

Scenic Texas

THE OUTLOOK

FOR THE LOVE OF TEXAS

FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

MISSION CENTERED HIGHLIGHT



SCENIC CITY LEADERSHIP NETWORK (SCLN)

Scenic Texas Leadership Network was established for Scenic Cities to provide support, share resources, strategies, build relationships, and strengthen municipalities. Scenic Cities meet virtually once a month to work together with partnered communities, provide program assistance and oversight, and collaborate and engage with municipalities. To do so, we formed a network that includes teams of planners, landscape architects, educators, park developers, and other municipal professionals. To Join or Learn More, call 361-688-4571

38 YEARS OF IMPACT - 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

2023

SCENIC CITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Promoted best practices & served Texas cities through our statewide Scenic City Certification Program



SCENIC CITY SHOWCASE

Launched Scenic City Showcase honoring the unique qualities of our Texas Scenic Cities

FOR THE LOVE OF TEXAS

Hosted 2nd Annual For the Love of Texas Bike Ride in Dripping Springs, Texas at Dripping Springs Distilling



GENERATIONAL SCENIC CONSERVATIONISTS

Implemented an internship program to create the next generation of scenic conservationists & develop future scenic talent

SCENIC CITY ANNUAL AWARD RECEPTION

Honored 22 Texas Scenic Cities at the Annual Reward Reception for their dedication & commitment to providing high quality municipal ordinances, creating green spaces and better quality of life



PROTECT TEXAS SCENIC CONSERVATION

Successfully defeated pro-billboard bills and protected scenic policies during the 2023 Texas Legislative Session

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Donated & planted trees in Texas cities to protect our state's natural environment and honor Texas Arbor Day & Scenic Texas founder, Carroll Shaddock

SCENIC CITY OF THE YEAR PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

Hosted Scenic City of the Year & People's Choice Award Contest



TEXAS SCENIC CITY LEADERSHIP NETWORK (SCLN)

Created the SCLN for Scenic Cities to provide support, share resources, strategies, build relationships, and strengthen municipalities

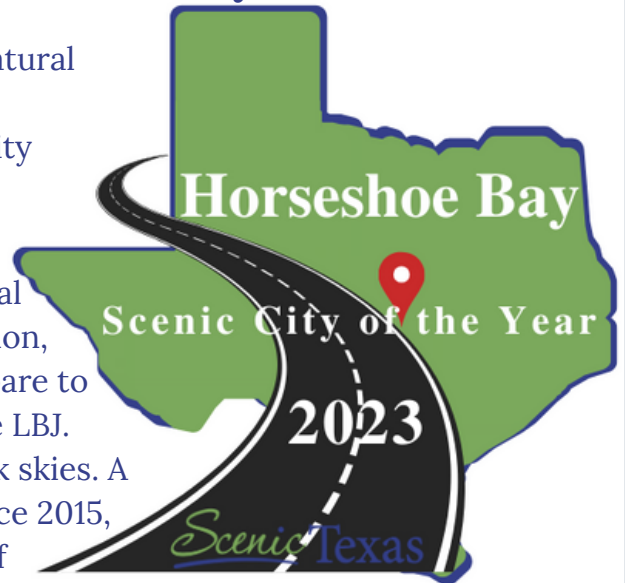
2024

2023 SCENIC CITY OF THE YEAR WINNER

City of Horseshoe Bay Wins Scenic City of the Year

Recently named Scenic City of the Year with its natural beauty, serene landscape, and captivating vistas, Horseshoe Bay provides residents with a community where they can be engaged and active.

This environmentally minded community is committed to enhancing and preserving the natural built environment through public policy, information, and education. As the day turns into evening, prepare to be captivated by the magnificent sunsets over lake LBJ. Sunsets are the perfect prequel to our natural dark skies. A designated International Dark Sky Community since 2015, Horseshoe Bay citizens enjoy night skies worthy of stargazing and night photography.



A hidden gem in the heart of the Texas Hill Country.

Embracing the natural beauty of serene landscapes, the captivating nature park, the city park, and numerous hiking trails lend to Horseshoe Bay's natural Texas Hill Country feel. **The Steve Hawley Drought Tolerant Gardens** featured at city hall demonstrating native landscaping and a butterfly and pollinator garden. In addition to winning Scenic City of the Year, Horseshoe Bay is a certified **Platinum** Scenic City. Horseshoe Bay has a unique ability to adopt and enforce a robust framework for environmental conservation, growth management and a clear identity as one of the most scenic cities in the Texas Hill Country.



