



3 | PLACEMAKING & RESILIENCY

“...Streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs. If a city’s streets and sidewalks look interesting, the city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull.”

–Jane Jacobs

Placemaking and Resiliency Principles

- PRINCIPLE 1:** Create distinctive destinations that attract people and encourage social interaction.
- PRINCIPLE 2:** Create great streets with human-scaled architecture, walkability, attractive amenities and an engaging street wall.
- PRINCIPLE 3:** Build for the long term value of both the development and the community with safe streets and neighborhoods, high-quality buildings that can adapt easily to the changing demands of the marketplace, a range of housing options and a variety of gathering spaces.
- PRINCIPLE 4:** Encourage a mixture of land uses in an active pedestrian environment and a network of sidewalks and trails that links people of all ages and physical abilities to their destinations.
- PRINCIPLE 5:** Encourage environmental responsiveness, preserving and enhancing natural areas for the health, aesthetic, infrastructure and economic benefits the community will receive.

Introduction

Placemaking is the foundation for creating a desirable city, and adherence to the principles of Placemaking will be critical in determining Frisco’s future.

Placemaking is about putting people first.

When people have a choice about where to live, they seek out the places that offer community, connection and a higher quality of life. Three elements crucial to a successful city—good schools, a variety of services, and strong aesthetics—combine to create strong and resilient places that attract people, shore up property values and help maintain a healthy revenue stream for the city.

Successful “Placemaking” is creating memorable places that engage people.

These places tend to emerge where a city and/or a developer takes advantage of the attributes of the surrounding area—topography, vegetation, land uses, building form—and utilizes those attributes to create a place that is distinctly different from any other place in the region. They have a sense of authenticity rather than a Disneyland feel, (*see also Appendix A2, Placemaking & Resiliency*).

Street rights-of-way are one of the most overlooked opportunities for shaping a community’s image, (*see also Appendix A2, Placemaking & Resiliency and Appendix A8, Transportation/Mobility*). Street rights-of-way

