landscaping at the front of their buildings. As cited before, the various bank branches had outstanding color and design throughout their landscaping. They must realize the power of well-designed landscaping to attract customers to their premises. Obviously, most residents in Dyer value nice landscaping.

The entrance and the grounds around Dyer Town Hall were very attractive and well-maintained. Two of the parks we visited, Elmer Miller Park and Pheasant Hills Park, both had landscape installed next to the signs announcing the parks. Elmer Miller Park was the more attractive of the two with lush growth surrounding the sign.



Throughout the community we could see strong evidence of healthy, groomed plants, even in the high July heat, in both the residential and commercial areas. *The public sector needs to do more work to keep their parks' landscape plantings looking well-groomed and maintained. While there is no irrigation in the majority of the parks, Lakeshore Landscaping, who maintains the flowers and landscaped areas for the parks, needs to step up their maintenance. Perhaps a review of the standards for maintenance should be conducted by the city to ensure those standards are being met by the local contractor. By tightening up on the standards, the contractor knows what is expected and the end results will be a more pleasing experience for your residents.*



Everywhere we went we saw that the turf is well-maintained throughout the community. In the public sector the Park Department does an exceptional job of turf maintenance through their local contractor, Evergreen Landscape. *The Park Department and Evergreen should be commended for their commitment to the IPM principles of proper treatment for broadleaf control and for a mowing height of not less than three inches.*

Although the turf is managed well, there is a lot of it! The 17-acres of Pheasant Hills and the 30 plus acres of Central Park probably consist of 80% turf. *Consider establishing native plantings where practical in these parks and others. Since there is no*

irrigation in your parks, native vegetation is attractive as it generally has a deeper root system and can better withstand summer droughts. Not to be thought of as “weed,” native plantings can increase bio-diversity attracting birds, butterflies and other wildlife. It will also decrease the amount of mowing required by turf, potentially saving public funds. *A good place to start could be along the paths that border the pond in Pheasant Hills Park. A great example of native plantings is the community of St. Charles, IL, and what they have done along the pathway of the Fox River. You already have a relationship with the IDNR through tree grants and plantings; contact them to see how to go about establishing native plantings or go to Roy Diblik Northwind Landscaping for ideas on creating sustainable plantings.*

Since Central Park is still in the planning and developmental stage, this location would also be a great area to establish native or sustainable plantings throughout. It would cost the city some money to hire a landscape architect to design such a planting, but the long-term effects would be worth every penny invested in such a project!

To help develop the plans described above, consider input from your citizens, DIB, the Beautification Committee, all working together with Nike O’Shea and the Park Department. Once a plan is adopted, make an appeal to the residents to volunteer time to help establish the plantings. Also, interns that have a horticultural major can offer their knowledge as well as a vested interest in projects like these. They can also help to organize the work needed for these kinds of projects.

Urban Forestry Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
4. URBAN FORESTRY (UF): trees and related programs for the leadership, management, design, installation, and maintenance on public and private lands	Not Applicable N/A	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
a. Leadership and Policy						
UF.a.01 - Qualified personnel are on staff or accessing trained individuals such as arborists and/or urban foresters			X			
UF.a.02 - Tree board/commission and/or department is active				X		
UF.a.03 - Municipal ordinance(s) enacted/enforced for tree preservation on public and/or private property		X				
UF.a.04 - Municipal ordinance(s) enacted/enforced for protection of trees during construction			X			
UF.a.05 - Currently a Tree City USA community and/or has the Growth Award designation					X	
b. Plan of Action						
UF.b.01 - Tree inventory for public areas is complete and current within the past ten years			X			
UF.b.02 - Annual tree planting program for public areas					X	
UF.b.03 - Management strategies for removal of dead, imperiled, and invasive trees			X			
UF.b.04 - Policy for recognition and protection of heritage trees in place		X				
UF.b.05 - Effective communication to residents of recommended trees, proper planting, "Right Tree in the Right Place," and/or maintenance					X	
c. Design						
UF.c.01 - Variety: current practices include appropriate selection of tree species being planted						X
UF.c.02 - Placement: current practices include appropriate spacing and planting area for optimal root and canopy growth					X	
UF.c.03 - Planting: current practices include correct tree planting depth (trunk flare at/above grade)				X		
UF.c.04 - Arboretum in place with labels and descriptive signage		X				
d. Maintenance						
UF.d.01 - Tree Health: strategies in place to monitor and manage diseases and pests				X		
UF.d.02 - Watering, Mulching, and Pruning for New Trees: procedures for watering and proper mulching (i.e., no volcano mulching) in place				X		
UF.d.03 - Pruning for Established Trees: appropriate pruning, removal of dead limbs, and canopies raised adequately above vehicle and pedestrian areas				X		
e. Community Involvement						
UF.e.01 - Policy for donations to tree planting in public areas (memorial trees, etc.) in place				X		
UF.e.02 - Community participates in Arbor Day activities						X
UF.e.03 - Volunteers assist in tree planting and/or care					X	

f. Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
UF.f.01 - Judges to enter text below		NS	NS	NS		X
The Communitree volunteer program that plants seedlings in nurseries for future tree planting						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
4. Urban Forestry (UF)	84	43	51.19%			

Urban Forestry (UF) Recommendations:

Congratulations to Dyer for celebrating its 12th year as a Tree City USA! It reflects your understanding of and commitment to the importance of trees to a community!



Through your association with the IDNR you have made great strides in increasing your urban forestry canopy through grants provided by them. As a result, over the past years, you have learned the concept of “right tree, right place.” *Put in signs designating what type of tree is planted. This will help interested residents make appropriate tree choices for their own residence. Mike O’Shea is in the process of becoming a tree steward. We encourage him to complete that program.*

With grant money you received and with the help of volunteers, you have planted over 279 trees within the past three years! That is quite an accomplishment! *We encourage you to keep on applying for those grants and*

to continue developing a relationship with the IDNR.



Tucked behind the Dyer Town Hall is the three-acre Elmer Miller Park – a nicely shaded park with a playground, amenities, and at least 13 different species of trees. All were mature, healthy trees! *With the park’s proximity to the town hall, consider labeling the trees for identification to help educate people who come to visit the park. Perhaps on the next Arbor Day, plant a Tulip tree in the park to commemorate its position as the state tree of Indiana. Make an event out of the planting and invite the town manager and city officials. Think about inviting the IDNR Forestry Division manager. An event like this gives you an opportunity to show off your accomplishments, raises awareness*

for your urban forestry plan and may increase volunteerism.

The community of Dyer is involved in Arbor Day Celebration, giving out one hundred seedlings to the residents of Dyer. Also, the community plants hundreds of other trees at schools and “nurseries” in public parks and other public areas throughout the city. We understand you are planning on producing a newsletter this fall on tree planting and maintenance. *Be sure to include the “right tree, right place” concept and pass this information to your residents when they pick up the trees on Arbor Day.*

According to your Profile you are planning to establish a forest on the south end of Central Park. *Consider establishing an arboretum as part of the forest by using trees found in the mid-west for starters. The Arbor Day Foundation has information on how to start a simple arboretum. See arborday.org/programs.*

You have an active tree board. *We suggest they review the tree ordinances for the purpose of protecting or mitigating damage to trees on public property during construction projects whether the construction is public or private.* There should be a policy in place to manage and preserve trees in public parks and certain trees in the right of way. With a current tree inventory, you have a start toward developing a tree policy. *Use this policy to determine which trees need to be or should be preserved. To keep your inventory up to date, consider using interns to update them periodically.*

When we were driving through the neighborhoods, we noticed trees that were dead or had large branches that were hung up. These can be dangerous to homeowners or their neighbors because of deteriorating or falling branches. *While there is an ordinance about the removal of such trees, the enforcement is lax. Step up the enforcement of the ordinance to make the neighborhoods safer.*

Central Park is being developed into a multi-use park. You are to be commended for the plan to plant trees as part of that development. By using grant money and volunteers to plant the trees, you are planning for the future. *Consider using "gator bags" around the new saplings until they are well-established, especially in summer drought periods.*

