

# America in Bloom 2019 Evaluation Report



**Community:** Mansfield, Ohio  
**Population:** 43,160  
**Population Category:** 30,001-45,000  
**Evaluation Dates:** July 25-26

**Lead Judge:** Linda Cromer  
**Co-Judge:** Tim France

*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)	84.00	47.00	55.95%
2. Flowers (FL)	92.00	63.00	68.48%
3. Landscaped Areas (LA)	76.00	48.00	63.16%
4. Urban Forestry (UF)	84.00	41.00	48.81%
5. Environmental Efforts (EE)	92.00	41.00	44.57%
6. Celebrating Heritage (CH)	88.00	47.00	53.41%
7. Overall Impression (OI)	80.00	45.00	56.25%
<b>Other</b>			
8. Evaluation Tour Preparation & Actions (ET)	14.00	14.00	100.00%
<b>Scoring</b>			
<b>Total Points and Percentage</b>	<b>610.00</b>	<b>346.00</b>	<b>56.72%</b>

*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
Roberta Perry	Mansfield in Bloom Contact Person	<a href="mailto:Roberta@Chooserichland.com">Roberta@Chooserichland.com</a>
Tom Brennan	Mansfield in Bloom Committee Chair	<a href="mailto:tbrennan7240@gmail.com">tbrennan7240@gmail.com</a>
Doug Versaw	Mansfield in Bloom Contact Person	<a href="mailto:dpversaw@gmail.com">dpversaw@gmail.com</a>
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Jodie Perry	Richland Area Chamber of Commerce	<a href="mailto:jperry@richlandareachamber.com">jperry@richlandareachamber.com</a>
Jim Kulig	Mansfield Men’s Garden Club, MIB	<a href="mailto:jimk323@aol.com">jimk323@aol.com</a>
Josh Maurer	Alta Florist and Greenhouse, MIB	<a href="mailto:josh-maurer@hotmail.com">josh-maurer@hotmail.com</a>

## **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



evaluation grid in the same way. Further, they were changes made to do away with ambiguities that invited subjective interpretation. We believe you, too, will appreciate the alterations to the grid as you dissect and absorb the evaluation's contents.

The restructuring of your Mansfield in Bloom's committee to include helpers/advisors for your criteria champions is a model for all "in bloom" committees. This structure serves to increase capacity and involve even greater numbers of volunteers in the selection, planning, and execution of your many targeted projects.

We appreciate the thoughtful and masterfully written leadership profiles included in your broader Community Profile. It was a gift and a privilege to read them. *As you make progress toward your goals, please include similar information on champions of change in the Community Profile. If you begin a new initiative, indicate so even if not fully completed. If you make changes or take on projects resulting from comments from the judges, please note that as well.* We like to know if we have helped, and to take measure of how you have progressed on the continuum toward the exceptional future you are creating for yourselves.

The opening session at the beginning of the tour was very helpful in setting the stage for us as we came to experience your efforts throughout our visit. We believe it will be similarly helpful for judges next year.

It was truly wonderful to meet so many members of your community from every segment of your population. We look forward to hearing of the progress you make as you continue engaging together on the journey you have begun.

Linda Cromer and Tim France

Community Vitality (CV) Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
<b>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</b>	Not Applicable N/A	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
<b>a. Leadership and Policy</b>						
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>b. Facilities and Events</b>						
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		
<b>c. Community Involvement</b>						
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	
Mansfield Rising is establishing a framework for the future of Mansfield.						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
1. Community Vitality (CV)	84	47	55.95%			

**Community Vitality (CV) Recommendations:**

Community Vitality encompasses the policies, programs, and outdoor activities and facilities that lead to a vibrant community. Mansfield residents and business owners revel in their vitality and are an inspiration.

Multiple agencies partner to better the lives of community members. Local philanthropists have invested in the renaissance of Mansfield’s downtown. North End Community Improvement Collaborative (NECIC) has partnered with multiple groups to address the needs of an underserved portion of the community.



The Blust Avenue Teaching Garden, located in the heart of a food desert, is improving the food intake of nearby residents. The garden could use a shelter. *Consider partnering with a service organization such as the Rotary Club to make it happen.*

From May to September, the Brickyard, an outdoor venue in the center of historic downtown, hosts Final Friday Concerts attended by thousands of residents and visitors. The atmosphere is festive and fun. Celebrants of all ages come for the music and sense of community. The Renaissance Theater, the largest performing arts center in North-Central Ohio is another downtown jewel in Mansfield’s crown and will anchor the planned Imagination District.

There is an exciting menu of experiences for all ages in the community. Activities for children abound. The YMCA has a new building and a splash pad in the rear. The hand carved carousel downtown is a delight for children of all ages.