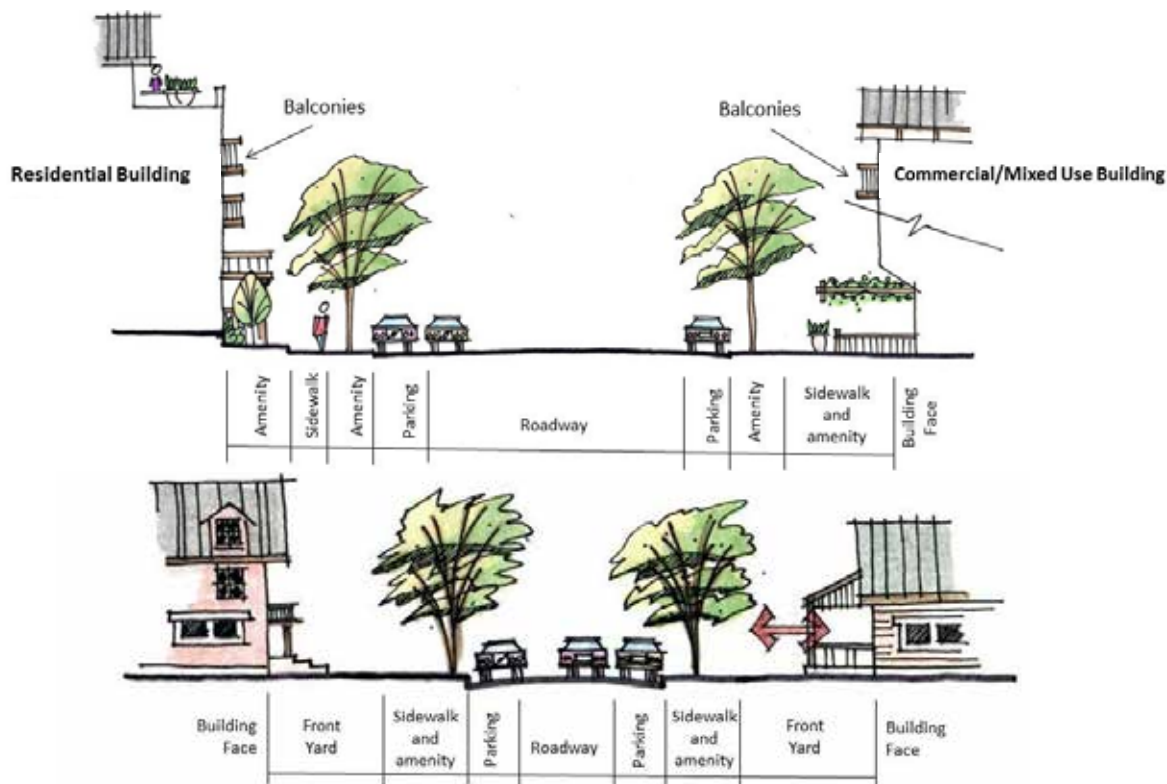


Figure 3-1: Street Right-Of-Way Design

are generally the single largest land use within a city. Everyone who lives, visits or travels through a city develops a perception of the community and decides what kind of place it is and how desirable it would be to live or work there based on the impression they get as they travel on city streets.

When people drive, use transit, walk or cycle into Frisco, they should be struck by the fact that they are in a special community. The best way to achieve this feeling is not just with signage, banners or entry monuments, but with the design of streets and trails, the siting and design of

buildings and the use of streetscaping and strategically located open space.

“Resiliency” is ensuring that a place will continue to be desirable in comparison with other areas, maintaining and even increasing its value over time and through economic cycles. Resilient places like Highland Park, University Park, and the “M Streets” in Dallas embody many of the guiding principles listed above, and their residents tend to display a strong sense of pride and community cohesion.

Maturing suburban cities begin facing the challenge of aging properties, sagging property values and declining sales tax revenues at about the same time as the need for major maintenance occurs on crumbling infrastructure, (*see also Appendix A2, Placemaking & Resiliency*).

Placemaking techniques can help create and maintain higher property values and attract reinvestment. The application of placemaking principles, however, will not occur without City leadership.



The Value of Placemaking

There are two types of value - **initial value** and **long-term value**. Initial value benefits meeting an immediate market demand and converting vacant land into a new use by improving it with buildings and utilities. Over time, however, the value of the investment often tends to decline, and this can be challenging for communities.

The city has a fiscal obligation to its citizens to ensure that there is a diversity of commercial and residential projects, firmly based on quality Placemaking principles, so that businesses and residents are committed to the city and their neighborhoods for the long term and will invest and reinvest in their properties.

Proven techniques for enhancing property values and attracting reinvestment include, but are not limited to:

- The provision and integration of open space can significantly enhance property values.
- Expressing natural features like topography, vegetation, creeks and drainage can provide a community with personality and beauty, distinguishing it from neighboring cities and helping to define the community's unique DNA.
- Trees provide relief from the harshness of roads and buildings and have a significant effect on making both the indoor and outdoor environment more comfortable.

An astute developer recognizes the added value that trees, water and unique land formations can bring to a project; i.e. designing with the natural environment rather than trying to minimize it.

- Natural areas should be encouraged to be, or perhaps required to be, preserved for the betterment of the community and the people in it, even in the heart of the urban environment, (*see also Appendix A2, Placemaking & Resiliency*).



Placemaking and Resiliency

Developments that incorporate sound Placemaking principles as a fundamental part of the design process will stand out as unique, identifiable places that attract businesses and residents and create higher property values in both the short term and the long term.

These key consideration can combine to create a place that is much greater in total than the sum of its parts—a truly great place.

Great Streets



Great streets comfortably accommodate multiple users—cars, pedestrians and bicycles—and are defined by buildings and streetscaping.

- When streets are designed so that traffic moves at speeds of 20 to 25 mph, all users can share the street. Drivers are moving slowly enough to watch for pedestrians and to see signs and signals; pedestrians

feel safe crossing the roadway; cyclists can blend in with vehicular movement.

