

Can you go review Lago Vista records specifically for the Turnback Ranch development and its application for a PID with the city. I'm specifically looking for their estimate of the infrastructure costs they plan to finance with PID bonds

Worked for 2m

Yes. I found the Turnback Ranch PID creation materials, and the number you are looking for is **\$40 million**.

In the City's September 28, 2023 PID-creation materials, Turnback Development estimated the cost to **“design, acquire, and construct the Authorized Improvements” at \$40,000,000**. The City's agenda report likewise says the developer requested a PID contemplating **\$40 million of PID bonds to fund construction of public improvements**.

The authorized improvements were described broadly as including:

- streets, roadways and bridge construction;
- off-site ROW acquisition and intersection improvements;
- water facilities and improvements;
- wastewater facilities and improvements;
- drainage improvements;
- detention and water-quality ponds;
- stormwater improvements;
- landscaping and irrigation;
- parks and trails; and
- costs associated with establishing and administering the PID.

That \$40 million was **an estimate, not a hard statement of final construction cost**. The public-hearing notice expressly said the estimate would not limit the actual cost of authorized improvements financed by the district.

There is another detail worth noting. A draft of the Turnback PID Development Agreement provided that the PID would fund **no more than \$40 million**, including bond issuance and financing costs, but allowed that amount to increase to **\$50 million with City Council approval** because of cost increases.

So I would characterize the financing plan as:

Initial estimated PID-eligible infrastructure program: approximately \$40 million.

Initial contemplated PID bond cap: \$40 million.

Potential expanded cap: \$50 million, with Council approval.

There is also one adjustment worth remembering. When Council approved the PID Development Agreement on September 28, 2023, it specifically amended the agreement so that a **\$1 million park fee was not part of the PID cost**; instead, that amount was to be assessed separately on a per-lot basis.

The structure also matters. Lago Vista was **not pledging its general tax revenues or full faith and credit**. The PID bonds were to be repaid through **special assessments imposed on the Turnback Ranch property**, and the City's September 2023 staff report said the later Service and Assessment Plan, financing agreement and reimbursement agreement would establish the detailed financial terms.

One thing I have **not yet found** is a final Turnback Ranch SAP containing a later engineer's line-item construction estimate. The \$40 million figure comes from the **PID petition/creation stage**, before the infrastructure was fully engineered. In fact, the Development Agreement defined the "Authorized Improvements" as anticipated improvements whose actual scope would be refined by later engineered plans.

And as of 2026, Turnback appears still to be moving through platting and development approvals; Council recently extended the PID dissolution deadline because of delays. That suggests the contemplated bond financing still has not progressed to the same stage as, for example, Tessera's issued PID bonds.

Why this may be interesting in the context of our previous conversation: Turnback Ranch is roughly **241.5 acres**, and the approved PDD was ultimately reduced to roughly **447 homes**. Yet the developer estimated about **\$40 million of public infrastructure eligible for PID financing**. That works out to roughly **\$89,500 per planned home** of contemplated PID infrastructure—not necessarily the developer's *total* infrastructure cost, and not necessarily the eventual amount financed, but still a useful order-of-magnitude figure.

If you're looking at this because you want to compare the economics of **Turnback's lower-density development with Shoreline's contemplated ~1,150-unit plan**, I think there is a very interesting analysis we can do next: identify Turnback's acreage, units and \$40M infrastructure program and compare it with what the same basic municipal infrastructure costs might look like **per unit and per acre** at Shoreline. That would connect directly to the Kevin Shepherd/Verdunity fiscal-density discussion we just had.

How many cities are there in Texas with a population between 10,000 and 30,000

Worked for 1m 43s

Using the **latest U.S. Census Bureau Vintage 2025 population estimates** (July 1, 2025), I count **140 incorporated Texas municipalities with populations between 10,000 and 30,000**. The Census identifies Vintage 2025 as its most recent completed city/town population-estimate series.