*Judges encourage the municipality to develop and use a master plan for public green space and parks as an interactive tool and road map for the future.* The profile reflects that such a plan has been launched but no details were provided. *Use the input of the SXS group and their suggestions and truly develop that blueprint for the city. Consider in that plan creating connectors between and among existing trails.*

People of all ages have mobility issues. Mansfield has progressively installed sidewalk ADA accessible curb ramps for all sidewalks, even in the depressed areas of town. Accommodating access to parks and recreational areas is enriching to all. *When updating the master plan for public parks and recreation areas, include plans for ADA compliance in playgrounds, ramps and surfaces that accommodate wheelchairs, walkers, and other assistive devices. Expand accessibility with firm foam surfaces under play equipment rather than sand, bark, or dirt. Install hard surface pathways (e.g., decomposed granite) to access unique historic structures like the Blockhouse. Invest in ADA playground equipment to allow children of all ability levels to integrate into the park and play together. Provide some furnishings that accommodate wheelchairs.*



*We suggest that one area in Mansfield Rising’s Downtown Investment Plan that may especially require extensive further thought is the action item to build a community pool. It is certainly an imperative to invest in activities for our youth, but think hard about the cost vs. benefit ratio of a new pool, unless it is an enclosed, year round facility. Many community leaders across the Midwest have a nostalgic connection to the days they spent at an outdoor community pool, invest in those memories rather than investing in the realities of today and beyond, and end up with buyers’ remorse. The success of the new splash pad argues for additional facilities of that type in other areas of the community if the intent is to offer seasonal experiences for children. We are not nay-saying the idea as a whole, but urge you to consider if needs for accommodating your swim team can be met using*

*current methods. And, again, keep in mind that a short period of use for outdoor pools argues for enclosed facilities if you opt for pool construction. <https://www.curbed.com/2016/8/25/12613140/summer-swimming-pool-fountains-splash-pads-cities>*

*Mansfield shines when it comes to volunteers and your energy and enthusiasm is overwhelming. The ability of different organizations to work together and the support of foundations and individuals for capital campaigns are gratifying to see. Several people mentioned an Educational Foundation that had not been approached for funding. Sometimes the courts also have special funding for projects to benefit their special dockets such as drug courts or veteran’s courts. The participants of these programs might need to be educated about social responsibility or benefit from horticultural training or art therapy to improve their outlook, grow as individuals, and prepare to contribute to their community. We recommend you explore collaboration between and among the courts, the Mansfield Art Center and Mansfield in Bloom (MIB) to benefit all parties. You could utilize foundation educational funding to provide art therapy and horticulture education or even develop a program such as Horticulture as Art. Participants would learn social responsibility by helping MIB further develop, design and maintain the islands of color or other MIB projects. Perhaps the participants could work off fines by providing service to Mansfield in Bloom. These would all be educational experiences for the participants.*

*Farmers markets were not as successful as they were in 2018 due to the weather issues this spring and early summer. Continue to promote this concept. It will be a valuable tool to bring people to your downtown area. You might also explore the idea of creating an indoor market by adaptively reusing an appropriate vacant building in or near downtown for year-round use. Provide casual seating for purchase-and-eat patrons.*



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)
<b>a. Leadership and Policy</b>						
FL.a.01 - Public or private management of flower displays					X	
<b>b. Plan of Action</b>						
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		
<b>c. Design</b>						
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	
F.L.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	
<b>d. Maintenance</b>						
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	
The Dazzle with Daffodils initiative extended the bloom season in a big way.						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
<b>2. Flowers (FL)</b>	92	63	68.48%			

**Flowers (FL) Recommendations:**



Mansfield's team spirit shines in its floral displays. Volunteers, businesses, non-profit and civic organizations, and city government come together to fund and plant the downtown's hanging baskets, planters and numerous floral displays. Even parking lots are spruced up with barrier planters salvaged from a nearby telecommunications company. One standout floral display is located at the Richland Carrousel Park, the centerpiece of downtown.

We applaud you for your smart choices in plant material and repeated use of similar combinations, creating great visual impact in your containers and in-ground plantings

Kingwood Center Gardens has outstanding annual displays with stunning groupings of color and form. In addition, Kingwood features displays utilizing native perennials and providing a beautiful lesson is sustainable planting.



Perhaps the most ambitious new floral project for Mansfield in Bloom for 2019 was Dazzle with Daffodils. 16,000 daffodil bulbs were planted last fall in 87 different locations in Mansfield. What a sight it must have been to see daffodils dancing across the community! *It would be helpful for the judges to see more pictures of MIB's seasonal displays.*

The hanging baskets are watered daily and on alternate weeks by the city and New Hope Industries, which employs adults with special challenges. *Some baskets were not hanging at the time of our visit. Make this a priority next year. Consider that the areas you placed them at ground level are good locations for in-ground planting efforts in future. In addition, reconsider your watering schedule. The baskets and planters should not need to be watered daily. Proper use of the reservoir baskets combined with smart plant selection can reduce the labor costs for watering by 50%. We suspect that the beautiful combination chosen for your baskets this year would have thrived even with a reduced watering schedule.*



Throughout the city, volunteers play a big part in the floral plantings. For example, the city hosts a downtown planting day in May when volunteers gather to plant at the municipal building and county courthouse. At the fairgrounds, Master Gardener volunteers, the Men's Garden Club and 4-H clubs plant and maintain the floral displays. The community's floral pride also spills over to local businesses and churches. Congratulations on your efforts to recognize these volunteers with evenings like the lovely event at the Country Club.

