

DESIGNING THE CIVIC COMMONS: HOW DESIGN
CAN FOSTER SOCIAL CAPITAL IN CIVIC SPACES
IN THE CONTEXT OF URBAN SPRAWL

by

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In Loving Memory of

Sally Hammond

9/6/2019

My Mom, My Best Friend

Abstract

DESIGNING THE CIVIC COMMONS: HOW DESIGN CAN FOSTER SOCIAL CAPITAL IN CIVIC SPACES IN THE CONTEXT OF URBAN SPRAWL

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In modern America, people gather in civic public spaces for many reasons: to celebrate family, gather as a community, engage in commerce, or protest injustices. The design of these spaces is critical to their ability to foster civic participation. Jan Gehl has argued that public spaces should be designed for people and encourage social interactions that build social capital (Gehl, 2006). Social capital is beneficial to individuals and communities in many ways, including political engagement, the economic prosperity of individuals and communities, and the safety and security of the community (Putnam, 1995). It has been said that in public spaces, we learn to be citizens (Kaufman & Tepper, 1999), and therefore, we can say good citizens are made in good places.

While sociologists have emphasized the connections between public space and social capital, there is little research that looks specifically at the design features and programming that make these connections possible. This research focuses on the role of design in creating public, civic

spaces that encourage social interaction and build social capital. While architects and planners have established formal typologies for civic space in large cities, there is little research that evaluates their success in supporting social interaction. What is the role of the government in the creation of civic public spaces that encourage social interaction and build social capital? Are there civic space typologies that are more successful than others for building social capital? Which design features are most successful in bringing people together and thus creating social capital?

These questions are addressed through the development of an audit framework to allow the study of three case study investigations of Texas edge cities on the northern urban fringe of the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area: Denton, Southlake, and Frisco. This original framework combines a study of the physical layer, code layer, and content layer (Nemeth) with a Public Space Index (Vikas) and applies them to three case studies. These case studies will include qualitative and quantitative data gained through public space audits, behavior mapping, survey data, and participant observation. The intended result of this research is to determine how successful each civic public space is in regards to building social capital and what role the government plays in facilitating and maintaining it. Additionally, this research seeks to understand the space typology and features present in the most successful public spaces both from the perspective of policy and of design, proposing new ways for these separate disciplines to communicate about their shared concerns. If you build a good place, people will gather in it (Walljasper, 2005). Local governments have a vested interest in building social capital with their

citizens. As public administrators understand the ways that civic space can be designed and used, the better-designed spaces will be.

"Cultures and climates differ all over the world,
but people are the same. They will
gather in public if you give them a good place to do it."

-Jan Gehl

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iii
Abstract	vii
Table of Figures	xiv
Table of Tables	xvi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Introduction	1
Research Questions	3
Civic Public Space Defined	5
Public Space as a Political Forum	6
Privatization of Public Space	7
Studies in Public Space	9
COVID 19 and Its Impact on Public Space	11
Significance of Research	11
Contributions	12
Chapter 2: Public Space Design	14
Design in Public Spaces	14
Civic Materialism	17
Placemaking	18
Design and Social Capital	18
Public Space Typologies	19
Tools of Design	22
Chapter 3: Social Capital	25
Social Capital Theory	25
Formal Networks	26
Informal Networks	27
Social Trust and Social Norms	28
Social Capital in Public Spaces	29
Social Capital as an Outcome	30

Social Capital and COVID 19	31
Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework.....	33
Chapter 5: Methodology	38
Introduction to Case Studies	38
Methodology.....	42
Physical Layer	42
Content Layer	44
Use Layer.....	44
Change in Methodologies Due to COVID 19.....	48
Chapter 6: Denton, Texas.....	49
Context and History.....	49
City Hall and Park	51
Building Analysis.....	52
Site Analysis.....	54
Use/User Analysis.....	59
Ordinance Analysis	60
Behavior Analysis.....	61
Quakertown Park Amidst COVID 19	63
Chapter 7: Frisco, Texas	71
Context and History.....	71
City Hall and Park	73
Building Analysis.....	74
Site Analysis.....	75
Use/User Analysis.....	79
Ordinance Analysis	81
Behavior Analysis.....	82
Simpson Plaza Amdist COVID 19	83
Chapter 8: Southlake, Texas.....	91
Context and History.....	91
City Hall and Park	92

Building Analysis	93
Site Analysis	95
Use/User Analysis	98
Ordinance Analysis	100
Behavior Analysis.....	101
Rustin and Family Park Amidst COVID 19	106
Chapter 9: Discussion and Conclusion.....	109
Government's Role: Policy Analysis.....	112
Most Successful Typology: Use Layer	117
Most Successful Design Tools: Use Layer	118
Policy Recommendations	121
Limitations.....	123
Future Research	124
Conclusion	125
Works Cited	131
Appendix A: Surveys and Audits	143
Planning Director Survey	143
Public Information Officer Survey	147
Parks and Recreation Director.....	151
Paper Citizen Survey.....	155
Public Space Audit	157
Survey Data Collection Tool.....	161

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual Model	37
Figure 2: DFW Metroplex	41
Figure 3: Page from Field Journal	47
Figure 4: Map of Denton, Texas	50
Figure 5: Historical Marker About Quakertown	56
Figure 6: Historical marker about City Hall.....	56
Figure 7: Statue of Children Playing in Quakertown Park Garden.....	57
Figure 8: Sculpture In Honor of Teacher	57
Figure 9: Denton - Quakertown Park.....	58
Figure 10: Park Sign with COVID 19 Guidelines in Park	64
Figure 11: Denton Activities	65
Figure 12: Denton Stays and Interactions	66
Figure 13: Denton Behavior Map	67
Figure 14: Denton City Hall.....	68
Figure 15: Denton Vantage Point 1	68
Figure 16: Denton Vantage Point 2	69
Figure 17: Quakertown Park During 4th of July Event.....	69
Figure 18: Quakertown Park on a Sunday Afternoon.....	70
Figure 19: Map of Frisco, Texas.....	72
Figure 20: Fetching Water Sculpture.....	77
Figure 21: Train Conductor Sculpture	78
Figure 22: The Three Muses of Frisco	78
Figure 23: Simpson Plaza Site Plan	79
Figure 24: Activities in Simpson Plaza	85
Figure 25: Stays in Simpson Plaza.....	86
Figure 26: Behavior Map of Simpson Plaza	87
Figure 27: Frisco City Hall	88

Figure 28: Frisco Vantage Point.....	88
Figure 29: Fourth of July in Simpson Plaza	89
Figure 30: Lymphoma Event in Simpson Plaza	89
Figure 31: A Quiet Saturday in Simpson Plaza.....	90
Figure 32: Map of Southlake, Texas	91
Figure 33: Picture of Statue in Rustin Family Park.....	96
Figure 34: Rustin Family Park Site Plan.....	98
Figure 35: Activities in Southlake	103
Figure 36: Stays in Southlake.....	104
Figure 37: Southlake Behavior Map	105
Figure 38: Southlake City Hall.....	107
Figure 39: Southlake Vantage Point	107
Figure 40: A Busy Afternoon in Rustin Family Park	108
Figure 41: A Quiet Afternoon in Rustin Family Park	108

Table of Tables

Table 1: Case Study Determination Table	40
Table 2: City Demographics	41
Table 3: Denon Survey Data	54
Table 4: Denton Record of Visits	65
Table 5: Frisco Survey Data	75
Table 6: Record of Visits to Simpson Plaza	85
Table 7: Southlake Survey Data	95
Table 8: Record of Southlake Visits	103
Table 9: Sloan Social Capital Framework Important Elements	109
Table 10: Types of City-Sponsored Events	112
Table 11: Policy Recommendations	122

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

On August 28, 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his powerful "I Have a Dream" speech in the most iconic public space the United States has to offer. The National Mall was overflowing with people who participated in the March on Washington, who gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial to present a united voice for Civil Rights. The public space was pushed to its limits and was the perfect picture of democracy. People gathered for a common cause to make a difference. The National Mall was not designed for such grand democratic events but had, over time, adapted to its role as a ground for democratic activism. According to Benton-Short, "the mall provides space for active citizenship" (Benton-Short, 2016, page 9). The National Mall is a place for political protests, public gatherings, and celebrations (Nikitin, 2009). In this space, social capital is created, and people are aroused to engage with their country.

Public spaces come in all shapes and forms. They are each meant to incite a different reaction in those who spend time there. Some public spaces incite peace and reflection, while others action and excitement. Civic public spaces in the United States associated with city halls, state capitols, or other government institutions have historically been places used for the civic engagement of people. From protests to punishments, from parties to peace, public spaces have served American cities and towns in many different ways (Means and Tims, 2005; Nikitin, 2009). Through the understanding of how life is breathed into our civic public spaces, we can begin to think about the underlining democratic meaning and how well-designed public spaces bring value to the lives of a community's citizens (Means and Tims, 2005).

Sociologists have studied the tradition of public space and the social role it plays. Public space is that space we share with strangers and where strangers can coexist as equals (Rogers, 2004; Jalaladdini and Oktay, 2012). Meaning, that individuals can become one with each other to band together and stand against injustice or celebrate together over a victory, space where coexistence becomes a community activity. According to Carr et al. (1992), public spaces are where the "drama of communal life unfolds" (page 3). "In the parks, plazas, markets, waterfronts, and natural areas of our cities, people from different cultural groups can come together in a supportive context of mutual enjoyment. As these experiences are repeated, public spaces become vessels to carry positive communal meaning." (Carr et al., 1992, page 344). The public life of citizens happens in the public spaces that are designed for them (Jalaladdini and Oktay, 2012). Civic public spaces can function as a community anchor, symbolically, and physically, generating a gathering place that can serve as an open forum (Nikitin, 2009). People need good public spaces not only to gather but also to form the bonds of shared citizenship.

This link between public space and citizenship makes them great incubators in which to understand the building of social capital. Social capital refers to the resources derived from collective or group action. It is associated with networks, social trust, and norms that build cooperation and coordination for a mutual benefit (Casey, 2014; Putnam, 1995). When public spaces in a community are rich in social capital, the public spaces are cleaner, the streets are safer, and people are friendlier to each other (Ijla, 2012). Therefore, public space becomes a tool that local governments can use to engage with citizens and build strong civic relationships. Local governments have the power to design public spaces in such a way that they provide an array of

activities and services for the whole of the city or a specified neighborhood, activities that build and foster social capital.

Successful public spaces can be intentionally designed using certain features or elements. Design can create "settings that produce aesthetic experiences for those who move through and occupy them" (Miller, 2007, page xiii). According to Walljasper, if you build a good place, people will gather in it (Walljasper, 2005). Well-designed public spaces can increase the quality of life for citizens (Jalaladdini and Oktay, 2012). This notion suggests that if governments design public civic spaces that are inviting and creative, people will spend time there and build social capital in those spaces (APAWC, n.d.).

Research Questions

The DFW metroplex is the laboratory for this interdisciplinary research project. Many different disciplines look at public space and talk about public space from architecture, anthropology, urban design, sociology, public administration, and public policy. Designers emphasize similar themes. Landscape architect Laurie Olin, in his book, *Be Seated*, stated that "In a democracy, we are expected to fulfill two potentials - those of private citizens and contributing members of a community. When sitting on a bench or chair in a park or plaza, we inevitably participate in the life of a particular space, city, and society while simultaneously pursuing our own life with its demands and aspirations." (Amazon, n.d.) While the terminology may be different, public spaces may even be called by different names, yet all fields are talking about the same thing.

To help explore the links between these different disciplines and how they think about the design of public civic space and the ways it can build social capital, I developed a framework to analyze the design features of governments and their ability to create social capital. -Guided by the ideas of social capital theory, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the role of government in the creation of civic public spaces that encourage s social interaction and build s social capital?
2. Are there public space typologies for civic space that are more successful than others for building social capital?
3. Which public space design features for civic space are most successful in bringing people together and thus building social capital?

It is critical to understand the ability of governments to provide public spaces for their citizens where their citizens want to spend time. It is not just about semantics and how each different discipline looks at public space and how they define it. It is not just about policy and what policy mandates that governments have in place to address public spaces. Design is central to the success of civic public space. Site specification, seating, tree arrangement, and paving choices all play a role in how accessible and inviting space is and how well the citizens will use it. Failure to provide for the right amenities, attractions, or connections to social networks, even a well-designed public space, will be sterile, and people will not use it (Worpole and Knox, 2007).

By looking at civic public spaces in the suburban context, I explore the ability of cities to overcome the stigma of placelessness that seems to be engrained in suburban communities. Even though cities may encourage citizen engagement and build spaces and architecture that is

beautiful, it lacks the appeal that urban cities garner. However, suburban communities desire to create a higher standard of living away from the urban core. According to Dauny et al., "a higher standard of living has somehow failed to result in a better quality of life" (Dauny et al., 2000, page xxii). The purpose of choosing these specific suburban communities for this research was to demonstrate that city governments want to create a quality of life for its citizens and, through the design of public spaces, they can create a sense of place and a sense of pride for those who live there.

Civic Public Space Defined

Public spaces have been defined in many different ways by many different people. Some consider it a social arena that is assessable to everyone (Goodsell, 2003). Some refer to public space as a physical location such as parks, streets, or plazas placed strategically in and around the city for people to gather (Goodsell, 2003). Another definition is a place owned by the government, with no restrictions placed on accessibility and provides opportunities for interaction and open communication (Toolis, 2017). Another viewpoint of public space is that of the commons. A commons is a "collectively owned resource held in joint use or possession to which anyone has access without obtaining permission from anyone else" (Nemeth, 2012, page 5), or places where rights are shared by a particular group (Childs, 2004). Public space is also defined as open space, not privately controlled, and accessible to the public (Madanipour, 1996; Mehta, 2014). Chattopadhyay and White consider public spaces that are inherently political, with the ability "to foster group or community identity" (Chattopadhyay & White, 2014, page 3).

Many public spaces, such as the National Mall, are directly connected to powerful democratic institutions with political associations (Chattopadhyay & White, 2014).

For this research, the definition adopted is that public spaces are a physical location, open and accessible to all, and owned or controlled by the city. These civic spaces are accessible to all, and owned and operated by local governments. These civic spaces often focus on city halls, and their associated civic spaces are suggested by their role as a real focal point for civic engagement. While other kinds of public spaces, like public parks, play a role in building social capital in neighborhoods and cities, the city hall and its public square or plaza play a unique role in the way that they connect citizens directly to city government and symbolically represent democratic ideals and institutions (Ryan, 2000; Upton, 1998; Chattopadhyay and White, 2014). Civic public spaces can be designed in such a way to encourage civic engagement and therefore build social capital.

Public Space as a Political Forum

Civic Public space can be an open forum for political engagement. Many public spaces have been used as locations for protests, celebrations, stand-offs between the citizenry and the government, and a display of the public's ability to show the government that they care about their country or civic issues. This is a tradition of American democracy in the nation's public spaces. This is a tradition of public spaces anywhere. The agora is one of the most often thought about spaces when thinking about public space as a political forum (Bodnar, 2015). The beauty of public space is that it has the ability to bring together diverse populations, a democratic function in and of itself (Bodnar, 2015; Jalaladdini and Oktay. 2012).

Democracy and public space have a crucial relationship for the public. According to Kevin Mattson, "Democracy requires places where citizens can gather together to discuss the issues of the day and work on solving problems" (Mattson, 1999, pg 133). This has been realized by architects and designers for centuries. The agora, the town commons, and central parks were designed as a means to provide the citizens with a place to hash out the political frustrations of the day, as well as, a place to express their rights as citizens and assemble to make a statement (Toolis, 2017). A symbolic power was awarded to these spaces to make them a place of pride for all who visited, adorned with ornaments and statues (Mattson, 1999; Miller, 2007). The encouragement of social interaction and discourse was the specific role of architecture in democracy.

Privatization of Public Space

One of the emerging problems in regards to public space is that of privatization. In the past, civic public spaces were traditionally owned and operated by the local government and fully available to the public for community or individual events (Loukaitou-Sideras, 1993). Recently, we are beginning to see a new trend where public spaces are controlled by private organizations and often designed, built, and then managed by private entities as opposed to the cities in which they exist (Loukaitou-Sideras, 1993). In some extreme cases, even city hall buildings and their associated civic public spaces are being built and funded by Public-Private Partnerships (P3). Space is then leased by the city and managed by a management company, such being the case in Long Beach, California (McNary, 2016). In Southlake, Texas, the land is owned by the management company, but the city owns and manages the city hall.

The commercialization of the town square is the new American idea (Bodnar, 2015). However, it has inherent problems in how it treats the concept of the public when it is not itself a public venture. There is a tension between the publicness of the Shopping Mall or Towne Center and the private interests of property owners. Considering the malls are owned by private companies, the idea that a limit is placed on free speech in those places (Mattson, 1999). Sundance Square in Fort Worth, Texas, is an excellent example of a space that appears to function as a town square but is, in fact, owned by a private real estate management company that explicitly limits public activities and speech (Schlachter, 2015).

One of the biggest reasons for the decline of public space and the increase in privatization are limited budgets and challenges to government spending. The economic burden can be lowered when private entities take over control of the expensive upkeep of public spaces, especially in urban areas (Loukaitou-Sideras, 1993). With tax cuts, cities are forced to reduce spending anywhere they can. Another reason can be attributed to the perception of public spaces regarding common urban problems, such as homelessness and crime (Loukaitou-Sideras, 1993).

Privatization is even more noticeable in the American suburbs. The suburbs were built around the incessant need for the automobile, and in many places, people cannot maneuver the terrain without one (Mattson, 1999). Gated communities with private homeowner associations lock citizens into little bubbles, where individuals simply go from point A to point B and back on typical days of the week. These private homeowner organizations also acculturate residents to

the private regulation of public space through limits on how their property can be developed and maintained (Blakely and Snyder, 1997).

This dichotomy of public and private brings about the concern of the publicness of the space. The open-access of private spaces, and not truly public, can be questioned, potentially hindering the demonstration of democracy and the inherent rights of democracy, such as free speech and the right to assemble, not to mention the loss of civic identity (Nemeth, 2012; Toolis, 2017). Public spaces, especially such idyllic spaces as the National Mall or the New York City Hall Park, are indicative of democracy and the promotion of active citizenship through the exchange, dialogue, social movements, and political movements (Nemeth, 2012; Mehta, 2014). In understanding social capital in civic, public spaces, the freedom for one to participate and actively engage in democracy.

Studies in Public Space

While there is little literature that focuses on public spaces in the suburban context, there are several organizations that have generated methods for looking at civic engagement and trust in urban areas. Three such organizations are very much at the forefront of studies that look at urban spaces. Two of them, Civic Commons and Center for Active Design, are both funded by the Knight Foundation, an organization that seeks to engage and inform the cities where the Knight Brothers owned newspapers. Project for Public Spaces is dedicated to the promotion of placemaking and fostering communities that have sustainable public spaces that foster strong communities.

"Reimagining the Civic Commons" is in the process of conducting a multi-city study of civic commons across the United States. All of the cities selected for this study are large urban areas: Chicago, Memphis, Akron, Detroit, and Philadelphia. Four dimensions are measured: civic engagement, socioeconomic mixing, environmental sustainability, and value creation. "More than just places to gather and recreate, our civic assets are key to nurturing engagement, equity, sustainability, and economic resiliency in our cities." (Reimagining the Civic Commons, n.d., page 5).

Center for Active Design is another organization in the process of conducting a large-scale study of public space design. Again, the cities are urban areas mostly on the Eastern side of the United States: Aberdeen, Akron, Biloxi, Boulder, Bradenton, Charlotte, Columbia, Columbus, Duluth, Detroit, Ft. Wayne, Gary, Grand Forks, Lexington, Long Beach, Milledgeville, Myrtle Beach, Macon, Miami, Philadelphia, Palm Beach County, San Jose, St. Paul, State College, Tallahassee, and Wichita. Similar to Reimagining the Civic Commons, the Center for Active Design study has four objectives dealing with civic engagement: civic trust and appreciation, participation in public life, stewardship of the public realm, and informed local voting. According to the Center for Active Design, parks are essential. The inclusion of parks in neighborhoods increases the social trust of the community and makes people more likely to help their neighbors (Center for Active Design, 2017). Civic trust is directly related to park design and maintenance of parks already in place (Center for Active Design, 2017).

Project for Public Spaces is an organization that has shared many projects across the United States and has produced several articles laying out their thoughts and ideas about how

spaces can be successful. This includes articles such as "10 Principles for Successful Squares", "Eleven Principles for Turning Public Spaces into Civic Spaces," and "What is a Good Civic Space." This organization is dedicated to creating vibrant public spaces and that aid community building in the process. While being the central advocate for the Placemaking movement, they are also focused on providing tools for communities, practitioners, and anyone interested in making their place a place that they can love.

COVID 19 and Its Impact on Public Space

Throughout my research, a new disease struck our nation. The 2019 novel coronavirus quickly elevated to a pandemic and promptly changed the face of American life and our public spaces, possibly forever. Cities shut their doors, and public spaces were blocked off; playgrounds were covered in caution tape, and policies were incorporated forbidding citizens from going anywhere non-essential. Even as cities begin to open up after the initial wave of the pandemic, the face of public spaces and how they are used has changed. It seems only appropriate to incorporate these changes into my research and demonstrate the power of a virus over a community.

Significance of Research

This research is important because the design of civic public spaces and the creation of these spaces is occurring without a thoughtful understanding that there is a difference between urban civic spaces and civic public spaces in the suburban context. People need good public spaces in which to spend time regardless of whether they live in an urban space or the suburbs. However, the concepts of design in these spaces are fundamentally different just as the

environment is different. People interacting in public space is critical for cities to have engaged citizens. Often city officials will comment on these spaces and their successful nature; however, they do not offer a reason why or even understand why they are successful. This research fills the gap for a framework to evaluate social capital in public spaces, along with methodologies that are useful in understanding how spaces are used daily and longitudinally, as well as how they measure behavior. This research is significant because a successful framework is developed and utilized in three separate locations.

Contributions

The most solid contribution of this research is the building of a framework that successfully measures and demonstrates an understanding of social capital. There is currently no unified measurement of social capital, and the field is in desperate need of a methodology that can measure social capital in different disciplines and venues. Behavior mapping and participant observation are used as a means to understand the activities of people, and through this methodology, we can derive a good picture of how social capital is built in public spaces. The framework pulls together three layers that not only look at how space is utilized but at the environment and what tools are used to make those uses occur. Cities rely on the expertise of architects for well-designed spaces, but public administrators can make more informed decisions if they have a framework that makes sense for public administration. This research provides this framework.

There is a shortage of literature that reviews the amenities and public services provided by city governments in civic public spaces. As well, there is a lack of research that addresses

sociability in newly designed public spaces and how these new designs are impacted by the social realm (Aelbrecht, 2016). The idea of this research is first to understand how social capital is achieved and then to acknowledge what amenities or public provisions can be made in public spaces to make them centers for developing various networks. Another contribution is the understanding of how the location of those public spaces and the outlying geography or environment can promote social capital within a public space. Organizations such as Project for Public Spaces, Civic Commons, and the Center for Active Design have begun examining these issues with case studies located in large urban cities; my research focuses on suburban incorporated cities in the fabric of fragmented urban sprawl. The goal of this research is to create and utilize a framework that assesses how well local governments facilitate the building of social capital in their public civic spaces. The goal is to suggest some best practice design features along with policies that can be put in place for governments to design public spaces for people.

Chapter 2: Public Space Design

Design in Public Spaces

Design is in the eye of the beholder, and people "see what they want to see" (Lang and Marshall, 2017, page 174). Design is meant to create settings by transforming the environment and producing experiences for those who spend time in those spaces (Miller, 2007). Design is how space is laid out and how it is filled with features that will either draw people in or push people away. A good mixture of uses within a park will produce a variety of users who will come and go (Jacobs, 1961). The design has everything to do with whether people spend time there; if space is well-designed, then people will want to be there (Willjasper, 2005). A space that is empty and void of any amenities or plantings will be a space no one wants to use (Gehl, 2011).

Therefore, the design of public spaces must be at the forefront of how public spaces are put together. Civic public space design should be open, attractive, and flexible, promoting lively enclosures that encourage social interactions and democracy. The chapter concludes with a section highlighting the various elements or amenities used by cities in their attempts to design civic public spaces in which people want to spend. The details are essential when considering how people use a space and will determine if people will stay in that space or not (Gehl, 2011).