- Streetscapes should not be dominated by parking lots. Parking should generally be maximized on non-arterial streets to provide visitors and customers easy access to adjacent properties.

Additional parking, including garages and loading bays, should be relegated to secondary streets and alleys and the center of blocks which are largely lined with buildings and landscaping.

- Parking should also be shared among the non-residential uses in mixed-use districts to minimize the amount of parking that is reserved for individual users. This technique improves the efficiency of parking and reduces the total number of spaces that must be built to accommodate development.

One way to accomplish this objective in larger development parcels is to establish a parking district that would consolidate employee and visitor parking in locations meeting the criteria outlined above. This approach could also accommodate changes in uses without triggering the requirement for the construction of new parking facilities. A district of this sort could be managed by a parking authority or district association.

Great Places

Creating great destinations involves the development of places that people are attracted to—compact places that feel comfortable and provide opportunities for pedestrian activity and social interaction. This principle has great implications for those considering how to arrange land uses and how to design streets and buildings, especially at street level. These key consideration can combine to create a place that is much greater in total than the sum of its parts—a truly great place.

The concept of building for the long term promotes the construction of a high-quality infrastructure of buildings that do not have to be



demolished once the original tenant has vacated.

- Great cities contain buildings that are well-sited, constructed for pedestrian access and provide a feeling of enclosure for the adjoining public space, including streets, open space and plazas.
- A combination of flexible building types, a flexible site layout and focusing retail and mixed-use into compact pedestrian-oriented centers can help expedite the reuse, reinvestment and re-purposing of buildings; and in encouraging people to stay, socialize and reinvest in the development.
- A range of neighborhoods and housing choices should also be encouraged in order to fill a variety of needs and markets. These choices could include:
 - Lofts with or without retail/flex space at grade;
 - Urban living units;
 - Live/Work units;

- Townhomes;
- Detached single-family residences; and
- Estate homes.
- Integrating a variety of uses within a development supports the concept of creating engaging places by mixing land uses—retail, personal service, residential and office—to help animate the area by encouraging activity during the day, in the evening and on weekends.
- Linking mixed-use and retail centers to their surroundings and other districts in the city is an important aspect of Placemaking. These great places should have clear edges, human-scaled architecture, walkable streets, public gathering spaces, attractive amenities and eye-catching detail.
- Flex space that can accommodate either retail or restaurant uses should be constructed along primary pedestrian corridors and should incorporate windows and entrances that open directly to the sidewalk. These spaces can be populated with stores, restaurants and “third places”—places that are neither home nor work, but where people meet, visit and exchange ideas. They also help create an engaging walking environment.
 - Flex space at-grade can be defined as building space which has at least a 14-foot clear ceiling height and a façade that has the structural capability to accommodate changes in the amount of glazing and the number of entries.
- Compact centers should also have pockets of green space, connectivity to neighborhoods, ADA-compliant trails and cultural and recreational activities. Green spaces, parks and plazas will provide focus for the center and surrounding neighborhoods, and the trail connections will help link users to their destinations.

Image

A city has a number of opportunities to create a positive community image, (*see also Chapter 10, Implementation*). Most important among them are:

- The design and framing of streets (including streetscaping);
- The location and design of public and private open space;
- The design of civic buildings;
- The interaction of buildings with the street and their surroundings; and
- The ability to regulate building form in certain situations.

In terms of image and placemaking, Frisco has successfully incorporated these concepts into projects such as:

- Frisco Square, which includes City Hall, Frisco Bridges, Dr. Pepper Ballpark, Dr. Pepper Arena, Toyota Stadium, Newman Village, Griffin Parc (Phase 2) and mixed-use buildings with urban living units, retail and restaurants;
- Stonebriar Commons, which features employment, shopping areas, hotels and urban living units; and
- The proposed Grand Park, which will include commercial and residential uses and a major open space area.

Building on these and other positive examples will help to further distinguish Frisco as a premier city for living, doing business and visiting.

