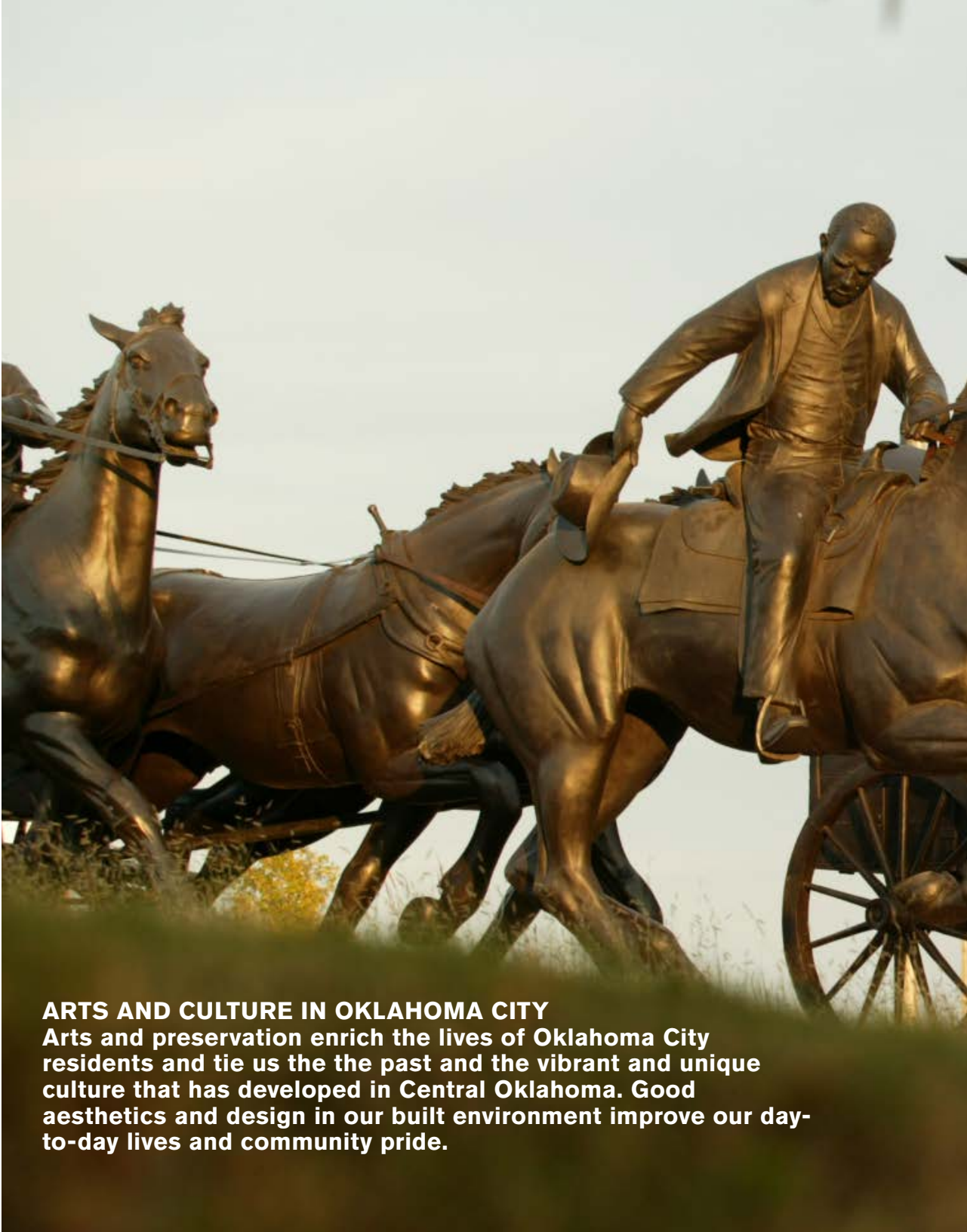




enrichokc
preservation | appearance | culture

Our Situation 222
 Preservation of Buildings 223
 Community Appearance 224
 The Urban Landscape 224
 Heritage and Culture 224
 Urban Design 225
Our Plan. 227
Our Initiatives. 227
Our Goals 227



ARTS AND CULTURE IN OKLAHOMA CITY
Arts and preservation enrich the lives of Oklahoma City residents and tie us the the past and the vibrant and unique culture that has developed in Central Oklahoma. Good aesthetics and design in our built environment improve our day-to-day lives and community pride.





Our Situation

The traditional elements of our comprehensive plan guide how the city grows, uses land, provides transportation access and services to its citizens, maintains a safe environment, and sustains itself economically. But great cities go beyond these basic systems by elevating the lives of their residents and visitors. Their physical environments integrate the stories and markers of the city's history into contemporary development. Their arts and cultural environments advance individual and regional creativity and expression, while offering the larger global cultural context. In short, great cities enrich, enthuse, and invigorate their citizens through their character and culture. They introduce a high level of meaning and delight into the experience of city living.