Environmental Efforts Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
5. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS (EE): environmental leadership, policies, plans and programs for resource conservation; pollution control; trash, recycling, and reuse; and alternative fuel vehicles	Not Applicable N/A	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
a. Leadership and Policy						
EE.a.01 - Environmental Advisory Board(s) and/or Green Team(s) in place		X				
EE.a.02 - Electric/alternative fuel vehicle(s) used by municipality			X			
EE.a.03 - Electric vehicle charging station(s) provided				X		
EE.a.04 - Stormwater management policies in place					X	
EE.a.05 - Pet waste policies in place and enforced					X	
b. Plan of Action						
EE.b.01 - Sustainability Action Plan in place			X			
EE.b.02 - Effective education about environmental efforts				X		
EE.b.03 - Litter and/or environmental clean-up procedures in use					X	
c. Resource Conservation						
EE.c.01 - Bio-swales and/or rain gardens to reduce stormwater run-off pollution in place					X	
EE.c.02 - Home energy audit/incentives available				X		
EE.c.03 - Low-flow water device incentives available		X				
d. Trash, Recycling, and Reuse Management						
EE.d.01 - Residential curbside trash collection is available and/or required					X	
EE.d.02 - Residential curbside recycling collection and/or collection points are in place					X	
EE.d.03 - Standardized labels (Recycle Across America) are on trash/recycling bins/carts				X		
EE.d.04 - Standardized labels (Recycle Across America) are on trash/recycling receptacles in public areas					X	
EE.d.05 - Yard waste composting pick-up and/ or drop-off available						X
EE.d.06 - Prescription drug drop-off(s) available				X		
EE.d.07 - Hazardous waste and/or electronics waste collection or drop-off(s) available					X	
EE.d.08 - Plastic bag and/or foam container collection point(s) available				X		
EE.d.09 - Reuse opportunities are available (clothing, books, household goods, repair initiatives, etc.				X		

e. Community Involvement						
EE.e.01 - Participation in Earth Day celebrations, and similar events that enhance public awareness of environmental issues				X		
EE.e.02 - Garden clubs, Master Gardeners, school curricula, and/or Soil and Water Conservation District, etc. provide educational opportunities for rain barrel usage, backyard habitats, and other environmental initiatives				X		
f. Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
EE.f.01 - Judges to enter text below		NS	NS	NS	X	
Bike path is in Comprehensive Plan						
Totals:	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
5. Environmental Efforts (EE)	92		51		55.43%	

Environmental Efforts (EE) Recommendations:



In the past few years, Dyer has actively pursued a variety of funding resources, including grants, bond issuance, TIF initiatives and more. As a result, the town has begun to be in a position to fund projects which were previously out of reach. The town manager has carefully prioritized infrastructure projects which are being addressed as funds become available. Storm water management projects are among the infrastructure projects now on the list. Of special note is the 2-stage ditch project which addresses the Plum Creek which flows between Town Hall and the Dyer Community Center and ultimately ends at the Little Calumet

River. The grant program which is funding this project includes the Little Calumet Commission and other local communities. The town is now working with the County surveyor on necessary planning prior to construction, which will include widening the creek bed, removing obstructions and stabilizing the banks of the stream.



Other significant infrastructure projects aimed at controlling storm water are also underway. Street utilities are being replaced and new curbs and gutters are being installed in neighborhoods prone to flooding in major storm events. This reconstruction is part of the much-needed infrastructure upgrade.

Numerous detention basins located throughout Dyer constitute an important component of the storm water management for the town. Many of these areas are mowed and used as part of the park along the waterway. Native plants line detention basins and help stabilize the

banks. *We noted a refreshing lack of invasive species in these areas, although phragmites, an especially aggressive invasive plant, is beginning to take hold. We urge you to take action to eliminate the spread of this species while it is still relatively contained. Twice a year, in the spring and fall, treatment is required. In the*

spring a controlled burn (at larger sites) or regulated spray with herbicide approved for aquatic areas followed by overseeding with desired native plants is advised. Fall treatment should include a second spray application. For additional information go to <http://greatlakesphragmites.net>.

To extend control of phragmites to privately held property, consider requiring control through a town ordinance. As you rewrite/update your ordinance as part of the new Comprehensive Plan, expand the noxious weed ordinance to include invasive species, with phragmites among those being named. Be sure to include teeth in the ordinance to encourage compliance.

Dyer's trash and recycling program is comprehensive. A third party is under contract by the town for curbside pickup of trash once per week. Similarly, recyclable material is picked up curbside every other week. Attractive, clean, easily identified trash and recycling containers are conveniently located throughout the town, especially in the parks near sports and picnic areas. Working with the Lake County Solid Waste Management District (LCSWMD), hazardous waste recycling, shredding services, and more are available. Most extraordinary, we understand that the town has arranged for a service that will pick up large appliances such as refrigerators and air conditioners for disposal or recycling. To keep the ball rolling, recycling information is published in the town newsletter.