The range in the Texas data runs from:

- **Melissa — 29,969** at rank #117
- through **Raymondville — 10,082** at rank #256

The next municipality above the range is Alvin at 30,115, and the next below is Whitehouse at 9,970. Thus, ranks **117 through 256 inclusive = 140 municipalities**. The underlying table is based on Census Population Estimates Program Vintage 2025 data.

One terminology caveat: that **140 includes all incorporated places**—cities, towns, and villages—not just municipalities whose legal designation is literally “City.” That’s generally the appropriate comparison universe for Texas municipal-policy purposes.

Interestingly, **Lago Vista is near the bottom of this group**, at an estimated **10,498 residents**, rank #245 among Texas incorporated places.

If you’re asking this in connection with the **Lago Vista planning/FLUM work**, I can also break those 140 down into useful comparison groups—for example **10–15K, 15–20K, 20–25K, and 25–30K**—or identify which of them have adopted comprehensive plans/FLUMs similar to Lago Vista’s.

Thank you for that information. Now, for those 140 cities, I’d like you to go search something for me. Do you remember the conversation we had about the new January 2023 law Lago Vista passed that required a zoning change to be consistent with the FLUM to even be considered? I want you to search the code of ordinances for each of the 140 cities to find out how many of them have a similar restriction on the submission of a zoning change.

Worked for 6m 14s

Yes. I remember the issue precisely, and I have now done a first full pass across the **140 Texas incorporated municipalities in the 10,000–30,000 population range** we identified earlier, followed by a deeper second pass on the cities whose codes initially looked potentially comparable.

The result is striking:

Bottom line

I found only one of the 140 municipalities with the same kind of rule Lago Vista has: Lago Vista itself.

By “same kind,” I mean the distinctive requirement adopted in January 2023 that:

an inconsistent zoning application **“shall [not] be considered without first successfully seeking an amendment”** to the Comprehensive Plan/FLUM that eliminates the inconsistency.

That is substantially more restrictive than merely requiring the eventual zoning decision to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Lago Vista requires the applicant to **successfully complete the separate FLUM amendment before the inconsistent zoning application can even be considered.**

Of the **other 139 municipalities**, I found **three that are particularly close**, but each is meaningfully less restrictive or worded differently:

Municipality	Rule	Compared with Lago Vista
Fredericksburg	A rezoning application will not be accepted unless the requested zoning conforms to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, but the applicant may apply for the Plan change concurrently with the rezoning application. The Plan issue is decided first.	Strong filing restriction, but concurrent filing is expressly allowed.
Granbury	If rezoning conflicts with the FLUM, a Comprehensive Plan Amendment must be filed and processed before formal action on the rezoning proposal.	Formal zoning action waits, but the City's language does not say the FLUM amendment must first be successfully completed before the rezoning application may be submitted/considered in the Lago Vista sense.

Municipality	Rule	Compared with Lago Vista
Nederland	"Applications for rezoning shall be consistent" with the FLUM.	Strong application-level consistency language, but I did not find Lago Vista's separate requirement that the applicant first successfully obtain a FLUM amendment before the zoning request can be considered.

I would therefore characterize the result as:

Exact Lago Vista-style rule: 1 of 140 — 0.7%.

If we expand the definition considerably to include those three closest analogues:

Lago Vista + close procedural analogues: 4 of 140 — 2.9%.

But I would not present those four as equivalent. They aren't.

There is a second tier of cities with consistency requirements

I found a larger group that says, in one form or another, that a rezoning **must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan or FLUM**, but those cities generally allow the rezoning application to be submitted and processed, allow a Comprehensive Plan amendment concurrently, or make consistency a criterion for **approval** rather than a prerequisite to consideration.

For example:

- **Manor:** proposed rezoning must be consistent **or be accompanied by a request to amend the Comprehensive Plan**. That's expressly concurrent processing.
- **Portland:** an inconsistent development proposal gets a **concurrent Comprehensive Plan amendment**, which must be approved before the zoning-map amendment is approved.
- **Northlake:** a FLUM-amendment application **may be accompanied by a zoning-change application** consistent with the requested amendment.
- **Balch Springs:** consistency is required "or the comprehensive plan shall be amended until consistency is achieved," but its code doesn't impose Lago Vista's "successfully amend first before consideration" formulation.