Once, people viewed the appearance and design of cities and their arts and cultural lives as luxuries, secondary to the real business of economic growth. But the urban experience has taught us otherwise. An attractive city provides opportunities that expand people's horizons, encourages conviviality and a sense of common destiny, advances creativity, and creates happier citizens. And happy people are invariably more productive. These

attributes also make cities more successful by attracting new residents, retaining existing citizens, and igniting the creativity of both. Indeed, strong commitments to community design and arts and culture efforts are fundamentally investments in the economy of the city.

Oklahoma City has recognized these lessons over the years. Its long tradition of building great community places and supporting its arts, historical, cultural institutions attests to a commitment to enriching the lives of citizens. More recently, the achievements of MAPS such as the restoration of the Civic Center Music Hall, and supporting community investments like the Myriad Gardens redesign and the development of the Oklahoma City Museum of Art accelerated this commitment.

Today, Oklahoma City's appearance and cultural features have become distinct assets to the city and its image. Our challenge is to maintain and enhance those assets wherever possible as we continue to grow and develop.

enrichokc is the preservation, appearance, and culture element of **planokc**. This element identifies initiatives

and policies that will express and promote Oklahoma City's identity through its built environment and cultural opportunities. It considers the past development patterns of Oklahoma City and, in some cases, the loss of its traditional character. But our vision looks forward and recognizes the benefits of preserving our most significant natural and historical resources, creating attractive and rewarding communities, and building on the foundations of our stories, our arts, and our cultural assets. Defining this vision and its initiatives requires discussing several issues, including conservation of the built environment, the urban landscape, heritage preservation, the design of both existing and new urban environments, and the continued growth and enhancement of our cultural resources. Many of the land use directions of **sustainokc**, the transportation policies of **connectokc**, the environmental policies of **greenokc**, and other elements relate to the concepts discussed in this vision of using city character, design, arts, and culture to enrich the lives of our residents.



REHABILITATION AND PRESERVATION

The preservation of commercial, residential, and civic structures is important to maintaining a strong community image, fostering economic growth, and thriving neighborhoods. These photos show just a few examples of successful preservation strategies.

Preservation of Buildings

Every part of a city contributes to its character and image. Some places have special importance because of their historic and symbolic roles in the city, visibility, function in the everyday lives of citizens, or distinctive physical qualities. Preserving these places helps maintain a strong community image, produces economic growth, and sustains neighborhoods. It also helps maintain a degree of historic or architectural continuity with the city's growth and development, continuing the story of our city.

Public Awareness. The preservation process begins with increasing public awareness and appreciation of the built environment. Our city is still relatively young and our historical time frame is short. Often property owners think that removing an existing building and starting over involves less trouble and expense, or that older structures cannot be upgraded to meet current

codes or energy efficiency standards. Owners and even neighbors also may view buildings as individuals, rather than as part of a larger neighborhood context. Despite the successes of great places like Automobile Alley, where significant buildings have been put to new uses that their original owners could not have conceived, we still tend to value the new over the old, and do not always see the benefits of maintaining our existing building fabric.

Incentives, educational efforts, and regulations related to building reuse can help to rebalance these perceptions. Current development policies and regulations appear to make it easier or more predictable to develop at the city's edge rather than in areas with existing resources and infrastructure.

"... creativity is a fundamental and intrinsic human characteristic. In a real sense, all human beings are creative What (creative people) look for in communities are abundant high-quality experiences, an openness to diversity of all kinds, and above all else, the opportunity to validate their identities as creative people."

- Richard Florida
Cities and the Creative Class, 2005

Community Appearance

Community appearance has direct impacts on both the likelihood that existing buildings will receive new investment and the satisfaction of existing residents with their neighborhoods.

Detrimental Components. plan**okc**'s Community Appearance Survey was the first step in understanding what residents view as valuable and detrimental to community. In live**okc**, we discuss the effects of deteriorating buildings on neighborhood sustainability. Survey results indicate that front yards, street corridors or parking lots also make strong first impressions that can positively or negatively influence the future direction of a neighborhood. The "one bad property" on a block can discourage investment or maintenance on surrounding properties, resulting in a cycle of decline.

Standards for Building and Property Maintenance.

Unfortunately, "good appearance" means different things to different people, and people have different sensitivities to their physical environment and differing amounts of resources to improve it. We lack baseline standards or specific expectations for building and property maintenance. The enforcement of those regulations we have is not an adequate deterrent to property neglect. The City cannot effectively induce absentee property owners to maintain their properties. The boarding of windows to secure abandoned properties adds to the poor appearance of a neighborhood and the perception of disinvestment. These are all challenges that the City must conquer in order to successfully improve community appearance.

The Urban Landscape

Urban landscaping is a crucial contributor to an attractive community image. green**okc** discussed the importance of an urban forestry program with revised landscape ordinances.

