Scenic City

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE GUIDE

Fort Worth, Texas

Cuero, Texas

Dripping Springs, Texas

And thank you to each of our participating platinum and gold Scenic Cities:

Fairview, Texas
McKinney, Texas
Benbrook, Texas
South Padre Island, Texas
Southlake, Texas
Fort Worth, Texas
Flower Mound, Texas
Frisco, Texas
Pearland, Texas
Dripping Springs, Texas
Missouri City, Texas
Cuero, Texas

Thank you to our **Certified Scenic City Program Partners**:

About the Author
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Samantha is currently working towards a dual master's degree in Community and Regional Planning and Sustianable Design at the University of Texas at Austin, School of Arcitecture. She is interested in sense-of-place, ecology within the city, and urban tourism.

Samantha was an intern for Scenic Texas during the Summer of 2021. Throughout the summer, she traveled to platinum and gold ranked Certified Scenic Cities around Texas to collect information for the SCCP Best Practices Guide. Using information from interviews and academic research, she wrote the guide.

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Introduction

About Scenic Texas and the Scenic City Certification Program

Scenic Texas is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization that's mission is to preserve and enhance the state of Texas's visual environment. Scenic Texas and the 17 partners administer the Scenic City Certification Program (SCCP) to work towards our vision:

> We believe in a Texas with exemplary visual standards alongside roadways and enhanced streetscapes that provide better quality of life for citizens and visitors.

The SCCP began in 2010 with 13 certified cities. Eleven years later in 2021, there are 85 certified cities in Texas.[1] The program has grown immensely through additional participating Certified Scenic Cities, partners, and in prominence. Becoming a Certified Scenic City is beneficial to a city and its residents in many ways. The SCCP can be used as a tool for Texas cities that intend to create high-quality and thoughtful ordinances, plans, and programs through local municipalities. Certified Scenic Cities are recognized by the program for establishing strong infrastructural standards related to public roadways and public spaces. A primary goal of the SCCP is to help establish a foundation of cohesive scenic standards across Texas that promote sustainability through environmental conservation, economic management, and sense of place. The SCCP is also committed to developing a network of Certified Scenic Cities that may collaborate and improve by working together to share ideas and progress.

The SCCP Mission

> The mission of the Scenic City Certification Program is to support and recognize Texas municipalities that implement high-quality scenic standards for public roadways and spaces. The Scenic City Certification Program provides a proven, highly regarded tool to Texas cities for assessment, evaluation, and recognition of infrastructure standards.

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[1] https://sceniccitycertification.org/certified-cities

Why should your city apply to become a SCCP?

Any Texas municipality is eligible and encouraged to apply to be a Certified Scenic City. A Certified Scenic City benefits from the program and certification in numerous ways. The application submission and review processes provide an objective third-party evaluation of a city's existing standards. The process also forms a continual review and analysis of a city's development plans as a city up-ranks and recertifies. There is also opportunity to educate citizens on the positive impact comprehensive local policies can create. Finally, economic development efforts are also strengthened through a Scenic City Certification.

The program's application process is designed to create a platform for cities to work with Scenic Texas to improve or create strong and strategically worded ordinances, plans and programs that will yield in the most beneficial outcomes for an area. The SCCP helps cities to act in protecting the visual qualities that make each city in Texas unique. Strong city ordinances and programs also help to preserve the sense of place for the human and wildlife inhabitants, as well as the existing landscapes. As Texas experiences major growth in many parts of the state, it is critical that our cities can maintain equity and character during development and expansion.

The SCCP specifically requires existing ordinance and program language in the application to ensure the language will effectively translate into actions that protect and enhance your community. An applicant city will receive feedback on the language that is submitted and then have a period to consider the feedback before the final application is due. This allows improvement beginning with the first application from a city. A city's improvement is the most important achievement to the SCCP.

Becoming a Certified Scenic City also connects your city to a network of other cities around Texas through a unified vision. Certified Scenic Cities municipalities can connect and learn together to help promote scenic standards across the region. To encourage cross city collaboration, this Scenic City Certification Program Best Practices Resource Guide is intended to be a resource for new and recertifying applicants. Many Certified Scenic Cities will use existing ordinance language from highly ranked cities to further develop their own set of ordinances. In addition to connecting with a group of other Texas cities that prioritize the promotion of scenic standards, Certified Scenic Cities also can connect with Scenic Texas's 17 SCCP project partners.

The assessment of a city is points-based. There is a total of 338 points available for a city to earn by implementing a variety scenically and environmentally themed ordinances, plans, and programs. Based on the total points a city receives determines what rank a city earns. There are five possible ranks: Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze, or Recognized. Once a city receives a rank, they are eligible to rank up. It is common for cities to rank up after connecting with other Certified Scenic Cities to gain a better understanding of well-written ordinance language.

Please refer to the Certified Scenic City Program Application Guidelines for more information on how to apply to become a Certified Scenic City: https://sceniccitycertification.org/resource

An individual can support Scenic Texas's mission to fight visual pollution by becoming a Scenic Texas Annual Member: https://www.scenictexas.org/donate

Marble Falls, Texas

Why is the SCCP important?

The SCCP creates a collaborative understanding of what a model scenic city should prioritize. This establishes a set of standards made available for Texas municipalities to adapt and use while preserving scenic standards in their city. Through collective visioning, Scenic Texas and the 17 project partners worked together to design the structure of ten Visual Tenets that reflect a Scenic City. Collective visioning is an essential element of a sustainable future for Texas. The SCCP has helped cities throughout Texas create plans that align with the collective vision. The Scenic Cities also play a critical role in the constant improvements and revisions to the principles the SCCP adopts. Co-learning between the program and the Certified Scenic Cities has allowed the SCCP to be truly equitable and consistently advancing.

Program Benefits:

- Provides expert third-party evaluation of existing standards.
- Forms a basis for continual review and analysis of development plans.
- Serves as a platform to educate citizens on the impact of local regulations.
- Supports economic development efforts.[2]

Scenic Cities demonstrate a strong commitment to maintaining strong visual standards in their city. Visual standards create a platform for cities to address additional supporting standards. The SCCP uses important concepts to define Scenic Cities including strong scenic standards (1), environmental conservation (2), economic growth and management (3), and sense of place (4). These four critical factors that are the focus of the SCCP are displayed below in Figure 1. Strong scenic standards act as a foundation and a point of access to implement changes that support a sustainable future for Texas cities as our state continues to develop.

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[2] https://sceniccitycertification.org/certified-cities

Critical Factors Addressed by the Certified Scenic City Program

Strong Scenic Standards

Environmental Conservation

Economic Growth and Growth Management

Sense of Place

Figure 1. A model of the critical urban factors addressed by the Scenic City Certification Program (SCCP). The outer most circle is strong scenic standards which represent the criteria in the SCCP certification requirements. Within the strong scenic standards, the SCCP requirements promote environmental conservation, economic growth and management, and sense of place. Each of the factors are address directly through the SCCP. Each factor within the scenic standard circle is of equal importance. Source: (Author).

Critical Factors Addressed by the Certified Scenic City Program

Strong Scenic Standards

Strong scenic standards provide a framework for environmental conservation, economic growth and growth management, and sense of place to be established within. Scenic standards promote authenticity and well-being through carefully written ordinances that serve the public and the environment. The SCCP uses scenic standards to help cities across Texas maximize sustainable outcomes.

Environmental Conservation

Environmental Conservation is maintained and supported through scenic standards. The SCCP encompasses standards that prioritize environmentally friendly municipal ordinances and programs through scenic standards. The SCCP is devoted to protecting trees, native landscaping, and animal habitat. These aspects are intended to help cities prepare to adapt to climate change.

Economic Growth and Growth Mangement

The economic health of a city influences all other aspects. Finding a healthy balance between economic growth and growth management that leaves residents and visitors comfortable is a challenge. With specific ordinances and regulations, the local economy can help a city thrive. The SCCP focuses on helping cities determine what economic elements should be leveraged to bring about the best possible outcome for all involved.

Sense of Place

Instilling and maintaining a sense of belonging in a community can be challenging as cities become more dynamic and connected to major metropolitan areas. The SCCP encourages and teaches cities how to maintain control of their sense of place during times of standardization. Sustaining the unique charm that makes a city feel like home is supported through the SCCP application criteria.

The Scenic City Certification Program Best Practices Resource Guide

This resource guide provides real Texas city examples of strong ordinances and programs and the impacts they have on human and natural systems. The case studies included in this guide are intended to help new and recertifying cities visualize the outcomes that specific ordnance and program language can create. This resource can also be used to help gain support of said language at the municipal level. In many case studies, complicated ideas are unpacked and translated into visuals and narratives that are easy to share and discuss with stakeholders across professions. At Scenic Texas, we understand the collaborative and dynamic network of people it requires to manage a city. Sometimes transparent and efficient conversations require taking a step back to establish a set of shared values and goals for a city as a foundation to the various initiatives from different stakeholders. This resource guide is our effort to define the foundational values and goals set by some of our most distinguished Scenic Cities so they can be adapted and used in cities across Texas.

SCCP Visual Tenets

The SCCP application criterion were developed based on the model Scenic City created by the 18 SCCP partners. There is intentional overlap of the ten visual elements and green infrastructure that is incorporated into city infrastructure to maximize sustainability outcomes. The ten visual tenets were created with sustainability and the critical urban factors described in figure 1 as the foundation. The 10 visual tenets quantify the aspects that the 18 project partners determined are essential to address to fit the standard of a Certified Scenic City. The 10 visual tenets directly relate to the application criteria included in the Scenic City application. The SCCP believed the ten elements below are essential for cities to craft intentional language regarding as they expand and develop to ensure the city may maintain control over the fabric of their home.

The 10 visual tenets used to define the model Scenic City include:
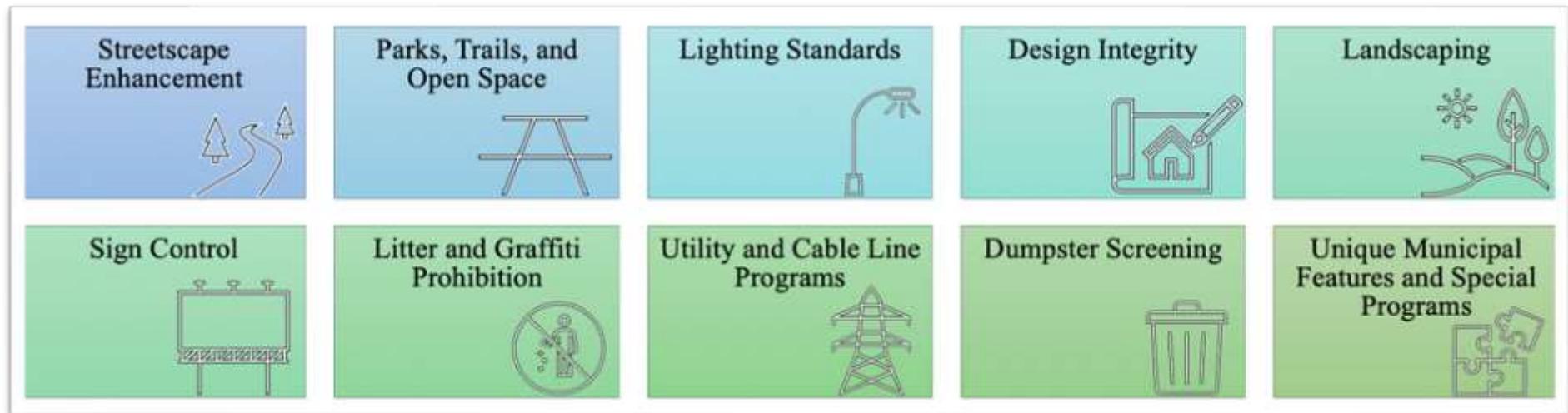
Figure 2. The 10 Visual Tenets of the SCCP.

10 Visual Tenets Definitions and Key Elements

1) Streetscape Enhancements:

Streetscapes that are design for all users including pedestrians, bikers, and motor traffic.

- Trees and landscaping along major roadways, streets, and medians.
- Pedestrian friendly sidewalks.

2) Parks, Trails and Public Space:

A connected system of green space that is available and accessible to all community members.

- A comprehensive system of parks, greenbelts, and open space that is accessible to residents.
- Parks include natural and manmade amenities that align with community preferences.
- Park land dedication for future developments.
- Limited impervious cover in open space areas.

3) Lighting Standards:

Lighting that promotes public safety and limits light pollution that is undesirable to humans and harmful to wildlife.

- Selection of lighting location and equipment that provide visibility, safety, and security.
- Adequate illumination for level of use.
- Lighting program that emphasizes directional lighting.
- Cost-sharing program between city and electric provider to upgrade fixtures.

4) Design Integrity:

A clearly defined sense of place that sets a framework for incoming business and residential developments to abide by to maintain the existing community character.

- Clearly stated design standards that are in place to ensure coordination of individual efforts.
- Storefront design standards based on shapes and materials.
- Signage limitation for on-premises displays.
- Exterior design and landscaping requirements.

5) Landscaping:

Well placed and selected plants to enhance beauty, separation of use, and stormwater control.

- Appropriately scaled landscaping to screen parking areas.
- Required landscaping in islands with curbs.
- If paving around trees, used porous pavement.
- Plant selection must be appropriate for climate region.

6) Sign Control: (on and off premises)

Signage restrictions intended to protect the community character and wildlife while not over-burdening businesses.

- Thoughtful limits on size, placement, and quantity of signs for businesses.
- Require permits for permanent signage.
- Restrict wind devices, roof, and portable signage.
- Restrict electronic signage.
- Plan to bring grandfathered signage into conformity with code.
- Management of existing signs and removal of signage when damaged or otherwise appropriate.
- No new outdoor off-premises signs, no relocation of existing off-premises signs.
- No vehicles placed for the primary purpose of advertising.
- No advertisements on right-of-way amenities or public properties.
- No tree-cutting or clearing to better view of off-premises signage.

7) Litter and Graffiti Prohibition:

Appropriate management and removal of litter and graffiti.

- Littering is prohibited and penalized.
- Graffiti is prohibited and penalized.
- Dumping is prohibited and penalized.
- Clean-up efforts.
- Public trash receptacles available and include protective lid.
- Trash placed for collection only 15 hours before or after specific collection days.

8) Utility and Cable Line Programs:

Program in place to ensure that new and replaced utility and cable lines are placed underground when possible.

- New utility lines to be installed underground when possible.
- Replacement of damaged utility lines should be installed underground.

9) Dumpster Screening:

Dumpsters are effectively screened and constructed of masonry material.

- All trash and bulk containers require screening.
- Be constructed from masonry material.
- The opening of screen be faced away from sidewalks and streets.

10) Unique Municipal Features and Special Programs:

Adopted ordinances, plans, or programs that contribute to scenic standards but fall outside the boundaries of the SCCP application.

- These may include, but are not limited to:
  - historic districts or historic preservation program
  - a scenic program related to a unique geographic feature
  - a natural environment enhancement program
  - storm runoff collectors
  - innovative programs above and beyond the criteria in any of the certification categories
  - active chapter in good standing with Keep Texas Beautiful
  - current participation in Texas Historical Commission's Texas Main Street Program

Research Methods

Supporting Topics for the 10 Visual Tenets

For each of the 10 visual tenet criteria, a minimum of two academic sources are cited to support the importance of each. The supporting topics included in each section are either addressed by a case study or academic literature. The supporting topics are all sustainably orientated. In the Streetscapes enhancement visual tenet section, street trees, riparian buffers, complete streets, and raingardens are addressed. These supporting topics are not direct elements of the SCCP application; however, they are means by which application criteria may be addressed. The supporting topics are displayed in table 1 below.

Table 1. Supporting Academic Research Topics of Visual Tenets

10 Visual Tenets	Supporting Topics
Streetscape Enhancement	Street Trees Riparian Buffers Buffer Zones Complete Streets Raingardens
Parks, Trails, and Public Space	Greenspace Network Multifunctional Landscaping
Lighting Standards	Pedestrian and Driver Safety Lighting Suitability Wildlife Awareness
Design Integrity	Participatory Planning Authenticity Sense of Place
Landscaping	Plant and Tree Protection During Construction Sustainable Irrigation Systems Native Plants
Sign Control	Non-illuminated Billboards Programming for Grandfathered Signage Pandemic context
Litter and Graffiti	Education Against Removal Program
Utility and Cable Line Program	Replacement Wildlife Public Safety
Dumpster Screening	Native Plants Around Screen Public Art Around Screen
Unique Municipal Features and Special Programs	Mainstreet Program Keep Texas Beautiful Chapters Darks Sky Program

Best Practices Case Studies for the 10 Visual Tenet

Each of the 10 visual tenets are supported below by relevant case studies from current scenic cities. Each city featured in the map below is a best practice's case study that has either a platinum or gold ranking in the SCCP. Each city was selected because a programs or ordinances the city implements is considered a "best practice" according to the SCCP standards. The cities received full credit in the visual tenet they are featured for. The SCCP believed that each of the following case studies are best practices and can be used for new and reranking cities to adapt. The Scenic Cities included in the guide are displayed below in table 2.

Table 2. Featured Certified Scenic Cities

Certified Scenic City	Rank	Corresponding Visual Tenet
Fairview, Texas	Platinum	Streetscape Enhancement
Benbrook	Gold	Parks, Trails, and Public Space
McKinney, Texas	Platinum	Parks, Trails, and Public Space
South Padre Island, Texas	Gold	Lighting Standards
Flower Mound, Texas	Gold	Lighting Standards
Southlake, Texas	Platinum	Design Integrity
Friendswood, Texas	Platinum	Landscaping
Bee Cave, Texas	Platinum	Sign Control
Fort Worth, Texas	Gold	Litter and Graffiti
Pearland, Texas	Gold	Dumpster Screening
Frisco, Texas	Platinum	Utility and Cable Line
Pearland, Texas	Gold	Dumpster Screening
Dripping Springs	Gold	Special Programs

For each featured city, I interviewed city employees and officials to better understand the impact of implementing the ordinances, plans, or programs that allowed the cities to achieve and maintain a high level of scenic standards. During the interview, the representatives for each Scenic City discussed:

1) The specific ordinance, plan, or program language.
2) The implementation and enforcement of the ordinance plan, or program.
3) The positive impact on the community.
4) Hardships the community has encountered regarding the scenic standard.
5) Tips for communities trying to achieve similar scenic standards.

The written case studies for each visual tenet are based on the information collected during each interview. After the interviews, the representative of the Scenic City was asked to recommend sights for me to visit. At each site, I documented the featured element in action. Some cities also provided links and PDFs to resources that can be of use to cities when drafting their own scenically orientated language.

How the Scenic City Certification Program has helped our cities.

Our city already held many of the same values that the SCCP promotes, we just needed help putting it into ordinace language.
-Friendswood

The SCCP allows us to streamline each of our efforts.
– Fort Worth

We wanted to prevent becoming another stretch of highway to glance over as you drive by.
-Bee Cave

Creating a shared community brand is important. The program is a part of our brand.
-Benbrook

The SCCP helps us communicate the importance of outdoor ammenities.
-McKinney

Communicating with residents makes city work so much more effective.
-Frisco

Many of these topics support pubic saftey.
-Pearland

Cedar Park, Texas

McAllen, Texas

Buda. Texas

Nolensville, Texas
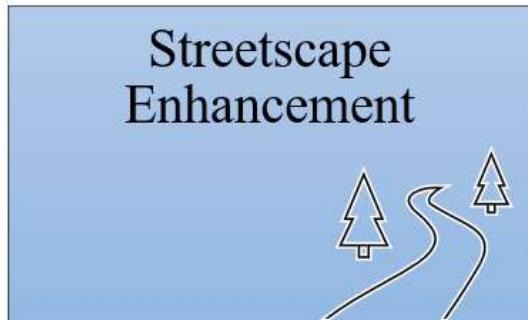
1. Streetscape enhancements

The streetscape enhancement tenet is included in the SCCP application because Scenic Texas believes in promoting infrastructure for conservation, pedestrians, and beautification. The streetscape enhancements requirements include both landscaping and sidewalk standards.

