Scenic City Certification Program



Becoming a **Certified Texas Scenic City** is much more than an environmental recognition—it is an **economic development, tourism, placemaking, quality of life, and community branding strategy**. Cities that actively leverage their Scenic City Certification can use it to attract visitors, businesses, residents, developers, and investment while strengthening community pride.

Below is a comprehensive list of ways Scenic City Certification can support **tourism, economic development, and promotional efforts.**

How Scenic City Certification Supports Tourism, Economic Development & Community Promotion

1. Strengthens the City's Brand

A Scenic City designation provides a recognizable, third-party credential that distinguishes a city from neighboring communities.

Benefits include:

- Positions the city as attractive, clean, and well-managed
- Creates a positive community identity
- Builds credibility with visitors and investors
- Differentiates the city in regional marketing
- Reinforces the city's commitment to quality of life

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2. Attracts Tourism

Beautiful communities naturally attract more visitors.

A Scenic City can promote:

- Historic downtown districts
- Parks and trails
- Lakes and waterways
- Nature preserves
- Botanical gardens
- Public art
- Tree-lined streets
- Scenic roadways
- Festivals
- Farmers markets
- Outdoor recreation

Visitors are more likely to:

- Stay longer
- Spend more money
- Return
- Recommend the city to others

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3. Supports Economic Development

Businesses increasingly evaluate the quality of life when choosing locations.

Scenic City Certification demonstrates that the community values:

- Beautification
- Attractive development
- Long-term planning
- Environmental stewardship
- Sustainable growth

This helps attract:

- Corporate relocations
- Small businesses
- Restaurants
- Retail
- Mixed-use developments

- Professional offices
- Entrepreneurs
- Investors

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4. Helps Recruit Workforce Talent

Today's workforce wants to live in communities offering:

- Walkability
- Parks
- Green spaces
- Outdoor recreation
- Beautiful neighborhoods
- High quality of life

Companies often use community amenities when recruiting employees.

A Scenic City becomes an asset for workforce recruitment.

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5. Enhances Community Image

Certification signals that the city:

- Invests in its appearance
- Protects community character
- Maintains high development standards
- Preserves natural resources
- Values beautification

This creates confidence among:

- Visitors
- Residents
- Businesses
- Developers
- Realtors
- Investors

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6. Supports Residential Growth

People often choose where to live based on community appearance.

Scenic communities tend to experience:

- Increased residential interest
- Higher demand for housing
- Strong neighborhood pride
- Greater resident satisfaction

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7. Increases Property Values

Numerous studies have shown that attractive communities with:

- Mature trees
- Parks
- Green infrastructure
- Attractive streetscapes
- Protected open space

often experience stronger property values compared to less attractive communities.

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8. Promotes Downtown Revitalization

Scenic City principles support:

- Streetscape improvements
- Historic preservation
- Outdoor dining
- Landscaping
- Wayfinding
- Decorative lighting
- Public gathering spaces

These improvements increase downtown visitation and business activity.

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9. Supports Heritage Tourism

Certification complements the promotion of:

- Historic districts
- Museums

- Historic homes
- Cultural attractions
- Local history
- Architecture
- Heritage trails

Visitors increasingly seek authentic experiences.

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10. Encourages Outdoor Recreation Tourism

A Scenic City can market:

- Hiking
- Biking
- Birdwatching
- Fishing
- Kayaking
- Nature photography
- Wildlife viewing
- Scenic drives

Outdoor recreation continues to be one of the fastest-growing tourism sectors.

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11. Creates Marketing Opportunities

Certification provides new promotional content for:

- Tourism brochures
- Visitor guides
- Economic development packets
- Chamber publications
- Websites
- Social media
- Videos
- Visitor centers
- Convention & Visitors Bureau campaigns

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12. Strengthens Convention & Event Marketing

Meeting planners increasingly consider destination appeal.

A Scenic City can promote:

- Beautiful event venues
- Attractive downtowns
- Parks
- Walkability
- Quality hotels
- Outdoor amenities

These features make conferences and tournaments more attractive.

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13. Supports Hotel Occupancy

Visitors attracted by:

- Festivals
- Scenic attractions
- Parks
- Trails
- Sporting events
- Downtown activities

They are more likely to stay overnight, benefiting local hotels.

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14. Increases Visitor Spending

Visitors spend money at:

- Restaurants
- Hotels
- Retail shops
- Boutiques
- Coffee shops
- Museums
- Entertainment venues
- Local attractions

A more attractive community encourages longer stays and repeat visits.