Landscape Enhancement. Chapter Two discusses the ability of landscape to minimize land use incompatibilities. Landscaping must also be seen from the perspective of creating an enriched urban



PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

We will always need parking lots. But they need not always be bad environments. The image at left not surprisingly received very negative ratings in the Community Appearance Survey, and was described as a "sea of asphalt," "asphalt desert", or "runway." At right, a different kind of parking lot at Classen Curve is designed to minimize the expanse of paving.

environment. The Community Appearance Survey showed that citizens place a strong value on landscaping, trees, sidewalks, and pedestrian features. Citizens and developers are also increasingly aware of the value of trees and their ability to shade, provide pedestrian comfort, contribute to urban design, moderate the micro-climate, and attract customers.

Sustainable Landscape. In Oklahoma City's hot, relatively dry climate, sustaining an attractive landscape requires choosing proper materials. Landscaping often defaults to turf and other non-native materials that require a good deal of water and ongoing maintenance. And maintenance is critical to appearance. Maintenance responsibilities in highly visible situations, like major street corridors, are unclear and often neglected. Design and placement of landscaping to avoid or minimize conflicts with utilities, both above and below ground, is another significant factor in providing attractive landscaped environments with continuity and substance.

Heritage and Culture

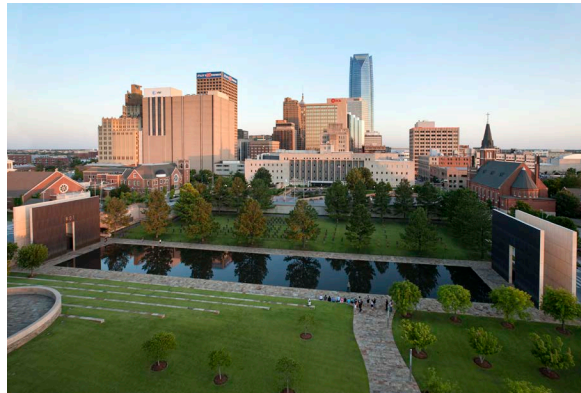
Calling attention to and investing in the city's heritage and culture builds interest in the process of building Oklahoma City. It enriches the experience of living

"Parking lots in OKC need trees and grass! They help mitigate the wind and keep them from becoming such heat sinks during the summers."

- Resident comment from the Community Appearance Survey

in Oklahoma City, telling visitors about the place and rooting residents in the context of their community. We generate economic opportunity by maintaining and enhancing the thematic character of different parts of the city.

Understanding Heritage. Oklahoma City residents are demonstrating a growing interest in understanding and communicating our heritage and culture. Residents also appreciate being part of neighborhoods with distinctive characteristics. We can continue to build on these foundations.



IDENTIFYING SPECIAL DISTRICTS

Small improvements can pay dividends in creating a brand for distinctive areas. From top, stylized Stockyards City arch and light-mounted graphics along Automobile Alley.

PLACES THAT ENRICH OKLAHOMA CITY

Sometimes great places move us, sometimes they delight us, but they never leave us indifferent.

Connectivity between residents and history. New households, many of which are part of the so-called Millennial generation, are attracted to the urban qualities of the central city area, making it a hub of new business and creativity. Greater knowledge of the history and culture of our capital city could add new levels of meaning to this experience. A greater connection is needed between the city's cultural assets and its residents to the great benefit of both.

Heritage and culture belong to all of Oklahoma City's residents, and all of our economic, racial, and ethnic groups are indispensable parts of our story. But with limited transportation options and socioeconomic separations, many citizens, including the youngest and poorest of our community, lack access to the wide array of cultural facilities located throughout the city. This denies them knowledge and appreciation for the possibilities attainable through arts and culture.

Distinctive districts and neighborhoods. The distinctiveness and identity of different districts and neighborhoods also presents many opportunities. Oklahoma City has many distinct cultural regions, including nine special design districts, nine historic preservation districts, and four individual historic preservation landmarks. In our expansive city, these special districts add texture and orientation, as well as

places to enjoy and experience. Some of these areas have taken advantage of their qualities and created brands, which we can define as packages of expectations. In some cases, these brands are reinforced in the public environment. More work needs to be done in connecting these areas into a network of assets, reinforcing and marketing each other, and considering new districts for inclusion in the network of special places.

Urban Design

Most people gravitate to places that are attractive, offer quality and activity, and make them happy and pleased to be there, or move them emotionally or spiritually. Some great places are carefully crafted, and combine various design disciplines with keen observation, community involvement, and sometimes even social science. The Bricktown Canal, Myriad Gardens, and the National Memorial provide excellent examples of these types of popular people environments. Others just happen from small acts or the collective work of different people at different times.