Landscaping along major roadways, city streets, street medians or in parking lots are required elements of the SCCP application. Communicating the importance of urban greenery is complicated despite supporting literature. Trees and other plant infrastructure can fall second to other highly prioritizes initiatives such as funding for hospitals.[3] The most traditional argument in favor of urban forestry is the desire to bring "natural aesthetic into a predominantly artificial urban form".[2] The benefits of street trees and landscaping are wider ranged than traditional arguments include. There are economic, environmental, and social benefits to urban forestry.[4]

The economic benefits of landscaping along roads, streets, and in parking lots range. Research shows that residents and visitors are much more likely to spent time on shaded and walkable sidewalk streets. Tree shade can also help to reduce fees associated with pavement cracking and rutting from sun exposure.[5] A city should be strategic in the place's street trees are prioritized and the types of trees that are installed. With a well-researched plan, street trees are proven to be cost effective. Street trees should be on heavy pedestrian trafficked streets. It is best to plant native trees that are suited for the area.[2]

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[3] Andy J. Moffat (2016) Communicating the benefits of urban trees: A critical review, Arboricultural Journal, 38:2, 64-82, DOI: 10.1080/03071375.2016.1163111

[4] Roman (2020) Beyond 'trees are good': Disservices, management costs, and tradeoffs in urban forestry

[5] Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris (2010) Vibrant Sidewalks in the United States: Re-Integrating Walking and a Quintessential Social Realm, ACCESS Magazine, page 29

Fort Worth Street Trees

"People like to be in beautiful places." – Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris

Landscaping can also provide ecosystem services such as acting as riparian buffers, creating habitat for insects and animals, and preventing stormwater runoff through solid root systems. As the impacts of climate change has put increasing pressure on city infrastructure. Urban landscaping can prevent stormwater damage to streets and sidewalks. Mitigation through landscaping is a type of Green Infrastructure. Green Infrastructure is becoming an increasingly popular and important priority for cities in the United States. Types of Green Infrastructure that can be applied to Scenic Cities include plant buffer zones, riparian buffer zones, and rain gardens.

Native plant buffer zones and riparian zones are intentionally placed planted areas that provide a handful of environmental benefits and are visually appealing. The zones help to enhance public safety, alleviate the damages, and intercept pollutants that can occur during weather events. Installing buffer zones can be a great community event that all community members can take part in.

Native plant buffer zones along streets and sidewalks can prevent erosion and runoff by holding the ground in place during stormwater events to prevent damage to the surrounding streets and drainage systems. In addition, buffer zones can effectively separate pedestrian sidewalks from roadways. The width of a typical buffer zone ranges from 1 to 6 feet.
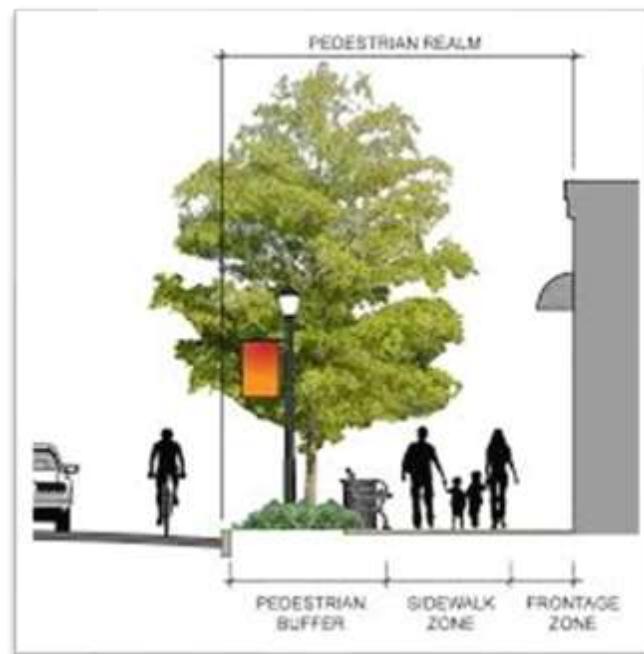

Image 1. Pedestrian Buffer Zone Image. Source: (http://www.greenways.com/downloads/A8.pdf)

Riparian buffers are along or near bodies of water and work to filter pollution, recharge groundwater, create habitat, and serve as beautifying landscape.[6] Riparian budders are a landscaping alternative to mowing grass around the parameter of urban bodies of water. The plants in riparian buffers also slow the speed of the water reentering a water system. When water rushes into a body of water too

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[6] https://extension.psu.edu/roadside-guide-to-clean-water-riparian-buffers

quickly, the speed of the body of water increases. Fast flowing water is dangerous a public safety concern. Riparian buffers are a natural solution to maintain clean and safe water systems in a city.
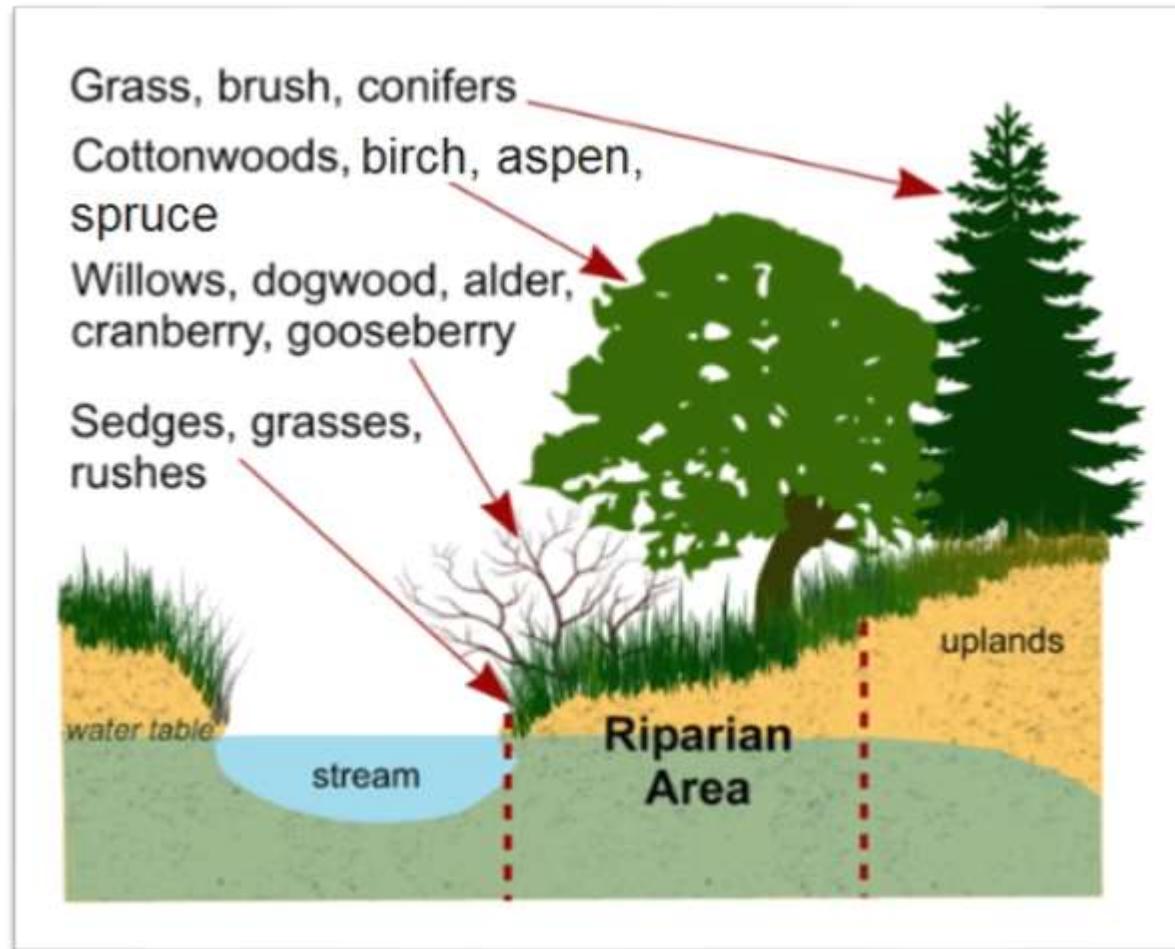

Image 2. Riparian Buffer Zone image. Source: (http://www.tvwatershed.org/riparian-zone-information)

Raingardens are commonly used to prevent stormwater from overflowing drainage systems. Raingardens are designed specifically with plants that have the capability to hold large quantities of water in their root systems. Installing raingardens in places that collect sitting water, sit in low areas, or places that handle large amounts of water over their surface during storm events can help to create

Raingardens are as beautiful as they are functional, and they also provide great pollinating sites for bees. Depending on the region of Texas a city is located, the raingarden plants that most suite the area differ. Local governments and residents can create collective impact on stormwater management through installing systems of raingardens throughout the city.

Image 3. Rain Garden Image. Source: (https://tinkerscreek.org/rain-gardens/)

Austin, Texas Rain Garden Plant Selection Guide: (Central Texas)

https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Watershed/rain-gardens/Rain-garden-plant-selection-09-08-2015.pdf

Texas Master Gardener's Rain Gardens for Northern Texas Landscapes:

http://txmg.org/denton/files/2012/10/Raingardens.pdf

The Green Infrastructure examples above are cost effective and applicable to many public and private areas. Another element of streetscape enhancement that is important to the SCCP is sidewalk standards. Improving pedestrian infrastructure leads to a variety of community outcomes. Healthy and inviting sidewalk designs promote more than just walking. Sidewalk health and accessibility is central to all the core values of the SCCP including environmental conservation, economic growth, and sense of place.

The most apparent outcome is an increase of pedestrian traffic, which leads to a decrease of car traffic on urban roads. A decrease in road traffic is not only better for public safety, but it is also better for the environment and the direct air quality of a place. An increase of pedestrian traffic also brings more economic activity to a place. Residents and visitors are much more likely to interact with businesses as pedestrian passersby than they are in motor vehicles. Finally, sidewalks create human interaction in a way that cars are unable to. Social interactions on streets work to create a sense of place in an area through networking and feelings of familiarity.

"Sidewalk users are more exposed to their environments than drivers, both because pedestrians are not encased in vehicles and because they move through their environments more slowly than do people in cars. For this reason, sidewalk users also require more from their environments. A successful sidewalk is more than just a route for getting from Point A to Point B; it is also a place to abide, to meet others, and to participate in neighborhood life." - Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris

Complete streets are the most current model of a highly performing green street.[7] A complete street is a street that is designed to suit all street users consistently. There are two major elements to keep in mind while designing a complete street. The first element is stormwater management and the second is capability for multi-modal transportation. To have successful stormwater management, complete streets typically include buffer systems. For multi-modal transportation, there is less street space dedicated to cars than in a traditional street. The space is divided among car, bike, and walking transit modes.

[7] https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-stormwater-guide/streets-are-ecosystems/complete-streets-green-streets/
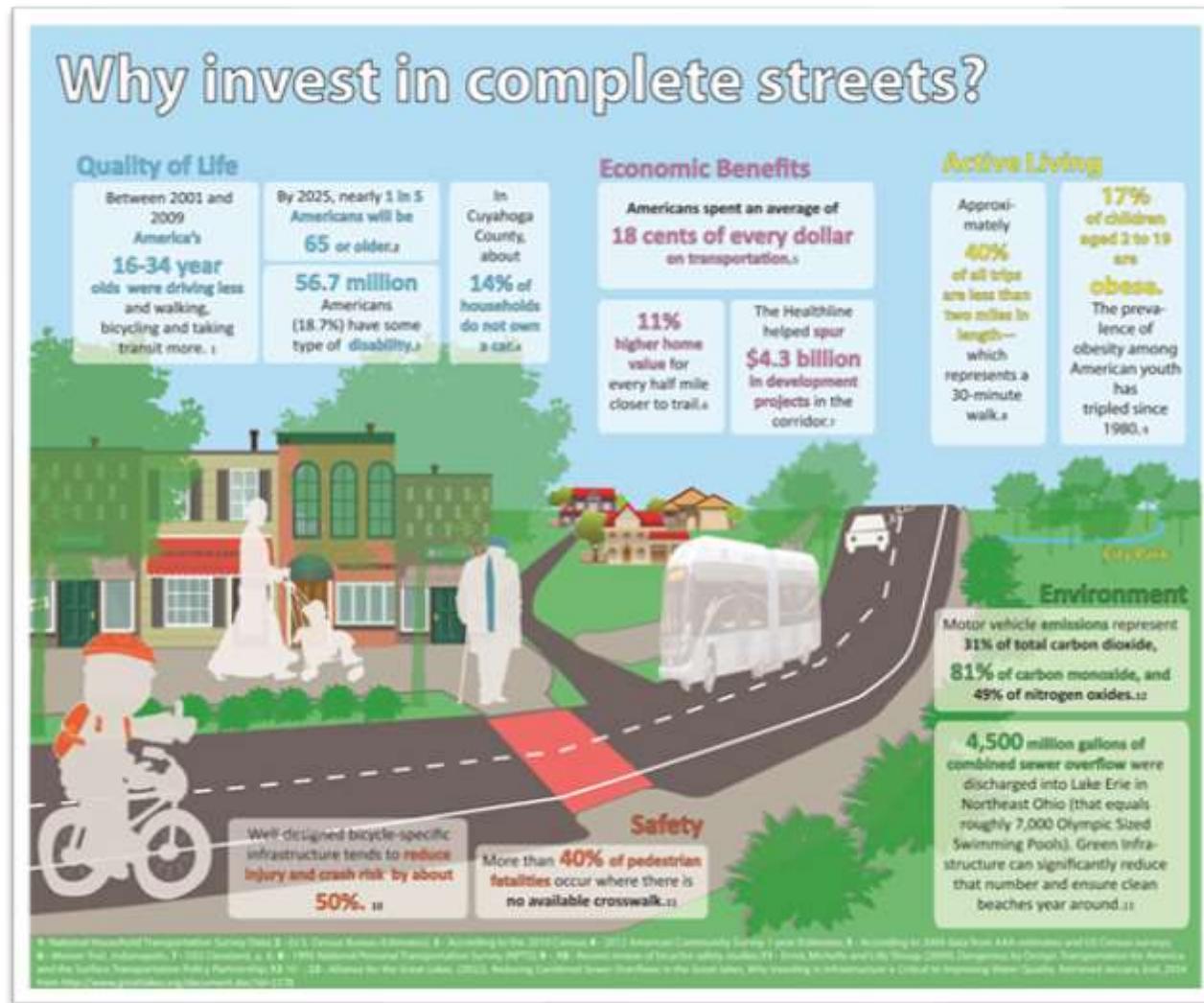
Image 4. Complete Streets Graphic. Source: (http://www.rahwayrising.com/city-council-to-adopt-complete-streets-policy/complete-streets-graphic/)

Scenic City
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Fairview, Texas
STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS

Fairview is a city that stretches over 9 square miles and is home to 9,770 people. The City of Fairview is dedicated to maintaining a streetscape that is authentic, sustainable, and pedestrian friendly. The local government accomplishes this through strong ordinance language that aims to prevent tree removal, create an extensive trail system, and to provide development patterns that align with the vision of the community.

"Keeping It Country: The Town of Fairview was incorporated in 1958 with a population of 50. Since that time, it has grown steadily to today's population of almost 9,000. The community is marked by large houses on large lots, expansive open spaces, numerous horse farms, excellent schools, rolling hills, vast hardwoods, beautiful creeks, and the extensive Village at Fairview shopping area and mixed-use center."[8]

The Town of Fairview has master plans that ensure individual commercial and residential projects promote the collective sense of place and environmental standards the town has set. The city sent out surveys to residents to determine the content of the master plans. The city has master park and trail plans, among others. Their newest place is focused on combating urban heat island, passed in 2014.

Residential developments are required to incorporate a park dedication in all new developments. This is determined by ordinance language. The developers that work in Fairview feature the parkland as an amenity to residents and look at the ordinance as an opportunity. The community members want to be in places with access to green space. Many residential developments use the parkland dedication to create connections to existing trials. Some residential developments even give more land than is required by the ordinance. The trail map for the Town of Fairview is displayed below in Image 5. If the incorporation of parkland dedication is not possible, the developers pay into a park fee as alternative. The established park fee is used to maintain and plan new parkland through the city.

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[8] https://fairviewtexas.org/departments/community-economic-development.html
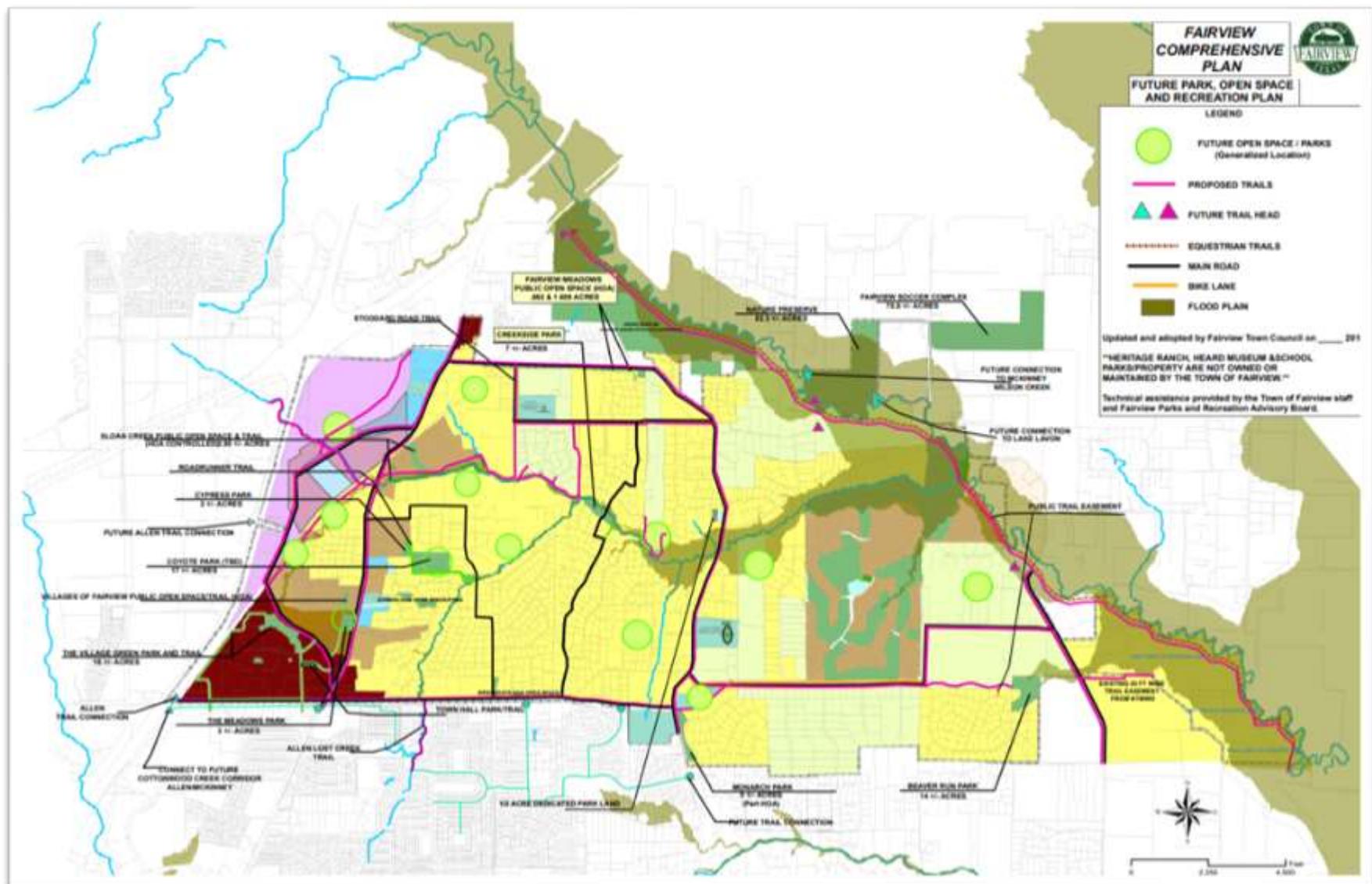
Image 5. Fairview trails map 2019. Source: (https://fairviewtexas.org/other-pages/find-a-document/category/13-maps.html)

There is also a requirement of every development to spend 1% of the total cost of construction on a public art project or piece on-site. If a development cannot incorporate a piece of public art, they may pay the same amount in a public art fee. The public art funds are used to install art pieces in public places around the Town of Fairview. The art pieces vary from sculptures, fountains, public squares, and public sitting areas. Funds from the 1% public art dedication were used to construct an amphitheater across from the Macy's downtown. This area is used for public gathers. The street is often blocked off for community events. Images of the area are below in Image 6.