We understand that there is a program in the schools and at the town summer camp which teaches recycling among other environmental efforts. *Consider engaging the classrooms in the elementary school to track the quantity and type of recycling material collected. Post a thermometer in the main hall of the school that shows the volume of recycled material and the reduction of material otherwise headed for the landfill. An expansion of this program would be a competition among grades to see which grade is most successful in reducing waste. The winner each year could be posted on a plaque in the main hall of the school.*

Directly behind the Plum Creek Center sign in Elmer Smith Park a demonstration rain garden has been installed to inform residents of this attractive, effective tool to control storm water runoff. *While attractive, this raingarden cannot in and of itself inform residents how to install a raingarden which will most successfully control stormwater runoff. We suggest an interpretive sign be installed in this area with information on the base structure of a rain garden plus suggested plants.*

We applaud the Parks Department for providing uniform, clean, attractive waste and recycling containers in the parks and other public spaces. *While the blue containers are clearly marked "recycle," we suggest you add further labeling which defines which material is to be recycled in these containers. See www.recycleacrossamerica.com for labeling availability. This will help avoid contamination of the recycled material*



While Dyer has a program to collect leaves in residential neighborhoods during the fall, it does not have a composting program. Rather, collected yard waste is chopped, then land- applied by spreading at a site outside of town. Similarly, sludge from the Dyer sewage treatment plant is also land-applied. This work is done by an outside contractor under contract to the Town of Dyer.

Celebrating Heritage Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
6. CELEBRATING HERITAGE (CH): recognition, designation, protection, commemoration, and celebration of historical, cultural, natural, agricultural, and industrial resources	Not Applicable N/A	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
a. Leadership and Policy						
CH.a.01 - Historic preservation ordinance effectively provides commercial and residential <u>district</u> designation and protection from demolition		X				
CH.a.02 - Historic preservation ordinance effectively provides commercial and residential <u>individual structure</u> designation and protection from demolition	X					
CH.a.03 - Design guidelines in place to preserve the character of historic neighborhoods and/or structures	X					
CH.a.04 - Protective covenants to protect structures from demolition are in place and promoted	X					
CH.a.05 - Incentives offered to promote preservation: tax credits, waived permit fees, eased setbacks, rebates, etc.		X				
CH.a.06 - Land trusts and/or conservation easements to protect open spaces are available		X				
CH.a.07 - Historic Preservation and/or Architectural Review Board in place and effective			X			
CH.a.08 - Historical Society is active				X		
b. Plan of Action						
CH.b.01 - Effective communication of ordinances, policies, and restoration methods	X					
CH.b.02 - National Register of Historic Places district and/or individual designations in place				X		
CH.b.03 - Natural and/or agricultural areas are protected				X		
CH.b.04 - Archives, artifacts, cemetery records, and/or oral histories in place and properly stored				X		
CH.b.05 - Education: historical publications/websites, interpretive signage, and programs in place				X		
c. Commemoration						
CH.c.01 - Signage in place for historic neighborhoods and/or structures		X				
CH.c.02 - Historical museum(s) and/or interpretive displays maintained				X		
CH.c.03 - Cemeteries, monuments, and/or plaques in place and well-maintained				X		
CH.c.04 - Community heritage promoted through tours (guided or self), brochures, Smartphone apps, etc.				X		
CH.c.05 - Parades, festivals, events, programs commemorating a community's heritage are held					X	
CH.c.06 - National Preservation Month in May celebrated		X				
d. Community Involvement						
CH.d.01 - Volunteers participate in planning and implementing recognition of a community's heritage through historical tours, parades, festivals, etc.				X		
CH.d.02 - Volunteers participate in maintaining historical sites and structures			X			

f. Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
CH.e.01 - Judges to enter text below		NS	NS	NS	X	
Continuation of fourth grade history education at the Museum						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
6. Celebrating Heritage (CH)	72	26	36.11%			

Celebrating Heritage (CH) Recommendations:

With early roots in farming, Dyer has little built history remaining from its earliest roots.