The NECIG at Blust Avenue Garden plants annual flowers and gives them away to neighbors. What a great way to establish goodwill and deep connections to their community. Outstanding idea!

*The Judges were impressed by the recycled yellow containers planted with annuals at the Richland County Fairgrounds and would like to see their use expanded to other areas. Fabulous and floriferous - a knockout combination! Further, the sustainable perennial plantings installed by the Farmhand Friends 4-H Club provide an excellent model and could be replicated throughout the community.*



Although there appears to be an action plan in place for procurement, scheduling, planting and maintaining flower displays, *the timeline for procurement and ordering or putting the items out for bid should be moved to September (rather than January) to allow the successful bidder to get discounts on their orders and maximize their growing space in their greenhouses. The timing of this evaluation means that our recommendation is for October action this year.*

It appears that the Art Center is poised to become active in the MIB family. *Explore ways for the art community to become more active in the design elements, plant choices, and installation of your annuals.* A program such as Art in Horticulture or Horticulture as Art supported by the Mansfield Art Center might reap significant rewards.

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	Applicable N/A	Not Applicable	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
<b>a. Leadership and Policy</b>							
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>b. Plan of Action</b>							
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		
<b>c. Design</b>							
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	
<b>d. Maintenance</b>							
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		
<b>e. Community Involvement</b>							
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	
Development of "islands of color" at strategic locations throughout the community are a dynamic public/partner arrangement.						
<b>Totals:</b>		<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Actual Points</b>	<b>Percentage</b>		
<b>3. Landscaped Areas (LA)</b>		76	48	63.16%		

### Landscaped Areas (LA) Recommendations:

Mansfield engages its youth, Master Gardeners, 4-H clubs and garden clubs in landscaping. Master Gardeners created and maintain the entry landscaping and Nature Park's native landscaping demonstration gardens at the fairgrounds. The retaining wall of the park was extended 160 feet and completely encircles the Native Plant Park on the south and west sides of the facility building. Benefits include limiting soil erosion, providing a border for plant beds, and providing extra seating. Providing additional places to sit not only fosters relaxation but facilitates viewing speeches and performances on a small stage adjacent to the nature park building.

The east, west and south entrances are ADA accessible. The accessibility project includes a 120 feet long and five feet wide concrete walkway. We salute this important initiative.

This popular nature park offers a quiet oasis in the middle of sometimes hectic fairground activity. It also shares information on the benefits of landscaping with plants native to Ohio. The native plant area of the park features 147 distinct varieties of plants native to the Buckeye State. These plants all contribute to sustainability, supporting the food chain for insects as well as wildlife. Some of the larger plants displayed include varieties of milkweed and prairie grass. *We recommend collection of milkweed seed from the area to expand the population of this important monarch butterfly food source to other areas of the city.* This can help contribute to a future "monarch highway" across the community.



The Mansfield in Bloom team initiated a project this year to add "islands of color" with the establishment of new flower beds at key points throughout the city. The MIB floral committee identified four existing urban islands in the middle of roads or intersections. These islands are public property, established years ago when neighborhoods were established. The committee also identified seven plots on abandoned lots, sign locations, or centers of boulevards.

The Mansfield in Bloom team established these new beds by counting on volunteer help and smaller donations of flowers and other materials. Up to 11 beds were completed with the use of a variety of perennials.

These islands of color are an excellent investment by MIB. It shows that MIB is touching all parts of the city. *The program should be expanded in scope but only and always with respect to the capacities of the group of volunteers responsible to properly maintain them. You may want to consider making some of the islands monarch way stations and add educational labels or signage to them if they adjoin sidewalks or are close to pedestrian traffic.*



OSU Mansfield/North Central State Campus is a 640-acre natural area filled with wetlands, woodlands and a vernal pool. The school is involved in research that allows power line right-of-way to be naturalized areas without interfering with the distribution grid and without the use of clear-cutting the right-of-way. *This experimental area could be expanded to allow a larger area of the campus to be naturalized, and increased naturalization means a greater haven for pollinators and wildlife.*



Kingwood Garden Center completed its successful \$8.5 million fundraising effort. Ground has been broken for the new gateway visitor center, a perennial garden styled by noted landscape designers, and a landscaped parking garden. Kingwood has offered displaced perennials to MIB and the deadline for moving them was approximately a week after the judges' visit.

