

Survey Description, Format, and Response Rate

- Submissions were open from Oct. 2015 to Jan. 2016.
- Survey responses were accepted both online and in a paper format. http://www.beautifulbellaire.com was the website. Written forms were distributed and collected at the Bellaire Library and Bellaire City Hall.
- Answers were kept anonymous, with each member of a household allowed to submit individual opinions
- No residency restrictions were enforced, but over 99% of respondents self-reported as living in Bellaire.
- The survey included multiple choice demographic questions, but used an open ended format primarily.
- A total of 1,021 surveys were completed, with the vast majority returned using the online method.
- Answers were generally thoughtful, and showed strong familiarity with Bellaire and the issues being explored by CBB's beautification effort.
- 🥯 In total, respondents wrote 183,000 words, and spent approximately 484 combined hours filling out the online version of the beautification survey.
- participants were overwhelmingly supportive of beautification in Bellaire. However, this analysis also aimed to fully consider the views of those opposed to the prioritization of beautification or certain elements

- Primary author and analyst was Christopher Butler (CBB, Bellaire P&Z, urban planner).
- Representation CBB members were heavily involved in question selection, promoting survey participation, and bias reduction (by assisting with text analysis rules).
- The City of Bellaire advertised the survey through various online and facility channels, but did not fund the process or exercise any influence over analysis.
- Given Bellaire's population, the 1,021 responses would be mathematically sufficient to grant a strong confidence level and low margin of error. However, the survey used a self selecting and anonymous group, so the representativeness of its sample population cannot be assessed. This analysis will make no claims about statistical fit or prediction, nor is it even necessary given the project's phase 1 goals.
- Empirical evidence suggests that this survey reached a similar sample population in Bellaire as the US Census. Equivalent demographics questions returned strikingly similar results on both. However, this still falls short of the statistical proof needed to state confidence level or margin of error figures.

Project Purpose, Understanding this Analysis

- The survey and analysis goals shifted to follow evolved mandates of CBB (something the open ended format accommodated). In this phase, the survey and analysis are intended to:
 - 📚 seek public input to determine community desires regarding beautification
 - e help writing consultant and contractor project scopes (if sentiment proves supportive)
 - solicit actionable public opinion for future studies and projects addressing beautification
- The survey's dataset is a rich source of public input that can be utilized in future phases of this beautification effort, and other city projects that need an understanding of citizen views of civic image.
- This survey is very different from opinion polls seeking to simulate an up or down vote on any one issue. Instead, it is more like a 1,000 person town hall session session meant to brainstorm the issues.
- Some overwhelming consensus came forward, but this phase is more about deciding which questions need asking, not coming back with firm answers.
- The opinions expressed in this analysis are of the survey respondents, not of CBB's members (though many of them took and promoted the survey).
- The annotative text added to this analysis is meant to explain how to read the results, and highlight some key points made by participants. It is not an exhaustive discussion, with many important notions not mentioned to save space and focus on the big picture. The annotation also stops short of recommending actions (a necessary step to extend this phase into a full Beautification Master Plan).



rengths of Bellaire's Current cance parks relatively clean private landscaping estal public safety public safety formula finity community estal large lots public safety formula finity community estal large lots for the large lots formula finity community estal large lots for the large lots for the

theme elements single fam. homes new houses for billion delivery house for billion delivery houses for billion del public landscaping good maintenance

street repair/replacement varied architectur

a In a SWOT Analysis, "Strengths" are positives that currently exist. Also, strengths are internal, meaning the City or Bellaire's land owners control them.

The top 60% of identified appearance strengths involve ome and neighborhood focused (trees, landscaping, homes, facilities, and parks).

Landscaping/trees lead answers, but maintenance involves many responsible parties. Keeping these as strengths will require different strategies for trees in greenery, and retail landscaping.

Zoning/development regs. were unusually prominent for such a technical topic, indicating the unique strength it gives Bellaire in a mostly unzoned Houston region.

Mouses and a focus on homes naturally scored very well, but other related topics were also strong. These included active neighborhoods & lively streets.

A SWOT's "Weaknesses" hurt the community today. These are internal, under authority of local government or Bellaire owners.

Some weaknesses identified by participants can be improved by beautification work, such as better landscaping and street upkeep/planning. However, over half of answers were issues requiring work through zoning, economic development, regional cooperation, and private owners.

Commercial land was a big issue with the Triangle and Downtown drawing the most ire. Lacking economic development lenient standards were cited.

