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“Successful cities do not just happen. Nor are they necessarily the result of fortuitous history, geography, or economics. They come about because individuals and agencies within the public and private sectors make decisions and take a series of actions.”

Cy Paumier

Creating a Vibrant City Center, 2004
WHO IS **SCENIC HOUSTON**?

Scenic Houston is a non-profit organization working to **preserve** and **enhance** the character of Greater Houston areas, streets, sidewalks, and public spaces. Scenic Houston has long recognized that the character of Houston is linked to the appearance of its public streets and spaces. In fact, Houston’s position as a global economic center offering a high quality of life and attractive urban amenities depends on functional, well-designed, vibrant streetscapes. Thoughtful, **holistic planning and development** will enhance Houston’s public vistas for decades to come.

WHAT’S THE **PURPOSE** OF THE STREETSCAPE RESOURCE GUIDE?

Understanding that any stakeholder interested in Houston streetscape planning and development could benefit from a definitive resource guide — and finding none — Scenic Houston has produced this **Streetscape Resource Guide** with these objectives:

- **SUPPORT** optimal planning design and construction using current Code standards
- **CONSIDER** all users during the planning, design and construction phases
- **ILLUSTRATE** enhanced design standards that can result in long-term cost savings for both public and private investment
- **DEPICT** unintended consequences that can result from lack of cohesive planning
- **ENCOURAGE** continued growth and economic development in the region
HOW DO I USE THE STREETSCAPE RESOURCE GUIDE?

Through sketched street sections and photographs of existing streetscape conditions, this Streetscape Resource Guide is an illustrated companion for successful streetscape planning based on current streetscape development standards in the Houston region.¹ With the information contained herein, any user can become informed about preserving functional, well-designed streetscapes that enhance the character of our city.

Users of this Guide will be able to:

- **LEARN** sound principles and guidelines that govern streetscape development
- **ACCESS** recommendations for improvements to current Right-of-Way (ROW) design standards across pedestrian, travelway and shared streetscape realms
- **RECOMMEND** cross-section sketches of various ROW widths
- **SEE** an array of photos that clearly illustrate results when the recommended enhancements are in place
- **UTILIZE** the information and illustrations in this Guide to advocate for the best street improvements possible

Intended Stakeholders:

- City Officials
- Design Professionals
- Developers
- Management Districts
- Neighborhood Groups
- Residents
- Anyone who is invested in the benefits of thoughtful streetscapes.

¹ A list of relevant guidelines and standards utilized to compile this Guide are located in the Resources and References section.

¹ This Streetscape Resource Guide can be downloaded at www.scenichouston.org/streetscape-houston-project/
This Guide is divided in three sections as indicated in the chart below. Each section is color coded for ease of cross reference.

The boxes below show recommendations for each streetscape realm. The chapters are color coded on the recommended streetscapes for easy reference.

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“The measure of any great civilization is in its cities, and the measure of a city’s greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and squares.”

John Ruskin

*Creating a Vibrant City Center, 2004*
Well-planned pedestrian walkways complement and enhance streetscape function and appearance.

- Create a walkable environment
- Plan for pedestrian volume and activity
- Use pedestrian easements to increase pedestrian realm
- Coordinate pedestrian paths
- Improve access to transit vehicles
- Facilitate access to retail
- Create an enhanced sense of community
- Allow for street amenities such as benches, shelters, and trash receptacles to create a more inviting sense of place
- Improve safety
- Provide landscaping and street trees to:
  - supply shade
  - screen unsightly views
  - reduce stormwater runoff

Trees, signs and utility poles all aligned in right-of-way

Proper species of tree chosen for close proximity of building

Clear walkway throughout

Pedestrian connection points to on-street parking
Decorative amenities

Landscaping and shading

Blodgett and Almeda
All underground and above ground utilities are within landscape area outside of walking path.