One feature of the design of public space is openness and accessibility (Marcus and Frances, 1998). While there should be measures of safety and security, spaces that are open and accessible are more likely to draw people in than spaces that are closed off (Peters et al., 2010; Lange, 2012). A closed-off space can give the appearance of privacy and may scare some away as if space were private rather than public. According to Ayala-Azcarraga et al. (2019), accessibility

directly correlates with its use. There should be a desire for spaces to be inviting to encourage individuals to come in and spend time there (Gehl, 2011).

Public space design should be flexible. By this, I mean that space should provide for a variety of uses. Depending on the day, week, or year, space needs to be able to adapt to the changing uses or users (Project for Public Spaces, 2005). A public space that can be a picnic area one minute, a spot to watch a parade the next and the location of a festival five minutes later is a much more valuable space than a space that can only be used in one way. Space should allow for some self-organization (Mean and Tims, 2005).

The design of attractive public spaces can provide for many functions. A beautiful public space demonstrates the level of care provided to that space. Governments that allocate money to maintain and clean public spaces can produce higher quality spaces. Attractive spaces can create environments where strangers can share experiences (Anderson et al., 2016). It is suggested that "high-quality" public spaces can impact social health in communities (Anderson et al., 2016). It is also believed that "high-quality" public spaces are those spaces that encourage what Gehl considers "optional activities"; those activities that are not necessary to everyday life, but are activities people choose to do (Bishop and Marshall, 2017; Gehl, 2013). Overall, the quality aspect of public space is a crucial quality of life for the residents of that community (Brain, 2019).

Public spaces should be lively and promote a myriad of social interactions. People are social beings, and design should focus on this social aspect (Aelbrecht, 2016). They need spaces in which they can conduct their social lives. One of the goals of design should be the

development of such spaces that draw people together for different activities (Madanipour, 1999; Ijla, 2012; Brain, 2019). It is thought that lively spaces are those that have the potential to alleviate fear and allow individuals to socialize freely (Aelbrecht, 2016). The hope is that the design of public spaces will bring strangers together where they can interact (Madanipour, 1999).

Spaces should be designed with the concept of staying in mind. People who want to spend time in public spaces are more likely to spend time in a space that they feel like they can stay in, where they feel safe and comfortable (Brain, 2019). This will include a space in which they feel safe. This will also be in a space where amenities exist that encourage staying (Gehl, 2013; Gehl, 2011; Aelbrecht, 2016). Activities such as standing, waiting, watching, and sitting are good staying activities (Aelbrecht, 2016). A space with a stage, either literal or figural, is a great place to stay as "people-watching" is a popular pastime of many who frequent public spaces (Jacobs, 1961). In a sense, people are actors, and space is the stage (Upton and Vlach, 1986). According to Jacobs (1961), some of the best parks are centered on stages set for people.

Public spaces, especially those attached to civic buildings like City Halls, serve a democratic purpose as well as a social one. These spaces symbolize the power of the government, primarily when used as a venue for city events or the location city monuments (Madanipour, 1999). Public squares of the past attached to civic buildings were decorated with statues, monuments, works of art, and fountains, and they were used by the government to host many events, including markets and celebrations (Madanipour, 1999).

Civic Materialism

Historians consider similar matters about the relationship between civic spaces and expressions of democracy. Mary Ryan uses the term "civic materialism" to describe the ways that civic spaces and city hall buildings embody the symbolic civic values of local government and citizens. This notion suggests that the city hall is the focal point of the citizenship experience (Ryan, 2000). In essence, city hall is an anchor that shapes political expectations and processes through its image as well as in the spaces it creates. It is the design of city halls and public spaces that lead citizens on a journey through their government. That is to say, the floor plans of a city hall or spatial layout of a town square are a foundation for how citizens navigate their citizenship (Ryan, 2000). Therefore, the public space that is attached to the city hall becomes the primary zone in which citizens began their journey and make their first interactions with democracy.

Civic materialism is grounded in the political histories of American cities. The materialistic approach to building grand buildings with lavish interiors was often a point of contestation on the democratic forefront of the American city; it was an intense political struggle in many cities (Ryan, 2000). Civic materialism does not just consider the political struggle or the aesthetic value that the architects strived to achieve, but also the civic actions of all citizens (Ryan, 2008). City hall, in all its grandeur or its modesty, can speak to the active citizenship needed to develop it and can be a contribution to civic vitality. Civic materialism allows us to understand the material culture of the civic public space as symbolic of its values. (Ryan, 2000; Chattopadhyay and White, 2014).

Placemaking

Placemaking is a means of emphasizing community collaboration and participation in the design process to increase the livability of spaces, towns, and cities (Toolis, 2017).

Project for Public Spaces is a proponent of placemaking, and its website provides tools and guidelines for the effective use of placemaking to create good places and communities. Many of these efforts focus on beautifying and cleaning public spaces to create investment opportunities and development (Toolis, 2017). Many cities have begun to incorporate the concepts of placemaking in their comprehensive planning. They are starting to cite the ideas as direct guidelines for how they will make their cities better places to live and create a quality of life for all residents.

Design and Social Capital

What we know about social capital is that there is a mutual benefit to a community through the actions of others. The design of public space can impact social capital. According to Upton and Vlach, "if the square design makes the community a better place to live, there are benefits for the individual citizen" (Upton & Vlach, 1986, page 142). It is also said that if space is well-designed and interactions occur in that space, there is a higher likelihood that the connectivity and social bonds formed in that space will create social capital for a community (Ijla, 2012). The built environment and how it is ordered can impact the connection of social capital in public spaces (Brain, 2019). A public space that is socially successful will be evocative and unforgettable and create a sense of place in the city (Bishop and Marshall, 2017). Everything

suggests that if one creates a space that is socially diverse and active, then social capital will be built in that space.

Public Space Typologies

There are many different kinds of public spaces. It is common for design disciplines to assign a typology to public spaces rather than consider their political or social context (Miller, 2007). A typology is a way to categorize design and is fundamental to critics of design, historians, and designers (Veselka, 2000). Each typology plays a role in the political and social context when that space is attached to a city hall. Squares, parks, waterfronts, and streets are all examples of public spaces (Lang and Marshall, 2017) and all of which have a place in building social capital within cities. These spaces give an "ebb and flow" to the city and the daily lives of the individuals who live there (Carr et al., 1992, page 3). Public spaces are designed for the communities they inhabit (Carr et al., 1992). The type of space will fluctuate based on corresponding needs. These spaces should be designed as "lively enclosures" meant to join people together through an array of activities (Madanipour, 1999). According to Madanipour (1999), through economic, political, and aesthetic value, public spaces are intended to "act as an infrastructure for social life" (page 882). These spaces become the lifeblood of the community.

Squares and plazas are those exterior spaces that are most often contained by the built environment (Childs, 2004; Lang and Marshall, 2017). Squares are commonly in the center of town and are usually the central point of government activity in the public sphere. They are a sign of economic prosperity and often highly reflective of the businesses that surround the square (Upton and Vlach, 1986; Veselka, 2000). The square is generally placed in a location with

maximum accessibility for all to promote social contact and increase civic pride (Upton & Vlach, 1986).

The courthouse square is a prominent typology in American cities that are county seats (Veselka, 2000). The courthouse square is designed in a rectangular form outlined with streets (Upton and Vlach, 1986; Veselka, 2000). The grandest building, typically a courthouse stands alone, ornate and beautiful, in the middle of the square (Upton and Vlach, 1986; Veselka, 2000). "Plaza courthouses concentrate public activities, and land uses at the square – a key factor in the square's centripetal influence" (Veselka, 2000, page 101). The courthouse square is important not only in regards to the shape of the community's economic life but in the symbolism and focus of the architecture. This typology brings a sense of identity to a community of belonging and instills pride in its users (Lang and Marshall, 2017). This is the location of ceremonies, parades, town events, and monuments (Veselka, 2000). Waxahachie, Texas, and Denton, Texas, are great examples of cities that employ the courthouse square typology. However, cities such as San Diego, Texas, and Southlake, Texas, have used this same courthouse square typology in city governments, straying from the county building being at the center. Here, the city hall becomes the grandest building in the middle of the square; this is civic materialism at its most direct.

Plazas are often found attached to a civic building that holds some importance for the city. Plazas are often hardscaped or paved surfaces surrounded by buildings and are inaccessible to vehicles (Marcus and Francis, 1998). When most people think of plazas, they think about the piazzas and plazas of Latin America and Southern Europe. However, they can be found in America as well. For example, plazas became essential design elements in the building of high-

rise structures, after New York City enacted policies that allowed for taller buildings when the inclusion of a plaza was present in the design (Marcus and Francis, 1998). In the United States, Marcus and Francis describe six categories of plaza; street plaza, corporate foyer, urban oasis, transit foyer, the street as a plaza, and the grand public space (Marcus and Francis, 1998). Frisco, Texas, is an example of the urban garden oasis, detached from the street and cars, where plantings create a retreat from the busy city around it.

Squares and plazas can be excellent sources of social capital. Individuals and families may use these spaces to attend programmed events like Christmas tree lightings, and as a group of strangers, they band together to celebrate the holiday. Many people may use the spaces informally, coming alone to enjoy something to eat on their break or to breathe the fresh outdoor air. Organizations that support certain ideals may gather in the town square or plaza to join together for a display of protest to change policy or regulations.

Parks are probably the most commonly considered public space, especially regarding the engagement of social capital. They are generally regarded "as more desirable than a square or plaza" (Lang and Marshall, 2017, page 8) in the mind of many Anglo-Saxon societies. Parks can be landmarks and can signify a specific event or time in the history of that location (Lang and Marshall, 2017). Neighborhood parks and pocket parks are often found in residential areas and contain play structures or soft landscapes, allowing a mixture of active and passive activities (Marcus and Francis, 1998). People go to public parks for a variety of reasons. They may frequent different parks based on the amenities or public services provided in individual parks, while some parks may be more subdued and allow for a more relaxing, quiet visit. Organizations frequently

use parks as a location for activities or events. These events may be protests, meant to fulfill organizational missions, or simply meant to allow their members a time and place to relax and fellowship.

Tools of Design

Civic public spaces, regardless of their typology, typically employ a standard set of design features. These include water features (active fountains, passive fountains, or lake/pond), walking trails, grassy areas, playgrounds, sculptures, gardens (flowers and trees), and seating. Activities in public spaces will vary depending on the facilities that are provided. The tools that are used in a public space will dictate what activities occur there (Peters et al., 2010). This is by no means an exhaustive list, but are the most prominent and are the tools most often employed by designers.

Water is a feature that has been employed by cities in public spaces since the beginning of city planning. Water might be in the form of a reflecting pool, pond, lake, or fountain. Fountains can be active or passive, suggesting a certain intractability for each. According to Childs, water becomes an attraction, a place to play (Childs, 2004). Water is popular, especially during summer months, and can be an enticement for both children and adults alike (Whyte, 1980). In many public spaces, a fountain of some sort is a focal point, placed in the center of that space or in a spot where it will garner the most attention (Lang and Marshall, 2017). There is a fantastic aspect of water to draw people in and even provide for social interactions between strangers. There is something about the sound of water and the feel; it is hard to resist wanting to play in the waters (Whyte, 1980; Land and Marshall, 2017).

Walking trails are standard tools considered by designers in public spaces because they are a means to get from one place to another. During the era of the pleasure ground, they were used to lift one's spirit; today, that can still be said, as many walk for the pure enjoyment of clearing their head (Cranz, 1982). However, walking paths can also be links that are created to get from one side of a complex to the other (Lang and Marshall, 2017). Walking trails are becoming more and more popular in cities as a means to help make communities healthier.

Seating is an essential element in public space. If people are given a place to sit, they will do so (Whyte, 1980). Chairs that are moveable, benches, or even ledges make excellent places for people to sit. In many cases, just about anything in a public space will be used for sitting (Olin, 2019). This allows for individuals to stop, rest, and savor the environment. Seating is necessary to create a space for staying. Individuals will look around for a space to sit, if there are none, they are not likely to stay and will probably spend much less time there in the future (Lang and Marshall, 2017). Seating will also have a substantial impact on how individuals act and feel when they are in public spaces (Olin, 2019).

Playgrounds, while not something individual adults will use to create social capital, children at play will bring parents together for spontaneous conversations. Frequently, home school groups will gather at a nearby playground. Children get the opportunity to play while the mothers or fathers, conduct business or visit amongst themselves. Stranger connections are made at playgrounds. Parents may introduce themselves to someone new, or children may play with other kids, thus making connections and new friendships.

Public art, sculptures, and play structures can bring a visual element to a public space. These elements can tell a story about the history of that space or an individual. Statues, memorials, and monuments, for example, are standard features of public space that represent the identity and past values of a community (Toolis, 2017, page 187). The presence of a statue or other sculptural element can become a linking piece that will connect strangers and stimulate conversation between them (Carr et al., 1992).

Great lawns or grassy areas are probably the most flexible element that can be incorporated by designers. Activities in these spaces can be active or passive (Rasidi et al., 2012). Active engagement can include sports, placement of booths/tents for bazaars/festivals, or they can simply be used for walking. The grassy areas give individuals a venue to endure some sort of active involvement (Bishop and Marshall, 2017). Great lawns can be used for rallies or speaking events, harnessing their influence for democratic purposes. Passive engagement includes laying down, picnicking, sitting on a bench, and people-watching; these are activities that do not require an individual to be actively involved, but a chance for leisure time (Ayala-Azcarraga et al., 2019; Bishop and Marshall, 2017). Both of these can build opportunities to interact with strangers (Peters et al., 2010). It is thought that when strangers frequent these spaces, they become familiar with each other and make social connections (Rasidi et al., 2012). These green spaces can be vital to social interactions. Depending on their design, they will be used, or they will not (Ayala-Azcarraga et al., 2019).

Chapter 3: Social Capital

Social capital theory helps to ground this research in the public administration discipline. The following chapter will discuss social capital theory and its tenets. For this research, the adopted definition of social capital is that it is an outcome produced as a collection of interactions and relationships formed between unfamiliar individuals. Trust, norms, and networks, especially informal ones, are important structures to provide individuals with the comfort to spend time in public places and thus interact with others.

Social Capital Theory

The concept of social capital became a prominent topic for governments when Robert Putnam wrote his seminal article, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital" in 1995. While a standard definition of social capital is hard to conclude, Putnam's definition is found many times in literature where social capital is discussed. According to Putnam, social capital can be defined as norms, networks, and social trust that develop coordination and cooperation for a mutual benefit (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 1998; Casey, 2007). The key in this definition is the mutual benefit that the trust, norms, and networks bring to individuals. Social capital is created when multiple individuals come together in a place, regardless of whether they know each other and build relationships.

Social capital is all about relationships. Hyman suggests that social capital is two-fold; it is an asset that represents a pool of resources and that those "resources are embedded in relationships" (Hyman, 2002, pg 6). In Field's eyes, communities are built on interactions from those relationships, and relationships are crucial (Field, 2003). Therefore, social capital is

important for communities. A successful or thriving community will have an abundance of social capital (Putnam, 1995). Social capital plays a role in political engagement, economic prosperity of the community and individuals, and the safety and security of the community (Putnam, 1995). As individuals get more civically involved in their cities, and there is an increase in social capital, there is an increase in the welfare of the community (Hyman, 2002). Social capital can then be a reflection of the connections between individuals (Putnam, 1995). It is almost critical to the well-being of individuals; it impacts the everyday lives of everyone in a community (Claridge, 2020).

Formal Networks

Tocqueville noted on his visit to America, the ability we have to build associations of different kinds (Putnam, 1995). This leads to the notion that social capital is formed by formal and informal networks (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999; Lamore et al., 2006; Putnam, 1995). Formal networks include organized groups or civic organizations that individuals join in order to mingle with other like-minded individuals. These formal networks include churches, environmental groups, civic associations, or "any other extra-governmental, noncommercial, collective pursuit" that aids in community engagement and builds social trust (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999 page 301; Lamore et al., 2006).

Formal networks have a direct impact on social capital; individuals come together in order to obtain a common goal. Pierre Bourdieu views social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance" (Bourdieu, 1986 page 21). Sufficed to say that group membership is important for the collective capital to be shared among members

(Bourdieu, 1986). Therefore, membership may be in the form of a family unit (an informal network), organization, school, or other group institution that is key to building social capital.

Participation in community organizations has had a significant impact on improving social conditions and the quality of the physical environment (Chavis, 1990; Lamore et al., 2006; Woolcock and Narayan, 2002). Participation in organized networks leads to an increase in political participation (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999). Within formal networks, the group as a whole emphasizes civic duty, becomes accustomed to hold each other accountable, and cooperates with others (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999). Individuals who are part of a formal network have been found to have more career success and are often more intellectual (Mahmood, 2015).

Informal Networks

Informal networks can be considered in two ways. First of all, informal networks include family units, communities, or neighborhoods. Secondly, informal networks foster the interactions between unfamiliar individuals (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999). Kaufman and Tepper suggest that the informal networks built between strangers, while perhaps not as strong as formal networks, still can develop social trust and lead to the interchange of ideas (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999). Here, individuals can feel free to separate (compartmentalize) their public and private personas and speak freely about topics that in a formal setting might be perceived as too precarious (i.e., offend or break codes of friendship) (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999). Essentially, when individuals come in contact with other individuals, social capital is formed (Woolcock and Narayan, 2002).

One does not have to be connected to benefit from the social capital built in a community. Putnam suggests that value is created by social networks, especially for connected individuals, but also for bystanders (Lamore et al., 2006; Benton-Short, 2016). The development of one's self-identity can be built through the experiences they have with strangers in a public setting (Benton-Short, 2016). Coleman suggests that social capital becomes a resource available to individuals; therefore, it is a public good (Coleman, 1988). According to Coleman, individuals are actors, and the concept of social capital can be seen as a resource used to benefit individual interests (Coleman, 1988). Individuals have access to resources belonging to others through relationships and individuals know the quality and amount of resources (Hyman, 2002).

Social Trust and Social Norms

Trust is the ability to believe in others. When there is appropriate trust in the government to keep those spaces safe, one can trust in that civic space and in the people encountered there. When trust is present, one may feel that they have additional freedoms to do things that they might otherwise avoid. Coleman suggests that social capital "facilitates productive activity" (Coleman, 1988, page 383). Therefore, a community with a built trust structure will be able to do more. According to Beem, "trust between individuals thus becomes trust between strangers and trust of a broad fabric of social institutions" (Beem, 1999, page 20, Ijla, 2012). Kaufman and Tepper (1999) suggest that trust is built directly through informal social interactions. The confines of an organization or association are not necessary; people can build trust between themselves even in the most public of places. Jane Jacobs believed that neighborhood businesses and individuals build social networks that can work together for the

greater good with the critical component of trust. According to Jacobs, "these networks are a city's irreplaceable social capital" (Jacobs, 1992, page 138). These networks help to bring a level of mutual trust to a neighborhood and, in times of difficulty, lead to a higher degree of resiliency than non-connected communities (Jacobs, 1992; Laurence, 2018).

There are standards and norms for every aspect of human life. Some norms guide individuals in their public as well as private lives. These are the unwritten rules about how to behave, react, and how to function when in social situations (Hechter and Opp, 2005; Mean and Tims, 2005). These norms often fluctuate depending on the neighborhood from a city-wide macro-level to a micro-level (Mean and Tims, 2005). According to Hechter and Opp (2005), they do not see how strangers could handle social interactions in public places without norms. Social norms in public spaces include knowing what behaviors are acceptable around others, families, and children. One may act one way around families with children and a completely different way when no children are present. In some respects, a person will not engage with others, depending on the social norms for that particular space (Worhole and Knox, 2007). The rules can broadly impact the involvement of strangers interacting with others if they do not feel welcome or accepted based on the social norms of a particular environment.

Social Capital in Public Spaces

Social capital is formed in public spaces. In public spaces, there is an opportunity created for individuals from all different cultures to interact and make exchanges that provide for learning and the breaking of barriers (Gaffikin et al., 2010). It is in public spaces that we learn to be citizens (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999). Public spaces can nurture social experiences giving

individuals the ability to participate in community activities. Hyman suggests that the creation of social capital occurs when a "catalytic issue or event" spurs civic participation and is "directed toward a particular end or purpose" (Hyman, 2002, page 7). Instrumental in the development of one's self-identity is the experiences had with strangers in a public setting (Benton-Short, 2016). There is also the belief that encounters with strangers in a public space will aid in the development of a diversity of thought, meaning it allows people to recognize (and appreciate/respect) the differences between people.

In public space, there is an interchange of ideas. This interchange might come in the sharing of a job opportunity in an informal conversation or the sharing of a recipe that might spark innovation in the kitchen. There is a need for public spaces that encourage interaction between strangers (Aelbrecht, 2016). It is the exchange between strangers that, in many cases, provides for the freest expression of one's opinions (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999). This expression then becomes a social norm in that public space. In fact, Kaufman and Tepper (1999) suggest that informal interaction is the key to political participation. They say,

"it may be the prevalence of opportunities for relative strangers to meet and interact, as opposed to opportunities for familiars to participate in regularly scheduled activities that engender social capital, and thus greater commitment to the public good" (Kaufman and Tepper, 1999).

Social Capital as an Outcome

Social capital can be the product of interactions in public spaces. According to Coleman, social capital is an outcome and created when individuals are affected by the actions of other

individuals or networks (Coleman, 1988; Hyman, 2002). Also, Bourdieu believes that the amount of social capital to which an individual has access is dependent upon the network of relationships that individuals can organize (Bourdieu, 1986). Based on these ideas, the assumption can be made that social outcomes can be viewed as an outcome in a public space. If people are spending time in a public space, they have a certain level of trust and comfort in that place. If others witness individuals spending time in a public space, they can then assume that the space is safe and will then spend time there as well. The picture of safety can grow and grow until space is filled and being enjoyed by many. Social capital then becomes an outcome of the trust and security one feels in that public space. Gehl (2011) argues that when people see one individual trusting in an environment, then others will join (Gehl, 2011).

Social Capital and COVID 19

While no literature exists in academic journals regarding social capital and the novel coronavirus, there have been many who have dedicated blogs about how the virus and the stay-home (quarantine) orders impact social capital. Tristan Claridge, head of the Social Capital Research Group, has done extensive research on social capital and discusses the effects of this new virus. The loneliness of isolation and quarantine can be very daunting and can damage social capital (Claridge, 2020). The solitude could be an impact that lasts many years based on data reviewed from the era of the Spanish Flu (Aassve et al., 2020). Research from the Spanish Flu era suggests that "the social disruption and generalized mistrust had permanent consequences on individual behavior in terms of lower social trust" (Aassve et al., 2020).

People are social beings and require human interactions. Claridge (2020) notes that social capital is in some ways critical to things like job performance; when one moves into working from home, the absence of human interaction can impact job performance in a negative way. He stresses the importance of human interaction but following the social distancing guidelines of six feet. He also recommends the use of technology to create social interactions that one would otherwise do in person, such as share a cup of coffee or go to a book club meeting. However, even these informal technology-based meetings are not a replacement for in-person meetings (Claridge, 2020).

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework

To study social capital in public spaces, I developed a framework and tested it with reasonable success. The social capital formation can be analyzed through the "spatial layout of cities" (Kaufman & Tepper, 1999, pg 300). In essence, local governments design public spaces to build social capital and increase civic engagement. The local government positions (i.e., locates) and designs its public spaces; these actions are intentional. These intentions are critical in understanding the placement of a city hall, the public space that will be associated with that city hall, and how the surrounding elements impact activities in those spaces. While public spaces have been studied in various ways, there are two studies that I referenced when formatting the theoretical framework described below, that are adaptable to measure the outcome of social capital in public spaces.

I developed my framework by looking first at the work of Jeremy Nemeth. Nemeth developed a model that seeks to understand just how public a public space is. He took a model developed by Lawrence Lessig for understanding the Internet and translated it to study a physical space. Lessig asserted that the Internet could be viewed in three layers: **physical**, **code**, and **content** (Németh, 2012). The **physical layer** is the medium in which communication travels and includes the "wireless spectra that transmit information," wires, and hardware (Németh, 2012). The **code layer** includes what one might think of as the coding or software: the processes, protocols, legal standards, and programming languages (Németh, 2012). Lastly, the **content layer** comprises the data, the information transmitted between the consumer and producer (Németh, 2012). Lessig applies this same concept to two public spaces, the Speaker's Corner in London's

Hyde Park and Madison Square Garden. The Speaker's Corner is a commons in all three layers; however, Madison Square Garden is only a commons in two of the three layers as it is not owned publicly, and therefore the physical layer is not public (Németh, 2012).