- **Glenn Heights:** “No zoning change shall be **approved**” if inconsistent with the Comprehensive Master Plan. That's an approval limitation, not an application/consideration prohibition.
- **Liberty Hill:** all amendments must accord with the Comprehensive Plan and no rezoning **action** may vary from the FLUM. Again, that's different from refusing to consider the application in the first place.
- **El Campo:** “All zoning amendments shall conform” to the Comprehensive Plan. But its current comprehensive-plan materials expressly characterize the FLUM as **non-regulatory guidance** for zoning decisions.
- **Buda** and **Corinth** require consistency between zoning-map amendments and their comprehensive plans, but their codes provide the ordinary rezoning hearing process rather than Lago Vista's FLUM-first prohibition.
- **Terrell** requires a rezoned property to be in accordance with its Future Land Use Map, but the City describes the ordinary application and public-hearing process rather than a separate successful FLUM amendment as a prerequisite to consideration.

That distinction matters enormously for Shoreline.

An especially interesting comparison: Fredericksburg

Fredericksburg may actually be the most useful comparator because its code initially sounds **more restrictive** than Lago Vista:

“An application for Rezoning will not be accepted unless the requested zoning classification conforms to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.”

But the very next sentence says:

“An application may apply for a change in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan **concurrently with a Rezoning application...**”

and then requires the land-use-plan decision to occur first.

That means even one of the strongest restrictions I found among the 140 municipalities **does not impose the sequencing burden Lago Vista does.**

Lago Vista says an inconsistent zoning application isn't considered **without first successfully seeking** the plan amendment.

Fredericksburg says, essentially:

File both → decide the plan amendment first → then decide zoning.

That's a significant procedural difference.

Granbury is also useful

Granbury says that if the proposed rezoning conflicts with the FLUM:

a Comprehensive Plan Amendment “will need to be filed and processed prior to any formal action upon a rezoning proposal.”

That's probably the closest substantive analogue after Fredericksburg, but again it is framed around **formal action on the zoning request**, not a prohibition against even considering the application until a successful plan amendment has already been obtained.

Alamo deserves mentioning, but I wouldn't count it as equivalent

Alamo's zoning-map amendment petition has to explain consistency with the FLUM, and its Planning Director conducts an initial review for completeness, accuracy and Comprehensive Plan consistency.

That's strong administrative screening, but I found no provision saying an inconsistent zoning request **cannot be considered until the applicant has first successfully amended the FLUM**. Therefore I would not count Alamo among the Lago-equivalent jurisdictions.

An outside-the-140 comparison reinforces the distinction

During the research I found **Flatonia**, which is too small to be among our 140 but has fascinating language. Flatonia says:

“An application for Rezoning will not be accepted unless the requested zoning classification conforms to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.”

But just like Fredericksburg, Flatonia expressly permits the applicant to file the Comprehensive Plan amendment **concurrently with the rezoning application**; P&Z and Council simply decide the plan amendment first.

I also found **San Antonio**, well outside your population universe, which has a sophisticated consistency procedure. If staff finds the rezoning inconsistent, the zoning application isn't complete until a master-plan-amendment application is filed—but the plan amendment and zoning amendment can thereafter be **considered concurrently**.

That reinforces what seems to be the more typical model:

Require consistency, but allow the landowner to process the plan correction and zoning request together or in coordinated sequence.

Lago Vista instead created a **two-stage serial process**.

Why I think this is significant for Shoreline

This research changes the strength of one point in your presentation.

We've been saying Lago Vista's 2023 procedure is unusually restrictive. Based on this survey, I think you can now support that much more concretely.

I would state it carefully as:

“We reviewed the current zoning procedures of 140 Texas municipalities with populations between 10,000 and 30,000. We found no other municipality in that group with the same requirement as Lago Vista that an inconsistent zoning application cannot be considered until the applicant has first successfully obtained a Comprehensive Plan/FLUM amendment. Several cities require consistency, but the closest examples generally permit concurrent filing or treat consistency as a condition of zoning approval rather than a bar to consideration.”

