Oklahoma City
Community Appearance Survey Report

planokc
planning for a healthy future

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Prepared for:

City of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The City of Oklahoma City (the City) is developing a new comprehensive plan, called plan**okc**, to guide decisions about future growth and development throughout the City. The plan will capture what is important to citizens in terms of land use and growth patterns; historic preservation; recreational opportunities; transportation options; environmental protection; cultural, retail and entertainment opportunities; economic development; and public safety.

Community appearance is an important consideration in the comprehensive plan.   In order to understand what community appearance issues are most important to residents, the City hired RRC Associates to conduct a "Community Appearance Survey" (CAS).   Community appearance can instill a sense of community pride and belonging; contribute to the overall quality of life; and influence economic opportunities.   In the same way that strong public safety and a full complement of recreational and retail opportunities can cement a positive image for a city, community appearance can make a city more appealing to residents, visitors, and prospective employers alike.

Process

The survey was conducted through a combination of random sample mail out invitations, an online invitation-only survey, multiple public hearings, and an open-link computer based survey portal. The survey was also presented to a series of focus groups comprised of the City's various design review committees and commissions.

Survey images depicted a variety of urban settings, including buildings, streets, landscaping, and signage; some images were from areas within Oklahoma City and others were from different municipalities. The images were categorized into different land use categories, including single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial shopping and dining, and commercial office. Additionally, the survey included image categories related to the appearance of parking lots, parking structures, streets and streetscapes, signs, and community character. Each image was ascribed a series of attributes from a more detailed menu of features representing the various design elements visible in the image, such as the presence or absence of landscaping; the orientation and/or visibility of garage doors; the relationship of sidewalks to nearby streets; the amount of parking pavement; and to what extent parking was visible.   In this way, the key design features of each image and their impact on the image rating could be identified.

Survey respondents rated the images positively or negatively. Identified attributes were tabulated from the five highest scoring and the five lowest scoring images in each category to find both commonalities and differences between the two groups. This helped to identify the most popular and least popular elements that affect community appearance. Ratings for each individual image were also assessed for differences based on where the respondent lived and respondent's age to determine whether there were any significant differences.

Results

The City received a total of 1,605 completed surveys. The survey asked respondents for their preferences regarding the appearance and design attributes represented in 124 images. Survey participants were asked to evaluate the appearance of each image, using a scale of -5 (least desirable) to

+5 (most desirable).   Based on a final sample size of 241 from the random sampled method for this statistically valid survey, the margin of error is approximately +/- 6.3 percentage points.

The survey revealed noticeably different responses based on where respondents lived and between certain age groups. For example, younger people preferred more contemporary architectural styles with denser developments connected by lush, pedestrian-oriented streetscapes. Conversely, older respondents preferred traditional architectural styles and lower density developments with no on-street parking. Further, compared to respondents from other geographic sub-areas, respondents from the Downtown and Central areas noticeably favored dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development that incorporated alternative modes of transportation.   Community appearance and development guidelines should recognize these divergent opinions, and incorporate policies that attract both.

In addition to the numerical image ratings, the survey returned over 300 pages of open-ended comments. These comments provide additional context to the numerical survey results, and, perhaps most importantly, demonstrate the true care and concern that the City's citizens have for the appearance of their community.

Summary of key findings

- **Parking lot landscaping is essential.** Respondents consistently rated images of parking lots with a greater proportion of healthy and mature trees and landscaping higher than images with little or no landscaping. Community appearance can be improved by policies that require landscaping to shade and screen parking lots.

- **Signs need to be regulated**. The most highly ranked sign images were ground signs or smaller wall-mounted signs.   Excessively tall or out of proportion signs were disliked. Community appearance can be improved by policies that the limit the size, number, and height of signs.

- **The more landscaping, the better**. Abundant, well-maintained landscaping contributed to favorable ratings in every image category. Community appearance can be improved by incorporating more healthy trees into new developments and streetscapes, and preserving existing mature trees wherever possible.

- **Garages should be inconspicuous.** Images of single-family homes where the garage dominates the front façade were ranked very poorly.   Conversely, there was strong support for homes featuring side, tuck-back, or alley-loaded garages. Community appearance can be improved by home designs in which the garage is not the primary feature.

- **Neighbors want space to get to know each other**.   Front porches on single family homes were highly rated design feature.   Community appearance can be improved by promoting front porches and other shaded outdoor areas that provide spaces for neighbors to interact.

- **There is interest in innovative housing styles.** Cottage-style architecture and more modern designs were favorably rated while survey respondents criticized "cookie-cutter" single family home designs and "bland" multi-family residential schemes.   Community appearance can be improved by promoting a greater variety of styles in both types of residential developments.

- **Residential choices should be expanded.** Some open-ended comments voiced support for a broader range of residential products. Instead of accepting the choice between single-family homes or multi-family residences, respondents voiced a desire to have a broader range of choices, such as duplexes, fourplexes, and townhomes.

- **People love pedestrian-friendly streetscapes**. Survey respondents highly favored streetscapes that included sidewalks separated from traffic lanes by parked vehicles, landscaped parkways, bike lanes, or a combination thereof.   Less favored streetscapes had no sidewalks, little or no landscaping, and overhead power lines.

- **Shopping and dining centers should be vibrant and attractive.** The highest rated commercial area images featured high densities and mixed uses combined with ample landscaping, pleasant walking environments, and people-oriented gathering spots.   Community appearance can be improved by adopting new standards that promote these attributes.

- **Commercial office developments need a mix of styles and uses.** Popular images in this category embraced the retention and renovation of historic structures while equally supporting a more contemporary style for new buildings. Community appearance can be improved by promoting landscaping, informal gathering spots, walkability, and access to transit systems near office buildings.

- **Parking structures should not be exempt from appearance standards.** Parking structures designed with street-oriented uses, better integrated with the buildings they serve, and those with more architectural detailing scored higher image ratings. Those with blank facades and no relationship to the adjacent street or human scale fared worse. Community appearance can be improved by revising standards to improve the design of parking structures.

Conclusion

Using the survey results, the City's comprehensive plan can guide future development that better reflects these community appearance preferences. Plan**okc** can recommend policies that offer more choice and diversity in residential, commercial, and office building design as well as enhanced designs for streetscapes, signs, parking lots, and parking structures. These polices can then be implemented through changes to development regulations and design guidelines which could be applied citywide or in designated design district areas. Developers may also benefit from the survey results by responding to desired product types and design features favored by the survey respondents.

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

The survey was conducted using five methods: 1) a mail-back survey, 2) an online invitation-only survey to further stimulate response from those residents already within the defined random sample, 3) multiple public hearings, 4) several focus groups, and 5) an open link online survey for members of the public who were not part of the random sample, public hearings, or the focus groups but wished to participate in the process.

The primary list source used for the mailing was a third party list purchased from Melissa Data Corp., a leading provider of data quality solutions with emphasis on U.S., Canadian, and international address and phone verification and postal software. Use of the Melissa Data list also includes renters in the sample who are frequently missed in other list sources such as utility billing lists.

Based on a final sample size of 241 from the random sampled method for this statistically valid survey[1], the margin of error is approximately +/-6.3 percentage points calculated for questions at 50% response[2]. Results from the open link survey, public hearings, and focus groups generated an additional 1,364 responses. Due to the strong correlation between the mean ratings for the 241 randomly sampled respondents and the 1,364 open link respondents, the cases have been combined to create a more robust and complete dataset (Pearson Correlation=.968[3] or 97%; see chart below). By combining these respondents together the sample size for the purposes of the subsequent analysis was 1,605 responses. A Pearson Correlation of 97% indicates that only 3% of the random sample ratings cannot be predicted by the average rating of the open link/public hearings/focus group results. This results in an intensely strong correlation between the two methods.

Bivariate Correlation-Two-Tailed Test and Scatter Plot

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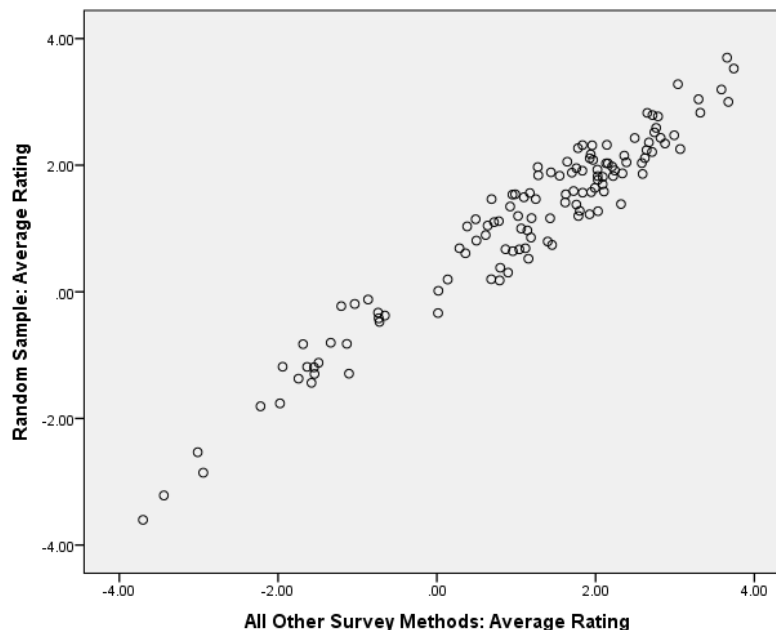
[1] Statistically valid survey refers to the random selection methods of sampling across the evaluated geography.

