

State Capitol Committee

December 16, 2015

Campus Eco-turf Project

Purpose: Information

The purpose of the agenda item is to brief the State Capitol Committee (SCC) on an eco-turf trial project. The Department of Enterprise Services' horticulturalist, Brent Chapman, and members of the grounds crew will present this agenda item.

Background

A major goal for the Department of Enterprise Services in caring for the Capitol Campus grounds is to become a leader in the use of environmentally sustainable landscape practices. As part of this ongoing effort, the Enterprise Services grounds staff will conduct an eco-turf trial in 2016 on sections of east and west campus.

Eco-turf usually consists of slow-growing grasses, clover and other low-lying perennials that crowd out weeds while still allowing people to walk on it or through it. The use of eco-turf can lower maintenance costs and reduce environmental impacts compared to a conventional lawn.

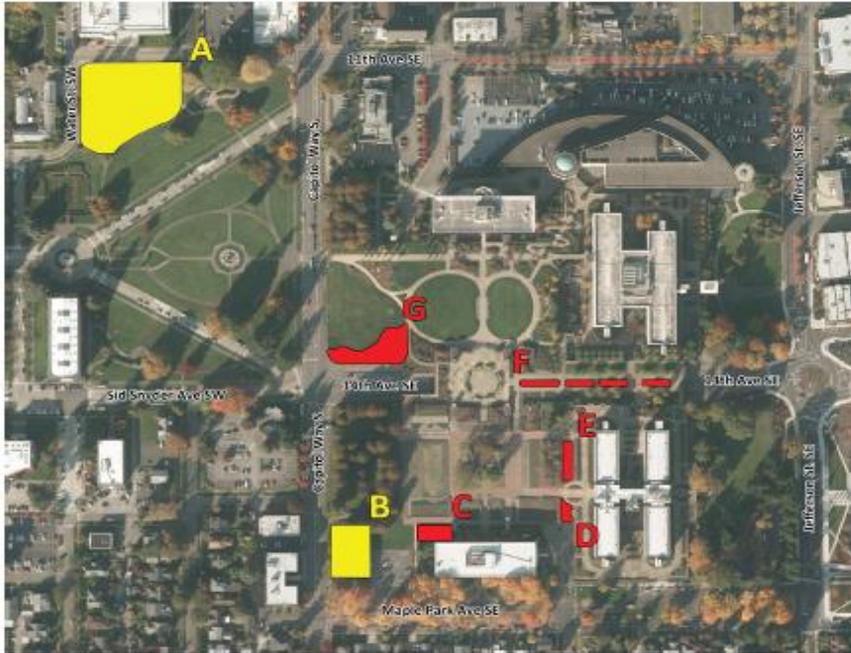
Campus trial goals:

- Determine tenant and public reactions to two different types of eco-turf.
 - Letting existing turf grow out to its mature height
 - A seeded wildflower/turf mix
- Determine best horticultural management practices for each of the two types of eco-turf.
- Reduce consumption of water, fertilizer and pesticides.
- Reduce contaminants in campus stormwater runoff.
- Per the recommendation of the 2009 Master Landscape Plan, improve sustainability while creating a meadow-like transition area between the surrounding urban street edge and the Olmsted-designed, highly formal focal point and axis at Tivoli Fountain.
- Increase the visual diversity of the campus grounds.
- Reallocate grounds staff time to ensure highest priority areas are maintained to the proper level of detail.

Implementation Steps:

- Create and implement a multi-pronged communication program that outlines the project's goals and potential benefits.
- Begin trials on January 1, 2016.
- Create contoured eco-turf trial areas.
- Monitor trial areas for noxious weeds and hand remove as required.
- Mow and irrigate as needed per the type of eco-turf being trialed.
- Assess results at the end of 2016

Ecoturf Trials - Exhibit A



Campus Overview Map

- Grow out existing turfgrass to maturity
- Newly seeded turf/wildflower mix



Enlarged Map - Area "A"

- Ecoturf, 8-12" tall
- Pedestrian Path
- Picnic Table