Image 6. Fairview public gathering space outside of Macy's in town center.

New residential and commercial developments are also required to incorporate a tree protection and sidewalk protection plan with every new development. A tree protection ordinance specifies that the city must approve any tree removal before it takes place. Builders are prohibited from maximizing building size by removing trees. Instead, builders are encouraged to use the natural topography and tree grouping to influence a building size and location. The city withholds permits until they complete two reviews: initial review and final review. The city pays special attention to heritage trees and tree groupings. If a tree is removed, it must be replaced in an alternative location. The tree canopy in Fairview, and the strong dedication to tree protection the city takes, is apparent in aerial photos of the town (Image 7). The tree canopy, and the constant presence of trees, helps Fairview to have a unique and welcoming streetscape. Many of the trees were preserved rather than transplanted after development.
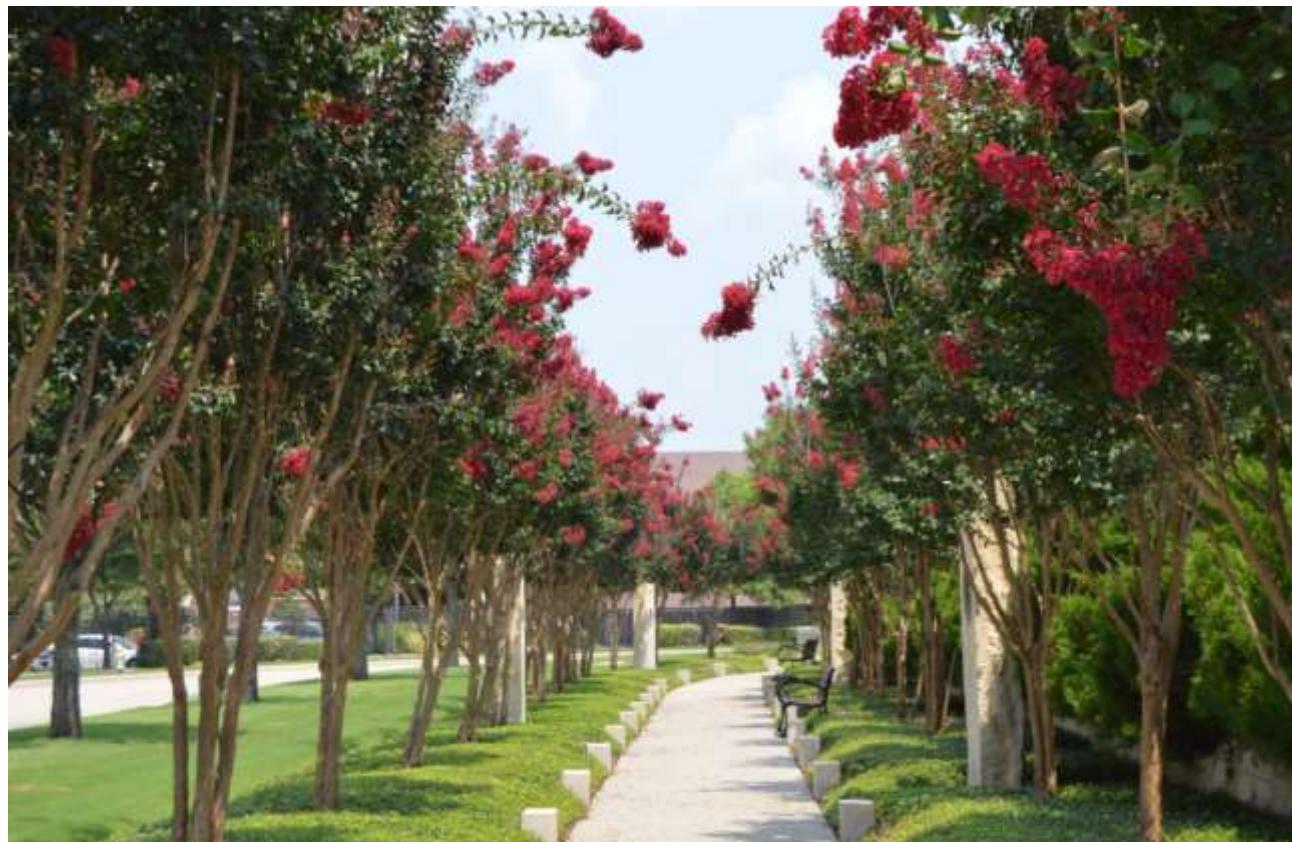
Image 7. The extensive tree canopy in Fairview that shapes the streetscapes. Source: (https://www.landsat.com/fairview-texas-aerialphotography-map.html)

Fairview also has strong sidewalk and parking lot standards. The local government works hard to ensure there is a connected path of sidewalks that bare the minimum 5-foot requirement through the city. Downtown all sidewalks are 10-feet, and around transit corridors, sidewalks are 8-feet. There are pedestrian buffers along high traffic sidewalks. The urban sidewalks lead to the 8-foot-wide hike and bike trails towards the outskirts of the town. These elements together provide a multipurpose amenity to residents that can be

used for leisure or commuting. There are pocket parks created by the parkland dedication ordinances along the trails. The trails connect to the surround areas in McKinney and McAllen.

The Town of Fairview also requires landscaping islands in commercial parking lots. The local government has worked hard to create ordinance language that builds a fair balance between scenic standards and the rights of a business. Fairview businesses can put signage on the buildings that follow a set of guidelines, as well as uniform signs that are along with roadway between the business and roadways. All remaining billboards are grandfathered, and no new billboards are permitted. The parking lots follow a standard that require specific landscaping in trees. The Village Shopping Mall, outside of the Town of Fairview Town Hall, is a great example of these scenic ordinances at play. Images of the Village Shopping Mall streetscape and surrounding areas are displayed below in Image 8.

Image 8. Fairview Village Shopping Mall parking.

There is a constant conversation between the local government and private developers that work in Fairview. The continuing conversation between the groups create a set of standards that both parties agree on. Fairview local government employees attribute their successful streetscapes and sense of place to the longevity of their efforts. Fairview residents have a shared vision for developments in the area, so passing scenically focused language has become less adverse than other cities may experience. The town has been intentional about protecting trees, providing trails, and maintaining scenic standards on streetscapes since its establishment. The city suggests that once there are amenities in place, expanding is much easier. Getting the first amenities planned and installed can be a challenge. The streetscape is a natural result of the sense of place that exists in the Town of Fairview.

Texas

Fairview, Texas

Frisco, Texas

Cedar Hill, Texas
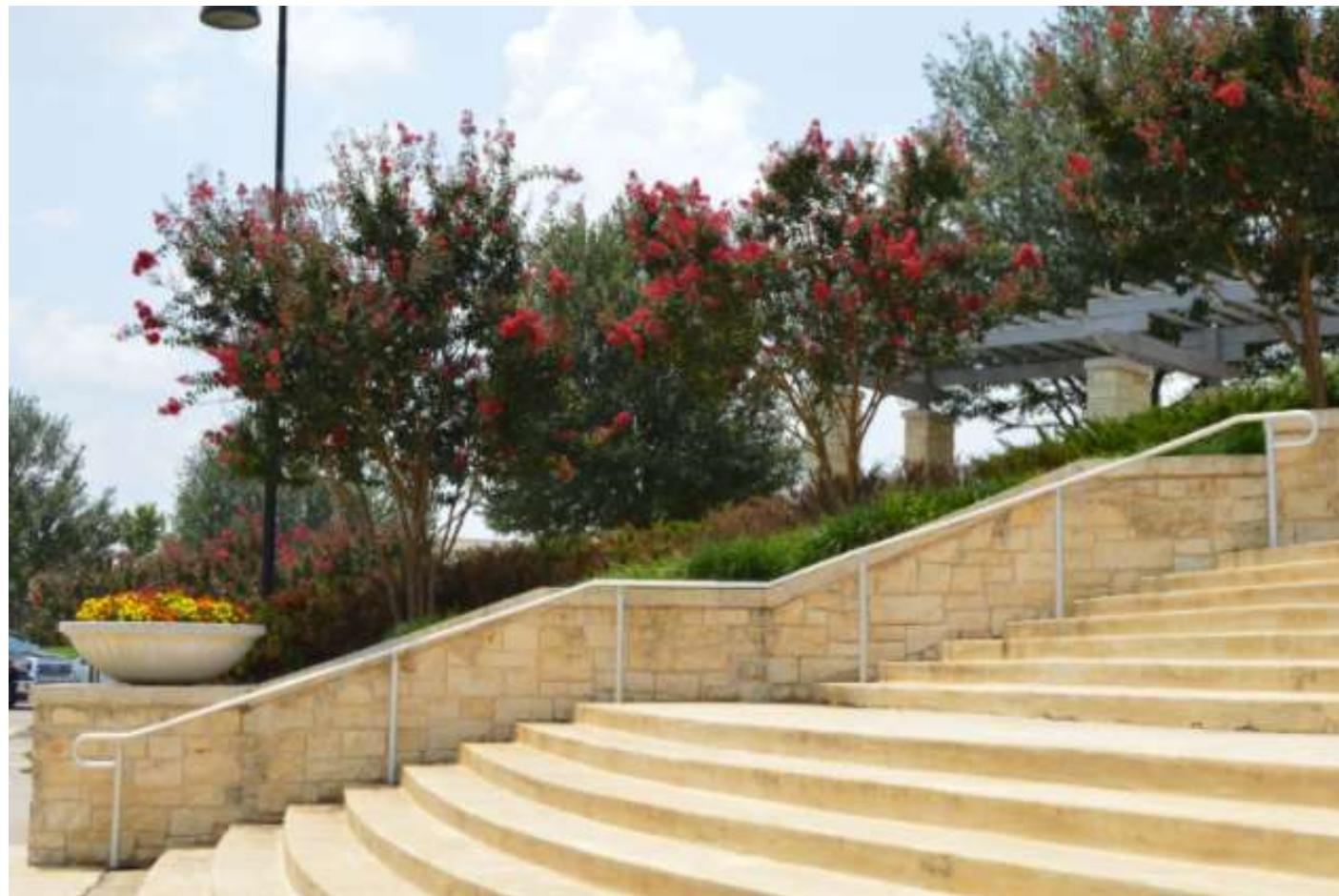
Parks, Trails, and Open Space
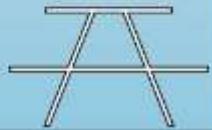
2. Parks, Trails and Public Spaces

The second visual tenet is Parks, Trails and Public Spaces. The SCCP and the 17 project partners place importance on greenspace because of the natural and human benefits they bring to a place. Providing greenspace that is accessible to all residents is a critical element of environmental equity. It is common for cities to create a goal to reach a certain area of greenspace per-captia. Parks, trails, and public spaces should be designed in a way that promotes environmental, social, and economic benefits.

Well planned greenspace networks are multifunctional in accordance with environmental, social, and economic benefits. Providing a network of greenspace benefits humans, wildlife, and allows for the land to regulate and function naturally; this is called microclimate regulation.

A popular publication from 2013 titled *Supplying Urban Ecosystem Service*s explains three categories of functions sustainably planned greenspace can have: ecological functions, cultural functions, and production functions. The ecological functions can include "climate regulation, carbon sequestration, water infiltration, biodiversity conservation, nutrient cycling, and other benefits for environmental health." The cultural functions include "recreation, visual quality, cultural heritage, education, and other benefits directly experienced by humans". Finally, the production benefits include ways in which the land can provide things like food, biofuel, or medicinal resources.[9]

Land that is impacted or projected to be impacted by climate change can be good to transform to public greenspace. Floodplains can be designed into multifunctional spaces that serve as park land as well as flood mitigation. Planning parks with multiple functions is typically requires a multi-scale planning approach. Because green infrastructure works best in a network, environmental planners suggest cities work with their surrounding areas to create a collaborative network of greenspace that is connected through greenways, bodies of water, or trails.[8] A green network is an alternative to planning disconnected greenspaces throughout a city. Although disconnected greenspaces also have mitigative and social benefits, the impacts are maximized in areas that plan for a connected system of greenspace in the form of parks, trails, and public space.

Below, in Image 9, is the plan for an urban greenbelt in Austin, Texas. The project has required collaboration from 8 partners including the Austin Parks and Recreation Department. The greenbelt utilizes water ways including two creeks and a lake to design greenways along. The greenways will create a walkable system to people to use as well as a healthier water system by including green buffers around each body of water that will prevent run off and pollution from entering the water system.

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[9] Lovell Taylor (2013). Supplying Urban Ecosystem Services

Image 9. Downtown Austin Alliance plan for Urban Greenbelt in Austin, Texas. (https://downtownaustin.com/what-we-do/current-projects/urban-greenbelt/)

A person's understanding of what public space is may vary. Some may include streets, parks, and squares and others may not. This causes conversations surrounding public spaces to also vary. However, the interactions that public space make possible are what gives

the spaces true value. Cities need well-functioning public spaces. Determining who can access a public space, and what they are able to use it for, is critical. A city should ensure access to all people in public spaces. Furthermore, cities should strive to ensure all people are comfortable and welcomed into public spaces to practice whatever they please, within legal limits.[10] Public spaces should be designed to be inclusionary. They should be designed to be multifunctional, to cater to all groups of people. Social justice should be promoted in all public spaces by promoting and fostering diversity and inclusion.

Public spaces also need to be managed. It is not uncommon for a space to either be overmanaged or undermanaged. A city should observe and find the right amount of maintenance for each space. Management includes public safety and cleanliness.[11]

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[10] : Don Mitchell (1996) INTRODUCTION: PUBLIC SPACE AND THE CITY, Urban Geography, 17:2, 127-131, DOI: 10.2747/0272-3638.17.2.127
[11] Carmona, Matthew. 2010. Contemporary Public Space, Part Two: Classification. Journal of Urban Design15(2): 157-173.

McKinney, Texas has a population of 200,000. McKinney is almost 68 square miles. The city received a perfect score for the park, trails, and public space visual tenet. McKinney has 3,000 acres of park between their 45 parks and 60 miles of trails. The city also has four recreation centers, including one for elders, four pools, and a municipal golf course. In addition, McKinney has a soccer complex with frisbee golf and cricket fields. The cricket fields are installed in place of some soccer fields during a part of the year. The decision to install cricket infrastructure was based on community input and the recent increase of the Indian population in McKinney.

McKinney does a great job of keeping residents updated and included in the planning process. The Park Development page on the McKinney city website is extremely resourceful: https://www.mckinneytexas.org/614/Parks-Development. They also provide an active GIS map that allows residents to easily locate a number of amenities including picnic shelters, restrooms, splash pads and playgrounds: https://mck.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8f0f46dee8a047d7af62308c239a8b30.
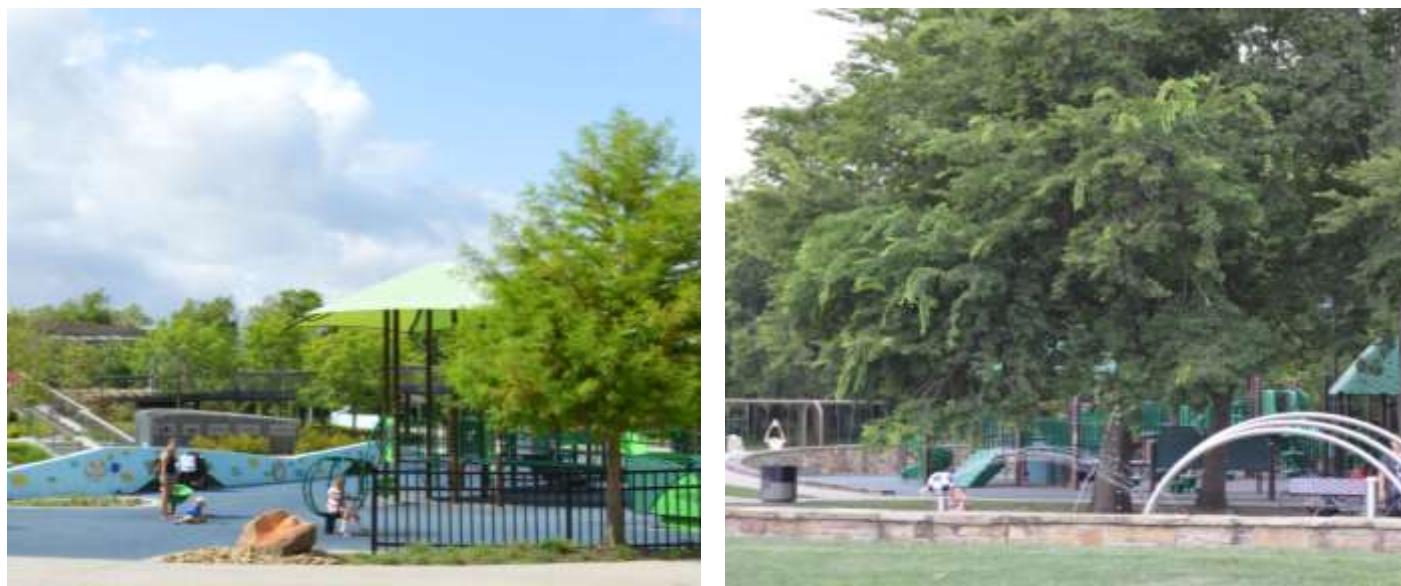
Image 10. Park amenities in McKinney

McKinney's Parks and Recreation Master Plan has made acquiring and managing parkland possible in the city. The master plan included ordinance language that required developments to follow specific guidelines that are mindful of the green space system that exists in McKinney. The residents of McKinney are fully aware of the park system and the future of it. The number one requested amenity in McKinney is more hike and bike trails. Surveying and communicating with the community are very important to

McKinney. Hike and bike trails around McKinney are depicted below in Image 11. A video about McKinney's hike and bike trails can be seen at: https://youtu.be/BSZk7Yy6x0g. The trail stretches 6 continuous miles at one point.

Image 11. Hike and bike trails in McKinney.

In accordance with the master plan and city ordinances, Developments must either dedicate some land to park land or pay a fee that is later used by the local government to build larger parks in areas picked based on surveying and master planning. Developments are also required to install sidewalks or hike and bike trails depending on the location of the development.

McKinney experiences annual flooding in certain areas of the city. They have planned a park system that is designed to minimize damage and maximize mitigation. Much of the flooding occurs around the Wilson Creek. The city has used to creek line to create a connected system of parks that also serve as floodplain areas. The dual rule of the land allows the land to still be utilized by the community in ways that other mitigative strategies to not address. This mitigative strategy is also passive, which the City of McKinney prefers because of the sustainability. The trail shown in the top right of image 11 is an example of a trail that floods annually. It is one of the 12-foot-wide trails in McKinney. The standard width for the bike and bike trails is 10-feet, however McKinney is in the process of increasing the standard to 12-feet.

The McKinney local government had very extensive and well-staffed departments. In addition to a parks and recreation department, McKinney also has development, management, athletics, and aquatics departments. Depending on the stage and nature of a development in a point in time, a particular department will oversee planning, oversight, or maintenance. For example, when a park is in the planning stages Parks and Recreation is in charge. After the park is completed, the management department takes over. This helps keep old and new initiatives in McKinney operating in good condition.