*Gifted daylilies could have been used to overplant the sunny daffodil beds which would cover the dying daffodils in the late spring. Any hostas could have been used to overplant daffodils in shaded beds. These possibilities were mentioned during our visit. The great advantage of daylilies and hostas is*

*their dig/divide/and do-it-again utility. The suggestion is still viable. Even if you used the great bounty of perennials elsewhere, they can be lifted and divided next spring.* In addition, another suggestion was that any other extra plants could have been temporarily planted at some of the land bank lots and saved for later uses in the islands of color or just to remain there to enhance their attractiveness.

*We recommend in this evaluation that you use a land bank lot for "farming" perennials for inclusion in islands of color or other areas. A lot where a building was razed will already have water service close at hand. Ask the city to extend the service on to the lot, an effort but not a massive project, and install a recessed in-ground hose receptacle requiring a "key" to open near the planting area. Having water at hand when heeling in or temporarily planting perennials will ensure survival and healthier plant stock.*



Improving the appearance of 10 gateway signs in Mansfield is a Mansfield in Bloom landscaping project that began last year and continued this year. The signs had fallen into some disrepair with no landscaping and infrequent mowing around them. They now offer a warm welcome to visitors to Mansfield. The project is an exceptional collaborative effort tapping volunteers, in-kind resources, and sponsors throughout Mansfield. The effort started with improving the soil, resourcefully managing weeds with cardboard, and smartly selecting and planting tough shrubs. The use of leaf mulch throughout Kingwood Center Gardens and public plantings in the city is a laudable best management practice (BMP) and we commend you.

As the downtown area evolves and continues to attract investment, it is critical to review and enforce ordinances covering landscaping for new development. *Greenspace requirements should include use of native plants.*

Urban Forestry Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
	Not Applicable N/A	Not Started (0 pts)	Launched (1 pt)	Achieved (2 pts)	Surpassing (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
<b>4. URBAN FORESTRY (UF): trees and related programs for the leadership, management, design, installation, and maintenance on public and private lands</b>						
<b>a. Leadership and Policy</b>						
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						
UF.a.05 - Currently a Tree City USA community and/or has the Growth Award designation				X		
<b>b. Plan of Action</b>						
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		
<b>c. Design</b>						
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			
<b>d. Maintenance</b>						
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 donation of six trees planted on Arbor Day in Central Park this spring was the first step in the commitment made by the Rotary Club to help with a vigorous tree planting program in concert with the Shade Tree Commission.						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
<b>4. Urban Forestry (UF)</b>	84	41	48.81%			

**Urban Forestry (UF) Recommendations:**

Congratulations for being a Tree City USA for 24 consecutive years. It’s an achievement of which you should be very proud.

We commend your plans to create a Certified Level 1 Arboretum near the bike path along the abandoned B&O railroad at North Lake Park. Volunteers are identifying the necessary 25 species for Level 1 certification. Once volunteers have identified the species, and *before you order signage, we recommend you check and double-check the identification. Contact qualified staff at the Mansfield OSU campus or your ODNR Regional Forester to confirm the identification. Richland County is in Region 1 of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and your urban forest contact can be reached at [www.lisa.bowers@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:www.lisa.bowers@dnr.state.oh.us).*

Your arboretum may very well provide a qualifying project for a Growth Award through the Arbor Day Foundation. *We recommend you add another educational piece to the program, such as a printed or virtual map of the different trees identified in the arboretum, and a QR code on the tree labels to allow access to a website for more detailed information about the species, habit, growth rate, whether or not it is a native species, etc. For information on the Growth Award see [www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/growthAwards.cfm](http://www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/growthAwards.cfm).*



Your aggressive tree planting program is impressive, Notable is the partnership between the city and the Rotary Club in planting six trees in Central Park as part of the Arbor Day festivities. It was apparent during the judges’ visit that there are other areas where new tree stock is being added. *One area ripe for additional trees is Marion Street, and we recommend it for priority planting. A number of blocks on Marion have nice trees (some seemingly planted fairly recently) in the generous street side lawns, while others do not.*

We also understand that a memorial tree program is under review by the city’s legal team before implementation, and that all memorial trees are to be approved as to location and allowable species. *We recommend that all memorial trees be native trees.*

There is no current tree inventory for public trees in Mansfield other than a listing of trees planted over the past 15 years and an EAB management plan that identifies ash trees. While the very active and dedicated Tree Shade Commission creates an annual work plan, this is simply not sufficient to protect, plan, and manage an urban forest

for a community the size of Mansfield with older trees in distress and needing attention.

Trees are among the most important infrastructure and aesthetic assets Mansfield has, and smart asset management is powered by data—current, accurate data that tells you exactly what assets you have, where they're located, and how much they're worth. It is important that you have a comprehensive current baseline of your tree population. *We recommend that you invest in a complete inventory of all trees on public property and develop a five-year management plan.* Collecting accurate data is crucial to making good decisions and implementing a productive asset management strategy. *Pursuant to acquiring a new inventory, we recommend that the inventory be kept current by entering any changes (pruning, removals, planting) at least every two months.* Updating



an inventory to keep it current can easily be overlooked if not put on a regular schedule. Resources to help develop a tree inventory may be available through partnerships with the OSU Mansfield Campus [www.mansfield.osu.edu](http://www.mansfield.osu.edu) or the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Urban Forestry Division.