Back of house utilities and dumpster enclosures are screened.
Planting buffer between vehicles and pedestrians

Double row of shade trees provides enhanced pedestrian realm canopy
Shared pedestrian and vehicular lighting

Uninterrupted pedestrian sidewalk

Defined crosswalks for safety and mobility

Pedestrian site amenities

Uninterrupted pedestrian sidewalk
Avenida de Las Americas at George R. Brown Convention Center

- Shared location for pedestrian lighting and seating
- Uninterrupted pedestrian sidewalk with enhanced paver design
- Landscape protecting sidewalk and barrier to protect landscape
2.2 Lighting

Pedestrian-oriented lighting adds to overall streetscape safety and character.

- Improve visibility
- Increase the sense of personal safety
- Enhance streetscape character
- Coordinate with existing and proposed street trees to ensure continued illumination
- Direct light to pedestrian areas
- Reduce light pollution and interference with residential spaces

Middle Park along Anita

Light fixtures designed to reduce light pollution

In-ground lighting to illuminate walks without interfering with visual sight lines

Lighting and decorative landscape buffer edge outside of sidewalk
Special light fixtures or art installations provide placemaking elements.

At-grade lighting to limit the number of poles and vertical fixtures.
Pedestrian light fixture appropriately located adjacent to sidewalk

Tree located appropriate distance from light fixture — does not interfere/obscure lighting

Vehicular lighting and seating amenity within landscape area rather than within sidewalk

Pedestrian light fixture appropriately located adjacent to sidewalk

Kirby at West Alabama
2.3 Above-ground Utilities

Well-planned and coordinated placement of above-ground utilities creates a better organized streetscape and improved pedestrian access.

- Focus on above-ground utilities during the planning and early design phase of projects.
- Minimize the number of above-ground utilities where possible.
- Align utilities with street lights and street signs for aesthetic appeal.
- Locate above-ground utilities away from intersections.
- Verify correct utility placement during construction.
- Place above-ground utilities in landscape areas out of pedestrian pathway.
- Design for long-term maintenance of both underground and above-ground utilities.
Above-ground utilities located together in landscaped areas.

Utilities and trees in alignment.

Existing utility poles used for signage.

Clear pedestrian access.
**Kirby at Bissonnet**

- Excessive accumulation of above-ground utilities
- Duplicate fire hydrants unnecessary

**Bering north of San Felipe**

- Obstructed line of sight for motorist exiting driveway
- Inaccessible sidewalk
- Poor planning and execution create problems for pedestrians
2.4 Drainage

Drainage improvements and low impact development strategies allow for an improved pedestrian experience. They divert runoff from pedestrian crossings and slow down and clean storm water before it reaches inlets that flow into the bayous and continue on to Galveston Bay.

- Streets can employ low impact development methods:
  - Reduce impervious areas
  - Store stormwater: This can be done in a surface feature, such as a bioswale, or gravel storage underground
  - Consider permeable surfaces

Considerations for drainage inlets:
- Interrupt stormwater flows. Impervious surfaces like driveways and sidewalks can drain through a vegetated buffer such as a median before they reach a stormwater inlet. This filters out some pollutants before they reach the storm sewer
- Avoid sheet flow across sidewalks, down pedestrian ramps, and in the bicycle travelway
- Design site detention storage to meet relevant safety criteria for pedestrians
- Install internal drainage to allow drainage directly to the street, avoiding pedestrian areas

Pedestrian crosswalks slope to drain and free of standing water

Location of inlets on both sides of pedestrian crosswalk provides a dry path for pedestrians
Inlet location results in drainage flowing across pedestrian path.

Gutter slope too flat, results in debris collection.

Expansive impervious surface with no internal drainage system allows runoff to flow directly to the street across sidewalk.