2023 SCENIC CITY PEOPLE'S CHOICE WINNER

City of McAllen Wins People's Choice Award

As the second largest city in Rio Grande Valley, it has evolved from a farming community to a popular destination for visitors. The city offers a mild winter climate, tropical breezes, colorful birds, and a low cost of living. With an international metro population of around 2,400,000, McAllen is at the center of a region rooted in various cultures and history while also looking forward to taking us to places never imagined. From access to thirty miles of coastline and harnessing dreams out of this world, McAllen's location provides a secure, versatile, entertaining, and high-value quality of life. As a national leader in many retail spaces and a large advocate for the entrepreneurial business of any size, McAllen has created an ecosystem of large-city options while preserving the culture of a hometown lifestyle.



McAllen's woodland is rich and known for its vibrant birding scene, which attracts visitors from all over the world. The area is home to a steady variety of bird species that can't be found anywhere else in the U.S. There are dozens of birding hotspots in the region where visitors can spot over 540 bird species and more than 330 butterfly species. In addition to birding, McAllen has its very own park and recreation's nature center.

In addition to winning the 2023 Scenic Texas People's Choice Award, McAllen was honored and awarded **Platinum** Scenic City Certification. The city is known for several progressive initiatives including the citywide graffiti removal program that removes graffiti free of charge, even on private property, a thoughtful historic preservation program, and has storm water detention facilities to mitigate flooding.

McAllen, the city of choice.



2023 SCENIC CITY ANNUAL AWARD'S RECEPTION

Scenic Texas Honors Texas Scenic Cities on October 12, 2023 in Dallas, Texas at the TML Conference



**Little Elm
Platinum**



**Prosper
Gold**



**Argyle
Gold**



**DeSoto
Gold**



**Mesquite
Platinum**



**Goliad
Recognized**



**Lake Jackson
Recognized**



**Mineola
Bronze**



**Port Aransas
Gold**



**Port Lavaca
Bronze**



**Round Rock
Gold**



**Schertz
Platinum**

Municipal officials celebrating their city and community achievements across Texas. Not Pictured: Corinth (Gold), West University Place (Silver), Duncanville (Bronze), McKinney (Platinum), Orange Grove (Bronze)

SCENIC CITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Argyle	Fulshear	Orange Grove
Arlington	Goliad	Pearland
Bastrop	Grandbury	Pflugerville
Beaumont	Grand Prairie	Pharr
Bedford	Heath	Pilot Point
Bee Cave	Helotes	Plano
Belton	Horseshoe Bay	Port Aransas
Benbrook	Houston	Port Lavaca
Blanco	Hutto	Princeton
Boerne	Irving	Prosper
Buda	Keller	Richardson
Bulverde	Kyle	Richmond
Cedar Hill	La Vernia	Roanoke
Cedar Park	Lago Vista	Round Rock
Celina	Lake Jackson	Rowlett
Cibolo	Lancaster	Sacsh
Colleyville	League City	Seabrook
Corinth	Little Elm	Sealy
Cuero	Lucas	Shavano Park
Dayton	Magnolia	Schertz
Denton	Manor	Southlake
DeSoto	Mansfield	South Padre Island
Dripping Springs	Marble Falls	Sugar Land
Duncanville	McAllen	Taylor
Edinburg	McKinney	Webster
El Campo	Mesquite	West Lake Hills
Fairview	Mineola	W. University Place
Flower Mound	Missouri City	Westlake
Forest Hill	Nassau Bay	
Fort Worth	Nolanville	
Frisco	North Richland Hills	



Scenic City

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

- **Implementing High Quality Scenic Municipal Standards**
- **Promoting Best Practices**
- **Serving Texas Communities**



**2024 NEW
SCENIC CITY
APPLICATIONS
ACCEPTED
UNTIL
APRIL 30, 2024**

**To Learn More
About the Scenic
City Certification
Program**

[Click Here](#)

3RD ANNUAL FOR THE LOVE OF TEXAS BIKE RIDE



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[Donate](#)

Scenic Texas

**For the Love of Texas
Scenic Bike Ride**



Date: April 20th

Registration: 10:00 - 10:30

Ride: 10:30-11:30

Lunch & Raffle: 11:30 - 12:30

Open Bike Ride
Stay for Live Music



[WEBPAGE](#)



[VIDEO](#)



[BIKE RIDE
GROUP](#)

1 MILLION TREES ACROSS TEXAS



- 5,050 Trees Planted in 20 Texas Cities in 2023
- \$252,180 Total Contribution
- Prioritizing State Beautification
- Protecting Texas' Natural Environment

Landmark Trees Celebrated at Six Texas Sites

[Click Here](#)

**Texas Cities
Beautifying
Communities
in 2023**



Any Texas city interested in planting trees, contact: info@scenic texas.org

PROTECT OUR DARK SKIES

The stars at night are big and bright, deep in the heart of Texas!

