

FARMERS
BRANCH



WEST SIDE PLAN

history

history

The following is a historical summary of the west side area for Farmers Branch. The intent of this summary is to convey significant events, factors, and land uses that have influenced the west side area. All dates contained herein are historical estimations, based upon best available information.



The Early Days

The first record of Farmers Branch population was made in 1885. At that time the community had 100 residents. After World War II, the community began its period of rapid growth. In 1946, with an estimated population of 800 residents, the town of Farmers Branch was incorporated. The estimated population in 2002 is 27,700.



Downtown Farmers Branch

In 1927, the downtown area of Farmers Branch, near Valley View Lane and Denton Drive, was the western border of the city. At such time when the city was incorporated in 1946, the present day Burlington Northern Railroad was the westernborder of the city.

1924-1932

Electric Interurban Railway Serves Farmers Branch

Electric Interurban Railway Serves Farmers Branch

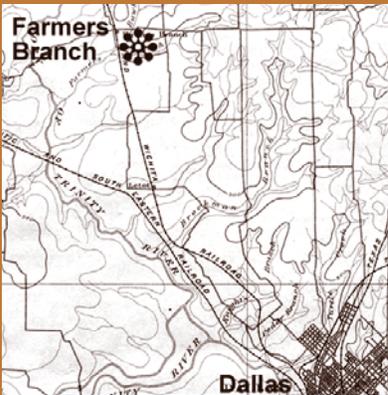
Prior to the City being incorporated in 1946, the Texas Interurban Railway provided electric rail service between Dallas and Denton, including a rail stop in Farmers Branch. The rail line was convenient for business and student commuters to nearby cities, as well as shoppers and persons traveling at leisure to visit friends and family. The rail line operated from 1924 to 1932.

1927

Burlington Northern Railroad is Western Boundary

Annexation of West Side

During 1957, the City of Farmers Branch began incorporating the land bounded by present day Valwood Parkway on the north, the Elm Fork-Trinity River on the west, Joe Field Road (present day Royal Lane) on the south, and the present day Burlington Northern Railroad on the east. The annexation procedures were initiated in response to the aggressive land annexation by nearby cities. The west side area, as it is configured today, was established on March 16, 1959.



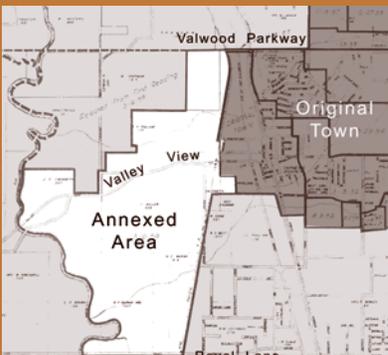
1893 USGS Map

1959

Annexation of West Side

Predominant Land Uses

During the 1960s, the land within the West Side area was predominantly vacant or used for agriculture purposes. The second largest land use within the area was gravel pits and borrows pits as a result of strip-mining operations. A limited number of industrial uses, such as batch or processing plants and landfills, existed within the area. There were also some scattered single-family residences that existed within the area.



Area annexed into Farmers Branch



Gravel mining operation

First Development Plan Adopted

The Development Plan for the Western Portion of Farmers Branch, adopted in 1962, was the first report mentioning western Farmers Branch. The plan focused on the land area generally bounded by IH35E on the east, the Elm-Fork Trinity River on the west, and the corporate limits of the City of Carrollton and City of Dallas on the north and south, respectively. The plan included recommendations to promote and encourage development within the western area of Farmers Branch, and included an access and circulation plan. Land use recommendations included: filling of existing gravel pits; allowing commercial and service uses within the area between IH35E and the railroad line while encouraging industrial uses west of the railroad line; reclaiming floodplain areas; allowing outside storage within reclamation areas; and, using floodplain areas for agriculture, recreation, and open space activities. The plan recommended that no gravel mining or other extraction uses and no metal building construction be allowed.

Major Highway Connects Farmers Branch to Dallas

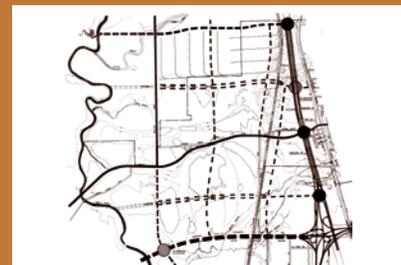
Prior to 1963, U.S. Highway 77 (IH35E) extended from the northern city boundary southward to approximately present day Farmers Branch Lane. During August 1963, the extension of the highway from Farmers Branch Lane to Dallas was completed.



