CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM

DEPARTMENT: **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

AGENDA DATE: **3/29/2011**

CONTACT PERSON/PHONE: Daryl W. Cole/ (915) 621-6750

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: ALL

SUBJECT:
A Resolution adopting "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" as a recommended design guideline for the use in the design and construction of new thoroughfares and redesign and reconstruction of existing thoroughfares on all City projects within the City of El Paso.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:
This resolution adopts "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach", published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), as a recommended guideline for the City of El Paso. The ITE Manual is used for thoroughfare projects in areas where community goals call for walkable context, in which case applying the design guidance will shape public investment to advance those goals.

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

On November 30, 2010, the El Paso City Council approved moving forward with a Smart Growth implementation Plan. The items on the implementation plan have been divided into separate timelines and this is the first group of changes. Items can be expected in April, May and then throughout the rest of the calendar year.

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A

BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:

Development Coordinating Committee and City Plan Commission both recommended approval.

_____

********************REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION**********************

LEGAL: (if required) _____ **FINANCE:** (if required) _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD: _____

(Example: if RCA is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)
Information copy to appropriate Deputy City Manager

APPROVED FOR AGENDA:

CITY MANAGER: _____ **DATE:** _____

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING "DESIGNING WALKABLE URBAN THOROUGHFARES: A CONTEXT SENSITIVE APPROACH" AS A RECOMMENDED PRACTICE FOR USE IN THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW THOROUGHFARES AND REDESIGN AND RECONSTRUCTION OF EXISTING THOROUGHFARES ON ALL CITY PROJECTS WITHIN THE CITY OF EL PASO.

WHEREAS, "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" was published by Institute of Transportation Engineers and the Congress for New Urbanism in 2010 to assist communities in improving mobility choices and community character through a commitment to creating and enhancing walkable communities; and,

WHEREAS, "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" was sponsored by the Office of Infrastructure, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Planning, Federal Highway Administration, and Office of Sustainable Communities, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and,

WHEREAS, "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" promotes a collaborative, multidisciplinary process that involves all stakeholders in planning and designing transportation facilities; and

WHEREAS, "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" focuses on applying concepts and principles in the design of urban thoroughfares that emphasize walkable communities in order to facilitate the restoration of the multiple functions of urban streets; and

WHEREAS, *The Plan for El Paso* recommends that thoroughfares within the City of El Paso provide connectivity and support multimodal transportation, and that the City of El Paso establish a transportation system that facilitates a greater use of transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission, after conducting a public hearing, recommends adoption of "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" as a recommended practice as herein enumerated; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso City Council Legislative Committee, after conducting a public hearing, recommends adoption of "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" as a recommended practice as herein enumerated; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso City Council finds that the adoption of the "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" as a recommended practice will continue to carry out the purpose and spirit of the policies expressed in The Plan for El Paso and will have no negative impact upon the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the City;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

That, the "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" is hereby adopted as design guidance by the City of El Paso for use on all city thoroughfare projects both for the design and construction of new thoroughfares and for the redesign and reconstruction of existing thoroughfares and is attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2011.

THE CITY OF EL PASO

_____
John F. Cook
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Richarda Duffy Momsen
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

_____
R. Alan Shubert, P.E.
City Engineer

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

_____
Daryl W. Cole, Director
Department of Transportation

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

_____
Kathy Dodson, Director, Planning and
Economic Development Department

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
Lupe Cuellar, Assistant City Attorney

SMART GROWTH IMPLEMENTATION

Presentation to City Council

March 29, 2011

Smart, Sustainable Development Implementation Strategies

City Council uses a variety of language to describe the type of development they would like see in El Paso.

- Pedestrian Friendly
- Mixed Use
- Transit Corridors
- Transit Oriented Development
- Preservation
- Mix of Housing Types & Price Points
- Infill
- Neighborhoods
- Pocket Parks
- Context Sensitive Design
- Complete Streets

Smart, Sustainable Development Implementation Strategies

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City Council's "Community Development Policy Statement," part of the Strategic Plan memorializes this type of development:

To become the most livable city in the United States and be recognized as an international city.

- Identify the top ten livability factors/criteria most relevant to El Paso and establish benchmarks and comparisons in order to develop target opportunities for improvement
- Promote Sustainable Quality Development
- Identify core principles of smart growth and new urbanism to be incorporated into the comprehensive plan for El Paso.
- Update local regulations to reflect local definition of smart growth and new urbanism principles.
- Identify sites for infill and redevelopment opportunities.