The Dyer Historical Society and Museum, established in 1984, works hard to preserve important information about the town's founders and those who worked to build the community. The museum is a repository of memorabilia, beginning with native Indian artifacts and moving to the present with an active program to gather family history from residents with multi-generational roots in the community. The Society remains active, working with students during the school year, hosting a speaker once a month, and maintaining the displays throughout the year.



The History Museum is housed in the lower level of Town Hall. A display case in the main entry of Town Hall provides an excellent introduction to the collection in the lower level and induces visitors to head downstairs to see more.

The museum archives include a collection of native artifacts from the Potawatomi Tribe which lived in the area. Other collections also provide a diverse and interesting glimpse into the past. *Unfortunately, Kathy Powers, the museum director, has few other volunteers to assist in organizing, cataloguing and displaying the collections. As did last year's judges, we recommend you reach out to potential volunteers to help with specific tasks or areas of interest.*

We were told that there is no budget for a computer for the museum. We suggest you put the word out that the museum could use a computer. You may find that one or more of the residents or businesses in Dyer is upgrading their computer and is more than willing to donate a used one to the organization. Alternatively, visit <https://outlet.us.dell.com> where refurbished laptops and other computers are available at rock bottom prices. As space is at a premium, the purchase of a laptop would be a good way to minimize the spatial impact of the computer while providing the needed technology to digitize and catalogue information held by the museum. Once you have a computer in hand, you may wish to consider obtaining the free software called Museum Archive. The basic edition is free, but with the purchase of the book, the premium edition is available at no additional charge. Go to www.musarch.com for further information. For starters you should reach out to high school students interested in history for assistance in using the new equipment and software. Many students need to find interesting projects to fulfill the volunteer hours required for graduation.

Among other collections, the museum is also home to volumes of Dyer resident family histories which are housed in the museum office. Individuals often visit to look in these books and do genealogical research. *Much of this information would be more accessible if it were digitized. Further, digitized backups stored off site would provide some protection against loss in the event of unexpected flooding or other catastrophe.*

Currently Dyer lacks a historic preservation ordinance and consequently has neither a local historic district nor local designated historic site. One site in town, Meyer's Castle, built between 1927-1931, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The original owner, J.E. Meyer, was a herbologist and continued his practice on the grounds until 1950. In 1975, the castle and grounds were sold to the East Dyer Development Company who developed the Castlewood Subdivision of Dyer. Subsequently, the castle was again sold, rehabilitated, and served as event venue but is now closed. *We strongly recommend that Dyer explore several avenues to preserve this iconic historic artifact in the town. Ideally, the grounds could be turned into an arboretum and the mansion and grounds become a tourist destination for those traveling down the historic Lincoln Highway. If the condition of the mansion makes this impractical, maintenance of the grounds as a park and/or arboretum would clearly benefit the town and all visitors to the area. When modifying the Zoning Ordinance, consider having the area occupied by Meyer's Castle reflect a low density development zone with permitted uses which reflect those which have historically occupied the grounds.*

St. Joseph's Church is a landmark in town visible from quite a distance in any direction. Time has taken its toll on the church and repairs are needed, especially at the steeple which is visibly out of plumb. This church is home to the only cemetery within the town limits. A cyclone fence surrounds the cemetery which was closed to visitors during our visit. The cemetery is nearly full and the church is seeking to expand it into the grassy area adjacent to the parking lot. *The cemetery does not appear to have hours when it is open to the public on a regular basis. This area is reported to include the graves of about 15 of the original homesteaders. Perhaps the Historical Society could work with the church to open the cemetery to visitors on select days during the year and include a map of the grounds locating the graves of persons of note. Also, consider having Society members or other volunteers take rubbings of historical markers. These could be stored in the Museum archives and periodically go on display at the museum.*

We also recommend the church soften the appearance of the rather forbidding cyclone fence by planting some low maintenance shrubbery along its border with the road.