Németh proceeded to extend Lessig's theory to the physical context of public spaces. In his model, the **physical layer** consists of the physical elements of the public space, including programming, location, and aesthetics (Németh, 2012). The **code layer** includes any municipal codes or regulations that exist for public spaces (Németh, 2012). The **content layer** includes the use of public spaces (Németh, 2012). While his framework is favorably used in determining the publicness of public space, it falls short of identifying the creation of social capital in public spaces because it does not consider the people using the space, but rather how public space is.

Vikas Mehta also suggests a framework for the evaluation of public space. This framework develops a Public Space Index (PSI) that consists of 42 to 45 variables across six categories (Mehta, 2014). Space is considered "good" when the user has a good experience and

wants to linger and socialize with other space patrons (Mehta, 2014). The five categories suggest that space is good when:

- space is open and accessible,
- space supports activities, and the design is meaningful,
- there is a sense of security, comfort, and convenience,
- a sense of control, and
- there is a sensory pleasure (Mehta, 2014).

Mehta's public space framework, while again useful in evaluating public space, falls short because it must be adapted based on location to reflect the changing cultures and subcultures of different locations.

However, this model helps reinforce Gehl's theory of poor and good spaces and suggesting a way of measuring the activities that will occur in those spaces dependent upon the design. Gehl asserts that in a well-designed public space, not only will necessary and social activities occur, but optional activities will occur as well (Gehl, 2011). Nevertheless, in poorly designed public spaces, he finds that not only do optional activities rarely happen, but social activities are also less likely to occur (Gehl, 2011).

Sloan Social Capital Framework

I developed the framework to understand how local governments use public space from an adaptation of Nemeth's Layers Applied to Physical Space and portions of Mehta's PSI. A **physical layer** aids in understanding the physical components of the space and their spatial properties concerning the built environment around them and to the city hall. It stands to reason

that the built environment, streets, sidewalks, and crosswalks that border and serve the public space play a role in social capital formation. There is a constant interaction between motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists that affects how the people will use a space.

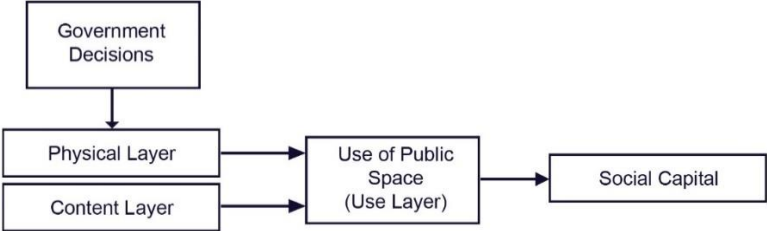
A **content layer** includes the amenities or programming elements that are permanent and those that can change or be used in a manner other than intended. Government decisions ultimately control these first two layers. Policies and practices dictate certain facets of the layers (see Figure 9). The government impacts both the **content layer** and the **physical layer**. The governmental decisions and their impacts on sociability in public spaces are consistent with Coleman's idea of social capital, in that social capital is a resource to individuals and an outcome that can be seen when individuals or networks take specific actions. Based on the decisions of the government, they can impact how the community is affected, therefore either encouraging social capital or discouraging it.

Lastly, the **use layer** involves the social interactions and relationships of those that use the public space. While the government has some control over actions in this layer, they do not have absolute power. Governments program events for these public spaces, but aside from those events, depending on the content, space can be used in various ways by the different individuals that inhabit or occupy the space. The **use layer** is impacted by how citizens interact in the space and how they interact with the amenities of the space.

A conceptual model for the developed theoretical framework is seen in Figure 1. We see that Government decisions lead to the development of the **physical layer** and the **content layer**. These are ordinances, such as land-use policies and programming performed by different

departments of the city. According to a report promulgated by the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association (n.d.), "Because social capital is largely generated at the local and community levels, planners working at the community, municipal, and regional levels can play a big role in fostering the social capital" (page 1). The decisions that are made and govern the **physical layer** and the **content layer** impact how space is used. If good decisions are made, according to the literature, people will use the space. However, if space is not well designed, is lacking amenities and attractions, or even contains poor programming, space will stagnate and not be used (Worhole and Knox, 2007). When space is well-used, and there are social interactions that take place between strangers, families, and social networks, social capital is produced. By providing a space to mingle and linger, governments exercise power to grant citizens a sense of community, and this enhances social capital (Tollis, 2017).

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL MODEL



Chapter 5: Methodology

Introduction to Case Studies

The methodology employed in this paper will be a mixed-methods approach, utilizing case studies involving three Texas cities that are part of the suburban sprawl of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Statistical Area. Each has intentionally designed city halls with connected parks or plazas. According to Robert Stake, a collective case study is useful for developing an understanding of common characteristics (Stake, 1998). Many famous social scientists, such as William Whyte and Jan Gehl, used collective case studies in their work. I believe this will be instrumental in the understanding of the design characteristics that are useful for creating social capital in public spaces in suburban cities. The goal is not to compare the three cases and make a judgment as to which city has the best public space, but rather to understand what elements in each of them would make the best designed public space to recommend policies that will facilitate good public space design.

To determine what cities would be studied, two steps were taken. First, the Bright-Lambiase Citizen Engagement Survey was utilized to determine the cities that had the most reported visits to the city hall, indicating an existing high degree of citizen engagement (See Table 1). The Bright-Lambiase Survey is a study conducted by two professors at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. They were looking not at physical space, but virtual space and

the level of democratic activism conducted by citizens in a digital format. However, they had some questions that focused on the physical space and the city hall as a focal point.

Second, a public space audit was conducted on each space. I developed the public space audit based on Mehta's PSI, a SWOT Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), and concepts from the Center for Active Design's civic engagement survey. A copy of the audit can be found in Appendix A. The audit considered the **physical, content, and use layers** of a single visit. Each layer was scored, and the results are presented in Table 1. The series of questions allowed a Likert scale style response, allowing the emotions and feelings of the author about the space to be revealed subjectively. Each site was visited, photographs were taken, and the audit completed. The number of individuals present in the space impacted the response. The data was then calculated by layer.

The top five cities from each list were compiled and compared. Only two cities made the top five in both Denton and Frisco (as seen in Table 1). However, to consider the impact of a city hall that is well-designed according to the audit, but lacked respondents on the survey, a case study analysis was also conducted on the city of Southlake, Texas. Along with the site visit and survey results, some demographic information was collected from the Census Bureau, Sterling's Best Places, and city websites. This demographic information will be valuable in the analysis of the spaces from the standpoint of relative comparison among locations.

As seen in Figure 2, all locations in this study are suburban communities. The goal of this research was to look at these civic public spaces in the context of the suburban sprawl as opposed to an urban context. Each site is more than thirty minutes outside of Dallas, Texas, and

to the north. All three cities are predominately caucasian. Denton and Frisco are cities of substantial size and population (see Table 2). Southlake is much smaller in terms of size and population; however, Southlake’s median income is nearly twice that of Frisco and quadruple that of Denton. Based on Putnam’s view of social capital, one might surmise that Southlake is a community with a great deal of social capital (Putnam, 1995).

TABLE 1: CASE STUDY DETERMINATION TABLE

Row Labels	Count of City	Physical Layer	Content Layer	Use Layer	Total Audit Score
Fort Worth	66	32	39	3	74
Carrollton	65	43	50	3	96
Irving	61	37	45	27	109
Frisco	60	48	77	48	173
Burleson	58	33	34	4	71
Denton	58	58	83	53	194
Dallas	42	44	54	17	115
DeSoto	37	36	13	3	52
Mesquite	29	36	46	0	82
Grapevine	15	44	42	37	123
Southlake	14	55	80	39	174
Keller	8	60	57	48	165
Wilmer	2	15	14	2	31

FIGURE 2: DFW METROPLEX



TABLE 2: CITY DEMOGRAPHICS

	Denton	Frisco	Southlake
Current Population	131,097	155,363	30,900
Size of City (in square miles)	89.32	62.39	22.5
Form of Government	Council-Manager	Council-Manager	Council-Manager
Number of Council Members	Mayor + 6	Mayor + 6	Mayor + 6
County	Denton	Collin/Denton	Tarrant
Political Leaning	Republican	Republican	Republican
Median Income	\$52,164	\$120,701	\$207,917
Median Age	29	36	42
Median Home Value	\$179,000	\$335,900	\$627,700
Main Race:			
Caucasian	82.0%	72.4%	83.7%
African American	10.7%	8.6%	2.6%
Asian	5.1%	18.4%	10.2%

Methodology

The methods for this research are both qualitative and quantitative. Data is obtained from primary and secondary sources in order to determine the success of public spaces attached to a city's civic building and used to conduct the case studies. The case studies offer various analyses in order to understand the site: the context of the site, the history, the ordinances that govern the design, the uses, and the users. Each layer identified in the model will contain multiple methods in order to answer the research questions.

Physical Layer

The first layer is the **physical layer**. In order to understand the role of the local government in this layer, a survey was conducted. Survey questionnaires were sent to Planning Directors, Parks and Recreation Directors, and Public Information Officers (see Appendix A). This survey is specific in how the government or the private sector is involved in the design. In the planning and parks departments, the hope is to understand who performs the work necessary for the development of public spaces as well as the maintenance required for the upkeep of the space. While Public Information Officers (PIOs) generally deal in the digital realm, there can be an understanding of their ideology about physical space with regards to the digital one they deal with online. PIO's also are aware of the city's various upcoming activities and events and can be a good source of media-related information. Surveys are useful methodological tools for both quantitative and qualitative analysis. While the surveys have some questions that are counted and simple statistics performed, the majority of the questions are free-response; this free-

response allows for a rich narrative that can be studied through content analysis by coding specific phrases (Given, 2008).

Additionally, an additional public space audit was conducted in each of the cities. The public space audit, in regards to this [the physical] layer, will seek to identify critical physical attributes of the public spaces (See Appendix A). The audit considers the building, the civic space it is attached to, and the surrounding environment. This audit, different from the initial audit, is more quantitative, requesting the specific number of benches, for example, and solicits yes/no answers to most of the questions. The public space audit is supported by a ten-question survey in each city regarding an individual's perceptions of the space (see Appendix A). The survey asks questions that relate to attributes of social capital, such as norms, trust, and individual interaction. This survey, like the surveys sent to the city officials, has both quantitative and qualitative questions.

Lastly, the city hall, the public space, and the immediate surrounding area are mapped to facilitate an understanding of the environment in which the public space is situated. There is much understanding to be gained by analyzing the spaces that are being studied. What are the buildings that directly surround the space? Different types of buildings and activities can have different effects on the content or use of public spaces (Jacobs, 1961; Jacobs, 1961). Spatial

mapping can help to understand the social context of an area as much as the environmental context (Rucks-Ahidiana and Bierbaum, 2017).

Content Layer

The second layer is the **content layer**. The information from the survey can be utilized in the measuring of this layer as well. In this layer, we seek to understand the elements or design features used. Therefore, questions about these elements were included in the surveys. The public space audit includes questions about key features used for programming that is permanent and repositionable and looks at a direct count of those amenities. This portion of the audit seeks to understand the built and non-built attributes of the public space. Are there trees or water in the space? What built elements has the city added to make the space more desirable? The idea here is to understand and analyze government actions at an implementation level.

Use Layer

The last layer is the **use layer**. The use layer is the most crucial, as this is the layer where the interaction occurs. For this layer, the primary methods used are participant observation, photography, behavior mapping, and counting. According to Jan Gehl, these are the most significant ways to study people in public spaces (Gehl, 2013). All observations and data collected throughout the course of this research were kept in a field journal. Knowledge of human behavior in a public space can be increased when the little details and nuances are noted (Gehl & Svarre, 2013). The date, the time, and the weather were noted in the field journal along with all the counting data and mapping (see Figure 4). Gehl and Svarre (2013) discuss how good

weather is important when studying people, or “the kind of weather that provides the best conditions for outdoor life, especially staying” (page 22). This is extremely important for recording stationary individuals. Even if bad weather has passed, it might have left behind wet benches or other hindrances, which would cause a person to not want to stay in that location for any period of time (Gehl & Svarre, 2013).

In regards to counting, as people engage in various activities, the number of participants can be counted, which helps to demonstrate a picture of the rhythm of the public space (Gehl, 2013). This count was conducted in two different ways. Initially, for ten minutes, I counted how many individuals were walking, riding bikes, running, sitting, or acting in some way in that public space. Thirty minutes later, the ten-minute count was performed again. Later, I conducted a thirty-minute count for each visit. During these counts, notes were taken as well. An excerpt from the field journal can be seen in Figure 4. Activities conducted during the count were identified, and individuals were counted.

Also counted were the number of stays and family and stranger interactions. The real test of success attributed to a place is measured by not only the number of visitors but how many

people stay and how long they stay in those spaces. Stays were counted based on the length of time individuals stayed in the space.

- Short stays were stays that were less than two minutes.
- Medium stays were stays that lasted longer than two minutes but less than ten minutes.
- Long stays were stays that lasted over ten minutes.

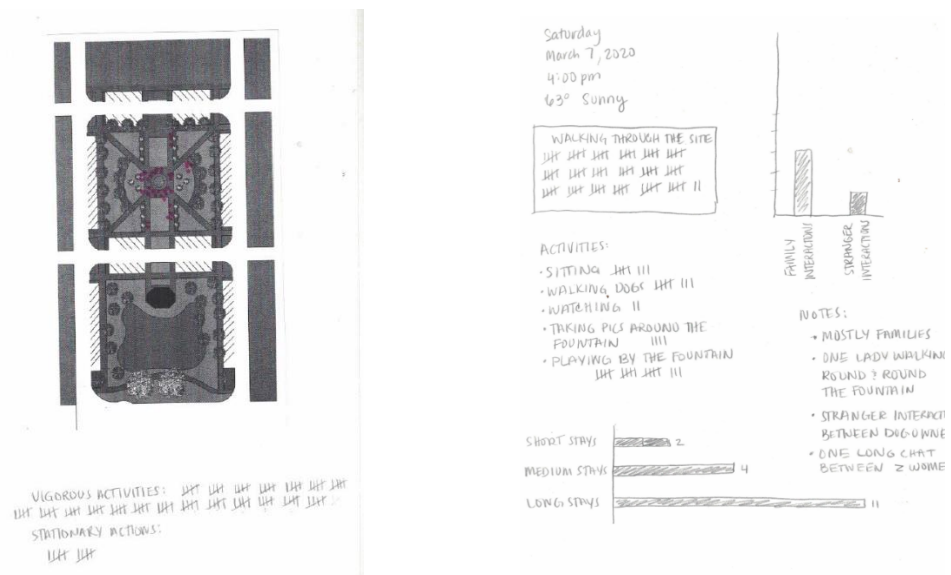
Individuals just walking through space were not counted as a stay. A stay was only counted if an individual stopped and stood or interacted with a feature of the space. Family interactions were counted in a per family manner, and stranger interactions were watched and noted if they were made between adults or children, and how the interaction was noted in the field journal.

Behavior mapping can be used to get a snapshot of a moment in any given space (Gehl, 2013; Moore and Cosco, 2010). This methodology is useful for studying behavior in the built environment (Moore and Cosco, 2010). Behavior mapping can answer questions about what amenities are the most used or encourage the most social interaction (Moore and Cosco, 2010). Having this knowledge allows designers and public administrators to make more informed decisions in the design process (Moore and Cosco, 2010). The behaviors being mapped are those activities where people are stationary, not moving from one thing to the next. For thirty minutes, a map is used to mark the location of the stationary individuals in the space. Individuals that were sitting were not the only ones mapped; the location of individuals that stayed in a

general location for some time was mapped, including individuals that were playing sports or standing or taking pictures.

Lastly, I accessed ParkServe, a program of The Trust for Public Land. This program has metrics for parks all across the United States. This program has a record of the population served by each park. This data is based on the area that is within a 10-minute walk or half-mile from the park. The data also contains the number of children, adults, and seniors within the population served. Data also noted in ParkServe is demographic about race/ethnicity and household income. While imperfect because the three case studies considered here are primarily accessed by car, the data provides a snapshot of the population and allows me to make inferences about the nature of the core users that have ready access to the park.

FIGURE 3: PAGE FROM FIELD JOURNAL



The main goal is to spend time in the public spaces, taking note of how people interact and with whom. These notes include watching to see what people do, how long they stay there, and how people use these spaces. According to Bryman and Bell (2004), when a researcher spends a long time in a “social setting,” they can see the space just as those who typically use it. This is the best way to identify how the spaces are used and to determine if social capital is an outcome of the government’s design of that civic public space.

Change in Methodologies Due to COVID 19

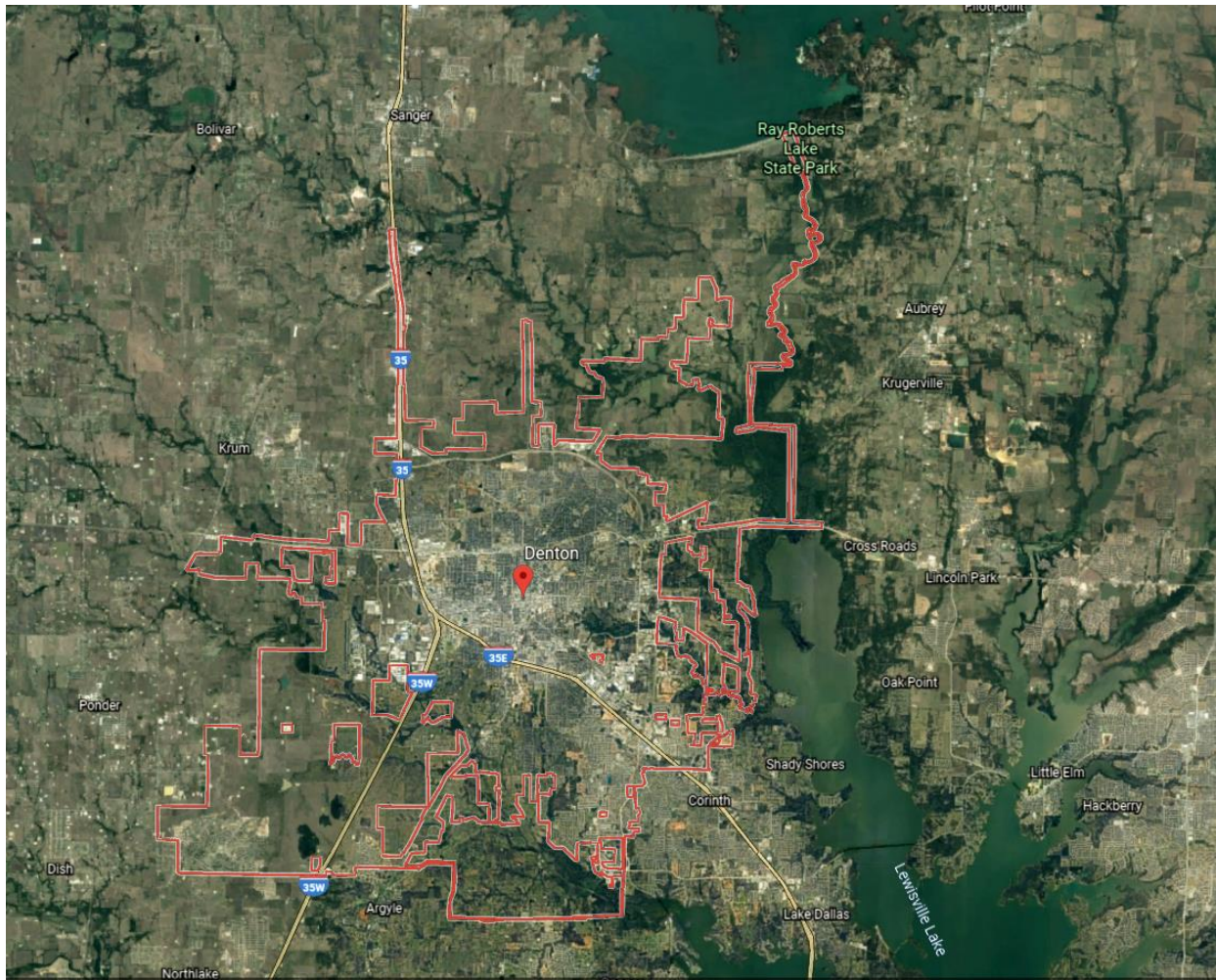
Due to the closing of public spaces and government offices, there were elements of this project that could not be completed. I did not receive any surveys back from city officials. Therefore, I conducted an ordinance review to understand the role of the government in the design of public space. I did this by accessing each of the city’s comprehensive plans and the master plans associated with the parks in the city. Even though I did conduct two to three visits in these spaces following the order to close all facilities, I was unable to interact with anyone, and no citizen surveys were completed. However, these methods were left in this section as a suggestion that they will make a study more robust and, in time, would be considered valuable information to obtain as people are more comfortable talking to strangers.

Chapter 6: Denton, Texas

Context and History

Denton is the county seat of Denton County and well-known for its small college town feel. Like Austin, Denton's culture is very artistic and local (Wylie, 2013). There is a high concentration of local businesses as opposed to many other suburbs of the same size. In 2013, Denton was rated 55th on the Top 100 Best Places to Live for their education, housing, and social capital (Wylie, 2013). Denton is known for producing musicians from local colleges such as Pat Boone, Roy Orbison, Brave Combo, and Bowling for Soup (Friedman, 2014). Music and art are celebrated annually at the Denton Arts and Jazz Festival held in Quakertown Park. Denton's progressive, artistic culture influenced by the universities laid the groundwork for the creation of a city hall and civic center designed by Texas legend O'Neil Ford, a San Antonio based architect who has close personal ties to the region (Texas State Historical Association, 2018; George, 1992).

FIGURE 4: MAP OF DENTON, TEXAS



Denton County was established in 1846, and its first county seat was a small community called Pinckneyville ('A Brief History of Denton County', n.d.). Due to water shortages, the community had to relocate and moved to Alton, a town that flourished for many years. In 1857, the county wanted to relocate again and this time to a new community, the township of Denton, named for John B. Denton, an early settler who had been killed in a conflict with Native Americans of the region ('A Brief History of Denton County', n.d.). In time the railroads came through Denton, boosting the economy and growing the population. In 1890, Denton became

home to the North Texas Normal College (University of North Texas). Ten years later, the Girls College of Industrial Arts (later Texas Woman's University) was granted the authorization to open in Denton, making it a "major higher education center" ('A Brief History of Denton County', n.d.).

City Hall and Park

Renowned architect O'Neil Ford designed Denton's current City Hall. It was built by Cain and Cain Construction Co. of Fort Worth and opened in 1968 (Moon, 1967). It is in the Texas Modern Regionalism style of many other buildings around Denton that he designed. It is anchored by a sunken garden and courtyard and surrounded by landscaped gardens ('O'Neil Ford: Denton Architect', n.d.). The north and south façade was made of glass so that the views of the gardens could be seen from inside the building ('Open House For New City Hall Planned', 1968). It was designed to be able to grow to four stories, including a basement. At the time of completion, the basement included a bomb shelter with dorms for both men and women ('O'Neil Ford: Denton Architect', n.d.). The city hall is part of a complex of buildings all designed by Ford that include a library, a pool, and civic center ('O'Neil Ford: Denton Architect', n.d.). According to Moon (1967, pg 1), "what was at one time was city park is now developing governmental-cultural-recreational complex with all the appearance of a wooded glen complete with waterfalls and waterfowl." The completed city hall was \$730,000 and funded by a 1961 bond issue ('Open House for New City Hall Planned', 1968). It was dedicated in September of 1968 by Mayor Zeke Martin.

Quakertown Park is the park that surrounds the Denton City Hall and the Civic Complex. While Denton is today known for its progressive university culture, ironically, the creation of the

park that surrounds the civic center complex is rooted in the violent racism of the Jim Crow era. The desire to create a park in this location began as early as 1919. The plans were drawn, and a local bond election was held; a \$75,000 bond was passed in 1921 (Glaze, 1991). The park's site was deliberately chosen to displace the African American citizens of Denton, who lived in a freedman's town called Quakertown. City leaders declared that the homes were in disrepair, and the part of the bond funds was intended to pay these residents to relocate (Glaze, 1991). While some African American families fled to other areas of the city and beyond after the bond passed, many stayed in Quakertown and refused to leave. After a violent intimidation campaign by the Klu Klux Klan, most of the residents relocated, and by 1923 all residents had left Quakertown (Glaze, 1991). It was in 1923 that construction began to level and clear the land for a park. The park was designed to be updated and beautified as part of Denton's 1960 Master Plan (Moon, 1967). The walkways were to be ten-foot-wide made of brick and winding through the park with decorative lamps to light the way (Moon, 1967). It was initially called Civic Center Park but was renamed in 2007 to Quakertown Park to commemorate the African-American community's history in the city (Glaze, 1991).

