Overview of Aesthetic Treatments

Roadway

Location and Design Manual (L&D)
Traffic Engineering Manual (TEM)
(Updated July 2018)
General Principals:

- Aesthetics cannot be a distraction to the driving task
- PROWAG/ADA accessibility cannot be effected (including smooth path and minimum width)
- Roadside safety/clear zone requirements trump aesthetic desires
ODOT’s Updated Aesthetic Design Guidelines

Longitudinal Barriers

- **Baseline:**
  - Cable barriers
  - Guardrail
  - Concrete barrier

- **Sealer typically not applied to lengthy sections of urban concrete barrier; Avoid painting or applying form liners**

- **Enhancements:**
  - Rare to none due to critical safety functions
  - Best practice for aesthetics: Regular Maintenance
Baseline:
- Type CLT - 60” galvanized chain link
- Type 47 - 47” woven steel fabric with barbed wire
- Type 47RA - 47” woven steel fabric, no barbed wire

Enhancements:
- Not common
- Alternate colors or styles occasionally used:
  - Black CLT fence
  - Styles that mimic black wrought iron
  - Fences with horizontal members - clear zone required
**ODOT’s Updated Aesthetic Design Guidelines**

**Highway Guide Signs**

- **Baseline:**
  - Detailed in TEM and Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (OMUTCD)
  - Unpainted galvanized steel or aluminum supports

- **Enhancements:**
  - Alternate support styles/colors (uncommon)
    - Monotubes - very expensive/fracture critical
    - Painted supports - use SS 916
  
  - Best practices for aesthetics:
    - Sign spreading (see OMUTCD), avoid clutter
    - Regular maintenance
Baseline:

- **Signal Heads/Backplates**
  - Black polycarbonate plastic
  - Backplate with yellow reflective sheeting

- **Signal Strain Pole or Mast Arms Supports (TC-81.10 and TC-81.20):**
  - Galvanized steel (unpainted), straight mast arms

- **Haunched Mast Arms:** Typically an enhancement
  - May be baseline if there are utility conflicts
Alternate colors and styles
- Black (most common) and all other colors are enhancements
- Decorative skirts/bases, fluting, and mast arms
- Haunched mast arms

Common Enhancements:

- Painted Supports: Excessive peeling if not applied correctly - use SS 916
  - Highly visible to traffic/pedestrians stopped at traffic light
- **PRO TIP:** If you paint poles don’t forget to paint luminaire bracket arms and controller cabinets.
- Decorative Skirts/Bases: Can hold water and rust anchor bolts if can’t drain
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Highway/Street Lighting

- **Baseline:**
  - Freeway/Interchange & Street Lighting:
    - Provided on HL-10.11

- At intersections, combine light poles with signal poles to minimize clutter
Baseline (Continued):

Examples.....
Common Enhancements:

- Alternate colors and styles
  - Decorative skirts
  - Ornate poles and luminaires

- Avoid acorn-style luminaires (light trespass, glare)
- For painting of light standards - use SS 916
- Federal/State Money - Buy America Provisions
  - Must use approved list of decorative steel poles (ODOT)
  - No exceptions (alternate/proprietary bids do not provide exception)
Sidewalks and Buffers

- **Baseline:**
  - **Sidewalks:**
    - Concrete
    - Location/widths specified in L&D manual
    - Surface preparation per CMS (slip resistant, low vibration)
    - Bridge sidewalks (per BDM) - apply sealer to match parapet
  - **Buffers:**
    - Grass, no plantings
    - Can be concrete in commercial/business district areas
Common Enhancements:

- Alternate pavement types, colors, patterns
- Decorative landscaping
- Special amenities (benches, shelters, trash receptacles)

- Sidewalk amenities located within lateral offset limits (per L&D 800.2.2) must meet MASH (2016) safety requirements

- Safety, mobility, and accessibility are of primary importance
  - ADA/PROWAG compliance (See L&D Volume 1 Section 300)
  - Minimize obstacles, provide low vibration zone

- Important vegetation planting and maintenance challenges
  - Watering, spacing (near lighting, signs), appropriate species
Baseline:

- **Medians**
  - Interstate/Expressway
    - Depressed grass; seed per CMS (roadside mix)
  - Local Roads/Streets
    - Raised concrete with light-neutral sealer
    - Raised grass with concrete curb
    - Pavement markings (per TEM and OMUTCD)

- **Islands:**
  - Depressed grass
  - Raised concrete with light-neutral sealer
  - Raised grass with concrete curb
  - Pavement markings (per TEM and OMUTCD)

- **Crosswalks:**
  - White pavement markings (per TEM and OMUTCD)
- Baseline (Continued):
  - Examples.....

  - Depressed Grass Median
  - Raised Grass/Curbed Median
  - Raised Concrete Median
  - Depressed Grass Island
  - Crosswalk & Raised Concrete Island
  - Median Pavement Markings
ODOT’s Updated Aesthetic Design Guidelines

Medians, Islands, Crosswalks

- **Common Enhancements:**
  - Alternate pavement types, colors, patterns
  - Decorative landscaping

- **General Rule:** No enhancements in freeway medians (clear zone safety)
- **Similar to sidewalks and buffers:**
  - Safety and accessibility are of primary importance
  - Cannot be a distraction to drivers per OMUTCD
  - Consider vegetation planting and maintenance challenges
- **Coordinate with other aesthetic treatments** → unified corridor
- **Baseline:**
  - Various roadside and slope seed mixes
    - Per CMS 659 (new seed mixes coming soon)
  - Revised Maintenance Practices:
    - Reduced mowing on backslopes and infields
    - Allows for growth of native flowers and vegetation
  - Other Programs:
    - Pollinator program, living snow fences

- General Rule: ODOT does not grade for aesthetics or plant trees in ROW
  - Safety/clear zone requirements of primary importance
Common Enhancements:

- Landscaping in “gateway” interchanges
- Backslope landscaping (outside clear zone)
  - Typically permit projects sponsored by locals

- L&D Section 900 - Roadside Landscaping Safety Guidelines
  - Fixed objects, bodies of water
  - Clear zones/setbacks
  - Landscaping/irrigation
  - Planting guidelines, constraints, maintenance

- CMS 651 through 671 - Additional planting and maintenance specifications
Baseline:

- Summarized in L&D 400 and 900
- Key Feature: Central Island
  - Low earthen mound
  - Grass or mulch
  - Basic plantings to reduce headlight glare, achieve line-of-sight goals
- Truck apron and splitter islands
  - Typically concrete

Landscaping must be designed to account for critical sight triangles
**Common Enhancements:**

- Alternate pavement types, patterns
- Decorative landscaping, small walls (35mph or less approach posted speeds and VERY specific design criteria for walls – see L&D 905.3.3)

- L&D Section 905: Guidelines on hazardous/fixed objects
- Avoid distracting items in central island
- Include water supply and electricity in central island
- Discourage pedestrian use
  - Avoid features that appear to be walkways
Questions?

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