Texas skies are legendary, from our spectacular sunsets to those big stars at night. But as more and more people move to Texas, dark skies are getting harder to find because as urban areas continue to sprawl, they often generate excessive outdoor lighting. Scenic Texas has made protecting this important natural resource – the night skies – a high priority. We work with groups leading the way to help others throughout the state devise ways to protect their dark skies and educate the public about light pollution.

International Dark Sky Association works with businesses, communities, and governments to prioritize outdoor lighting that reduces light pollution. Scenic Texas encourages cities to participate in Lights Out Texas which supports efforts to reduce light pollution, especially during bird migrations. Because our natural environment contributes to the sustainable quality of life for all Texans, both rural and urban, Scenic Texas has supported successful legislative efforts that allow communities to protect their night skies by passing necessary lighting ordinances to pursue a Dark Sky designation.

80% of Americans can no longer see the Milky Way. Without initiatives to protect the night sky, which many people may never see in their lifetime. “Please join us in honoring dark skies, by visiting our own Big Bend Dark Sky Reserve, the world’s largest Dark Sky Reserve and one of the only thirteen parks worldwide with the Dark Sky designation,” Linda Beranek; Big Bend Dark Sky Reserve Steering Committee, and Scenic Texas, former Board Member.

Important Dates for Dark Skies:

April 6-12: International Dark Sky Week

April 8: Total Solar Eclipse. Astronomy experts predict best viewing runs diagonally across Texas from Del Rio to Texarkana.

April 22 – May 12: Lights Out Dates for Spring Bird Migration. Find out how your city can participate.

[International Dark Sky Association](#)

[Lights Out Texas](#)

[Scenic Texas Dark Sky Protection](#)

PROTECTING SCENIC CONSERVATION

Round Rock Community Unites to Stop New Billboards

In January, the city of Round Rock, an Austin suburb and a Gold-certified Texas Scenic City, witnessed the failure of a \$486,000 Media Choice campaign aimed at establishing 12 digital billboards along area highways. The deceptively titled, Keep Round Rock Safe Political Action Committee, pursued a charter amendment to allow 12 new electronic billboards along IH-35 and SH-45 but did not meet the necessary threshold of valid voter signatures to be placed on a ballot.

According to Round Rock city leaders, in the summer, the city said residents started receiving misleading mailers and text messages to take a survey about public safety. The PAC's website said, "Round Rock city leadership agrees with us," but a city spokesperson said city leaders do not agree with the PAC.

Round Rock Mayor Craig Morgan said in a city news release, "I have shared my disappointment with the techniques used by this PAC to obtain signatures, including unauthorized use of the City's logo and several misleading statements in their marketing materials."

Both the City Council and the Round Rock Chamber Board of Directors, during its regular December board meeting, unanimously voted to oppose a change in the City of Round Rock's charter to allow for new electronic billboards. The Round Rock City Council opposed the billboards and stood by the existing ordinance prohibiting them. The company was attempting to gather signatures to put the proposal up for a vote. Activists used social media and one-on-one meetings with area businesses to counter the billboards. Some businesses who supported Media Choice's effort initially, retracted their support once they were informed about what the company was really trying to do.

The billboard company began the campaign to erect the billboards a year and a half ago. Company personnel lobbied city council

members, attended the chamber's luncheons, joined the chamber, and last year tried to find a candidate for the city council who would vote to allow the billboards.

Larry Gonzales, a former state representative and Round Rock resident, participated in the effort against Media Choice, said the company conducted an extensive and misleading campaign to garner signatures to put an initiative on the local ballot to allow the billboards.

"They got real involved in the city's grass roots and tried to build relationships," Gonzales said. Among other false arguments, Media Choice said that the billboards would increase economic activity for the city as well as public safety, by displaying Amber Alerts, Silver Alerts, and other emergency messages. However, Round Rock officials pointed out the city already has several systems in place to keep its citizens informed about emergencies in the community. "People come to Round Rock for the quality of life," Gonzales said. "Since the city has no control over the content of the billboards, the citizens don't want billboards advertising alcohol or men's clubs or other inappropriate messages."

Gonzales said he has no doubt the company will try again, pointing out that Media Choice has already set up a website for a similar campaign in Georgetown, a nearby city.

