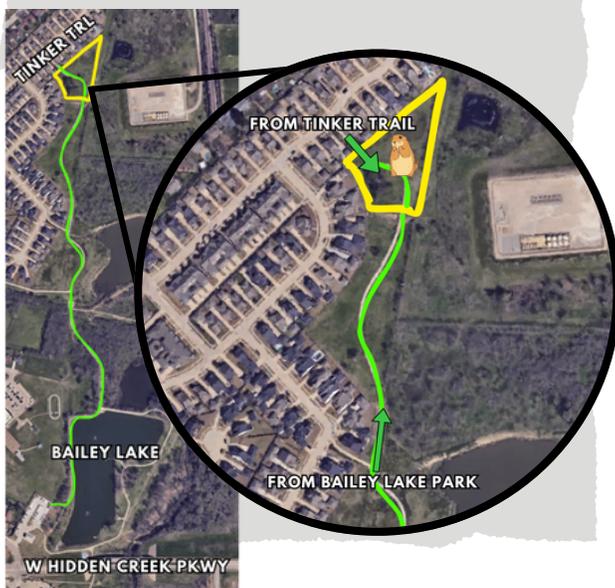




# PRAIRIE DOGS

## TIPS FOR REDUCING HUMAN-PRAIRIE DOG CONFLICTS:

- **Do not give them human food.**  
Not only is it bad for their health, but interacting with them increases the chance that they will lose their natural fear of humans.
- **A leashed dog is a safer dog.**  
Burleson's prairie dog population resides in a city-owned park where it is required to keep your dog on a leash.
- **Keep them out of your yard.**  
Prairie dogs actively clear vegetation so they can see predators from a distance. To force a colony to relocate, establish a visual barrier using fast-growing tall grasses, other vegetation or fencing.



## BENEFITS OF PRAIRIE DOGS

Prairie dogs play an important role in the ecosystem. Through their foraging, prairie dogs affect the redistribution of minerals and nutrients, encourage penetration and retention of moisture, and affect plant species composition. By eating grass, they help maintain grassland habitats by preventing woody shrubs from taking over.

They serve as a food source for many predators and leave vacant burrows for other animals.

## NATURAL HISTORY

- Black-tailed prairie dogs are from the Sciuridae family and are found in isolated populations from Central Texas to just north of the Canadian border.
- Prairie dogs are strictly diurnal animals. They are most active during the cool hours of the day, when they engage in social activities such as visiting and grooming each other as well as feeding on grasses and herbs.
- Black-tailed prairie dogs live in large social colonies and do not migrate. Males will disperse from their home family groups upon maturation but typically stay within the same larger group or immigrate to another nearby colony. Very infrequently, males will attempt to establish a completely new colony.
- Prairie dogs only give birth to one litter per year. The breeding season is mid-March to mid-April, with the young being born four to five weeks later. The size of the litter varies from two to eight young. During May and early June, the young begin to emerge from their burrows.