



BEAUTIFICATION PLAN 2013-2014



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PURPOSE AND GOAL

The City of Kilgore Beautification Plan is a comprehensive plan intended to guide the beautification of public and private properties in the city limits of Kilgore, Texas. The plan



includes an analysis of the city's beautification needs and recommendations on fulfilling those needs. The plan is developed by the Kilgore City Beautification Plan Committee consisting of the City Manager, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, Director of Planning, Director of General Services, Code Enforcement Officer, GIS Coordinator and President of the Kilgore Improvement and Beautification Association. The City of Kilgore

Beautification Plan is a guiding tool to identify areas in need of beautification throughout the City and recommendations on how to achieve an overall beautiful and attractive City of Kilgore.

The overall goal of the Beautification Plan is to identify and implement projects that will beautify our community, increase desirability of commercial and residential real estate, and encourage residential home owners and business owners to invest in landscaping and cleanup of their properties.

BACKGROUND

Since 1930 the City of Kilgore has been known as an oil town. Indeed, Kilgore is known as one of several major oil capitols of Texas, and sits in the heart of the east Texas oil field. With this history, it is no wonder that the city has over the years taken on an industrial look and feel. Over 200 operating wells and tank batteries reside in the city limits, and heavy truck traffic drives the streets each day to service these wells and the oil well companies that are located in Kilgore.

The industrialized character of Kilgore has resulted in an overall city appearance that now demands enhanced beautification efforts. Such beautification will go a long way to attract a diversified economy and residential atmosphere. The City of Kilgore is dedicated to upgrading its quality of life proffering to incentivize home builders and retailers to develop in Kilgore.

The City of Kilgore would like to partner with the community to assist in the beautification initiatives listed below. A beautification program of this magnitude does not happen overnight, and many of these initiatives will take a dedicated commitment of time and resources. As such, the city has estimated construction/project costs for these initiatives and appeal to the community to assist in making these efforts a reality.

The benefits of a Beautification Plan include:

1. Consistency in decision making- The Beautification Plan gives decision makers a consistent reference point for directing beautification efforts.
2. Ability to make informed decisions- the Beautification Plan provides facts on existing conditions, and recommendations on beautifying existing conditions enabling the decision makers to understand the impact of their decisions.
3. Produce positive economic development- Beautiful communities attract new growth and development, as well as protects property values in both residential and commercial community.

INITIATIVE 1 – CREATION OF AN ENTRY CORRIDOR OVERLAY ZONE

In the 2006 Master Plan the recommendation of Entry Corridor Overlay (ECO) Zones was introduced. Entry Corridor Overlays lend additional guidelines that enhance the corridors of the City of Kilgore. The district will be established to provide development standards for particular roadway corridor areas that are in addition to current zoning districts already in existence within the designated corridors. The ECO is designed to recognize the importance of the corridors and enhance the aesthetic appeal for those entering the city. Guidelines will include additional screening, signage, and additional landscaping requirements for new commercial or industrial structures. The ECO zone will be a target area for code enforcement compliance. Additionally, in the Entry Corridor Overlays, the City of Kilgore will work closely with the Texas Department of Transportation on placement of new city entrance signage, additional streetscape improvements in the state right-of-ways, and maintenance of the right-of-ways in the following overlays:



1. State Highway 135 and Interstate 20
2. Hwy 42 and Interstate 20
3. Hwy 42 South (Industrial Boulevard)
4. North Henderson Boulevard
5. FM 2204 (Stone Road)
6. South Henderson Boulevard
7. State Highway 31 West

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Create the Entry Corridor Overlay Zone.
- 2.) Recruit Stephen F. Austin State University for a right-of-way landscaping design for the overlays and create a budget for these improvements.

- 3) Begin implementation of the corridor regulations on the corridors along Interstate 20 and Industrial Boulevard.
- 4) Meet with property owners in the corridors to involve them in the beautification efforts of the area.
- 5) Since the City of Kilgore will rely on the businesses in the corridor to provide additional landscaping, beautification grant opportunities should be created and made available to soften the cost for the additional landscaping guidelines.
- 6) Meet with the Texas Department of Transportation regarding landscaping and signage in the state public right-of-ways.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS:

- A. Planning Department
- B. General Services Department
- C. City Manager's Office

PROJECT COST:

TBD

INITIATIVE 2 – UNIFORM AND ATTRACTIVE SIGNAGE

Entryway Signage establishes a visual aesthetic that will enhance the appearance of the community. The role of the entryway sign is to set an image that will generate a favorable impression to visitors and citizens.

The goal of **Wayfinding Signage** is to make it easy for visitors and residents to navigate around downtown, as well as highlight attractions within the City and offerings in an appealing and informative manner.