Scenic City
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE GUIDE

Benbrook, Texas

PARKS, TRAILS AND PUBLIC SPACE
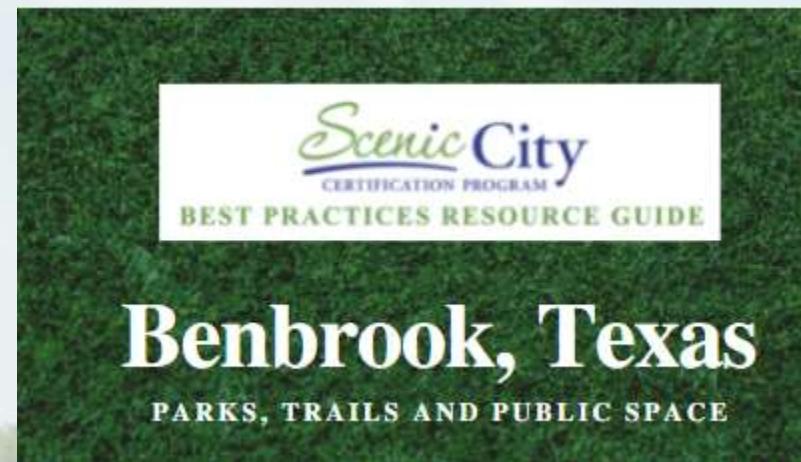
Benbrook has a population of 24,000. The town is 12.1 square miles, which is equal to 7,744 acres. Of the 7,744 acres, 1,069 is parkland. 125 acres of the parkland is developed into amenities. Almost 14% of Benbrook is parkland. Benbrook is home to Dutch Branch Park. Dutch Branch Park is in the middle of the city, so it is highly accessible to residents. It is seen as the focal point of the city and has had enormous influence on the sense of place of Benbrook. Along with Dutch Branch Park, there are 7 other parks within the town limits. A map of the existing parks is shown below in Image 14.

The parkland is used for community and individually led events. One event that is popular among Benbrook residents is the Household Hazardous Waste event that occurs twice a year. The event is intended to educate community members about how to dispose of household hazardous waste materials. The event occurs in a local park. Benbrook has worked with Fort Worth and their Crud Cruiser event to provide this to residents. Information about Fort Worth's Crud Cruiser can be found at:

https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/departments/code-compliance/environmental-quality/services/crud-cruiser/other-city-schedules.

The local YMCA puts on a Heritage fest that celebrates the history of Benbrook in October every year. The 2021 Heritage fest is to be held on October 2nd. The event notice is shown below in image 12.

Benbrook Heritage Fest

Benbrook is saddling up to host Heritage Fest on Saturday, October 2, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Dutch Branch Park. This year's event will be packed full of family-friendly fun entertainment, music performances, food, artisan vendors, a pumpkin patch, and much more!

Best of all, admission is FREE. Simply put, Heritage Fest is the perfect way to celebrate our history and our city. The Cowboy Roundup is sure to be a great time for everyone – even if you don't own a pair of boots!

Image 12. Event notice for the annual Benbrook Heritage Fest.

The parks are designed specifically to be welcoming to the public. The entrance of Dutch Branch Park includes a scenic entrance marker depicted below in Image 13. People come from outside of the city limits to visit the park and trail systems which brings economic activity to the area. Establishing a strong brand and sense of place for Benbrook has allowed this to occur. Benbrook recently received a 22-million-dollar bond that will allow to city to further shape their sense of place through improvements along the Main Street. Part of the plan for improvements is to build a new town hall with a public pavilion in front that will be used for community gatherings.

Image 13. Dutch Branch Park in Benbrook, Texas.

A love of parkland and outdoor activities is something that the whole community shares. It has taken Benbrook a lot of planning and interaction with residents to ensure the visions of Benbrook turned to reality. Even still, there is room for additions and improvement to Benbrook's Park system and the city staff is working hard to tackle them. There are amenities in the park such as pavilions, kayak rentals, and playgrounds.

Benbrook is continuously adding to their existing hike and bike trail system. A map of the existing and proposed trails is below in Image 14. Providing connectivity and access to the softscape amenities is a high priority for the town. The town staff also realized the environmental benefits of connecting greenspaces throughout developments regarding ecosystem services and the natural functions of land.
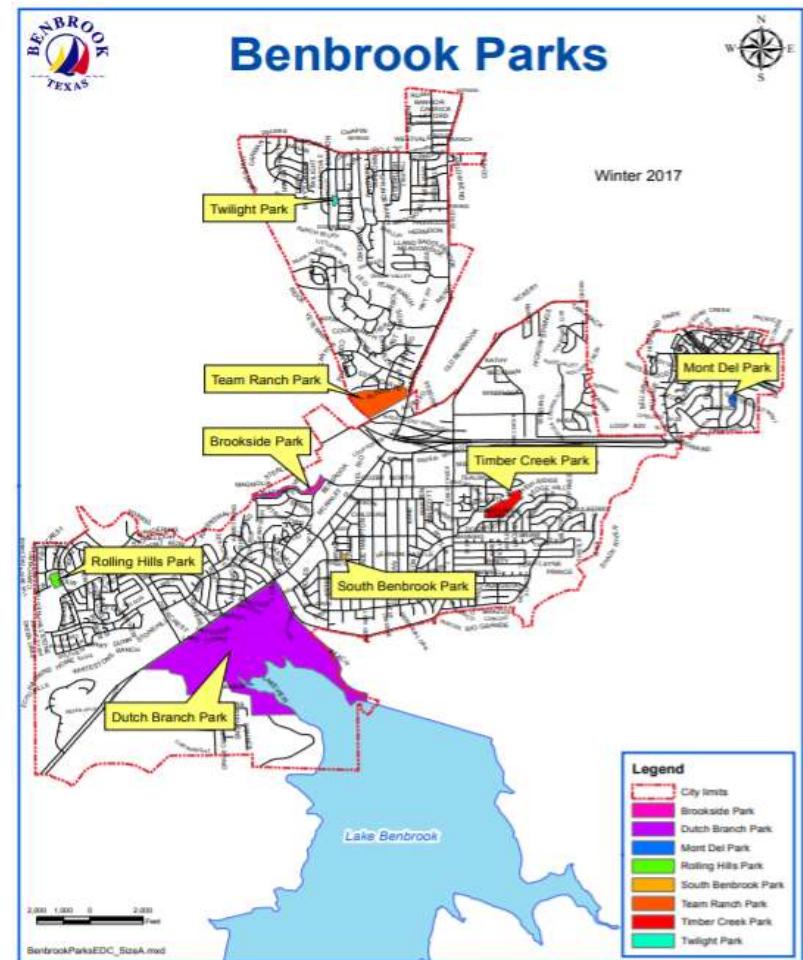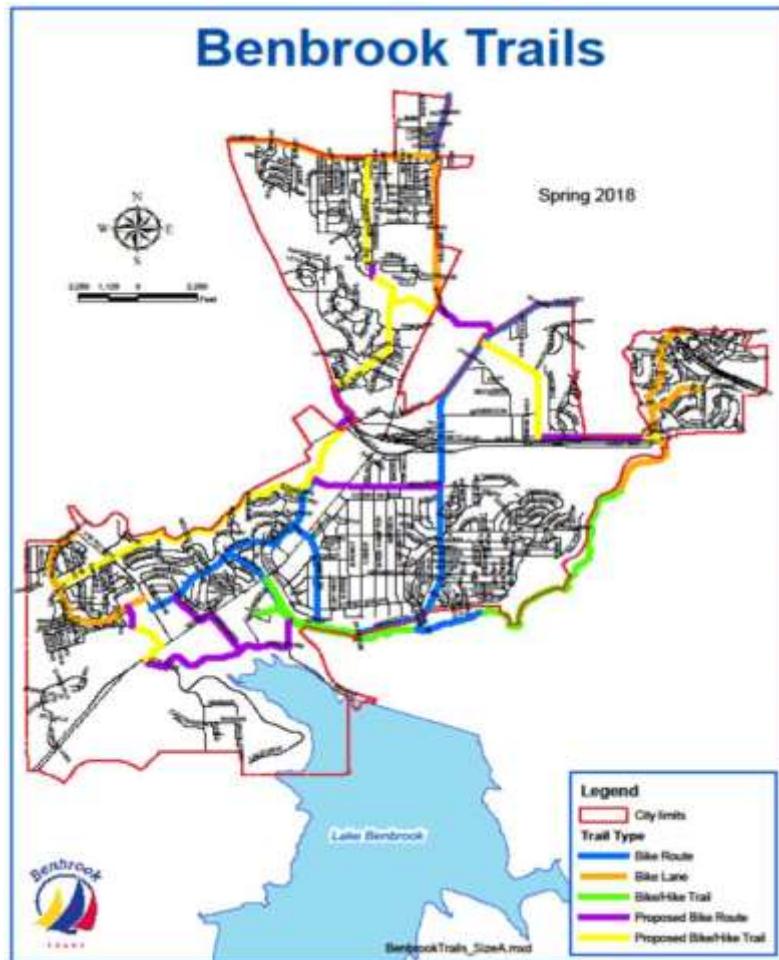
Image 14. Map of Benbrook existing and proposed trails (left) and map of existing parks in Benbrook.

Benbrook has a Keep Benbrook Beautiful program that helps with community-led upkeep and beautification efforts in the parks and along the hike and bike trails. The city attributes the sense of pride and ownership to efforts like these. In Benbrook, volunteers sign up as groups to take ownership of a portion of land, often a mile, to keep clean and maintain. This encourages hands-on interaction with the public amenities that Benbrook offers, as well as inter-group interactions. Groups may include local businesses, local churches, and schools, among others. Images from Keep Benbrook Beautiful efforts are in image 15.

Benbrook has a collective vision for the park, trail, and public space systems in the town. This has made making decisions and passing favorable ordinance language and programs much easier. Benbrook's advice to cities that want to build on their green infrastructure is to work hard to create a collective sense of place and a city brand that prioritizing access to green space. They also note that interacting with the public and maintaining a constant line of communication helps to get things done more quickly and less adversely.

Image 15. LMRA Bicycle Club participating in Keep Benbrook Beautiful's Adopt-A-Mile initiative.

Georgetown, Texas

Keller, Texas

Friendswood, Texas

Horseshoe Bay, Texas

Lighting Standards

3. Lighting Standards

The SCCP understands the unique influence that lighting can have in an area. Lighting impacts humans as well as wildlife, the SCCP is committed to ensuring the undesirable impacts are minimal and the desirable impacts are maximized. Street lighting is critical to instill a feeling of safety among pedestrians and drivers at night. Streets and sidewalks should be effectively illuminated to guarantee visibility that is appropriate for the space. Software such as GIS can be used to determine the best placement and type of lighting for a space. Strong lighting standards set by municipalities can create more effective, environmentally friendly, and efficient lighting for public streets and sidewalks.

Appropriate lighting can help ensure safety to drivers, pedestrians, and the environment. The artificial lighting a particular area will require is specific to the space. The lighting implemented in a space can determine how the space is used, and by who. Uniform lighting should not be applied to all streets. It is important to recognize that more light does not always create the most activated version of the space at night. Lighting should instead be based on demand and account for energy usage and environmental factors. Things such as "building cover ratio, floor area ratio, tree cover ratio and ground surface albedo explain 88% of the variability of night-time site illuminance uniformity." [12] Setting specific criteria for lighting by ordinance can improve the health and sustainability of the space. Understanding how light will act and effect a space is essential. The diagram below, by Pan and Du, demonstrates how artificial light interacts with the existing natural and build environment (Image 16.)

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[12] Pan, W., & Du, J. (2021). Impacts of urban morphological characteristics on nocturnal outdoor lighting environment in cities: An empirical investigation in Shenzhen. *Building and Environment*, *192*, 107587.
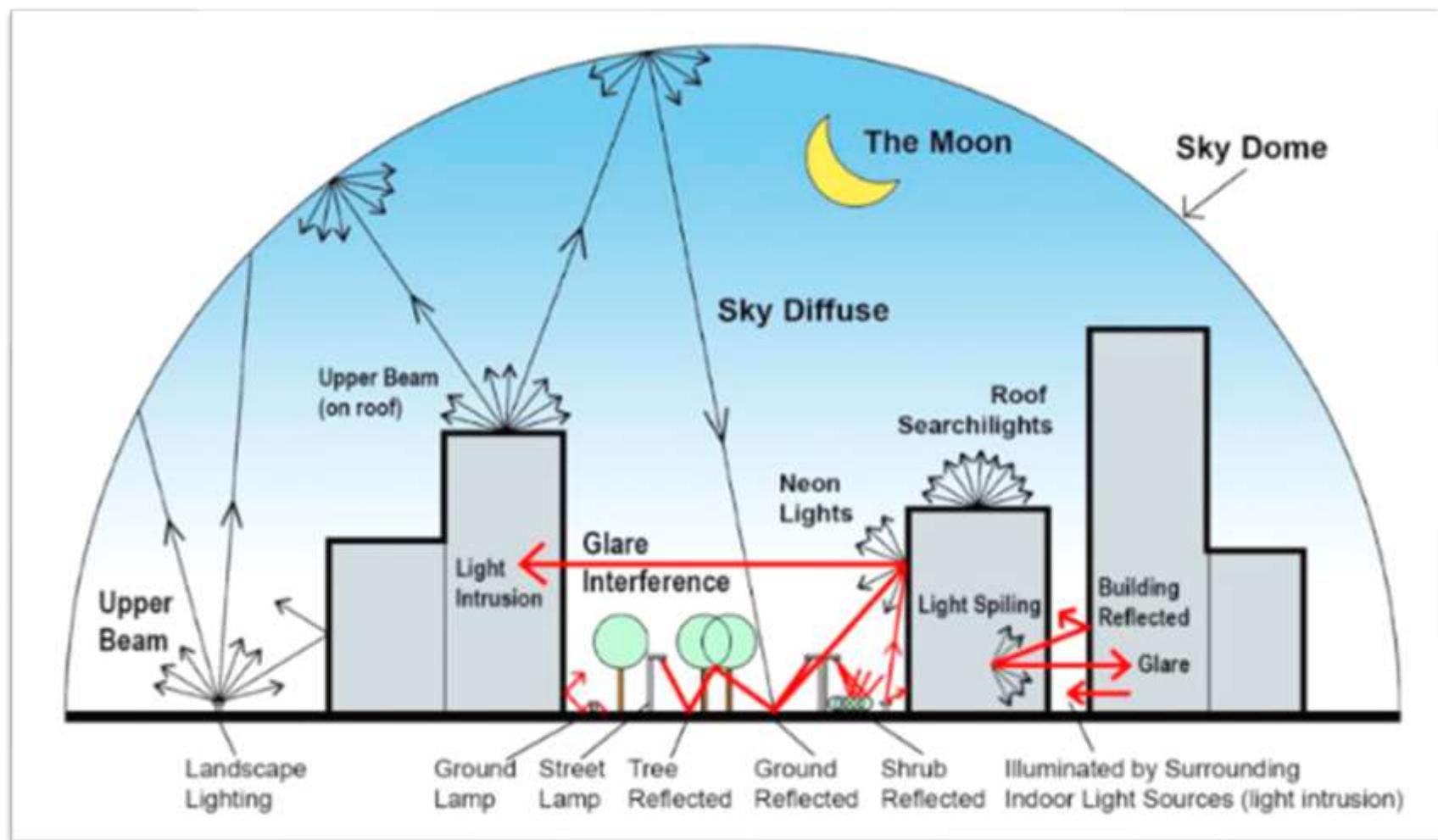
Image 16. "Nocturnal lighting patters within urban canyons: "bottom-up" lighting behaviors (Source: Pan, W., & Du, J. (2021). Impacts of urban morphological characteristics on nocturnal outdoor lighting environment in cities: An empirical investigation in Shenzhen. *Building and Environment*, *192*, 107587.).

> "An appropriate administration of the public lighting systems, including baffles and automatic timing devices to give light emitted control reducing luminous flux and turning off (partially or fully) light fittings in the nighttime, can favor a reduction in LP (light pollution) and a remarkable energy saving"[13]

Excess light pollution in cities is the result of poorly designed lighting infrastructure. Measures can be taken to minimize light pollution in urban regions. This is important to "preserve biological equilibrium in protected natural areas, to safeguard fauna and the avifauna's migratory routes and to reduce energy waste."[12] Light pollution can be minimized by ordinances requiring lighting plans that include a lighting study for developments. Education to residents about the impacts of light pollution and how it can be minimized on an individual basis is also a good tactic. For example, informing residents about the negative impacts of leaving unnecessary lights on at night.

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[13] Leccese, F., & Tuoni, G. (2003). On the environmental pollution and energy waste due to urban lighting. *WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment*, *63*.

South Padre Island, Texas

Scenic City
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE GUIDE

LIGHTING STANDARDS

South Padre Island is the most southern Scenic City. The city faces a unique set of challenges because it is located on an island that is largely a tourist destination. The island is home to 2,818 people and attracts around 4 million visitors each year. At any given day the number of people on the island is averaged to be 11,780.[14] South Padre Island is 113 miles long and 3 miles wide at some points. The lighting standards on South Padre Island are intended to protect the wildlife that inhabit the island. The local government has set measures to combat light pollution across the island. There are regulations for the lighting fixtures, bulbs, glare, and commercial residential lighting. The lighting that is selected to be allowed on the islands minimizes glair, excess lighting to adjected properties, and light pollution. South Padre Island does not maintain or install street lighting. A third party, American Electric Power, handles maintenance and installations.

There are five full time code enforcements officers on the island that will report lighting standard violations. If a person violates the lighting standards on the island, they may be subject to pay $500 or more. During developments, builders must comply with the lighting standards to receive a building permit.

South Padre Island has a comprehensive plan that was passed by city council in 2008 (Image 17). The plan highlights recommendation actions that the city has been working on since 2008. The plan includes maintaining a high standard of land use, appearances, and preservation.[15] Part of the plan is dedicated to preservation for birds, marine and other animals. South Padre is also facing continuous development in a vulnerable area. The city has set development regulations to ensure all new developments are within the sustainable and scenic standards the city has set.

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[14] https://southpadreislandedc.com/population#:~:text=In%20the%20Resort%20Market%20Analysis,to%2027%20for%20Cameron%20County.
[15] https://www.myspi.org/egov/documents/1394143273_17709.pdf
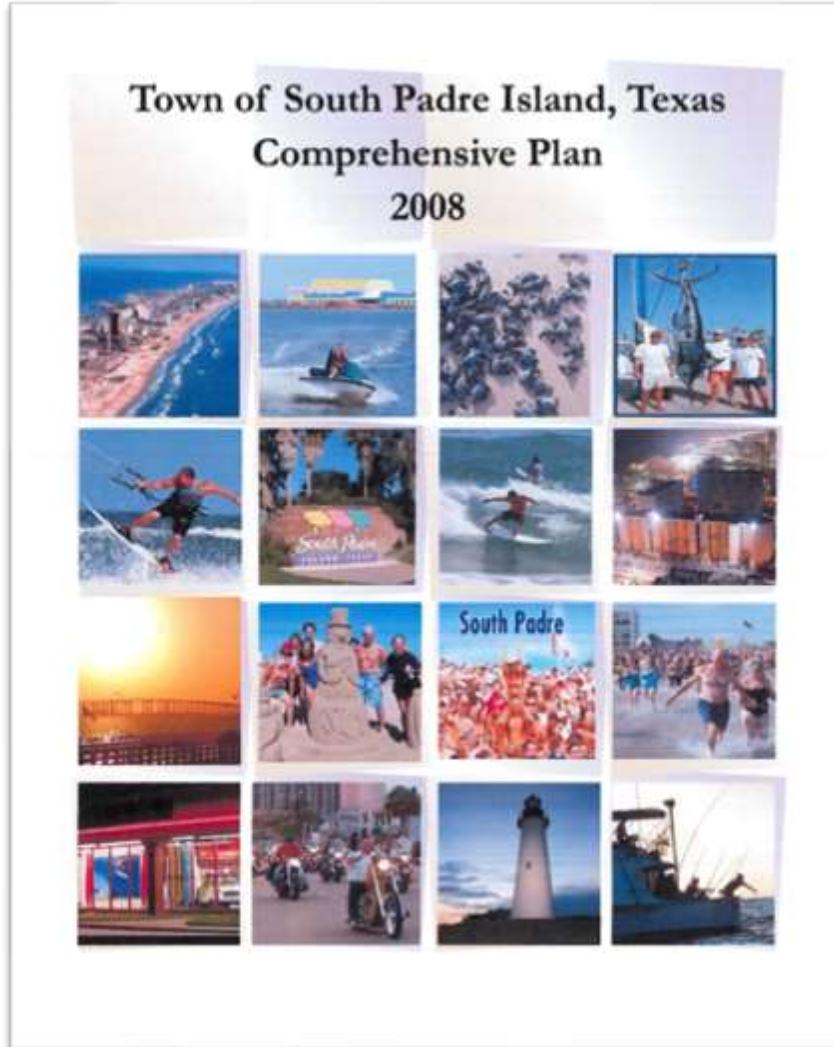
Image 17. South Padre Island Comprehensive Plan 2008

The Town of Flower mound has a population of 79,390 residents and spreads over 45 square miles in Northern Texas. The town suggests that they place importance on quality lighting standards to maintain the small-town feel they are known for and love. Since the 1970's Flower Mound has been experiencing growth in population and development that is shown in the chart below in Image 18. The town is projected to continue experiencing population increase through 2045. To ensure the expected population and economic development does not drastically alter the sense of place of the community and the established values they hold, Flower Mound is attentive to the ordinances and enforcement that are implemented regarding lighting. At one point, the Town of Flower Mound passed a moratorium on new lighting to create a detailed lighting plan in 2002.