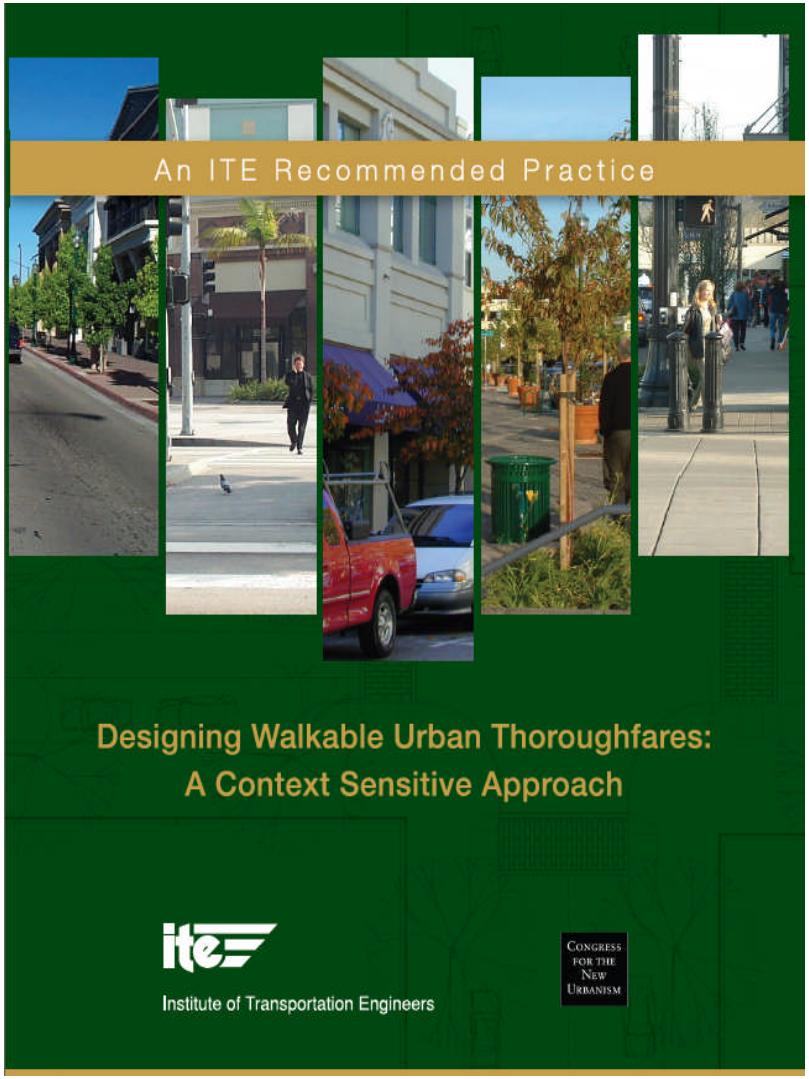
March Implementation Items

1. Adopt ITE Manual as a recommended practice
2. Amend Title 19 to allow parkland dedication of less than one acre
3. Review and recommend revisions to Title 19 to encourage different park typologies
4. Amend Title 19 to amend frontage standards for Parks
5. Amend Title 19 to require tree planting as part of park improvements

Public Notification/Meetings

- CPC: March 10, 2011
- Information Sheet Distributed
- OSAB (Title 19 items): March 16, 2011
- Public Meeting: March 22, 2011

ITE Manual:


An ITE Recommended Practice
Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares:
A Context Sensitive Approach
ite
Institute of Transportation Engineers
Congress for the New Urbanism

An ITE Recommended Practice
Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach

The ITE Manual is used for thoroughfare projects in areas where community goals call for a **walkable** context, in which case applying ITE design guidance will shape public investment to advance those goals.

The ITE Manual Provides Guidance on the following:

- Applying **Context Sensitive Solutions** for the planning and design of urban thoroughfares
- Considering a broad set of factors to facilitate the planning and design of **walkable urban thoroughfares**.
- Recognizing the importance of context, the role of sites and buildings and how **context** influences the design of the thoroughfare and vice versa; and
- Providing an understanding of how thoroughfare design criteria should vary depending on the **context** through which the thoroughfare passes.