Even houses were a source of concern for some. Yard/structure maintenance, "trendy" new home architecture, and over covered lots were common annoyances

Sidewalk gaps proved unpopular in neighborhoods, while the design of retail streets drew major disappointment. Maintenance failures were mentioned as well

Weaknesses of Bellaire's dilapidated businesses overhead lines, road striping/signs 610 litter/weeds no architectural strandards

shabby/junky/messy feels barren no/broken curbs behind other cities few plants/flowers behind other cities few plants/flowers business feels barren no/broken curbs behind other cities few plants/flowers business feels barren no/broken curbs behind other cities few plants/flowers business feels barren no/broken curbs behind other cities few plants/flowers business feels barren no/broken curbs behind other cities few plants/flowers business feels barren no/broken curbs business feels busi

pedestrian threatening overgrown/weeds no city gateways, looks unattractive lots of old buildings no sidewalks looks unplanned inadequate drainage no sidewalks looks unplanned median design wrong econ. dev. focus speeding/cut-through trash/litter bus. below home standard

x/wrong zoning low-end commercial feel bad lighting

many chains/strip-mails bad lighting

Opportunities to Improve recognizable gateways connected facilities more restaurants consistent building style recognizable gateways improved drainage tiered wayfinding designed for bikes establish Tri/DT vision park/ROW maintenance tiered wayfinding e's Appearance plan Tri/DT retail think past city limits high development standards parking lot esplanades litter free

business traighter poles theme more greens pace theme more greens paced tree preservation business traighter poles theme more greens paced tree preservation business act city-wide lussh/connected power lines act city-wide lussh/connected parks paced power lines lussh/connected parks pread pocket parks pedestrian inviting finish Evelyn's Park before street lighting to the spread packet parks paced or the preservation business act city-wide lussh/connected parks pread pocket parks pedestrian inviting finish Evelyn's Park before street lighting to the spread packet finish Evelyn's Park better street lighting house skiller Smaintain quality streets replace low-end retail neighborhood esplanades

fix Tri/DT circulation upgrade Tri/DT architecture regular park updates yard care standard pedestrian friendly Tri/DT pedestrian friendly Tri/DT seasonal color/decoration Bellaire targeted retail

category citizens suggested. This inter-disciplinar high standards set by Bellaire homes. Sentiment suggested a few catalyst projects could begin a district-wide reinvigoration for Downtown and the Triangle, reinforcing investment in Town Square.

Survey respondents recognized that opportunities to fix many weaknesses will need strong cooperation between Bellaire and Houston, METRO, TxDOT, West U/Southside Place, and Uptown.

The survey revealed support for several beautification related projects to resume or be undertaken for the first time: aesthetic and vision Triangle/Downtown master planning, street character (thoroughfare planning), and wayfinding/entryway planning.

"Opportunities" are positives that don't yet exist (or have not been fully realized), and can include external strengths that could be captured for internal benefit.

"Opportunities" highlight many potential appearance benefits that can be brought to Bellaire, but many require work not typically associated with beautification.

When brainstorming ways to help Bellaire's image, survey respondents veered into territory many existing City boards and organizations already address. This is a chance for comprehensive beautification, benefiting from many specialties and interests.

The top opportunity category

focuses on turning Bellaire into an Esplanade City. This would add traditional esplanades to major streets. It would establish esplanade design concepts that can be added to green space in parks, neighborhoods, trails, and parking lots to tie them into the system. It could even focus on Downtown rights of way to create an urban forest from the Triangle to a rebuilt Bellaire Town Square.

"Challenges" are potential blocks to improvement opportunities in that section of a SWOT analysis. They are future issues (either weaknesses that get worse, or new problems "moving in").

Any project inspired by an opportunity must be protected from the issues raised in this section of the SWOT analysis.

The top future problems raised by participants were budget and time. For most, the worry was about a lack of funds or reallocation due to budget emergencies. In fairness, another group worried that money spent on beautification is wasteful. The survey results should not be read as a "vote," but the majority of respondents favor beautification. For them the threat of budget is about too little money being spent.

The Triangle/Downtown area continued to receive significant attention. In this case, stakeholders worried a lack of action will lead to future blight Another concern was that failure to plan would yield "so so" edevelopment that misses a chance for signature projects.

Challenges to Improving Bellaire's Appearance

nce DT/Tri hurting city image not funding beautification he

blighted Tri/DT land losing Bellaire's culture city staff not adjoining Houston land no/wrong theme blend 3% street decline & growing traffic misunderstood vision commercial blight regional traffic growth no political will 3% worsening com

uninterested owners ons CC leadership inaction

Delayed action was itself mentioned. Some worried that citizens will become blind to gradually worsening conditions, and settle for unattractive infrastructure and businesses. Lost momentum from endless planning (but not doing) was another worry. Conversely, acting without a consensus plan/vision concerned other respondents

5% beautification

A reduction of interest after gentrification, housing price rise, and lost identity was raised as possibly dampening future grassroots action.

A possible lack of regional cooperation worried many. Specifically decline into blight on adjacent Houston land, or uncooperative METRO and TxDOT (regarding 610 and the bus transfer center).

Opinions were mixed if the bigger threat was asking too little or too much from developers. The majority favored higher standards (though this survey does not claim a representative sample). Both sides agreed owners with no redevelopment interest were a problem