Placemaking Examples

The examples labeled “Not Preferred” on the following pages might meet minimum zoning and engineering standards, but would not convey a sense of a desirable place. Some of the images represent streets and places that fall short of the target, either aesthetically or functionally.



Frisco Square serves as the heart of the community and is an investment in the City's future. As each building is constructed in this civic mixed-use center, it enhances the sense of place and becomes increasingly more active with pedestrians and events. The layout and buildings are based on timeless principles and will serve future generations of Frisco residents well.



Newman Village is a good example of a walkable neighborhood that includes homes facing open space, public art and generous landscaping and streetscape, all of which will increase the value of properties not only now, but also in the long term.



Open space will be a major visual and recreational amenity for the City and will attract a broad range of development activity. Its regional identity will enhance Frisco's image and result in increased value for projects located near it.

Pedestrian Environment: Commercial Streets

(See also Appendix A8, Transportation/Mobility).

Not Preferred



- A poor pedestrian environment results from the lack of interaction between the building and the sidewalk
- Few windows and entrances interacting with the street reduces pedestrian activity and safety
- A lack of shade, because of greater spacing between trees, also deters pedestrians



- Narrow sidewalks make walking difficult for pedestrians, especially movement-impaired individuals and for socialization

Preferred



- Windows and doors provide articulation and detail of buildings
- Wide sidewalk allows for various users
- Active ground floor uses
- Shading for pedestrians provided by tighter spacing of trees



- Outdoor dining creates an active and inviting public realm
- Street trees provide shaded sidewalks
- Sufficient sidewalk width for pedestrians to navigate

Pedestrian Environment: Residential Streets

Site layout and design can have a large impact on the creation of long-term value and is important in supporting community image.

Not Preferred



- Straight treeless streets
- Wider than necessary street encourages speeding and discourages pedestrian and social interaction



- Large amounts of paving absorb and radiate heat during the summer months for the pedestrian environment when there are no trees to provide shade
- Front-loaded garages on narrow lots present an unattractive face, create more pedestrian conflicts, and severely restrict visitor parking



- Unattractive streetscape
- Fencing homes and neighborhoods from local streets reduces pedestrian safety, encourages speeding traffic and is not pedestrian-friendly

Preferred



- Street trees provide shade canopy and value



- Street trees and on-street parking tend to slow traffic naturally, providing shade for pedestrians and a physical barrier to active traffic



- Clear demarcation of the building entrance to landscaped street encourage pedestrian and social interaction

Building Form

A building's form determines how it will interact with the environment. This form also dictates the potential uses and reuses that are possible on the site

Not Preferred



- Large blank buildings are less flexible for redevelopment and adaptive reuse
- Lost opportunity for a landmark building



- Buildings with large expanses of blank wall do not interact with the surrounding environment, are devoid of activity, and inappropriate in a pedestrian oriented district

Preferred



- Buildings scaled to the pedestrian interact more with the environment and allow for a greater variety of uses and activities



- A mixture of scales and uses are more visually stimulating and have greater appeal to attract pedestrians

Site Layout

Site layout and design can have a large impact on the creation of long-term value and is important in supporting community image.

Not Preferred



- Large building setbacks and parking in front of the buildings reduce the vibrancy of both the corridor and the city as a whole



- Large Parking areas located in front of the building inhibit pedestrian accessibility and options for commercial reuse

Preferred



- Buildings that are pulled up to the street create a more varied and cohesive streetscape, resulting in a more active corridor and higher values over time



- Retail that includes shaded walkways and places to sit encourages socialization and tends to be more successful at attracting shoppers and reinvestment

Townhomes

Not Preferred



- Public face dominated by garage doors



- Visitor parking is almost nonexistent because of front-entry garages on narrow lots



- Large volumes of paving and roadways create heat sinks in summer that contribute to the urban heat island effect

Preferred



- Buildings with trees and lots of windows are more inviting and desirable, resulting in higher property values



- These townhomes relate to the sidewalk and encourage social interaction



- Townhomes should have architecturally appealing end caps that create an interesting façade to the street and an inviting presence to the sidewalk

Public and Private Open Space

The integration of open space into both residential and commercial development provides focus and helps create a sense of community and a place where people can meet and engage with other users.