Tree School is a day-long workshop held annually at the Ohio State University Mansfield Campus. Whether a gardener, wildlife enthusiast, landscaper, natural resources professional, or someone just interested in learning more about trees, Tree School should be on your calendar of events. Tree School features a variety of educational sessions, both indoors and outdoors, on a range of tree-related topics. Topics from past years' Tree Schools include Tree Planting, Selecting the Best Tree for Your Landscape, Attracting Wildlife to Your Backyard, Identifying Plant Diseases, Planting for Pollinators, The Correct Way to Prune a Tree, Invasive Species ID & Management, and Woodland Management. *We recommend your Tree Shade Commission members and other tree hugging residents embrace these opportunities whenever possible.*

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)
<b>a. Leadership and Policy</b>						
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>b. Plan of Action</b>						
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		
<b>c. Resource Conservation</b>						
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				
<b>d. Trash, Recycling, and Reuse Management</b>						
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		
<b>e. Community Involvement</b>						
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
The Grant and Mary Milliron Research Wetlands and classroom at the OSU Mansfield campus is an innovative and important environmental initiative.						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
<b>5. Environmental Efforts (EE)</b>	92	41	44.57%			

**Environmental Efforts (EE) Recommendations:**

Your urban micro farm initiative is an incredible program that could be referenced in other criteria sections, but we salute it here because of its impressive positive environmental attributes, particularly putting abandoned industrial sites to good use. We have no doubt that it will be successful, and a model for Ohio and across the nation.



The city has no electric vehicles in its fleet. There are, however, electric charging stations in place at the Nissan dealership and at Walmart. This is evidence that there is some interest in the community in electric powered vehicles, and it's only going to increase. *We recommend that the city consider the purchase of an electric vehicle when it is time for a vehicle in the city fleet to be replaced.* This first step may encourage you to begin a regular program of purchasing similarly- powered vehicles when making replacements or adding to the fleet, and the city can begin taking the lead in this environmentally friendly practice. *Further, we recommend that the city establish a policy that vehicles be turned off when idling more than half a minute during the normal course of daily activities.* It will save fuel costs, mitigate engine emissions, and reduce the city's carbon footprint. The myth that it's inefficient to turn off and restart an idling vehicle is just that – a myth.

Mansfield does not have an environmental advisory board or green team in place, but some organizations and individuals are engaged in outstanding initiatives with a sustainability message. The Nature Center at the Richland County Fairgrounds is a stellar example. The Mansfield Men's Garden Club, Richland County Master Gardeners and the Richland County Agricultural Society have collaborated on a major native plant display that is a showcase for sustainability and supporting the natural food chain for insects as well as wildlife. A new retaining wall eliminates soil erosion and provides seating. An annual clean-up of the fairgrounds and Native Plant Park involves area school children. The clever display created to educate visitors about creating homes for pollinators is captivating. *We recommend that you replicate the display at Blust Avenue Garden, South Park Teaching Garden, and other locations where young (and older) gardeners congregate.*



The Mansfield OSU campus features a wetland turned outdoor lab that started as a mitigation project. Now that's sustainability in action! The judges also noted an outstanding example of the use of bio swales to control storm water runoff near GROhio Credit Union.

Garbage and recycling pick-up in Mansfield is by private haulers. While the City of Mansfield licenses haulers, it does not regulate the schedule and/or recycling alternatives available through waste haulers. That means: 1) multiple companies have trucks rolling through your neighborhoods each week causing wear and tear to your city streets, spewing exhaust fumes, and creating the racket only a garbage truck seems to achieve; 2) the city is relinquishing the role of champion of environmentally

proactive efforts when it comes to recycling; 3) a hodge-podge of containers in various sizes, colors, and configurations visually litter the streetscape daily. This is counterintuitive for a community trying to expand its environmental initiatives and improve its eye-appeal. *We recommend that Mansfield enter into discussions to determine the most favorable terms for residents with a single hauler. Your infrastructure and air quality will be less negatively affected, and your curbs will be less cluttered by an olio of receptacles. Reduced rates may even be a welcome by-product of the city leveraging a collective consumer base.*



You need more trash/recycling receptacles in your parks and public areas. Congratulations



to the volunteers who artistically painted trash cans for your historic Liberty Park. *Extend this program to include other parks, pair the containers, and distinguish recycling containers by stenciling the universally recognized recycling symbol on their lids.* Brewton, Alabama, another AIB city, has turned discarded drums into an outstanding public art project by using empty 50-gallon drums donated by a local business as canvasses for artist volunteers, purchasing receptacle replacement lids to pair with the barrels. Mansfield Rising has described an exciting initiative on a larger scale as part of their action items for developing a large recycling program for downtown Mansfield. Decorating donated barrels would provide an accessible model for the larger endeavor. You can check out suitable lids at

<https://trashcansunlimited.com/drum-lids/> .