Defining an effective public realm. Ultimately, creating great places involves more than just a building; it includes creating a public realm that may include walkways, landscaping, public spaces to meet or enjoy, shapes and edges, public art, street furniture, water, and

other ingredients. It is very difficult to legislate good places for people. Some well-intentioned projects fall short of expectations or do not age well; others succeed seemingly (but not actually) by accident. In our urban design environment, we should strive for a quality that is hard to describe but that we recognize when we see it. The key word here is striving, focused on creating projects that, even when they seem routine, contribute something to the beauty and welfare of our city.

Aspirational Design Standards. Like many cities, though, the standards we have are minimal, not aspirational, and do not often lead to successful places. We lack a mechanism that directs or even encourages developers to strive for something better. So new developments tend to look the same and many of our urban, suburban, and rural areas lack a defining character. New developments, especially big box retailers, are built to national standards with no local sense of place or character, while at the same time, older buildings and districts with human scale and architectural character sometimes wither.

Inconsistent Design Standards. The City has established urban design and historic districts within our zoning ordinance to attempt to capture and maintain the fabric of distinctive places. Areas beyond these zoning districts do not have mechanisms for review and enforcement of design issues.

Treatment of the Public Realm. Finally, the largest part of our public realm—our public streets—is in most cases far from enriching. Streets and transportation are one of our most pervasive and visible land uses in the urbanized area, but rarely get the design treatment and care that they deserve. Signs, utility lines, transformers, equipment, street lights, and many other elements of the street environment are located in utilitarian ways, but their visual quality and how they can neatly be integrated into the streetscape is rarely a consideration. The traditional approach to public infrastructure gives too little consideration to the urban environment or neighborhood character. "Standard engineering practice" for infrastructure rarely explores the nexus between functionality and visual quality.



PUBLIC GATHERING PLACES

It is vital that the city have numerous public gathering places that are suitable for large-scale events and casual everyday activities.

Our Plan

The environment that we see and experience every day of our lives in the city should be a joy, not a burden to endure. Visually and experientially, our city should enrich us, not impoverish us. To this end, we will promote our city's identity through its built environment and cultural opportunities. Our neighborhoods will speak to the character and quality of our heritage. Attention must be given to the preservation of neighborhoods, design of the built environment and support for arts and culture. The private and public sectors will work cooperatively to create built environments worthy of Oklahoma City's traditions and citizens.

The initiatives in the following section will address the substantive design and appearance considerations that shape our built environment and enhancements related to quality, quantity, and accessibility of cultural assets. The success of these initiatives will be closely tied to the directions identified in many of the other elements of this plan, including sustainokc, liveokc, and connectokc.

APPEARANCE PRIORITIES

An important recommendation from the *Community Appearance Survey* indicates a need to 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.

Our Goals

PRESERVATION/REHABILITATION

- 1. Oklahoma City values its history and protects its cultural and built resources through appropriate rehabilitation and preservation.

LANDSCAPING

- 2. Landscaping is located, designed, and maintained to ensure an attractive and safe community.

HERITAGE OF THE CITY

- 3. Oklahoma City is recognized for its appreciation and preservation of historic, architectural, and cultural assets.

URBAN DESIGN AND FORM

- 4. The neighborhoods and commercial centers of Oklahoma City are integrated, attractive, functional, and of high quality.

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

- 5. Oklahoma City's built and natural environments are attractive and well-maintained.

ARTS AND CULTURE

- 6. Oklahoma City has a rich variety of arts and cultural assets and experiences.

Our Initiatives

enrichokc Initiatives	enrichokc Goals					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Develop and implement a citywide historic preservation plan.	■		■		■	■
2. Improve landscaping regulations.		■		■	■	
3. Expand the cultural districts program.			■	■		■
4. Upgrade urban design and development standards.		■	■	■	■	
5. Improve parking lot design.		■		■	■	
6. Expand property maintenance programs.					■	
7. Develop and implement a cultural heritage and public art master plan.	■		■			■
8. Increase access to arts and cultural programs, institutions and facilities.			■			■



Preservation of historic and architectural assets is the starting point of the program to enrich Oklahoma City by enhancing the physical environment. The city has a historic preservation program, with extensive design guidelines and special building permit requirements that apply to designated historic districts.

INITIATIVE 1

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A CITYWIDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

We will develop a comprehensive strategy for the identification, retention, preservation, and revitalization of the city's historic, cultural, and architectural resources. Oklahoma City has nine locally designated historic districts, and four locally designated individual landmarks. Additionally, the city has many other historic and architectural resources, including nearly 100 properties and over two-dozen districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and many more potential local or National Register districts and landmarks. We need to improve our understanding of the extent and condition of our existing historic resources and consider the state of current practice and the impact of current development patterns, existing policies, and regulations on those resources. A comprehensive historic preservation plan will identify future preservation and rehabilitation focuses, and establish the basis for new and improved policies, review guidelines, and incentives to conserve our spectrum of historic assets in the built environment.

A historic preservation plan also has another significant function: increasing public awareness and knowledge of preservation and its role in community development. Educational programs should address three objectives:

- Increasing community understanding on the role of preservation and support for specific programs.
- Increasing knowledge and competence of property owners as they work on historic properties.