Building Analysis

The building analysis is based on data collected in the Bright-Lambiase Digital Placemaking Survey. In Denton, there were 58 respondents (data shown in Table 3). Of those respondents, 69% of them have visited City Hall at least once. There were several attributes measured about the City Hall. Most respondents felt that this was a good building. 22% said it was a beautiful, 29% said it was an efficient building, 36% of respondents said it was a useful

building, and 28% said it was easy to navigate. When asked if a functional, inviting City Hall is most important, 42% agreed, while 40% had no opinion. Overall, 36% visit City Hall once a year, while 31% visit the public space near the City Hall. The majority of respondents do not visit the City Hall or the public space near City Hall. When asked if the City Hall was a symbol of democracy, most respondents had no opinion, while 48% agreed. Lastly, respondents were given a list of terms that might demonstrate the City Hall as a symbol of democracy. The most significant term was community, with 55% of respondents saying that the City Hall stood for community; however, 33% said it also stood for efficiency, and 31% said it stood for accountability.

TABLE 3: DENON SURVEY DATA

Have you visited City Hall?				
Yes 18		No 18		More than Once 22
City Hall Attributes				
Attribute		Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
Intimidating/Inviting		6	12	20
Attractive/Unattractive		13	21	4
Efficient/Inefficient		17	18	3
Not Useful/Useful		4	12	21
Out of Date/New		7	19	9
Hard to Navigate/Easy		3	18	16
Function City Hall Most Important				
Agree 9		No Opinion 15		Disagree 23
				6
				2
Frequency of Visits to City Hall				
Weekly 1	Monthly 5	Yearly 21		Not at All 29
Frequency of Visits to Public Spaces Near City Hall				
Weekly 3	Monthly 9	Yearly 18		Not at All 26
City Hall as a Symbol of Democracy				
Agree 7		No Opinion 21		Disagree 24
				2
				1
What does City Hall Stand For to You?				
Transparency	9		Community	32
Openness	18		Accountability	18
Efficiency	19		Integrity	17
Diversity	15		Other	5

Site Analysis

Quakertown Park is a large park owned and maintained by the City of Denton. It is bordered by four streets: Withers, N Bell Avenue, McKinney, and Oakland. While the City Hall is located on McKinney, the majority of the park is behind it. It is part of a civic complex that includes a Civic Center, a Senior Center, a Library, a Woman’s League, and the City Pool. More

than a hundred trees cover this park, and there are expansive green spaces. In addition to the green spaces, this park contains an amphitheater, a playground, partly lighted sidewalks that move throughout the park, two bridges, a flower garden, benches, picnic tables, trash cans and recycle bins, grills, and multiple water and electricity access points. This park is easily accessible from the street at many different points by foot, bicycle, or wheelchair. There is free parking in many places around the park in parking lots or on the street. Quakertown Park is a space that is comfortable and relaxing, a great location to spend a lazy afternoon any day of the week.

In addition to the playground, there is a play structure and a statue in the park. The play structure is a memorial to a teacher, Mrs. Betty Jane Blazier of the Denton Independent School District (seen in Figure 8), for her work with children. The statue of two children (seen in Figure 7) was gifted to the park by the Denton Festival Foundation in honor of 30 years of the Denton Jazz and Music Festival. Between the city hall and the park, three historical markers note the historical implications of the space and the City Hall. Two of these can be seen in Figures 5 and 6.

FIGURE 5: HISTORICAL MARKER ABOUT QUAKERTOWN

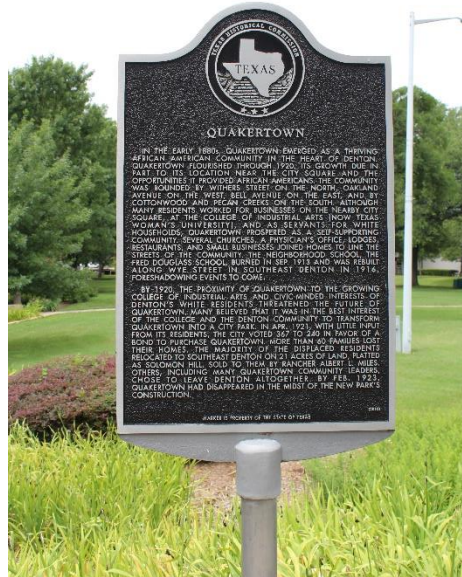


FIGURE 6: HISTORICAL MARKER ABOUT CITY HALL



FIGURE 7: STATUE OF CHILDREN PLAYING IN QUAKERTOWN PARK GARDEN



FIGURE 8: SCULPTURE IN HONOR OF TEACHER

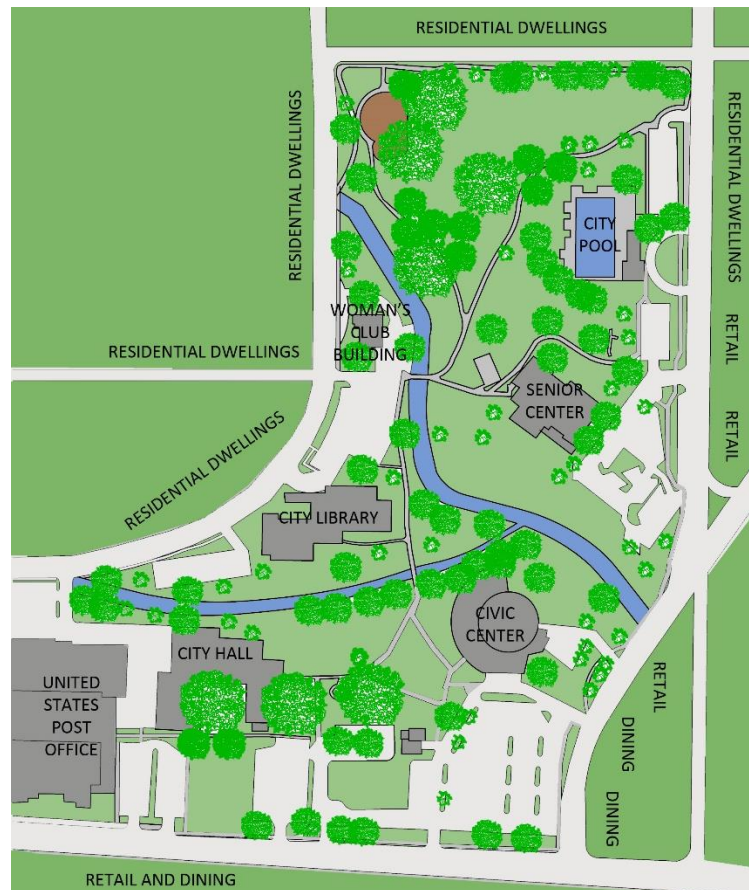


Overall, this is an idyllic park where one feels a sense of calm and relief from a busy city. Even though three major roads border the park, there is no sense of the hustle and bustle in this space. The walkways cross over waterways and guide one from building to building in the

complex. The trees keep space shaded; however, there are plenty of spaces not covered in trees to allow for the sun to shine through to the lawns. The pathways easily take one from the front of the park to the back and are large enough to walk in groups or allow to pass others effortlessly.

Unlike many city halls, the Denton City Hall is not a focal point of the surrounding park and civic complex. Ford's concept was to place a building inside a landscape that created a sense of relaxation and peace, rather than a focus on the building as this grand gesture of community pride and symbolism. Instead, the building is obstructed by trees and meant not to be seen amongst the trees and rolling hills.

FIGURE 9: DENTON - QUAKERTOWN PARK



Use/User Analysis

Quakertown Park is open and welcoming and almost gives one the feeling they are walking through the countryside. It lends itself to many different kinds of uses and users. While many of the city events are held in Downtown, which is adjacent to the park, the following is a comprehensive list of events hosted by the city in Quakertown Park throughout the year. There are many open areas in this park that allow for the setup of inflatables and tents for vendors.

- March/April – Egg’stravagnza and Easter Egg Hunt
- April – Denton Rosebud Festival
- April – Denton Arts and Jazz Festival
- July – 4th of July Celebration
- September – National Night Out

Of these official events, only one is associated with a religious holiday. One is a local civic event, and two are nationally observed events, one associated with patriotism and civic identity and the other with community-police relationship building and crime prevention. One of the most impactful events held in the park is a major regional arts festival.

The site is used not only by the city for events but by other organizations as well. On multiple occasions, the site visits I made were at the same time as homeless outreach events. Clothes and food are given out on the weekends, and in the winter, blankets and other warming items are distributed. It does not appear that there is a problem with a homeless population utilizing the space during the day or on weekends. Moreover, it does not appear that they feel unwelcomed, which is the case in many public spaces.

Families use this park to enjoy afternoon picnics and play sports such as soccer and football. Many families also take advantage of the updated playground to let children frolic in the sun. On a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, it is no surprise to see families or couples eating at one of the many picnic tables or even taking an afternoon nap in the grass. People ride bicycles through the paths, and there is plenty of walkers as well.

According to ParkServe, Quakertown Park serves 3.12% (3,962 individuals) of the population of Denton (The Trust for Public Land, Denton – Quakertown Park). Of this number, 2,804 individuals are adults and 967 children and 191 seniors (The Trust for Public Land, Denton – Quakertown Park). The ratio of adults to children suggests that there are far more adults and fewer families surrounding this park. Given the knowledge that this is a college town, this is not overly surprising. However, there are still a significant number of children suggesting that there are families that have access to the park.

Ordinance Analysis

The park's size, maintenance, and amenities are guided by the city's comprehensive plan, DentonPlan 2030. One of the main features of the comprehensive plan is the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan. The mission of this organization is to build community and enhance the lives of citizens through open space and parks and to provide opportunities for learning, well-being, and creativity (City of Denton, 2009). Inside the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan, there is an inventory of each park in the City of Denton and a listing of suggested amenities at the various categories of parks. Quakertown Park is categorized as a City Park. These City Parks should be anywhere from 25 to 375 acres and located along at least one major road. They should

provide some or all of the following: playgrounds for different ages, parking, swimming pools, passive areas, recreational buildings, restrooms, special event meeting areas, lighting to allow for nighttime play, multi-purpose courts, tennis courts, and picnic tables.

Section 4.13 of the comprehensive plan specifies that the appearance should be maintained with “high-quality urban design guidelines” (City of Denton, 2015, pg 120). Trees and landscaping are specified design criteria to meet this ordinance, given their aesthetic and environmental impact. “Attractive, safe, and well-maintained public parks, open space, and recreation facilities are essential elements of Denton’s image and quality of life (City of Denton, 2015, pg 138). One of the goals of the comprehensive plan includes the use of the parks to generate interactions and allow individuals to “connect socially with others in the community” (City of Denton, 2015, pg 138).

The DentonPlan 2030 focuses on policies for maintaining the character of Denton and the desire to build on those unique characteristics. Section 4.10.4 specifies the creation of design standards in public spaces, such as making sure they are accessible and the provision of water fountains, lighting, trash cans, and shade. The plan also explores the use of some placemaking guidelines in terms of community vitality. The hope is that Denton’s public spaces will be filled with people all day every day, people out enjoying the beauty of the city and celebrating it with other fellow citizens.

Behavior Analysis

Quakertown Park was visited on nine occasions. The first visit on July 4, 2019, was the city’s annual Fourth of July Festival. There were games, food, and several different inflatables for

children to play on. No doubt, there were stranger interactions; however, with the magnitude of the event, I was unable to collect any data. As well, it can be assumed that families were present at this event and spent a minimum of thirty minutes to an hour at the park.

The remaining visits occurred on weekends and weekdays. Table 4 gives an overview of the day of the week, the time of day the visit was made, the temperature at the time, the weather conditions, and names the event (if one was in progress). Family and stranger interactions can be seen in Table 4. While there were several family interactions, there were few stranger interactions. The majority of stranger interactions occurred during the homeless events that were providing clothes and food to the homeless in the area. However, on my last visit during the period of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, a stranger interaction occurred between myself and a family walking their dog. The dog came up to me to be petted, and the lady and I had a brief conversation about dogs and wearing out her dog and kids after being cooped up in the house all day. And then she and her children went on their way.

Many different activities were observed in Quakertown Park throughout the eight site visits. There are many that like to walk and run through this beautiful park; many take advantage of the great lawn. Families and groups play sports or play with their dogs. Kids run after balls and frisbees. The picnic tables and benches are used by many to have picnics or just sit down and relax. Kids play on the playgrounds, and adults watching; in some cases, the parents play on the playground with their children.

There are several extended stays observed while in Quakertown Park. Based on Figure 11, it can be seen that the homeless events impact the stays in the park. However, on multiple

site visits, I witnessed families and couples staying and spending time in the park. In Figure 13, you can see that the playground is by far the most popular place for people to gather and stay. However, the great lawn near the pool is also a popular place for people to spend time. It should be noted that due to the size of this park, a walker or runner can be observed in the park for more than two minutes. However, walkers and runners are not counted as stays as they are conducting activities that simply move them from one place in the park to another or simply out of the park.

Quakertown Park Amidst COVID 19

On March 24, 2020, Denton County and the City of Denton issued stay home orders to all residents. As part of this order, all recreation centers, sports courts, dog parks, restrooms, and playgrounds were ordered closed. However, the Civic Center Pool allowed for showers and bathrooms to be open Monday through Saturday from 9 in the morning until 5 in the evening. Open space trails and parks were allowed to remain open as well. Initially, the order ran until the end of March; it later it was extended until May 4th. However, upon visiting in May, the playground was still wrapped in tape, informing the public it was still closed. The City also canceled its annual Easter Egg Hunt and the Denton Music and Jazz Festival, both events held in Quakertown Park. The City emphasized the social distancing policy and encouraged residents to avoid large gatherings (seen in Figure 10).

FIGURE 10: PARK SIGN WITH COVID 19 GUIDELINES IN PARK



During this period, I made three trips to the park. These trips are noted below the dark line in Table 4. While Quakertown Park is an open space park, the majority of the park is open for residents to enjoy walking and biking and other activities that are within the confines of the orders. On Easter Sunday, there were not any families there celebrating, and the majority of the individuals in the park were no doubt homeless individuals that spent a good part of their time in the park during the days. However, the other two trips there, there were families and individuals having picnics. During these visits, I did not witness any stranger interactions; yet I did have an interaction with a dog owner, whose dog came up to me to pet him. The presence of the dog initiated a brief conversation about the use of the park to tire the dog and her children.

TABLE 4: DENTON RECORD OF VISITS

	7/4/2020	9/28/2020	11/3/2020	2/25/2020	3/1/2020	3/7/2020	4/12/2020	5/7/2020	5/9/2020
Day of the Week	Thursday	Saturday	Sunday	Tuesday	Sunday	Sunday	Sunday	Thursday	Saturday
Time of Day	10:15 AM	2:50 PM	3:30 PM	8:35 AM	5:20 PM	2:15 PM	12:54 PM	6:55 PM	7:45 PM
Temperature	89	94	67	46	73	63	82	82	70
Weather	Sunny	Sunny w/some clouds	Sunny w/some clouds and wind	Cloudy	Mostly sunny and windy	Sunny	Sunny	Windy and overcast	Sunny
Event	4th of July								
Family Interactions		1			3	3		2	2
Stranger Interactions			5			3			1