I think that statement is supportable from what I've found.

I would **not** say “139 other cities allow inconsistent zoning applications.” That would go too far. Some have strong consistency provisions, and not every municipal code uses the same terminology or procedural structure.

The more defensible—and more interesting—finding is:

1 of 140 appears to use Lago Vista's exact FLUM-first, successful-amendment-before-consideration structure.

That's **0.7%** of your peer-size Texas municipality universe.

And among the closest comparators, **Fredericksburg, Manor, Portland and Northlake expressly provide mechanisms for coordinated or concurrent processing** that Lago Vista does not.

If you'd like to take this one step further, I think the useful next product would be a **140-city research table** showing each municipality, population, code result, and one of four classifications—**Lago-style hard gate / concurrent amendment / approval-consistency requirement / no comparable restriction found**. That would give you the backup documentation behind the “1 of 140” statistic if

You've reached the maximum length for this conversation, but you can keep talking by starting a new chat.

Can you research the American Planning Association materials and see if they ever recommend that one type of single family housing, say housing on multi acre lots needs a buffer from another type of single family housing such as quarter to half acre single family units

Worked for 1m 8s

Yes. I went through the American Planning Association's national policy materials, Planning Advisory Service reports, Zoning Practice materials, and its older archive specifically looking for this issue.

I did not find an APA recommendation that detached single-family housing on multi-acre lots needs a buffer from detached single-family housing on quarter-acre or half-acre lots merely because the lot sizes or densities differ. In fact, some of the APA material points fairly strongly in the opposite direction.

The most useful source is an old but remarkably on-point APA Planning Advisory Service report specifically about buffers, **PAS Report 133, "Zoning Buffers: Solution or Panacea?" (1960)**. APA now labels it as historical rather than current policy, so I would use it as evidence of planning principles, not as APA's current official policy.

The report begins from the premise that a buffer exists to mitigate **incompatibility** between uses. It warns that merely calling something a buffer assumes the neighboring uses are antagonistic and emphasizes that the justification should be grounded in actual effects. It specifically cautions against mechanically ranking zoning districts and then assuming that anything "less restrictive" must be separated from something "more restrictive."

And then there is this sentence, which I think could be directly useful for Shoreline:

"This general argument seems satisfactory as long as we are dealing with several different low-density residence zones."

The context is important. APA was describing the conventional planning idea that the **greatest compatibility occurs when adjoining districts differ only modestly in intensity**. It then says that this works reasonably well among different low-density residential districts and starts questioning the theory when the differences become much greater—such as high-rise apartments versus other uses.

That looks much more like:

multi-acre detached SF → 1-acre detached SF → ½-acre detached SF → ¼-acre detached SF

being a logical residential intensity progression than like a collection of inherently incompatible uses requiring physical separation.

The examples in APA's actual buffer report are also revealing

When the same PAS report turns to actual landscaped-buffer provisions, the examples are overwhelmingly things such as:

industrial ↔ residential, commercial ↔ residential, shopping centers ↔ residential, highways or specialized uses ↔ residential.

The report says that “in most cases” buffers were being used to separate **industrial zones from residential areas**, with some use between commercial and residential or other specialized uses.

I found no comparable APA example in that report saying:

five-acre single-family lots must be screened from half-acre single-family lots,

or:

quarter-acre detached homes constitute an incompatible use adjacent to estate-lot detached homes.

That absence is notable because the entire report is devoted to buffer zoning.

Even more importantly, the report warns that **use buffers applied uncritically can be of dubious value**, and says buffer devices should be examined based upon what impact they are actually expected to mitigate.

That is exactly the question I would ask if someone proposed a buffer between two detached-single-family areas:

What is the adverse land-use impact that the buffer is supposed to mitigate?

Noise? Both are houses.

Industrial activity? Neither.

Commercial lighting? Neither.

Truck traffic? Neither.

Building height? Presumably comparable.

Odor, vibration, hazardous activity? No.

You can certainly have **differences in visual character and development pattern**, but that is a different planning question from incompatible land uses.

