



January 7, 2014

Mr. Clayton Husband, AICP  
City of Arlington  
101 West Abram Street  
Mail Stop 01-0260  
Arlington, Texas 76010

Re: Midwest Texas APA "Planner of the Year" Award Nomination

Dear Mr. Husband:

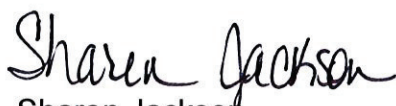
It is our honor to nominate Mr. Kenneth Baker for the Midwest Texas APA "Planner of the Year" award. Mr. Baker is an outstanding planner and an integral part of the City of Southlake's executive team. He has used his considerable talents to help the City achieve its strategic goals through proactive planning and implementation support. We are all pleased to be a part of this nomination, believing that Mr. Baker is an exceptional planner and an outstanding co-worker. We appreciate the consideration of the Awards Jury, and would be happy to provide further information or answer any questions you may have.

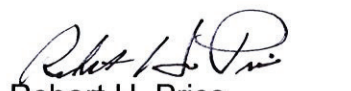
Sincerely,

  
Shana Yelverton  
City Manager

  
Ben Thatcher  
Assistant City Manager

  
Alison Ortowski  
Assistant City Manager

  
Sharen Jackson  
Chief Financial Officer

  
Robert H. Price  
Director of Public Works

  
Chris Tribble  
Director of Community Services

  
Alicia Richardson  
City Secretary

  
Stacey Black  
Director of Human Resources

  
Michael Starr  
Fire Chief

  
Steve Mylett  
Police Chief

  
Pilar Schank  
Communication &  
Website Manager



**MIDWEST TEXAS APA  
PLANNER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION**

**KEN BAKER, AICP  
SR. DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
CITY OF SOUTHLAKE**

Mr. Baker has provided leadership in the planning and development of the Southlake community and performed his work in conformance with the Core Values of the American Planning Association by:

- Leading the community through the development of *Southlake 2030*, a comprehensive plan for our community comprised of 19 elements with over 700 recommendations. Mr. Baker is the primary owner of *Southlake 2030*, working with department directors, appointed Boards and Commission members, the City Council and interested members of the community. All recommendations are aligned with Vision North Texas and Southlake's Strategic Plan and then prioritized and incorporated into department business plans and the City's budget for implementation. All elements were developed in-house with minimal requirements for consulting support. It is conservatively estimated that over \$450,000 in cost avoidance has been achieved as a result of his competent leadership and technical capabilities. The Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association presented the Planning and Development Services (PDS) Department a "Certificate of Achievement for Planning Excellence" for 2013. (We are committed to fairness, diversity, community engagement, choice, and collaboration in seeking solutions. We work toward integrated and comprehensive planning solutions.)
- Overseeing current planning efforts and ordinance development to ensure the orderly development of the City. Southlake has rigorous development requirements, rooted in a detailed framework of master plan policies. Mr. Baker provides excellent support to policy makers, the development community, and Southlake residents who are involved in the process. As with Southlake's comprehensive planning efforts, Mr. Baker and his team collaborate with other City departments, the local school districts, and provide information to the public through the Southlake Program for the Involvement of Neighborhoods (SPIN) and personal contact. (We provide and value public education and empowerment.)
- Directing code enforcement, building services, and Geographic Information Services in addition to traditional planning services. Mr. Baker is considered an "A" player within our organization and is often asked to take on new projects and responsibilities because of the confidence that we have in his abilities. One example where his leadership was invaluable was when the City had to begin enforcing water restrictions to ensure we were able to maintain pressure in our system. His expertise has been tapped by other cities in the area as well, for example, with the development of regulations related to gas drilling. He and his staff have also taken a leadership role in the development of regional trails, coordinating efforts with 11 other cities. (We collaborate closely with other professions to ensure the best outcomes for our communities and regions.)
- Communicating effectively with the public, appointed and elected officials and staff. Mr. Baker is a fearless communicator. He is willing to present to hostile audiences, patiently guide uniformed individuals through the complexities of a case, and author a "Development Activity News" blog. He is authentic and humble, and willing to share credit. His energetic and effective approach to ensuring that the community and other stakeholders stay informed has been a key to his success in Southlake. (We value accountability and transparency in carrying out our duty as trusted advisors to the public we serve.)

Finally, Mr. Baker is considered to be highly ethical in adherence to the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. He provides strong recommendations that have been fully vetted and considered from all points of view. He ensures that he and his staff continually train so that their knowledge, skills and abilities are up-to-date. He never uses his position to personal advantage; rather, he views his role as one of subject matter support and policy facilitation. He has a superior work ethic.

Mr. Kenneth Baker would be an excellent choice for "Planner of the Year."