Parking not adequately separated from the sidewalk.
Drainage swales and inlets within landscape to collect and slow water runoff

Utilities and lighting away from pedestrian pathway

Mandell Park along Bonnie Brae
Driveway trench at base of slope captures runoff

Drainage placement avoids walkway and curbs

Adequate slope (max 2%) prevents accumulation in pedestrian path

Richmond west of Edloe

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2.5 Signage

An improved streetscape should include a coordinated system of directional and informational signage that is aesthetically pleasing, consistent and appropriately located. Signage should:

- Offer direction to key area destinations
- Consolidate and group directional, regulatory and informational signage
- Place outside of pedestrian pathways
- Avoid obstructing motorist views

Combining signs reduces the number of poles

Placing signs on light fixtures reduces the number of poles
Consolidation of signs would avoid unnecessary sign clutter.

Sign pole obstruction blocks pedestrian or wheeled access.
Ensure sign poles are outside of pedestrian walkways

Provide a comprehensive style of signage and wayfinding throughout individual districts
Utilities incorporated within hardscape without blocking pedestrian walks

Overall signage character coordinating throughout the district
Optimally designed and implemented transit stops benefit transit users, pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobile users. Transit system success is heavily dependent upon a transit stop’s ability to accommodate transit users without unnecessarily interrupting the flow of pedestrians or bicyclists on nearby sidewalks and bike paths or vehicles using the street. Well-designed transit stops will plan for:

**Comfort**
- Shelter from rain, wind, cold, heat, sun, and shade — one size does not fit all; the shelter is designed to the specific area
- Provide adequate visibility and lighting to create social safety
- Design to encourage cleanliness by providing trash receptacles and regular maintenance
- Provide a bench or leaning rail, space for a wheelchair, strollers and walkers

**Capacity**
- Size for ridership and boarding needs
- Design for line management determined by ridership and boarding timing

**Access/Placement**
- Consider ADA accessibility standards are met as a minimum
- Ensure adequate pathways so shelter does not interfere with pedestrian or bicycle facilities
- Provide unobstructed boarding areas
- Supply parking for bicycles

**Critical Information and Wayfinding**
- Provide signage include the following information
  - Stop name and number
  - Route number, direction and destination
  - System logo
  - Nearby points of interest
  - Real time displays and wait times

**Aesthetics**
- Include Landscaping and green elements
- Consider signature stop designs and public art

San Felipe at South Post Oak

Upgraded transit stop that is aesthetically pleasing and provides valuable pedestrian refuge

Site amenities and signage within landscape or at dedicated areas to ensure clear pedestrian route
Offset transit stop with clear pedestrian route and accessible space

Ample amount of dedicated space for user staging

Dedicated shelter at transit stop for pedestrian refuge in harsh weather conditions
2.7 Path to Street/Sidewalk Connections

Providing a path to sidewalk and street connections allows pedestrians and bicyclists to access green space and provides alternate travel paths to reach destinations. By providing appropriately designed connections, pedestrians and bicyclists have a safe path that they are likely to use where they feel comfortable.

Well-designed connections include:
- Uninterrupted continuous pathways
- Well-marked intersections
- Separation from vehicles using underpasses or bridges
- High visibility
- Pedestrian and bicycle refuge on large streets
- Reduced traffic speed at junctions
- Adequate lighting
- Trash receptacles
- Bicycle and automobile parking when appropriate
- Wayfinding signage
- ADA compliance as a minimum
- Maintenance planning

Well-placed access to path and from street at edge of bridge and at intersection

Accessible routes from street to devoted pedestrian walks and trails
Montrose and Allen Parkway

Clear access points and connections to pedestrian walks and trails

All utilities placed within adjacent landscape to keep pedestrian paths clear

Public art used at connection locations helps with placemaking
2.8 Bike Facilities

Optimally designed and implemented bike systems benefit transit users, pedestrians, bicyclists and automobile users. Bike system success is dependent upon the ability to accommodate bike parking facilities and bicycle users without unnecessarily interrupting the flow of pedestrians on nearby sidewalks or vehicles utilizing the street.

