

Landscaping Permits -- Adopt-an-Interchange Program

Modified 8/3/09

Through the Adopt-an-Interchange program, SCDOT provides opportunities for local government agencies to work with SCDOT in landscaping and irrigating interchanges. These interchanges include key interstate interchanges and other controlled access roadway interchanges. Adopt an Interchange funds can pay up to 80% when local government agencies provide 20% matching funds. The application process for the Adopt-an-Interchange Program will be administered by the Local Program Administration office, with the assistance of the SCDOT's Landscape Architect in Preconstruction Support. The applicant must accept responsibility for the long-term maintenance and irrigation of the landscaped interchange (including the cost of supplying water to the plant material) by signing a participation/maintenance agreement.

1. If the applicant's interchange is within one of the state's 10 metropolitan areas, a copy of the application must be submitted to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The proposed project should be reviewed by members of the MPO (primarily elected officials) and listed in the area's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Once placed in the TIP (by contacting the SCDOT Planning office), applications for Adopt-An-Interchange will be used to verify eligibility and prepare contracts. (The federal portion of funds comes out of the SCDOT share of enhancement funds, not the MPO share)
2. Federal Funds are limited to \$250,000.00 maximum to any one local public agency within the federal fiscal year.
3. Applicants must comply with Federal and State Guidelines.
4. Applicants that have received Adopt-an-Interchange funding from the previous federal fiscal year or have an active Adopt-an-Interchange project will not be eligible to receive funding until the project is at least 50% complete.
5. The project must begin within 6 months of notice to proceed by SCDOT and should be completed within 24 months.
6. If you attach information, provide it in an unbound format that can be easily copied. Supplemental information that gives a clearer picture of the impact of the project may be included, but please limit additional information to phases of the project that is relevant to the spending of the funds sought.
7. At least one of the applicants must be a local public agency, and the application must include a certification signature of someone with authority to commit that local public agency to a contract.
8. Sources of matching funds must be indicated. Funds spent prior to execution of the contract are not eligible for reimbursement and cannot be counted toward matching funds.
9. Project cost estimates on page 4 must contain enough detail that the various cost elements of the project are clear. Detailed estimates on page 4 must be consistent with the cost shown on page 8.
10. All applicants (both urban and rural areas) should include a letter from the local Resident Maintenance Engineer. This letter should say that the work appears to be feasible under our encroachment permit process.
11. If work is proposed on or adjacent to a facility currently open to use by the public, an estimate of the amount needed to provide Traffic Control (signs, barriers, cones, temporary markings, etc.) during planting (or other construction) should be provided.
12. Applications call for a concept plan designed by a registered Landscape Architect and cost estimate that is vital to the approval process. The SCDOT Landscape Architect and a technical staff team will review applications and plans for compliance and approval is determined by the Director of Administration and the District office. All proposed projects will be scored by a *Project Selection Criteria* sheet and presented to the Commission Enhancement Committee for a recommendation to the full Commission.

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13. Final landscape planting plans (for the encroachment permit application) will have to be designed by a registered landscape architect. This final design work would be eligible for reimbursement funding if included in the application cost estimate and performed after the signing of the participation/maintenance agreement.
14. Plans should be sensitive to visibility of exiting business and outdoor advertising.
15. The applicant's proposed work at an interchange should not focus on the removal of existing trees. Emphasis on the landscaping plan should be significant improvement of appearance by adding native trees and shrubs.
16. All planting should be done by a licensed landscape contractor, who will have to follow our traffic control, access, federal regulations and safety regulations. City or County maintenance workers may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.
17. Applications must comply with the following guidelines: The *Access and Roadside Management Manual* (chapter 9 is landscaping section), *The Roadside Plants to Avoid/ Trees with Limitations on Rights of Way* list and (if applicable) *Suggestions for Street Tree Planting* list. This landscaping information can be found at the following web address: <http://www.scdot.org/community/Landscapeguidelines.shtml>
18. FHWA's guidance on landscaping setbacks on Interstates is as follows:
 - Trees (ultimate trunk diameter over 4 inches in diameter): 45' from edge of travel way.
 - Small plants/shrubs: 30' from edge of travel way.
 - On the ramp side, FHWA could live with a 5' reduction in the above listed dimensions for trees with an ultimate trunk diameter over 4 inches in diameter.

Encroachment Permit

A landscaping plan designed by a registered landscape architect should detail all pertinent information. Applicants shall furnish, install and maintain all plantings according to our SCDOT standards and setbacks. *An encroachment permit will be required prior to the start of any work.* Proposed beautification projects must be submitted on an *Application for Encroachment Permit* to the local Resident Maintenance Engineer in each county in which the landscaping is to be done. No work will be permitted until the formal permit is approved by the SCDOT and returned to the applicant. A planting plan/irrigation plan of the proposed project must be attached to the Encroachment Application. This plan should show the planting arrangement and the type of plants to be used.

Adopt-An-Interchange Acknowledgement Signs *(Engineering Directive Memorandum #40)*

Previously, the SCDOT did not allow any signing within the interchange areas; however, in recognition of a local government's participation in providing and maintaining the landscaping, the SCDOT will allow an acknowledgment sign within the interchange area. **However, the sign is not eligible for enhancement funding or 20% local matching funding.** The sign must be located in an area that is not distracting to motorists and does not pose a safety risk to motorists (and at least 45' from the edge of the travel lane). The maximum size of the sign will be 72 square feet and may be bordered by materials that are not considered to be safety risks if struck by a vehicle. These materials could be breakaway wood or stucco (no solid brick or concrete block).

Engineering Directive Memorandum #40 can be found at: <http://www.scdot.org/doing/edm.asp>