



Date: December 17, 2024

To: Members of the City Council

From: Michelle Ramirez, Community Development Director

By: Gregg Lodan, Neighborhood Services Manager | GLodan@TorranceCA.Gov

Subject: Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission and Community Development – Review Guidelines for the Torrance Beautification Awards and Authorize Staff to Conduct Awards Annually. Expenditure: None.

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## RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission and Community Development Director that the City Council review the guidelines for the Torrance Beautification Awards and authorize staff to conduct the awards annually, with the first one taking place in the Spring of 2025.

## FUNDING

None Required.

## DISCUSSION

On November 28, 2023, City Council directed the Community Development Department to develop a Beautification Awards Program (Program) that could be implemented to honor property owners within each Council District who preserve and enhance the beautiful appearance of the residential neighborhoods in Torrance. The Program would complement the City's ongoing efforts to promote community pride and improve the visual appeal of residential properties.

In April 2024, staff brought forward an initial draft of the Program to the Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission (TEQECC). At the meeting Commission Members discussed the guidelines and noted several areas of concern. These areas included potential confusion with the existing Climate Smart Awards Program, concerns that the timing of the awards could be limiting to property owners, and concerns with some parts of the originally proposed scoring criteria. With these concerns in mind, staff updated the guidelines and presented the revisions to the TEQECC at their meeting of October 3, 2024.

Under the guidelines, the nomination period for the Program would occur in late February to mid-March, as many property owners will be completing spring improvement projects during this time. The Community Development Department will conduct a robust outreach campaign to

spread the word about the Program. The outreach will include social media, Council announcements, and outreach to registered Torrance Homeowners Associations (HOAs).

The guidelines include two categories of awards: Landscape Beautification and Sustainable Landscape Design. The Landscape Beautification award will recognize homes that exhibit exceptional pride of ownership through well-maintained and exceptional landscaping of their property, while the Sustainable Landscape Design award will highlight the Commission's focus on the Environment. The Community Development Department will accept nominations through a nomination form. Staff will sort the nominations by Council District and prepare materials for the TEQECC to conduct judging. Depending on the number of nominations submitted, staff may elect to select finalists in order to facilitate timely judging. Judging criteria include curb appeal, pride of ownership, landscape design, structure maintenance, sustainable design features, and contribution to the beautification of Torrance.

Award Recipients will be selected with up to two overall first place winners in each Council District as well as up to three additional Honorable Mention Recipients. The honorees will be announced by the TEQECC at a regularly scheduled meeting in the summer. Recipients will receive a certificate of recognition, a commemorative yard sign, and a gift card to a local home improvement store. Funding for this program exists in the Community Development Department operating budget.

At their October meeting, the TEQECC recommended the Program guidelines be forwarded to City Council for approval. If approved, staff would prepare outreach material with the intention of promoting the first annual Program for the spring 2025 season.

## **ATTACHMENT**

1. Torrance Beautification Awards Program Guidelines

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ATTACHMENT 1

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Torrance takes great pride in its homes and outdoor spaces, each reflecting the unique style of its residents. When homeowners care for their properties, it positively impacts the entire community. We are excited to announce the Torrance Beautification Awards, celebrating the efforts of residents who maintain and enhance their homes and outdoor spaces. Through these awards, we aim to inspire even more beautification across our city.

Let's work together to make Torrance shine!



**#WHYTORRANCE**



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## Award Categories

**Landscape Beautification Award:** This award will recognize homes that exhibit exceptional pride of ownership through well-maintained and exceptional landscaping of their property. This includes an attractive landscaping design of the front yard and parkway, a clean and well-maintained exterior, and overall good curb appeal.

**Sustainable Landscape Beautification Award:** This award will recognize homes that exhibit exceptional pride of ownership through the use of water conservation practices as part of their landscaping design. This includes the use of drought-tolerant or native plants, water-friendly irrigation systems, and energy-efficient or solar lighting.

## Qualifications for Nomination Include:

- Residence must be located within the City of Torrance.
- Residence may be a single-family or multi-family property.
- One (1) nomination per submission form.
- Residence must be properly permitted at the time of nomination with no code violations.
- Nominations must include 3 to 5 photos that clearly display the nominated residence's exterior and landscaping. These photos will be used by the judges to evaluate each nomination.
- Nominated residences should display pride of ownership through well-maintained and exceptional landscaping of their property.