Intersection of Valley View Lane at U.S. Highway 77

1962

First Development Plan Adopted



Thoroughfare plan adopted as a component of 1962 Development Plan

1963

Major Highway Connects Farmers Branch to Dallas

1968

Reconstruction of Valley View Lane Provides Better Connection to West Side Area

Reconstruction of Valley View Lane

Although Valley View Lane existed generally as a two-lane asphalt road prior to 1962, the reconstruction of Valley View Lane during 1968 to its current width, from IH35E westward to the Burlington Northern Railroad, provided for better access from the west side area to Old Farmers Branch.

1970s

Railroads Stimulate Development

Railroads Stimulate Development

The railroad system became a prominent transportation system in the early 1900s throughout Texas, including Farmers Branch. The present day Burlington Northern Railroad line assisted with moving materials extracted from the gravel pits and borrow pits. The existence of the railroad line helped stimulate the development of the West Side business parks within the 1970s and businesses were able to use the railroad line for shipping and receiving supplies and products. The Burlington Northern Railroad line had many names including the Chicago Rock Island & Pacific line.

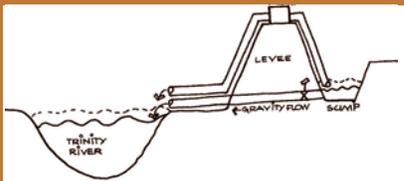


1974

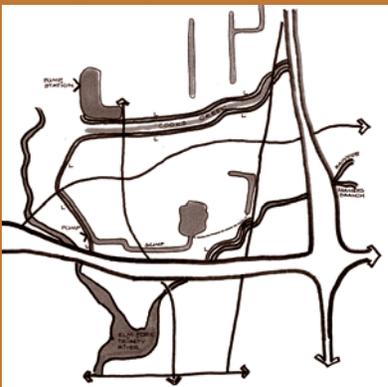
Valwood Improvement Authority is Established

Valwood Improvement Authority Established

Significant development did not occur on the West Side until the threat of flooding was alleviated. Flood mitigation was accomplished with the establishment of the Valwood Improvement Authority (VIA) – formerly known as FB/Carrollton Flood Control District – in 1974, and subsequent construction of levees and sumps completed in 1980 minimized the threat of flooding over approximately 1,100 acres within the district.



Section of the levee/sump system



Levee/sump system as it exists today

DFW Airport Opens

DFW Airport opened on January 13, 1974 providing domestic and international air transportation. Since the Outer Metropolitan Loop (present day IH635/LBJ Freeway) did not exist west of IH35E, the airport was accessible from the West Side area via Valley View Lane and existing highways.

Improvements to the IH35E

Improvements to the IH35E highway system through Farmers Branch were completed in September 1976 resulting in the current configuration of the highway. The West Side area would later develop extensively as industrial uses. The development is largely attributed to the extensive transportation infrastructure, including IH35E and IH635, passing through the West Side area.



Intersection of Valley View Lane and Interstate Highway 35E

First Planned Development District Ordinance Adopted

During November 1977, the City of Farmers Branch rezoned the entire West Side area west of the Burlington Northern Railroad, from "LI" – Light Industrial to Planned Development District No. 22 allowing for light industrial uses and establishing development standards. Although many property owners opposed the rezoning, the City Council believed it was in the best interest of the city to rezone the area to Planned Development District in order to ensure quality development within the area.

1974

DFW Airport Opens

1976

Improvements to Interstate Highway IH35E

1977

First Planned Development District Ordinance Adopted

1977(circa)

Major East-West Freeway Divides West Side Area



Interstate Highway 635 divides the West Side Area

Major East-West Freeway

LBJ Freeway (IH635) was extended westward from IH35E through Farmers Branch during 1977 (circa). The freeway followed the then existing alignment of Forest Lane west of IH35E. The initial phase of roadway construction terminated at the Dallas County/Tarrant County line. Within a few years, the freeway system was eventually extended to DFW Airport and access to the airport became a quick 10 minutes away from the West Side area.

