



City of Copperas Cove

T E X A S

City Built for Family Living

CHAPTER 4: COMMUNITY IMAGE AND URBAN DESIGN

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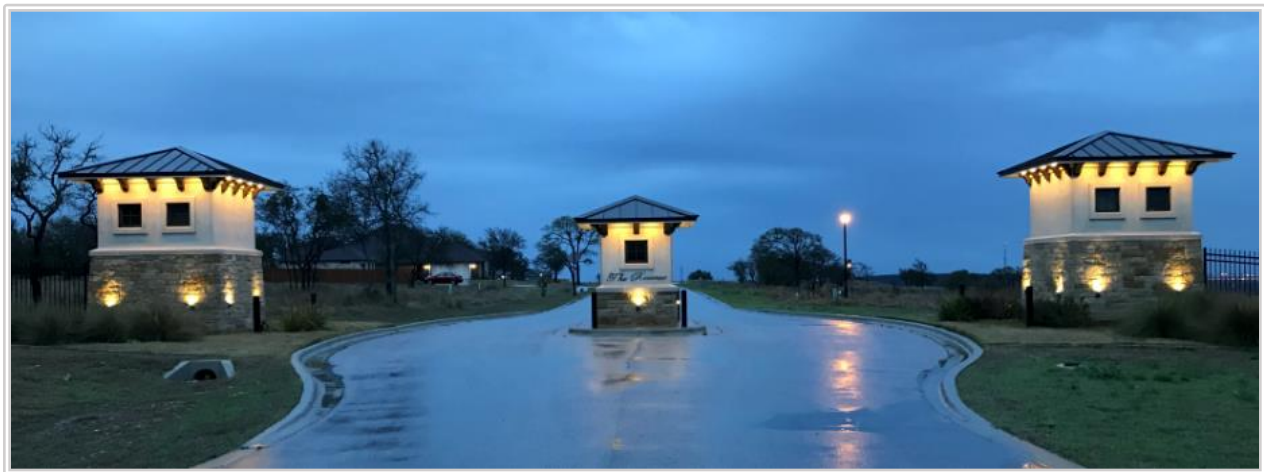
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INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY IMAGE AND URBAN DESIGN

This section of the Comprehensive Plan Update identifies areas which can enhance and improve the City's community image and increase the quality of development practices.

Several concepts for the City's design were identified and some were implemented from the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. These elements are still relevant to planning in Copperas Cove today.

1. Gateway treatments at key entrances to planned communities.
2. Creating a better residential aesthetic and increasing connectivity.
3. Streetscape treatments along major thoroughfares.
4. Signage, street lighting, and other amenities.
5. Downtown beautification.



Gateway entrance to planned community of The Reserve at Skyline Mountain

Designing the community image with a common theme with specific urban design standards can improve the overall image and aesthetic of the City. It can enhance Copperas Cove's ability to acquire new residents and keep existing ones as they consider their desired life-style choice of housing in the region. A number of planning developments within Copperas Cove have incorporated gateway treatments at key entrances to their communities.



Gateway entrance to new planned community of Creekside Hills



Gateway entrance to planned community of Walker Place

COMMUNITY FOCAL POINTS/LANDMARKS

Copperas Cove has opportunities to consolidate a clear identity and a focal point for activities. The three most common areas that create a city aesthetic are along its major street corridors, retail market places and in its downtown core.

Copperas Cove has many prospects to create a community image. Business 190 is the major travel corridor providing visibility to the City's retail market places and access to the downtown. One way in which the City can begin to create a common theme and apply design enhancements is to focus on this corridor and the branding market place activities that surround it. Applying design standards to new buildings that have appealing architectural components and landscaping create an area that a passerby will want to stop and dine, perhaps explore or do a bit of shopping. By expanding upon this, the

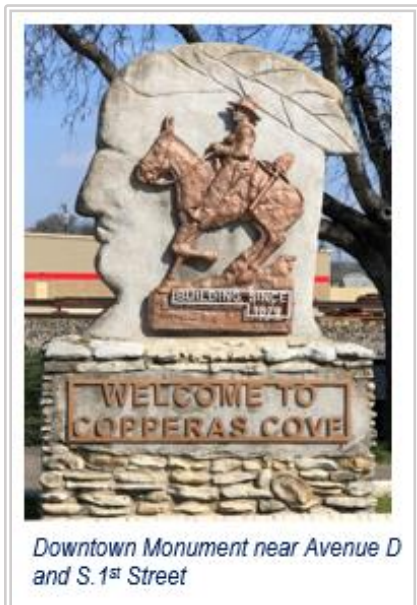
downtown can add locally owned restaurants and boutiques which will draw interest. In addition, due to the strong linear space along Business 190, there can be interest built-in to the fabric of the City by incorporating appealing wayfaring signage from retail market places, which will lead a passerby towards the downtown core. Copperas Cove has the potential to create a beautifully designed major corridor and downtown that can become the City's focal point.