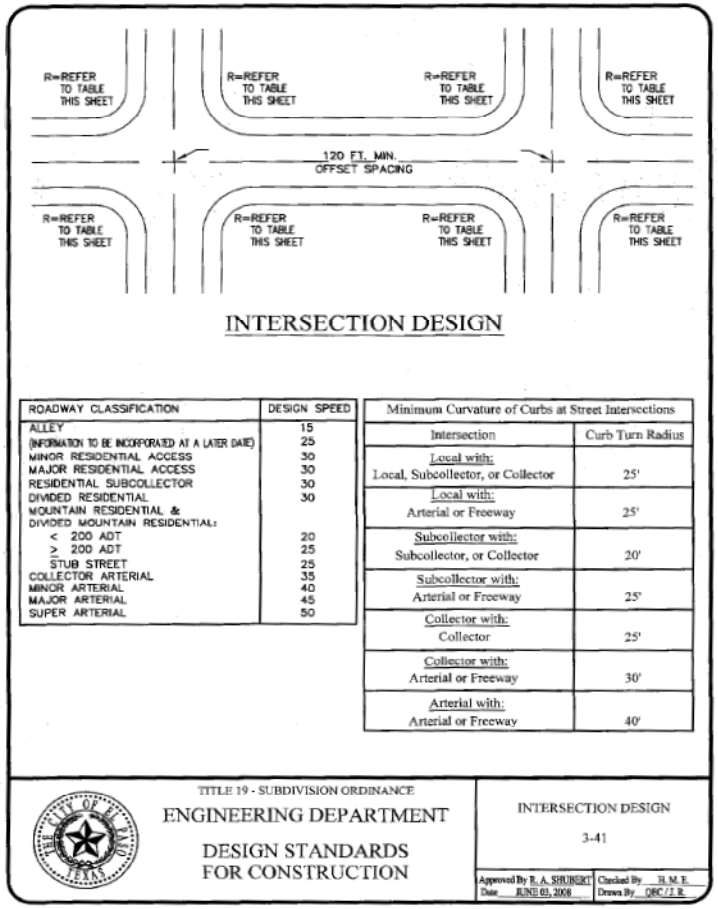
TXDoT has adopted the ITE Manual as a recommended practice.

ITE Manual- City Code Amendments

Staff to conduct comprehensive review of Title 19 and the Design Standards for Construction and return with recommendations in May.

Table 6.5 Main Street Design Parameters

Context	Suburban (C-3)		General Urban (C-4)		Urban Center (C-5)	
	Commercial Main Streets					
	Avenue	Street	Avenue	Street	Avenue	Street
Building Orientation (entrance location)	front, side	front, side	front	front	front	front
Maximum Building Setback	5 ft.	5 ft.	0 ft.	0 ft.	0 ft.	0 ft.
Off–Street Parking Access/Location	rear, side	rear, side	rear, side	rear, side	rear, side	rear, side
Streetside						
Recommended Streetside Width	15 ft.	14 ft.	16 ft.	14 ft.	19.5 ft.	16 ft.
Edge Zone	1.5 ft. minimum for operational clearance. Use 2.5 ft. if angled parking is considered. Ensure edge zone is wide enough to accommodate parking meters, utilities and signs.					
Furnishings Zone Width	6 ft. tree well	6 ft. tree well	6 ft. tree well	6 ft. tree well	6 ft. tree well	6 ft. tree well
	Wider furnishings zone is needed to provide public spaces and if main street uses include the potential for street cafes.					
Pedestrian Throughway (minimum)	6 ft.	6 ft.	6 ft.	6 ft.	9 ft.	6 ft.
Frontage Zone	2.5 ft. to 3 ft. minimum to accommodate commercial activity along building fronts. Wider frontage zone is needed (6 ft. or wider) if potential for street cafes or merchandise displays.					
Street Lighting	Intersection safety lighting, basic street lighting and pedestrian–scaled lighting.					
Traveled Way						
Target Speed (mph)	25	20–25	25	20–25	25	20–25
Number of Through Lanes	2–4	2	2–4	2	2–4	2
Lane Width	10–12 ft.	10–12 ft.	10–12 ft.	10–12 ft.	10–11 ft.	10–11 ft.
Parallel On–Street Parking Width	8 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.
Min. Combined Parking/Bike Lane Width	13 ft.	13 ft.	13 ft.	13 ft.	13 ft.	13 ft.
Medians	Optional	None	Optional	None	Optional	None
Bike Lanes (minimum/preferred width)	5 ft./6 ft.	5 ft./6 ft.	5 ft./6 ft.	5 ft./6 ft.	5 ft./6 ft.	5 ft./6 ft.
Access Management	Minimize driveways on main streets. Access land uses via cross streets and/or alleys.					
Typical Traffic Volume Range (vehicles per day)	5,000–20,000+	1,000–15,000	5,000–20,000+	1,000–15,000	5,000–20,000+	1,000–15,000
Intersections						
Curb Extensions (with on–street parking)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Minimum Curb Return Radii (if extensions not used)	10–15 ft.	10–15 ft.	10–15 ft.	10–15 ft.	10–15 ft.	10–15 ft.
Roundabouts	Not recommended on main streets, except as gateway intersections					