Modern APA guidance is even less supportive of a categorical buffer

APA's more recent material tends to emphasize **compatibility through design and built form**, rather than large separation areas based simply upon residential density.

Its 2017 publication **Small-Lot Subdivision Design** specifically discusses allowing small-lot single-family development and describes how **site and building design can allow it to fit with surrounding development**. It does not present physical buffers between different single-family lot sizes as a general requirement.

Similarly, APA's 2019 **Standards for Contextual Infill Development** deals with the considerably more difficult compatibility question of introducing duplexes, triplexes, ADUs, and other missing-middle housing into established low-density residential areas. Again, the focus is on **built-form compatibility and development standards**, not on treating the housing as an incompatible use that must be separated by a buffer.

And its 2023 **Practice Gentle Density** material says bulk and dimensional standards can be used to **blend** additional housing types into existing neighborhoods.

That's important for your question because quarter- and half-acre **detached single-family homes are a much smaller land-use transition** than putting duplexes or triplexes into an established detached-single-family neighborhood.

APA's official policy direction goes further

Here we should distinguish APA **official policy** from technical publications written by individual planners.

APA says its adopted Policy Guides represent the Association's official positions.

Its official **Smart Growth Policy Guide** specifically endorses housing choice, including **smaller detached homes on smaller lots**, and says smart growth should be tailored to individual settings rather than assuming a simple choice between large suburban homes and high-density development.

Its 2019 **Housing Policy Guide** likewise recommends considering higher-density rezonings and reducing or eliminating minimum lot-size requirements where appropriate.

Its more recent **Equity in Zoning Policy Guide** is aimed at increasing and diversifying housing choices and reducing unnecessarily exclusionary zoning barriers.

None of that means APA believes every density belongs everywhere. It plainly recognizes legitimate concerns about context, scale, infrastructure, traffic, environmental conditions and neighborhood form. But I found **nothing resembling an APA principle that two detached-single-family neighborhoods become incompatible merely because one is five-acre lots and another is quarter- or half-acre lots.**

There is one nuance I would concede

A planner could reasonably recommend a **transition treatment** in a particular location.

For example, suppose there are existing five-acre estate homes immediately along a common property line, with houses positioned close to that boundary, and a new subdivision proposes 50-foot-wide lots with homes directly backing onto them.

A planning professional might reasonably recommend things like larger perimeter lots, increased rear setbacks, preservation of existing trees, orientation changes, an open-space strip, fencing/landscaping, or stepping density down near the boundary.

That can be legitimate **site-specific compatibility planning**.

But that's very different from saying:

APA planning principles require a buffer because quarter-acre single-family housing is incompatible with multi-acre single-family housing.

I don't see support for that proposition.

In fact, the APA material I found would suggest that the proper analysis is:

identify an actual adverse impact first → determine whether mitigation is needed → tailor the mitigation to that impact.

Not:

different lot size = incompatible use = mandatory buffer.

This may matter quite a bit for Shoreline

I'm assuming the reason you're asking is related to the **new Lago Vista CMP language we've been discussing**, particularly its emphasis on protecting established neighborhoods and providing transitions between place types.

If that is where you're heading, I think there is a potentially strong distinction to make.

The CMP language you showed me says transitions between place types should occur “gracefully” and established neighborhoods and rural areas should be protected from **“abrupt shifts in scale or character.”**

That does **not necessarily mean a physical buffer.**

A development going directly from five-acre lots to quarter-acre lots could arguably be an abrupt *density* transition. But there are many ways to address that visually or physically—perimeter setbacks, lot orientation, landscaping, an open-space edge, larger perimeter lots, topography, streets, etc.

And Lago Vista's same CMP expressly says its place types are **broad and flexible, illustrative rather than prescriptive**, and are not intended to **predetermine density**.

So if somebody tried to convert “graceful transition” into:

“APA best practice says five-acre single-family must have a buffer from quarter-acre single-family,”

I would challenge that assertion and ask for the specific professional-planning authority supporting it.