FIGURE 11: DENTON ACTIVITIES

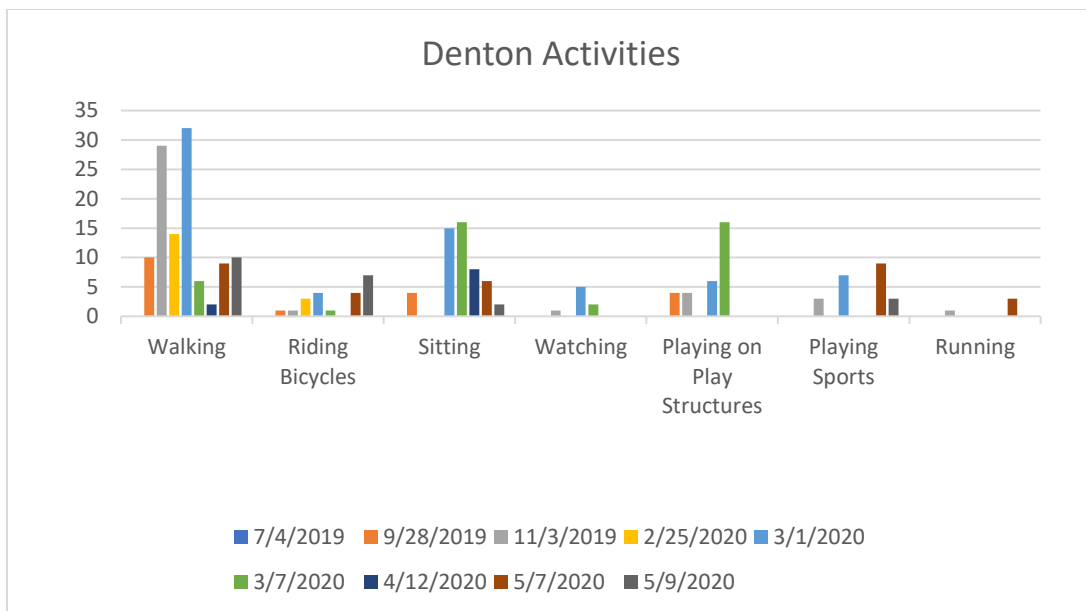


FIGURE 12: DENTON STAYS AND INTERACTIONS

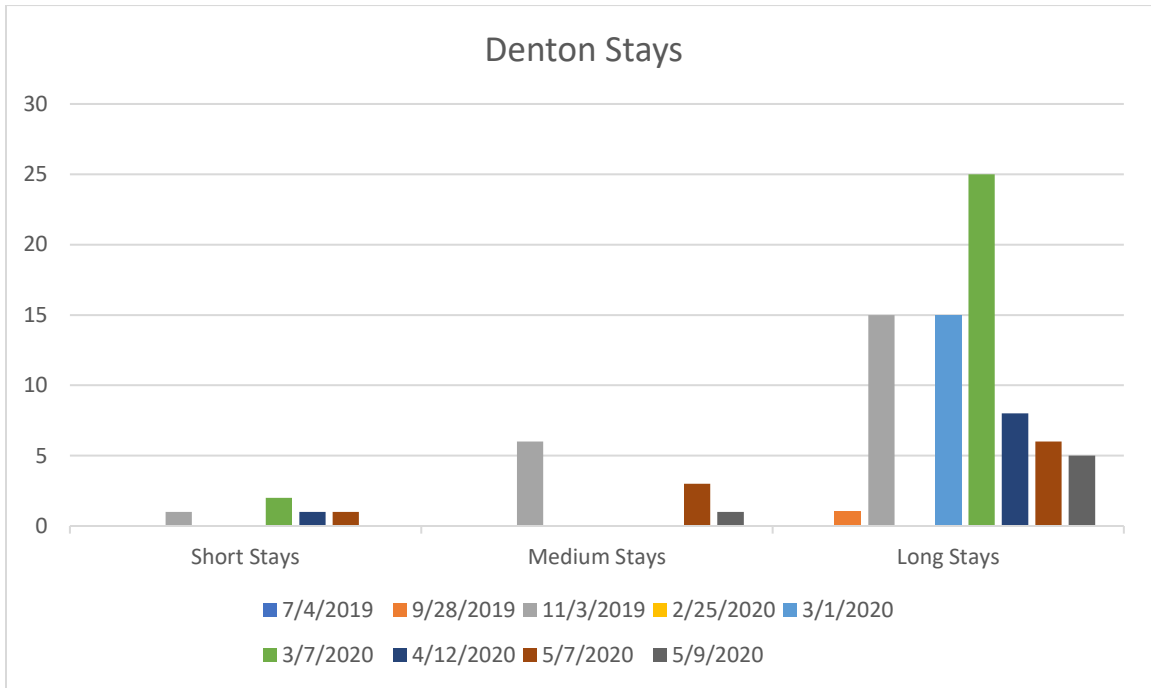


FIGURE 13: DENTON BEHAVIOR MAP

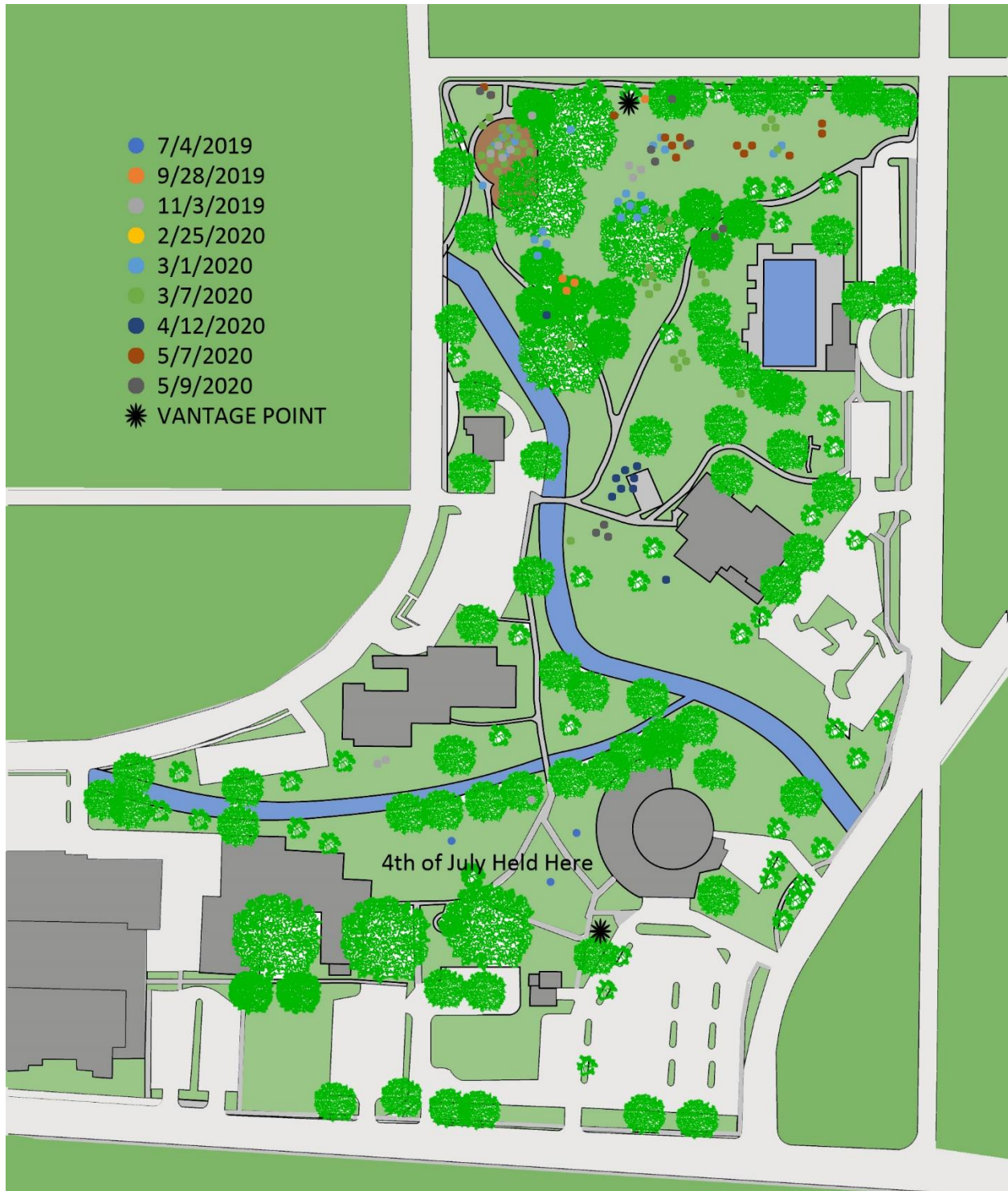


FIGURE 14: DENTON CITY HALL



FIGURE 15: DENTON VANTAGE POINT 1



FIGURE 16: DENTON VANTAGE POINT 2



FIGURE 17: QUAKERTOWN PARK DURING 4TH OF JULY EVENT



FIGURE 18: QUAKERTOWN PARK ON A SUNDAY AFTERNOON

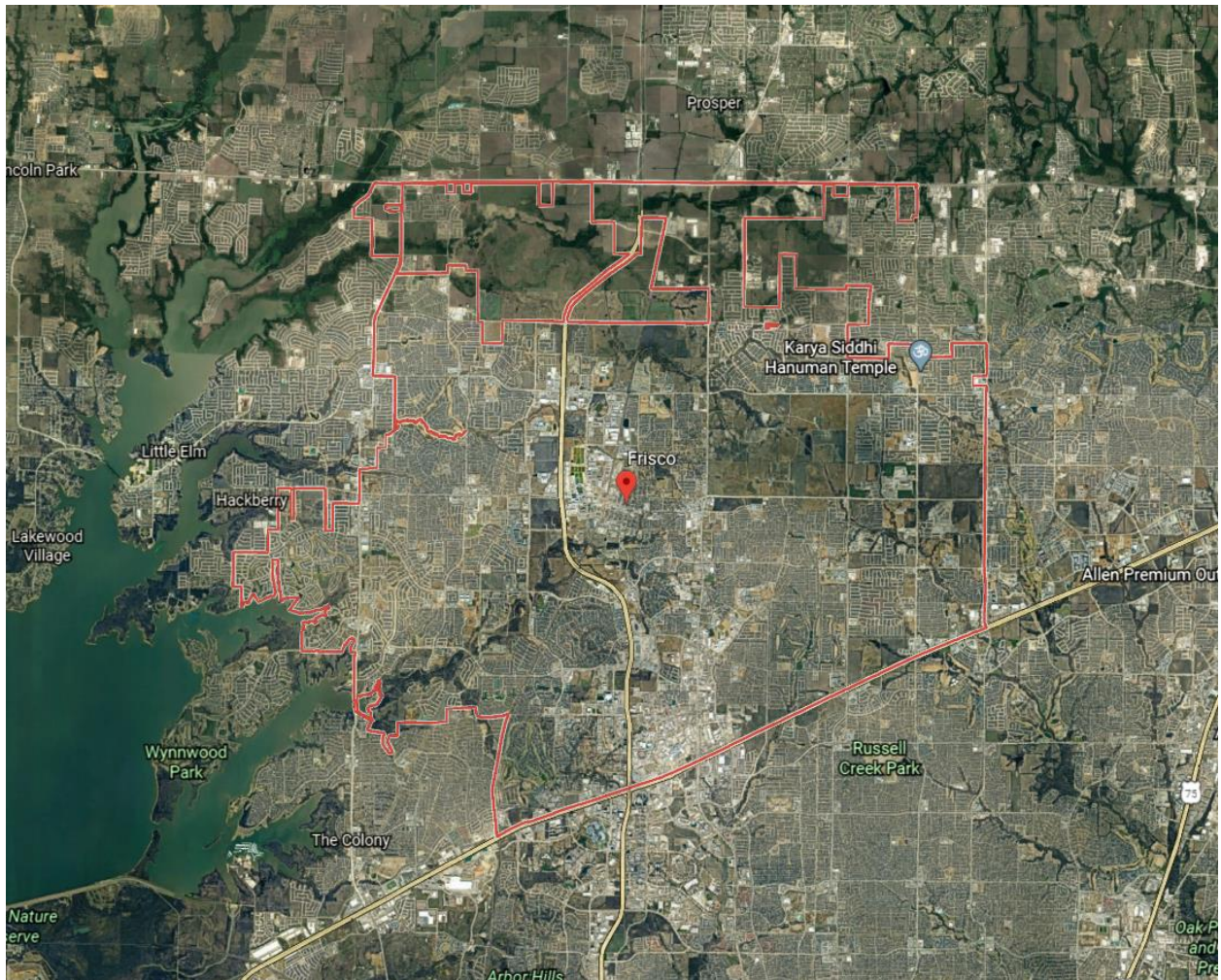


Chapter 7: Frisco, Texas

Context and History

Frisco is a booming suburban community in the far north suburbs of Dallas. Frisco promotes itself as a small town with a big city feel – “Urban Energy, Small Town Feel” is a marketing slogan of Frisco Square, a mixed-use development adjacent to Frisco City Hall (About Frisco Square, n.d.). According to the US Census Bureau (2018), in 2017, Frisco was the fastest growing city in America. However, for five years running, it had been in the top 15 fastest growing cities in America (Cowan, 2018). Today it is home to the Dallas Cowboy football franchise, and many other Fortune 500 companies are headquartered here. In 2017, Toyota opened its North American headquarters in Frisco. Toyota Stadium across the street from Frisco Town Square has played host to the 2005 Major League Soccer Finals and is on the list of potential cities for the World Cup in 2026. Frisco is also home to a minor league baseball team, The Frisco Roughriders and a professional soccer team, the FC Dallas. Like many Dallas suburbs, it has its roots as a nineteenth-century railroad town and has a rich history as a cattle drive town.

FIGURE 19: MAP OF FRISCO, TEXAS



Frisco began as a small community along the Shawnee Trail called Lebanon. In 1902, the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway was being built near Lebanon. Watering holes were needed for the steam engines, and Lebanon was not a suitable location due to elevation, so one was placed four miles away; thus, Emerson was formed ('History', n.d.). The US Postal Service rejected the name of Emerson, and in 1904, the residents choose Frisco City in honor of the railway that gave the town its beginnings ('History', n.d.). Frisco had five cotton gins and was an agricultural center for many years ('Discover the History of Frisco', n.d.).

City Hall and Park

Frisco City Hall is the newest of the three city halls in this study. Frisco City Hall is deliberately modeled on the Texas Courthouse square prototype, connecting new Frisco to the existing social and spatial traditions of small-town Texas (Veselka, 2000). Due to a space crunch at the old city hall, there was a huge need to build a city hall that could allow for growth and put all services under one roof (McCann, 2002). It was completed in 2006 by Lee Lewis Construction. Malcolm Holzman of Holzman-Moss Architecture was the architect. Holzman has stated that his design was stylized after the Victorian era designs of Galveston architect Nicolas J. Clayton from the early 1900s ('Project Description, n.d.). As a silver LEED project, the building materials are composed of natural resources from around the region ('Project Description, n.d.). The building is five stories and 148,000 square feet. It is located in the heart of Frisco Square, a mixed-use development that is pedestrian-friendly and mixes office space, apartment living, dining, shopping, a library, parks, and the city hall ('About Frisco Square', n.d.). The building was dedicated in 2006 by Mayor Mike Simpson.

In 2002, the residents approved a bond for \$197.5 million that would cover several different projects and a new city hall (McCann, 2002); \$63 million was dedicated to new municipal services (Piloto, 2002). The library and a performance facility are located within the city hall and pay homage to the city's history, even in the fabric of the chairs in the performance hall (Wirth, 2006). The library gives the building life on nights and weekends and helps the building to function as a companion to the town commons ('A People Place', 2006).

Building Analysis

The building analysis is based on data collected in the Bright-Lambiase Digital Placemaking Survey. In Frisco, there were 60 respondents. Of those respondents, 87% of them have visited City Hall at least once. There were several attributes measured about the City Hall. Most respondents felt that this was a good building. 60% said it was a beautiful, 57% said it was an efficient building, 58% of respondents said it was a useful building, 63% said it was newer architecture, and 58% said it was easy to navigate. When asked if a functional, inviting City Hall is most important, 53% agreed. Overall, 48% visit City Hall once a year, while 32% visit the public space near the City Hall. Respondents in Frisco, seem to use the public space near City Hall more frequently than they visit City Hall. However, 45% of respondents said they do not use the space at all. When asked if the City Hall was a symbol of democracy, most respondents had no opinion, while 44% agreed. Lastly, respondents were given a list of terms that might demonstrate the City Hall as a symbol of democracy. The most significant term was community, with 72% of respondents saying that the City Hall stood for community. Respondents also said it stands for efficiency (45%) and diversity (38%). One respondent commented on the "Other" response and said that the building was ugly.

TABLE 5: FRISCO SURVEY DATA

Have you visited City Hall?				
Yes	No	More than Once		
21	31	8		
City Hall Attributes				
Attribute	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	
Intimidating/Inviting	5	18	29	
Attractive/Unattractive	36	11	5	
Efficient/Inefficient	34	16	2	
Not Useful/Useful	1	16	35	
Out of Date/New	1	13	38	
Hard to Navigate/Easy	3	14	35	
Function City Hall Most Important				
Agree	No Opinion	Disagree		
2	22	3	3	
30				
Frequency of Visits to City Hall				
Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Not at All	
3	7	29	21	
Frequency of Visits to Public Spaces Near City Hall				
Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Not at All	
5	9	19	27	
City Hall as a Symbol of Democracy				
Agree	No Opinion	Disagree		
7	27	6	1	
19				
What does City Hall Stand For to You?				
Transparency	13		Community	43
Openness	19		Accountability	18
Efficiency	27		Integrity	19
Diversity	23		Other	4

Site Analysis

Simpson Plaza is a small one-acre park owned and operated by the City of Frisco. It is surrounded by Frisco Square Blvd and is in the center of Frisco Square, a mixed-use development designed to resemble an old-fashioned town square. On the western side of the park, there is a restaurant where people can sit on the patio and watch their children play on the play structures

and open fields of grass. Simpson Park is a plaza that lies directly north of the City Hall. According to Dallas Morning News, “the open space right in the front has that foreign plaza appearance” (‘A People Place’, 2006). The park has a few structures that serve as both art and play, open fields, rocks where one can sit, trees that children play in, and a couple of doggy waste stations. A large fountain invites individuals and families into the park and towards the city hall. The site is flanked by trees and shrubbery on the north and south sides, providing a sense of security from the roads that surround the site. The park can be accessed through a couple of points on these sides and from the eastern border. There are no paved walkways in this park, making accessibility difficult for wheelchair access. The gravel paths lead around the park, but as they enter on the north and south sides, they dead-end into grass except in the center of the park. The trees in the center of the park provide shade to the rocks where people sit. The trees open up, allowing the lawns to receive plenty of sunshine. There is free parking on the north and south side of the plaza.

Three monuments are present in the park that act as play structures. The center sculpture is reminiscent of the hard-working woman that helped settle the land at the beginning of this small town. Explicitly dedicated to a young woman, who too early in life lost her battle with cancer, but fought and worked hard to provide for her family (seen in Figure 20). A train is reminiscent of Frisco’s heritage as a stop for trains in years passed and the prosperity it gained from the many items that were exported from this area (seen in Figure 21). The train is the most often used structure of the three for children to play on. In Figure 22, the third sculpture in the space represents the three elements that brought prosperity to Frisco in the early days of the

town's incorporation; water, agriculture, and railroad. The sculpture is here to remind Frisco citizens of the city's past, present, and future.

FIGURE 20: FETCHING WATER SCULPTURE



FIGURE 21: TRAIN CONDUCTOR SCULPTURE



FIGURE 22: THE THREE MUSES OF FRISCO



FIGURE 23: SIMPSON PLAZA SITE PLAN



Use/User Analysis

Simpson Plaza hosts many events throughout the year. Its designers have described it as a “festival-ready space” (‘A People Place’, 2006). It is the location of the city Christmas Tree. Art in the Square and Music in the Square are other events that occur in the public space in front of City Hall during the year and are sponsored by the Frisco Square Owners Association (FSOA).

There are other scheduled events planned by the city and FSOA. As well, the plaza has played host to the Otsukimi Festival and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Light the Night the events which are not city-sponsored. The city has also hosted movie nights in years past, where movies were projected on a screen.

- March – Art in the Square
- June (Friday Nights) – Music in the Square
- July – Freedom Fest
- September – POW/MIA Recognition Day
- October – Oktoberfest
- October – Trick or Treat the Square
- December – Frosty 5K
- December – Merry Main Street (hosted by Frisco Square and also listed as Christmas in the Square)

Of these official events, only one is associated with a religious holiday. There is one local cultural event, and one is a nationally observed event associated with patriotism and civic identity. Another is a local civic event to honor those killed in battle or imprisoned, and one is a secular holiday. Lastly, there is an event meant to bolster community participation for a good cause.

Families and individuals use this space in different capacities. Families have played sports in the open fields or gathered around the fountain for photo opportunities. Individuals sit on the rocks and watch the world go by around them. Many walk their dogs through space and allow

them to run through the fields. Many walk through the plaza to the other side of the development.

According to ParkServe, Simpson Plaza serves .29% (516 individuals) of the population of Frisco (The Trust for Public Land, Frisco – Simpson Plaza). Of this number, 367 individuals are adults and 103 children and 48 seniors (The Trust for Public Land, Frisco – Simpson Plaza). The ratio of adults to children suggests that one-child families are living near the park. Considering the types of establishments around the plaza, it is understandable why there is not a higher group of children. However, there have regularly been adults frequenting the plaza with dogs suggesting a high level of single adults nearby.

Ordinance Analysis

Frisco is governed by a comprehensive plan that also contains a Parks and Open Space Master Plan. The first principle given in the comprehensive plan is the creation of “distinctive destinations that attract people and encourage social interaction” (City of Frisco, 2015).

Placemaking is a founding guideline that serves the design of every element of the comprehensive plan. The plan calls for the use of trees as a measure to protect against the harshness of buildings and roads. The plan calls for site designs that are flexible and provide shade to pedestrians. The plan suggests that there are sidewalks and other areas that provide pleasant walking experiences and encourage social interaction.

In Frisco, Simpson Plaza is a park categorized as “other park.” These parks are defined by the Parks and Open Space Master Plan as parks “determined by need” (City of Frisco, 2016). These parks are designed for low-intensity play and recreation, suggesting such activities as large

unprogrammed areas, free play, and picnicking (City of Frisco, 2016). There are also guidelines set aside for Mixed-use developments. These guidelines include walkable areas that lead to passive areas and play space, a place for dogs to play, the ability of that public space to create a “sense of place,” and bring a certain “quality of life to that space” (City of Frisco, 2016).

Behavior Analysis

Simpson Plaza was visited on nine occasions. The first visit on July 4, 2019, the city’s annual Fourth of July Festival was being held. There were games, food, and several different inflatables for children to play on. No doubt, stranger interactions were going on; however, with the magnitude of the event, I was unable to collect any data. As well, it can be assumed that families were present at this event and spent a minimum of thirty minutes to an hour at the park. The two visits following this visit on September 28, 2019, and November 3, 2019, there were also events. As with the Fourth of July Festival, there were many people, and it is assumed that stranger interactions and family interactions occurred. People likely stayed for a minimum of thirty minutes. However, these last two events were not events hosted by the city but by private organizations.

The remaining visits occurred on weekends and weekdays. Table 6 gives an overview of the day of the week, the time of day the visit was made, the temperature at the time, the weather conditions, and the names of the event (if one was in progress). Family and stranger interactions can be seen in Table 6, as well. While there were a few family interactions, there were no stranger interactions. For the most part, people seem to keep to themselves while in this space. However, I did have a lady approach me once while I was observing, she introduced

herself and proceeded to share her faith with me. I informed her that I belonged to First Baptist Church in Dallas, and we had a very nice conversation about the church and its pastor.

Many different activities were observed in Simpson Plaza throughout the eight site visits. Many people came to enjoy walking their dogs through the park. However, most of the walkers simply used the space to get from one parking lot to the shopping and dining area of Frisco Town Square. On the side of the plaza where the café is, many families play soccer and run while waiting for their food, while others come after they had eaten. At times individuals would sit on the rocks that serve as benches. Kids like to play on the train and the smaller trees at the front of the plaza. A fountain is a popular place for kids to play as well and for kids and adults of all ages to take pictures.

There were several long stays observed while in Simpson Plaza. We see in Figure 25 that there were several long stays, but several short stays as well. However, on multiple site visits, I witnessed families and couples staying and spending time in the park. In Figure 26, you can see that the fountain area and the great lawn on the café side is by far the most popular place for people to gather and stay. I think it is important to note that this is an excellent location for events and is designed to suit the needs of events for both the city and Frisco Town Square. Even the designers emphasize the site as a location for festivals.

Simpson Plaza Amidst COVID 19

The City of Frisco went under a stay home order on March 25, 2020. Frisco is located in two counties, Denton and Collin, and both counties instituted stay home orders on March 24, 2020. Under this order, residents are urged to stay home unless going to work at an essential

business or conducting essential business such as shopping for groceries or picking up food. Individuals are ordered to practice social distancing, refrain from gathering in groups of more than ten, and sports courts are closed. Parks and open spaces are still open for walking, biking, hiking, and dog walking. Individuals are ordered to maintain a distance of six feet from each other while in public spaces.

All city-sponsored events were canceled. The city Easter Egg Hunt that was scheduled was moved to a virtual platform, and people were encouraged to participate by coloring an Easter Egg and hanging it in their window. The Park and Recreation Department's Facebook page encouraged people to take pictures of the eggs they found around town and post them on the Facebook page.

Two visits were made to Simpson Plaza under the stay home order. The visit made on Easter Sunday; there were only two individuals in the park enjoying a picnic. On my second visit during the restrictions, there were several families. Some families stayed for a long time and others for a medium length visit. There were several families there taking graduation photos, a group of four having a picnic by the fountain, and others just playing in the grass or by the fountain. There were no interactions between strangers; however, this park had not previously experienced any stranger interactions.

TABLE 6: RECORD OF VISITS TO SIMPSON PLAZA

	7/4/2019	9/28/2019	11/3/2019	3/1/2020	3/3/2020	3/5/2020	3/7/2020	4/12/2020	5/9/2020
Day of the Week	Thursday	Saturday	Sunday	Sunday	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday	Sunday	Saturday
Time of Day	12:30 PM	7:00 PM	6:30 PM	3:40 PM	8:05 AM	7:15 PM	12:55 PM	12:00 PM	7:45 PM
Temperature	95	92	60	73	58	64	65	79	70
Weather	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Cloudy, windy	Overcast, Cool, Drizzle	Clear	Overcast, Cloudy	Sunny	Sunny
Event	4th of July	Oktsumi Festival	Lukemia Soceity Night of Lights						
Family Interactions				4	1		3		8
Stranger Interactions									