Parks Amendments

- 19.20.030- Accept Parks less than one acre
- 19.20.050- Encourage new park typologies
- 19.20.050- Amend Park Right-of-Way standards
- 19.20.050- Require street trees
- Parks Design and Construction Standards: Add 7ft. Parkway

These parks amendments achieve smart growth by making parks the center of the neighborhood and thus an improved amenity for the neighborhood. It allows for smaller parks, and parks with houses abutting them which creates enclosure and adds eyes on the park. The parks can vary in design, but must have street trees with appropriate spacing.

The goal of these amendments is to create a safer, more intimate neighborhood parks, by providing:

- “Third Place”
- developers the opportunity to provide a greater variety of parks in more locations
- types of parks rarely seen in El Paso
- more security from placing “eyes on the park”
- street trees to help provide a more pleasant pedestrian experience

Section 19.20.030 - Types of Parkland that may be dedicated

19.20.030(B)1.a – Neighborhood Parks

Parks ¼ acre or greater in size may be dedicated to the City (current requirement is one acre or greater)

Caruso Park

Sunset Heights

Section 19.20.50- Alternative Development Proposals

Alternative designs may include:

"GREEN" means an Open Space, available for unstructured recreation. A Green may be spatially defined by landscaping rather than by building frontages. Its landscape shall consist of lawns and trees, naturalistically disposed. The minimum size shall be 1/2 acre and the maximum shall be 8 acres.

"PLAZA" means an Open Space available for civic purposes and commercial activities. A Plaza shall be spatially defined by building frontages. Its landscape shall consist primarily of hard surface, such as pavement, concrete, stamped concrete or brick pavers. Trees are optional. Plazas should be located at the intersection of important streets. The minimum size shall be 1/4 acre and the maximum shall be 2 acres.

"POCKET PARK" means an Open Space used for active or passive recreation, usually less than one acre.

"SQUARE" means an Open Space available for unstructured recreation and civic purposes. A Square is spatially defined by building frontages. Its landscape shall consist of paths, lawns and trees, formally disposed. Squares shall be location at the intersection of important thoroughfares. The minimum size shall be 1/2 acre and the maximum shall be 5 acres.

Section 19.20.050– Standards for deeded parkland

19.20.050(A) –General Characteristics <u>CURRENT LANGUAGE</u>

4. The parkland shall have a minimum of one hundred feet of continuous frontage contiguous with a public street that provides direct access to the park site, except where approved by the director of the parks and recreation department;

19.20.050(A) –General Characteristics- <u>NEW LANGUAGE</u>

4. Parks shall be completely bounded by rights-of-way except when abutting residential lots, if approved for alternative design:

   Developer must provide pedestrian connectivity between park and
   adjacent lots

   Plat must include a front *build-to line*

   Park must share one boundary with a right-of-way

Section 19.20.050– Standards for deeded parkland

19.20.050(A) –General Characteristics-

Delete #5

5. The placement of rear or side lot lines adjacent to the park boundaries should be minimized. Continuous street frontage around the edges of the park site is required, except where approved by the director of parks and recreation;

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Section 19.20.050- Standards for Deeded Parkland

19.20.050(B)- Minimum Improvements

Add the following:

j. Street trees shall be provided in the parkway at 30-foot intervals

Amendment to Parks Design and Construction Standards

This amendment in the Parks Facilities Standards is to add a 7 ft. Parkway from back of curb to the face of 7 ft. wide sidewalk along park perimeter on street right of way.