Source: NCTCOG Regional Data Center, 2021

Year	Population
2045 Projections	117,555
2021 Estimate	79,390
2010 Census	64,669
2000 Census	50,702

Image 18. Demographic history and projections according to the NCTCOG Regional Data Center. Source: (https://www.flower-mound.com/321/Demographics)

When new commercial developments are proposed, engineers receive a packet from the city that discloses all requirements of the building. Having a packet of standardized information to give individuals requesting new developments has helped avoid receiving permit requests with lighting elements that do not comply with the town's code. In this packet, there are specific requirements for lighting that are located on the bottom of page 2 of the document:

https://www.flower-mound.com/DocumentCenter/View/507/Commercial-Construction-Packet?bidId=

Image 19. Commercial developments in Flower Mound at night. Source: The Town of Flower Mound.

A detailed outdoor lighting plan is required for submission for all new developments or alterations to existing structures. The lighting plan must be done by an engineer. The city then conducts two inspections to check compliance throughout the construction process. A building may only receive a permit once the infrastructure aligns with the code. The code enforcement department handles code enforcement once a building is fully functioning with all required permits. For residential developments, any outside lighting fixtures must be no more than 15 watts and must be full cut-off fixtures to minimize lighting pollution.

Image 20. Residential streets in Flower Mound at night. Source: The Town of Flower Mound.

There are still lighting fixtures in Flower Mound that do not comply with code because they are grandfathered or were installed before the most recent ordinances took effect. The town has partnered with Co Serv Electric through a rebate and capital credit program. The program seeks lighting upgrades for facilities or infrastructure that does not currently comply with the code. Below is an image (Image 21) from 2019 when Flower Mound used the program to upgrade the lighting in a facility. More information about the program can be found at this link:

https://support.coserv.com/hc/en-us/articles/360007895554

Image 21. Co Serv Rebate program example from 2019. Source: Town of Flower Mound.

The Town of Flower Mound is a relatively young town. They attribute their success in implementing good lighting standards to starting early. When Flower Mound noticed that developments were increasing, the town acted quickly to implement deliberate code language that aligned with values. Now that the lighting code has been around awhile, the community is aware of the intents and outcomes produced by the way it is written. Flower Mound city employees also suggest that a city pays attention to guaranteeing that all lighting replacements be according to code. Through the course of determining changes to the code, Flower Mound held "work groups" that consisted of residents and business owners. The work groups would meet and discuss issues in the community and ideas of how to best handle them. Some of these discussions were focused on residential and commercial lighting in the town. Involving the community in the process resulted in a code that was collaboratively crafted and receives support from community members. This has made getting town-wide goals accomplished with must less opposition.

Buda, Texas

Fairview, Texas

Frisco, Texas

Cedar Hill, Texas

4. Design Integrity

Design integrity is important to maintain a sense of ownership over a location. With design standards in place, a city is protected from outside developers coming in and altering the fabric of the city. The SCCP requires a portion of the application be dedicated to strong design standards to support towns around Texas in managing development in a way that aligns with a cities already existing values according to the established population.

When a company takes on a development project, the burden of cost is on that company until the completed building is either sold or occupied.[16] With this in mind, it is important for cities to determine a set of design standards that accounts for the city's own needs, while remaining appealing to companies to invest in. Time is also a cost to developers. So, while the necessary measures should be in place to ensure developments abide by the standards, the system of review should be efficient.

Zoning regulations are typically intended to prevent inappropriate uses of buildings. More recently, it has become common to craft regulations to shape consistent design as well as appropriate uses. Design standards help ensure the protection of property value, public health, and safety. [17] The author of *Architectural design regulations* notes that design standards are not to be confused with a line drawn between beaty and ugly. They are instead a way to ensure orderly development. Quantifiable standards are good to use in practice. Having design standards set in place prevents misalignment between proposed development plans, neighbors, and the municipalities.

The foundation of the design standards a city implements through municipal measures should be the collective vision of the residents. Each regulation should have a clear and valid purpose, and procedure.[16] Upholding the sense of place and uniqueness of a place can be defined using quantifiable standards. This is increasingly important as Texas cities continue to develop and attract out-of-town economic opportunities. With appropriate design standards, a city may harness the economic activity to foster the sense of place. Design standards also provide a transparent expectation for developers to plan under.

The three dimensions of sense of place, as defined by Montgomery, are activity, physical setting, and meaning. The municipal level can protect a sense of place in the physical setting dimension. The diagram below (Image 22) shows the factors that are included in the

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[16] Sendich, E. (2006). *Planning and urban design standards*. John Wiley & Sons.
[17] Tappendorf, J. A. (2002). Architectural design regulations: What can a municipality do to protect against unattractive, inappropriate, and just plain ugly structures.

physical setting dimension. The physical setting of a place can be defined by ordinance and master planning to ensure new developments and reconstructions fall into the defined sense of place.
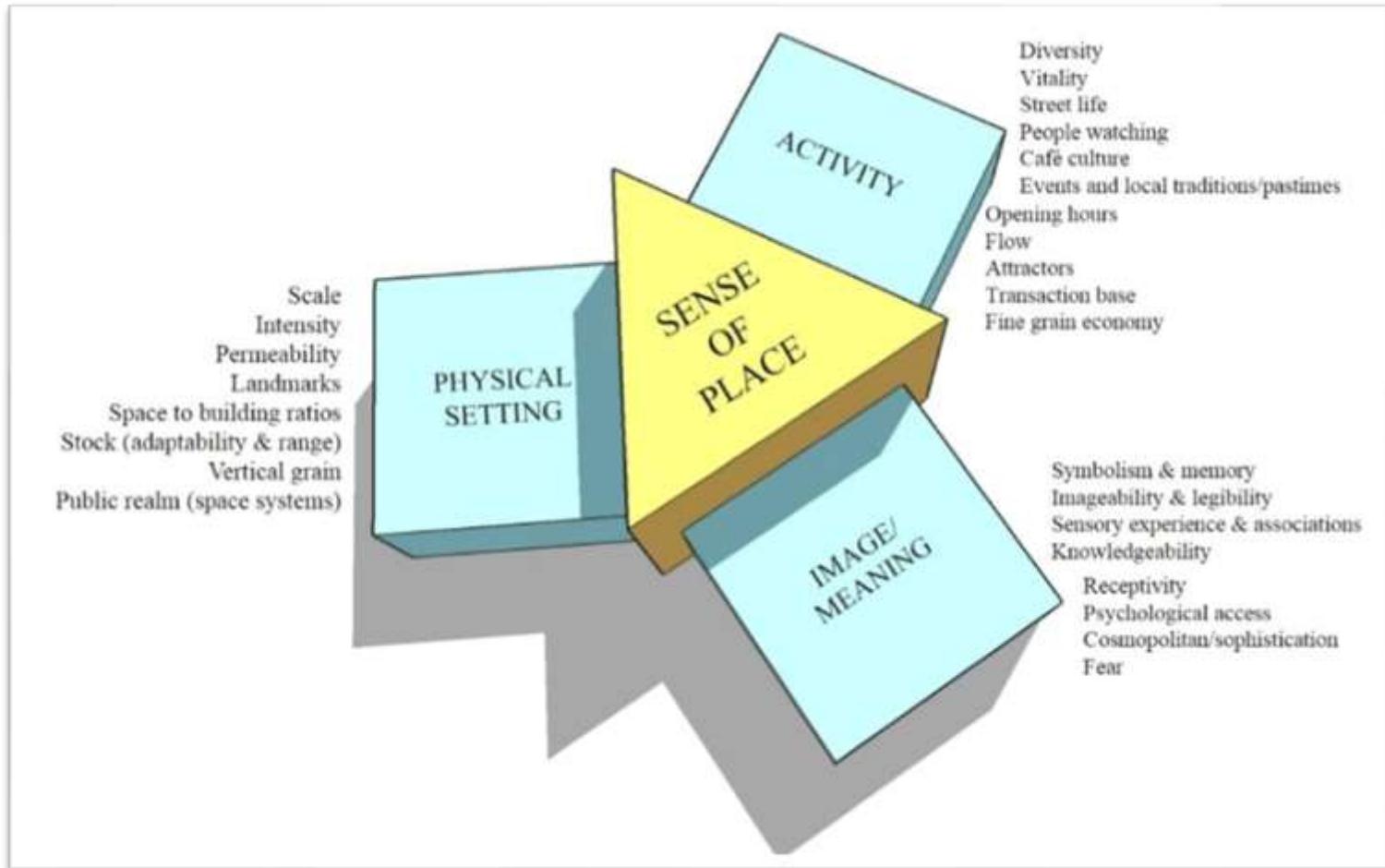

Image 22. The three dimensions of sense of place. Source: Montgomery, 1998.[18]

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[18] Ghani, Izham & Abdul Rahman, Norhafizah & Mat Nayan, Nadiyanti & Bahaluddin, Azrul. (2018). Experiential virtual urban environments: A preliminary investigation. PLANNING MALAYSIA JOURNAL. 16. 10.21837/pmjournal.v16.i5.408.

Scenic City
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE GUIDE

Southlake, Texas

DESIGN INTEGRITY

The City of Southlake demonstrates outstanding design integrity standards through ordinances and programming. The ordinances allow the city to maintain a strong sense of place that promotes the collective vision of the residents as well as improves safety and operations of the city. The ordinances are accompanied by visually descriptive resources that highlight the intentions behind the ordinance language (Image 25). In 2008, Southlake adopted the city's most recent Major Corridors Urban Design Plan that will be implemented through 2025. The plan was accepted by the Southlake City Council. Community members were involved in the planning process.

The City of Southlake has been committed to honoring their community character since the 1995 Corridor Study. The 1995 Corridor Study was the starting point for Southlake's many successful urban design projects. In 2005, the Southlake Comprehensive Plan suggested an Urban Design study that was to focus on design to "leverage and complement private development and investment by making the public realm a design priority."[19] An image of the plan can be seen below in Image 24. There are specific guidelines for various corridors throughout the city.

Southlake's Downtown District Design Guidelines[20] were adopted in March 2003 in accordance with the downtown zoning regulations (ordinance 480-SS). The guidelines include key design principles, guidelines for various land-uses, and amendment process. The document is included in the Southlake Land Development Code under the Zoning section 62. The document is equipped with detailed guidelines that are paired with images from existing land uses. The document is a great resource for future developments or redevelopments.

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[19] https://www.cityofsouthlake.com/DocumentCenter/View/719/Urban-Design-Plan?bidId=
[20] https://library.municode.com/tx/southlake/codes/development_ordinances?nodeId=Resolution%2003-011%20-%20Downtown%20District%20Design%20Guidelines

Image 23. Southlake streetscapes and building design

Design guidelines have been a priority of the city since its founding. This has made it less complicated to pass design focused language. Southlake has benefited largely from having comprehensive plans that address sense of place and design integrity. The plans have added an element of transparency and collective vision. The collective vision has been carried out through the different corridors of the city. The design of Southlake has a feeling of seamlessness through residential and commercial areas.

Southlake Blvd. (FM 1709) and Davis Blvd./Randol Mill Ave. (FM 1938) collectively traverse approximately 15 miles of the city, passing through a number of different visual conditions. Land use, setbacks, topography, and presence or lack of existing trees are key variables that inform appropriate design responses for road corridor image. The design team's field observations and analysis led to a separation of these boulevard corridors into three different *"character zones,"* based upon these variables.

The **character zones** are:
1) **Town Center**,
2) **Commercial Parkway**, and
3) **Estate Residential**.

Figure 1 illustrates the design opportunities available along the three major corridors and identifies the locations of the three character zones. In addition, this map illustrates the key tree stands that should be considered for preservation with new development, which are shown in dark green.
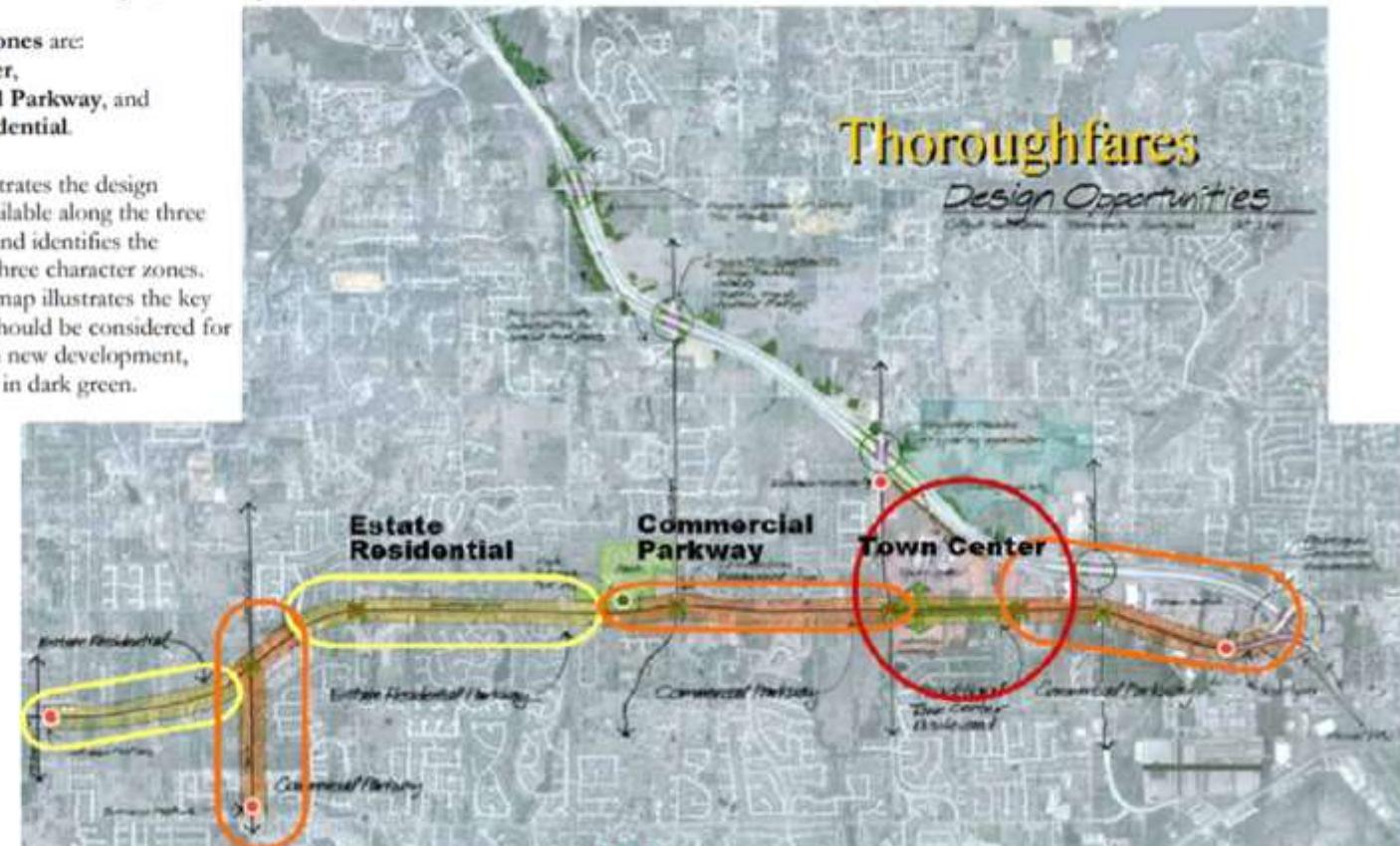

Image 24. Southlake Major Corridors Urban Design Plan, page 5[21]

Image 25. Southlake Urban Design Plan, page 23[22]

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[22] https://www.cityofsouthlake.com/DocumentCenter/View/719/Urban-Design-Plan?bidId=

The City of Southlake also has a public art master plan. This has allowed for the city to set aside funds to install art pieces at highly visited corners of the city. The art installations are commonly found at the end of street medians. The city website includes information and a virtual tour of each of the art pieces around the city at this link:

(https://southlake.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTour/index.html?appid=46525a5a9ec34f99a0b16a65f017d7ff).

The virtual tour gives a description and location of each piece, the year it was installed, and the funding information. There is a wide range of art pieces that all represent various community stories. The piece in Image 26 below is titled "Loyalty and Service Above All Else". It was funded by the Crime Control and Prevention District.

Image 26. "Loyalty and Service Above All Else" public art piece funded by the Crime Control and Prevention District in Southlake.

Sealy, Buda,

Taylor, Texas

Rockwall, Texas
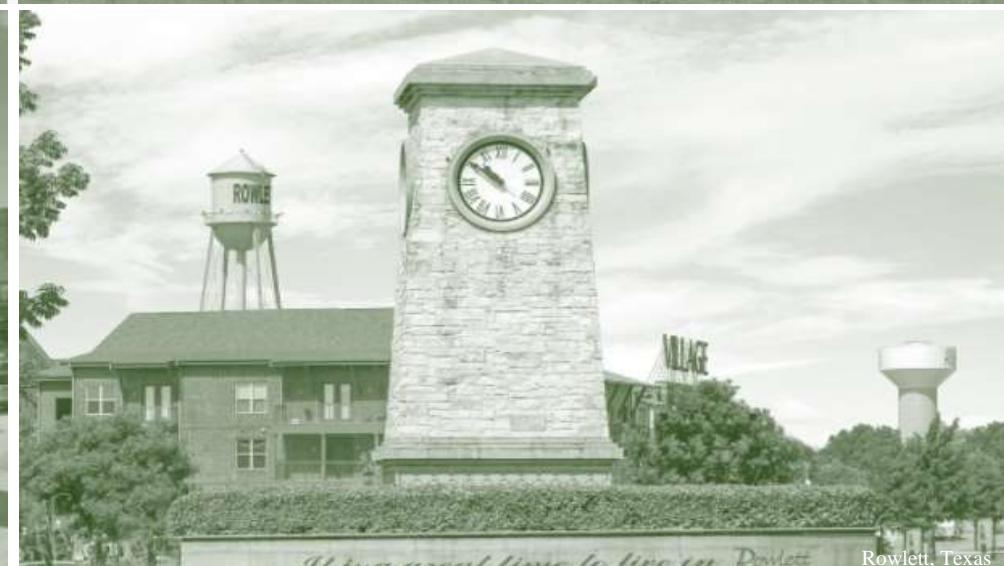
Rowlett, Texas

5. Landscaping

The capabilities of strategic landscaping venture far beyond beautification in cities. Landscaping can increase the resilience of an urban area by decreasing thermal heat, collecting excess rainwater, as well as preventing air, light, and noise pollution. As areas develop, the square footage of impervious cover tends to increase. Impervious cover prevents land from performing natural functions such as climate control, moisture control, and filtration. Incorporating landscaping in areas with a lot of impervious cover, such as parking lots, can reduce the negative impacts. Like greenspace networks discussed in the Parks, Trails and Public Space tenet section, landscaping can also be connected systematically to "maximize the impact of the greenery."[23]

A study conducted in Turkey found that dense landscaping or natural green space along roadways can decrease the traffic noise that can be heard from the other side. Noise from traffic may have negative impacts on human health and the local economy.[24] Natural vegetation left along roadways also may lessen the cost of maintenance.[28]

Informing residents about the benefits of sustainable landscaping can also create collective mitigative outcomes. Below is an image from San Jose's Guide to Sustainable Landscaping.[25] The city published the guide to inform residents on best practices, and how to accomplish them in their own yards. The guide discusses how converting yards to native landscaping can be cost effective and create harmony among yards across the city.[24] Creating a guide or sharing information gives residents a better understanding possible actions they can take at home to help the resiliency of their city and its unique environmental context.