- Educating owners and developers on the process, potential markets, and available incentives for preservation projects.

We will create targeted incentives for preservation processes, aimed at potential obstacles. The historic preservation plan will recommend new tools to help deliver real projects. Some of these tools may include low-interest or forgivable loans, Tax Increment Financing, historic tax credits, preservation easements (the first of which was recently accepted), and expedited review processes. These strategies should focus on two general areas: financing gaps created by some of the contingencies of historically appropriate preservation and adaptive reuse, and concerns by developers about delays or uncertainties during the project development process.

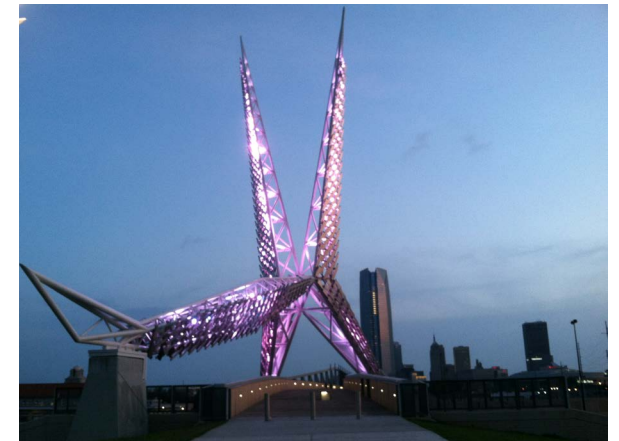
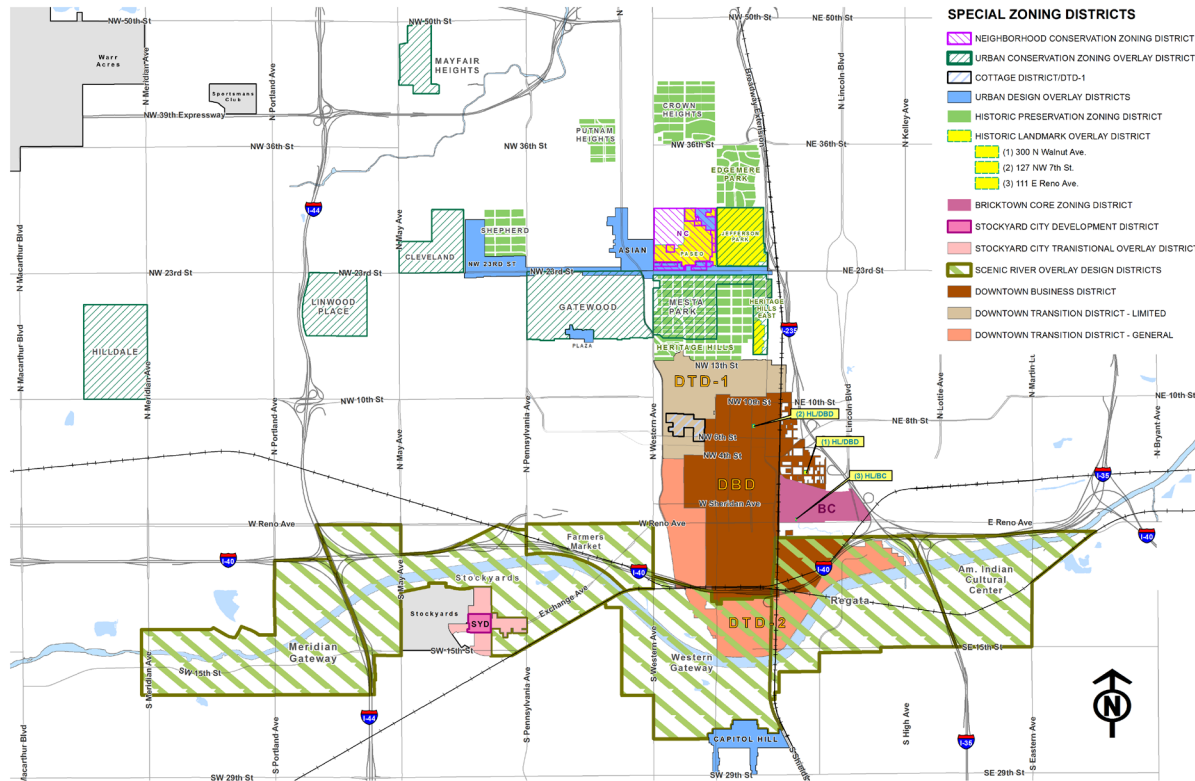
We will revise and adopt new ordinances that ensure consistency in the review of projects that affect historic properties. All historic preservation programs involve the review of projects. Every case is different, and the review process must deal with difficult issues such as economic feasibility, level of deterioration, impact of change or even loss of a building on a neighborhood. Establishing consistency in this process ensures a strong program.

