

To the Editor, Herald Zeitung:

Citizens of New Braunfels and Comal County, help save our area's natural beauty! I began looking for a place to move in 2007 and the beauty, parks, open spaces, and friendliness of Comal County and New Braunfels put this area at the top of the list. At the time, there were about 52,000 people in New Braunfels and 106,000 in Comal County (US census). New Braunfels population is currently estimated to be almost 85,000 and Comal County almost 141,000 now. Several news reports show us as one of the fastest growing areas in the US, so lots of people agree that this is a great place to live.

Unfortunately, that growth is affecting our area's beauty, decrease the amount of open space, and crowd our parks. As Eva Silverfine Ott said in her letter to the editor, there are many ways that our City and County Commissioners can choose to add parks, hiking and biking trails, open space, and aquifer recharge protection areas. The longer we wait to get started on these, (and it takes years to make them happen) the more expensive they will be, the harder to accomplish, and the fewer options there will be available. Many of our surrounding cities and counties have demonstrated what can be done.

If you believe that our area's beauty, open areas, parks, hiking and biking trails, and water availability are important for the people living here and the people that will be moving in, and are willing to commit tax dollars to the effort, I urge you to contact your City and County Commissioners and encourage them to make this a priority. It is very unlikely that much will happen without the dedication of tax dollars to purchase land and conservation easements. There is too much interest in land for new homes and businesses for donations to make the needed impact. From what I have seen, our commissioners are very responsive and will make this a priority if they believe this is what the majority of us want. Making the preservation of the beauty of our area a priority now will mean that in 15 or 20 years people will still want to move here instead of moving out. This area is what they are moving here to get away from.

Richard Bigelow