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[23] Yu, C., & Hien, W. N. (2009). Thermal impact of strategic landscaping in cities: A review. *Advances in Building Energy Research*, *3*(1), 237-260.

[24] Erdogan, E., & Yazgan, M. E. (2009). Landscaping in reducing traffic noise problem in cities: Ankara case. *African Journal of Agricultural Research*, *4*(10), 1015-1022.

[25] https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/1316/636618519470770000

Image 27. Images from the San Jose's Guide to Sustainable Landscaping. Source:
(https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/1316/636618519470770000)

Protecting and preserving natural landscaping and heritage trees during development is becoming a common topic of municipal ordinance.[26] Tree canopy is threatened by new developments in natural places. The most common damage inflicted on trees during construction is root severance. Other damage includes "soil compaction, and trunk damage."[25] Municipal code can be used to prevent and educate against removal and damage to trees. Once there is a standard set on the municipal level, prevention and protection can take place on a city-scale.

"Tree preservation ordinances are tools that establish standards for the protection of trees before, during, and after construction and development occurs. These types of land regulations for property development and municipal infrastructure projects have been shown to increase urban canopy cover (Landry and Pu, 2010; Hauer et al., 2020)."[27]

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[26] Pike, K., O'Herrin, K., Klimas, C., & Vogt, J. (2021). Tree preservation during construction: An evaluation of a comprehensive municipal tree ordinance. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, *57*, 126914.

[27] Pike, K., O'Herrin, K., Klimas, C., & Vogt, J. (2021). Tree preservation during construction: An evaluation of a comprehensive municipal tree ordinance. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, *57*, 126914.

Scenic City
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE GUIDE

Friendswood, Texas

LANDSCAPING

The City of Friendswood is located 40 minutes south of Houston, Texas. The population is 42,000 and the city stretches over 21.2 square miles. In recent years, the city has experienced a lot of major developments. The developments are expected to continue into the coming years. Friendswood has used this opportunity to shape the developments to fit their populations vision for the city. This year, the city's Keep Friendswood Beautiful chapter is working with TxDOT to install sidewalks and upgraded lighting along the main street of the city, 518.

Friendswood received a perfect score in the Landscaping visual tenet sections of the application. The Landscaping visual tenet directly relates to section 6 and section 7 of the SCCP application. Friendswood has been a Scenic City since 2014. They certified as bronze their first year. During their recertification in 2019, Friendswood was able to certify as platinum. Friendswood used the SCCP application, and other scenic cities, as models to recraft their own ordinance language.

After their first application, Friendswood local government employees realized they already practice many of the requirements on the SCCP application, they were just not codified into well-written ordinance language. The SCCP program helped Friendswood to create more clear and detailed ordinances for the city, including landscaping ordinances.

Friendswood landscaping ordinances are directly modeled after the SCCP application. After Friendswood's 2014 application, the city walked through each of the criteria in section 6 and section 7 of the application with the intention to add elements that align with their city's vision. Friendswood found that all the landscaping criteria aligned with the plan for their city.

The city already required landscaping in the street median islands. After 2014, they added island and other landscaping maintenance that the SCCP requires. The City of Friendswood ordinances now require that the shrubs and other greenery be trimmed so they are visible. The city also added elements to their tree protection during construction ordinances, such as "no vehicles may park on roots during". Friendswood city employees made a point to note that many criteria in the SCCP application made perfect sense to add to their ordinances, it had just never been brought to their attention before their final review session with Scenic Texas after the submission of their 2014 application.

Image 28. Landscaping at a new development in Friendswood, Texas.

In addition to landscaping maintenance, Friendswood also requires the use of native species. The city provides a list of trees that are all acceptable. The tree list gives detailed information based on categorizations of trees to developers. Friendswood worked hard to find an appropriate balance between a collection of trees what would look nice and survive in the climate, and not to be overburdensome to developers. The list can be found at:

https://www.ci.friendswood.tx.us/DocumentCenter/View/1833/Appendix-D---Qualified-Tree-List-PDF?bidId=

Friendswood qualified tree list classification description:

"Trees are divided into four classes. Class 1 and 2 trees are considered the most valuable in enhancing the environment and are the most likely to prosper in the Friendswood area. Therefore, only Class 1 and 2 trees shall be approved as new plantings for a) city parks and property, and parking lots and b) for streets or other public right-of-ways, respectively, unless otherwise approved by the City Engineer on the advice of an Urban Forester. Species that are classified as shade trees

will reach a height and size that will conflict with overhead powerlines, permanent structures, or the canopy will exceed the limits of a confined space. Species that are classified as small trees will not provide the protection or aesthetic impact of a large shade tree, yet they are suitable for planting beneath powerlines and are good alternatives for areas of limited space."[28]

Friendswood withholds the certificate of occupancy from developments until they pass final inspection to ensure the development complies with all tree and landscaping regulations. All commercial developments are reviewed by zoning and planning department staff, as well as the zoning department board. There are predevelopment meetings at which the developers receive a check list that includes landscaping requirements and the native tree list. Many designers that work in the area are established and are aware with the standards that Friendswood has set, which makes enforcement much less burdensome.

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[28] https://www.ci.friendswood.tx.us/DocumentCenter/View/1833/Appendix-D---Qualified-Tree-List-PDF?bidId=

Webster, Texas

Westlake, Texas

Waxahachie, Texas

Prosper, Texas

Sign Control
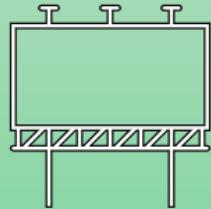
6. Sign control

On and off premises signage has become an increasingly challenging topic as our society continues to expand forms of contactless communications and information sharing. Determining what role on and off premises signage should play should consider the visual environment and the authenticity of place. Scenic Texas is interested in setting guidelines pertaining to the size and location of signage. Limiting the content (while understanding First Amendment protection) of signage may be of interest to some municipalities, however this is not included in SCCP applications.

On-premises signage should be "crafted in such a way as to allow for the free flow of speech while preserving community character."[29] Well written ordinances that consider context and fairness can create effective advertisements and signage that falls within the constitution, while ensuring the community character is not jeopardized. It is important to acknowledge that signage is important to the function and public safety of cities. Signs warn us of construction zones, pedestrian crossings, and driver instructions. These signs are all effective because they are standardized to be sure they are understood. Ordinances for on and off premises signage can be crafted to ensure that business signage is implemented in an effective and efficient way. The signage should benefit both the entity and the recipient, while not taking away from the visual environment more than required. Ordinances may be used to ensure detectability and legibility of on-premises signage. This may include specifications regarding the lateral and vertical offset, surrounding area, font, color, as well as size and shape.[30] Signage clutter becomes unsightly and ineffective.

Off premise signage includes billboards and other signage that belongs to an entity located elsewhere. This includes multi-tenant signage. Billboards were becoming obsolete in the digital age until the digital billboard, or the electronic messaging center, began to take over the outdoor advertising industry. Digital billboards are no longer a characteristic of New York City's Time Square. They are becoming more prevalent along highways.[31] It is important to consider the environmental and social impacts of digital billboards as they continue to appear. "Electronic billboards can be up to ten times brighter at night than traditionally lit billboards and can be harmful to the nighttime environment."[1]

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[29] Jourdan, D., Strauss, E., & Hunter, M. (2017). Sign code development process: best practices. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Signage and Wayfinding*, *2*(1), 34-59.

[30] Zineddin, A. Z., Garvey, P. M., & Pietrucha, M. T. (2005). Impact of sign orientation on on-premises commercial signs. *Journal of transportation engineering*, *131*(1), 11-17.

[31] https://www.darksky.org/our-work/lighting/lighting-for-industry/emc/

Digital billboards cause light pollution, create hazard to motorists and pedestrians, and can decrease property value. For these reasons, the SCCP advises cities create ordinances that deter the construction of all new billboards, including digital billboards. The International Dark-Sky Association identifies four forms light pollution may occur: (1) the glare, (2) trespass, (3) grouping of light, (4) sky glow.[32] Digital billboards may contribute to all four forms. Glare results from the light source being surrounded by unequally lit sources. Trespass occurs when lights stretch across property lines. Grouping of lights refers to overlapping illumination sources. And sky glow is collective impact of all artificial light sources that illuminates the sky of the involved and surrounding area.

Scenic Nevada provides an infographic that describes the environmental impacts of digital signs and billboards. The infographic highlights some of the most pressing issues illuminated signage brings about. This includes the constant energy use the signage requires throughout the day and night to be seen, the disruptions the lighting causes to wildlife migration and matting patterns, and the collective light pollution the billboards contribute to. Scenic Nevada provides infographics pertaining to the implications of billboards to humans and wildlife in a "Scenic Education Tool Kit" that can be found here:

https://www.scenicnevada.org/resources/scenic-education-toolkit/.

Once a sign ordinance is revised, there will likely be non-conforming signage throughout the community. There are several ways to produce a just transition to conforming signs through ordinance. Once the ordinance is in place, construction of non-conforming signs should be prohibited. Non-conforming signs that already exist should be regulated. Amortization gives the sign owner a period (typically 1 to 5 years) to bring the sign into conformity. Ordinances may also require that when a non-conforming sign must be replaced, due to damage or displacement, the replacement sign must conform. [33] This is the method many Scenic Cities utilize in sign control ordinances.

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[32] Ścieżor, T. (2019). Light pollution as an environmental hazard. *Czasopismo Techniczne*, *2019*(Volume 8), 129-142.

[33]McMahon, E. (1996). Sign Regulation. Planning Commissioners Journal, Number 25(Winter).

"The signs along a city's streets influence the public's perception of individual businesses, commercial districts, and the community as a whole. Well designed, appropriately scaled signs can enhance a community's unique image, while an overabundance of haphazardly placed, oversized, look-alike plastic signs detract from the community's appearance — and ultimately hurts business" – Edward McMahon, 1997

Below in Image 29, are resources provided by Scenic Fort Worth to inform the public of the negative externalities associated with digital billboards. Externalities include impacts on migratory birds, energy use, driver safety, light pollution, taxpayer costs, and property value.

Scenic Fort Worth

Fort Worth has a deep commitment and strong history of eliminating digital billboard blight to protect our natural scenic resources. Digital billboards contribute to light pollution, affect energy consumption, impact property values, harm wildlife, distract drivers, and pose other environmental threats to Texans. Yet we've witnessed a drastic increase in the number of digital billboards nationwide -- from 4,000 in 2010 to 9,600 in 2020. As digital billboards have more than doubled over this decade, so has their devastating impact.

Energy Impacts
Standard billboards and signs only use electricity at nighttime to be viewed. Digital signs, however, are major energy hogs that require around-the-clock electricity to display rotating messages. One digital billboard uses the same amount of electricity in a 24-hour period as 15 average homes.

Property Values
In "Beyond Aesthetics: How Billboards Affect Economic Prosperity," urban planner Jonathan Snyder found that homes within 500 feet of a billboard were worth $30,826 less on average at the time of sale compared with homes farther away from billboards. Communities of color are more negatively impacted by this reality, with studies showing that overall advertising density is higher in low-income zip codes.

Light Pollution
Digital billboards and signs are contributors to "sky glow," a form of light pollution. Incredibly, the industry's brightness standards are three times brighter at night than standard billboards, a benefit to the sign industry but not to residential quality of life. Across the U.S., at least 18 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have laws in place to reduce light pollution and many have enacted "dark skies" legislation to promote energy conservation, public safety, aesthetic interests, and astronomical research and tourism capabilities.

Development and Wildlife Impacts
Development and noise can disrupt the cycles and patterns of wildlife, but light from various sources including digital billboards impact is also enough to have a negative impact. Mating behaviors, timing of migration, sleep, and predation nighttime are determined by the length of nighttime darkness.

Economic Development
As a designated Gold-level "Scenic City," Fort Worth has been a proud model of our Scenic City Certification Program. Standards for the program include the banning of digital billboards and other protections that promote and protect Fort Worth's visual environment. Allowing digital billboards in Fort Worth would mean losing this elite designation and the associated economic benefits of being a certified city.

Scenic Fort Worth

WHY OUR COMMUNITY OPPOSES DIGITAL BILLBOARDS

Migratory Birds
Fort Worth was a state leader in the nationwide Lights Out Initiative, which works to protect billions of birds as they migrate across the U.S. in central Texas.

Energy Use
In a 24-hour period, one digital billboard uses the same amount of energy as 15 "average" homes.

Driver Safety
A Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation study on digital billboard adjacent to a stadium found that sideswipe and rear-end collisions were up as much as 35% where the sign was most visible.

Light Pollution
According to the International Dark Sky Association, the Milky Way is no longer visible to one-third of humanity — including 80 percent of Americans.

Taxpayer Costs
Digital billboards create legal challenges and expense to governmental entities in the form of billboard company regulation and lawsuits.

Property Value
Homes within 500 feet of a billboard were worth $30,826 less on average at time of sale.

Source: scenictexas.org/resources/billboards

Figure 29. Scenic Fort Worth Digital Billboard Infographic. Source: (Scenic Fort Worth).

Scenic City
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE GUIDE

Bee Cave, Texas

SIGN CONTROL

Just southeast of Austin, Bee Cave is home to almost 8,000 residents over 8.5 square miles. The Town of Bee Cave, formerly the Village of Bee Cave, was founded in 1987. Bee Cave was named after colonies of Mexican honeybees in the area. Bee Cave has always made preserving and enhancing nature a core value. Their first sign control ordinance was passed only ten years after its founding in 1997. The city council passed this ordinance to prevent Bee Cave from becoming "a high-way passthrough area." Bee Cave has been intentional about nurturing a strong sense of place that is founded on establishing protective measures against standardization. This is relevant to both on and off premises signage. Through preserving the health and visibility of the Hill Country landscape that surrounds Bee Cave, the area stands out as a desirable place to live and spend time. The sign codes the city has in place help to maximize utility of the signs while preventing clutter and ineffective signage.

Because of the early implementation of sign ordinances, the town only has 5 billboards and other non-conforming signs. There is also an ordinance in place that prevents repair to the remaining billboards if the repair is to more than 60% of the structure, or costs more than 60% of its total value. Bee Cave city employees have also found that developers and business owners know and understand the codes very well because of the consistent standards overtime.
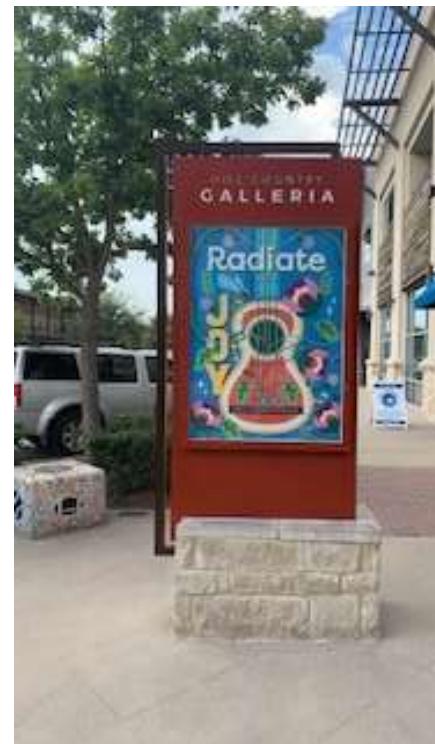
Although this is not directly related to the SCCP application, Bee Cave is in the process of updating the sign ordinances that relate to the content of signage, considering the 2015 Supreme Court Case No. 13-502 Reed ET AL v. Town of Gilbert, Arizona, ET AL. In the case, a local pastor rented space at an elementary school and put around 17 signs up that advertised the time and location of his church's services. The Town of Gilbert has a sign ordinance that "restricts the size, number, duration, and location of certain types of signs, including directional ones, to prevent improper signage."[34] The United States Supreme Court unanimously found the Town of Gilbert's sign ordinance to be unconstitutional under the Free Speech Clause of the Frist Amendment. The Town of Gilbert's ordinances restricted content by discriminating against speech from religious groups and could not stand against strict scrutiny.[35] Bee Cave's ordinances regarding the visual standards will remain the same. However, in January 2022, the ordinances that address the content of the signage will be repassed through the city council to abide by Reed v. the Town of Gilbert. Bee Cave has demonstrated a dedication to maintaining up-to-date standards that align with federal guidelines. There will be a new sign code available via the Bee Cave website in January 2022. The previous code is published in this guidebook. Although the current ordinances did receive full credit on the SCCP application, the City of Bee Cave suggests readers use the most current set of ordinances for "Best Practices" reference as soon as they are available.

Regarding on and off premises signage, the City of Bee Cave has made sure to be attentive to context, understanding that occasionally the ordinance language is not suited to handle every decision. The city employees have made themselves available to work with residents and business owners when necessary. An example of this was in the midst the COVID-19 pandemic. As many cities experienced, restaurants in Bee Cave began to install temporary signage in certain parking spots to designate them as pick-up or to-go order spaces. Although these signs did not align with the code of ordinances, the city felt that the extra-ordinary circumstance created a situation where this type of signage temporarily makes sense. Bee Cave made a conscious effort to understand how this impacted residents and businesses. The city understands that completing policy objectives will sometimes occur. While it is okay to grant variances to handle these situations in an appropriate way, it is important to understand that granting a single variant may result in other similar cases coming forward with the expectation of the same treatment. They are best kept to a minimum, and a city council should think through the future impacts before granting a variant.

The City of Bee Cave uses an online portal to collect sign applications. The city employees a singular sign control reviewer. This is appropriate considering Bee Caves size; other cities may require more. However, in Bee Cave this has allowed for equal treatment and review of each sign. Which has in turn created solid enforcement of the City's ordinances. The city also primarily works with one sign company that provides signs to the businesses in Bee Cave. The company is aware of the ordinances. If a non-conforming sign does

[34] https://www.oyez.org/cases/2014/13-502
[35] 576 U.S. 155 (more) 135 S. Ct. 2218; 192 L. Ed. 2d 236; 2015 U.S. LEXIS 4061; 83 U.S.L.W. 4444; 25 Fla. L. Weekly Fed. S 383

get submitted or constructed, the city withholds the certificate of occupancy until the sign is brought to conformity. Bee Cave recommends dealing with sign non-conformity in administration rather than in court. This allows for consistency in enforcement. This also decreases applications for variance. Which allows the discussion to primarily revolve around the corner stone cases that do require a variance.

Plano, Texas

Mesquite, Texas

Magnolia, Texas

Lucas, Texas

7. Litter and graffiti prohibition

Managing litter and graffiti can be difficult in a city. Litter and graffiti removal efforts must be continuous and dynamic. The efforts should be both proactive and responsive. Proactive efforts may include scheduled clean-ups of sites that are known to face difficulties with litter and graffiti. Responsive efforts may include clean-ups based on reporting and the scheduling of regular clean-ups in areas newly categorized as hot spots.

Determining the "hot spot" areas that experience litter and graffiti crimes by keeping up-to-date records of offensives can provide the foundation of a management plan. Clearer streets may reduce crime, increase economic activity, and "encourage healthy behavior and improve mental health." [36] Studies show that there is a relationship between litter and graffiti. In a place where graffiti is present, litter is likely to also be present. In some instances, the introduction of graffiti increased the amount of litter found at the site over time.[25] Creating a set of ordinances that establish regular cleanings of areas with graffiti can help to reduce litter. The presence of litter and graffiti can also predict other crimes such as robbery.[37] In the same study, public spaces with no presence of litter and graffiti experienced much less crime. Removal processes are important to public safety.