Overall Impression (OI) Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
7. OVERALL IMPRESSION (OI): adequate and effective amenities are provided in good condition, and the community is welcoming and attractive	Not Applicable N/A	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
a. Leadership and Policy						
Ol.a.01 - Signage ordinances enacted and enforced				X		
Ol.a.02 - Ordinances in place to address overgrown lots, abandoned vehicles, unscreened dumpsters, public nuisances, unregulated garage sales, empty storefront windows, etc.					X	
Ol.a.03 - Code enforcement/compliance officer on municipal staff and codes are enforced					X	
Ol.a.04 - Design style determined, applied, and consistent for: site furnishings, crosswalks, gateway entry features, banners, wayfinding signage, etc.				X		
b. Amenities						
Ol.b.01 - Site furnishings in place: water features, lamp posts, benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, trash and recycling receptacles, containers, planters, and cigarette receptacles					X	
Ol.b.02 - Crosswalks well-marked			X			
Ol.b.03 - Public restrooms available					X	
Ol.b.04 - Effective community gateway entry features				X		
Ol.b.05 - Effective use of banners, murals, and/or public art				X		
Ol.b.06 - Effective wayfinding signage		X				
Ol.b.07 - Effective use of non-plant seasonal decorations (lights, ornaments, etc.)			X			
c. Condition and Maintenance						
Ol.c.01 - Condition of structures, buildings, decks, patios related to lack of vandalism, graffiti, peeling or faded paint, and rust					X	
Ol.c.02 - Condition of infrastructure: roadways, road shoulders, curbs, medians, sidewalks, crosswalks/pavement markings, transformers, and utility poles related to lack of weeds, vandalism, litter, graffiti, peeling or faded paint, and rust					X	
Ol.c.03 - Condition of signs and site furnishings: water features, lamp posts, benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, trash and recycling receptacles, containers, planters, and cigarette receptacles					X	
Ol.c.04 - Condition of vacant lots, stormwater retention ponds, and swales				X		
Ol.c.05 - Lack of snipe/stake signs, billboards, and posted flyers					X	
Ol.c.06 - Regularly scheduled street sweeping					X	

d. Community Involvement						
Ol.d.01 - Volunteer funding and/or participation in community revitalization and improvement initiatives, such as Adopt-A-Spot, Habitat for Humanity, River Sweep, home repair programs (CHIP), disaster relief, clean-up days, etc.			X			
Ol.d.02 - Process is available for residents to fund public amenities such as memorial benches, brick pathways, etc.				X		
e. Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
Ol.e.01 - Judges to enter text below		NS	NS	NS	X	
Reworking Comprehensive Plan and Ordinances to meet current city needs.						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points		Percentage		
7. Overall Impression (OI)	80	45		56.25%		

Overall Impression (OI) Recommendations:



Dyer is a town in rural Indiana which is in the midst of a growth and development spurt, rapidly changing it from a farming community to one that is distinctly suburban in flavor. The town is home to numerous parks, good schools, an excellent health system, a variety of residential neighborhoods, both single and multi-family, and a growing commercial district. Bisected by U.S. Route 30, Dyer is challenged to knit north and south sections of the town into a cohesive whole and create a central business district at and

near the intersection of Calumet, the north/south artery and U.S. Route 30. Both the heavy traffic and the speed of travel on Route 30 discourage travelers from stopping to enjoy the many favorable aspects of Dyer. Clearly, slowing traffic to the posted speed limit would go a long way as a first step to making this area user friendly. *Encouraging attractive landscaping at all commercial sites is the next step in enticing travelers to stop in town.* Kudos to the banks along this route as their landscaping is universally well-conceived and well-maintained. *As a fellow judge once said, "Never forget the real and perceived value of beauty as individuals make decisions about where to stop, where to shop, and where to live."*

Crosswalks in the heavily trafficked areas of Dyer are poorly marked, if at all, even in areas controlled by traffic signals. While in Dyer, on several occasions we observed a number of pedestrians attempting to cross Route 30 at a light on their route to a restaurant on the other side of the road. Even when crossing with a green light, the pedestrians were in danger from turning vehicles whose drivers had no regard to those on foot. We personally experienced a similar situation when crossing the road at Hart St. near U.S.30. *We highly recommend that Dyer join forces with neighboring towns bordering Rt.30 to seek several remedies from the state:*

- *Install traffic signals with pedestrian signals, especially near Town Hall and at intersections near multiuse facilities with professional offices and residential apartments, and in areas targeted by the Comprehensive Plan to be ripe for development into a commercial Town Center. Jumping into a car to cross the street is counterproductive.*