Policies E-1, E-2, E-3, E-4, E-5, E-29, C-9, and C-10 implement this initiative.



"Emphasizing landscapes that create native plant 'communities' (like woodland or prairie), instead of monocultures of a single plant, increases biodiversity and essentially brings nature back to the city in a way that a single plant cannot."

- Resident comment from the draft planokc review process



SPECIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

Some of the many benefits of the urban landscape have been explored in previous elements of our comprehensive plan. In greenokc, we considered the environmental benefits of enhanced landscaping. But well-maintained green environments also enhance community appearance. Citizens who participated in the Community Appearance Survey clearly expressed the importance of good landscaping.

INITIATIVE 2

DEVELOP NEW OR STRENGTHEN EXISTING REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR LANDSCAPING

We will update and improve the city's landscape ordinances. Improvements will address the objectives of improving community appearance, minimizing land use incompatibilities, improving air quality, and managing the city's micro-climate. These ordinances also must address the long-term by including maintenance in their requirements. This starts with requiring native trees and plants that are adapted to the central Oklahoma climate. Use of native and drought tolerant plants lowers irrigation requirements, lowers cost, and conserves water.

We will educate the public on the use of native materials and proper maintenance. Preconceived notions of an aesthetically pleasing landscape often lead to the use of high-maintenance materials like non-native grasses. To overcome these inclinations, educational

ICONIC ENVIRONMENTAL ART

The city itself is a work of art, and a fitting environment for a lively arts and cultural community. Clockwise from top, the Braum's Milk Bottle building, the Paseo Arts District, and the SkyDance Bridge with Devon Tower in the background.

materials, demonstration gardens, and targeted corridor improvement projects should advertise both the beauty and benefits of proper installation and maintenance of native landscapes.

We will develop better procedures for reporting, citing and enforcement of violations. The current system for enforcement of landscaping requirements is complaint based, resulting in inconsistent maintenance on private properties and along many public rights-of-way. Improved procedures for code enforcement affecting private properties and additional funding sources for public areas should establish a clear level of expectation across the city.

Policies E-6, E-7, E-10, E-11, E-13, E-14, E-31, E-32, E-33, E-34, E-36, E-40, E-43, G-2, G-3, G-12, G-22, G-23, G-24, G-25, G-29, and G-30 implement this initiative.

Our cultural and historic resources and districts and traditional development patterns give the city its unique character and aesthetics. We need to support these districts and apply their lessons to new growth.



INITIATIVE 3

EXPAND THE CULTURAL DISTRICTS PROGRAM

We will reinforce the city's existing cultural districts and expand the network into new areas. The city's cultural districts have specific zoning and urban design regulations. They are "experience centers" that strengthen their surrounding neighborhoods. This program should be enhanced in two ways:

- Reinforcing existing districts through small-scale public realm projects (identifying graphics, sidewalk and streetscape improvements, wayfinding); cross-marketing; and integration into an "active loop," linking the nodes with pedestrian and bicycle routes.
- Expanding the program to new cultural districts, including the four pending districts and others that might be identified through the historic preservation plan and other neighborhood planning processes.

Ultimately, the culture districts should be viewed as, and evolve, into a connected network of attractions.

Policies E-8, E-15, E-16, E-20, E-22, E-25, E-26, E-27, E-41, E-42, ST-10, and ST-11 implement this initiative.



CULTURAL DISTRICTS

Oklahoma City currently has six cultural districts: Asian District, Paseo, the Plaza District, Uptown 23rd Street, Capitol Hill, and Stockyards City. Four other areas have also been identified as potential cultural districts, including Automobile Alley, Britton Town, Film Row, and North Western Avenue. These areas could be further reinforced by connecting them with pedestrian and bicycle routes into an active experience loop.

CULTURAL DISTRICTS, NOW AND FUTURE

The Plaza District (left) is a vital; center of city life; Britton Road (right) is a potential culture district that would benefit from this recognition and could emerge as an urban experience center for its part of the city.

The application of urban design standards to cultural districts has helped these special areas maintain their walkability and human scale. These attributes, in turn, attracted new businesses. The lessons of this process can be expanded beyond neighborhood nodes and main street districts to settings in all parts of the city, such as commercial corridors, automobile-oriented commercial development, and more contemporary neighborhoods.

INITIATIVE 4

UPGRADE URBAN DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

We will update and enhance design standards and guidelines that apply to areas outside existing Design Review Districts. The Community Appearance Survey identified residents' support for pedestrian-oriented amenities and human-scaled development. Appealing living spaces combine ingredients such as street and sidewalk environments, properly scaled buildings, visual interest, well-placed and designed furniture, and other elements. Updated standards will address the lessons and results of the Community Appearance Survey and provide practical and cost-effective design guidance and choices. They will address scale, materials, variety, visual quality, signs and graphics, and environmental sensitivity. The effort to update and enhance these standards will involve all stakeholders. They will also be routinely reviewed against best practices, allowing innovative design techniques and incorporating new techniques in low-impact development.

