Scenic Texas is proudly showcasing a Scenic City each week to feature each city's unique and best qualities. We want to share what qualifies a city to be a certified Scenic City. No two cities are alike and in a big state like Texas, you'll find that Texas Scenic Cities are each rich in history, offer something special and there is a city for everyone.

Whatever your plans are this summer, send us a virtual postcard. We’d love to see how you celebrate our beautiful state, so we can share to info@scenictexas.org and inspire others to visit Texas Scenic Cities.
Scenic Texas is excited to announce its 2nd Annual Scenic City of the Year competition. What does it take to win? Tell us what makes your city "More Than A City." All certified Scenic Cities can apply by clicking on the link below and completing the Scenic City of the Year application by **September 16, 2023, by 5:00 pm**. Becoming the 2023 Scenic City of the Year is an outstanding achievement and honor that exemplifies your city’s commitment to high-quality municipal standards. Entries will be judged by a select group of committed peer industry leaders, along with Scenic Texas committee members. In addition, Scenic Texas is also providing an opportunity for your city to win the People's Choice Award. This is a great way to get your community and citizens involved in supporting the city where they enjoy living and working.

**Voting for the People's Choice Award** is online and open to the public at scenictexas.org. Scenic Cities can apply and vote today by opening the links below.
## SCENIC CITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

### NEWLY QUALIFIED SCENIC CITIES
- Goliad
- Lake Jackson
- Mineola
- Orange Grove
- Premont
- Port Aransas
- Port Lavaca
- Round Rock
- San Marcos
- Schertz

These cities have applied to either rank up, recertify, or become a Scenic Certified City. Their designation will be announced at the Scenic City Award’s Ceremony at the Texas Municipal League Conference on October 5th.

### RECERTIFIED CITIES
- Corinth
- Duncanville
- Little Elm
- McKinney
- Prosper
- West University Place
- Seabrook

### CITIES RISING IN THE RANK
- Argyle
- DeSoto
- Horseshoe Bay
- Mesquite
- McAllen

## JOIN US FOR THE SCENIC CITY AWARD’S CEREMONY AT THE TML CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

**TEXAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE**

111th Annual Conference and Exhibition  
October 4-6, 2023 • Dallas

### KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON CONVENTION CENTER

### SCENIC CITY RESOURCES

- **BYWAYS INFORMATION**

- **SCENIC TEXAS RESOURCE GUIDE**

### GATEWAY MARKERS AVAILABLE

- **Scenic Texas Platinum Certified City 2022-2027**
  - Size: 18" x 12"
  
To order, contact

info@scenictexas.org
Dripping Springs Distilling, Sponsors and Cyclists (106) for making our For the Love Texas Bike Ride a huge success. Cyclists experienced the adventure of riding their bicycles through a beautiful leisure region with iconic hill country views in the charming Scenic City of Dripping Springs. The bike ride was packed with plenty of door prizes, tasty food, t-shirt giveaways and live music. For many cyclists, it will become their annual tradition.

**Early Registration begins November 1, 2023**

3rd Annual For the Love of Texas Bike Ride
April 2024

VIEW 2022 BIKE RIDE PHOTOS
Scenic Texas and its allies worked tirelessly during the recent regular session to protect our state’s scenic beauty against a number of bills that would have provided billboard companies expanded opportunities to erect more billboards, even in cities where they are highly regulated or prohibited.

On the good news front, the legislature continued the Green Ribbon Program operated by the Texas Department of Transportation, which sets aside money from each highway project for native landscaping upon completion of the project. This program has been in place since 2001.

On the defensive front, the billboard companies came to the legislature with at least half dozen bills designed to allow for more billboards, either directly or by weakening cities’ authority to regulate billboards in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the cities. Among the bad bills Scenic Texas helped to defeat were bills; allowing billboard companies to relocate signs and give the companies property rights not provided to other business owners; allowing billboard companies to cut down roadside vegetation if the companies believed the vegetation blocked the billboard, without any input from TxDOT; prohibiting cities from regulating billboards in their ETJs; and allowing dynamic messaging billboards along the state’s highways rights of way.