[2] For the total sample size of 241, margin of error is +/- 6.3-percentage points calculated for questions at 50% response (if the response for a particular question is "50%"—the standard way to generalize margin of error is to state the larger margin, which occurs for responses at 50%). Note that the margin of error is different for every single question response on the survey depending on the resultant sample sizes, proportion of responses, and number of answer categories for each question. Comparison of differences in the data between various segments, therefore, should take into consideration these factors. As a general comment, it is sometimes more appropriate to focus attention on the general trends and patterns in the data rather than on the individual percentages.

[3] Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

With the use of an expansive matrix of over 100 attributes applied to the mean ratings of the 124 images, specific design features and elements were ranked and analyzed. By evaluating the attributes of the highest and lowest rated images for each examined land use category, the design features contained in the most desirable and least desirable images can be isolated for consideration in policy development.

The analysis presumes that the highest rated images in each category incorporate the design elements and community appearance most likely favored by the majority of survey respondents. Conversely, the lowest rated images represent design features that have the most undesirable impacts on community appearance. By looking at the attributes present in both the highest and lowest rated images, the survey results define the important design characteristics that need the most attention from the City in the comprehensive plan and future implementation efforts. Through this assessment of the most popular and unpopular design attributes, this report pinpoints the preferred design elements and the associated factors in each of the survey categories as reflected by citizens of Oklahoma City through their image ratings. For an in-depth discussion of survey methodology and analysis refer to the Appendix of this report.

Summary of Image Ratings

The image ratings in this section provide insight into the types of design features that the survey respondents find attractive. The attributes evident in each of the rated images provide keys to the design concepts that need to be pursued further and the policies the City should consider for inclusion or adjustments in the overall effort to enhance community appearance. This section of the report highlights the highest and lowest rated images in each image category and identifies the key design elements, both desirable and undesirable, that are most common to each set of images.

- Single-family residential homes with prominent front-facing garages, large lots, and few trees were less desirable than homes with prominent trees and landscaping, and front porches.

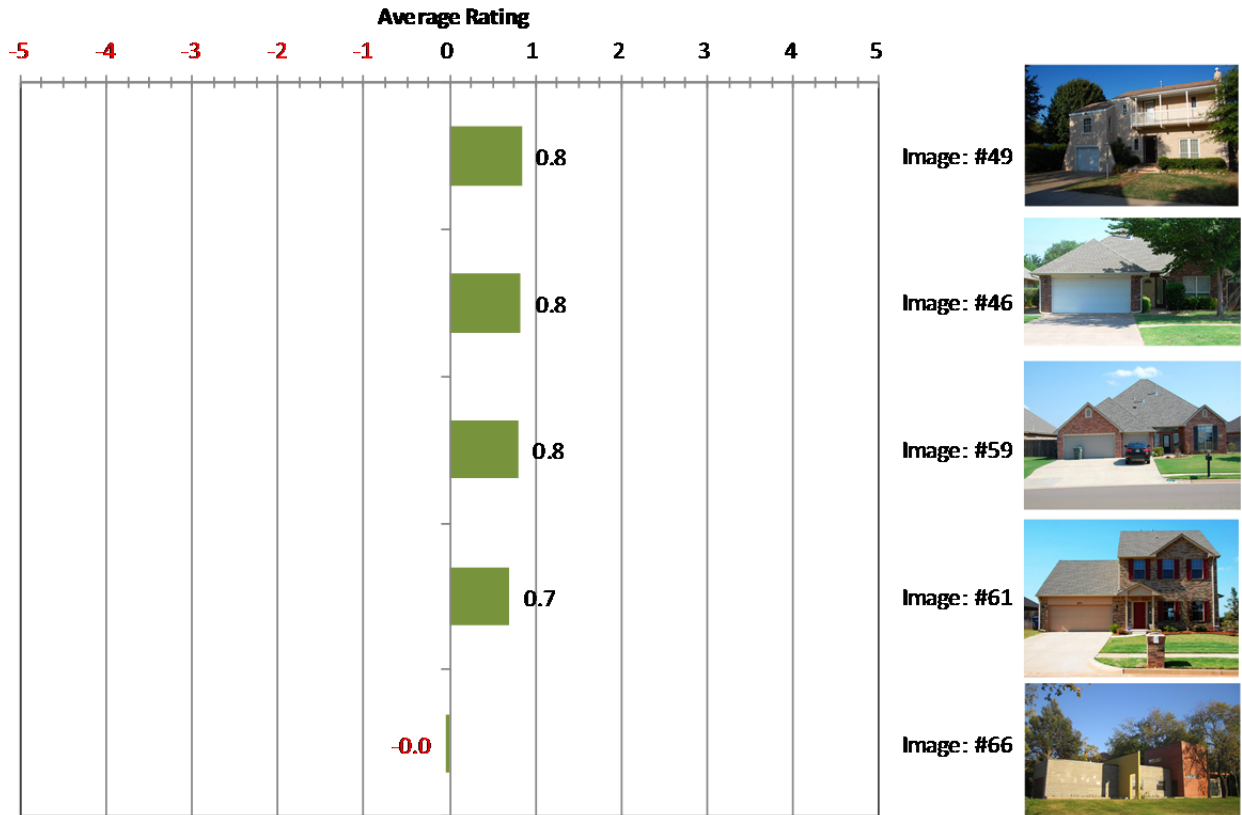Image 62 (2.8 Mean Rating: Tied for Highest Single-Family Residential Image Rating)

Image 61 (0.7 Mean Rating: Second Lowest Single-Family Residential Image Rating)

- With "cottage" style architecture defined as "quaint, craftsman style architecture possessing front porches, and shingles or siding on walls" respondents indicated a preference for homes with cottage style architecture and contemporary style architecture. The "traditional" style architecture, typically found in many current Oklahoma City neighborhoods, possessing large front facing garages, lack of trees and landscaping, and steeply pitched roofs tended to receive the lowest ratings.
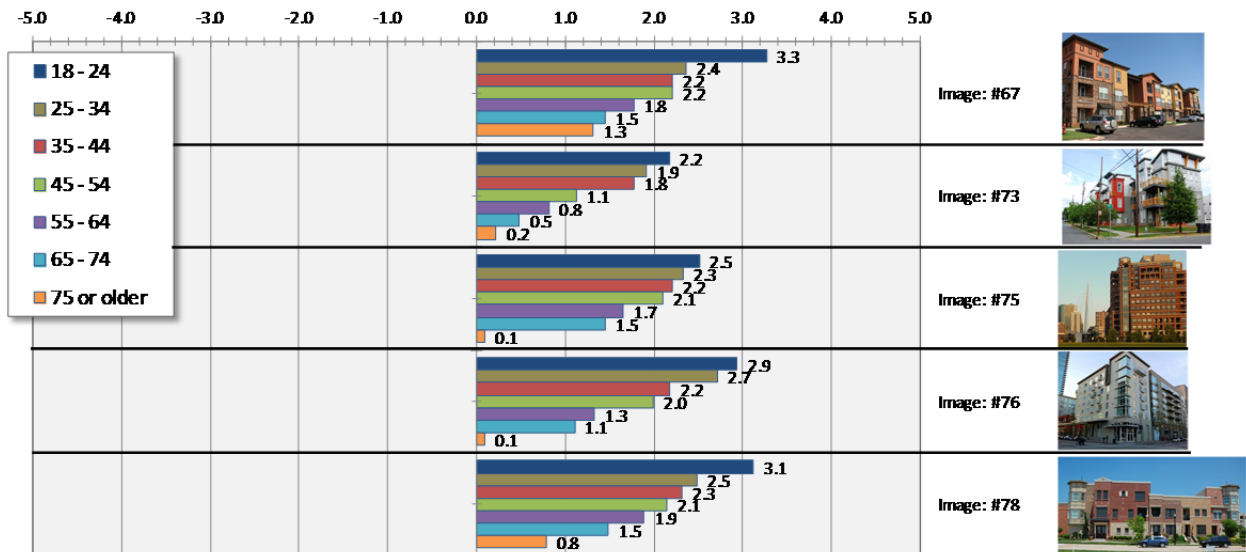

Single Family Residential - Top Five Rated Images

Average Rating

Image	Rating
Image: #54	2.8
Image: #62	2.8
Image: #55	2.6
Image: #60	2.6
Image: #51	2.5

Single Family Residential – Bottom Five Rated Images

Average Rating

Image	Rating
Image: #49	0.8
Image: #46	0.8
Image: #59	0.8
Image: #61	0.7
Image: #66	-0.0

- Younger respondents and those living within the Downtown and Central geographic sub-areas favored certain multi-family residential images more than did older respondents and respondents from other sub-areas than Downtown and Central.