FIGURE 24: ACTIVITIES IN SIMPSON PLAZA

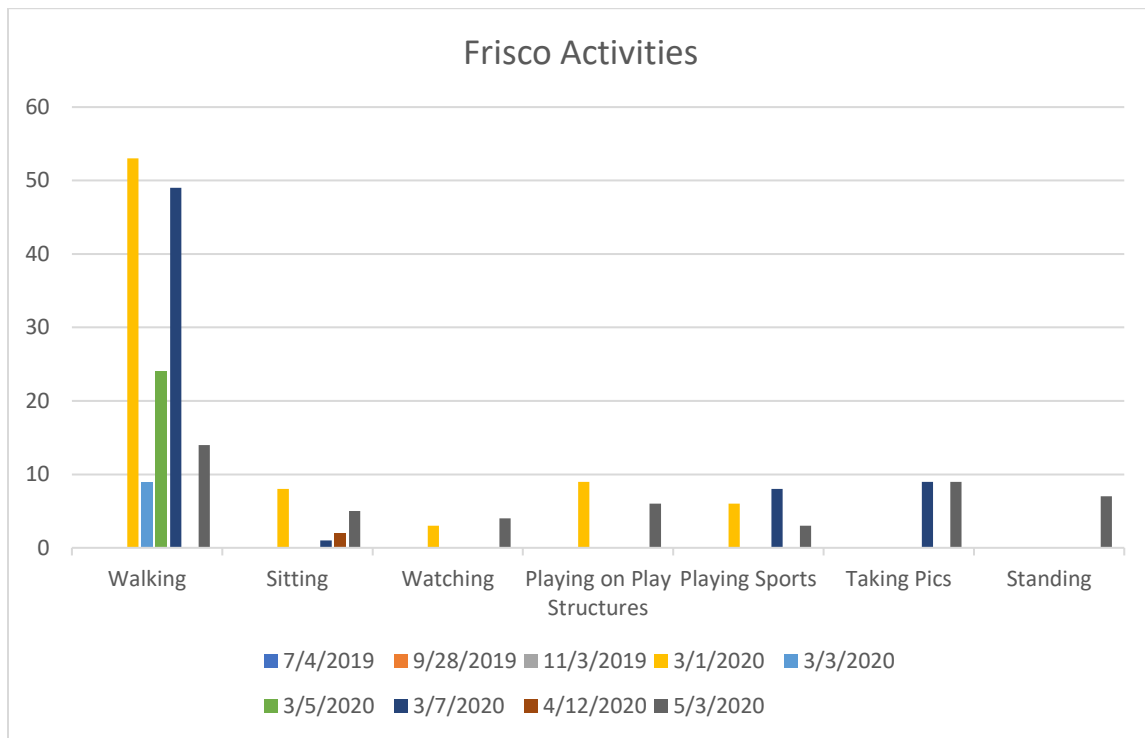


FIGURE 25: STAYS IN SIMPSON PLAZA

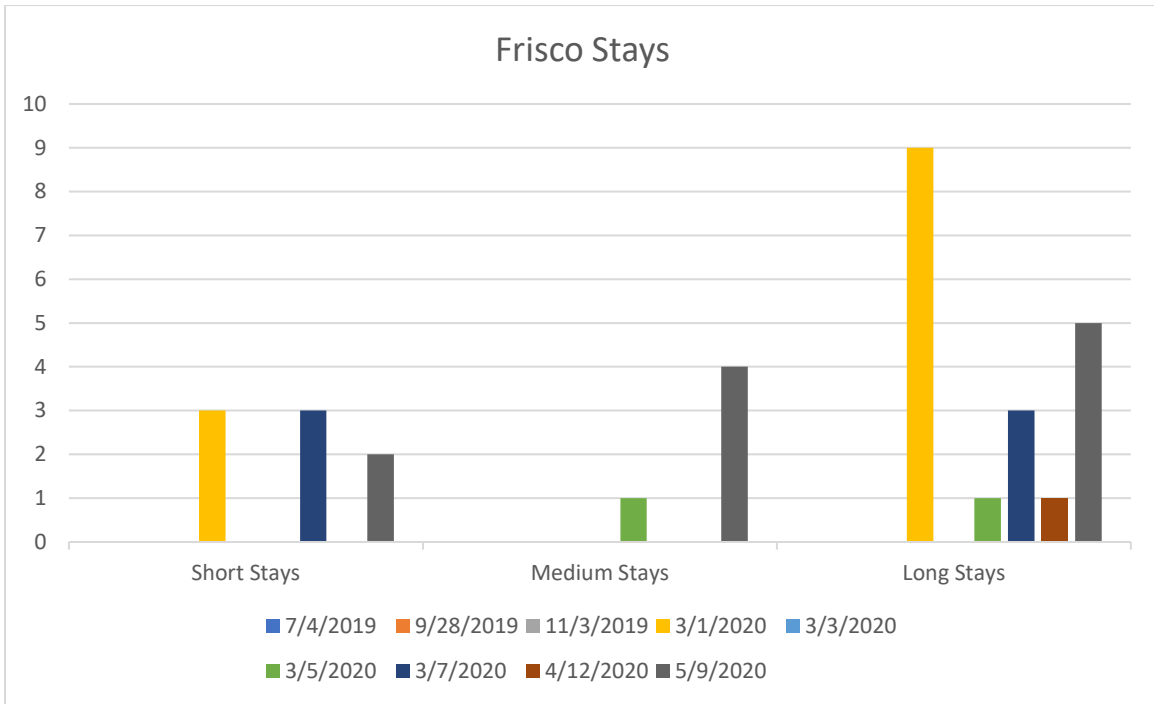


FIGURE 26: BEHAVIOR MAP OF SIMPSON PLAZA

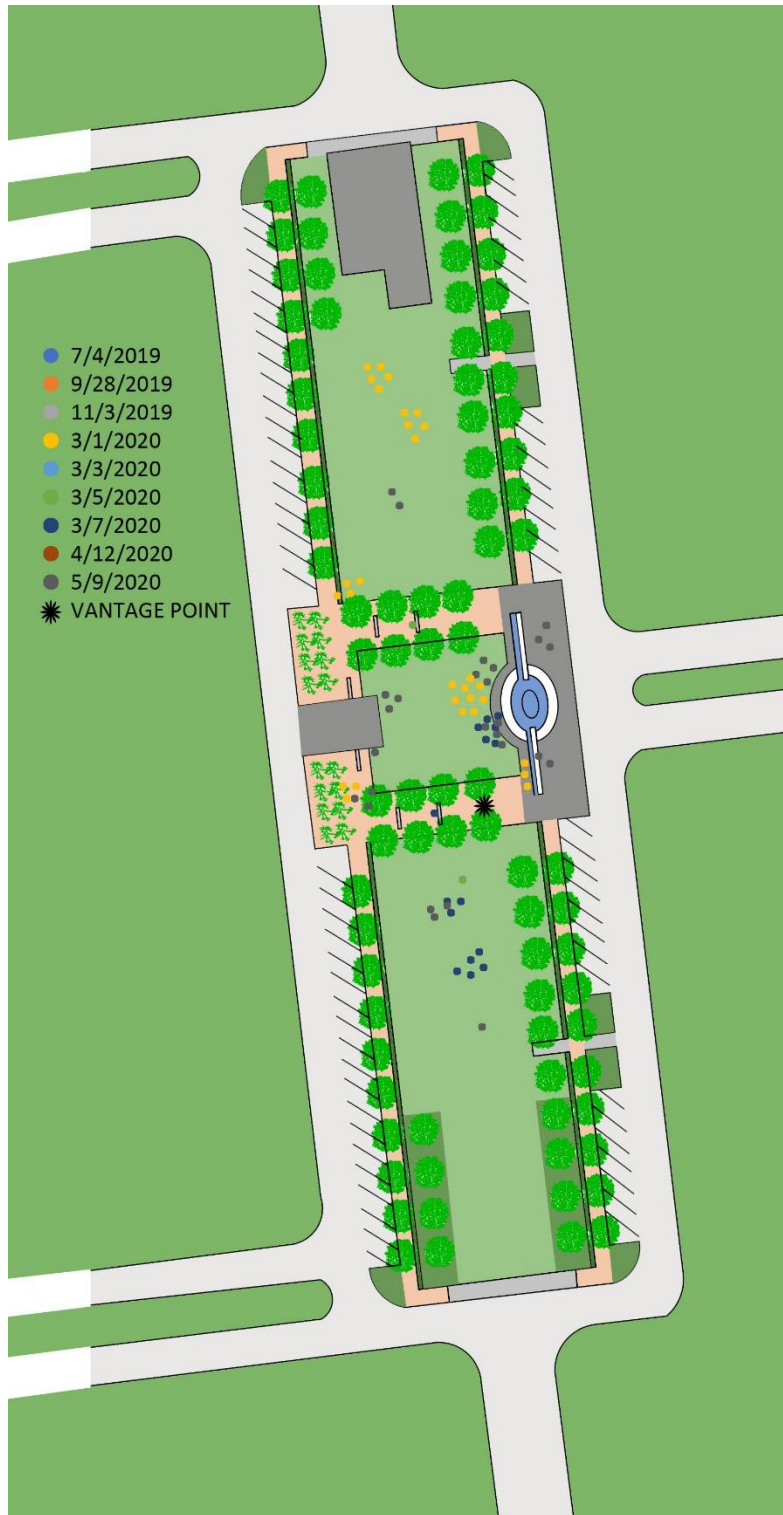


FIGURE 27: FRISCO CITY HALL



FIGURE 28: FRISCO VANTAGE POINT



FIGURE 29: FOURTH OF JULY IN SIMPSON PLAZA



FIGURE 30: LYMPHOMA EVENT IN SIMPSON PLAZA



FIGURE 31: A QUIET SATURDAY IN SIMPSON PLAZA

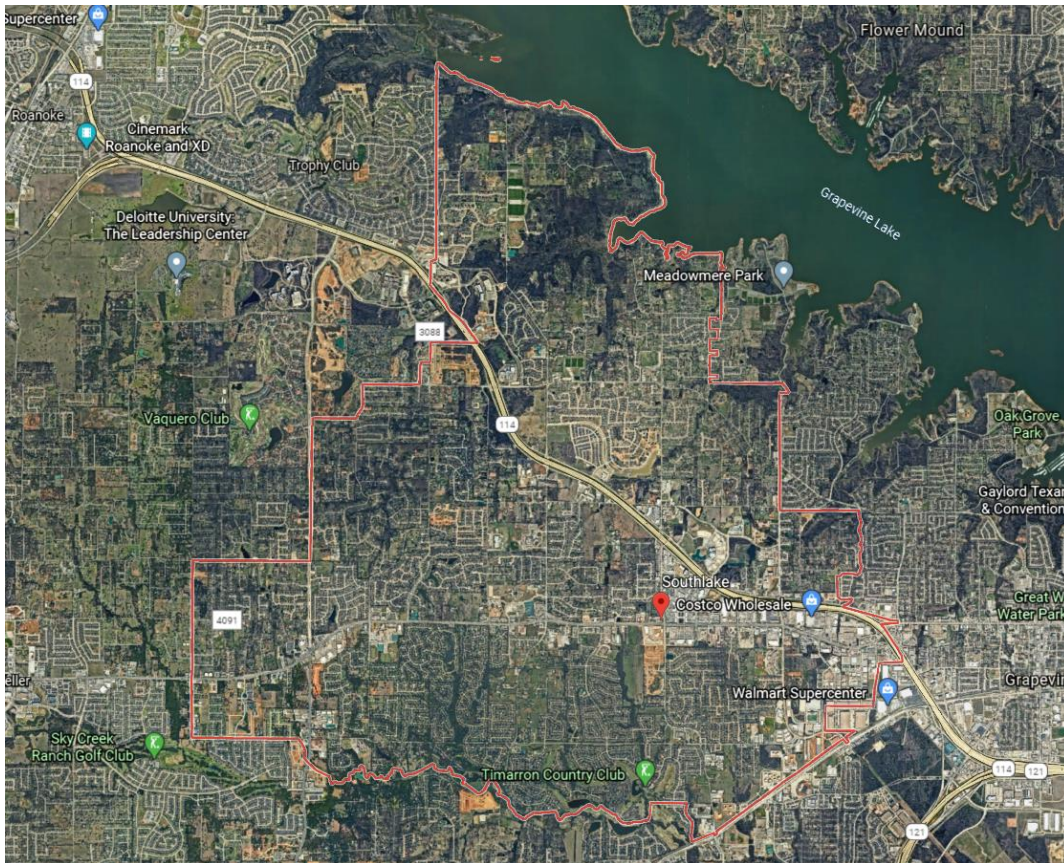


Chapter 8: Southlake, Texas

Context and History

Southlake is an affluent suburb of Dallas and Fort Worth located just to the west of DFW International Airport and is the youngest of the three cities studied here. It incorporated in 1956, mainly in response to the planning of the neighboring DFW airport and a desire to control and profit from local land use as airport development discussions began. In 2014, Southlake was named as one of the wealthiest cities in America by Time Magazine. They ranked 9th, with 58.7% of households having incomes over \$150,000 (Graphiq, 2014). Southlake is also known for its high school championship football and swimming programs.

FIGURE 32: MAP OF SOUTHLAKE, TEXAS



Like other North Texas suburbs, Southlake traces its early development to farming communities, in this case, the small communities of Dove, White's Chapel, and Old Union (Cooley et al., 2010). In 1919 Carroll School was built when these small communities were consolidated (Robeson, 2006). Everything for Southlake happened at this school, elections, recitals, town meetings. Roads slowly built up around town, along with a gas station, a café, and a grocery store. In 1956, residents voted to incorporate, 30 people for and 24 against; many were content to stay a small rural community (Robeson & Cooley, n.d.). Still, everything surrounded the Carroll School and football, until DFW Airport was opened in 1974. The town began to grow, and the City Council created zoning and design regulations to control the kinds of development that could take place (Robeson & Cooley, n.d.). Special zoning regulations give strict design specifications for all the buildings, leaving Southlake a city with high property values and affluent residents (Robeson & Cooley, n.d.). Southlake is very intentional in its planning with large lots that limit the construction of smaller, more affordable housing and limited land available for multi-family housing.

City Hall and Park

The City Hall is the focal point of Southlake Town Square, a 130-acre mixed-use development that Southlake calls Downtown. It is a "one-stop government stop" containing government offices, a library, courts, and a post office (Graham, 2000). It was designed by Washington DC-based David M Schwarz Architects, a firm well known for neo-traditional designs (Massie, 2015), with construction completed in 2000 by the Beck Group. The building, funded through a Tax Incremental Finance District, cost around \$16 million (Packer, 2000). The building

is four stories and 80,000 square feet. The building was dedicated in March of 1999 by Mayor Rick Stacy.

The design of the city hall is a reference to the traditional county courthouses throughout Texas, regarding scale and materials ('Town Square', n.d., Veselka, 2000). When designing the Town Square, a mixed-use development, the architects and planners met with the residents, asking them what they looked for in downtown. Schwarz sought creative genius from the movie *Back to the Future*, and the town square with the clock tower that is iconic to every American (McAleer & Soles, 2015). The goal of the center was to get people downtown and allow the pedestrian to feel a sense of community ('Town Square', n.d.). Schwarz says, "people are social animals," and he wanted to design a place where people could walk and where people would want to be (McAleer & Soles, 2015). According to Dallas Morning News writer, A. Lee Graham (2000), "Southlake Town Square fuses bucolic tranquility with a relaxed urban feel." Brian Stebbins (2010), one of the designers and proponents of the Town Square, envisioned a place where one could go naturally, not thinking about where they were going. However, there is enough destinations that all desires are fulfilled in one location. The idea was founded in new urbanism with the intent to develop an area with a human scale that has a sense of place (Stebbins, 2010). While developers use this term "urban environment," Southlake Town Square is the perfect example of feeling like a small town, with very few buildings over two stories.

Building Analysis

The building analysis is based on data collected in the Bright-Lambiase Digital Placemaking Survey. In Southlake, there were 14 respondents. Of those respondents, 86% of

them have visited City Hall at least once. There were several attributes measured about the City Hall. Most respondents felt that this was a good building. 57% said it was a beautiful and efficient building, and 64% of respondents said it was a useful building. When asked if a functional, inviting City Hall is the most important, 50% agreed. Overall, 50% visit City Hall once a year, while 36% visit the public space near the City Hall. A few more visit the public space near the City Hall more than once a year, but not many. When asked if the City Hall was a symbol of democracy, most respondents had no opinion, while 36% agreed. Lastly, respondents were given a list of terms that might demonstrate the City Hall as a symbol of democracy. The most significant term was community, with 64% of respondents saying that the City Hall stood for community. Of the responses, "Other" was chosen three times, and more than one of those written in responses said that it was merely a government building with no meaning.

TABLE 7: SOUTHLAKE SURVEY DATA

Have you visited City Hall?						
Yes 3		No 2		More than Once 9		
City Hall Attributes						
Attribute		Agree		No Opinion	Disagree	
Intimidating/Inviting		1		5	6	
Attractive/Unattractive		8		2	2	
Efficient/Inefficient		8		2	2	
Not Useful/Useful		2		1	9	
Out of Date/New		0		6	6	
Hard to Navigate/Easy		3		4	5	
Function City Hall Most Important						
Agree 0		7		No Opinion 2	Disagree 3	2
Frequency of Visits to City Hall						
Weekly 0	Monthly 3	Yearly 7		Not at All 4		
Frequency of Visits to Public Spaces Near City Hall						
Weekly 2	Monthly 4	Yearly 5		Not at All 3		
City Hall as a Symbol of Democracy						
Agree 1		4		No Opinion 9	Disagree 0	0
What does City Hall Stand For to You?						
Transparency	0			Community	9	
Openness	11			Accountability	3	
Efficiency	11			Integrity	3	
Diversity	1			Other	3	

Site Analysis

Rustin and Family Park is a one-acre tract that was gifted to the City of Southlake by Retail Properties of America, a REIT that focuses on retail developments. The City of Southlake maintains the park. Main Street borders the park to the north, Southlake Blvd to the south, and Grand Ave and State Street are to the east and west of the park, respectively. Fountain Place

runs through the southern end of the park, separating the central plaza from a section of the park with a pond and gazebo. Rustin and Family Park is a plaza in front of the Southlake City Hall. This city hall and plaza are reminiscent of the Courthouse Square design of many Texas towns (Veselka, 2000). State Street and Grand Avenue are lined with retail stores and restaurants of all types.

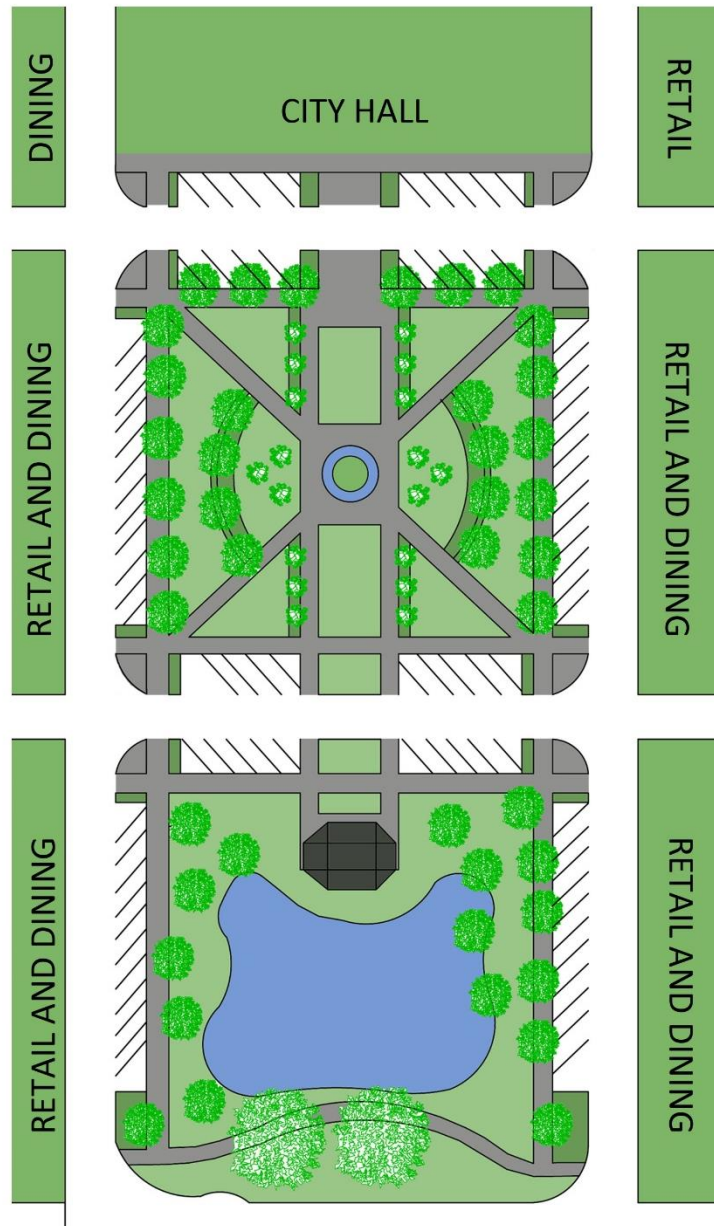
The plaza's main feature is the fountain at the very center. There are benches, a pond, bandstand or gazebo, lighted sidewalks, small grassy areas, and trash cans. On the northwestern edge of the park is a statue of a man tying a boy's shoe that pays homage to Brian Stebbins, one of the men responsible for the creation of Southlake Town Square, after he passed away in October of 2012 ('Town Square', n.d.). This statue can be seen in Figure 33. The gazebo is used as a stage for concerts and Santaland during Christmas in the Park. The gazebo is a great place to take photos as it overlooks a grassy area with a pond.

FIGURE 33: PICTURE OF STATUE IN RUSTIN FAMILY PARK



This park has several hedges that enclose the park and make it feel intimate, and there are many trees. There is plenty of shady areas on a warm summer day to escape the sun. However, some areas are open and allow for the sun to penetrate and allow for play. The walkways link the park to the shopping and restaurants of the Southlake Town Square, making the park a frequently traveled path from one of the retail stores to the other. Openings allow for easy entry on all sides of the park for those walking or entering by wheelchair. There is free parking on all sides of the park and Fountain Place, except for the southern border that is the main thoroughfare through Southlake. The space is idyllic and quiet, a great place to spend a quiet afternoon people watching.

FIGURE 34: RUSTIN FAMILY PARK SITE PLAN



Use/User Analysis

Rustin Park is the home of many special events throughout the year. It is the location of the Christmas Tree and hosts many events for the city that enliven this public space and draw

huge crowds of people. All year round, people can be found walking the sidewalks and resting on the park's many benches. At Easter, the fountain is a popular destination for family and children photos. Below is a list of events hosted by the city in Rustin and Family Parks.

- April – Art in the Square
- May & June – MasterWorks Concerts
- July – Stars, and Stripes
- September – National Night Out
- October – Oktoberfest
- October – Walk for PKO
- November – Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony
- December – Toys for Tots Toy Drive

Events in this space are varied. There is a selection of events that cater to the community and those that are focused on the arts. There is one national event in and one Christian event held in this park. There is also a cultural event meant to celebrate German heritage. Lastly, this space is used for organizations as a location for a fund-raising event.

Families and individuals use Rustin park for outings. Families come year-round to take pictures by the fountain and run and play in the grassy areas. Groups of teenagers and couples have gathered around the fountain and gazebo for pictures as well. With its location to retail and restaurants, many simply walk through the park to get from store to store. However, many linger and take the time to smell the flowers blooming and see the glow of the fountain.

According to ParkServe, Rustin Park serves 2% (682 individuals) of the population of Southlake (The Trust for Public Land, Southlake – Family Park). Of this number, 409 individuals are adults and 200 children (The Trust for Public Land, Southlake – Family Park). The ratio of adults to children demonstrates that there are plenty of families that live near the park.

Ordinance Analysis

Southlake's ordinances that govern Rustin Family Park are located in the Parks, Recreation & Open Space/Community Facilities Master Plan 2030. The Master Plan is one element of the Comprehensive Plan 2030 developed by the city. It was adopted in 2013 and is currently in the process of being reviewed for the 2035 plan. The goal of this document is the specifications that provide for a quality of life for Southlake residents and visitors. The hope is that there will be a provision for active and passive pursuits and create a sense of place for residents. City events are a big part of the programming specified in the master plan. These city events are held not only to create events for the citizens of Southlake but to draw in visitors and hope that they stay in Southlake (City of Southlake, 2013).

Southlake has been named a Scenic City by Texas Municipal League for 2017 - 2022. This is a certification program designed to set high-quality standards for public spaces (City of Southlake, 2013). Southlake is particular about aesthetics and building standards. They require the use of specific building materials and other design standards that profoundly impact the cost of construction. Again, the comprehensive plan calls for high-quality facilities and high-quality public spaces that lead to a certain quality of life for the residents.

Southlake has three categorizations of parks. Rustin Family Park is considered a community park. According to standards, these parks are developed to serve the community and are versatile (City of Southlake, 2013). One or more of the following are suggested amenities for community parks: athletic fields, areas for community events, pavilions or other gathering spaces with picnic tables, sports courts, restrooms, playground structures, viewpoints or overlooks, hiking and biking trails, natural trails, drinking fountains, benches, grills, ponds and water features, trash cans, trees, and landscaping. Park amenities are standardized between parks; however, Town Square parks are expected to have higher quality amenities, considering the prime location of these spaces (City of Southlake, 2013).

Another feature of this master plan is the inclusion of city facilities. While there is an inventory of the various departments that are housed in each building, there is little else this plan specifies that is not specified in the building code section of the comprehensive plan. The building includes not only offices for the City of Southlake, but it houses a City Library and several County Departments and some courtrooms.

Behavior Analysis

Rustin Family Park was visited on ten occasions. While a visit was made on July 4th, 2019, because the holiday event was held on the 3rd, no data was collected. On September 28, 2019, National Night Out was held. There were games, food, and several different inflatables for children to play on. No doubt, stranger interactions were going on; however, with the magnitude of the event, I was unable to collect any data on the trip. As well, it can be assumed that families were present at this event and spent a minimum of thirty minutes to an hour at the park.

The remaining visits occurred on weekends and weekdays. Table 8 gives an overview of the day of the week, the time of day they visit was made, the temperature at the time, the weather conditions, and names the event (if one was in progress). Family and stranger interactions can be seen in Table 8. While there were several family interactions, there were few stranger interactions. Of the two observed stranger interactions, one was between dog owners and the other between two children. In the case of the children, there was no interaction between parents; the children simply played together.

Many different activities were observed in Rustin Family Park throughout the nine site visits. There are many that simply use the park as a pass-through to get from one side of the shopping development to the other. However, some stop briefly to admire the fountain or take pictures at one of the many picturesque areas in the park. Families have been spotted playing in the grassy lawn areas, and often parents watch their children run from the fountain to the grass and play. Kids run after balls and frisbees. The benches are used by many to sit down and relax or enjoy a picnic.

There are several long stays observed while in Rustin Family Park (seen in Figure 36). Many of these include families or large groups out taking pictures or basking in the sun. On multiple site visits, I witnessed families and couples staying and spending time in the park just relaxing on one of the many benches. In Figure 37, we see that around the fountain, and the benches near the fountain are the most popular places people stop and stay. However, the grassy area has been used frequently too.

TABLE 8: RECORD OF SOUTHLAKE VISITS

	9/28/20	11/3/20	2/27/20	3/1/20	3/7/20	3/9/20	3/10/20	4/12/20	5/3/20
Day of the Week	Saturday	Sunday	Thursday	Sunday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Sunday	Sunday
Time of Day	7:30 PM	7:01 PM	5:00 PM	1:00 PM	4:00 PM	7:03 PM	8:15 AM	2:30 PM	3:31 PM
Temperature	80	59	62	71	63	74	50	83	89
Weather	Sunny	Clear	Sunny	Mostly sunny and windy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny
Event	National Night Out								
Family Interactions			2	2	3	10		1	4
Stranger Interactions					1	1			