GATEWAY ENTRY TREATMENTS

A visitor's initial perception of the character and livability of a community occurs along the major access corridors and entrances into a city. These corridors and entrances are gateways to the community and should be designed to create a cohesive identity and reflect the desired image of the community. Gateways can also include architecturally significant buildings, bridges or other infrastructure improvements such as monuments, signs, and streetscapes.

Gateways can be enhanced through either public realm improvements or private development, or a combination of the two. The public realm improvements can be in the form of landscape improvements or enhancements, directional/ informational signs or markers, public artwork, monuments, and public infrastructure/bridge improvements. Private development can be guided to improve gateways through City land use controls, site planning standards, architectural guidelines and viewshed corridors.



Within the City of Copperas Cove, there exist two main gateway corridors that provide access to the City from adjacent communities. These gateway corridors help to define and celebrate the entrance into the City and reinforce the identity and character throughout the community. These gateways also give visitors their initial perceptions of the City.

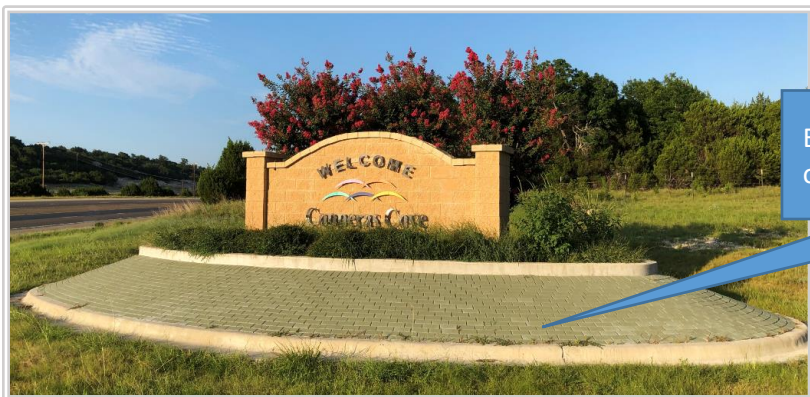


The existing gateway corridors into Copperas Cove along primary arterial roadways include:

- Business 190 (from Killeen I-14 from the east)
- US Hwy 190 (from Kempner from the west)



Entrance to City Gateway Monument on Business 190 heading west.



Entrance to City Gateway Monument on US Hwy 190 heading east.

The 2008 Downtown Improvements Master Plan corridors include:

- Avenue D (north)
- 4th Street (east)
- Avenue F (south)
- 3rd Street (west)

Downtown Revitalization

Downtowns are among the first places visitors (tourists, potential residents, prospective businesses) see in a community. Communities with vibrant downtowns often have a distinct advantage, making them better able to compete for talent and business investments. Although Copperas Cove does not have the advantage of a “historic” downtown, maintaining and enhancing the existing building stock should be a priority. Recent infrastructure investments (sidewalks) add to the area’s appeal. This investment should be met with a concerted strategy for filling available vacancies and driving foot traffic downtown.



Motion, movement and vibrant activities are essential elements to a thriving downtown business district. This can be accomplished by stimulating economic growth, incorporating livable green spaces and appealing aesthetics. The 2008 Downtown Improvements Master Plan shows the proposed revitalization of the City’s downtown business district. It is anticipated that the downtown plan will be soon updated to address growth impacts and traffic flow access issues happening due to steady housing expansion occurring in the northern sector of the City along FM 116 (1st Street).

RESIDENTIAL BEAUTIFICATION AND SUBDIVISION CONNECTIVITY

Close to schools, convenient shopping and affordable housing is what you will find in Copperas Cove, “The City Built for Family Living”. The city is fortunate to have an affordable cost of living, a vibrant local economy, natural beauty and safe friendly neighborhoods. City leaders take extra care to encourage home builders to provide long-term aesthetic value and marketability. Some examples of subdivision design practices include designing and creating roads that follow natural contours, protecting existing vegetation when possible, requiring sidewalks, and including attractive facades like those found along Walker Place Boulevard.