Multi-Family Residential Images Most Favored by Younger Age Cohorts – Mean Ratings

Legend: 18 - 24, 25 - 34, 35 - 44, 45 - 54, 55 - 64, 65 - 74, 75 or older

Image: #67 — 3.3, 2.4, 2.2, 2.2, 1.8, 1.5, 1.3

Image: #73 — 2.2, 1.9, 1.8, 1.1, 0.8, 0.5, 0.2

Image: #75 — 2.5, 2.3, 2.2, 2.1, 1.7, 1.5, 0.1

Image: #76 — 2.9, 2.7, 2.2, 2.0, 1.3, 1.1, 0.1

Image: #78 — 3.1, 2.5, 2.3, 2.1, 1.9, 1.5, 0.8

- While higher density residential uses do not appeal to all residents, there are definable segments of the resident population for which new multi-family residential products are attractive. Based on the survey results, the most favorable examples of these structures are characterized by greater height,

contemporary appearance, and established landscaping. Survey results suggest there is support for a greater diversity of multi-family products than currently exists. The data help to measure and target segments of the community most likely to be interested in new types of housing (i.e., younger people and those living or having a desire to live in the Downtown and Central sub-areas).

- Parking lot and parking structure images also showed wide variation in level of desirability. Parking lots with visible, mature, healthy trees and landscaping and visual breaks in asphalt received much higher ratings than parking lots with large expanses of asphalt.


Image 85 (1.8 Mean Rating: Highest Parking Lot Image Rating)

Image 86 (-1.6 Mean Rating: Lowest Parking Lot Image Rating)

- Parking structures that were disguised or integrated into adjoining structures or that incorporated active uses oriented to the street frontage, featured with visible trees and landscaping, and presented safe pedestrian access were rated as desirable. These findings provide a source of policy guidance. Encouraging mixed uses in conjunction with parking and concealing parking structures, in general, are supported over parking lots and over parking structures that lack landscaping and fail to incorporate design elements to conceal their purpose. Maintaining some measure of human scale in the design of parking structures is an important consideration.

Highest and Lowest Rated Parking Structure Images - Mean Ratings
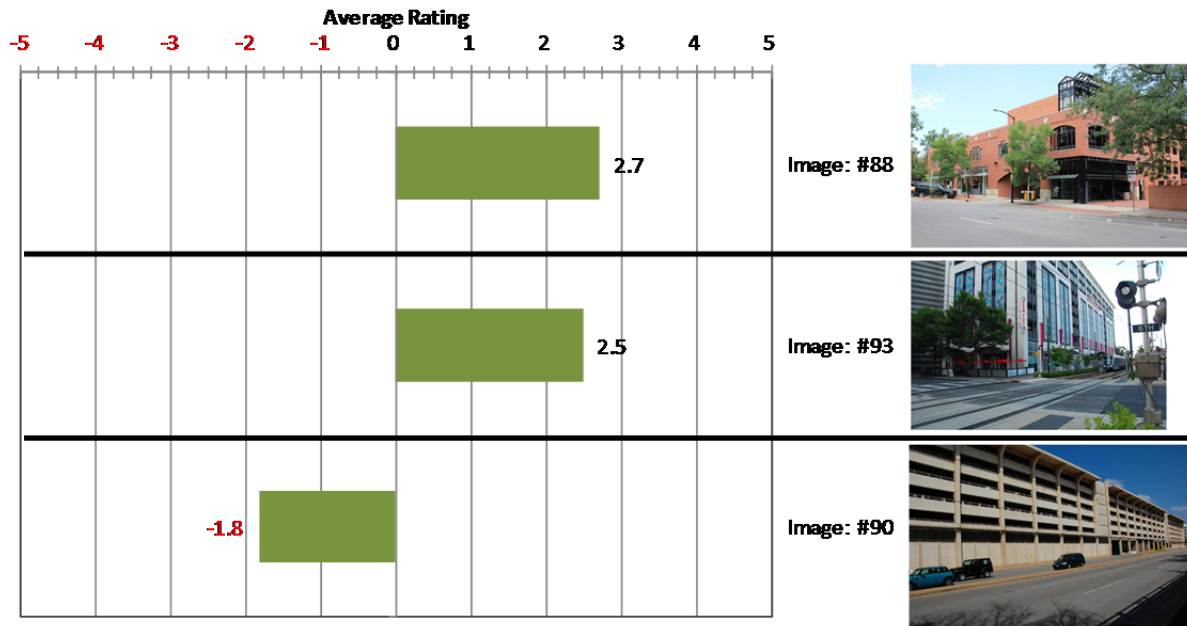
- Signs had the most negatively rated images overall, but some sign images were rated substantially more favorably than others. Sign scale, type, and the presence of landscaping and trees were the most significant factors associated with the level of desirability, with images depicting large and numerous signs receiving the lowest ratings. Images of pole and billboard signs were relatively undesirable, while images of monument and wall signs were more preferred. These findings may provide guidance and support for changes in sign codes and/or design guidelines.

Representative Sign Images for Most and Least Desirable - Mean Ratings

	Average Rating	
Image: #95	3.1	
Image: #104	1.4	
Image: #97	-2.2	
Image: #102	-3.4	
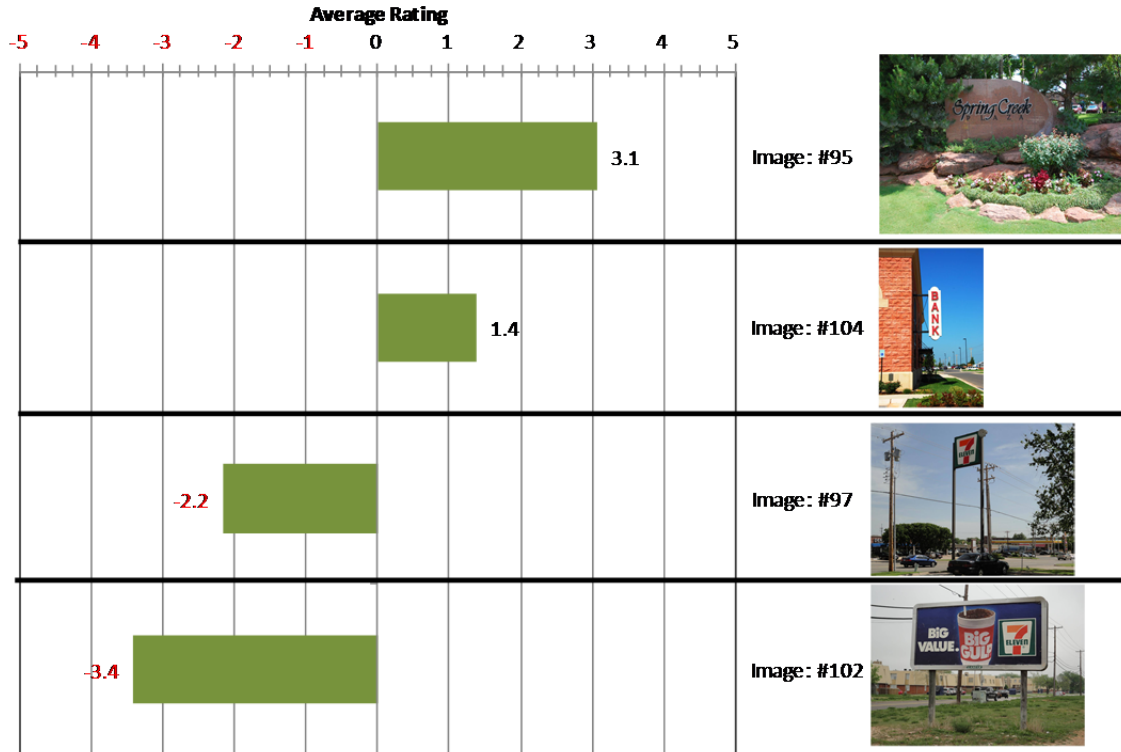
- Consistent with other trends, streets and streetscape images containing a prominent amount of trees and landscaping, and having pedestrian-friendly amenities such as sidewalks received the highest ratings overall. Streets with an abundance of utilities such as power lines and poles, strip commercial developments, and a dominant amount of asphalt were rated lowest by respondents.

Image 25 (3.5 Mean Rating: Highest Streets and Streetscapes Image Rating)

Image 27 (-3.7 Mean Rating: Lowest Streets and Streetscapes Image Rating)

- The most consistent themes within the open-ended comments for favorable designs of community character, verified by the high mean ratings, included providing opportunities for farmer's markets and community gardens, parks and open spaces, and a focus on pedestrian-oriented environment and amenities. The highest rated community character images reflected these themes.

Image 119 (2.9 Mean Rating)

Image 110 (3.7 Mean Rating)

Image 123 (3.6 Mean Rating)

Image 117 (3.3 Mean Rating)

Image 120 (2.9 Mean Rating)

Key Findings and Observations

The survey included an open-ended comment section that revealed preferences for certain reoccurring design themes or elements as well as highlighting certain concerns of issues that may need attention. These preferences were reinforced by the positive image ratings while the concerns were evidenced by images that received consistently low ratings. A variety of design issues and concerns received attention in the open-ended comments section of the survey. There was a direct correlation between many of the design issues raised in the open-ended comments and the image ratings. By combining selected comments with some of the images that triggered the comments, patterns of the most and least favorable design treatments begin to emerge. These patterns serve as the basis for the key findings and observations of this report.

Parking Lots

- Parking lots should be designed with a greater proportion of healthy and mature trees and landscaping as these images received consistently higher ratings than images with little or no landscaping. The image at right scored a 39 percent in positive ratings with 4 percent in negative ratings while the image below had 13 percent in positive ratings and 34 percent in negative ratings.