Community empowerment through citizen participation in labor and advocacy efforts can be instrumental in ensuring community investment in things such as anti-litter and graffiti initiatives.[38] Organizing community-led clean up initiatives help to create a sense of ownership and pride among community members. According to Pepper 2015, younger people are more likely to litter. Involving youth in clean-up initiatives when safe can spread awareness among youth about the negative impacts of littering. Supporting grass-roots initiatives that organize clean-up events is a great way to reduce litter in a city while also supporting local organizations and promoting community empowerment.

Litter and graffiti offenses are also commonly committed by non-residents, or passersby. People are less likely commit these offenses when they feel someone else is present or watching them. Installing mobile or permanent cameras in hot spot areas can reduce offenses. This may apply to public and private spaces that have low visibility or experience times of low usage.

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[36] Pepper, G. (2015). Cleaner, healthier streets: possible approaches and likely benefits: An evidence review written for the Newcastle City Council Public Health team.

[37] Brown, B. B., Perkins, D. D., & Brown, G. (2004). Incivilities, place attachment and crime: Block and individual effects. *Journal of environmental psychology*, *24*(3), 359-371.

[38] Perkins, D. D., Brown, B. B., & Taylor, R. B. (1996). The ecology of empowerment: Predicting participation in community organizations. *Journal of Social Issues*, *52*, 85-110.

The Urban Institute published a guide to help cities prevent vandalism at a low-cost. The guide is part of a series released to promote the Urban Institute's Safe City model that "aims to reduce crime, build awareness, and develop communities into safer places to live, work, and shop."[39] The guide includes quick tips that are shown in the image below (Image 30). The guide also discusses detailed strategies and case studies that may be helpful to cities searching for ways to prevent vandalism. The guide can be accessed at:

https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/31256/1001192-Preventing-Vandalism.PDF.

Quick Tips

Here are a few guiding steps that can help prevent vandalism:

① Measure your vandalism problem.

② Identify business practices that may make you vulnerable to vandalism.

③ Choose a practical strategy to reduce vandalism and try it.

④ Measure your vandalism problem again to assess the impact of your strategy.

⑤ Modify your strategy if necessary.

Image 30. The Urban Institute's Vandalism Prevention Guide Quick Tips. Source: (https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/31256/1001192-Preventing-Vandalism.PDF)

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[39] https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/31256/1001192-Preventing-Vandalism.PDF

Finally, there are many fun and creative ways that a city can combat litter. An article published by The Park Catalog in 2017 features urban case studies that found creative ways to reduce litter. Among the case studies is Toronto. Toronto uses "trash talk" to spread the message that "littering says a lot about you."[40] Food wrappers with brand logos are rearranged to spell out massages that target litters.

Image 31. Toronto's "Livegreen" campaign targeting litter offenses. Source: (https://www.theparkcatalog.com/blog/cities-stop-littering-trash-receptacles/.)

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[40] The Park Catalog. (2017, November 17). *Cities use creative campaigns to stop littering*. The Park Blog.
    https://www.theparkcatalog.com/blog/cities-stop-littering-trash-receptacles/.

Scenic City

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE GUIDE

Fort Worth, Texas

LITTER AND GRAFFITI

Fort Worth is a city located in Northern Texas with a population of 874,401. The city is 356 square miles, making Fort Worth the largest city to rank gold in the SCCP. Fort Worth recertified their gold ranking in 2021. The city received a perfect score on the Litter and Graffiti visual tenet as well as the Dumpster Screening visual tenet. In addition to the residents of Fort Worth, thousands more commute for work daily. The city also attracts 1.5 million tourists each year[41]. With thousands of people moving around the city per day, litter and graffiti is often inevitable. The tactics that Fort Worth uses to address litter and graffiti keep Forth Worth looking clean and lively.

Fort Worth attests the successful management of litter and graffiti to the multilevel approaches their local government takes, and the partnerships that make the process a collective effort. To tackle litter and graffiti, the city uses a combination of funding, incentives, and enforcement. There are also a variety of community- led programs and events that help to keep Fort Worth so clean. The community buy-in that Fort Worth has established with their residents makes managing litter and graffiti efforts accomplishable.

To create and maintain a collective vision to control litter in Fort Worth, the city has dedicated a chapter of the Environmental Master Plan to controlling litter. The master plan can be found at:

https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/files/assets/public/code-compliance/env/documents/code-environmental-emp-environmental-master-plan-chapter-6-litter-control-2021.pdf.

The litter control chapter includes a graphic, displayed below in Image 32, that explains why supporting clean up initiatives is important. Fort Worth believes that educating the public through providing outreach and resources is a key factor of maintaining litter and graffiti in the area.

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[41] Fort Worth environmental master plan page 183

Image 32. Litter Control graphic from Fort Worth's Environmental Master Plan.

The City of Fort Worth partners with the Downtown Fort Worth Inc, Keep Fort Worth Beautiful, Litter Free Fort Worth, Tarrant Regional Water District, and internal organizations such as Parks and Recreation Department and Texas Department of Transportation.

Fort Worth has a Scenic Fort Worth Chapter that has been able to promote strategically crafted ordinances to promote strong scenic standards. The Scenic Fort Worth Chapter has also helped to create an active community in Fort Worth that work to maintain and enhance the area's scenic environment. The chapter has helped to appropriately frame issues in a way that appeals to residents for support. Scenic issues are quality of life issues.

The Downtown Fort Worth Inc (DFWI) has a contract with the city to lead efforts to clean up litter and graffiti across the city. The DFWI has a litter abatement team that employees a staff of almost 40 crew members that work continuously to clean litter through the city. There is also a graffiti abatement team that consists of an additional 40 staff members. Because Fort Worth is geographically large, there are 10 public improvement districts (PIDs) that break up the area within the city limits. Each PIDs is managed separately. They operate in a similar manor to an HOA; residents pay a higher tax in exchange for litter and graffiti cleanup crews to maintain their district. The DFWI has taken deliberate steps to create a noticeable presence in the community through their abatement teams. The community members see and often interact with the team members throughout the city, their presence is consistent and meaningful. The DFWI also employees 13 ambassadors that take on a role like code enforcement officers, they report findings to the abatement teams.

Keep Fort Worth Beautiful (KFWB) organizes several community-led beautification efforts in the city that make a big difference. The work that Keep Fort Worth Beautiful does is driven by the mission "*to educate and engage Fort Worth residents and businesses to take responsibility for improving their community environment.*" KFWB "manages litter awareness programs, organizes litter cleanup events, provides support and supplies for community cleanups and engages volunteers."[42] Having a Keep America Beautiful affiliate has been a key element to Fort Worth's collective effort to combat litter and graffiti within the city. One type of event that KFWB organizes each year is community led cleanups. There are three volunteer events that community members and businesses can participate in including Cowtown Great American Cleanup, Neighborhood Litter Stomp, and Trinity Trash Bash.

Another major program KFWB organizes is Adopt a Spot.

"Adopt-A-Spot is a volunteer program for individuals or groups that want to take pride and ownership in their own part of Fort Worth. Picking up litter at your very own spot and make it beautiful! Adopters can choose litter-only agreements and regularly remove litter. You can also choose beyond litter control with options to support landscaping and facilities."

[42] Fort Worth Environmental master plan page 191

Image 33. Keep Fort Beautiful Initiatives. Source: Keep Fort Worth Beautiful.

To provide equal efforts across the Fort Worth community, there are video surveillance efforts posted along roadways across the community to help identify spots that may need intervention. The cameras are mobile, so they can survey any point of the city at a given time. The locations of the cameras are based on complaints or observation of a spot that needs attention. Leveraging technology has allowed the city to oversee the entire city. Fort Worth is currently the only city in state of Texas using technology this way. The city has detailed Geographic Information System (GIS) maps that highlight the hot spots for both liter and graffiti that are constantly being updates. They organize preemptive cleanings in hot spots.

The staff at Fort Worth emphasizes that utilizing various levels of implementation has also been critical to their success. The team uses a combination of education, incentives, and enforcement when needed.

- Educating community members about resources available to them. There are four trash collection centers in the city, drop off is free to anyone with a driver's license. The city created an app that contains information about trash collections dates for

residents. When a resident moves to Fort Worth, they receive an information packet that contains information about how to dispose and recycle materials. There is also an app that allows residents to report litter and graffiti sightings across the city.

- Incentivizing residents and businesses to manage trash and recycling responsibly.
- Enforcement is utilized as a last resort, after education and incentivization are no longer options.

Fort Worth has two full-time communications and outreach employees. They produce a newsletter, the new residents' informational packets, and ongoing outreach efforts to community members. The city believes that communication is essential for any other initiative to be effective. The city ensures to communicate to residents the information they need and be available to answer questions and concerns from residents.

Sugar Land, Texas

Roanoke, Texas

Nolanville, Texas

ty, Texas

8. Utility and Cable Line Programs

There are many benefits to transitioning to underground utility wires. In the United States, there are "180 million telephone and television lines strung."[43] There are "three million miles of above-ground electric cables" in America.[43] The wires create a public safety issue and take away for scenic beauty. It has become increasingly common for local governments to implement ordinances that ensure new utility lines are installed underground. Ordinances also often include language specifying that if a utility or cable line must be replaced, they should be replaced by underground lines.

Scenic America explains the benefits of installing utility wires underground. The benefits are described below on Table 3. They are taken directly from the Scenic America webpage for "Underground Utility Wires."

Table 3. Scenic America's Benefits to Underground Utility and Cable Line Wires.

Benefits	Description
Aesthetics	"Greater outdoor areas can improve in appearances by reducing the presence of utility wires. Often viewed as unruly, overhead wires can mask the beauty and unique traits of different communities. Projects like sidewalk widening and tree planting can also take place more seamlessly without the obstacle of power lines."
Safety and Community Health	"Burying lines eliminates fire hazards, accidents, safety risks, and power outages due to downed lines. This also reduces risks of health conditions related to electromagnetic radiation and improves road safety by lessening the chances of motorists striking poles."
Reduced Maintenance	"Undergrounding eliminates weather-related power outages and provides more reliable service to citizens. For instance, falling tree limbs, high winds, and heavy snow will not cause the same disruptions or damages."
Economic Development	"Revitalization experts agree that investments surrounding the visual improvement of commercial areas is one of the best ways to attract new business and stimulate economic development. By focusing on the cleanliness and beauty of retail and commercial spaces, communities can become more successful."
Source: https://www.scenic.org/visual-pollution-issues/underground-power-lines/	

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[43] https://www.scenic.org/visual-pollution-issues/underground-power-lines/

The transition to underground utility and cable line infrastructure can be expensive and take time. However, there are funding sources a city may use for the process. Table 5 below is directly from Scenic America's webpage for "Funding Utility Relocation."

Table 5. Scenic America's Funding Sources for Utility Relocation.

Funding Sources	Description
Federal Sources	"The federal Transportation Enhancements Program, under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), can pay for relocation. Through their state department of transportation, communities can apply for Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds for utility burial or relocation under categories of landscaping, scenic beautification, or scenic/historic highway programs and welcome centers. These actions are normally attached to a larger beautification project. For example, Vidalia, GA and Augusta, ME used TE funds to bury wires as part of their downtown improvement project. Maryland has also used federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to fund utility relocation projects."
Local and State Sources	"Local and state community improvement grants are another way of fund small scale utility projects. Certain states, like Pennsylvania and Maryland, consider utility burial an aesthetic improvement similar to landscaping. This allows for communities to apply for funding under downtown and Main Street improvement grants. For example, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's "Downtown and Communities of Opportunity" grant program awards funding for communities seeking to enhance aesthetics and quality of life. In states like Washington, however, the state department of transportation (DOT) has authority to pay for relocation costs through highway construction. The DOT can use federal highway funds for utility relocation under one or more of the following conditions: • Relocation promotes safety, aesthetic, economic, or legal standpoint • Utilities have a property interest in present location • Relocation involves implementing safety measures to reduce the roadside hazards of utility facilities to highway users • Utilities are municipally owned and occupy the public right-of-way • Utility reimbursement laws which give it the authority to pay for utility relocation."
Special Assessment Districts	"When certain regions are scheduled for undergrounding, they are assigned "Special Assignment Areas". These operate with utility subscribers paying an extra fee, generally two percent, on their

monthly bill to fund the project. Special assessment areas are normally designated through the acts of petitioning.

Since the early 1970s, Commonwealth Electric in Massachusetts has successfully used special assessments to fund utility burial efforts in historic Cape Cod communities, such as Nantucket. One drawback to special assessments is that total revenue collected is often minimal in comparison to general utility relocation costs, forcing the project to span a longer period of time.

States like California and Oregon have established "undergrounding districts" to help communities pay for burying utility wires. In California, the public utilities commission collects a percentage of revenue from all wire-based utilities for undergrounding. In order to receive a share of this, an undergrounding district must be formed by special resolution passed by the local government or the collection of signatures from at least 70 percent of property owners within the proposed area. In addition, property owners must agree to pay for the cost of hookup from the new underground conduit to their property (typically $500-$2000). Once a community meets these requirements, the local government can apply to the public utilities commission for undergrounding funds and coordinate a schedule with planners and utility providers."

Source: https://www.scenic.org/visual-pollution-issues/underground-power-lines/funding/

Before   After

Image 34. Before and after image of cable lines that were moved underground. Source: (Scenic America).

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Frisco, Texas
UTILITY AND CABLE LINE

Frisco, Texas is in Northern Texas. Within almost 70 square miles, the population of Frisco is 268,771. The town has experienced a steady increase in population since 2000 when the outdoor mall opened at the town center. The City of Frisco received a perfect score for the Utility and Cable Line visual tenet. The score was ultimately achieved through strong ordinance language that prioritizes protecting the future of Frisco. The city has an Engineering Standards Guide that is provided to the parties involved in a new construction project. The guide can be found at:

https://www.friscotexas.gov/DocumentCenter/View/19609/Engineering-Standards-August-2020_Final-V2?bidId=

The Engineering Standards guide helps the city to inform developers about standards including utility and cable line expectations. This has prevented the submission of non-conforming construction plans to the city. The guide includes requirements that are specific to many of the visual tenets promoted by the SCCP. Part 3, "Execution" pertains to the Utility and Cable Line visual tenet. Providing clear and comprehensive information to the community has been instrumental in Frisco's efforts to maintain visual standards. The city conducts construction inspections to ensure the plans align with the city's standards.
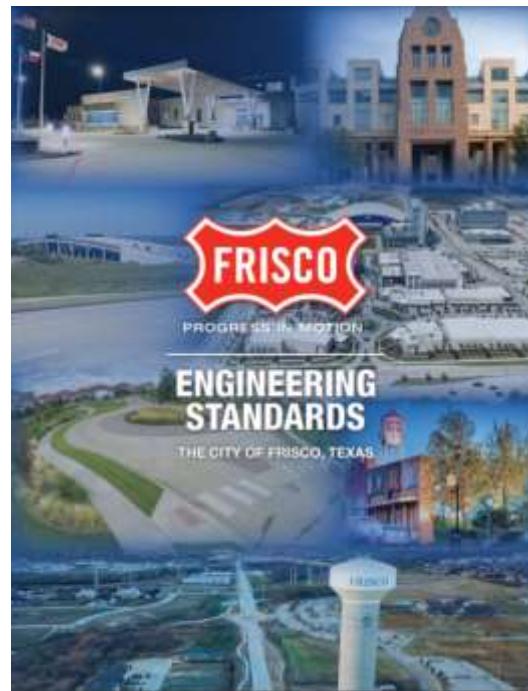
Image 35. The City of Frisco Engineering Standards Guide. Source: The City of Frisco.

The city also holds a City Hall 101 class twice a year, since 2010. The class is free to residents over 18. There are 13 classes total that occur on Monday nights. Each week has a theme, for example, parks and recreation. The parks department will send guest speakers to the class to share details about their job and current initiatives in the city. Other guests include the mayor, first responders, and the police department. The class is intended to "give citizens a behind-the-scenes look at how city hall and other municipal facilities operate."[44] This class attracts a variety of residents. All new city employees get paid to take the class as part of their training. This helps to create connectivity through city departments. The material used for the class is presented in a way that is easy for residents to understand. This is just one of the public outreach efforts Frisco uses to ensure the public is informed and involved in the governance and development processes. More information about City Hall 101 can be found at the city's website:

https://www.friscotexas.gov/670/City-Hall-101

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[44] https://www.friscotexas.gov/670/City-Hall-101

South Padre Island, Texas

Little Elm, Texas

Argyle, Texas

9. Dumpster Screening

Dumpster screening, or a dumpster enclosure, is used to conceal dumpsters. There are many reasons why concealing a dumpster is a good idea. For starters, dumpsters can be unsightly. An un-enclosed dumpster may also become a public safety risk. Dumpster screening protects trash from unwanted wildlife, weather events, and human access to trash. Concealing a dumpster also presents a more professional appearance for a business.[45]

- Animals often find themselves searching for human scraps in dumpsters. This is a danger to both wildlife and humans, and often results in a large mess. Dumpster screens make it much more difficult for animals to access the trash.
- Weather events, such as strong winds, can also displace trash from dumpsters. A dumpster screen can prevent wind from impacting the dumpster.
- Finally, a dumpster screen is typically constructed on around all four sides, with a locked gate at the front. A locked gate prevents any unwanted human interactions with trash. For example, external trash being placed in the dumpster. Screens provide security for a business as well as public safety.

Dumpster screens also present an opportunity to create a more appealing designated trash area. The SCCP suggests that cities create ordinances that require masonry to be used in the construction of dumpster enclosures. The masonry typically matches the style of the associated building. To further incorporate a dumpster screen, many businesses choose to add landscaping around the parameter. Using dumpster screens may help to set a standard for other trash-related practices. People are more inclined to litter when the site is unclean. Keeping a site clean, deters customers or tenets from misplacing trash.

[45] https://www.texasdisposal.com/blog/dumpster-enclosures/
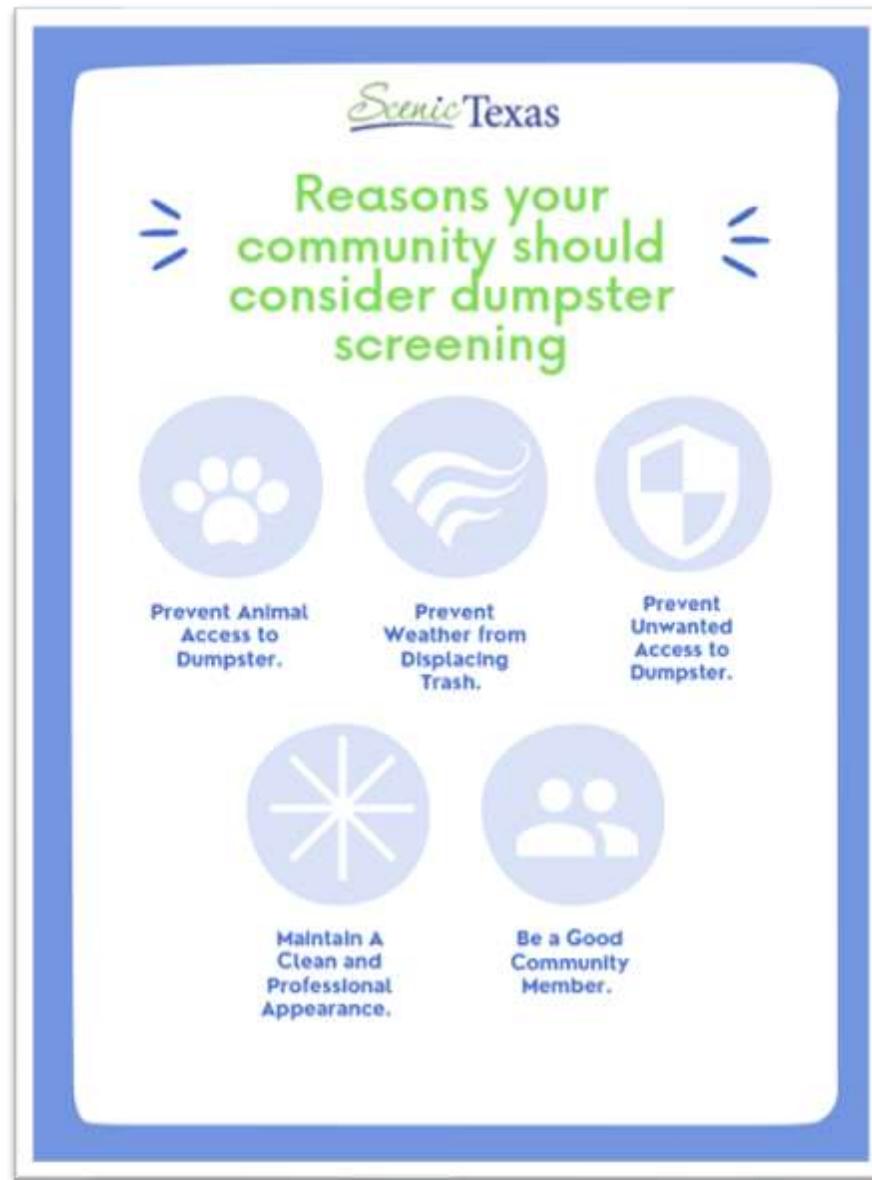
Image 36. Reasons your community should consider dumpster screening infographic. Source: (author).

