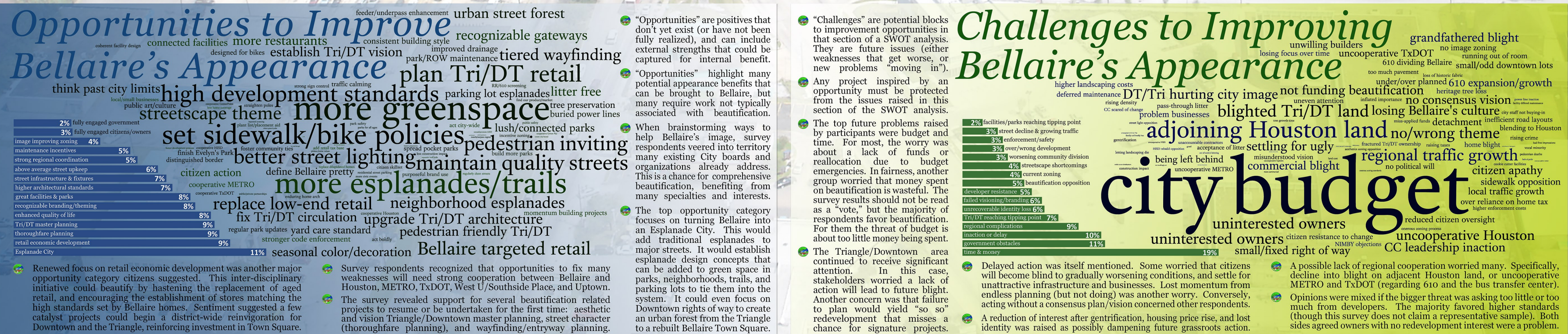
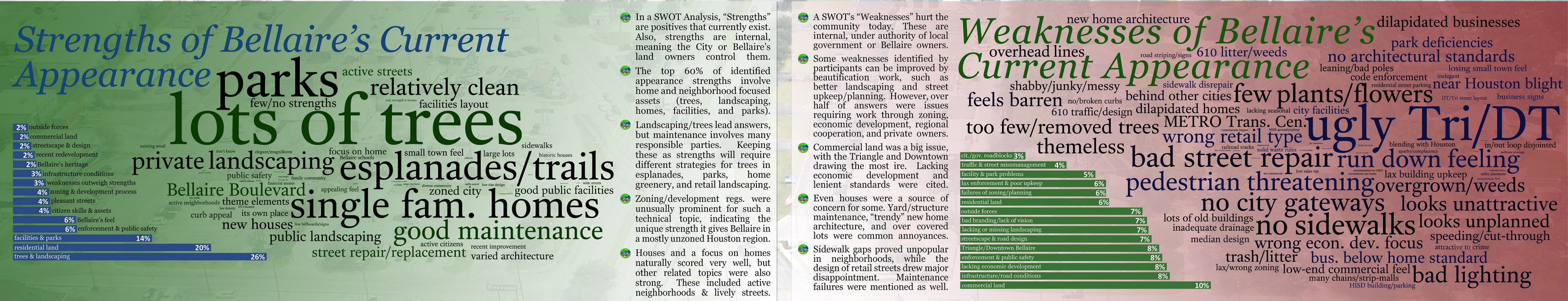


Survey Description, Format, and Response Rate

- 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.
- The survey's primary author and analyst was Christopher Butler (CBB, Bellaire P&Z, urban planner).
- 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
 - 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).



- Renewed focus on retail economic development was another major opportunity category citizens suggested. This inter-disciplinary initiative could beautify by hastening the replacement of aged retail, and encouraging the establishment of stores matching the high standards set by Bellaire homes. Sentiment suggested a few catalyst projects could begin a district-wide reinavigation 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” redevelopment that misses a chance for signature projects.
- 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.
- A reduction of interest after gentrification, housing price rise, and lost identity was raised as possibly dampening future grassroots action.
- unwilling builders, losing focus over time, uncooperative TxDOT, 610 dividing Bellaire, too much pavement, loss of historic fabric, under/over planned 610 expansion/growth, inflated importance, uneven attention, not funding beautification, blighted Tri/DT land, losing Bellaire's culture, inefficient road layouts, detaching, blending to Houston, rising crime, home blight, road minority, pedestrian deaths, double center facilities, city staff not buying in, over reliance on home tax, higher enforcement costs, CC leadership inaction, uncooperative Houston, reduced citizen oversight, citizen resistance to change, NIMBY objections, time & money, small/fixed right of way, uninterested owners, uninterested owners, small/fixed right of way.
- 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.