Characteristics of a good bike parking system:

Comfort
- Cleanliness — plan for regular maintenance, trash bins
- Safety — adequate lighting and visibility

Capacity
- Number of bicycle facilities and size determined by current and future users

Access/Placement
- Provide easy access to pedestrian, transit or vehicular traffic
- Unobstructed
- Avoid interference with pedestrian, transit and vehicular traffic

Provide Critical Information and Wayfinding
- Location name
- Nearby points of interest

Aesthetics
- Landscape and green elements
- Public art
- Signature facility designs
Crawford and Walker B-Station

Clear access points and connections from bicycle parking and pedestrian walks.

Clear directional and information signage located near gathering spaces and bicycle stations.
Memorial City near Gaylord

Provide bicycle racks near pedestrian corridors and walkways

Provide map of accessible routes, bicycle lanes and parking locations
“Streets and their sidewalks, and the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs”

Jane Jacobs
*Death and Life of Great American Cities, 1961*
3.1 Underground Utilities

The organized placement of underground utilities will yield an unobstructed pedestrian realm, a more pleasing overall streetscape experience and can simplify future maintenance and improvements.

- Coordinate the design of hardscape and utilities.
- Sidewalks should be free of impediments such as inlets and above ground utilities.

Kirby at West Main

- Reduction or elimination of all aerial utilities
- Upgraded pedestrian crossings
- Pedestrian refuge within larger right-of-ways improves safety
- All utilities are buried underground and within planting zones with no interference to the pedestrian walkways
Easy access to pedestrian signal buttons

Flat staging for pedestrians provides comfortable waiting position

Collecting drainage behind street corners keeps sidewalk and ramps dry and clean and filters water by passing it across a vegetated buffer

Sidewalk aligned with crosswalk facilitates pedestrian/wheeled access
Visibility is important at street corners where pedestrian activity is often concentrated.

- Place utilities away from intersections and out of visibility triangles
- Show locations of utilities on construction and installation drawings and consider their locations during the design phase
- Verify correct utility placement during construction
- Provide easy access to pedestrian signal buttons
- Provide aligned crosswalk paths and flat staging for pedestrian / wheel access and comply with all ADA requirements
- Keep current and future needs in mind
- Provide refuge areas for pedestrians
- Plan for visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and cars

Pedestrian lighting at corner provides safe and visually appealing night environment

Unimpeded pedestrian walk

Raised median provides protection for pedestrians

No above-ground utilities provides clear motorist views, appealing environment

Clearly defined crosswalk using color and mixed materials

Inlet outside of intersection

Above-ground utilities outside walk
Numerous utilities in walking path are less safe for pedestrians.

Sloped approach ramp makes waiting difficult for wheelchairs.

Ramp not aligned with sidewalk.
Provide protection for pedestrians

Keep lighting and utility poles away from pedestrian walk and crossings
Ensure all above-ground utilities outside of pedestrian walkways

Ensure pedestrian safety at intersections and crossings

Incorporate bicycle parking and refuge along with public art
Pedestrian tactile warnings and enhanced corner at intersection

Bollards designed to provide pedestrian safety

Utilities organized offset from pedestrian movement
3.3 Shared Curb Cuts

Curb cuts should be minimized to reduce pedestrian and vehicle crossings. This also creates a more attractive pedestrian realm and facilitates smooth flow of all traffic with greater opportunities for landscaping.

- Minimize curb cuts
- Provide visual and tactile cues to warn pedestrians about vehicle crossings

Curb cuts consolidated at major driveway connections creates a more attractive and safe pedestrian realm.

Too many curb cuts create dangerous vehicular access points.

Texas Parkway at Kenforest

Barryknoll at Strey
3.4 Sustainability

Streetscapes can be more sustainable by supporting habitat, helping to manage stormwater with natural features, and using resources responsibly.