Not Preferred



- This open space provides no benefit for the homeowners, and could be a potential safety liability



- Large open spaces that are unplanned and unshaded add little aesthetic or functional value to the neighborhood
- Unnecessary wide street

Preferred



- Homes that face public open space benefit with a premium of up to 23% in value and improved safety
- *Valuing Open Space: Land Economic and Neighborhood Parks. MIT, 2001.*



- Sidewalks and shade trees create pleasant spaces for community interaction and exercise

Public and Private Open Space

Not Preferred



- Lack of a plan or amenities results in little value for the surrounding residents
- Little visual interest
- Minimal tree planting provides little to no shade for users



- A barren, uninviting space becomes a negative influence on the surrounding area
- No shade
- Lacks character

Preferred



- A variety of programming elements makes the open space more inclusive and useful for a variety of activities
- Numerous trees for shading and strategically planted to provide an area for active use



- Trees in public spaces create shade and a sense of enclosure that makes the space feel comfortable and facilitates community interaction
- Movable chairs for people to use

Public and Private Open Space

Not Preferred



- Open space that does not integrate with the surrounding urban environment creates dead, vacant space
- Barrier around the space
- Lack amenities to attract people



- Urban open space is often a left over rather than planned, providing little benefit to the businesses that surround it, such as restaurants, bakeries, and coffee shops

Preferred



- Interjecting open space into the urban fabric creates communal space and a sense of identity for the surrounding neighborhood
- Open to the street at the ends
- Units front open space on the other two sides



- Shade and visibility create a sense of protection and are an important elements of urban open space



- Successful urban open space can be active, offering opportunities to socialize and people watch

Response to Site Conditions

Several of these examples demonstrate the use of site conditions to create value for surrounding properties.

Not Preferred



- A concrete-lined channel creates an ugly wound on the landscape and lowers neighboring property values. Stormwater volume and velocity can also be dangerous during storm events



- On-site storm detention is often maximized by using steep slopes which must be fenced for safety

NotPreferred



- This detention area is little more than an open pit in the ground, with no amenities for the area
- Stark concrete structures eyesores



- A fence is necessary to prevent people from falling into the detention area, but the fence prevents any interaction with the space
- A ramp is provided for maintenance, but does not allow access for other uses

Response to Site Conditions

Appropriately handled, existing site conditions can give an area a sense of uniqueness and “place”, (see also Chapter 7, Ecology & Natural Resources).

Not Preferred



- While the wide open space is highly accessible, it can be improved with shade, trees and diversity of amenities



- Plain concrete culverts are eyesores that detract from the local environment

Preferred



- Building an attractive bridge is much more appealing than an industrial concrete culvert



- The simple act of facing a culvert bridge with masonry can turn an eyesore into an amenity

Response to Site Conditions

Preferred



- This space provides seating areas and plantings as amenities
- The site is designed to facilitate interaction with pedestrians



- As in other examples, a walking path makes the space interactive
- A local restaurant is oriented towards the space, using it as an asset for business

Preferred



- Terracing creates both ample seating, while a pathway and benches allow pedestrians to interact with the space
- The drainage pond functions as an attractive focal point for the area



- A walkway winding through various levels and native plantings invites pedestrians into the space
- An amphitheater transforms the area into a destination in its own right, while the terracing acts as biofiltration for storm runoff

Response to Site Conditions

Preferred



- Pergolas along a walkway create a destination for neighborhood residents, inviting pedestrians onto an overlook



- An attractive stone veneer retaining wall and benches create an overlook for pedestrians to enjoy
- Fountains create a focal point for the drainage areax

Preferred



- A naturalized stream bank and pedestrian bridge, along with shade trees and benches, turn this drainage area into an active open space area



- Retaining walls and shade trees create a neighborhood park
- A stone bridge creates an attractive focal point