

LANDSCAPED MEDIANS

Why create medians?

Many of the arterial and thoroughfare roadways in Sacramento are 4-6 lanes of asphalt. The easiest way to transform a roadway and make an impactful difference is to create landscaped medians. The addition of trees and shrubs to roadway can instantly change the look of a corridor.

Many of medians in Sacramento County have been landscaped in conjunction with roadway realignments, reconstruction or improvements. These plantings are designed in a tasteful, aesthetically pleasing manner while conserving water. They are quite attractive and offer many direct and indirect benefits, such as:

- An enhanced visual experience for drivers and passengers;
- Reduced nighttime headlight glare and distraction from oncoming vehicles;
- Depending on the type and density of the plant materials, they can provide additional safety by helping to prevent vehicles from crossing the median into oncoming traffic;
- Absorbing carbon dioxide (depending on type and species) and adding oxygen to the atmosphere;
- Reduction of potential soil erosion and stormwater runoff;
- Trapping of wind-blown debris and dust within the roadway.



Existing Condition Unimproved section of Folsom Blvd in Sacramento County. The roadway is a large expanse of asphalt. The two-way left hand turn lane does not add green space to the roadway. Pedestrians feel exposed and unprotected.



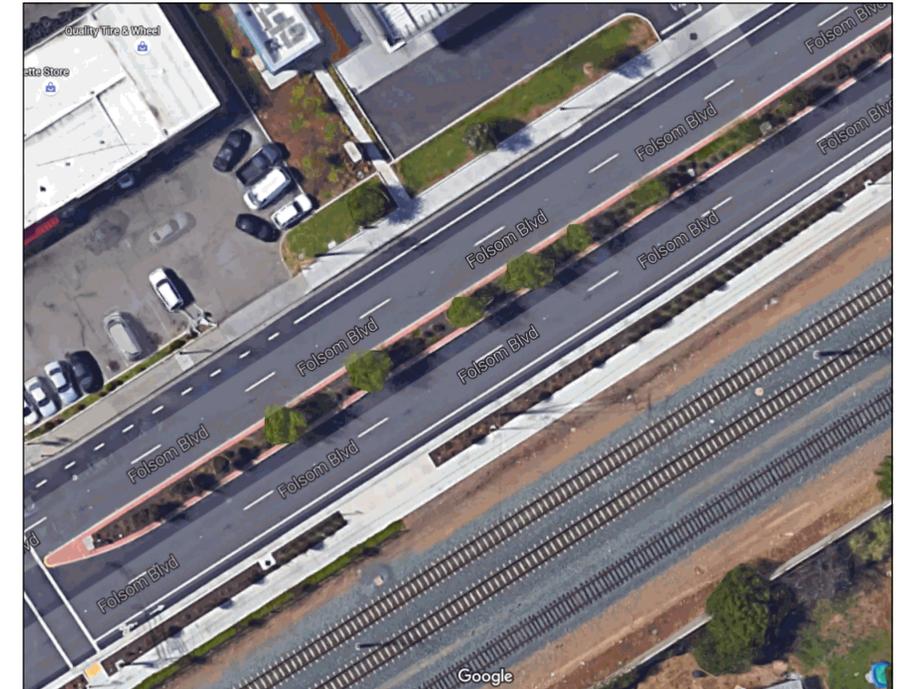
Future Vision Landscaping can transform a roadway and add to consistent corridor identification. Bonuses include shade and the beautification of the roadway. (Howe Ave, north of Feature Dr)



Future Vision—Pedestrian Access Fulton Ave in Sacramento County is a roadway that is also very similar to Folsom Boulevard. A landscaped median has been added to the roadway. Also featured is a signalized pedestrian crossing and refuge.



Future Vision Landscaped medians can drastically change the look/aesthetics of a roadway, especially for a corridor that wants to reinvent itself. Greenery can calm traffic, add to corridor identity, and beautify the roadway. Trees and shrubs break the continuity of asphalt. (Madison Ave)



Existing Condition Folsom Blvd within City of Rancho Cordova is has been improved with planted medians and sidewalks with plantings.

Helping Pedestrians Navigate the Road

Crossing the street can be a complex task for pedestrians. Pedestrians must estimate vehicle speeds, adjust their own walking speeds, determine adequacy of gaps, predict vehicle paths, and time their crossings appropriately. Drivers must see pedestrians, estimate vehicle and pedestrian speeds, determine the need for action, and react. At night, darkness and headlamp glare make the crossing task even more complex for both pedestrians and drivers.

Raised medians and pedestrian refuge islands allow pedestrians to cross one direction of traffic at a time. This significantly reduces the complexity of the crossing. They also provide a space to install improved lighting at pedestrian crossing locations. Improved lighting has been shown to reduce nighttime pedestrian fatalities at crossings by 78 percent.

Raised medians provide additional benefits above and beyond reducing pedestrian and automobile conflicts, including:

- Reducing motor vehicle crashes by 15 percent.
- Decreasing delays (>30 percent) for motorists.
- Increasing capacity (>30 percent) of roadways.
- Reducing vehicle speeds on the roadway.
- Providing space for landscaping within the right-of-way.
- Providing space to install additional roadway lighting, further improving the safety of the roadway.
- Providing space to allow for supplemental signage on multi-lane roadways.