Respondent Comment
"TREES! Grass! These things, if kept well, make such a huge difference. Not only does it provide shade, but visual texture, dimension, and character. Please give us trees!!

Respondent Comment
"Landscaping makes all of the difference when it comes to parking lots. It's a pet peeve of mine when businesses make the parking lots look like a runway."

Signage

- Survey ratings for images with large or excessively tall or out of proportion signs were not favorably received. Conversely, smaller signs closer to the ground, in scale with the use, and buffered with appropriate landscaping were far more acceptable. The incorporation of natural materials in the design of signs was viewed as an attractive feature. This image is one of the top rated signs and received 67 percent in favorable ratings with 2 percent in unfavorable ratings.

Respondent Comment
"Smaller signs with natural materials, rock and brick, are best."

Images with signs that were viewed as being inordinately tall or out of scale and proportion with their settings were typically received unfavorable ratings. This image was in the middle of the pack in the ratings for sign images and scored 9 percent in favorable ratings and 38 percent in unfavorable ratings.
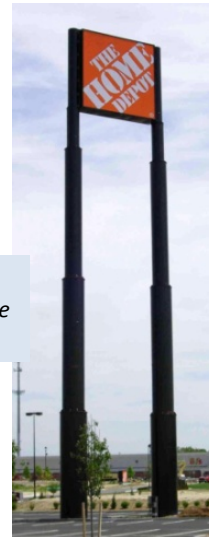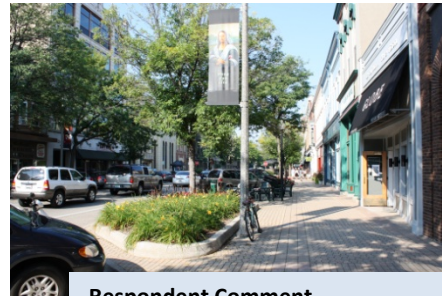
Respondent Comment
"Fewer big intrusive commercial signs in the skyline makes for a better place to live."

These sentiments would seem to indicate that there may be a need to reassess the City's sign regulations and consider addressing concerns over the size, number, and/or height of signs where appropriate.

Landscaping

- A desire for improved landscaping was a constant thread that ran through all the image categories. Sample ratings for well landscaped images such as these received 73 and 82 percent favorable ratings respectively against unfavorable ratings of just 1 and 2 percent.

  This indicates that, based on all the results found within the survey data, one of the most effective ways to improve the design and appearance of Oklahoma City is to incorporate more healthy trees into new developments and streetscapes. This may also suggest that efforts should be made to preserve as many existing mature trees in the design and construction of new developments.

Respondent Comment
"I love streets and neighborhoods with spacious roads and beautiful/peaceful/refreshing

Respondent Comment
"Walking space and greenery make all the difference."

Residential Garages

- Survey results indicated that images of single-family homes where the garage dominates the front facade of the home were less than desirable options for many survey respondents. This image received 27 percent in favorable ratings with 13 percent rating it unfavorably.

  The responses indicate strong support for more residential product with floor plan options that offer side-on garages, tuck back garages, or alley-loaded garages.

Respondent Comment
"Garages should be in the back of the house. This increases the chance that you will see your neighbor and interact with them."

Front Porches

- The presence of front porches on residential structures proved to be a popular feature that is reflected by the higher ratings for the single-family images that displayed that attribute. The most popular front porch images rated between 58 and 61 percent favorable ratings and only 1 to 2 percent unfavorable. Many responders commented on the need for shaded outdoor areas designed to offer space where they can interact and congregate with neighbors.

Respondent Comment
"Porches provide living spaces outside, away from sedentary living, and encourage more interaction with neighbors and nature."

Architectural Diversity

- Images of many single family-homes were called out as being "cookie cutter". Open ended comments associated with those images focused on the need for more diversity in residential architecture and more variety in colors and materials. Scores for these images ranged from favorable ratings of 30 to 33 percent and unfavorable rating of 7 t o16 percent.

Respondent Comment
"Contractors that develop housing additions should not be allowed to do 'cookie-cutter' housing. I understand it but more variety should be enforced."

Respondent Comment
"This home might be interesting on the inside, but that's only good for people who are here already. If we want to grow our community and not just make it prettier, we need to think about what people who aren't here would like."

Respondent Comment
"We need a unique and varied population to bring innovation to the community. We need to allow for different people who like different things."

- Images that showed residences that incorporated modern design themes or cottage style architecture were rated all rated in the top five images for the single-family residential category. These top five images ranged from 58 to 66 percent being rated favorably with only 1 to 6 percent rating them unfavorably.

Respondent Comment
"Oklahoma City housing is all the same style of 'French Country' type homes. In the process of looking for a new home and looking at modern and atomic ranch style homes. Finding that these don't stay on the market but a few days because people want something different."

This is an indication that there is a segment of the present population that would be interested in seeing a new and varied approach to the routine residential design repertoire.

- Comments on multi-family residential images focused on design quality and indicated concerns over the status quo in the typically bland design schemes. The image at right was one of the lowest scoring with 12 percent in favorable ratings and 26 percent in unfavorable ratings.

  The image below was the top rated image in this category and scored 50 percent favorable ratings with 4 in percent unfavorable ratings.

Respondent Comment
"Apartments should take advantage of their own density by being mixed-use settings with walkable configurations. In most OKC apartments, you have to live on top of your neighbor, drive even to the convenience store, and live in the middle of a parking lot."

Respondent Comment
"Beautiful because it has great colors and a great mix of bricks and wood materials."

More Diverse Product Types

- Image ratings in single-family and multi-family categories reflect support for on the lack of choice in residential product types and expressed a need for other options besides apartments. These images, both ranked in the top five of their image categories, rated 59 and 48 percent favorable ratings respectively with a 2 and 6 percent unfavorable rating. Support for more varied product types was found in some of the open-ended comments focused on a desire to have a broader spectrum of design options than available in the range of residential products presently available in Oklahoma City.

Respondent Comment
"I would like to see more duplexes and fourplexes scattered throughout neighborhoods."
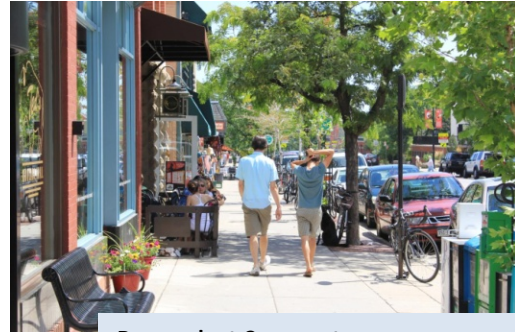

Respondent Comment
"There should be more mixed use and townhomes in OKC."

Streetscapes

- Generally speaking, streetscape images that included sidewalks separated from traffic lanes by parked vehicles, landscaped parkways (with or without trees), or some combination thereof, were widely praised as reflected in the image ratings.

  Images with pedestrian amenities (including wide sidewalks with ample room for pedestrians, having parked cars and street trees to separate the area from vehicular traffic, and other features such as benches, planters, and outdoor dining areas) received the most favorable ratings. The example at right received 79 percent favorable ratings with 1 percent in unfavorable ratings.

  Conversely, images without sidewalks, with sidewalks adjacent to the street curb, or with little or no landscaping were generally rated negatively. Overhead power lines were also a negative factor in many streetscape images. The image below received 2 percent in favorable ratings with 79 percent in unfavorable ratings.
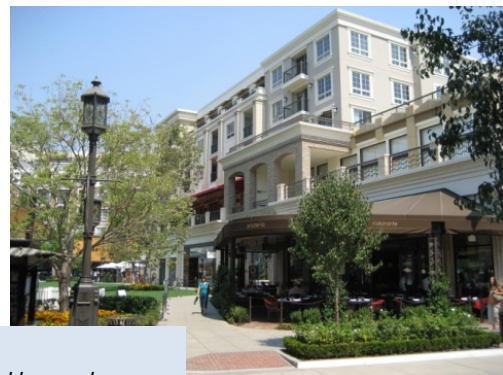

Respondent Comment
"Love it! There're benches for shoppers to rest, outdoor patios for people to eat, pretty colors, trees, flowers. This is so attractive. I would love to live in an area like that."

Respondent Comment
"This is an eyesore. The street looks new. So, the road was fixed up and the businesses were allowed to be utterly unattractive. This degrades the overall quality of the community."

Commercial Shopping and Dining

- The images that faired best in this category were typically commercial centers that incorporated ample landscaping combined with areas focused and designed to offer a pleasant walking environment or people-oriented gathering spots. A number of the highest rated images were in denser settings and incorporated a variety of land uses. This image was the highest rated in this category and received 82 percent in favorable ratings with just 2 percent in unfavorable ratings.

Respondent Comment
"Absolutely gorgeous and I would buy a place and live above those shops! That is absolutely what I wish Oklahoma City looked like."

