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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grassroots Effort Preserves and Renovates a Community Focal Point

When a beautiful community focal point in St. Charles was in desperate need of renovation and restoration, a caring group of neighbors launched a grassroots effort to transform and preserve it...

(St. Charles, Illinois) October 2, 2018- The Fox Chase Boulevard Median Foundation is pleased to announce that it is in the seventh year of its license agreement with the City of St. Charles and continues a grassroots effort to transform and preserve a beautiful boulevard that relies almost entirely on voluntary contributions from surrounding homeowners.

Twelve years ago, Fox Chase Boulevard, which served as a once beautiful winding gateway to several schools and neighborhood on the city's east side, was overrun with invasive weeds, overgrown with unsightly shrubs, and canopied with trees in poor health.

In the face of dwindling local budgets and a general unwillingness to add to tax bills, a group of concerned volunteer homeowners rallied into action and decided it would work to solicit voluntary contributions from neighborhoods adjoining the boulevard in order to expand the basic and limited level of care provided by the City and make improvements to plantings originally installed in 1974. To formalize these efforts, the Fox Chase Boulevard Foundation was incorporated in October, 2010, as a non-profit entity for the sole purpose of promoting horticultural beautification, maintenance and improvement of the boulevard, using sound ecology, sustainable plantings and indigenous flora, cost efficiency and close cooperation with the City of St. Charles.

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By March of 2011, the Foundation entered into a license agreement with the City of St. Charles, allowing the Foundation to continue its efforts to preserve and renovate this unique community focal point. This license agreement specifies the terms and conditions in which the City allows Fox Chase Boulevard Median Foundation to install and maintain landscape improvements along the median from the Dunham Road entrance to Winner's Cup Circle. The median area is a City-owned right-of-way.

Since 2011, the City has replaced several diseased trees, planted new trees purchased by the Median Foundation through the City's 50/50 Parkway Tree Program, provided mulch for the landscape beds and annually planted attractive flowers at the Dunham Road entrance. In turn, the Foundation has completed its comprehensive plan for transformation of the boulevard with plantings that are tolerant of the harsh median environment and easily maintained, yet beautiful. Invasive weeds and plants have been removed, trees were pruned for their continued health and beauty and extensive landscape beds full of shrubs, native grasses and perennials have been added as funds allow. Jeremy Craft, the city's arborist and public services division manager, applauds the Foundation's efforts. "It is clear these residents take a lot of pride in their subdivision. We have residents that do some parkway plantings, but nothing on this scale," notes Mr. Craft.

Bob Walters, current Foundation President explains, "The City provides the essential needs for the boulevard by mowing the grass and helping to replace trees, as well as planting flowers at the entrance. This has allowed the Foundation to focus our limited resources on the landscape restoration and maintenance. It took us five years to fully complete the transformation which seemed daunting at first when faced with the deplorable condition of the existing plants along a boulevard of more than a half mile. We are so grateful for the patience and support of the community and especially the Aintree Community Association for their commitment to our success." Mr. Walters also notes that in the early years of this endeavor Midwest Groundcover provided initial planting support for the organization that made the first years of planting hundreds of perennials a lot easier. Today, Sitarz Landscaping provides continuous maintenance and attention to the conditions of the median to support volunteer efforts. Additionally, the

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Foundation's website provides neighbors with transparency and information, current and historical, as well as answers to frequently asked questions.

An annual fund raising campaign seeking public support and within surrounding neighborhoods of the boulevard provides the continued support for the ongoing renovation and maintenance of the Fox Chase Boulevard Median, providing a clean landscape that is watered and refreshed with plantings as needed.

In 2017, one hundred ninety residents in the Fox Chase area contributed financially to this ongoing effort, with continued financial support from the Aintree Community Association and the Townhomes of Fox Chase. The continued support of the general public along with residents in the area will be needed to sustain this unique effort, whether it is through contributions of funds, time or enthusiasm. Donors have provided everything from mailing costs to mulch, allowing for immediate improvements to a lovely community focal point that contributes to the overall beauty of the City of St. Charles.

Today, those who traverse Fox Chase Boulevard to their homes or schools enjoy a lovely winding gateway that appears to have a beautiful park right within the roadway. It is a story of neighborhood activism to transform and preserve a beautiful boulevard. "This project has served as an excellent example of the good things that can be accomplished through the grassroots efforts of those who care about their community" noted Connie Thullen, former Median Foundation President.

About the Fox Chase Boulevard Median Foundation: We are a group of volunteers concerned about maintaining and improving the quality of the landscape areas in the median and entrance area of Fox Chase Boulevard.

The Fox Chase Boulevard Median Foundation was created in October, 2010, to formalize prior "grassroots" efforts to maintain the median areas. The Foundation is a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt public charity (EIN: 27-3799311), therefore cash donations are tax deductible. We invite you to come see the boulevard and compare it to photos of its condition before the transformation.

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Officers for Foundation include:

President, Bob Walters

Vice President, Lynne Hepler

Secretary, Treasurer, Todd Henning

For additional information: www.FoxChaseBoulevard.org or, contact Mr. Bob Walters, President, Fox Chase Boulevard Median Foundation