*Another option is for the community to explore acquiring “Big Belly”*

<http://bigbelly.com/> receptacles. The smart technology incorporated in the receptacles fits with the level of environment stewardship for which Mansfield is striving. The receptacles use solar power to compact refuse and they use a technology app to notify the responsible party when the receptacles need service. The other benefit of the receptacles is they provide a place on the side to advertise and/or promote environmental awareness.



Pet waste is a fact of life in a society that loves its dogs. For public health and aesthetic reasons, it is a good idea to provide pet waste stations for waste pick up and disposal. We understand that there is one pet waste station located in North Lake Park at the head of the B&O Trail. *We suggest an initiative to install at least one pet waste station in each active park, along other walking trails, and at key points near downtown where people walk their dogs on city sidewalks.* Commercial receptacle and bag dispensers are readily available, and some communities eliminate the cost of bags by using donated plastic grocery bags in the stations.

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)
<b>a. Leadership and Policy</b>						
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>b. Plan of Action</b>						
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		
<b>c. Commemoration</b>						
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
The replica of the REACH log house in South Park is a great addition to the heritage-related educational opportunities in the park.						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
<b>6. Celebrating Heritage (CH)</b>	88	47	53.41%			

**Celebrating Heritage (CH) Recommendations:**



Mansfield has a rich heritage and a wealth of historic structures.

The Mansfield Memorial Museum is the oldest museum in Richland County, and enjoys a prime location on Park Avenue West. This magnificent building began as the Mansfield Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building meeting hall and opera house and now houses the 3rd largest repository of original county records dating from 1813 to 1880, and is the permanent home of ELEKTRO, the Westinghouse robot built for the 1939 New York World's Fair. Two floors of exhibit space present an eclectic collection of artifacts including early medicinal plant specimens.

The museum mounted a new exhibit in April of this year featuring the history of brewing in Mansfield. Interest in the brewing industry is in the local zeitgeist because of the discovery of tunnels and caverns once used for storing beer, and plans are in the works to turn them into event space for a local restaurant. Scott Schaut, Curator of the Mansfield Memorial Museum, has spent much of the past seven years researching the brewing industry in Mansfield and plans to release a book in the fall. While the judges didn't get the opportunity to visit the museum because of its limited hours, we understand that the brewery exhibit includes a map of the historic brewery district in Mansfield northeast of downtown. *It seems opportune to explore ways to exploit the map by creating a walking tour of former brewery sites, promoting the museum's brewery-related exhibit, and generating interest in Mr. Schaut's book. Such tours are highly successful in other historic brewery communities and are fostering economic growth with the increase in microbreweries.* <http://www.cincinnatibrewerytours.com/>

The judges were interested to learn that there is only one microbrewery operating in downtown Mansfield. This seems out of sync in a community with two colleges, a recurring and massively successful Final Friday event in the Brickyard, and a history including an expansive brewery industry. Combine those facts with the stock of historic buildings downtown begging for development and one can see possibilities for a resurgence of a heritage industry on a different scale.

South Park is home to the historic Mansfield Block House and the Richland Early American Culture and History (REACH) Log Cabin, a replica of an early settlers' log cabin. This busy park also contains memorials to Johnny "Appleseed" Chapman and the sinking of the steamship Sultana. The Children's Teaching Garden, also in the park, is alive with activity. *We recommend involving fourth or fifth grade students in researching the plant specimens housed in the Mansfield Memorial Museum to identify candidates for a medicinal herb garden featuring heritage plants to become part of the REACH Log Cabin display and programming. Plant tags should provide both common and Latin names for the herbs and a simple brochure could describe their properties and traditional use.*



*During events featuring historical reenactors, the lady of the house (as dictated by the times) who would have historically tended the garden could be on hand to answer questions about the herbs and their uses.*

The movie industry put the image of The Ohio State Reformatory in the public consciousness, and this year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the release of The Shawshank Redemption, set in New England but filmed in Mansfield. The Shawshank Driving Tour features a number of stops in Mansfield begging for selfies. Areas of the prison also play into an initiative to attract visitors interested in the paranormal. Other locations popular with this audience of "ghost hunters" are the Renaissance Hotel and the Fire House Museum.

Mansfield has a bounty of historic buildings, many designated on the National Register of Historic Places. Notable are the many historic residential structures throughout the city, both a blessing and a curse, as numbers of them are falling into disrepair and/or are boarded up to discourage vandalism. It's a problem with no easy solution. We commend the efforts of the community and residents dedicated to preserving these magnificent structures.