The lowest rated images in this category displayed prominent areas dedicated to automobiles or parking lots along with no pedestrian orientatino and a significant lack of healthy and mature landscaping. This image is the lowest rated image in this category and received 15 percent in favorable ratings with 35 percent in unfavorable ratings.
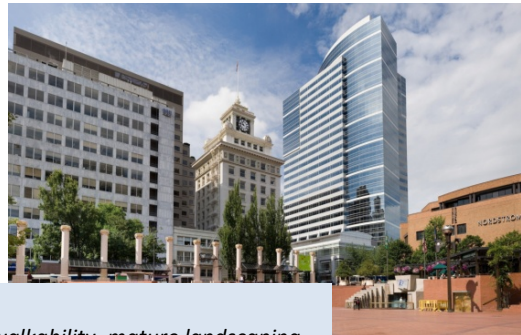

Respondent Comment
"No landscape installed to break up the monotony of the ugly parking lot. Would rather see parking behind and the stores up front and lots of trees and shrubs incorporated."

Commercial Office

- The images that proved most popular in this category embraced the retention and renovation of quality historic structures while equally supporting a more contemporary style of architecture for new structures. This image is the highest rated image in the category receiving 64 percent in favorable ratings and 3 percent in unfavorable ratings.
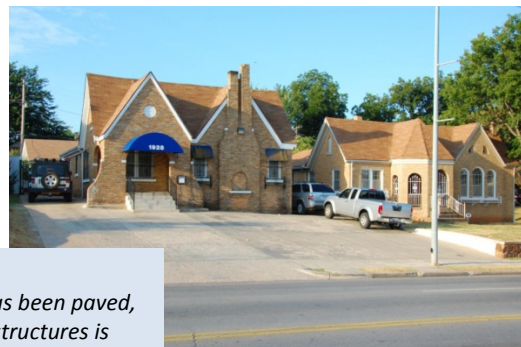

Respondent Comment
"(This image) has variety, walkability, mature landscaping, and has the feel of bustle. I like the integration of shopping, office and (I assume nearby lunch options."

Many respondents commented on the need to incorporate plazas for event space and informal gathering spots and to incorporate landscaping to soften. Others commented positively on images that included mixed-use, access to transit systems, or with an absence of visible parking.

- The conversion of residential homes to commercial offices along commercial corridors generated a wide range of opinions both pro and con. Images showing these types of conversions were rated at the bottom of this category. This image scored 9 percent in favorable ratings and 34 percent in undesirable ratings.

Respondent Comment
"I don't love that the entire yard has been paved, but overall, repurposing these old structures is much preferable to bulldozing them and replacing them with cookie cutter strip malls."

While some felt it was important to find ways to save these structures rather than having them torn down, many others expressed concerns over the lack of adequate parking and landscaping, inadequate or unsafe access, and excessive amounts of pavement.
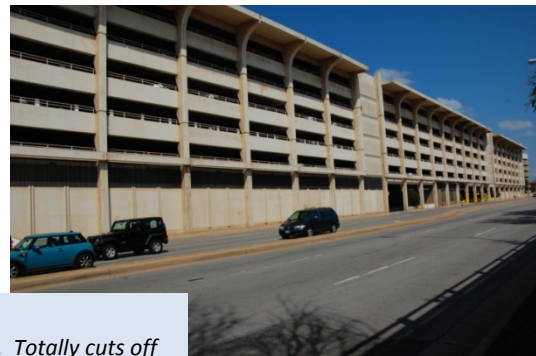
Parking Structures

- Image ratings indicate that respondents were appreciative of the efforts taken to provide architectural relief and detailing to parking structures to make them look less like parking structures and more like the buildings they offer parking for. The image at right received 60 percent in favorable ratings and 2 percent in unfavorable ratings making it the highest rated image in the category.

Respondent Comment
"You wouldn't even be able to tell it's a parking garage if it weren't for the caption. Parking garages should be attractively designed. Preferably with retail on the bottom floor."

Parking structures that included blank facades and offered no bearing or orientation to the adjacent street and no elements of human scale fared worse in the respondent ratings.   This image was the lowest rated image in the category scoring 7 percent in favorable ratings and 44 percent in unfavorable ratings.

Respondent Comment
"Worst parking structure ever. Totally cuts off CBD from EK Gaylord. No windows, no retail, just a monolithic street wall of concrete."

Preferences Based on Demographics and Geography

Age-Based Preferences

In some cases, there were marked differentiations in the reaction to certain images based on the image ratings from certain age cohorts of the survey respondents. Here are some of the more significant age-based differences:

<u>Younger respondents (in the 18 to 44 age range) were more likely to:</u>

Respondent Comment
"Eclectic modern homes of the right size and proportion are very attractive."

- Prefer single-family residences with a more contemporary architectural style.

- Prefer multi-family residences in a dense urban format provided that they are well-maintained, and that there are ample trees and parks or open spaces nearby.

Respondent Comment
"More residential towers like this within Bricktown, Midtown and along the I-235 corridor between Downtown and I-44 would be a very huge step for this city."

- Prefer mid-rise or high rise office development with contemporary architecture with hidden parking lots or on-street parking in a higher proportion than other age groups.

- Be less tolerant of strip commercial style developments than other age groups.

Respondent Comment
"Walkable shopping/living areas are very much needed in OKC! No more strip malls please."

- Have more extreme opinions on what types of signs were acceptable or unacceptable in offering more pronounced positive or negative ratings than other age cohorts.

- Favor the inclusion of multi-family residential as a desirable component of community character.

- Prefer streetscapes with wide sidewalks and pedestrian amenities such as street trees and street furniture.
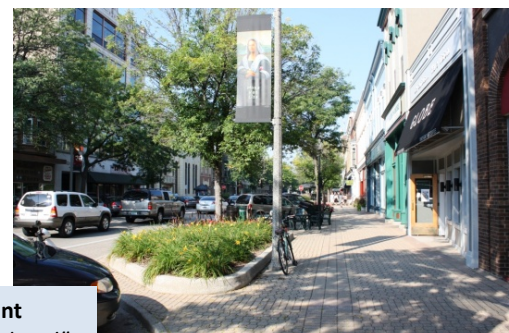
Respondent Comment
"Sigh. Let's all move there!"

- Desire single family residences on smaller lots with multiple stories, front porches, and hidden or detached garages.

Respondent Comment
"The front porch is an important element for building community and should really be encouraged as much as possible with builders."

<u>Older survey respondents (from age 55 to 75+) were more inclined to:</u>

- Favor wider streets with no parking and less pedestrian activity over denser, more urban streetscapes that include on-street parking and more pedestrian amenities.

Respondent Comment
"Any place where walking is encouraged and realistic is great!!!"

- Prefer the more traditional architectural styles of single-family residential architecture prominent in Oklahoma City.

- Support strip center style commercial development.

Respondent Comment
"Love the overhung walkway, cute design of building. Different businesses, all with different signage, yet it presents a unified, 'together' look."

- Prefer the more traditional types of architecture in commercial office design.

Respondent Comment
"I love this image because it is a renewed old building, I am a huge supporter of renewal and preservation rather than demolish and rebuild."
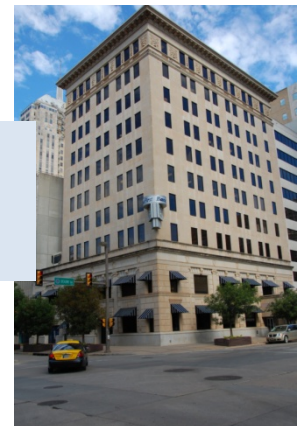
- Rate taller commercial office buildings with on-street parking lower than strip commercial developments.

Location-Based Preferences

Other survey responses demonstrated a divergence of opinion on images in various categories based upon where respondents they live. Among the more significant rating differences based on location of the respondents are:

- Lower ratings for standard single-family detached residential housing stock from respondents in the Downtown and Center geographic sub-areas than ratings from other survey sub-areas.

> **Respondent Comment**
> *"Too much concrete in front of house having to accommodate for three garages."*

- Respondents from the Downtown and Central geographic sub-areas were more likely to have more extreme reactions in their positive and negative ratings for multi-family residential product types, strongly favoring more vertical, mixed use options over standard two- and three-story style apartment developments.

> **Respondent Comment**
> *"Residences above retail: always good. Classic."*

- Respondents in the Downtown sub-area consistently rated lower density commercial office images much lower than ratings from other sub-areas.

> **Respondent Comment**
> *"Buildings should look like the use they are built for. Very strongly dislike office parks with single-family home style buildings, it makes every building look the same."*

- Street and streetscape images that indicated the presence of alternative modes of transportation and pedestrian-oriented development received higher ratings while rating with only sidewalks were rated significantly lower than respondents from any other sub-area.
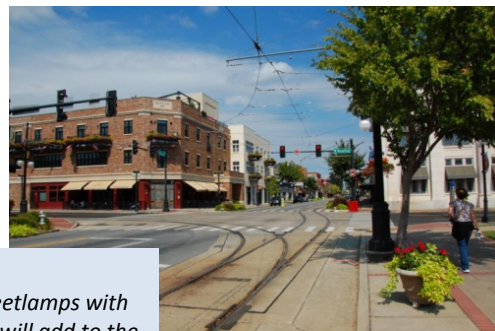
> **Respondent Comment**
> *"Streetcars, pedestrian passages, streetlamps with historical character and bicycle lanes will add to the appeal of our city and, entice population back to the inner city areas and reduce urban sprawl."*

CATEGORY SPECIFIC TRENDS

SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

All single-family residential images, except for Image 66, were rated positively. Differences of opinion were apparent when evaluated by sub-area/neighborhood and by respondent's age. Furthermore, images with identifiable attributes described below received much higher ratings than others.