FIGURE 35: ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHLAKE

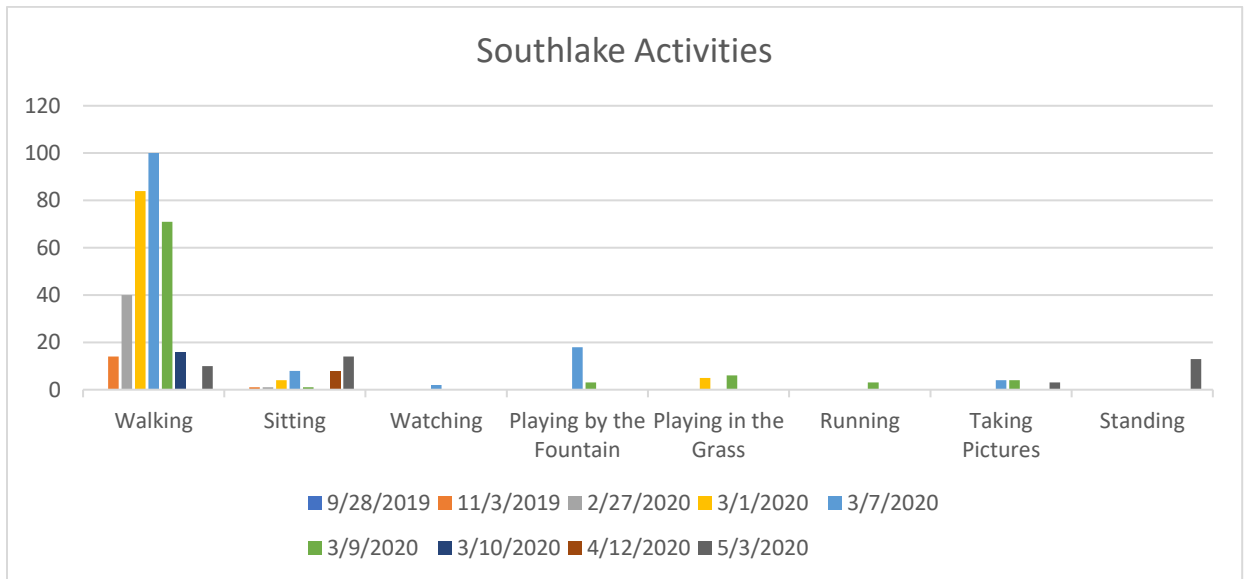


FIGURE 36: STAYS IN SOUTHLAKE

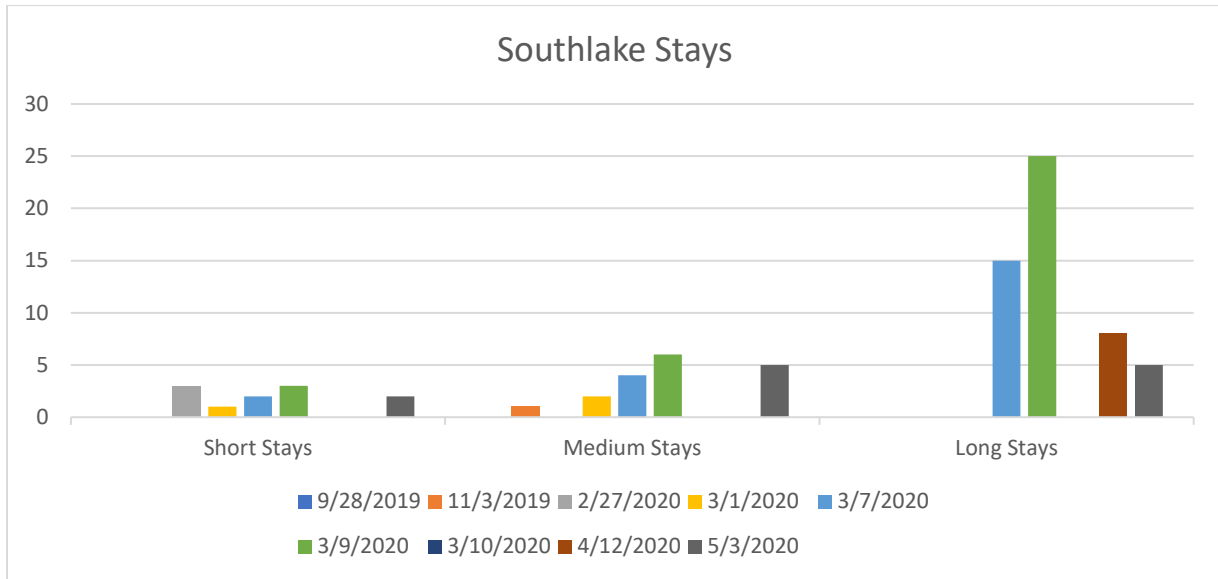
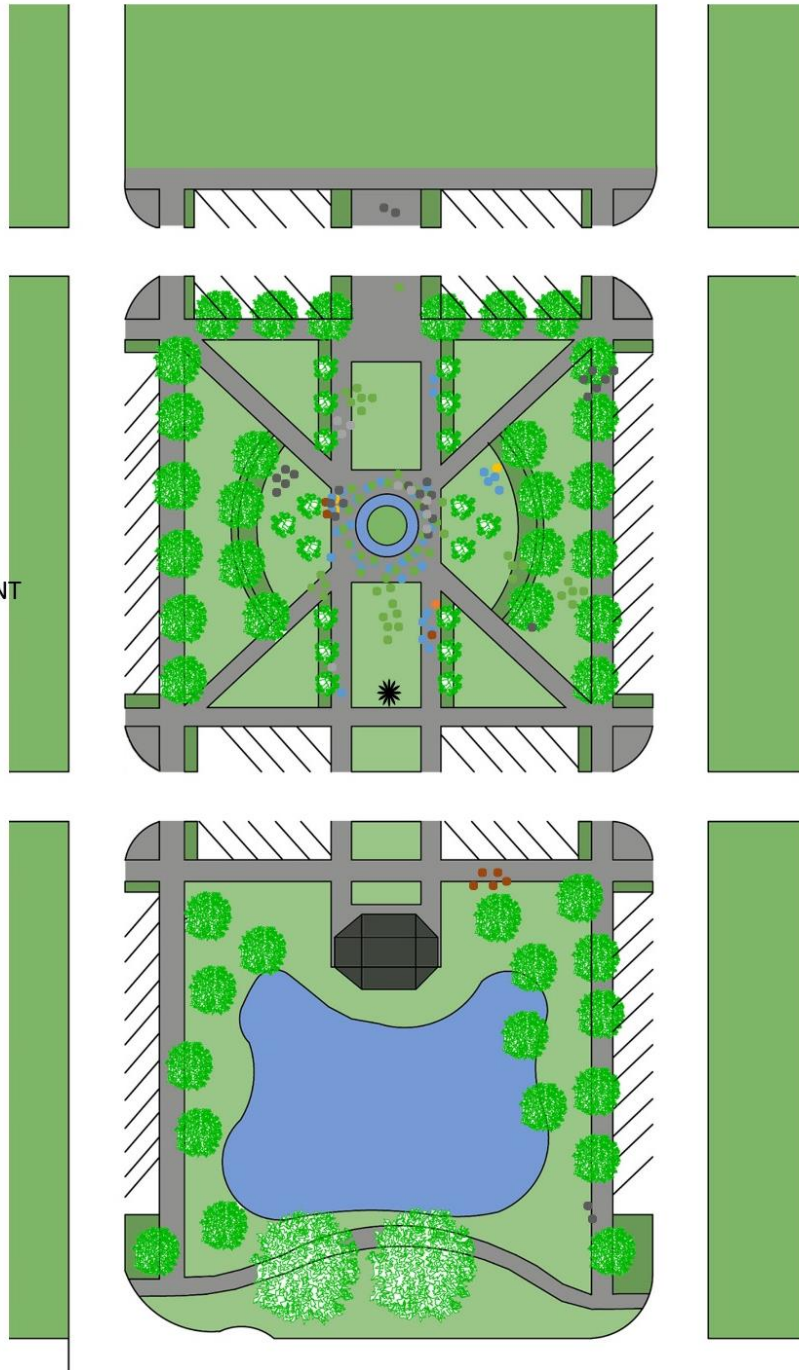


FIGURE 37: SOUTHLAKE BEHAVIOR MAP

- 9/28/2019
- 11/3/2019
- 2/27/2020
- 3/1/2020
- 3/7/2020
- 3/9/2020
- 3/10/2020
- 4/12/2020
- 5/3/2020
- ✱ VANTAGE POINT



Rustin and Family Park Amidst COVID 19

On March 20, 2020, Tarrant County and the City of Southlake went under at stay-at-home order in order to protect individuals from the novel coronavirus. At that time, all city facilities were closed to the public. Protect Southlake was the foundation for the COVID 19 regulations that would be instituted to protect the city and the spread of the virus. As of this time, there were sixteen cases in Southlake and one death. At this time, all retail closed in Southlake Town Square, and restaurants went to takeout and delivery only.

April 12th and May 3rd were the two dates following the stay home orders of Tarrant County, and recommendations by the City and Southlake Town Square for people to only go out for non-essential activities. These data can be seen in Table 8 following the dark line. While there were still individuals out on May 3rd, there were far fewer than would have usually been out at the park on a Sunny afternoon when there was beautiful weather. April 12th was Easter. I visited in the Easter of 2018, and there were several families out taking pictures and enjoying the beauty of the day and space with their families. I was surprised to see a family sprawled out by the parking area enjoying lunch together. They even had a tray with a bouquet. However, where they were sitting seem intentional, as if they anticipated the need to quickly get in their cars if the police were to stop by.

FIGURE 38: SOUTHLAKE CITY HALL



FIGURE 39: SOUTHLAKE VANTAGE POINT



FIGURE 40: A BUSY AFTERNOON IN RUSTIN FAMILY PARK



FIGURE 41: A QUIET AFTERNOON IN RUSTIN FAMILY PARK



Chapter 9: Discussion and Conclusion

The Sloan Social Capital Framework suggests that the most effective ways to build social capital in civic public spaces depend on creating places people want to stay in and are comfortable encountering strangers while in a place that is associated with at least one visible civic institution. The ways the cities plan events and provide physical infrastructure are critical contributions to increasing length of stay and interactions. The table below codifies the relative importance of various elements from the physical, content, and use layers and their relationship to building social capital:

TABLE 9: SLOAN SOCIAL CAPITAL FRAMEWORK IMPORTANT ELEMENTS

	Physical Layer	Content Layer	Use Layer
	<i>Visibility of the City Hall</i>	<i>Programmed Events</i>	<i>Length of Stay</i>
Why it matters	Value Accrues to City	Increased Length of Stay	Stranger Interactions
	Trust	Trust	Trust
	Building Community	Creates Shared Civic Values	Safety
How to make it work	Location for people to gather near institutional building	Holidays	Seating
		Arts	Grassy Areas
	Focal Point	Variety to reach diverse demographic	Playgrounds
			Water
		Food	

The findings of this research suggest that there are three elements essential to building social capital in civic public spaces. Length of stay is the essential element and occurs when the park or plaza is being used. When people stay in public spaces, there is a demonstration of a level of trust and safety that allows comfort in those spaces. On a personal level, not once in my visits did I ever feel unsafe, and data gathered through behavior mapping indicates a high degree of comfort and safety experienced by others in those public spaces as well. The longer a person

stays in space, the higher the number of stranger interactions that one may have in that space. During a short visit or a walk across a plaza, one may not encounter any strangers to build social relationships. Longer stays increase the probability of encounters with strangers.

In a civic public space, visibility of the City Hall or other recognizable civic institutions is critical for associating the trust built through the use of public space with the city itself. As the foundations of civil society, City Halls and other civic institutions are the cornerstones of democracy (Nikitin, 2009). "At their best, they nurture and define a community's identity by instilling a greater sense of pride" (Nikitin, 2009, page 10). Without City Hall as the focal point of the civic public space, it is just another park around town. People need these spaces as a democratic emblem to truly understand what community is. The Lambiase-Bright survey indicated that the majority of those surveyed viewed their city hall as a symbol of community. Cities should understand the opportunity provided by a city hall building's association with public space to increase trust and those associations with community connection. The number of survey respondents that viewed their City Hall as a picture of community is reason enough that this is a building that should be visible to the eyes of the civic public space.

Planned programmed events are essential to deliberately bring residents to civic public space as opportunities to create shared civic experiences and civic values. Programmed events are opportunities for cities and public administrators to gather with the citizens and share experiences. These provide opportunities as well for people to stay for long periods with many interactions with other residents. A level of trust is built when these spaces are used for events because the city is saying, "We feel safe here, and you should too."

There should be a variety of programmed events, with particular attention paid to inclusivity. All the cities studied here sponsored events for Christian holidays like Easter and Christmas, but civic events like July 4th and National Night Out are equally important. Secular events that provide opportunities to engage with creative arts like music events should be a part of the mix. As communities seek ways to build trust with a diversity of residents, events that honor a range of cultural expressions and religious beliefs can help build social capital.

All three of these cities, host a level of variety in their programmed events. Frisco has one of the most varied lineups of programmed events in its civic public space. Table 10 shows the range of events hosted by all the cities. In Simpson Plaza, not only the City of Frisco sponsors events, but also the Frisco Square Owners Association, as well as many other private organizations. Southlake also has a varied lineup, but not as varied as Frisco. Denton does lack the variety of events in Quakertown Park, but there are non-profit groups that perform outreach events here, and space is also set up for large family gatherings. Quakertown Park lacks access to the retail management company's that Frisco and Southlake have, and it lacks the appeal of the mixed-use developments with access to shopping and dining. However, it is an ample space with plenty of room to set up booths and provide for large groups of people.

TABLE 10: TYPES OF CITY-SPONSORED EVENTS

	Type of Event						
	<i>Civic</i>	<i>Cultural</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>Christian</i>	<i>Secular</i>	<i>Arts</i>	<i>Fund-Raiser</i>
Denton	1		2	1		1	
Frisco	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Southlake	1	1	2	1		2	1

Government's Role: Policy Analysis

These findings return us to the original three research questions that prompted this research, starting with the role of government in creating spaces that build social capital for communities. From the three case studies, we see that the role of the government is as a policy maker that determines the location of the civic public space and provides a vision for its design and role in the city. However, their role should also be as lead designer, taking the needs and desires of residents and translating them into good spaces. Architects and planners need to be engaged with the community for whom they are designing. The government sets goals and guidelines through comprehensive planning, and it is the job of the planning department and the parks department to see that these goals and procedures are met. In all three cities, the guidelines in the comprehensive plans reflect the government’s vision for civic public space and are evidenced in the public spaces.

Physical Layer

As stated earlier, the physical layer contains the provisions for how space is physically planted in the city and its relation to the surrounding environment. A strategic look at the ordinances helps to understand the basics for park design that the city desires. Quakertown Park is a beautiful setting among trees and lots of grassy areas. It is conveniently placed in more of a residential area, as opposed to retail. While there are surrounding features of retail along the

southern edge that connects to the central business district to the south of the park, it is outnumbered by the residential component. Here the City Hall is not the emphasis, but rather the park is highlighted and celebrated. Denton requires the park to be located on at least one main road, and for trees and landscaping to play a significant role in site design, we see this with the front of the park being located on McKinney and trees and landscaping throughout the park.

Simpson Plaza is a very formal space that provides a setting to view Frisco's new city hall building. On three other sides, it is surrounded by recently-constructed multi-family housing; it is directly connected to retail development along Coleman Boulevard. It is in close proximity to many retail and dining opportunities. Frisco, from the start, in principle one encourages the design of spaces to create social interactions. This suggests that the city would like to compel its citizens to come and socially interact with other community members. The placement of a café in the plaza creates a public presence in the plaza through the use of that private business establishment. The boundary between civic and commercial space is blurred. They emphasize the design for "high-quality" park space, which is achieved here through the use of expensive materials. Lang and Marshall (2017) encourage the use of high-quality materials in the construction of high-quality spaces as a means to strengthen the high-quality status of the space. The street, while at times busy, is visible from inside the park, but not a hindrance to the peacefulness one experiences. The trees and shrubbery that surround the majority of the park block the sight of the cars and give one a sense of security. The location of a café at the end of the park is a well-placed element that compliments the space nicely.

Southlake's Rustin Family Park reflects many of the components of the city's comprehensive plan and is a beautiful space that reflects the high-income status of its residents. They sit well in the built environment that surrounds it, and due to its proximity to shopping and dining, there is a lot of foot traffic through the park. On a sunny day, many individuals walk through the park and stop, even if briefly, and snap a pic in front of the fountain or at the gazebo overlooking the picturesque pond. Furthermore, while the south side of the park is bordered by a very busy thoroughfare, one does not notice it while in the park: trees and a pond guard against the noise. Inside the park, the busy streets of Southlake Town Square are hardly noticeable, with a buffer of trees and shrubbery that give a view of the street but offer safety from the cars.

Content Layer

The content layer explores the programming and tools the city chooses to fill their public space. This includes not only the amenities that are designed into their public spaces (which we have discussed) but also the events that are programmed for the city or by other entities that then rent or lease the space for an event. Very often, civic events focus on holidays; whether they be secular or Christian holidays, people will come together to participate in Easter egg hunts or Coffin Races. Public spaces have the capacity to bring people together, no matter what is being celebrated for a shared experience (Ryan, 2000; Chattopadhyay and White, 2014). There are also events that have the ability to bridge interests and create shared values. Events such as Music in the Park or a Jazz Festival, these well-programmed events put on by the city or even in cooperation with another institution, bring people together in these civic public spaces.

Denton requires its spaces to be accessible and provide shade, nighttime lighting, and water fountains. While there are not several water fountains throughout the park, there is one near the playground, and there are water outlets as well as electric outlets spread through the rear of the park. The park has many trash cans and recycle bins, picnic tables, and benches, suggesting that the government is creating opportunities for people to stay and spend time and encouraging them to be good stewards of shared public space. There are plenty of areas that provide sunshine and those that offer shade granting patrons the ability to bask in the sun or be protected from it. This is especially important near the playground, where there are multiple benches under trees and in the sun giving parents a choice of where they sit. Denton also provides the use of bathrooms from the pool from 9 AM to 5 PM. To provide restrooms is indeed a planned part of keeping people in the space for long periods of time.

Not all of Denton's civic events occur in Quakertown Park. However, there are portions of several of the events that are held there. For instance, the children's portion of the 4th of July event is held here. The Easter Egg Hunt is held in Quakertown Park as well. Probably one of the largest events held here is the Denton Jazz and Music Festival, which attracts attendees from across Texas.

Simpson Plaza is host to most of the city's planned events and many events hosted by the owners of Frisco Square. It is well laid out for tents and inflatables to be set up. I have attended multiple events here, and it is a very successful space for events. The City Hall makes a striking backdrop for the fireworks display, and at Christmas, the plaza is filled with different activities that people can engage in, such as a Christmas tree maze and outdoor ice-skating arena. The

Christmas tree is well placed in the center of the park for all to see, and several different activities are placed throughout Frisco Town Square and Simpson Park, including an outdoor ice rink and Christmas tree maze. I would say that this space is by far the most programmed of the three civic public spaces and has the most variety in the events that are offered for attendees.

While it is a good space to be in, it was clearly designed to be an event space and cater to the needs of programmed events rather than those that simply wish to spend an afternoon relaxing in a park. However, social capital between strangers happens frequently during events because it can bring them together (Peters et al., 2010). The lack of walkable pavement suggests that there are those that choose not to visit, because of the complications of getting around and through the site. According to Jan Gehl (2011), people are sensitive to the pavement, and substrates such as gravel are unsuitable and can adversely impact pedestrian movement. Comfortable seating is lacking in Simpson Plaza. This is a basic feature of public spaces, and a lack of good seating can negatively impact the staying factor in these places (Gehl, 2011; Gehl, 2013; Whyte, 1980; Lang and Marshall, 2017). There are only some rocks on which to sit, and they are not an optimal height, nor do they have a back. The site only has two doggy waste stations that have small trash receptacles, certainly not enough for lots of picnic trash.

Southlake's master plan specifies the special programming of the city's premier location. Events meant to draw in people are held several times of year to encourage people to stay in Southlake and enjoy the quality of life standards that have been designed into the city. Jalaladdini and Oktay (2012) suggest that events can draw people into the city, especially when an event is held in the town center and that the interest and stimulation of events will encourage

people to stay longer. Events such as Music in the Park draw in people to hear good music in a well-designed space. The gazebo acts as a stage for performers and acts as Santa's workshop during Christmas in the Park. The tree is the focal point during this celebration placed in the center of the grassy area at the south end of the park.

The trash cans, water fountains, and light fixtures are different than those specified for a regular park. The premier park demands premier and high-quality materials to ornate them. The incorporation of well-designed quality elements such as this adds quality to a public space (Land and Marshall, 2017). Southlake also has at its center a fountain, used as a focal element, fountains, and water can bring an ambient quality to a public space (Lang and Marshall, 2017).

Most Successful Typology: Use Layer

Another question this research sought to answer was what typology was best suited to create social capital in civic public spaces, as distinct from public spaces or public parks. In terms of staying ability, the park typology is best suited to keep people in the park. Denton, more often had some presence in the park, from families to individuals. The size alone lends itself to staying considering walking from one end of the park to the other takes about five minutes. Frisco and Southlake, while great parks are great thoroughfares, a space to get through. Without the train and fountain in Frisco, it is believed that few parents would walk through the park with their children to let them play. However, the plaza has the ability to provide strangers good opportunities to mingle as they share a smaller space with each other. Southlake does not even have a play structure of any sort. While an elegant plaza, it is not designed to serve the needs of a family. However, it too has a nice fountain, and many take advantage of taking pictures there. I

also witnessed a couple of interactions between strangers here; it is a smaller space and, therefore, more opportunities to pass by someone and strike a friendly conversation just by saying, "Hi."

Getting away from the idea of design and looking at the value and identity created by a public space, the plaza typology outweighs the park typology. Denton is a nicely designed park, but in terms of identity, it does not seem to have one. While 55% of respondents agree that the City Hall stands for community, it is less clear why compared to the other cities in this research. This is a City Hall that blends into the landscape and is hidden by trees. It is difficult to get a clear picture of the City Hall except up close where only a courtyard can be seen. However, it is designed by a famous architect and a humble building seems to suit the space just fine. Denton also has a smaller percentage of visitors than Frisco and Southlake; however, that could be in part because both Frisco and Southlake hold a public library, and Denton's library is in its own facility. Southlake and Frisco both have a clear identity and stand tall to be seen. The plazas are well-manicured and attractive. One can see through them, from one side to other (a trait that is lacking in Denton, after all, I had to visit locations in Denton to see all parts of the park). The residents of Southlake and Frisco seem to share the idea of civic identity, although more so in Frisco, with 64% and 72% respectively of respondents believing the City Hall stands for community.

Most Successful Design Tools: Use Layer

The last question I wanted to answer was what amenities are most successful in public spaces to encourage social capital. I addressed several tools of design in an earlier chapter, and

many of those elements are found in the parks that were observed. All three public spaces contained water elements. The fountains in Frisco and Southlake received much attention to park patrons, even in the cooler months of the year. After all, people love water, and where there is water, people will interact within in some way (Whyte, 1980). Denton has a natural and humanmade creek flowing through the park in a culvert. Although on most visits the creek was dry, there is still an opportunity for water and variety in the landscape. The concrete waterway became a skatepark on one visit, without the presence of water.

Every location has grassy areas. The grassy areas were a big draw for families in all three locations. However, I think this particular tool falls short of providing interaction opportunities between strangers. In Denton and even Frisco, the lawns are rather large, and while they provide great event space, they allow for individuals to be spread out with no need to congregate. Southlake, however, the lawns are small and allow for interactions, especially between playing children. This was witnessed on one visit, a child there with his mom and grandmother interacted with kids in another family.

It is important to note that the lack of trash cans and light fixtures inside Simpson Plaza detract somewhat from the spaces being used as a place where people would come to stay. Without proper disposal stations, having a picnic in this plaza might be avoided. Civic public spaces should have several trash cans and trash should be removed frequently (Lang and Marshall, 2017). However, on two occasions, I did find couples having a picnic. Denton and Southlake provide ample lighting and trash cans for waste disposal. To me, this says they are

encouraging people to stay here and have lunch. Denton even provides picnic tables, water faucets, electricity, and grills. All tools that encourage people to stay here and have a barbeque.

There are walking paths in all three locations as well. The paths in Southlake are crisscrossed, allowing for easy linkages between the sides of the shopping development. They are also wide enough that there is plenty of room to pass people without crowding each other (Gehl, 2011). Denton also has winding paths that are several feet thick, allowing for both walker and bike rider alike to move through space. The bridges that cross the waterways give one the appeal of walking through a county landscape. Frisco's Simpson Plaza lacks quality walkways. While, yes, there are walkways, they are made of gravel and are hard to walk from place to place. It is also more difficult to transverse for wheelchairs. There are walkers that move through the park, but it is not the quantity that Southlake experiences.

Seating is probably the most expected and crucial tool of designers in developing good public spaces. As already stated, Denton and Southlake provide many opportunities for comfortable seating. Benches or tables are provided throughout both parks. However, the seating in Frisco prohibits long visits due to the lowness to the ground and lack of a seatback. While I have sat here on many occasions, I cannot just lean back and enjoy the space; I have to support myself. There is a direct need for seating in any public space where there is a desire to give individuals a place to linger (Whyte, 1980; Mehta & Bosson, 2018; Gehl, 2011).

One element that Frisco has inside its borders is a café. By adding the element of food to a location, activity is increased in that place (Whyte, 1980). In Frisco, we see that this is true, as the park definitely increases activity from restaurant patrons. Many times, I witnessed families

leave and enter the café from the park to play sports. Southlake is in close proximity to restaurants and a coffee shop; however, I would not say that the park has increased activity because of those particular food installments, but rather the development overall. Denton lacks this feature; however, I would not say it hinders them from building social capital because there is the ability to cook food and easily have a picnic within the boundaries of this park.

The last element is the playground or play structure. A public space with a playground has an increased probability of use, especially by families with young children (Ayala-Azcarraga, 2019). Only one park has a playground, and that is Denton. According to behavior analysis, the playground is one of the most popular features of Quakertown Park. Prior to the COVID 19 restrictions, most weekends, the park had children playing in it and parents sitting on the benches nearby. Denton and Frisco both have play structures. However, I have never seen anyone play on the structure in Denton. It is nestled away between the Senior Center and the Community Pool. In Frisco, the train is a very popular place for children to play, younger children and older children. Southlake does not have a playground or play structure. It is hard to say if this feature would be a draw for more people, but I would make the assumption that "if you build it, they will come," meaning that the addition of play structure would increase resident use and therefore increase the staying capacity of the park.

Policy Recommendations

While each of the cities has done good planning in the way of designing their cities, some more specific standards could be put into place. For instance, Southlake referenced amenities and standards for things such as trash cans and water fountains, going even further and

specifying high-quality products in their more austere spaces. According to Duany et al. (2000), the more specific the standards are the better chance for spaces designed with the quality that is desired. This goes to the level of specifics that will enable planners to design high-quality spaces for people, even on a budget. Amenities do not have to have a price tag to be "high-quality."

