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City Engineering to make medians even 'greener'

Starting next week, anyone traveling down East Washington Avenue may notice more activity on the City's medians. From May to October 2019, City Engineering contractors will be replacing nearly 1,000 non-native plants, nearing the end of their life cycle, in traffic medians with native plants. A native plant is a plant with range typically included in this part of Wisconsin.

This is a continued commitment from the Engineering Division to greener infrastructure by improving the medians with native plants. Native plants are better for the environment because they're more suited for the climate, require less watering, provide more habitat for pollinators and are more likely to survive than the non-native plants currently in the medians. The selected plants are also drought and salt tolerant, which allows them to fit the conditions experienced in median areas.

The pollinator population has declined dramatically in recent years for a number of reasons. This effort is part of Engineering's work through the City's pollinator taskforce, where every City agency is encouraged to look at areas in the community to improve the habitat for pollinators.

While the native plants are great for the environment, they also require less maintenance from City crews. The native plants are also expected to make the medians look dynamic and different through the growing season as different flowers will bloom throughout the seasons.

Crews will work on the medians along East Washington Avenue from Franklin Street to East Springs Drive anytime between 9 a.m.-3 p.m. weekdays, weather dependent. Motorists may experience lane closures in connection to that work, however lane closures should not drastically impact traffic since they will be in off-peak traffic hours.

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