Backlit Street Signage -Many Cities have begun the transition to backlit street signage on major intersections within their cities. The City of Kilgore currently has 14 major intersections maintained by TxDot that would allow backlit signage. Backlit signage not only helps automobile drivers with identifying street names at night but also has an aesthetic value for the drivers on the road.

Right-of-way Audit- There are currently many permanent signs (church signs, old signage at the city limits, civic organization signs, etc.) that are positioned in state and city right-of-ways. Many of these signs are old, cracked, faded, or obsolete and need to be replaced, maintained, or removed permanently. The Kilgore sign ordinance currently prohibits signage in the right-of-way exempting signage for government entities (state signage, street signs, way finding signage etc). The City of Kilgore will perform an audit to determine how many signs are in the right-of-way and contact the owners of the signs to remove, repair, or permit these signs.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Begin a wayfinding program for key destinations throughout the city. Work with the Kilgore Convention and Visitors Bureau and others to identify sign characteristics.
- 2) Work with TxDOT to allow signage on I-20 at the Hwy 42 exit.
- 3.) Design the new Gateway corridor signage for all entry corridors including the interstate.
- 4.) Prioritize TxDot intersections that would benefit from backlit street signage and begin sign installation.
- 5.) Perform an audit on permanent signage in the right-of-way, and amend the sign ordinance to allow certain permanent signage in the right-of-way with proper permitting.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS:

- A. Planning Department
- B. General Services Department
- C. City Manager's Office

PROJECT COST:

Approximately \$75,000 per entryway sign
\$3,000 per backlit sign – 14 intersections at \$12,000 = \$168,000
\$5,000 per stand-alone wayfinding sign

INITIATIVE 3 - ENCLAVE AND ETJ BEAUTIFICATION

Enclaves are unincorporated areas surrounded by the City of Kilgore. Enclaves are regulated at the County level. Meeting with both Rusk County and Gregg County to discuss these areas, as well as areas in the extra-territorial jurisdiction that need immediate attention with code violations, can begin the process of cleanup at the county level. Both Rusk County and Gregg County employ a health officer that can enforce code violations within the County.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.) Create a list of enclave areas that need immediate attention with code violations.
- 2.) Work with County Code enforcement/Health officials on abating the violations.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS:

- A. Planning Department
- B. General Services Department (Code Enforcement)
- C. City Manager's Office

PROJECT COST:

\$0

INITIATIVE 4 - NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT

As stated in the 2006 City of Kilgore Master Plan, "The preservation and enhancement of neighborhoods are a critical component of any community." "Neighborhood Beautification Programs" are recommended under the Beautification Plan and are essential to enhancement

of properties. During this program, the City of Kilgore Code Enforcement Office will work with other departments at the City of Kilgore to identify and abate code violations in a designated neighborhood with the intent of improving the quality of life for the residents of the neighborhood and the general citizenry. The Code Enforcement Department will look for violations of high weeds and grass, junk vehicles, the accumulation of junk and debris, locations that do not have address numbers posted, dangerous structures, and other violations of the City Code. Additional departments will address issues such as potholes, replacement of street signs, mowing of rights-of-ways, and trash pick-up along the streets.

RECOMMENDATION: Under the 2013 Customer Service Plan an estimate of three “Neighborhood Beautification Programs” will be completed at the end of FY 2013. These neighborhoods have been identified and prioritized as to the deteriorating conditions of the area, code enforcement violations, and the need for public works assistance for remediating infrastructure issues (for example potholes, replacement of street signs, etc.). The three neighborhoods are:

1. Eastview Addition- located in the area of Hale Street, Bailey Street, and Luder Street.
2. Pinewood Addition- located in the area of Gordon Street and Forrest Street
3. Melrose Park Addition-located in the area of Still Street, Miller Street, and Caldwell Street.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS:

- A. Planning Department
- B. General Services Department
- C. Public Works Department
- D. Police Department

PROJECT COST:

\$0

INITIATIVE 5 - LITTER CONTROL PROGRAMS

Adopt a Street Program

In the 1990’s the “Adopt a Street Program” was introduced in Kilgore.” The program was a joint effort between the KIBA (Kilgore Improvement and Beautification Association) and residents to keep right-of-ways and neighborhoods clean and beautiful. The program allowed residents, businesses, clubs, and organizations to express their pride and commitment to the community, while providing them with signage recognition for their time and effort in beautification of their City. There are many areas throughout the City that were adopted by certain individuals or companies. However, over the years a lack of oversight has caused the program to lose momentum.