Image 66 (-0.04 Mean Rating)

- Respondents tended to rate images with visible and/or mature landscaping much higher than images with sparse or no landscaping. Also, none of the top rated images had a prominent front-facing garage, large setback, or a steep roof. Further, none of the lowest rated images had a front porch or siding (wood or otherwise); and several were built of brick, suggesting a relatively negative perception of brick.

Image 62 (2.8 Mean Rating)

- Some geographic sub-areas within Oklahoma City rated single-family residential images much higher than others, which suggest preference differences explained in part by neighborhood. For example, while the Downtown and Central sub-areas rated the majority of single-family residential images positively, their ratings were consistently lower than other geographic sub-areas. This indicates that the Downtown and Central sub-areas have a lower preference for single-family housing, especially single-family housing with large lots and setbacks, and front-facing garages.

Image 60 (2.6 Mean Rating)

- Respondents in younger age groups were much more likely to prefer single-family dwellings with more contemporary architecture, smaller lots, and reduced setbacks. Older populations rated single-family images with front facing garages much higher than their younger counterparts.

Single-Family Residential - Example Comments

- *I love front porches! — Image 62: Big porch! — Porches, yes! — Residential architecture has shifted from public socializing on the front porch to private parties in the back yard. The front porch is an important element for building community and should really be encouraged as much as possible with builders. — I love the big porch on Image 62.*

- *Still need more trees. — Image 60: love the footprint and landscape. — More landscaping with trees. — They need some mature foliage. — Needs a little more in the way of trees.*

- *Garages in the front make me depressed. — Hate houses that are all garage. — Image 59 is a garage with an attached home. — Hate it when the garage door is the predominant design element. — Hate the garages on the front. — Image 59: Is an example of a drab monotonous subdivision garage. I mean house. There is a house attached to that garage right?*

Image 59 (0.8 Mean Rating)

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

The majority of the multi-family residential images received positive ratings, though they are consistently lower than those given to single-family residential images. Additionally, there were several traditional and/or unkempt multi-family residential images that were rated negatively.

Segmentation among the different geographic sub-areas and age groups shows various preferences for the design and appearance of multi-family residential developments, indicating the presence of niche markets for certain types of multi-family housing.

- Some of the most noteworthy findings from the multi-family residential image ratings were similar to single-family residential images. Multi-family residential images with the highest ratings all had visible and/or mature landscaping, trees, and non-visible parking. Furthermore, pedestrian-friendly amenities such as sidewalks and bike lanes were also associated with the highest rated multi-family residential images (none of the lowest rated images had any of these attributes).

- Generally, there was agreement between both the geographic sub-areas and the age groups regarding which multi-family residential images were preferred and which were not preferred. However, some sub-areas rated certain multi-family residential images more positively or more negatively than others. For example, the Central and Downtown sub-areas consistently rated most of the multi-family residential images with higher or lower scores as compared to other sub-areas, indicating residents in these areas have stronger opinions regarding multi-family residential design.

Image 75 (2.0 Mean Rating)

- Age was an even stronger indicator of how desirable or undesirable multi-family residential images were to respondents. While all age groups agreed on whether an image was positively or negatively received, younger age cohorts tended to rate multi-family residential images most favorably or most unfavorably depending on the image.

- Similar to the findings regarding single-family images, the geography and age of respondents help to explain differences in ratings. Based on the overall survey results including the open-ended comments, younger respondents and those living in the Downtown or Central sub-areas seem particularly receptive to multi-family residential housing as long as that housing has trees, parks and open spaces, and is maintained well. A mixed-use setting and mid-rise/high-rise structures were also preferable to these groups.
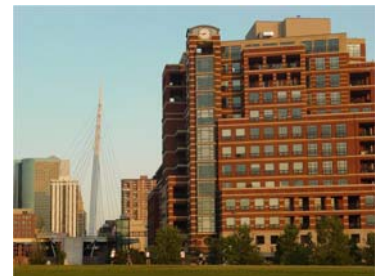
Multi-Family Residential - Example Comments

- *Image 67 is beautiful because it has great colors and a great mixture of bricks and wood materials.*

- *Image 81: They forgot to landscape. Very cold and plain. — Image 80 is great, especially if there is hidden' parking.*

Image 67 (2.1 Mean Rating)

Image 81 (-0.6 Mean Rating)

Image 80 (2.2 Mean Rating)

- *Run down and old apartments just need to go! — No place looks good if it is old, run-down, and in disrepair. — Image 79: cheap construction. — Image 77 is very dated, dirty, and unkempt looking. — Image 74: needs landscaping. — Need more trees (Image 74).*

- *Image 79: ALL GARAGE! — Image 79: I can't stand homes that have the garage as the focal point. — I don't like garages facing the street as if they are the most important feature of a building.*

Image 79 (-1.6 Mean Rating)	Image 77 (-2.9 Mean Rating)	Image 74 (-1.5 Mean Rating)

- *I like Image 78 because it looks dimensional and has a variety of different colors and bricks.*

- *Trees, greenery, brickwork and color schemes make desirability increase. — Image 75: Love the big park by the residences. — Image 75: Large multi-family units need parks and other areas to be active.*

Image 78 (2.1 Mean Rating)	Image 75 (2.0 Mean Rating)

COMMERCIAL SHOPPING AND DINING

Certain aspects of commercial shopping and dining were universally preferred by all age groups and geographic areas, though differences in the strength of opinions were evident when evaluated by these sub-categories.

- Commercial shopping and dining images which were pedestrian friendly, had space for people to relax, provided a protected sidewalk, and a mixed-use functionality were rated highest overall.

Image 2 (3.7 Mean Rating)

- Commercial shopping and dining had more variety in average ratings between the different age cohorts. While older age cohorts did not rate strip commercial developments with large parking lots very high (see Image 3 below), they did rate these types of commercial developments moderately higher than younger age groups. Younger age groups clearly rated strip commercial development negatively. Younger age cohorts rated taller commercial buildings with street-side parking much more positively than older age groups.

- The Downtown and Central sub-areas differed substantially from the other geographic areas when rating big box stores for commercial shopping and dining. The Downtown and Central sub-areas strongly opposed big box stores while other geographic sub-areas indicated higher acceptance for these types of shopping configurations.

Commercial Shopping and Dining - Example Comments

- *I like the greenery. — Image 10: reminds me of a small town with the decorations hanging across the street. The plants and flowers make it look interesting and inviting. — I like the landscaping in Image 2, walkability, & scenery. — I like the fountain and town center feel of Image 4. — Trees a plus. Lack of 'cheap' advertising a major influence. Absence of visible cars enhances image. — I particularly like the trees and foliage in Image 2.*

Image 10 (2.2 Mean Rating)

Image 4 (2.7 Mean Rating)

- *Want a more pedestrian-friendly and calming, urban-friendly design. — I much prefer pedestrian friendly shopping and dining, that is close to living space. — The first two images are desirable because of their walking accessibility. — I would prefer a center where you park and walk around the shopping center to access many different stores.*

- *I don't like parallel parking. — Street parking I don't like, should be diagonal parking. — I hate strip centers. — The less strip mall, the better. — Strip malls do not send the message that OKC is in a league with the more desirable communities. — Oklahoma City should phase out strip malls as much as possible. — Parking lots should go in the back of shopping centers and the facades should be right up on the street with little to no setback. — Image 3: Hate strip malls.*

Image 3 (-0.8 Mean Rating)

COMMERCIAL OFFICE

Desirable/undesirable attributes and open-ended comments for commercial office images were similar to the commercial shopping and dining results in that they each indicated preferences for pedestrian-oriented development and opposition to strip mall configurations.

- The top rated commercial office images generally did not show visible parking, low-rise buildings, or large setbacks. In contrast, most of the lowest rated commercial office images had an integrated parking lot, a lack of retail opportunities, were low-rise and had parking lots between the building and the street, and no on-street parking.

Image 19 (2.6 Mean Rating)

Image 12 (2.7 Mean Rating)

- Within the open-ended comments, many respondents indicated a preference for a mixture of historical and modern buildings.

- Also similar to commercial shopping and dining results, respondents living in the Downtown and Central sub-areas rated taller and more pedestrian-oriented commercial office images much higher than respondents from any other geographic sub-area. These results should not be surprising. Current residents of areas with more urban land uses are more favorably oriented toward these development patterns.

- As with the commercial shopping and dining, older age groups rated commercial office images with parking lots, low-rise/strip mall, and more automobile oriented opportunities higher than younger age groups. Younger respondents rated mid-rise buildings with more contemporary style architecture and on-street parking or hidden parking higher than older respondents.

