

# Neighborhood plans to landscape

By Linnea Fredrickson

The Woods Park neighborhood will be a busy place April 25, provided April showers don't interfere with the planned activities.

The Woods Park Neighborhood Association has received approval from the city to landscape 27th Street from Capitol Parkway to Randolph Street and Randolph Street from 26th to 28th Street.

Bill Tiwald, a housing rehabilitation specialist with the city and chairman of the streetscape project, said that Sunday, volunteers from the neighborhood will plant about 20 trees and about 200 bushes. Along the street a park bench also will be placed in front of the Open Harvest-H & R Block Building, 26th and Randolph Street, he said.

Darlene Brey, the association's social chairman, said the tree planting is scheduled to start early that morning. Other neighborhood activities also are planned for the day.

Tiwald said the idea to beautify the five-block area was his and Jerry Slominski's, a former president of the neighborhood association.

The project is partly an effort to establish a relationship between the business district and neighborhood, since the two are so integrally tied, Tiwald said. Many businesses suffered because 27th Street was widened and some failed, he said, which affects the neighborhood.

### Association formed

Tiwald said the Woods Park Neighborhood Association formed about four-and-a-half years ago to oppose the widening of 27th Street. Although the association was too late to stop the street widening, Tiwald said, it was organized in time to help with beautification after the project.

The city took trees down from Randolph Street to O Street as part of the widening project, so it planned to replace those trees, he said. But the section of 27th Street from Capitol Parkway to Randolph Street never was landscaped, so the neighborhood association is tackling it, he said.

Tiwald said other neighborhood associations told him their mistake was not communicating with the business district in their neighborhood.

"We're talking," Tiwald said. In fact, a representative from the business district now sits on the association's board of directors.

"We've aroused a nice community spirit, too," Tiwald said.

### Financial assistance

The association applied for assistance through the Lincoln Neighborhood Self-Help Grant Program. It received \$5,000, most of it to be spent on the trees and bushes.

Gwen Meister, a community resource specialist with the Urban Development Department who writes the guidelines for the self-help program, said the city provides the money for the trees and the neighborhood provides the volunteers. The Parks and Recreation Department is helping with planning and equipment, and will inspect the plants to make sure they're healthy.

Meister said the grant program gave \$30,000 to seven neighborhoods last year. She said the grants helped pay for the Malone gardening project, three neighborhood house painting projects, bikeway/walkway in the West A neighborhood and a couple of other tree-planting projects in other neighborhoods.

"Neighborhood associations are the going thing right now," she said, and she is hoping the self-help grant program budget will increase this next fiscal year.

"We feel the grants really help neighborhoods," she said.

Tiwald said as soon as the planting on this project is finished, the association will begin another tree-planting project for fall, this time in the residential areas.

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