- Use native plants and minimize the use of turf grass. Turf grass requires more water, fertilizer, and carbon-intensive maintenance than native planting.
- Plant trees. Trees absorb stormwater, make the sidewalk safer and more comfortable for pedestrians, reduce heat island effect, and clean the air of carbon dioxide.
- Use light fixtures that minimize light pollution. Light should be directed down toward surfaces needing light. This helps preserve the night sky and nocturnal habitat.
Use of native plants within right-of-ways, planting areas or adjacent property minimizes water use.
“While vehicular access and parking must be convenient and efficient, it is important to give the pedestrian clear priority in order to encourage walking and enliven the streets.”

Cy Paumier
*Creating a Vibrant City Center, 2004*
4.1 On-Street Parking

There are many design options for on-street parking:
- Parking on outside edge of wide lane
- Parallel parking in separate lane
- Angled parking
- Head-in parking

Streetscape elements near on-street parking have a significant impact on the safety and quality of the parking. Some of these items include:
- Drainage
- Streetlights
- Pedestrian lights
- Burned out bulbs
- Visibility when backing out

Provide an adequate distance from intersections to the first on-street parking space in order to assure visibility and appropriate sight lines.

Provide adequate access to pedestrian pathways.

Provide sufficient distance from travel lanes for safe ingress / egress.

Consider landscape separation from vehicular traffic.

Parked vehicles and landscape separation from road lanes enhance experience for pedestrians.

Curb cut-back parking area provides clear road lanes for motorists.
Pavers extended to curb between trees allow direct access from vehicle to sidewalk.

Parallel parking with handicap ramp incorporated in sidewalk and parking space.

Gutter on street side of parking space helps define parallel parking area.
Sufficient pedestrian refuge at parallel parking between landscape and curb.

Sufficient distance from adjacent travel lane for easy and safe ingress/egress.
Sufficient space for easy ingress/egress between buffer landscape.

Drainage rain garden near street parking spaces improves aesthetic design.
4.2 Medians

Roadway medians can offer benefits for pedestrians, cyclists and automobile traffic.

- Separate lanes of opposing traffic
- Provide a space to incorporate trees and landscaping, which helps to clean and store stormwater
- Offer refuge to pedestrians and bikers crossing wide streets
No refuge area makes street crossing difficult and unsafe for pedestrians.
Provide clear separation for pedestrian walk and major roadway

Landscaped areas reduce water run off and are aesthetically pleasing
Grisby at Westlake Park

Defined pedestrian walks through vehicular drive lanes

Safe refuge within medians to provide pedestrian safety

Drainage gutters away from pedestrian walks and vehicular intersection
4.3 Bikeway

Well-designed bikeway facilities provide a number of benefits. High-comfort bikeways encourage people to use bicycles for transportation. Optimally designed bike lanes increase the safety of both bicyclists and motorists and recent studies show that bike lanes lead to increases in business in an area. Separated bike lanes allow bicycles to travel at appropriate speeds, facilitate safe behavior for both bicyclists and motorists, and may provide an additional buffer between vehicles and pedestrians.

It is critical to identify appropriate streets for bikeways.

Well-designed bike travel facilities include:
- A separated bike lane when the speed of cars is greater than 30 mph
- A minimum width of 6’
- Good connectivity
- Intersections designed for the safety of bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicular traffic
- Appropriately designed bike staging areas at intersections
- Adequate lighting
- Adequate sight lines
- Adequate lane marking
- Good wayfinding information
Lamar at Travis

Dedicated and well-defined bike lane adjacent to the vehicular drive area

Well-placed separation barrier to provide increased safety for bicycle user

Utilities aligned along road to help provide clear pedestrian route

Dedicated and well-defined bike lane adjacent to the vehicular drive area
“The city center’s most important public spaces are its streets — the space from building front to building front, including street pavement. Because of their visibility, streets can play a powerful role in building a positive, unified city image.”