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Pearland, Texas

DUMPSTER SCREENING

Pearland, Texas is 46.3 square miles and has 125,848 residents. Pearland is located outside of Houston. The City of Pearland requires dumpster enclosures on all dumpsters. The enclosures must be approved by the city before they are constructed. A building permit will only be granted once the enclosure complies. The city requires the enclosure to be constructed of durable material and that there be incorporated landscaping around the parameter. The fence must be facing away from the sidewalk if the dumpster is located near one.

In 2020, Pearland created a new position within the city government. The position is an inspector. The inspector is one designated person that is responsible for ensuring compliance with city code. The City of Pearland decided to assign one person to the position to create consistency with code compliance through the city. If the inspector locates a non-conforming enclosure, or a locate that does not have an enclosure, they report to the planning department.

MASONRY CONTAINER ENCLOSURE

To ensure developers have access to the information they need in order to fulfill the requirements, the City of Pearland has a Container Closure Plan that is distributed to all new developers working within the city. The guide includes illustrations of ideal closures with measurements and material. The guide also includes information on placement to ensure service trucks can access the dumpster.

Image 37. Pearland's Container Closure Plan. Source: (City of Pearland).

COLLECTION VEHICLE APPROACH
AND TURN RADIUS DIAGRAM

VEHICLE	90 DEGREE TURN RADIUS	180 DEGREE TURN RADIUS
Crane Carier	38 Feet	72 Feet
White Expeditor Y084	45 Feet	90 Feet
Mack MR	29 Feet	79 Feet
Peterbilt	35 Feet	70 Feet

NOTE: verify actual required turning radiuses with vehicle manufacturer's specifications.

This tenet is important to Pearland for various reasons. It is a simple way to improve the daily lives of residents by taking away unpleasant encounters. The city is also committed to ensuring public health and safety. The dumpster screening works toward this by minimizing unprotected trash and by keeping trash in a single position. The dumpster screens protect the city's sense of place by lowering risk of trash taking away from something else. Most importantly, the screens ensure equity because they are required everywhere.

Pflugerville, Texas

West University Place, Texas

Sealy, Texas

Richardson, Texas

10. Unique municipal features and special programs

The SCCP has worked hard to create a comprehensive and inclusive set of visual tenets that support our mission. It is important for us to create space for cities to share unique and inventive ways that help to generate and maintain strong scenic standards. To allow for this, the 10th Visual Tenet, "Unique municipal features and special programs", is intentionally open-ended. In this section, cities showcase the creative ways that they incorporate scenic standards into city initiatives. The submissions vary based on location, size, age, and values of a community.

Some of the common submissions are as follows:

• historic districts
• historic preservation programs
• a scenic program related to a unique geographic feature
• a natural environment enhancement program
• storm runoff collectors
• beach/lake/river cleanups
• retention basins
• plantings in detention areas
• landscaping along a body of water
• a vegetated area bordering a stream or established to protect a stream system
• innovative programs above and beyond our criteria in any of the certification categories

In addition to the list provided above, cities often include art and park land dedication programs, Dark Sky certification, Keep America Beautiful chapters, and Main Street programs. As the SCCP continues to develop, more innovation and creativity is presented to us through our participating Scenic Cities. It is important that we continue the path of collaboration to collectively increase the level of sustainability and equity in the state of Texas.

Keep Missouri City Beautiful

Missouri City is extremely active in Keep Missouri City Beautiful, a chapter of Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB). They won the Keep Texas Beautiful Gold Star award in 2017, 2018, and 2019. The Gold Star Award is the highest level of recognition. To remain in good standing with KTB, community affiliates must submit a report, pay dues, attend training, and participate in a KTB-endorsed activity annually. To achieve this status, affiliates must share information on their mission and goals, answer questions about their economic development and diversity and inclusion practices or participate in the Keep Texas Beautiful Awards or Governor's Community Achievement Awards programs and provide a letter of support from their community. Missouri City also has a local program called Missouri City Green. It is a community run organization whose mission is to "increase and foster sustained pride, responsibility and beauty in our community in Missouri City, Texas". They focus on recycling, environmental education, litter removal and native trees and plants.[46] Participating in these programs has increased tourism, economic development efforts and the livability of the city.

The City of Cuero's Main Street Program

The City of Cuero's Main Street Program is an excellent example of a Unique Municipal Feature. According to the City of Cuero, it was originally certified from 1985-1990 and re-designated in 2013. Through the Main Street program Cuero focuses on downtown revitalization through the form of marketing, promotions, events and historic preservation. The Texas Main Street Program is administered by SCCP Partner Texas Historical Commission and is part of a broader effort that "helps Texas cities revitalize their historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts." By achieving a Main Street Program, a city is demonstrating a clear commitment to placemaking in preservation of cultural and historical districts, heritage tourism, and economic development driven by high-quality design standards. As a burgeoning city, Cuero is implementing strategies to preserve its cultural, historical, and natural character including the development of a Unified Development Code (UDC) in 2015. Cuero's Main Street Program enriches quality of life for residents and furthers civic pride that builds a resilient community to rapid densification and unintentional development.

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[46] https://www.missouricitygreen.org/about.html

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Dripping Springs, Texas
SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Dripping Springs received full credit on the bonus section. This was partially because of their International Dark Sky Community designation (IDA). In Dripping Springs, the movement towards adopting a lighting ordinance was citizen-led beginning in 2000. A Dripping Springs resident, John Gregory, "who had been the chief engineer of the University of Texas McDonald Observatory and owned an optical and telescope equipment consulting, design, and fabricating firm"[47] introduced the idea to the community.

Since 2000, the community has fully supported the Dark Sky Community designation and the ordinances it includes. Dripping Springs was the 6th city in the world to become an IDA, and the 1st in Texas. Being a Dark Sky Community has helped the City of Dripping Springs maintain their scenic beauty and rural charm. The city is also supportive of the scientific students on the health and safety risks of certain lighting devices. Many residents participate in star gazing. The lighting ordinances are adapted every few years to maintain the most up-to-date lighting standards that preserve the night sky and comply with the Dark Sky Community designation.

"An International Dark Sky Community (IDSC) is town, city, municipality or other similar entity that has shown exceptional dedication to the preservation of the night sky through the implementation and enforcement of quality lighting policies, dark-sky education, and citizen support of the ideal of dark skies."[48]

Image 37. Graphic used by Dripping Springs to inform residents about light pollution.
Source: (The City of Dripping Springs).

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[47] City of Dripping Springs
[48] https://www.darksky.org/our-work/conservation/idsp/communities/

The City of Dripping Springs has an established sense of place around the unified goal of preventing light pollution. Light pollution results in wasted light that performs no function or task, and light that illuminates areas it is not intended to. Because the lighting ordinance has been adapted frequently since 2000, it is extremely well written. The ordinance applies to both commercial and residential buildings. The implementation of lighting ordinances in the city has helped to:

- Improve safety and security
- Save energy and money
- Reduce harm to human health
- Enhance property rights
- Aesthetics
- Reduce harm to wildlife and plants
- Quality of life
- Attract tourists[46]

The City of Dripping Springs has a population of 2,220 within the city limits. The ETJ has 35,000 residents. The lighting ordinance only applies to the city limits however, many of the ETJ residents voluntarily comply with the Dark Sky Community standards. This speaks to the lighting ordinance truly being a part of the sense of place. Public outreach has been critical to the success the city has had with the program. There are outreach efforts that include presentations to local organizations and HOAs, an organized event "Lights Out Dripping Springs for Bird Migratory Months", star parties, "Be A Star" award, new resident welcome bags with information, communication with local lighting companies, and banners around the community. There is a noticeable difference when traveling through the area at night. More information on becoming a Dark Sky Community can be found at:

Image 38. Graphic used by Dripping Springs to inform residents about light trespass. Source: (The City of Dripping Springs).

www.idatexas.org

Image 39. Lighting information within the Dripping Springs Lighting Plan Submission Checklist. Source: (The City of Dripping Springs).

Rockwall, Texas

La Vernia, Texas

Manor, Texas

Nacogdoches, Texas

Conclusion

The cities featured in this guide have a platinum or gold rating through the SCCP. Each city is still striving to improve the existing conditions according to the most recent discoveries of best practices. We encourage cities to constantly seek to be better and evolve. We pledge to do so as a program, through maintaining up-to-date and relevant information to share with our cities. Through developing the SCCP Best Practices Guide, our understanding of scenic standards has grown more comprehensive. The participating cities have shown outstanding commitment to our principles, and we have learned a great deal from them, as we hope the readers of this guide do. They are an inspiration our work at Scenic Texas.

The intention of this resource guide is to further develop the inter-city collaboration that Scenic Texas and its founding SCCP partners are working to enhance through the Scenic City Certification Program. Each of the principles that the SCCP endorses work towards the global initiative to combat climate change and work towards a safe and just transition to a more sustainable and equitable future for Texas. Our hope is that cities can learn from each other through our joint effort to shape the future of our state to protect scenic standards, environmental conservation, economic growth and growth management, and sense of place. Through ordinances, plans and programs, cities can accomplish incredible things that together have the influence to leverage change for our state.

The most frequented advice given by the featured cities was to communicate with the residents and business owners within the community. Outreach efforts are truly worth the time and resources. Cities have found graphics to be incredibly helpful when communicating technical ideas to the public. During the interview process, many cities also noted that the SCCP certification has helped give a name to values the cities already prioritized and thus furthered the support.

*Further research considerations*

    Biophilic Design

Biophilia is the "urge to affiliate with other life." Biophilia is present throughout planning history, but only recently initiated the formation of an intentional design practice. Biophilic design, or biophilic urbanism, is the deliberate incorporation of nature into urban composition. Traditionally, nature is found in the form of street trees and plants that exist separate from city infrastructure. Biophilia often integrates nature and (internally and externally) built infrastructure. [49]

Understanding of the human urge to affiliate with nature has been popularized and biophilic design is an effort to account for the desired affiliation in an urban setting. Being around nature provides a swath of benefits to people in urban places. The presence of nature creates a "positive and uplifting include on human and physical and mental conditions."[48] Other benefits to humans include:

- Reduction of stress
- "Enhancement of creativity and clarity of thought"
- Increased the speed of healing[50]

Biophilic design can also be used to address a variety of climate change initiatives. Climate challenges that can be addressed using biophilic design include:

- "Urban heat island effect
- Particulate matter filtration
- Carbon dioxide sequestration
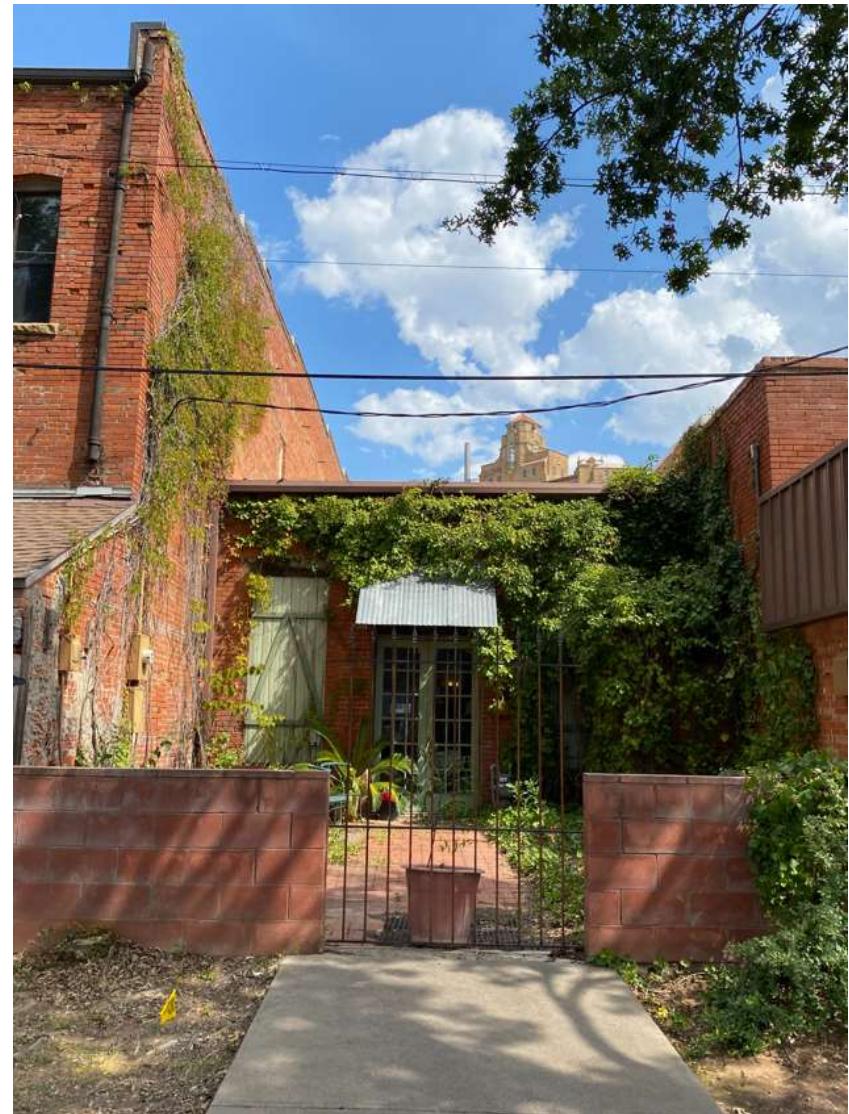
[49] Cabanek, A., Zingoni de Baro, M.E. & Newman, P. Biophilic streets: a design framework for creating multiple urban benefits. *Sustain Earth* **3,** 7 (2020). https://doi.org/10.1186/s42055-020-00027-0

[50] https://urbannext.net/biophilic-design/

- Rehabilitation and restoration of lost habitats
- Increased urban biodiversity"[48]
- Diffused light
- Thermal and airflow variability
- Natural system functions[49]

Biophilic design can be implemented in many ways. It may be implemented through greenery on and inside of buildings. In some cases, biophilic design is implemented through the design of a build to mimic a natural function. For example, a building that naturally heats and cools itself through things such as solar harnessing and diffused light. This is often called biomimicry. Examples of biomimicry in built infrastructure can be found at:

https://www.re-thinkingthefuture.com/rtf-fresh-perspectives/a952-10-stunning-examples-of-biomimicry-in-architecture/.

Ecosystem Services Equity

Ecosystem services are benefits humans receive from natural systems. The United Nations has identified four categories of ecosystem services that people benefit from:

- "Provisioning services: or the provision of food, fresh water. Fuel, fiber, and other goods
- Regulating services: such as climate, water, and disease regulation as well as pollination
- Supporting services: such as soil formation and nutrient cycling
- Cultural services: such as education, aesthetic, and cultural heritage values as well as recreation and tourism."[51]

As the global population increase and further develops, ecosystem services experience alterations. Access to each of these services is not possible for everyone. The benefits of conservation and protection efforts are also not practiced evenly across populations.[52] In a city scale, this may appear as lower income areas having less access to green spaces and tree shade or being located near a hazardous land use. While higher income areas have had access to resources to protect or restore shade and greenspace. Just the lack of tree shade alone can increase utility bills and decrease walkability. Local governments can play a critical role in protecting or restoring access to ecosystem services in areas that have been neglected access. Access to ecosystem services should be understood as a right

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[51] https://www.fs.fed.us/ecosystemservices/About_ES/

[52] Pascual, U., Phelps, J., Garmendia, E., Brown, K., Corbera, E., Martin, A., Muradian, R. (2014). Social equity matters in payments for ecosystem services. *Bioscience*, *64*(11), 1027-1036.

rather than a privilege. Recent research has suggested placing a monetary value on ecosystems and natural resources to promote conservation efforts. However, this commodification of nature has created unequal access.

> "Commodification turns ecosystem services that in principle were in open access, public or communal property into commodities that can be accessed only by those having purchasing power. This involves a substantial institutional and social change that we can evaluate positively or negatively depending on our normative ideology. For example, from the political ecology perspective, commodification is assumed, rather than empirically proven, to be socially undesirable, because by institutionalizing differential access to ecosystem services according to the ability to pay, commodification is likely to exacerbate social inequalities."[53]
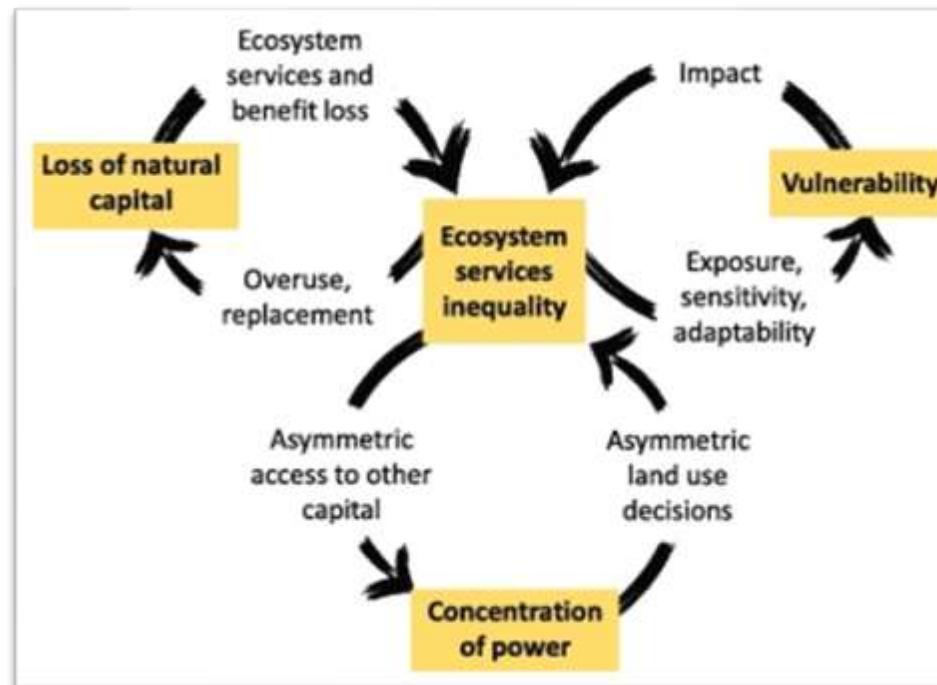

Image 40. Inequalities associated with ecosystem services. (Source: Pedro Laterra (2019). Linking inequalities and ecosystem services in Latin America. Ecosystem Services. Volume 36.100875. ISSN 2212-0416, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2018.12.001.)

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[53] Gómez-Baggethun, E., & Ruiz-Pérez, M. (2011). Economic valuation and the commodification of ecosystem services. *Progress in Physical Geography*, *35*(5), 613-628.