Requested Action:

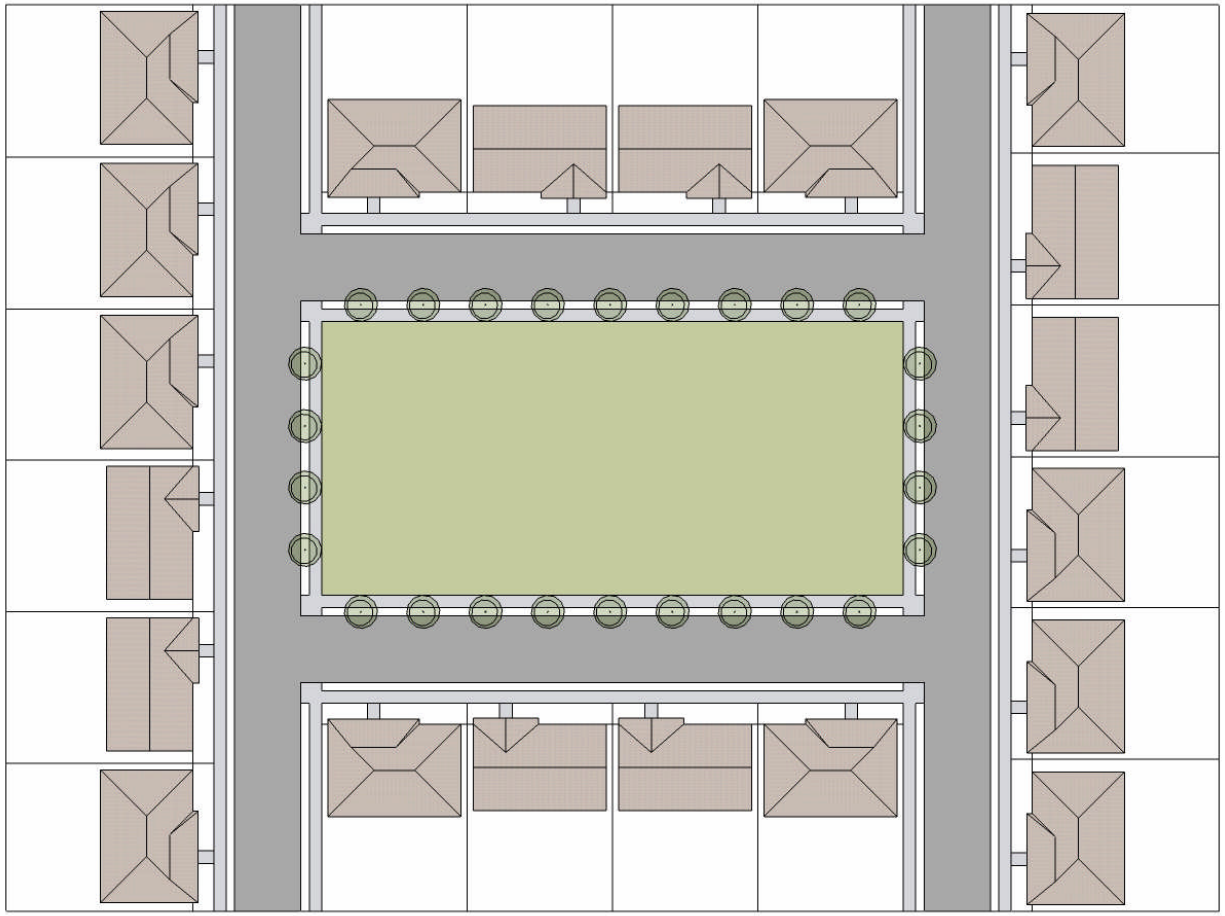
- Approve: Resolution, ITE Manual as Recommended Practice
- Provide Direction: ITE Manual, City Code changes
- Approve: Ordinance, Amendments to Title 19
- Approve: Resolution, Amendment to Parks Design and Construction Standards

What's Next:

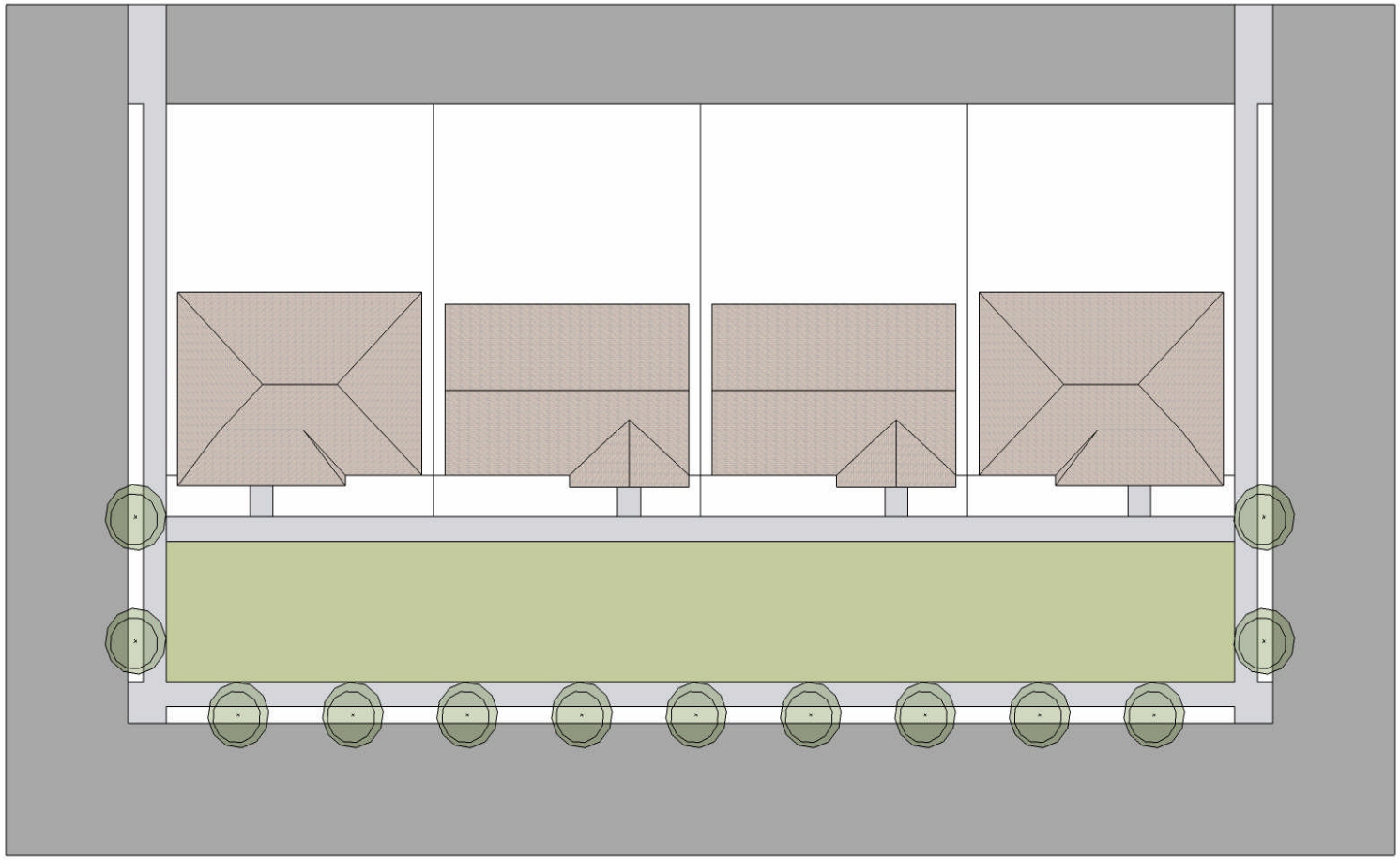
MARCH	APRIL	MAY
1. ITEM 2: Adopt ITE Manual as a recommended practice 2. ITEM 24: Amend parkland dedication of less than one acre 3. ITEM 25: Require tree planting as part of park improvements (refine existing code) 4. ITEM 26: Amend frontage standards for Parks 5. ITEM 27: Review and recommend revisions to Title 19 to encourage different park typologies *6. ITEM 39: Require a building line on plats*	1. ITEM 1: Expand Title 19 vesting procedures to other sections of the code (Primary Title 18) 2. ITEM 14: Amend Zoning Standards to allow accessory dwelling units based on criteria 3. ITEM 7: Improve existing Smart Code 4. ITEM 12: Adopt appropriate Smart Code manual incentives 5. ITEM 18: Establish parking maximums 6. ITEM 19: Reduce size and height of signs and implement design criteria *7. ITEM 13: Require landscape design standards to include tree installation for single-family and two-family suburban residential homes (types and placement of trees should be from approved tree manual).* *8. ITEM 17: Increase commercial landscape standards, including screening any parking lots adjacent to right-of-way; require appropriate tree types*	1. ITEM 4: Adopt ASARCO Special District Plan 2. ITEM 5: Adoption of Remcon, 5 Points and Glory Road Station Area Plans 3. ITEM 9: Require Smart Code zoning for all City community development incentive programs 4. ITEM 16: Require commercial buildings be placed at or near the front property line 5. ITEM 30: Review of ITE and Smart Code street sections and adoption of new standards for new or retrofit projects 6. ITEM 31: Establish zoning overlays for Bus Rapid Transit Corridors that include roadway standards (from ITE Urban Thoroughfares Manual) and design standards for abutting properties 7. ITEM 34: New development that is not zoned Smart Code should pay the full cost of providing infrastructure and services as allowed by state law. 8. ITEM 36: Identify scenic corridors within the City and establish appropriate regulations and overlay zoning