RECOMMENDATION: With the revival of the “Adopt a Street Program,” the community will have a hand in keeping our city beautiful. Additionally, contracting with the County juvenile probation and the Andrews Center to remediate litter on our state right-of-ways and Entry Corridor Overlays will enhance our beautification efforts for the gateways into the City.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

A. Planning Department

PROJECT COST:

Safety Vests \$180.00

Bags \$60.00

New signage TBD

Garbage Carts

Currently the City of Kilgore lacks an ordinance that requires household garbage to be placed in containers, nor is a container service offered by the City. This oftentimes creates problems because trash is either blown down the street or into another citizen’s yard, or is opened by wildlife. The 2006 Kilgore Master Plan also addresses this problem and the need for containers. Further, in the 2012 Citizen Survey, 61% of the citizens of Kilgore indicated that they are in favor of switching to 95 gallon carts and once per week garbage pick-up.

RECOMMENDATION: The City may adopt an ordinance change to require containers for solid waste and consider a solid waste contract that includes containers for all solid waste consumers.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

A. Planning Department

B. City Manager’s office

PROJECT COST:

\$0

Cigarette Butt Campaign

The “Keep Texas Beautiful” website states “Research shows that individuals who would never consider littering an aluminum can or paper, may well be littering cigarette butts. Although overall cigarette smoking in America has decreased, cigarette litter is a major problem in communities around the country. Dropping cigarette butts to the ground, putting them in planters, and disposing of them in waterways is littering. According to Keep America Beautiful research, the overall littering rate for cigarette butts is 65%, and tobacco products comprise 38% of all U.S. roadway litter. Cigarette litter is unsightly, costly to clean up and harmful to wildlife and waterways.” An online guide, www.preventcigarettelitter.org, is a guide to cigarette litter prevention that can be utilized by the cities. Public education, enforcement of litter laws,

installing ash receptacles at priority locations, encouraging the use of portable ashtrays, and the organization of a task force to organize the campaign against cigarette litter are all included in the guide.” (www.ktb.org)

RECOMMENDATION: Organize a task force or present the campaign to the KIBA (Kilgore Improvement and Beautification Association) for organization and implementation of the program.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

1. Planning Department
2. Police Department
3. Task Force (to be determined)

PROJECT COST:

\$2,000

INITIATIVE 6 – CATALOG CODE ISSUES ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

Public entities are always looking for programs and opportunities to enhance beautification throughout their communities. Many public entities have an abundance of property such as right-of-ways, parks and open spaces, struck-off properties, etc., that require maintenance. In public areas there may be code violation issues, or possibly no violations are seen but the area is unsightly. These areas can be easily abated by city staff such as removal of tree stumps, storm drain cleanouts, old traffic signal pedestals, broken gutters, sidewalk cracks etc. However these “eyesores” are often overlooked.



RECOMMENDATION: City workers can catalog problems requiring city maintenance. Once catalogued, they can be prioritized and abated.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

- A. All city departments

PROJECT COST:

\$0

INITIATIVE 7 – COMMUNITY GARDENS

Many Cities have begun establishing community gardens. Community gardens can feature flowers, fruit trees, or vegetables and herbs. These gardens may consist of one community plot or many individual plots throughout the community at locations such as schools, neighborhoods, or parks. The benefits of a community garden are 1) improves quality of life, 2)



stimulates social interaction, 3) beautifies the city and its neighborhoods, 4) produces nutritious food, and 5) reduces a family's budget. The benefits are endless.

RECOMMENDATION:

Offer to begin a pilot community garden in an area accessible to all citizens in Kilgore. Through a pilot program it can be determined how the community receives the garden. If it is successful, then more gardens can be established.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

- A. Planning Department
- B. Public Works Department (Parks)

PROJECT COST:

First Year \$300
Second Year \$600
Third Year \$700

INITIATIVE 8 – PRIVATE PROPERTY/ TOP PRIORITY ABATEMENT AREAS

There are many areas within the city limits of Kilgore that are owned by private individuals with structures and property that are simply abandoned and in need of clean-up and façade improvements; or may not be abandoned but may simply be unsightly to the public. These are areas that are seen when people visit our city. These areas include:



- 1. Old Dansby School site
- 2. Old Mansfield Plumbing location on North Henderson Boulevard.
- 3. Industrial Boulevard
- 4. Oil well and tank battery sites

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1). Contact the owners of the individual properties notifying them of the City's intentions of property abatement compliance.
- 2.) Consider placing fencing, landscaping, etc, in the right-of-way, so that a buffer is created to shield the property from the public.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS:

- A. Planning Department
- B. Public Works Department (Parks)

PROJECT COST:

\$200,000 for Dansby School demolition (grant funded)

