

GVC RESOURCE TITLE: Getting Started with Containers

GVC RESOURCE CODE: GVCR.006

APPLICABLE GVC SELF-ASSESSMENT METRIC CODE(S): FL.a.01, FL.c.01, FL.c.02, FL.c.03, FL.c.04, FL.c.10

GVC CRITERIA RELATED TO RESOURCE:

- Community Vitality
- ✓ Flowers
- Landscape Areas
- Urban Forestry
- Environmental Efforts
- Celebrating Heritage
- Overall Impression

APPROPRIATE COMMUNITY SIZE(S):

- ✓ All
- Under 10,000
- 10,001 – 50,000
- 50,001 – 100,000
- Over 100,000

LEVEL(S) OF EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION:

- ✓ All
- Beginning
- Intermediate
- Advanced

APPROPRIATE GEOGRAPHIC REGION(S) OF THE UNITED STATES:

- ✓ All
- Northeast
- Midwest
- South
- West

NARRATIVE:

Decorative containers are a great way to add warmth, color, and interest along a broad sidewalk or street – especially one that does not have any space for plantings. If the containers are similar in design and are planted with similar colors and textures, they will lend a sense of continuity to a downtown area. It is best to select a decorative container from those designed for commercial use as they are generally durable, weighted properly, and suitable for variable weather conditions. Containers that have water reservoirs require less watering.

When selecting plants for containers, remember that it is a creative process. There is a fun guideline that is helpful. Use a “thriller” as the centerpiece. Tall and striking and perhaps even colorful, bold tropical foliage such as Alocasia, Colocasia, banana, or a palm is a good choice. If a hardy plant is preferred, select a cold hardy evergreen as the “thriller.” Then select a “spiller” to cascade down the sides of the container. This is often one that would do well as a hanging

basket flowering plant. Next, select “spillers” with flowers that perform well over a long season and are self-cleaning/no dead heading. The third group of plants are “fillers.” These grow upright and mound as they fill in between the “thrillers” and the “spillers.” They may also be flowering. Select plants for heat tolerance, drought tolerance, wind tolerance, and pest resistance. Soil should be well-drained, so the plants can thrive. To keep these containers healthy for a long period, provide regular watering and fertilization. If plants dry out, they lose their vigor.

WEBLINKS:

Container basics with P Allen Smith: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oYgmQCl0Mig>

Self-watering containers: <http://trudrop.com/#QuickStart>

Urban containers: <https://www.campaniainternational.com/planters>

PHOTOS:



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