

# PROJECT PORTFOLIO

A SCRAPBOOK OF DESIGN/BUILD OVERHAULS

*shopping in style*

## THE MISSION

Keep an upscale shopping center's surroundings looking radiant regardless of the weather and other challenges.

The client's intent was to create an upscale, family-oriented shopping center. To achieve that goal, the firm sought a lot of landscape color on the property.

However, the existing conditions presented plenty of challenges—including a lack of irrigation; pollution elements from the nearby toll way and surrounding streets; foot traffic; shrubbery; natural area plants around the lake; and water fowl.

To address those issues, Landscape Concepts Management, Grayslake, Ill., decided to go the extra mile in plant care. That included hand watering areas that needed it and adding slow-release irrigation bags to the trees.

"We also made sure we sought the right plants for the area, that can handle both drought and wet areas," says Mark Gemmer, account manager for the project.

Shade trees were planted throughout the shopping center but are kept open to prevent wind damage. Plants are changed out each season and hand watered daily; bed lines are edged monthly; and the turf is replaced annually in small areas that have been affected by salt after the winter season. Perennials and shrub roses are deadheaded weekly to control overgrowth. Soil amendments are added twice a year for maximum growth.

The first year was somewhat of "a learning process," Gemmer acknowledges, and some of the plants did not work out. Eventually, though, the team became more familiar with the site and achieved its original goals.

"We were able to populate the site with flowers and plants that have lots of color and beautiful leaves," he reports. "Our plant experts were able to pick the right plant materials needed for certain areas, like those with high foot traffic, and plants that can resist both drought and wet conditions."



PHOTOS: LINDA OYAMA BRYAN



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# THE WORK

**1 | Curb appeal.** The shopping center sign is surrounded by 27 flower beds. The hedge rose and shrubbery are hand pruned for lighting quality and a formal look.

**2 | A pleasant stroll.** All shrubs are hand pruned so shoppers may enjoy the sitting areas. The hardscapes are checked each season and leveled to prevent tripping hazards.

**3 | To everything, there's a season.** There are 47 containers and more than two dozen flower beds throughout the property that are changed seasonally.

**4 | Scenic drive.** The parking lot is also decorated with lots of color, trees and plants. The concrete parking lot containers are hand watered during a drought to prevent foliage from burning.

**5 | Water play.** Four fountains are placed in the pond each year to prevent stagnant water.

**6 | Clean slate.** The walking paths are made from slate chips and raked weekly for a leveled ground.

*Landscape Concepts Management, based in Grayslake, Ill., serves Midwestern commercial sites, retail and mixed-use properties, homeowners' associations, multiunit rentals, educational and healthcare facilities and government agencies. Learn more at [LandscapeConcepts.com](http://LandscapeConcepts.com).*