Commercial Office - Example Comments

- *I like a mix of historic and modern properties. — I love the pictures mixed history with modern structures. It also seems pedestrian friendly. — We tore down so many of our 'classically styled' (like Image 19) buildings in the 60s. I wish we could build more to replace them. — Historic buildings always a plus. —Image 12: We need more modern looking buildings downtown. — Like the more modern look but still like the historic value. —I liked the old buildings 1900-1940's with different style architecture and work by different crafts and trades. — I appreciate modern renovation of old office buildings; I do not care for the rezoning of what were clearly meant to be residential homes as office buildings. — Image 12: I like the mix of historic and modern architecture.*

- *I like the look of Image 12, but none of these commercial spaces have enough green to them. — Too much concrete in Image 13. — When possible, green space and trees should be required. Big shopping areas can be 'hidden' by trees. — Parking should be behind buildings or in garages. — Image 13 is unattractive because of the bars on the windows and so much concrete.*

Image 13 (-1.1 Mean Rating)

PARKING LOTS

Generally, parking lots did not receive high ratings. However, there were definable differences in ratings of the six parking lot images; four received positive average ratings and two images were negatively scored.

- The most obvious difference between the parking lot images that were positively rated and the parking lot images negatively rated was the presence and quality of landscaping. Parking lot images with landscaping and visual breaks in the asphalt earned higher ratings, while parking lot images with little or no landscaping received the lowest ratings.

Image 85 (1.8 Mean Rating)

Image 86 (-1.6 Mean Rating)

- There was general agreement not only between different age groups but between the different geographic sub-areas in regards to which parking lots were preferred to those not preferred. All age groups and sub-areas rated parking lots with visible and healthy landscaping, pedestrian pathways, and visual breaks in the asphalt much more positively than parking lots that lacked these features.

Parking Lots - Example Comments

- *Image 87: I like that it's a little offset from the road and has trees. — Image 85: Nice trees. —TREES! Grass! These things, if kept well, make such a huge difference. Not only does it provide shade, but visual texture, dimension, and character. Please give us trees!! — Some shrubbery around a parking lot improves the looks. — Tress, trees, trees. — Image 84: Landscaping makes all of the difference when it comes to parking lots. It's a pet peeve of mine when businesses make the parking lots look like a runway. — Image 84: the only way you can make an ugly parking lot look reasonable is with*

Image 87 (1.3 Mean Rating)

trees! — Image 84: I lived in Austin prior to moving to OKC, I think the ordinance there was a tree every 11 parking spaces. It was tricky planning sometimes but it looked so much better than the sea of blacktop. — Parking lots in OKC need trees and grass! They help mitigate the wind and keep them from becoming such heat sinks (and night time heat generators) during the summers. — Needs landscaping!!!

- *Image 84: The spaces are too narrow, and lanes and one-ways are confusing. — Image 84: The third picture is from French Market Mall on NW 63 and May. It is the worst parking lot in OKC. The lanes are much too narrow as are the spaces. After having my car hit the third time, I no longer shop here. — Image 84: Sea of asphalt! Yuk — Image 84: The asphalt desert. — Image 84: We hate Bed Bath and Beyond parking lot. Worst in OKC. Spaces and isles are too small for safe maneuvering. — Parking lot Image 84 is configured so terribly*

Image 84 (-1.1 Mean Rating)

that I avoid that area just because of the tight parking. — Image 84: The ingress/egress is awful, the lanes are too narrow and the spots too small.

PARKING STRUCTURES

Parking structure images generally had more positive reactions than parking lot images, which suggests a preference for parking structures over parking lots. There was some variability in how certain parking structures were rated, however. Additionally, there was general agreement between respondents from all of the City's evaluated sub-areas and only modest disagreement between the different age groups.

- Similar to commercial shopping and dining, as well as streets and streetscapes, parking structure images that provided evidence of pedestrian-friendly access showed higher desirability than parking structures with no pedestrian access. Buildings that do not resemble obvious parking structures and are designed to look like mixed-use structures were rated consistently more favorably.

Image 88 (2.7 Mean Rating)

- Parking structures characterized by numerous, mature, healthy trees were also rated high.

- Parking structures lacking sidewalks, street trees, and which were poorly maintained rated least favorable.

Parking Structures - Example Comments

- *Image 88: I would not have known that it was a parking structure. — You wouldn't even be able to tell it's a parking garage if it weren't for the caption (Image 88). — I would never have known they were parking garages if I didn't have the annotation at the bottom of the photo. Very nice. — None of these resemble a parking garage which I like!*

- *Image 93: I like the multi use of space. — Bottom floors of parking garages are GREAT space for retail to bring street life. — Parking garages should be attractively designed. Preferably with retail on the bottom floor. — That Santa Fe garage in Image 90 is an absolute eyesore for so many reasons. Awful first floor; no clear sidewalk; poorly-maintained upper walls, drab beige look.*

- *Landscaping softens the austerity of all the samples. Image 94: The trees soften the appearance. — Image 90: still need more trees — Image 90: No landscape - busy street to pull out on - too close to street.*

Image 93 (2.5 Mean Rating)

Image 90 (-1.8 Mean Rating)

- *Provide plenty of sight lines for pedestrians at entrances and exits. — Image 88: It's an urban, walkable, retail area first, parking 2nd. — Image 90: There is no pedestrian access.*

SIGNS

Sign images had the lowest average ratings overall. Some sign images were distinctly preferred while several others were clearly undesirable. There was general agreement regarding the preferences on signage, either positive or negative, between the different age groups and only modest differences between the geographic sub-areas.

- The attributes most closely linked to preferred sign images include the scale of signs being in proportion to their environment, healthy landscaping, low sign heights, and either wall-mounted or monument types of signage. Conversely, attributes of the least desirable signs, based on the survey results and open-ended comments, included sign scale out of proportion to its environment, billboard or pole types of signage, and little to no trees or landscaping.

Image 95 (3.1 Mean Rating)

- Generally speaking, younger respondents as a group rated most sign images as either the highest or the lowest as compared to respondents in other age cohorts. This suggests that they may have stronger opinions on the design and appearance of signs.

- An evaluation of the open-ended comments revealed preferences for historical and unique signs, natural materials, and appropriately spaced and sized signage.

Signs - Example Comments

- *Image 95: Nice and low so it doesn't block other things. Also love the stone and landscaping. — Image 95: Has nice landscaping. — The Qdoba image is legible, has a good size, blends in with the building style without being off putting. Perfect. — I much prefer the on-the-building signs.*

- *Image 106: Has an 'old school' charm. — Image 106: It is such a classic. A little neon is OK, a little excess is OK. So, leave it all at COW!! — Image 104: This bank in Edmond is on a busy street and it works great. It's a more historic design. Plain and simple. — Image 104 is very pretty and clean.*

Image 106 (2.5 Mean Rating)

Image 104 (1.4 Mean Rating)

- *Image 106 shows streetlight with too much glare. Lamps should be shaded so light extends downward instead of all directions. — The changing neon sign like Image 99 is terrible especially at night--the light pollution is bad, you can always see it, it's a distraction and in an odd location. — Signs you can see from the moon are undesirable. — Not a huge fan of neon.*

Image 99 (-1.7 Mean Rating)

Image 97 (-2.2 Mean Rating)

Image 102 (-3.4 Mean Rating)

- *Image 97: Too tall. — Image 102: Big and run down looking. — Billboards- big and ugly! — Image 102: Billboards are for highways only, not over cluttered roads. — Image 99: Sign is completely out of place in this setting. — Image 105: Too big. — Image 105: too tall, too plain, too obtrusive. — Despise billboards. I think they're tacky and screw up the landscape. — Get the commercial signs out of my skyline!!! I want to look at the sky, not some nonsense! — No more out of scale signs. — I so wish OKC had a height ordinance that restricts signs of all sorts, including billboards.*

Image 105 (-2.9 Mean Rating)

STREETS AND STREETSCAPES

The street and streetscape images received ratings that suggest a clear ranking of preference. Certain attributes were definitively associated with the highest rated images and certain attributes were associated with the lowest rated images. While all age groups agreed over whether the street and streetscape images were desirable or undesirable overall, the strength of the ratings varied between the different age cohorts. Additionally, responses from the Downtown sub-areas differed considerably from the other geographic sub-areas.

- Consistent with the trend in other categories, street and streetscape images with prominent landscaping and trees, wide/protected sidewalks, and non-visible parking were associated more often with desirable ratings than undesirable ratings.

- Streets and streetscapes that received the lowest ratings tended to have visible utility infrastructure such as power lines and poles, signage, parking lots between buildings and streets, a dominant amount of asphalt, sparse or no landscaping or trees, and narrow or no sidewalks. None of the top rated images had any of these characteristics.

- Younger age groups reported a stronger level of support for street images with visibly wide sidewalks, trees, street furniture, and more pedestrian friendly amenities overall, whereas older age groups gave relatively higher ratings to images with wide streets with less evidence of pedestrian activity.

- Respondents from the Downtown sub-area were much more critical of some of the streets and streetscape images. Respondents from Downtown tended to positively rate images showing protected sidewalks, visible landscaping, trees, and street furniture, multi-modal options, and those within a mixed-use community.