## Nomination Deadline

All nominations must be submitted by 5:00 pm on \_\_\_\_\_ (to be determined each year). Nominations are accepted via email submitted to [CDDInfo@TorranceCA.Gov](mailto:CDDInfo@TorranceCA.Gov) or in person at the City of Torrance, Community Development Department, City Hall, 3031 Torrance Boulevard.

## Selection Process

Nominations will be judged by the Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission at their April \_\_\_\_\_ meeting. Following the selection of the winners, honorees will then be acknowledged by the Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission at their meeting in May \_\_\_\_\_. Judges will evaluate nominations, selecting properties that demonstrate exceptional landscaping, exterior maintenance, and overall beauty.

## Award Recipients

Up to two Award Recipients will be selected in each Council District. Up to three additional overall Honorable Mention Recipients will also be selected. The honorees will be announced by the Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission at their meeting in May \_\_\_\_\_. Recipients will receive a certificate of recognition, a commemorative yard sign, and a gift card to a local home improvement store.

For more information, please contact the Neighborhood Services Division of the Community Development Department at (310) 618-5929 or via email at [CDDInfo@TorranceCA.Gov](mailto:CDDInfo@TorranceCA.Gov) noting "\_\_\_\_\_ Torrance Beautification Awards" in the subject line.

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### NOMINATION FORM

The City of Torrance Beautification Award Program honors homeowners who take pride in the maintenance and beautification of their homes and outdoor spaces. To nominate a single family or multi-family property, please complete this form and submit it to the Community Development Department.

I hereby nominate the following location within Torrance for the \_\_\_\_\_ Beautification Award Program:



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#### Address

**Please check one:**  Single Family Residential  Multi-family Residential

**Please check one:**  Landscape Beautification  Sustainable Landscape Design

**Select Residence District (See District Map Attached):**

District 1  District 2  District 3  District 4  District 5  District 6

**If known, please provide the following Property Owner information:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Is property owner occupied?** Yes  No

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Briefly describe how this property enhances or preserves the beauty of the City of Torrance:**

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**Name of Person Submitting Nomination:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Photos

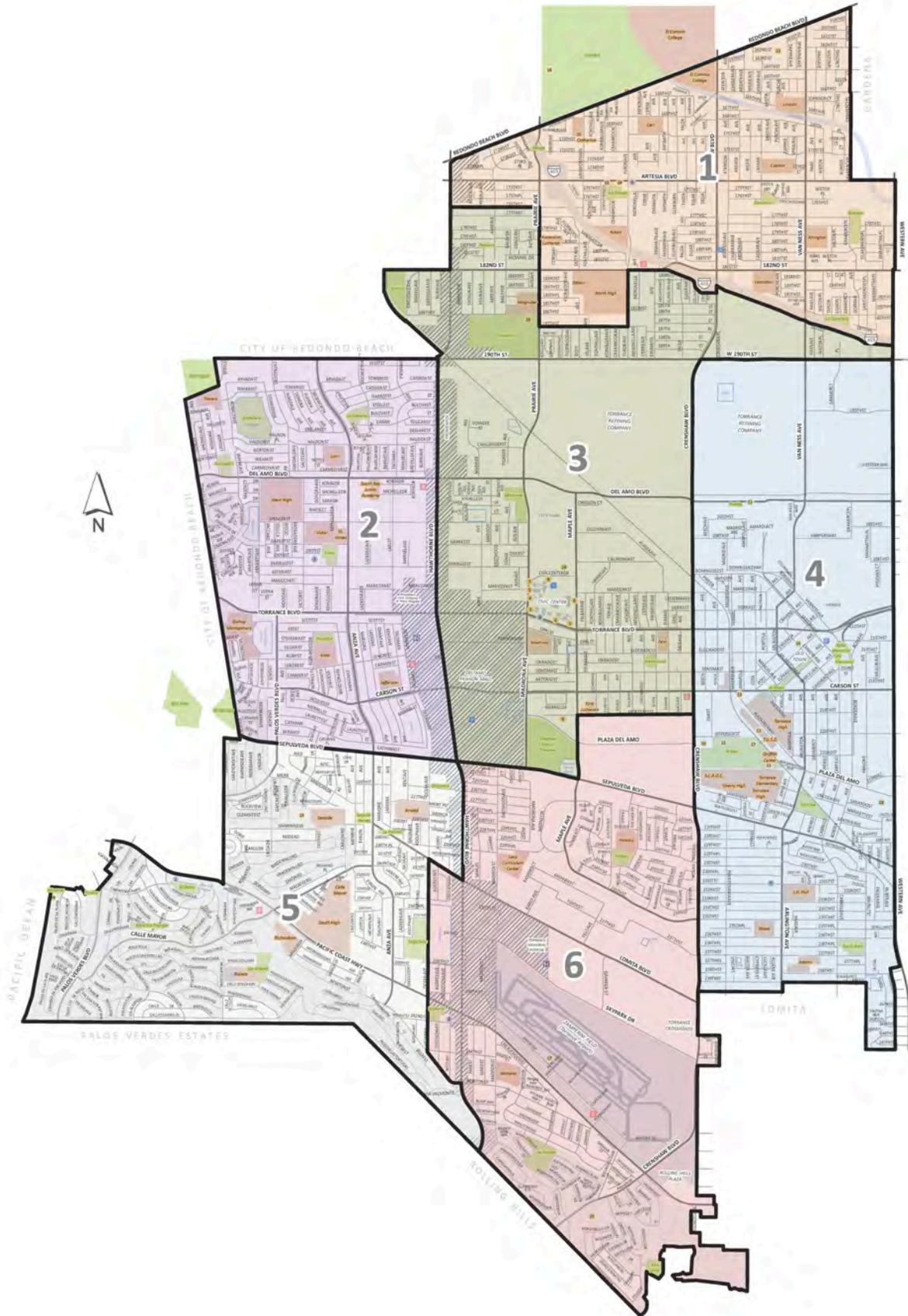
Each application must include 3 to 5 photos of the nominated property. Please include a wide shot of the residence with as much landscaping as possible. These photos can be attached to printed nomination forms or emailed along with electronic submittals.

