

FUNDING

Landscape and aesthetics projects are carefully considered to most effectively and efficiently use the available budget. With aesthetic treatments, multiple funding mechanisms are utilized.

Funding is included in the overall cost of a project. As a rule, up to 3 percent of funds for building new construction and capacity improvements may be allocated to landscape and aesthetics.



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Interstate 15 Las Vegas



LANDSCAPE AND AESTHETICS PROGRAM

Nevada Department of Transportation

VISION

Nevada's roadways connect us, and are often the paths from which our family, friends, visitors and potential new neighbors gain their first impressions of us, and form their first connections with Nevada.

The goal of the Nevada Department of Transportation is to make it possible for the seeds of these connections to sprout along our roadways. The Department is designing our highways with these connections in mind. We believe our roads should reflect the land and people of Nevada and enhance local and regional character through preservation, with an emphasis on cultural and natural features, scenic views and community identity.

Roadways are a part of our daily activities. They affect our safety, our economy and the quality of our lives. The projects we develop address all of these elements and go through an extensive development process with the public, local governments and the regional, state and federal transportation agencies. This collaborative effort is taken several steps further when designing the landscape and aesthetics portions of the projects.

DESIGN

The program and the design processes were developed by, and at, the request of Nevadans. The vision is outlined in the state's Master Plan for landscape and aesthetics "A Pattern and Palette of Place." This planning tool is a reflection of residents' desire for environmental protection and highway beautification.

The Master Plan forms a foundation further defined for the state's geographic regions by Landscape and Aesthetic Corridor Plans. In the Corridor Plans are found the themes for each region and the specific guidelines that direct design. All of these elements were developed and defined during the five-year master planning process undertaken by the state under the guidance of committees formed of professionals, residents and public agencies. Comments are sought from residents and local leaders during the design phase of all projects.



Carson City Freeway



Interstate 15 Las Vegas

BENEFITS

Benefits of landscape and aesthetics go beyond the immediate impression. Landscape and aesthetics creates economic development opportunities by providing a safe, interesting and welcoming community presence. It also demonstrates we are investing in keeping our environment attractive for visitors and potential businesses.



Designs which celebrate Nevada's heritage and highlight community values provide an instrument to pique visitors' curiosity to exit the highways and explore. This leads to longer visits, return trips, the attraction of new businesses and more money spent in our cities and towns.

Landscape and aesthetic features of our roadway projects add to the state's economic development efforts by

employing professionals from landscape architects to biologists and artists. Projects also create opportunities in many currently struggling fields such as construction by employing operators, welders, metal and concrete workers, masons, painters and landscapers. Workers from as many as 20 different disciplines can be employed on one project.

Landscape design results in improvements to air and water quality, reduces noise and pollution, reduces the impacts of flooding, increases groundwater recharge and the available water supply, reduces atmospheric CO2 and lowers rising temperatures from the urban heat island effect.

Studies have shown, in climates like Reno's, energy savings represents 75



percent of the environmental benefits associated with landscape and aesthetics, with stormwater runoff reduction accounting for another 22 percent. Air quality improvement and carbon dioxide reduction account for 1.4 percent each.

Additionally, landscape and aesthetic improvements reduce graffiti, improve wildlife habitat and provide public education opportunities. Studies have also shown that improvements reduce driver stress and road rage, fatigue, boredom, and increase safety.

Reflecting the communities' rich cultural heritage establishes a sense of belonging among residents and increases neighborhood pride resulting in less graffiti. This helps neighborhoods to feel safe, improves property values, and

lessens maintenance costs for graffiti removal.

Using native vegetation allows for long-term, low-maintenance solutions that help return our roadways to a more natural state with less visible scarring. Plantings of non-native adaptive species that thrive in our climate create a sense of place while reducing water use. Additionally, native plant and cactus salvage and replanting protects rare species, improves roadsides and protects tortoise habitat.



PARTNERSHIPS

The Department strives to improve the quality of life in Nevada by creating a sense of place. This sense is the result of the collaborative effort between NDOT, local public agencies and the community.



“When you see public art instead of a bunch of weeds, it shows we’re trying to present ourselves in a certain way, that we take your business seriously. Public art elevates and challenges people. It soothes and encourages.” -- Paolo Cividino, Reno artist.





LANDSCAPE AESTHETICS



US 95 Las Vegas




 Native plants, rock mulch and other local materials are used throughout the landscape designs to preserve water and reduce project and maintenance costs.

 The Interstate 80 Landscape and Aesthetics Project completed in December 2012, helps introduce visitors to the plants and animals of the Truckee Meadows.

 Public art, such as this steel sculpture of a bighorn sheep on Interstate 15 and tortoise sculpture at the Spaghetti Bowl both in Las Vegas, helps form a sense of place. This strengthens neighborhood ties, helps attract business and deters vandalism. Aesthetics projects also help build our economy by employing workers from more than 20 different disciplines.



 This Pony-Express-themed picnic shelter at the Schellbourne Rest Area in eastern Nevada creates a welcoming stop for travelers to take a break, recharge and learn a bit of Nevada history. Rest areas such as these improve driving safety.



Interstate 80 Reno



Schellbourne Rest Area

 “Another part of all these projects might be a bit more subtle but also is important. That’s the effort -- and money -- that NDOT and other agencies have committed to public art to go along with the road improvements. It’s a recognition that road building doesn’t have to create a blight on the landscape, but can instead beautify the community visually too. They’ve succeeded.” -- RGJ editorial board



Las Vegas Spaghetti Bowl

Interstate 80 near downtown Reno, before, during, and after construction