First Industrial Park Develops

During 1979/1980, with the exception of existing businesses along Valley View Lane, the Westwood Business Park (formerly known as the Luna IH635 Business Park), located generally at the northeast corner of Luna Road and Royal Lane, was one of the first industrial park developments within the West Side area and the recently created Planned Development No. 22 zoning district.



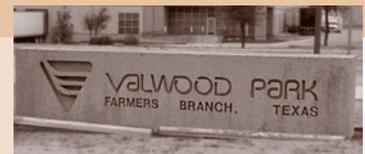
Westwood Business Park entrance sign

1979/1980

Westwood Business Park: First Industrial Park Development within West Side Area

First Planned Development within Levee Protected Area

The Valwood Industrial Park was the City's first comprehensively planned industrial park made possible through the reclaiming of floodplain by the Valwood Improvement Authority. Today, the Industrial Park consists primarily of office and warehouse/distribution centers.



Valwood monument sign

1981

Valwood Industrial Park: First Planned Development within Levee Protected Area

Utilities Stimulate Development within West Side Area

Until 1983, the West Side area, south of Valley View Lane, remained primarily undeveloped due to a lack of utilities servicing the area. Water utilities were then extended southward, generally along the Burlington Northern Railroad to Royal Lane, thus completing a looped water system within the city and stimulating further development.

Comprehensive Plan Adopted

In 1989, the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Farmers Branch was adopted. The Plan provided land use and development recommendations for the West Side area which included: a less automobile dependent development pattern; attractive environmental amenities; encouraged cooperation of area property owners with the City to produce a well-coordinated, attractive setting that addresses area-wide needs and attracts commercial development; and provided for diverse land uses such as commercial mixed-use/residential, general commercial, industrial and open space.

Valley View Lane Reconstructed

The reconstruction of Valley View Lane during 1992 to its current width (four lanes, divided), from the Burlington Northern Railroad to the Elm Fork – Trinity River, provided for better east-west traffic movement through the West Side area. Valley View Lane is secondary to IH635 in providing access to and from Farmers Branch.



Present day Valley View Lane

1983

Utilities Stimulate Development within West Side Area

1989

Comprehensive Plan Adopted



1989 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map

1992

Valley View Lane Reconstructed to Provide Better Access Through West Side Area

1995

Trades, Services, and
Industrial Uses
Establish Presence within
West Side Area

Trades, Services, and Industrial Uses Established

As of 1995, the West Side area was predominantly zoned for industrial, trades, services, and high-density uses. Although 49% of the West Side area was undeveloped, approximately 35% of the developed area was developed as trade, service and industrial uses which translated to 7.3 million square feet of building area as trades and services uses, and 1.7 million square feet of building area as industrial uses.

TIF District Created

On December 21, 1998, a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District, which includes a significant portion of the West Side area generally south of Valley View Lane, was created. The TIF project and financing plan was adopted on August 30, 1999. The purpose of the TIF is to fund the construction of public improvements, including streets, utilities, landscaping, and hike and bike trails, for the West Side of Farmers Branch. The TIF recommended that approximately 80 acres be developed as an urban town center, including a grid pattern street system.

1998

Tax Increment Finance (TIF)
District Created



TIF District Map

Colinas Crossing Becomes Home to i2 Technologies

Colinas Crossing - located on the West Side of Luna Road, south of LBJ Freeway, and north of Royal Lane - began construction of its initial phase of a 75-acre mixed-use corporate development during 1998. The mixed-use development is planned to have 1.5 million square feet of office and hotel space, and restaurants. The first phase of development

consisted of a 6-story office building which would later become home to i2 Technologies world headquarters in late 1999.



Colinas Crossing mixed-use planned development

President George Bush Turnpike (PGBT)

The section of the President George Bush Turnpike, which will traverse the West Side area, is presently being designed. Once completed, the turnpike will be a 30-mile road that will extend from SH-78 in Garland, through Plano, Dallas, and Carrollton, and will connect with Belt Line Road in Irving. The new turnpike will significantly relieve traffic congestion on IH35E and will offer a superior alternative for motorists who now use the most congested freeway in Texas, IH635 (LBJ Freeway). The turnpike interchange at IH635 is currently under construction and the turnpike is scheduled to be completed through Farmers Branch by 2006.

1998

Colinas Crossing Develops and Becomes Home to i2 Technologies

2000

President George Bush Turnpike Construction Underway



Map displaying location of President George Bush Turnpike

2006

President George Bush Turnpike Estimated Completion