The design standards like those found along Bowen Avenue show homes close to the sidewalk filled with native plants and trees while maintaining many of the older, larger trees during the development process. Many of the newer subdivision developments have incorporated these design standards. These areas of the City offer a variety of floor plans that are thoughtfully designed. Most of these homes are predominately single-family, one and two-story homes which offer timeless features and a variety of open concept layouts which are appealing to new buyers.



Sidewalks, front yards and landscaping are key to livable, walkable neighborhoods. Photo of Bowen Avenue.

COMMUNITY IMAGE AND URBAN DESIGN GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Goal 4-1: Develop a Façade or Gateway Enhancement Program that leverages development in ways that create unique, identifying spaces and buildings.

Objective:

- Enhance specific intersections and gateway nodes with landscaping, lighting, and informational/directional signs that will create a strong sense of arrival that informs visitors that they have entered into the City of Copperas Cove.

Policy:

- Define streetscape/gateway improvements along the corridors and at key locations along the City's main roadway entrances. Identify improvement locations along the entrance roads leading to the core of the City and the downtown area.

Implementation Measures:

- Define a system of regionally unique landscaping, civic monuments, sign treatments and public infrastructure improvements that reinforces the City's vision and creates a sense of community pride.
- A mix of retail, business services, entertainment and housing land use creates a vibrant sense of place at key gateways.

- Gateways to the City of Copperas Cove should be visible from a long distance and contain a mix of uses. The use of towers, cupolas, arches, lighting and public art are encouraged to draw attention to the destination and create a sense of place to gateway locations.

Goal 4-2: Allow and/or encourage new development types and trends as the market dictates (such as New Urbanism, Traditional Neighborhood Development, etc.)

Objective:

- Utilize the Planned Development tool in the Zoning Ordinance to encourage high-quality innovative development

Policy:

- Create a design criteria guide that explains in detail many of the design practices encouraged in this Comprehensive Plan

Implementation Measures:

- Encourage development guidelines that inspire innovation
- The City's development codes should provide enough guidance in their design processes that developers can implement innovative residential and commercial design that encourages land use efficiency, environmental sensitivity, and infrastructure techniques that uses vegetation, soils, and practices to restore some of the natural setting.
- Work with local organizations such as Keep Copperas Cove Beautiful to educate and implement green infrastructure practices. Example programs can include rain barrel donations, youth groups planting rain gardens, etc.

Goal 4-3: Address high traffic volumes in the Downtown.

Objective:

- Identify roadways and circulation patterns based on function and expected traffic volumes including alternate transportation modes, routes and opportunities.

Policy:

- Define standards by working with TXDOT and BNSF railroad for the City's downtown transportation system which can carry traffic generated by future development.

Implementation Measures:

- Create a downtown traffic study as a baseline document for a new downtown master plan.
- Identify downtown infrastructure programs for roadways, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, benches, signage, public parking and inviting open space amenities.

Goal 4-4: Create a new Downtown Master Plan and focus on refurbishing the surrounding neighborhoods.

Objective:

- Encourage property owners to redevelop properties in the downtown by focusing on mixed use development opportunities in the marketplace.

Policy:

- Develop a tax-increment funding mechanism for necessary public improvements, provide centralized, easy accessible parking which is well maintained and has directional signage and incentivize façade enhancement and create a marketplace downtown theme.

Implementation Measures:

- Create a “Downtown Public Private Partnership Program” to market the downtown for investment opportunities for retail, professional services, mixed-use and professional office.
- Identify anchor tenants to invest in the downtown. An anchor tenant can generate jobs and stimulate future development. As such, the City should offer incentives comparable to those offered to service industry prospects.
- Consider using the following approach to downtown revitalization:
 - Organization: Create a formal organization to establish clear lines of responsibility, create consensus and cooperation, and maximize resources (partnerships, volunteers, investors, lenders, stakeholders, business and community leaders.)
 - Promotion: Create a positive image and drive foot traffic to the downtown by scheduling and promoting events in the downtown on a regular basis (e.g., farmer’s markets, trade days, walking tours, art displays, craft shows and open air concerts.)
 - Design: Ensure downtown is safe and visually appealing. Related elements include attractive storefronts, signs, public spaces, parking areas, street furniture, public art, mature landscaping, window displays, and promotional materials.
- Seek and identify funding resources to invest and stimulate the downtown economy by refurbishing surrounding neighborhoods to create a downtown “destination” and unique identity.
- Enable Downtown Copperas Cove to become a retail center for unique businesses which meet missing market components.
- Develop a marketing plan to promote tourism in Copperas Cove, implement projects that strengthen Downtown and promote small-scale retail, window-based shopping and dining.