Cy Paumier
Creating a Vibrant City Center, 2004
The intent is to provide more pedestrian space on the edge of the right-of-way in the areas of wider sidewalks, more space to plant street trees and screening shrubs, as well as providing an alignment and consolidation of above-ground utilities and street signage. This can be accomplished by reducing median widths and moving that area to the edge of the right-of-way as well as suggesting sidewalk easements on adjacent properties where the right-of-way is limited in size.
5.2 Recommended Right-of-Way Section
80’ Right-of-Way
5.2 Recommended Right-of-Way Section
80' Right-of-Way
5.3 Recommended Right-of-Way Section
100’ Right-of-Way
5.3 Recommended Right-of-Way Section
100’ Right-of-Way
“Human will can be imposed effectively on our cities so that the form they take expresses the highest aspirations of our civilization. ... Building cities is one of man’s greatest achievements. ... A city’s physical form is determined by the decisions made by the people who live in it.”

Edmund Bacon  
*Design of Cities, 1967*
6.1 Existing City of Houston Streetscape Controls

The existing codes and guidelines that govern streetscape development in the City of Houston are outlined in the adjacent chart.

Primarily, streetscape development is governed by City of Houston Ordinances and the City of Houston Infrastructure Design Manual. Additional input on select elements is provided in the City of Houston Code and State and Federal documents such as the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the AASHTO Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets.

The Streetscape Resource Guide is included as a reference in the City of Houston Infrastructure Design Manual.

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City of Houston CIP [www.houstontx.gov/cip]
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### 1. Landscaping, Pedestrian Access, Walkways and Amenities

1. **Encourage walkability**

2. **Plan for pedestrian volume and activity**

3. **Use a pedestrian easement to increase pedestrian realm**

4. **Coordinate pedestrian paths**
   - Plan for transit access
   - Plan for access to retail

5. **Create an enhanced sense of community**

6. **Provide landscaping and street trees to**
   - Supply shade
   - Screen unsightly views
   - Reduce stormwater runoff

### 2. Lighting

1. **Provide appropriate light fixtures placement and spacing for pedestrian walkways and seating**
   - Improve visibility
   - Increase the sense of personal safety
   - Enhance streetscape character
   - Coordinate with existing and proposed street trees to ensure continuous illumination
   - Direct all lights to pedestrian areas to prevent light pollution

2. **Allow for street amenities such as benches, shelters, and trash receptacles to create a more inviting sense of place**

### 3. Utilities

1. **Focus on above-ground utilities during the planning and early design phase of projects**

2. **Minimize the number of above-ground utilities where possible**

3. **Align utilities with street lights and street signs for aesthetic appeal**

4. **Place above-ground utilities in landscaped areas out of pedestrian pathways**

5. **Verify correct utility placement during construction**

6. **Design for long-term maintenance of both underground and above-ground utilities**
### 6.2 Streetscape Resource Guide Design Checklist: a tool to guide stakeholder engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.0 PEDESTRIAN REALM</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 4. Drainage

4.1 Design for low impact when possible
- Reduce impervious area
- Store stormwater
- Use permeable surfaces where appropriate

4.2 Consider drainage inlets
- Avoid sheet flow across sidewalks, down pedestrian ramps and in bicycle travelway
- Design site detention storage to meet relevant safety criteria for pedestrians
- Install internal drainage to allow drainage directly to the street to avoid pedestrian areas

#### 5. Signage

5.1 Provide direction to key area destinations

5.2 Directional, informational and regulatory signage should be consolidated and grouped

5.3 Place signage outside of pedestrian pathways

5.4 Avoid obstruction of motorist views

#### 6. Transit

6.1 Design transit stops for comfort
- Shelter from rain, wind, cold, heat, sun and shade
- Encourage cleanliness by designing for maintenance and providing trash receptacles
- Provide a bench or leaning rail, space for a wheelchair, strollers and walkers

6.2 Design transit stops for capacity
- Size for ridership and boarding needs
- Design for line management as determined by ridership and boarding timing

6.3 Design for access
- ADA accessible is a minimum standard
- Adequate pathways so shelter does not interfere with pedestrian or bicycle facilities
- Boarding areas are unobstructed
- Bicycle parking