Unfortunately, a bill to reduce the amount of parkland a city can demand from a developer (or pay a fee in lieu of) when developers are getting city approvals for their development plans, passed this session.

Finally, the legislature continues its efforts to limit or eliminate cities’ ability to regulate certain functions or activities. The legislature passed a bill this past session to limit the scope of city regulation in several public policy areas, requiring city ordinances to be no more restrictive than state law. Fortunately, the bill did not impact cities’ ability to regulate billboards.

As always, our efforts are a result of teamwork, and we couldn’t do it without your help.

Jim Arnold
Public Affairs
VOTED YES
On the good Bill side, HB 1 passed - Green Ribbon Appropriations

SB 2038, one of our “watch ETJ” bills, did pass which is concerning due to its challenging petition and election provisions but its ultimate impact remains a bit unclear

VOTED NO
1. Relocation Bill Dead
2. Bad Tree/Vegetation Bill Dead
3. Bad ETJ Bill HB 4285 Dead
4. Bad Dynamic Message Sign Bill Dead
5. Bad ETJ Bill #2 Bill Dead

FRIENDS OF CARROLL SHADDOCK FOUNDERS CIRCLE

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Learn More
Bay City, TX Tree Giveaway at Riverside Park

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) selected Bay City’s Riverside Park Community Tree Program as the winner of the Water Innovation Strategies of Excellence (WISE) Award in the category of Completed Effort (Less Than $200,000). Bay City attributed this award as a result of their partnership with Scenic Texas.
I am always interested in how people come to support certain groups or organizations and what brought them to do so. I grew up on a farm in Nebraska. As a child, I just took for granted looking up in the sky and seeing the Milky Way and the stars. Years later, I took my grandchildren to my 130-year-old adobe home in West Texas for a visit. They had grown up in Oklahoma between Oklahoma City and Tulsa and then moved to Fort Worth. We were in my back yard and one of them asked me what that “white stuff” was in the sky. They had truly never been able to see the Milky Way under such a dark sky, and they were amazed! Unfortunately, observing the Milky Way and the dark skies, as I did as a child is becoming much more difficult. With the large cities, climate issues, and a lot of “space junk” the skies aren’t so amenable to star gazing these days.

The International Dark Sky website states: “For billions of years all life has relied on Earth’s predictable rhythm of day and night. It’s encoded in the DNA of all plants and animals. Humans have radically disrupted this cycle by lighting up the night! Plants and animals depend on Earth’s daily cycle of light and dark rhythm to govern life-sustaining behaviors such as reproduction, nourishment, sleep, and protection from predators.”

Artificial light has altered our environment in drastic ways. And yet, there is much to be excited about in the Dark Skies community. There are Dark Sky Chapters all over the world working to support everyone’s ability to continue to enjoy the dark skies. The United States has over 120 chapters; Texas has ten chapters. You can find a chapter near you by going to darksky.org.

So why should you get involved in supporting the Dark Skies? Maybe, like me, you grew up in a small community or a farm or ranch and value the ability to observe the stars. Or maybe you grew up in a major city and realize how important it is to be able to have places where one can observe the stars, the planets, etc. Many people are involved in the environmental community and understand the deep connection between humans, animals and plants, and the dark.

An easy way to get involved with the dark skies is to go to the website and just wander around on the site. There are so many opportunities to become more knowledgeable and engaged. But an easy way to take a first step is to simply look around your own environment. Take a look at your lighting and see what may not be meeting good lighting practices. Many types of lighting are sending light up into the sky instead of down to the area that requires lighting.

The Dark Sky website has lots of recommendations for lighting that meets their guidelines and still gives the type of safety and security that people require. Small steps like making lighting changes can make large impacts if many people become involved. We can all make a difference by protecting our dark skies.

Linda Beranek
Scenic Texas Board Member
Scenic Texas supporters are the bedrock of our organization. Our donors, members, partners, and supporters continue to play a crucial role in supporting our efforts to preserve and enhance the visual character of Texas.

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Conroe Texas
becapturedphotography@yahoo.com
WAYS YOU CAN HELP TEXAS

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• Become a Scenic Texas Member: https://www.scenictexas.org/donate
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