Streets and Streetscapes - Example Comments

Image 25 (3.5 Mean Rating)

- *Trees!! Tall, tall trees make a street look cozy, shady, comfortable, and classy. We need them everywhere! — Green and trees. Yes! — Image 25: trees and sidewalks are great. — Pedestrian and bike friendly. Lovely tree, landscaping and street character. — Image 36: Ugh, too many high signs but I love the lamps and trees. — Image 44: what a lot of OKC looked like in '65 moved here and need curb plantings even though the property is undeveloped. At least trees. — Image 44: looks very barren. Need mature trees and landscaping.*

Image 36 (-1.9 Mean Rating)

- *Walkability is a must have. — Image 25 gives you the presence of people and interaction with stores. The landscape/benches/bicycle availability is really warm. — Image 25 community minded design with benches and place for bikes and pedestrians. — Image 37: OKC definitely needs sidewalks and bike lanes!!! — Image 37 has huge appeal! Love the sidewalks, biking, the cool setup for the driving areas. — Image 28: Need better Bike trails. — Image 37 has wonderful, safe bicycle lanes! — Image 37 is great since it provides for alternative transportation with discernible bike lanes. — Image 37: We Need BIKE LANES!!!!!!!*

Image 44 (-1.5 Mean Rating)

Image 37 (2.7 Mean Rating)

Image 28 (2.8 Mean Rating)

Too many power lines, signs and power poles. — Image 36: At least there are some trees/green and light poles that are above-average. I know the center turn lanes increase traffic mobility, but they are dangerous, allow random, irregular curb cuts, are ugly (look how hideously WIDE that street is!). If you need left turn lanes, build a LANDSCAPED median with dedicated, regular turn lanes. I know it's more expensive, but it really makes a world of difference.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

All of the community character images received positive mean rating scores, yet some images received much higher ratings than others. Differences between responses from the various geographic sub-areas were not substantial and only minor differences between the different age groups were evident.

- Attributes associated with many of the highest rated community character images consisted of more pedestrian-oriented settings with no visible parking. None of the lowest rated community character images appeared to have pedestrian-friendly amenities. This suggests that fostering designs to promote walkability and social interaction are important to Oklahoma City residents.

- Consistent with previously described results, age group analyses revealed that younger respondents tended to have stronger opinions on the desirability of certain aspects of community character than older respondents. The most evident included multi-family residential housing.

- Examining the open-ended comments, there was resistance to some images that had multi-family residential housing. There was, however, strong support for providing farmer's markets and parks and recreation / open spaces.

Community Character - Example Comments

- *I wish American cities had more pedestrian-only streets. Heaven forbid we hinder the automobile! — In Image 119 I love the pedestrian focus and in Image 120, community gardens are very needed in OKC! — Image 118. Would rate this higher but too much asphalt in front – would be better to have an alley or back-parking. — The only problem with Image 121 is a lack of sidewalks.*

Image 119 (2.9 Mean Rating)

Image 120 (2.9 Mean Rating)

Image 118 (0.7 Mean Rating)

Image 121 (1.0 Mean Rating)

- *Image 111: Rather than the Lowes superstructure, I would rather find a neighborhood hardware store within a half mile of my home. — Image 111: should have planted larger trees.*

Image 111 (0.5 Mean Rating)

- *Parks and open space are of great community identity. — Image pro-active community. Very good. of neighborhood parks in OKC is great. Every neighborhood should mile squares. Make easy for kids sidewalks to parks. — Image 122: some street trees.*

value to neighborhood and 120: -Community garden means — The nearly complete absence shameful. — Image 117: Parks have one or have one for every 5 to ride bikes or walk by using The old brick houses just need

Image 122 (1.1 Mean Rating)

Image 117 (3.3 Mean Rating)

- *Image 110: I would love an open market or a good looking complex nearby. — Image 110: I would LOVE to have a farmer's market 1/2 mile of my neighborhood! — 123. All of that. Everywhere. Yes. — Image 110: Access to a farmers is a positive addition to any community.*

within a Image Yes.. YES. market

Image 110 (3.7 Mean Rating)

- *Image 124: I would not mind apartment complexes, if kept well maintained. More outdoor would be so nice and the landscaping is very well done with around the mature trees (which provide perfect shade for the — I do not want apartments near my home. — When I think neighborhood, I don't necessarily treasure condos, duplexes or apartments. — I would not want multi-family dwellings neighborhood, no matter how attractive the complex is.*

seating building summer). of my

around my

Image 124 (0.1 Mean Rating)

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Policies in the comprehensive plan can guide future development to better reflect the community's preferences for design as reflected by the input received through the survey. The extent to which input from this survey is assessed and converted into policy and the inclusion of those appropriate design policies into the proposed comprehensive plan update could help to address many of the concerns expressed by the survey respondents.

In addition, developers might expect to receive greater returns by offering products and product types designed in accordance with prevailing community desires. Development projects incorporating design features favored by the community would likely generate greater interest in the products. The resulting buildings and neighborhoods would also improve community appearance, increase diversity of design, and offer a wider range of options to citizens. Signs that are less visually obtrusive and street improvements designed to offer protected pedestrian activity and accommodate access for cyclists and alternate transportation modes are urban design feature that would appear favorable to a majority of the survey respondents. Improved landscaping and landscape maintenance is a recurring theme that affected all image categories.

Based on the input derived from the Community Appearance Survey, including an analysis of the image ratings and review of the open-ended comments, the following design considerations are supported by the community, and should be considered for inclusion as policy statements in plan**okc** to direct future development proposals.

Single-Family Residential
- Introduce more floor plans that include front porches.
- Offer more variation in the location and/or orientation of garages in the design of single-family homes to reduce the prominence of garage doors at the front elevation.
- Design more neighborhoods to include smaller front yard setbacks.
- Consider new product types that are well suited for smaller lot sizes.
- Reduce the dependence of steeply pitched roofs.
- Introduce more varied architectural styles and design treatments to single-family residential dwelling units to avoid monotony and offer more variety.
- Design residential subdivisions to accommodate more street trees and sidewalks that are separated from street curbs by a parkway.

Multi-Family Residential
- Incorporate more pedestrian-oriented elements, such as wider sidewalks and/or sidewalks that are physically separated from adjacent roadways.
- Increase street tree plantings within and around multi-family developments.
- Integrate more neighborhood oriented parks, open space, and recreation areas within multi-family developments.
- Introduce more variety and diversity in the architectural design of multi-family residential dwelling units incorporating more variation in materials and colors.
- Develop more mid-rise multi-family dwelling projects in the Downtown and Central sub-areas and consider integrating mixed use as part of the project.
- Offer more in the way of covered, structured, or enclosed parking.

Commercial Shopping and Dining

- Design commercial developments to facilitate convenient pedestrian access and integrate more pedestrian-oriented amenities such as wider sidewalks, benches, and gathering places.
- Enact new standards that require alternative designs for strip commercial development projects that include more landscaping, enhanced architectural design, parking lots in the rear of the site, and improved pedestrian orientation.
- Incorporate a mix of land uses into commercial developments as a means to facilitate easy access to a variety of land uses by modes other than the automobile.

Commercial Office

- Support historic preservation efforts and allow for the continued intermingling of well-maintained historic office buildings with more contemporary office structures.
- Contemporary architectural treatments should be employed in the design of new office developments where it does not conflict with design district design guidelines.
- Establish new standards to restrict the conversion of existing residences to office uses unless parking and access can be addressed without paving front yards and appropriate landscaping is included.

Parking Lots

- Incorporate safe and attractive pedestrian pathways in the design of larger scale parking lots.
- Screen direct views of parking lots by including enhanced boundary landscape treatments that can incorporate a mix of berming, landscaping, and low walls or fences.
- Design parking lots with more internal landscaping with appropriately spaced trees and visual breaks in large asphalt or concrete expanses.
- Where scale of the use is appropriate, design parking lots away from streets and generally out of view by altering site plans to place buildings in front.

Parking Structures

- Design parking structures to be integrated with surrounding structures that they serve.
- Use appropriate architectural treatments to disguise parking structures to look less like parking structures and more like the buildings on site or surrounding the site.
- Incorporate active uses on the first floor into the design of parking structures with have direct sidewalk access or street frontage.
- Provide ample landscape buffering/screening at the base of parking structures.

Signs

- Enact standards to better manage the number, size, and height of signs assuring that signs are in proportion with the setting, site and surrounding buildings and uses.
- Design signs to incorporate more natural elements and improved landscaping.
- Adopt standards that will enhance the appearance of billboard signs, require better maintenance, and limit the erection of new billboards.
- Develop standards to require a coordinated sign program for multi-tenant commercial centers as a means to minimize clutter and emphasize aesthetic continuity.
- Change current standards to focus on monument signs over pole signs with exceptions as may be necessary to address highway sign orientation.

Streetscapes

- Design streetscapes to better facilitate pedestrian access and improve safety with wider sidewalk widths and with parkways, including street trees, to separate sidewalks from adjacent streets.
- Integrate more landscaping into the design of streetscapes.

- Ensure that streetscape designs resolve any conflicts between landscape plantings and utility lines.
- In dense business areas, integrate decorative planters and street furniture such as benches into sidewalk alignments to promote greater pedestrian activity.

Community Character
- Include space to accommodate facilities or areas that promote community-level social interaction (e.g. farmers markets, community gardens, neighborhood parks, and other types of gathering places) in site plan design and land use planning.
- Hide or otherwise screen surface parking lots to the extent feasible (given context and setting) by placing them out of view, screening them with landscaping, or putting parking stalls in well-designed parking structures.
- Incorporate more landscaping in all commercial and residential developments.
- Design projects to be less auto-centric by including accommodations and facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Multi-family developments must be properly integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods and well maintained in order to be a welcomed element of community character.