Questions?

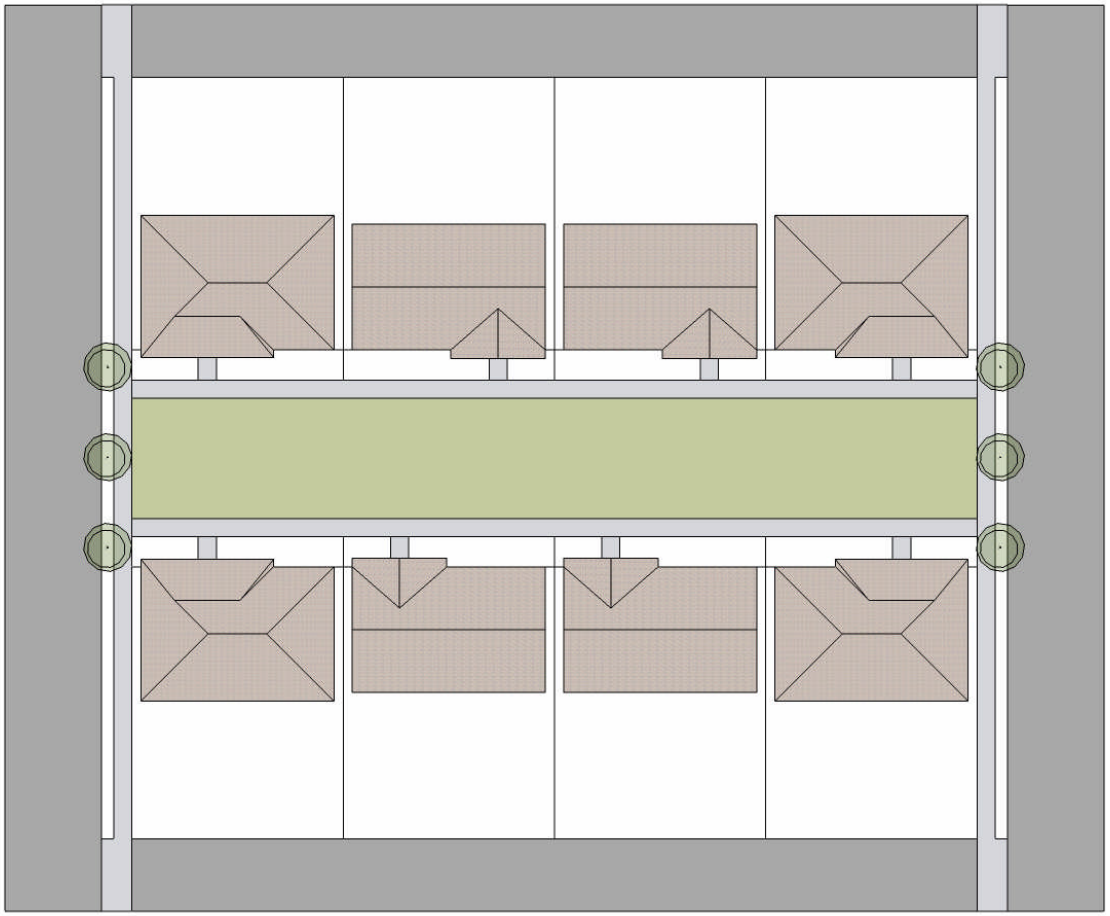
Parks surrounded by ROW- all sides w/ Parkway & street trees



Park surrounded by ROW- 3 sides w/ Parkway & street trees



Park surrounded by ROW- 2 sides w/ Parkway & street trees



7 ft. Parkway
7 ft. Sidewalk
30 ft.
spacing