TABLE 11: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Design for People	Increased Length of Stay	Seating
		Grassy Areas
		Play Structures
		Water
	Programmed Events	Music/Arts
		Holiday Events
Food		
Design with People	Placemaking Strategies	Surveys
		Town Hall Meetings
		In-Person Charrettes
Maintenance Guidelines	Litter Control	Maintenance Schedule
	Equipment Repair	Equipment Maintenance Schedule
	Equipment Replacement	Equipment Replacement Schedule

Policies should consider the needs of the residents and understand how they want the spaces used. Then to take it a step further, design spaces with people in mind, not for cars or for the built environment. There are a great need for parks as population numbers rise and “the future of cities depend on parks” (Lange, 2012, page 139). Design considerations should include not only the physical aspect of the space but the social aspect and how it will be used (Mehta and Bosson, 2018; Moore and Cosco, 2010). Parks should be intricately designed to move thorough a system of users and uses (Jacobs, 1961). If the desire is to get people to visit the spaces and stay there, they should be designed with that in mind. For instance, comfortable seating, even moveable seating is important to facilitating longer stays, especially for adults (Mehta and Bosson, 2018). Incorporating placemaking strategies into comprehensive plans

(Frisco and Denton are already doing this in theory) can also aid in the design of spaces that are desired by the residents. Town Hall Meetings and in-person charettes are equally important to surveys as means for cities to engage with citizens to get their feedback about design. These in-person events provide an opportunity for residents to see and envision possibilities for public spaces which is crucial when seeking input about design decisions which can be difficult for non-designers to picture in their heads. This allows for the public to have an input in the space design and give them a stake in the game, which may encourage them to use the space more frequently if they know they were part of the decisions.

Specific policies should be in place regarding park maintenance. While all three parks are maintained by the city, there are no specifications as to how often they are cleaned or how often amenities are updated. Parks that are maintained are used more often than parks that are not cared for (Lang and Marshall, 2017). After all, who want to spend a long period of time in a trashy, run-down park or plaza. These types of policies would ensure that proper maintenance keeps facilities in working order and free of parts that could injure a park patron. Cleaning of parks should be specified so as to ensure the cleanliness of the parks at all times.

Limitations

There are limitations to this research. Behavior mapping can be quite time intensive and requires multiple people and more visits. Trying to watch people moving about and counting them proved to be quite a task. If there were multiple people at one time counting and mapping certain areas, it is believed that there would be more reliable data collected. More site visits at more varied times of the day was also a limitation. It was easy to go on weekends and spend

time in each of the locations; however, it proved difficult to get there early enough in the mornings and spend lunchtime and dinner time near the parks.

The Coronavirus and the associated shut down of public space, local governments, and workplaces in Dallas-Fort Worth in the second week of March 2019 was probably the most intrusive limitation. It removed my ability to talk to people, to make site visits, and to gather necessary data from park patrons or city officials.

Future Research

In the future, I would like to see a planned longitudinal study of more and more parks throughout the metroplex. I think it would prove beneficial to continue to research the ability of behavior mapping as a tool to measure social capital. To add more parks and parks with more diverse users, I could truly investigate the success of behavior mapping as a means to measure social capital. The knowledge of what best facilitates the development of social capital within public spaces can impact public space design. "Direct observation of behavior, objective measurement, combined with qualitative methods, drawings, journaling, semi-structured interviews, and other data-gathering tools to measure behavior and perceptions useful to inform design" (Moore and Cosco, 2010, page 40). The three researched cities are all demographically similar and have more economic resources that can be used to invest in quality spaces. It is crucial to take the baselines found in this study and extend its scope to include more demographically diverse suburban communities and communities that are less wealthy. Not all the practices in these well-resourced communities require large budgets and they may translate well to communities with fewer financial resources.

Conclusion

Civic public spaces are incubators for social capital and civic engagement. In well-designed civic public spaces, people feel welcome and safe and are willing to spend time there. Being in a good public space can feel like home (Peters et al., 2010). When time is spent in those spaces, trust is built and, therefore, social capital. Where there is social capital, individuals benefit from the good fortune of others.

Public space means different things to different people and is defined differently by different academic fields. A common thread amongst those definitions is an openly accessible space where people can interact and come to know the world around them. While planners and architects may hold the blueprints, the real story of the space rests in the hands of those that use it; it is co-produced through use and active participation (Mean and Tims, 2005). Public spaces are simply a stage, and people are the actors that create a new story every day by how they use the space. Architecture is a practice of telling a social story, an avenue to shape our culture and society by creating the necessary settings for social action (Upton, 1998).

One of the most critical features of the design is that it should be designed for people and allow for social interactions. People are social beings and need to be a part of something bigger than themselves. It is the interactions people experience with others that they form a sense of identity, a sense of acceptance in their community, and the chance to build ties with other community members (Peters et al., 2010; Worhole and Knox, 2007). It does not matter if interactions are structured and strong or weak one-off visits with another stranger; what matters is that the space facilitates many different kinds of interactions between people (Peters et al., 2010). Designs of public spaces should shape "the behavior of individuals, encouraging social

interaction by maintaining a safe, comfortable and lively setting that draws individuals and encourages them to linger (Brain, 2019, page 171).

Good public space design must meet the needs and provide plenty of opportunities for activity (Jalaladdini and Oktay, 2012; Bishop and Marshall, 2017; Mehta and Bosson, 2018). Even a well-designed public space that is not useful or has nothing in it that is valuable to the community will not be used. If people need comfort and pleasure, a meaningful environment designed as such will be successful for people who use it and create social capital (Mehta and Bosson, 2018; Gehl, 2011). There is no other venue than a public space to provide for opportunities for interactions than in public spaces (Peters et al., 2010). If it does nothing more than to get people out of their homes, out of their boxes, public spaces are successful (Ayala-Azcarraga, 2019).

Programmed events are a great tool for cities to use to interact and engage with their citizens. They are tools that encourage people to not only come to their cities, but to stay in their civic public spaces where these events are held. Frisco is successful at creating a space that complements programmed events and provides plenty of room for large gatherings, even though it lacks the appeal of the other locations when there are no events. “It is difficult to reconcile the requirements for sufficient space for large events and the need for the square to be a pleasant place when no event is taking place” (Lang and Marchall, 2017, page 90). Southlake and Denton are also successful, however, it is seen that these spaces were designed less for events and more for the pleasure and relaxation of their users. Southlake must close down Fountain Place in order to set up plenty of booths to accommodate different vendors for a

successful event. Denton, while it has plenty of space for events, Downtown Denton is the home of most of the city-sponsored events.

There are typologies of space that are more successful in creating social capital. However, this can depend which element is being considered. In terms of getting people outside and spending family time, a park with many family-oriented amenities, such as a playground, can be successful for building social capital. However, the courthouse square is exceptionally successful in creating social capital as well. Squares draw on long associations with civic institutions and are easily recognized as civic symbols when placed in front of a City Hall; it can be seen in some eyes as a picture of high-quality status (Lang and Marshall, 2017). The courthouse square is reminiscent of the city centers in larger urban areas and quickly provide suburban communities and their citizens a place that is understandable to them (Lang and Marshall, 2017). A successful element of suburban placemaking is the creation of a traditional town center in a suburban area that did not previously have one (Lang and Marshall, 2017).

As a result, of the three research case studies, I would have to conclude that the most successful public space was Southlake's Rustin and Family Parks. The City Hall is visible to all who visit the park, and there are opportunities with plenty of seating and programmed events to encourage longer stays in the space. Because of the size of the space and proximity of benches and other amenities, there are ample opportunities for stranger interactions. They provide an elegant pedestrian space with a clear civic focal point in the midst of a busy, car-centered suburban backdrop. However, it functions as a place to take pictures, spend family time in the grass or attend one of many programmed events that are designed to keep people in Southlake.

This is a very successful reinvention of the courthouse square, measuring up to the “quality” that Southlake enforces through policies and maintenance. Southlake is well-balanced in terms of all the elements desired to make a design a successful civic public space that is used by many.

While the three cities used multiple amenities that are successful, there are a couple that stands out as more important than others in both research and in observation. Seating, seating not only gives individuals a place to rest, but it is also the fundamental feature designed to keep people in a public space. The hours can drift by when one is sitting. This allows for the opportunity to read, sleep, eat, play chess, or my personal favorite, people watch (Gehl, 2011). Seating is "vital to the quality of public spaces in a city. The availability or lack of good sitting opportunities must be considered an all-important factor in evaluating the quality of public spaces" (Gehl, 2011, page 155). Gehl (2011) suggests that if a city is considering improvements, they should always start with seating. Southlake and Denton both provide ample seating. While Southlake provides for a refined seating experience, I prefer the peacefulness of the trees and the landscape that make me feel like I have escaped the confines of suburban life.

Another successful tool of designers is the grassy areas. These are, by far, the most flexible tool that can be used to create social interactions and social capital. These spaces can become an arena for a family sporting event, a place to let kids just run and burn off steam, a place to set up tents for a city event, a place to nap, a place to picnic, a place to serve others or just a place to linger. Grassy areas allow one to be who they want to be. If one wants to fade into the background of the other park patrons, they can remain invisible in a world of strangers, or they can get involved with a group that's playing soccer or football; people decide (Peters et al.,

2010). All three cities are successful in providing grassy areas that serve the function of the people.

Design and policy both play a role from the governmental standpoint in the creation of public spaces that have the ability to build social capital for the mutual benefit of all residents. Policies can be put in place that aid in creating good design guidelines. Policies should be specific and even identify types of materials or finishes, and maintenance policies should be clear and strong in order to keep facilities at their best. Cities with tighter budgets can consider the use of robust amenities and drought-tolerant trees and plantings to help cut maintenance costs. Funding is vital to think about in the design process, especially for low-resourced suburban communities.

The three case studies addressed here are more affluent and thus have easier access to resources to provide design and quality in their public spaces. However, for less affluent communities, these lessons still hold. While Southlake and Frisco have large budgets to devote to amenities and require certain "high quality" design elements, it is clear that the most important design elements can be incorporated even on small budgets:

- Benches
- Garbage cans
- Water fountains
- Picnic tables
- Planned events + performances + music

- Food, either brought by visitors (eg, picnics) or purchased on site from food trucks and restaurants

Overall, public spaces have the opportunity to be so much more than what they are. With the proper design and the proper amenities, civic public spaces can become arenas for social capital and social interaction. Well-designed City Halls can give citizens a place that they are proud of and gives the suburban city a sense of place and civic identity. The public space that is attached to the City Hall should be just as grand but complement the built environment. As stated in the introduction, if you build a good space, people will gather in it (Walljasper, 2005; Gehl, 2011). These three civic public spaces successfully serve the purpose of building identifiable sense of community and social capital in the context of urban sprawl and offer lessons for other suburban cities.

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Appendix A: Surveys and Audits

Planning Director Survey

General Questions

How long have you been a Planning Director for your organization? _____

Briefly tell me some of your responsibilities for this organization.

Do you live in the city you work for? YES or NO

Is it a Requirement? YES or NO

Is your office in City Hall? YES or NO

If no, is your office in another civic building in the main civic complex or another building elsewhere in the city? Please describe its location

Please describe your city hall building, even if your office is elsewhere.

Is it part of a complex of civic buildings? YES or NO

Or is it isolated from other civic services? _____

Questions about Public Space

The goal of this survey is to discover your thoughts and feelings about the public space that is attached to the City Hall building.

Is there an outdoor public space attached or adjacent to your city hall? YES or NO

Do you spend time in the public space that is attached to your civic building? YES or NO

How often? _____

Do you spend time in the space when there are programmed events? YES or NO

Do you spend time in the space when there are NOT programmed events? YES or NO

Do you visit this space during the work week or on weekends? _____

Do you bring your family or friends to this space? YES or NO

How does this space make you feel?

Is this a space that you believe feels welcoming? YES or NO

If so, why? _____

If not, why? _____

Does this space embody the ideals and mission of the city? YES or NO

Would you say the public space is reflective of the architecture of City Hall? YES or NO

When you visit this space, are there residents here enjoying the space provided? YES or NO

Is this a space that you believe people can come to and demonstrate their ability to actively engage in government? YES or NO

Is this space where people socialize and engage on a personal level? YES or NO

What do you like most about this space?

What do you like least?

Public Space Programming

Are there community events held in the public space attached or adjacent to your city hall?

YES or NO

If so, is there an active programming schedule for this space? YES or NO

Where can it be found? _____

Who is responsible for coordinating events and announcing them to the public?

Which events have the highest attendance?

Public Space Policies and Procedures

What are the policies that dictate urban design in your city? Are there certain design features expected when designing a public space?

When planning out a public space in the city, what are the procedures? Are there certain amenities you feel belong in certain public spaces?

Has there been a recent discussion of the design of public space at your city hall within the past 5 years?

If yes, please summarize the discussion to the extent you are able, including key stakeholders in the discussion and the major issues.

Public Information Officer Survey

General Questions

How long have you been a Public Information Officer for your organization? _____

Briefly tell me some of your responsibilities for this organization.

Do you live in the city you work for? YES or NO

Is it a Requirement? YES or NO

Is your office in City Hall? YES or NO

If no, is your office in another civic building in the main civic complex or another building elsewhere in the city? Please describe its location

Please describe your city hall building, even if your office is elsewhere.

Is it part of a complex of civic buildings? YES or NO

Or is it isolated from other civic services? _____

Questions about Public Space

The goal of this survey is to discover your thoughts and feelings about the public space that is attached to the City Hall building and civic complex. I want to also understand the relationship between this physical space and the digital space you are perhaps more accustomed to working in.

Is there an outdoor public space attached or adjacent to your city hall? YES or NO

Do you spend time in the public space that is attached to your civic building? YES or NO

How often? _____

Do you spend time in the space when there are programmed events? YES or NO

Do you spend time in the space when there are NOT programmed events? YES or NO

Do you visit this space during the work week or on weekends? _____

Do you bring your family or friends to this space? YES or NO

How does this space make you feel?

Is this a space that you believe feels welcoming? YES or NO

If so, why? _____

If not, why? _____

Does this space embody the ideals and mission of the city? YES or NO

Would you say the public space is reflective of the architecture of City Hall? YES or NO

When you visit this space, are there residents here enjoying the space provided? YES or NO

Is this a space that you believe people can come to and demonstrate their ability to actively engage in government? YES or NO

Is this a space where people socialize and engage on a personal level? YES or NO

What do you like most about this space?

What do you like least?

Public Space Programming

Are there community events held in the public space attached or adjacent to your city hall?

YES or NO

If so, is there an active programming schedule for this space? YES or NO

Where can it be found? _____

Who is responsible for coordinating events and announcing them to the public?

Which events have the highest attendance?

Digital Space

Does the website provide a place for residents to voice their concerns about government actions? YES or NO

Does the website provide a place for people to engage with their elected officials? YES or NO

Does the website provide a place for people to engage with other residents? YES or NO

Are there any interactive capacities for your citizens when they are in the public space attached to the city hall? YES or NO

Has there been any conversations about the relationship between the public space that is attached to the city hall and the digital space? If so, describe the conversations and what thoughts there are in incorporating a relationship between the two.

Parks and Recreation Director

General Questions

How long have you been a Parks and Recreation Director for your organization? _____

Briefly tell me some of your responsibilities for this organization.

Do you live in the city you work for? YES or NO

Is it a Requirement? YES or NO

Is your office in City Hall? YES or NO

If no, is your office in another civic building in the main civic complex or another building elsewhere in the city? Please describe its location

Please describe your city hall building, even if your office is elsewhere.

Is it part of a complex of civic buildings? YES or NO

Or is it isolated from other civic services? _____

Questions about Public Space

The goal of this survey is to discover your thoughts and feelings about the public space that is attached to the City Hall building.

Do you spend time in the public space that is attached to your civic building? YES or NO

How often? _____

Do you spend time in the space when there are programmed events? YES or NO

Do you spend time in the space when there are NOT programmed events? YES or NO

Do you visit this space during the work week or on weekends? _____

Do you bring your family or friends to this space? YES or NO

How does this space make you feel?

Is this a space that you believe feels welcoming? YES or NO

If so, why? _____

If not, why? _____

Is this a safe space? YES or NO

Does this space embody the ideals and mission of the city? YES or NO

Would you say the public space is reflective of the architecture of City Hall? YES or NO

When you visit this space, are there residents here enjoying the space provided? YES or NO

Is this a space that you believe people can come to and demonstrate their ability to actively engage in government? YES or NO

Is this a space where people socialize and engage on a personal level? YES or NO

Do you meet new people and engage with them in conversation? YES or NO

Do you feel that you can trust others while you are in this space? YES or NO

What do you like most about this space?

What do you like least?

Do you feel safe in this space? YES or NO

Do you feel like residents feel a sense of trust with their neighbors in this space? YES or NO

Do you feel this space is accessible to all residents? YES or NO

Public Space Programming

Are there community events held in the public space attached or adjacent to your city hall?

YES or NO

If so, is there an active programming schedule for this space? YES or NO

Where can it be found? _____

Who is responsible for coordinating events and announcing them to the public?

Which events have the highest attendance?

Public Space Maintenance

Who is in charge of the upkeep and maintenance for the public space in front of the City Hall?

Are there any seasonal tasks that an arborist takes into consideration for this public space?

If there is public art in the space, how often is it changed? Who is responsible for making these decisions?

Paper Citizen Survey
City Hall Public Space

Welcome to the research study!

We are interested in understanding what do governments do to encourage social interaction and civic participation in their civic spaces. You will be presented with information relevant to the design of public spaces and asked to answer some questions about it. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential.

The study should take you around ten minutes to complete, and you will receive no incentive for your participation. However, you can leave your email address in the last question and be entered in a drawing for \$100. There are no risks, and no benefits to participating in this research study. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice. If you would like to contact the Principal Investigator in the study to discuss this research, please e-mail Jennifer Sloan at Jennifer.sloan@mavs.uta.edu. You can also contact the IRB Office at 817-272-3723 or regulatoryservices@uta.edu.

CONSENT

By signing this form, you are confirming that you understand the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and your rights as a research subject. By agreeing to participate, you are not waiving any of your legal rights. You can refuse to participate or discontinue participation at any time, with no penalty or loss of benefits that you would ordinarily have. Please sign below if you are at least 18 years of age and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER

DATE

**If you agree to participate, please provide the signed copy of this consent form to the research team. They will provide you with a copy to keep for your records.*

1. Which City Hall are you visiting?
 - Southlake City Hall
 - Frisco City Hall
 - Denton City Hall
2. When you are in this space, how do you feel? (Select all that apply)
 - Welcome
 - Safe
 - Trusting of the Environment
 - Trusting of the People
 - Other _____
3. Is this a space that you believe people can come to and demonstrate their ability to actively engage in government?
 - YES
 - NO
4. Is this a place you would bring your family and friends?
 - YES
 - NO
5. Does this space respect and highlight the civic building it is attached to?
 - YES
 - NO
6. What are your favorite elements of this public space? (Select all that apply)
 - Water Features (creek, fountain)
 - Trees
 - Picnic Tables
 - Walking Path
 - Playground
 - Garden
 - Public Art
 - Open Grass for Sports
 - Benches or Other Places to Sit
 - Other _____
7. Do people smile and at strangers when they make eye contact?
 - YES
 - NO
8. Have you ever attended an event in this public space?
 - YES
 - NO
9. What do you like best about this space?

10. What do you like least about this space?

11. What zip code do you live in? _____
12. Would you like to be entered in a drawing to win \$100? One individual from each City Hall site will be awarded a \$100 VISA Gift Card. Please leave your email address in the box below. Please leave your email address _____

Public Space Audit

LOCATION: _____

EVALUATE THE CIVIC SPACE

Goal: To identify the qualities of the public space attached to the civic building. The qualities of public space can be seen in three layers. A physical layer that encompasses the environment that the space is placed in. A content layer that includes all the amenities and park features, whether natural or man-made. Lastly, a use layer. This last layer is special because it can tell us if this space is a space that people use and enjoy.

When you have completed each section tally the scores here.

All Areas Data					
		# of Yes of Physical Layer			
		# of Yes of Content Layer			
		# of Yes of Use Layer			
		Number of Yes			

Physical Layer (Environment)		
Pedestrians and Bicyclists		
Is there a visual interest in the street and sidewalk	Yes	No
Pedestrians and bicyclists can easily access the space	Yes	No
Sidewalks are connected to adjacent spaces	Yes	No
Crosswalks are well-maintained and marked	Yes	No
Crossing distances are minimal	Yes	No
There is adequate storage for bikes	Yes	No
Drivers		
There is plenty of parking for people to park nearby	Yes	No
Cars are able to access the facility safely and efficiently	Yes	No
Cars don't distract from the pedestrian experience	Yes	No
Architecture		
The space respects and highlights the civic building it is attached	Yes	No
There is adequate, but not distracting signage for the space	Yes	No
Is located near uses that help guide people to active engagement in the space	Yes	No
Space is a part of a large civic complex	Yes	No
Does this space fit its surroundings?	Yes	No
Functional, Inviting City Hall	Yes	No
	Yes	_____
	No	_____

Content Layer			
Relief from the sun			
Built Shade Structures	Yes	No	
Natural Shade from Trees	Yes	No	
Natural Features			
Trees	Yes	No	
Creek/Pond	Yes	No	
Grass	Yes	No	
Man-Made Features			
Seats/Benches	Yes	No	
Walk/Bike Paths	Yes	No	
Bathrooms	Yes	No	
Café	Yes	No	
Playground/Play Structure	Yes	No	
Fountains/Water Element	Yes	No	
Sculpture/Public Art	Yes	No	
Picnic Tables	Yes	No	
Water/Electricity	Yes	No	
Drinking Fountains	Yes	No	
Sport Courts	Yes	No	
Lighted Paths	Yes	No	
Trash/Recycle Bins/Dog Waste Stations	Yes	No	
Is this a space that you could be in regardless of the weather?	Yes	No	
Is this a good space day or night?	Yes	No	
Do you feel safe in this space?	Yes	No	
Is this an attractive space that is well maintained?	Yes	No	
Amenities are operational, easily accessible, and consistent in design	Yes	No	
	Yes		
	No		

Use Layer		
Engagement with Environment	Yes	No
Sports being played	Yes	No
Kids playing on playground	Yes	No
People walking	Yes	No
People riding bikes	Yes	No
People watching	Yes	No
Activities are easily visible and inviting for pedestrians or drivers	Yes	No
Does this space accommodate many different activities?	Yes	No
Social Engagement		
Mix of ages, ethnic groups, and sexes reflective of the community	Yes	No
People are gathered here by choice	Yes	No
People smile at strangers when they make eye contact	Yes	No
Evidence that people gather here in groups	Yes	No
Chance encounters happen here between strangers and friends	Yes	No
Families spend time in this space	Yes	No
Couples spend time in this space	Yes	No
Individuals spend time in this space	Yes	No
	Yes	_____
	No	_____
All Areas Data		
	# of Yes of Physical Layer	_____
	# of Yes of Content Layer	_____
	# of Yes of Use Layer	_____
	Number of Yes	_____

Respondents _____

Have you ever visited your city's City Hall building?

- Yes, one time _____ %
- Yes, more than once _____ %
- No _____ %

Thinking about your City Hall experience, please rate your City Hall on the following attributes. Click the bubble closest to how you feel about the attribute.

- Intimidating _____ %
- Inviting _____ %
- Beautiful public building _____ %
- Unattractive public building _____ %
- Efficient public building _____ %
- Inefficient public building _____ %
- Not useful _____ %
- Useful _____ %
- Out of date _____ %
- New _____ %
- Hard to navigate _____ %
- Easy to navigate _____ %

What is more important to your needs as a resident of your city?

- A functional, inviting City Hall building is most important.
 - Strongly disagree _____ %
 - Somewhat disagree _____ %
 - Neither agree nor disagree _____ %
 - Somewhat agree _____ %
 - Strongly agree _____ %

What other city facilities do you use and how frequently?

- City Hall
 - Weekly _____ %
 - Monthly _____ %
 - Yearly _____ %
 - Do Not Use _____ %
- Public spaces near City Hall
 - Weekly _____ %
 - Monthly _____ %
 - Yearly _____ %
 - Do Not Use _____ %

When I think of my City Hall, I see a symbol of democracy.

- Strongly disagree _____ %
- Somewhat disagree _____ %
- Neither agree nor disagree _____ %
- Somewhat agree _____ %
- Strongly agree _____ %

When architects and city officials design City Hall buildings, they are often trying to design a building that embodies democracy. For me, my City Hall stands for ... check all that apply.

- Transparency _____ %
- Openness _____ %
- Efficiency _____ %
- Diversity _____ %
- Community _____ %
- Accountability _____ %
- Integrity _____ %

Other _____ %