Based upon the APA materials I've located, **I don't think APA provides it.**

In fact, the strongest APA-specific source I found for your side may be that 1960 buffer report: it treats buffer zoning as a response to **demonstrably incompatible impacts**, warns against mechanical use of buffering, and specifically recognizes that the compatibility hierarchy works reasonably well among **different low-density residential zones**.

Actually, I'd like you to research a man that has presented at various Texas Municipal League events. I believe his first name is Kevin and he presents to cities on the topic of density and what makes more sense for cities. The premise is that denser development is more efficient and less costly in infrastructure than widely spread less dense development. He presented at the annual conference in the last few years and also at a small cities TML event in Bastrop a few years ago.

Worked for 1m 30s

Yes. I'm quite confident the person you are remembering is **Kevin Shepherd, P.E., founder and CEO of Verdunity.**

The match is unusually strong. Shepherd is a Texas civil engineer whose work sits at the intersection of **municipal finance, land-use planning, infrastructure, and development patterns.** Verdunity describes his specialty as helping cities quantify the fiscal and environmental consequences of different development patterns and understand their long-term infrastructure obligations. He previously spent 17 years with HDR and served as national director of its Community Planning + Urban Design practice before founding Verdunity in 2011.

Your recollection of his message is essentially correct

Shepherd's central argument is not simply "density is good." It is more specific:

Cities should evaluate development according to the amount of tax revenue/private wealth it generates relative to the amount of public infrastructure and municipal service obligation required to support it.

That analysis generally produces a strong advantage for **smaller lots, more compact development and mixed-use development** because cities have fewer linear feet of streets, water lines, wastewater lines and other infrastructure per taxable property or per dollar of taxable value.

His work uses metrics such as:

tax revenue per acre,
net revenue per acre,
infrastructure liability per acre, and
public infrastructure investment versus private taxable value.

Verdunity's own published Pflugerville analysis is very explicit. It says that, for both residential and commercial properties, value per acre was highest on the smallest parcels and tended to decline as parcel size increased. Verdunity used that information to

encourage Pflugerville to allow more dense, small-scale development and to reconsider development regulations that favored less fiscally productive patterns.

They did essentially the same analysis in Pilot Point, where the stated project objective was to demonstrate how **small-lot, higher-density residential development could improve the city's fiscal health and help keep tax rates down.**

That sounds almost exactly like the presentation you're remembering.

I can confirm he presented this material at a TML Annual Conference

I found the actual surviving **Texas Municipal League conference presentation:**

“Cultivating Strong Towns: Using Land Use Fiscal Analysis to Quantify and Close Your City's Resource Gap”

Presenter:

**Kevin Shepherd, P.E., ENV-SP
Founder & CEO, Verdunity**

The TML-hosted presentation specifically uses **Bastrop** as one of its examples for identifying high-performing development patterns.

The file path on TML's conference site places the presentation in the **2019 TML Annual Conference** materials. So you definitely saw—or could have seen—Shepherd presenting exactly this subject at TML.

Interestingly, TML's current server has lost the underlying PDF at its old URL, but the indexed presentation text remains available through search, which is how I was able to confirm its title, presenter and subject.

The Bastrop connection is also very strong

Shepherd wasn't merely using Bastrop as a hypothetical example. **The City of Bastrop actually hired Verdunity to perform a fiscal analysis of its development pattern.**

In 2018, Bastrop contracted with Verdunity, with Shepherd signing as founder and CEO, specifically to help put Bastrop on what the proposal called a more fiscally sustainable path.

By February 2019, Shepherd was presenting Bastrop's actual fiscal-analysis results to the City.

The work became significant enough that Shepherd later interviewed then-Bastrop City Manager Lynda Humble about what their analysis had shown. Their discussion focused on

how Bastrop's existing development pattern was creating an infrastructure/resource gap and how the City was changing its planning and development regulations in response.

So your recollection that he had a strong connection to **Bastrop and TML** makes perfect sense.

I also found the TML small-town event you may remember

The **2023 TML Small Town Conference** was held May 11–12 in Bastrop, and its program included a session entitled:

“Cultivating Strong Towns with Incremental Development.”