**Thank you for your nomination!**

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**Council Districts Map**

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## Judging Guidelines

Nominations will be judged by the City of Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission. Each Commission Member will review every nomination and complete one score sheet per entry. Staff will tally the scores and provide the top 5 highest scores from each district. Judging will be based on the photos provided with the nomination entry.

To be eligible for judging each property entry must meet the following requirements:

- Have each section of the application questions filled out completely.
- Include 3 to 5 photographs that showcase the features of the residence.
- Be properly permitted with no code violations.

## Score Sheet

**Award Category:**  Landscape Beautification  Sustainable Landscape Design

**Property Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Judge:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assign a score for each criterion:**

Meets Criteria: up to 2 points; Exceeds Criteria: 3 to 4 points; Outstanding: 5 points

Criteria	Points:
Overall Curb Appeal	
Pride of Ownership	
Attractive Landscape Design	
Well Maintained Structure	
Contributes to the Beautification of Torrance	
Sustainable Design Features	
<b>Total Score (out of maximum 30)</b>	



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## Criteria Definitions

### **Overall Curb Appeal:**

This refers to the visual attractiveness of a property from the street. It encompasses the harmony of colors, materials, and design elements, creating an inviting first impression that reflects the property's charm and character.

### **Pride of Ownership:**

This criterion measures how well residents care for their property, including cleanliness and attention to detail. Signs of pride may include well-kept gardens, clean walkways, and personalized touches that showcase the owner's commitment to their home and community.

### **Attractive Landscape Design:**

This focuses on the arrangement and selection of plants, trees, and hardscaping elements to create a cohesive and visually appealing outdoor environment. Effective landscape design enhances the aesthetic appeal while considering seasonal changes, color coordination, and spatial balance.

### **Well-Maintained Structure:**

This involves the upkeep and condition of the property's physical structure, including the integrity of the building, paint quality, roof condition, and absence of visible damage. A well-maintained structure conveys care and enhances the overall impression of the neighborhood.

### **Contributes to the Beauty of Torrance:**

This criterion assesses how a property enhances the overall aesthetic and character of the Torrance Community. It looks at how the property fits within its surroundings, promotes visual harmony, and adds to the communal appeal of the area.

### **Sustainable Design Features:**

This focuses on environmentally friendly practices and materials incorporated into the property. Examples include native plant landscaping, energy-efficient systems, rain gardens, and use of recycled materials. Sustainable design features contribute to environmental stewardship and can enhance the City's ecological health.