For more information:

[City of Round Rock's response to PAC's petition regarding electronic billboards](#)

[PAC seeking billboard charter amendment fails to meet signature threshold](#)

[Round Rock officials: Billboard group fails to get enough signatures \(statesman.com\)](#)

[Facts Related to Efforts to Allow Significant Number of Electronic Billboards in Round Rock](#)

[Group pushing for new billboards in Round Rock fails to gain enough signatures on petition](#)

STRONGER SCENIC ADVOCACY POLICIES

George Bernard Shaw once noted: “The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.” Scenic Texas’ founder, Carroll Shaddock, now deceased, was our unreasonable man—the one we believe made the most difference in the way our State looks as viewed from the highway. He led many of us to Scenic Texas where he led a team inspired by his simple dream: to live, work, worship and play in places filled with tree-lined streets and no billboards. We invite you to honor Carroll by investing in the Carroll Shaddock advocacy fund, created to continue his dream.



**Scenic Texas Founder
Carroll Shaddock**

HELP CONTINUE CARROLL’S ADVOCACY PROGRAM
select “Carroll Shaddock Sustainability” under “Area of Interest”

[CLICK HERE](#)

READ MORE ABOUT CARROLL’S LEGACY

[CLICK HERE](#)

FRIENDS OF CARROLL SHADDOCK

Margaret “Meg” & Richard “Dick” Weekley

Margaret Lloyd & Bob Randolph

Cynthia “Cece” & Michael “Mack” Fowler

Meta & Albert “Boo” Hausser

Wendy & Mavis Kelsey

Margaret & Jim Demoss

Kay & Max Watson

Ann Lents & David Heaney

Kyle & John Kirksey

Locke Lord LLP

Harlan Crow

Kim And Bill Shaddock Family

SCENIC TEXAS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Engaging a New Generation in Scenic Conservation

Scenic Texas offers a competitive internship program across the state of Texas. We work closely with colleges such as TAMUCC, Del Mar College, and many others in the non-profit industry. Interns focus on scenic conservation, state beautification, environment, serving communities, and advocacy, across a variety of disciplines including Business, Grant Writing, Development, Fundraising, Marketing, Information Technology, Digital Media, Media, and Production.

Our Internship Program is designed to provide practical work experience and growth and development opportunities for college students wanting exposure to the best in the industry. Interns may be located all across the state of Texas and work in all operations of our business, will assist with special projects, and will participate in a variety of assignments and tasks aimed at fulfilling the internship program objectives. The program typically includes three areas of focus:

- Experience
- Education
- Engagement

The interns will be provided with hands-on experience. The internship program is a year-round recruiting tool that includes college recruiting fairs (with former interns as ambassadors), job interviews, and internships. Interns will have the opportunity to attend meetings, work as a team, work on-site, participate and attend fundraisers, and learn every aspect of the organization. The primary goal for this internship is for the intern to be able to join the workforce fully prepared to be successful in their field of work by gaining a wealth of work-related experience that will lead them to a successful career path.

“Interning for Scenic Texas has been the experience of a lifetime. With opportunities to learn from an organization in business for decades, I was able to gain the skills necessary for career advancement. I feel confident to enter the workforce and highly recommend the Scenic Texas Internship Program. If you love Texas, have an interest in our environment and want to gain practical and hands - on work experience, Scenic Texas is for you.” -Amanda, Marketing Specialist

For Scenic Texas, our internship program means:

- On-going Pipeline of Potential Future Full-time Employees & Scenic Conservationist
- Test-drive the Talent
- Increase Productivity
- Increase Employee Retention Rate
- Low-cost labor/Inexpensive Resources/Highly Motivated Members of the Workforce

“I worked with Scenic Texas as an intern for a little over a year. There were many skills that I learned which will further help me in the future. I loved the work environment and working with the team. Anyone that's looking for a company to work for, I highly recommend Scenic Texas! “

- Andrea, Business Administration Intern

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM, CALL 361-688-4571

LEADING THE WAY

TEAM MEMBERS



BRENDA DEES
Executive Director



JAFET SANTOS DOMINGUEZ
Computer Program Specialist



AMANDA SALAZAR
Marketing Specialist



AYANA VASQUEZ
Executive Assistant



SHANE DOBSON
CPA



JIM ARNOLD
Public Affairs

Scenic Texas

We Value You - Talk to Us

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[CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL LIST](#)



WAYS YOU CAN HELP TEXAS

- Donate \$25 for a tree to be planted in your honor: [Donate a Texas Tree](#)
- Become a Scenic Texas member: <https://www.scenictexas.org/donate>
- Get Involved. Follow us on our social channels @scenictexas:



[Annual Bike Ride Facebook Group](#)

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