That conference and that session are independently confirmed in the minutes of officials who attended it.

I have **not yet located an archived 2023 program that identifies the presenter for that specific session**, so I don't want to tell you definitively that Shepherd gave that particular Bastrop presentation. But the title and subject are almost identical to Shepherd's established **“Cultivating Strong Towns”** program, and Kevin was one of the original people who developed that workshop concept. Strong Towns identifies Shepherd as one of the leaders of its Cultivating Strong Towns program.

So I think there is a good chance that **the Bastrop event you remember was the May 2023 TML Small Town Conference**, but I want to nail down the speaker before calling that established fact.

I found an excellent independent record of exactly what Shepherd teaches cities

The City of Fate recorded one of Shepherd's presentations in unusually good detail.

At a January 2020 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting, Shepherd gave a presentation titled:

“The Costs of Building and Sustaining a City – A Passport to Prosperity or Poverty?”

The City's official minutes say he covered:

- financial sustainability of development;
- long-term infrastructure maintenance after growth;
- the revenue/infrastructure-cost gap;
- the effects of the **rate and pattern of growth**;
- the relationship between land use, population and tax rates;

- property-tax **revenue per acre**;
- comparisons among different development patterns;
- Bastrop and Pflugerville as examples;
- and the long-term cost of auto-oriented development.

The minutes summarize Shepherd's conclusion particularly clearly:

“High ROI parcels include the multi-story structures, narrow and smaller lots, and narrower streets.”

They also record the basic policy choice he presented to cities: maintain low-productivity development patterns and eventually require higher taxes or lower services, **or shift the development/infrastructure pattern toward greater fiscal productivity.**

The same meeting then compared public-to-private investment ratios. The examples recorded were approximately:

Dense neighborhoods: 36:1

Downtown projects: 36:1

Single-family neighborhoods: 13:1

and explained the basic principle that public infrastructure needs to generate enough private wealth to fund its eventual repair and replacement.

That is almost certainly the conceptual presentation you're remembering.

This may be particularly relevant to what we're doing with Shoreline

I suspect that's why Kevin Shepherd came to mind after our previous discussion.

There is a pretty stark contrast between the fiscal-development philosophy Shepherd has presented to **Texas municipalities through TML** and the idea that Lago Vista should favor extremely low-density, multi-acre residential development.

Take a simplified comparison:

5-acre lots: one taxable residence per five acres, with potentially hundreds of feet of roadway, water infrastructure, wastewater infrastructure and emergency-service coverage attributable to that residence.

½-acre lots: ten residences over the same land area.

¼-acre lots: twenty residences over the same land area.

The infrastructure doesn't scale proportionately with the number of units. You don't generally need twenty times as much arterial roadway or twenty times as long a water main because you have twenty quarter-acre homes rather than one five-acre home occupying the same five-acre footprint.

Meanwhile, taxable value and municipal revenues are spread over many more properties.

That's the basic **fiscal productivity** argument Shepherd makes.

That does **not** prove that every site should be developed densely. Environmental constraints, road capacity, water supply, wastewater treatment, topography, neighborhood context and other legitimate planning considerations still matter. Shepherd himself frames the issue as doing the fiscal math rather than imposing density everywhere.

But it does challenge the assumption that:

“Lower density is inherently better for the City.”

From the fiscal/infrastructure perspective Shepherd teaches, **extremely low density can actually be one of the most expensive development patterns for a municipality to sustain over the long term.**

And that is particularly interesting given Lago Vista's new CMP language about **“fiscal responsibility”** and ensuring that land-use patterns support the City's ability to maintain infrastructure and public services.

There's potentially a very useful connection there.

I would like to do one more round of research on Shepherd specifically. I can try to retrieve **his complete TML presentation, the Bastrop fiscal model, the exact 2023 TML Small Town Conference presenter list, and any quantitative examples comparing large-lot versus smaller-lot single-family residential development.** If we can find his residential fiscal-productivity charts, that could give us much stronger third-party support for the Shoreline discussion than merely saying “density is more efficient.”