- *Mark crosswalks very clearly. Consider installing brick pavers at crosswalks. Be sure to border them with white markings. Repaint them as necessary to keep them highly visible.*
- *Consider traffic calming strategies, especially along U.S. 30, to encourage drivers to stay within the speed limit. While planted medians such as those along some N/S roads in Dyer may not be feasible, large oblong containers planted with tall species such as crepe myrtle could be placed on the median in long rows. Landscaping along roadways has proven efficacious in slowing traffic.*



The new entry signs at the gateways to Dyer are quite distinctive and clearly announce one's entry into the town, especially at night as they are cleverly back-lit. *To make these entry markers even more distinctive, consider installing landscaping flanking the sides of the markers to help the gateway sign be distinct from competing signs on the roadway. Rather than have the Parks Department add this to their roster, offer these landscaping opportunities to businesses in town as a spot up for adoption in an Adopt-a-Spot program. The winning business would be permitted to add a small sign identifying themselves as the keeper of the marker. Of course, any business which failed to maintain the spot in pristine condition would lose the privilege of having the opportunity to advertise their business at the entry to the community.*

Town Hall is a handsome structure and is beautifully maintained. Its position adjacent to Elmer Miller Park and a brief walk across Plum Creek to the Dyer Community Center enhances this image and encourages residents to visit this part of town. Unfortunately, the blank right side wall of the town services building leaves something to be desired. *A well-done mural on this wall would provide a handsome complement to the Town Square and Elmer Smith Park.*

The American flags lining Calumet Avenue very effectively add to the street's identity along the length of the avenue. Similarly, banners on Hart St. are equally effective in creating a singular identity to the street.

The condition of roadways, curbs and gutters is generally very good. The municipality sweeps each street in town at least once per month and the town is in the process of repairing/replacing roadway infrastructure throughout town

Signs and site furnishings throughout the town on public property were generally in very good to excellent condition, and parks were equipped with picnic pavilions, toilet facilities, and opportunities for a wide variety of outdoor activities. Opportunities exist for residents to fund public amenities and numerous examples of same were in sight. *We recommend that the town select a uniform design for site furnishings such as benches, bicycle racks and the like, as currently multiple different styles exist throughout the town. This selection should be used both for both new and replacement furnishing and for memorial furnishings. Plaques affixed to donated furnishings should also fit within a unified style throughout the town.*

The continuing development of the new Central Park with its numerous playing fields, picnic grounds, dog park, tree nursery and more is to be commended. With the continued development of this park, traffic exiting the side of the park near the new fire station is surely increasing. Unfortunately, the sight of the cyclone fence at the border of Briar Ridge and Central Park is not particularly attractive, although the fence along the border closer to the entry of Briar Ridge is quite handsome. *Perhaps the visual impact of this cyclone fence could be reduced by painting it black or planting it out. Even better, perhaps the fence could be replaced by one similar to that near the main gate at the entry to the development.*

Increasing the involvement of volunteers in projects in town can frequently present a challenge. *Consider including several volunteer groups in town in a general meeting with DIB to create a list of smaller projects with distinct goals and limited time frames that would make an impact in town. These could be called “One and Done” projects which could be tied to an event in town and advertised as part of the event.*

We suggest several other initiatives that will help you identify residents who may be interested in getting involved on this front:

- *Activate a “Yard of the Month” program, placing a sign in the front yard of residences with outstanding floral displays and landscaping. Post the award on the town website and on other social media.*
- *Similarly, begin a “Business of the Month” program, recognizing businesses with a distinctive street presence.*
- *As more residents begin to improve their street presence, expand the program to encompass more awards than simply one per month.*



Warrenville, Illinois, gradually expanded programs such as these and now places over 200 “Curb Appeal” signs throughout the city. These have become coveted recognition signs with neighbors vying for the honor. This year, Warrenville reached out to recipients of the recognition, requesting interested individuals join the Warrenville in Bloom team. 35 people responded in the positive!

Finally, be sure to host a volunteer recognition dinner during the year. Encourage council members to attend and invite volunteers from various organizations to the event. In addition to recognizing those who have volunteered for different events, consider announcing a “Volunteer of the Year,” and be sure to post this award in Town Hall and on the website.

Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET) Definition		Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)		
8. EVALUATION TOUR PREPARATION AND ACTIONS (ET): community's readiness prior to and the action during the Evaluation Tour		Not Applicable N/A	Unmet (0 pts)	Met (1 pt)
a. Prior to the Evaluation Tour				
ET.a.01 - Community Profile provided to judges at least two weeks prior to the judging date				X
ET.a.02 - Community Profile includes contacts with emails				X
ET.a.03 - Community Profile from a returning community makes it clear what is new and/or implemented from judges' recommendations (scored as N/A for a new community)				X
ET.a.04 - Evaluation Tour Itinerary and Community Map with boundaries provided to judges at least two weeks prior to their arrival				X
b. During the Evaluation Tour				
ET.b.01 - Evaluation Tour provided a representative cross-section of the community				X
ET.b.02 - Judges met with elected/appointed municipal leaders and/or staff				X
ET.b.03 - Judges met with the business and/or non-profit community			X	
ET.b.04 - Judges met with the media			X	
ET.b.05 - Judges met with volunteers				X
ET.b.06 - Judges were asked to give a presentation(s)				X
c. Final Wrap-Up				
ET.c.01 - Enough time was allotted for judges to work on the Evaluation Tour Report in a quiet place with adequate Wi-Fi availability				X
ET.c.02 - Community participated in a wrap-up session at the end of the Evaluation Tour				X
ET.c.03 - Evaluation Report metrics were adequately addressed in the Community Profile and/or Evaluation Tour Itinerary and during the Evaluation Tour				X
d. Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note				
ET.d.01 - Judges to enter text below		X	NS	
Totals:		Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage
8. Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET)		13.00	11.00	84.62%

Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET) Recommendations:

We recommend you expand your tour itinerary to include a checklist to inform the judges which criteria are being covered at each stop along the tour. This could be done with the benefit of an excel spreadsheet, or simply with the inclusion of the initials of each relevant criteria after the name of the destination.

Also, inclusion of a tour map with the itinerary for each day mapped out in a distinctive color will aid the judges in orienting themselves within the community.

DISCLAIMERS:

1. Communities are responsible for addressing the metrics in the Community Profile, Evaluation Tour Itinerary, and during the Evaluation Tour. Please note that the metric calculations contained herein are final, and each community is encouraged to focus on any changes during the following year's entry in the America in Bloom National Awards Program.
2. All information is given to the best of America in Bloom's knowledge and is believed to be accurate. Your conditions of use and application of recommendations and/or suggested products are beyond our control. There is no warranty expressed or implied regarding the accuracy of any given data or statements. America in Bloom specifically disclaims any responsibility or liability relating to the use of the recommendations and/or suggested products and shall under no circumstances whatsoever, be liable for any special, incidental or consequential damages which may arise from such use.
3. Reference herein to any specific commercial products, processes, or service by trade named trademark manufacturer or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation or favoring by America in Bloom. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein shall not be used for advertising or product endorsement purposes.

2019 Community Recognitions

Community: Dyer, Indiana

Recognized Criterion: Environmental Efforts

Located in an area of Indiana which is prone to flooding, the town has actively pursued storm water management on several fronts. The town has storm water management policies in place, and with funds that have become available for infrastructure programs the town is moving forward with several projects relative to these policies. In several sections of Dyer, street utilities are being replaced and new curbs and gutters are being installed in neighborhoods with flooding issues. The Plum Creek which flows through town is being widened and stabilized to prevent future flooding. Detention basins throughout town are very well maintained, and in appropriate locations there are areas of moisture-loving native plants.

Dyer's trash and recycling program is comprehensive with curbside pickup of both trash and recyclables. Attractive, clean, easily identifiable trash and recycling containers are conveniently located throughout the town, especially in parks and near sports and picnic areas. Further, there is a program in the schools and at the town summer camp which teaches about recycling as well as other environmental subjects. In the fall, leaves are collected, chopped, then land-applied at an area just outside of town. Similarly, the sludge from Dyer's wastewater treatment plant is also land-applied after treatment.

Noteworthy Project or Initiative: Development of Central Park

In the past few years Dyer has added four new parks. The largest of these is Central Park, which is a multipurpose park of which the town is justifiably proud. The park includes a large pavilion with bathroom facilities which sees very heavy use, particularly on National Night Out, an event put on by the police department. Also included are both softball and baseball fields as well as "hard" sports like tennis and pickleball. Two areas near the playing fields boast tree nurseries which will supply trees for future installation in various parks. In addition to the trees already installed in the park, the town is tentatively planning a forested area on the south end of the park.

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