*As historic residences are being dismantled because they are beyond repair, we urge the city to establish a warehouse/clearinghouse for architectural artifacts that can be used in renovation efforts. Find a secure location in one of the idled industrial buildings and reuse the empty space to catalogue and safely store architectural salvage to be reused for projects approved through your Historic Preservation Board.*

Restoring older homes often requires specialized skill sets that are not commonly available. *We urge the Historic Preservation Board to develop a list of approved plasterers, carpenters, masons and other tradesmen and tradeswomen who have the ability to do justice to a quality historic restoration. Work with local architects, builders, and trade unions to help develop the list. Make it an honor to be included, as it should be, and these artisans may be willing to contribute their time and skills to community projects.*



There are tax credits available to help restore structures on the National Register, and various regional and local entities have helped with restorations in the past. *As a contributing project as downtown Mansfield is rising, target an historic home near downtown for restoration. Engage the aforementioned local architects, craftsmen and volunteers in the restoration process. Contact the local building trades and see if you could partner with their apprenticeship programs. Set up tours both pre- and post- renovation. You could pre-screen for a buyer for the restored property or auction it off. Either way, proceeds could go into a revolving fund for future restorations.*

Mansfield Rising is encouraging the establishment of a residential Community Reinvestment Area. *The judges want to add our voices to the call for this initiative and recommend that the CRA program prioritize residential neighborhoods with a large percentage of older structures still standing.*

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)
<b>a. Leadership and Policy</b>						
OI.a.01 - Signage ordinances enacted and enforced				X		
OI.a.02 - Ordinances in place to address overgrown lots, abandoned vehicles, unscreened dumpsters, public nuisances, unregulated garage sales, empty storefront windows, etc.				X		
OI.a.03 - Code enforcement/compliance officer on municipal staff and codes are enforced					X	
OI.a.04 - Design style determined, applied, and consistent for: site furnishings, crosswalks, gateway entry features, banners, wayfinding signage, etc.			X			
<b>b. Amenities</b>						
OI.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		
OI.b.02 - Crosswalks well-marked				X		
OI.b.03 - Public restrooms available			X			
OI.b.04 - Effective community gateway entry features					X	
OI.b.05 - Effective use of banners, murals, and/or public art					X	
OI.b.06 - Effective wayfinding signage			X			
OI.b.07 - Effective use of non-plant seasonal decorations (lights, ornaments, etc.)				X		
<b>c. Condition and Maintenance</b>						
OI.c.01 - Condition of structures, buildings, decks, patios related to lack of vandalism, graffiti, peeling or faded paint, and rust				X		
OI.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		
OI.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		
OI.c.04 - Condition of vacant lots, stormwater retention ponds, and swales				X		
OI.c.05 - Lack of snipe/stake signs, billboards, and posted flyers				X		
OI.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	
Mankind Murals is leading the way in an aggressive effort beautifying Mansfield with mural art.						
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage			
<b>7. Overall Impression (OI)</b>	80	45	56.25%			

**Overall Impression (OI) Recommendations:**

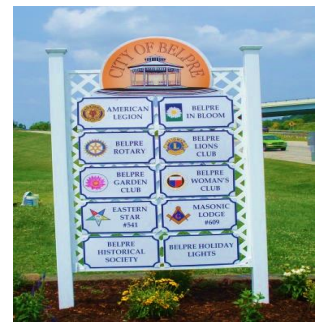
Mansfield has made great strides in creating an appealing downtown through efforts mentioned in previous criteria groups. Further, the Mansfield Rising Investment Plan 2019 lays out action items for improvements and describes potential project-oriented methods to achieve those goals. This ambitious plan is not for the faint-hearted, but Mansfield is proving you are up to the task.

Congratulations on your Land Bank which protects properties and offers opportunities for investment and positive development. While an empty lot is an improvement over a crumbling structure creating a public nuisance and safety issue, keeping those lots from becoming eyesores themselves is a herculean task. *We recommend that resources involved in mowing land bank lots be reduced by mowing of 10’ – 12’ strips around the perimeter on a regular basis and leaving the interior of lots to naturalize.* This will maintain a look of tidiness and intent. When the taller growth on the interior unmown sections becomes too aggressive, perhaps 2-3 times a year, address the issue. In the meantime, you have created a kempt look, provided wildlife habitat, saved labor costs, and reduced unhealthy emissions. Empty lots become pollinator plots.

The judges saw no instances of graffiti and minimal litter. Your Earth Stewardship and adopt-a-spot efforts are paying off. The animated accounting of volunteer efforts by Kim Hildreth, Program Coordinator for the City of Mansfield, at your awards dinner reaffirmed the remarkable achievements of community volunteers.