INITIATIVE 9 – DEMOLISH DILAPIDATED STRUCTURES

Dilapidated structures (structure is in a condition of decay and partial or complete collapse is possible) within a city are always an eyesore. Many times the structure is in need of repair or demolition but the owners of the property cannot be found, are deceased, or live out of state. This makes for a lengthy and difficult process for demolition or repair of structures. Since the decision of Dallas vs. Stewart, many cities have rewritten their policies and procedures regarding demolition of a structure or have abandoned their demolition programs until such new policies are in place. Staff, along



with the City Attorney, is crafting new policies and procedures for demolition of structures. Once the policy and procedures are in place, then demolition of structures can proceed. An annual budget of \$30,000 is set aside for demolition of structures. As always, the City gives notice to the property owner and allows ample opportunity to demolish the structure. If there is no compliance with the property owner then the city will demolish the structure and place a lien on the property.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) The creation of a demolition policy will be created for approval by the City Council.
- 2) A list of dilapidated structures will be created and prioritized by the structures that are most unsafe.
- 3) The “2013 Customer Service Plan” has an estimated goal of five structures to be demolished by the end of the FY 2013.
- 4) The list should be reviewed on a yearly basis by the Kilgore City Beautification Committee.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

- A. Planning Department
- B. General Services Department (Code Enforcement)

PROJECT COST:

\$30,000 annually

INITIATIVE 10 – OIL AND GAS WELL SITES AND TANK BATTERIES

The City of Kilgore has a rich history of oil production. The discovery of the East Texas Oilfield in the fall of 1930 transformed Kilgore from a declining rural community into a boomtown. Kilgore to this day has predominantly remained an oil/gas community. Currently there are over 200 oil/gas wells and tank batteries within the city limits of Kilgore. Many of these can be seen from public roadways and have become blighted areas needing maintenance (painting, mowing, fencing, landscaping etc.). Currently, the City of Kilgore Oil and Gas Ordinance addresses fencing of these sites but not painting.

RECOMMENDATION:

Amend the oil and gas ordinance to require that all well and battery sites are maintained in good condition. For example, type of fencing or landscaping and intact painting of the site should be included in the ordinance.



RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

- A. Planning Department
- B. General Services Department (Code Enforcement)

PROJECT COST:

\$0

INITIATIVE 11 – CERTIFICATIONS

The Scenic City Certification Program is a project of Scenic Texas. Scenic Texas has identified a direct correlation between the success of a city’s economic development efforts and the visual appearance of its public spaces. Scenic Texas has developed the Scenic City Certification Program to support and recognize municipalities that implement high-quality scenic standards for public roadways and public spaces.

The Scenic City Certification Program can play a vital role in giving voice to the proposition that all citizens of any city are entitled to a green, uncluttered, visually appealing place to live, work and play – a truly Scenic City.

Tree City USA program is a national program that provides the framework for community forestry management for cities and towns across America. Participation in the Tree City USA program helps residents feel good about the place they live and work. Annual recognition shows visitors and prospective residents that trees, conservation and the environment are an important part of life in the community. Pride in public trees also leads to more engaged residents and better care for new and existing trees on private property.

RECOMMENDATION: Accomplish all requirements of both the Scenic City Certification and Tree City USA and submit applications to be approved for the designations.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

- A. Planning Department
- B. General Services Department (Code Enforcement)

PROJECT COST:

\$100

BEAUTIFICATION PLAN INITIATIVE FUNDING

While the majority of these initiatives do not require major funding, certain initiatives do require substantial funding. These initiatives may be helped by the following funding ideas:

1. A permit fee for work over rigs may be considered.

2. Citizens could have the opportunity to donate a monthly fee to the program that will appear on their water bill.
3. Corporate sponsors
4. Landscape Cost Sharing Program. This program allows private businesses, civic organizations and local governments an opportunity to support the aesthetic improvement of the state highway system by sharing the project development, establishment and maintenance cost of landscaping the state highway system. The local government or donor will enter into an agreement with TxDOT and participate in the cost of the project by providing cash or eligible non-cash contributions.
5. Governor's Community Achievement Awards. This competition distributes \$2 million in funding from TxDOT across the ten communities, with the amount based on population size. The funds are used for landscaping projects along local rights-of-way. A community's environmental program is judged on achievements in seven different areas: community leadership and coordination, public awareness, education, beautification and community improvement, litter prevention and cleanup, solid waste management and litter law and illegal dumping enforcement.
6. Other funding sources (i.e. grants, dedicated taxes, bonds, etc.)

SUMMARY

The goal of the beautification plan is to improve the overall appearance of the City of Kilgore and its entry corridors. The elements of the plan will be combined to enhance the beauty of Kilgore and create a true sense of place. Investing in beautification supports existing and proposed private and public investments in the area. And, as this is a living document, the Beautification Plan will continue to identify projects that will beautify our community, increase desirability and quality of life, and encourage residential homeowners and business owners to invest in landscaping and clean up of their properties.