6.4 Provide critical information and wayfinding
- Stop name and number
- Route number, direction and destination
- System logo
- Nearby attractions
- Real time displays and wait times

6.5 Provide for aesthetics
- Landscaping and green elements
- Signature stop designs
- Public art
## 7. Path to Street/Sidewalk Connections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Pathways should be continuous with no interruptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Intersections should be well marked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Provide separations from vehicles by providing underpasses or bridges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Provide high visibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Provide pedestrian and bicycle refuge on large streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>Reduce traffic speeds at junctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Provide adequate lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>Provide trash facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>Bicycle and automobile parking when appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.10</td>
<td>Provide appropriate wayfinding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>ADA compliance is a minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.12</td>
<td>Plan for maintenance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 8. Bike Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 8.1 | Design for comfort  
  - Cleanliness; plan for regular maintenance and trash receptacles  
  - Provide adequate lighting and visibility for safety |
| 8.2 | Design for adequate capacity  
  - The number of bicycle facilities and size should be determined by current and future users |
| 8.3 | Design for access  
  - Provide easy access to pedestrians, transit or vehicular traffic  
  - Unobstructed  
  - Avoid interference with pedestrian, transit and vehicular traffic |
| 8.4 | Provide critical information and wayfinding  
  - Location name  
  - Nearby attractions and businesses |
| 8.5 | Provide for aesthetics  
  - Landscape and green elements  
  - Public art  
  - Signature facility designs |
### 3.0 SHARED REALM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Underground Utilities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Consolidate the design of hardscape and utilities</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Sidewalks should be free of impediments such as inlets and above-ground utilities</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. intersections</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Plan intersections to provide visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and cars</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Place utilities away from intersections and out of visibility triangles</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Utility planning should take place during the design phase with locations shown on construction and installation drawings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Verify correct utility placement during construction</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.5 Provide easy access to pedestrian signal buttons</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.6 Provide aligned crosswalk facilities and flat staging for pedestrian/wheeled access and comply with all ADA requirements</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.7 Provide pedestrian refuge areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.8 Keep current and future needs in mind</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Shared Curb Cuts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Minimize curb cuts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2 Provide adequate visual signals for pedestrians at curb cuts</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Sustainability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Use native plants and minimize the use of turf grass</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.2 Plant trees</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.3 Use light fixtures that minimize light pollution. Light should be directed down toward surfaces needing light</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 1. On-Street Parking

1.1 Provide adequate distance from intersections to street parking to assure pedestrian visibility

1.2 Provide adequate access to pedestrian pathways

1.3 Provide sufficient distance from travel lanes for safe ingress/egress
   - Consider landscape separation for automobile traffic

1.4 Consider the elements near on-street parking that significantly impact the safety and quality of the parking
   - Drainage
   - Streetlights
   - Pedestrian lights
   - Bulb outs
   - Visibility when backing out

### 2. Medians

2.1 Provide pedestrian refuge when possible

2.2 Consider using median area for storm water cleaning by utilizing bio-drainage methods

### 3. Bicycle Travelway

3.1 Provide a separated bike lane or side path when the speed of cars is greater than 30 mph

3.2 Bicycle Travelway should be a minimum of 6 feet

3.3 Provide good connectivity

3.4 Design intersections for the safety of bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicular traffic

3.5 Provide appropriately designed bike staging areas at intersections

3.6 Provide adequate lighting

3.7 Provide adequate sight lines

3.8 Lane markings should be clear

3.9 Provide good wayfinding information

3.10 Prior to design or installation identify appropriate streets for bike travelways

### Notes:
These guidelines are in addition to all city, state, and federal requirements.
6.3 Glossary

**Above-ground Utility**
Utilities such as a pole-mounted telephone, telegraph, or power line.

**Accessible Route**
A continuous unobstructed path connecting all accessible elements and spaces of a building or facility. Interior accessible routes may include corridors, floors, ramps, elevators, lifts, and clear floor space at fixtures.