We will remove obstacles to greater design variety within residential construction. Community Appearance Survey participants strongly supported residential designs that included front porches and minimized garage exposure. These findings and the Housing Demand Study results both indicated interest in smaller lots and greater housing product variety, especially among younger households. Both

the sustainokc and liveokc elements speak to the need for more diverse housing types. Design guidelines should illustrate ways to achieve higher densities in configurations that are consistent with citizen preferences. In addition, city standards and regulations that discourage design features like rear-loaded garages or mixed density housing should be modified.

We will improve regulation of sign scale, number, and placement. Sign images were the lowest rated urban design element in the Community Appearance Survey. New sign regulations will be fashioned as part of land development ordinance revisions to reduce clutter and increase legibility. Code direction will include limits on the number of permitted signs, increased use of ground signs, location standards, better overall size limitations, and requirements for sign master plans for large projects.

We will develop a Great Streets Program to improve the appearance of major arterial streets. Oklahoma City has implemented a Downtown Streetscape Master Plan, and should extend the concept of cohesive standards for landscaping, lighting, street furniture, sidewalk and crosswalk design, utility placement and treatment, and other elements to other streets of civic importance. This effort is related to the street typology concept presented in Chapter Two. The master planning effort will identify corridors of visual significance and establish vocabularies of materials and treatments that will be applied during widenings or reconstruction projects or on a stand-alone basis.

Policies E-2, E-3, E-7, E-9, E-10, E-11, E-12, E-13, E-14, E-16, E-21, E-28, E-29, E-30, E-31, E-32, E-33, E-34, E-35, E-36, E-37, E-38, E-39, E-40, E-41, E-42, SU-6, SU-7, SU-8, SU-10, SU-11, SU-34, G-2, G-3, G-12, G-22, G-24, G-29, L-12, L-15, L-16, L-27, L-33, L-34, L-40, ST-17, ST-28, SE-2, SE-8, and SE-16 implement this initiative.



URBAN DESIGN

According to the *Community Appearance Survey*, Oklahoma City residents prefer streets that do not have visible utility lines and poles, and that include trees, landscaping, and signage that is either wall or monument style. These images from the *Community Appearance Survey* illustrate some of these preferred design features.

In auto-oriented environments, surface parking becomes a dominant feature. Therefore, the design and location of parking can be especially important to the appearance and feel of a street. As a result, parking lots warrant special attention in any effort to improve the city's visual quality.

INITIATIVE 5

IMPROVE PARKING LOT DESIGN

We will increase landscaping and design requirements in parking areas. Tree plantings and landscaping in parking lots have multiple benefits. Trees shade parking areas and decrease the heat island effect, help orient customers in large parking lots, manage circulation, and can be integrated into design elements that provide safe paths for pedestrians. In addition, parking lots should provide safe and pleasant paths from public walks and paths and transit stops to the front door of major projects and destinations. In some cases, parking lots can be designed for multiple purposes, acting as public spaces or markets during specific events. New parking design standards for Oklahoma City should incorporate contemporary practices for improved parking lot design.

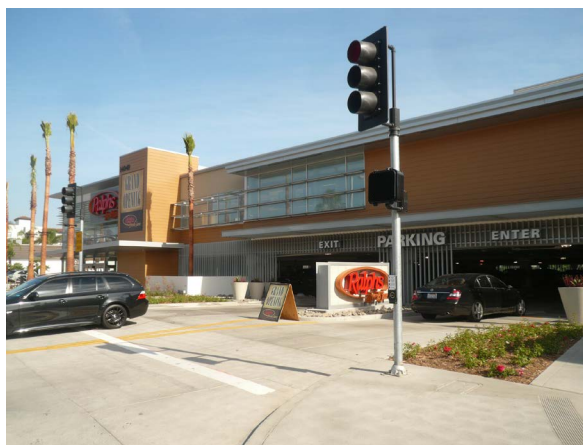
We will integrate parking structures into primary structures. In appropriate high intensity settings, parking structures should be used to the maximum degree possible. When located along streets, parking structures should be activated at street level by storefronts, public art, or other details to avoid blank walls. The exterior facades of structures should be enhanced and complement the architectural features and materials of the surrounding area as a means to disguise the function of the structure and to minimize the detrimental aesthetic impacts of such facilities.

Policies E-7, E-11, E-36, E-37, E-40, SU-29, SU-39, G-2, G-3, G-12, G-22, G-24, G-29, and L-37 implement this initiative.



PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

The images above from the Community Appearance Survey, illustrate the type of parking lot design and landscaping that Oklahoma City residents prefer, characterized by visible, mature, healthy trees and landscaping and ample visual breaks in paving.



PARKING DESIGN

From left, a parking structure incorporated into a supermarket and a surface lot specifically designed to provide a pleasant and safe walk between a primary commercial building and pad sites.



COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP EFFORTS

Whether maintaining residential properties or public parks, expanding efforts to keep Oklahoma City clean and attractive will ensure greater civic pride.

Poorly maintained buildings and sites can have an enormous effect on the visual quality of the city. Unkempt and neglected properties are depressing to residents and property values. But in many cases, people do not have access to resources to help them improve the appearance of their property.

INITIATIVE 6

EXPAND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS

We will establish programs for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of deteriorated structures. Vacant and abandoned properties threaten good community appearance. **liveokc** presents policies that address vacant buildings. When vacant properties have historic or architectural significance, preservation incentives should be especially focused on their reuse.

We will expand efforts to increase public awareness and participation in neighborhood clean-up efforts. These efforts may include training in property maintenance skills, development of volunteer programs (i.e. adopt a street), or publicizing such programs as Bulk Waste Days. Community education programs and materials should increase access to resources and knowledge, and publicize the level of property maintenance expected of citizens of Oklahoma City.

Policies E-3, E-5, E-6, E-11, E-12, E-13, E-14, E-17, E-18, E-19, E-31, E-32, E-36, E-39, E-43, L-1, L-2, L-3, L-5, L-6, L-16, L-29, L-30, L-31, L-34, L-36, and ST-24 implement this initiative.

A city and its architecture are indeed works of art, and Oklahoma City is no exception, from its City Beautiful parkways of the early twentieth century to works of vernacular architecture like the famous Braum's milk bottle to modern landmarks like the National Memorial and Devon Tower. But our city is also a canvas for ideas and human creativity, epitomized by its array of public art, events, cultural institutions and a lively arts community. These resources are there for everyone, but some of our citizens are still isolated from these enriching and engaging resource. Public policy should reinforce arts and culture and make them more accessible to everyone.

INITIATIVE 7

CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A CULTURAL HERITAGE MASTER PLAN

We will develop a Cultural Heritage Master Plan to preserve and promote heritage, arts, community development, cultural resources and understanding. This plan would be developed cooperatively by cultural groups, artists and institutions, potentially convened by the City. Its intention is not to supersede the planning efforts of any group, but rather to map significant areas, cultural resources, and a series of actions that can bring the arts, culture, and significant natural features closer to the overall community. Its special focuses include increasing linkages and mutual participation between cultural groups, the arts community, and the larger Oklahoma City community. It will reinforce the importance of historic sites and that expression of art that is most accessible to all because it requires no admission – public art.

Policies E-8, E-9, E-15, E-16, E-20, E-21, E-22, E-25, E-27, and E-29 implement this initiative.

INITIATIVE 8

INCREASE ACCESS TO ARTS AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND FACILITIES

We will increase awareness of and access to art and culture in the city. The Cultural Heritage Master Plan will identify access issues and strategies to address them. Possible directions include:

- Improvements to physical access by sidewalks, trails, pedestrian amenities, and transit services;
- Outreach programs that expand awareness and education on both the opportunities and benefits of the arts and culture in the city;
- Methods by which the City contracts with constituents can also be used to promote greater contact between arts institutions and grass-roots communities;
- Use of technology to provide greater access to public art and engage more people with its meaning;
- A process to fund, acquire, and locate significant works of public art.

We will incorporate arts and culture into City activities. The importance of the arts and culture in everyday life can be reinforced and encouraged through interpretive markers, public information efforts, special events and incorporating temporary art as solutions to urban issues, like vacant storefronts for art installations. These are opportunities that will showcase local talent and reinforce the economic benefits of arts and culture.

We will expand the City's public art program. The City's 1% for Arts ordinance is an important public investment to leverage private sector investment in public art throughout the City. Public art should continue to be included in City projects. Guidance and navigation can also encourage private development to include art in substantial developments as focal points in their developments. Public art, for example, could be a method of satisfying compatibility standards for adjacent land uses. The public art program should also include nationally used best practices to ensure high quality in the public realm.

We will help arts and cultural projects navigate the city's approval process. The volunteers and staff of cultural districts, neighborhoods, and arts organizations are often not familiar with the review and approval process and can find the experience daunting. By developing clear guidelines and working closely with these organizations, the city will reinforce the importance of arts and culture in the community while ensuring that projects meet established quality standards.

Policies E-8, E-9, E-15, E-16, E-20, E-21, E-22, E-23, E-24, E-25, E-26, E-27, E-28, E-30, E-34, C-26, and ST-9 implement this initiative.

"The economic impact of Arts and Cultural activities in Oklahoma County is 2/3 of what it is in similarly sized cities/metros."

- Arts & Economic Prosperity III: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations & Their Audiences in Oklahoma County, OK, 2009



ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC ART

Baseball fans may not expect to have an encounter with the arts when they attend a game with the excellent sculptures of great Oklahomans in baseball, including the superb likeness of Mickey Mantle.