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15. Encourages Private Investment

Developers often prefer communities with:

- Strong planning
- Attractive corridors
- Quality landscaping
- Community standards
- Stable long-term vision

Scenic City Certification signals these qualities.

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16. Supports Business Recruitment

Economic development organizations can include Scenic City Certification in recruitment materials.

It demonstrates that the city values:

- Community aesthetics
- Livability
- Sustainable development
- Infrastructure investment

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17. Attracts New Restaurants and Retail

Businesses often seek locations where people enjoy spending time.

Beautiful public spaces create:

- Increased pedestrian activity
- Higher customer traffic
- Better shopping experiences

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18. Supports Grant Opportunities

Certification may strengthen applications for grants involving:

- Parks
- Trails
- Beautification

- Urban forestry
- Downtown revitalization
- Transportation enhancements
- Tourism
- Community development

It demonstrates an existing commitment to community improvement.

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19. Encourages Public-Private Partnerships

Certification creates opportunities to partner with:

- Chambers of Commerce
- Tourism offices
- Main Street programs
- Garden clubs
- Local nonprofits
- Developers
- Utility companies
- Tree organizations
- Civic clubs

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20. Supports Environmental Tourism

Communities can highlight:

- Urban forests
- Native landscaping
- Pollinator gardens
- Nature preserves
- Wildlife habitats
- Water conservation projects

These amenities appeal to eco-tourists.

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21. Creates Community Pride

Certification becomes a source of civic pride.

Residents become ambassadors for their community by:

- Sharing local attractions
- Welcoming visitors
- Supporting beautification projects
- Participating in volunteer efforts

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22. Improves Social Media Marketing

Scenic locations naturally generate shareable content.

Visitors frequently post photos of:

- Downtowns
- Parks
- Murals
- Trails
- Gardens
- Public art
- Landscapes
- Festivals

User-generated content expands the city's visibility at no additional cost.

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23. Supports Place-Making

Scenic City principles help create memorable destinations through:

- Public gathering spaces
- Streetscape improvements
- Green corridors
- Signature entrances
- Public art
- Attractive signage

Strong placemaking encourages visitors to linger and explore.

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24. Strengthens Regional Tourism Partnerships

Scenic Cities can collaborate with neighboring communities to develop:

- Scenic driving routes
- Heritage trails
- Birding trails
- Cycling routes
- Culinary tours
- Shopping trails
- Nature itineraries

Regional partnerships expand visitor opportunities and encourage multi-city travel.

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25. Supports Community Storytelling

Certification provides a compelling narrative about the city's values and vision. Cities can share stories about:

- Historic preservation
- Tree planting initiatives
- Beautification projects
- Public art
- Volunteer efforts
- Park improvements
- Environmental stewardship

These stories resonate with residents, visitors, businesses, and potential investors.

Ways to Incorporate Scenic City Certification into Promotional Efforts

Once certified, a city can maximize the value of its designation by:

- Displaying Scenic City gateway signs at city entrances.
- Featuring the Scenic City Certification logo on the city website, tourism pages, and economic development materials.
- Including the designation in Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau marketing.
- Highlighting the certification in relocation guides and business recruitment packets.
- Adding the designation to press releases, newsletters, and email signatures.
- Promoting Scenic City status through social media campaigns and digital advertising.
- Developing self-guided scenic driving, walking, or cycling tours.

- Hosting annual beautification events, tree plantings, and community clean-up days tied to the Scenic City brand.
- Producing videos showcasing scenic assets, parks, downtown districts, and quality-of-life amenities.
- Featuring the certification in tourism brochures, visitor guides, and event programs.
- Incorporating the Scenic City logo into visitor center displays, wayfinding signage, and community banners.
- Recognizing local businesses, neighborhoods, and volunteers who contribute to beautification and community enhancement.
- Using the certification as part of presentations to site selectors, developers, chambers, and prospective employers.
- Encouraging local hotels, attractions, and businesses to reference the city's Scenic City status in their own marketing.

A Strong Message for Prospective Scenic Cities

Scenic City Certification is more than a designation—it is a strategic investment in a community's future. By enhancing visual appeal, protecting natural assets, and demonstrating a commitment to thoughtful growth, certified communities create places where people want to visit, live, work, and invest. The certification becomes a powerful marketing tool that strengthens tourism, supports economic development, enhances community pride, attracts new businesses and residents, and reinforces a city's reputation as a destination of choice in Texas.