**Amenity**
Something that helps to provide comfort, convenience, or enjoyment.

**Bioswale**
A long, channeled depression or trench that receives rainwater runoff (as from a parking lot) and has vegetation (such as grasses, flowering herbs, and shrubs) and organic matter (such as mulch) to slow water infiltration and filter out pollutants.

**Hardscape**
Structures (such as fountains, benches, or gazebos) that are incorporated into a landscape.

**Impervious Surface**
Surface composed of any material that impedes or prevents natural infiltration of water into the soil. Impervious surfaces shall include but are not limited to roofs, solid decks, driveways, patios, sidewalks, parking areas, tennis courts, concrete or asphalt streets, or compacted gravel surfaces.

**Native Plants**
A native plant is one that occurs naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, or habitat without direct or indirect human intervention.

**Permeable**
Capable of being permeated; penetrable; especially: having pores or openings that permit liquids or gases to pass through.

**Public Utility**
1. a service (such as light, power, or water) provided by a public utility
2. equipment or a piece of equipment to provide such service or a comparable service service used by the public.

**Right-of-Way or R.O.W.**
1. a: legal right of passage over another person's ground
2. a: the area over which a right-of-way exists
   b: the strip of land over which is built a public road
   c: the land occupied by a railroad especially for its main line
   d: the land used by a public utility (as for a transmission line)

**Streetscape**
1. the appearance or view of a street
2. a work of art depicting a view of a street

**Sustainability**
1. of, relating to, or being a method of harvesting or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged, including sustainable techniques, sustainable agriculture, etc.
2. of, or relating to, a lifestyle involving the use of sustainable methods or part of a sustainable society.

**Turf Grass**
Any of various grasses (such as Kentucky bluegrass or perennial ryegrass) grown to form turf.
6.4 References and Other Resources

Users of this Guide may find additional information with good examples related to a variety of streetscape elements by reviewing these additional sources.


Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Federal Regulations


Building Healthy Places Tool Kit, Urban Land Institute (ULI), Center for Active Design (2015)

City of Dallas Development Code, Section 51

City of Houston Infrastructure Design Manual

City of Houston Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan

City of Houston Sign Code, Chapter 46

City of Houston Tree & Shrub Ordinance

City of Houston Urban Transit Corridor Ordinance, Chapter 42


City Repair’s Placemaking Guidebook, City Repair (Victor Dover, John Massengale) (2nd Edition, February 2011)

Creating a Vibrant City Center (Cy Paumier, Urban Land Institute) (January 2004)


Global Street Design Guide, NACTO (2016)

Great Streets Development Program, City of Austin

Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities (AASHTO, 1999)

Guidelines for Bicycles and Pedestrian Facilities in Texas, Texas Transportation Institute (June 1997)

Harris County On-Premise Signs Regulations

Harris County Tree & Shrub Regulations

How to Turn a Place Around, Project for Public Spaces (December 2000)

Institute of Transportation Engineers

International Building Code (incorporates Uniform Building Code)

Making Toronto's Streets, Paul M. Hess, University of Toronto, Beth Ryerson, Millroy University (Sept 2006)


Pedestrian Crossing Guidelines for Texas, Sharon Turner, Paul Carlson, Texas Transportation Institute (December 2000)

Pedestrian Malls, Streetscapes and Urban Spaces, Harvey Rubenstein (John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1992)

Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide - Federal Highway Administration (May 2015)

Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (TxMUTCD) (Revision 2, 2011)


Transit Street Design, National Association of City Transportation Officials NACTO (2018)


Urban Intersection Design Guide, Texas Transportation Institute (February 2005)
This Guide was developed by Scenic Houston through the oversight of an Advisory Committee comprised of experts in streetscape planning and private real estate development. As this Guide was developed, Advisory Committee members met with City of Houston officials to ensure the content was compatible with the City’s regulations and policies.

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