Your new logo on your entryway signs is graphically appealing and the new landscaping is an excellent addition. The city logo itself, however, gets lost in the mix. *We suggest that you create a standard size for the ancillary*

*logos and space them equidistantly, allowing “breathing room” for the city logo to dominate. The structures themselves are handsome but consider painting the frame and lattice blue for a more cohesive appearance and so that the “MANSFIELD” stands out. See how Belpre, Ohio, another AIB city, has addressed gateway signs incorporating the very same elements, but giving more prominence to the city logo. Your logo would be even more distinctive since it spans the entire width of the sign.*





We cannot overstate the role of public art in creating energy and excitement in a community, nor can we praise too much the Dazzle with Daffodils effort. That inspired collaboration involved a massive volunteer effort, blanketed the city with the flower of hope, and created tremendous synergy with the Green Room Outdoor Gallery of works by sixteen local artists displayed in Central Park on eight 2-sided easels. Factor in live performances and it had to be an unforgettable experience. Just viewing the outdoor easel display during the judges' visit was wonderful.

The outdoor easels used for the daffodil display are ingenious in that they are portable. Even more impressive are the stylized metal versions in the works. You have the ability to create a gallery experience in a myriad of venues using the same easels, changing the artwork, and taking art "into the street" to be shared by everyone. While there is certainly a cost involved in replicating two-dimensional fine art works onto vinyl for outdoor exhibit, it is not prohibitive. *When you have artists willing to have their works duplicated for outdoor events, create a fundraising opportunity with a silent auction of the vinyl prints and share the proceeds with the artists.* Purchasers may want to acquire the originals as well, providing even greater opportunities for participating artists. *The balance of the proceeds can help fund the next exhibit.* West Chicago has a similar art/auction fundraising program using an outdoor banner program with artist-created street banners. [www.westchicago.org/arts/banner-art/](http://www.westchicago.org/arts/banner-art/)

Your public mural program is outstanding and getting ever better. The investment in mural art enhances everything else within eyesight. We were particularly impressed by the Welcome Garden Murals that combine a colorful artistic backdrop for a community garden, creating a three-dimensional display.



*There appears to be unlimited potential for the arts in Mansfield, and we recommend that you establish a formal Arts Commission or Council. Include a cross section of government, business, and the arts community in the group, including someone from the Mansfield Art Center.* With the new education wing being constructed, the Center should overcome the perceived elitism that has somewhat isolated it from the broader community.

*The sidewalk to be constructed connecting the Art Center to the street would provide the perfect venue for an open-arms community party, and we suggest you start planning.* Imagine food trucks (one event won't ruin the grass) or vendors flanking the sidewalk, musicians performing, an outdoor gallery display, small seating areas - color, cuisine, and conversation leading the community into the Center and the Center into the community. While we suspect the sidewalk to the center is already a reality of hard surfacing, *we suggest you consider expanding it with ample strips of permeable paving flanking the walkway to facilitate events of this type in the future. This application would work well in other areas of the community.*



*We recommend that one of the first initiatives of your new Arts Council is developing a program for outdoor sculpture exhibitions.* Outdoor sculpture elevates its surroundings and creates a reason for visitors to come. Setting up a program for a revolving exhibition and establishment of a permanent collection will provide dividends well into the future. Many communities have great models. A good example in a community of similar size is [www.libertymissouri.gov/sculptureprogram](http://www.libertymissouri.gov/sculptureprogram) .

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)
<b>a. Prior to the Evaluation Tour</b>			
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>b. During the Evaluation Tour</b>			
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
<b>c. Final Wrap-Up</b>			
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
<b>d. Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note</b>			
ET.d.01 - Judges to enter text below		NS	X
Profile and itinerary well-prepared. The narrative additions to the profile "fleshed out" the metrics.			
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Actual Points</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>8. Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET)</b>	14.00	14.00	100.00%

## **Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET) Recommendations:**

Your splendid Community Profile was timely submitted and comprehensive. *We enjoyed the descriptive profiles of community activists and hope you continue this practice of shining light on your volunteers.*

The itinerary covered a good cross-section of the community, and our timekeepers did an excellent job. *We suggest planning for more bathroom breaks during next year's tour.*

## **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.
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# 2019 Community Recognitions

**Community:** Mansfield, Ohio

## **Recognized Criterion: Flowers**

Mansfield has flower fever, and it has spread to every corner of the community!

Discussion of Mansfield's floral achievements has to begin with Kingwood Center Gardens, a source of pride and a magnet for visitors since it opened to the public in 1953. The bountiful displays in the garden's many "rooms" provide awe and inspiration in equal doses.

16,000 daffodils danced across the community this spring, and summer saw those happy yellow faces give way to an exuberant mix of color. Bountiful hanging baskets in the central city featuring red dragon-wing begonias, white scaevola, and gracefully trailing vinca vine echo a similar color scheme in generously-proportioned raised planters.

The Carrousel Park garden is a virtual rainbow; pollinator-loving native perennials crowd planting beds at the fairgrounds; islands of color at key locations throughout the community create a heightened awareness and magnify the stunning effect of flowers in the public landscape.

## **Noteworthy Project or Initiative: Mural Art**

Mankind Murals has been busy painting and/or installing pre-painted murals as dynamic public art in key locations in Mansfield. The most ambitious 2019 project is the recreation of a mural dating to 1977 featuring a locomotive and located on a building a short distance from the old train station.

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