

*The West Side of Farmers Branch is poised to develop into a premier community of the Dallas metropolitan area - a community that successfully weaves together commercial, residential and industrial development within a sustainable context. The West Side boasts the advantages of proximity to downtown Dallas, Love Field and the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, as well as excellent accessibility via two interstate freeways and (soon) the President George Bush Turnpike. In addition to its obvious strength of location, the West Side also offers a remarkable natural beauty - creeks and greenbelts traverse the area, multiple lakes accent its landscape, and the expansive peninsula situated at the confluence of Farmers Branch Creek and the Elm Fork of the Trinity River offers some of the most stunning vistas to be found anywhere in North Central Texas.*

*The West Side of Farmers Branch represents the City's greatest prospective asset. The largest concentration of contiguous, undeveloped land in the City is here. The West Side is strategically located in the heart of burgeoning regional growth that is expected to continue through the next few decades. Over the next 20 years, the West Side is projected to attract additional private development of more than \$1 billion in real taxable value alone.*

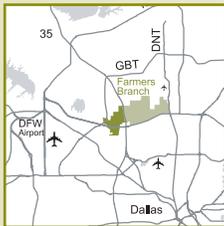
*Not only does the West Side hold great promise to achieve tremendous economic growth, it possesses the potential to offer individuals and families the opportunity to enjoy an urban lifestyle in vital neighborhoods seamlessly connected to employment centers, commercial districts and regional recreational amenities. Convenient access to public transit, including regional light rail service, will further enhance the area's appeal as a highly desirable place to live, work, shop and play.*

*To best ensure the West Side realizes its full potential, it is essential that its development be guided by a vision commensurate with that potential. The West Side Plan provides the City of Farmers Branch a bold vision of a promising future, fertile with innovative ideas but tempered with the values that make Farmers Branch what it is today -- a community.*

*The West Side Plan is the result of several years of public discussion, extensive study and substantial review by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council.*

## Unifying Themes

The West Side Plan is formatted into eight separate chapters addressing topics and issues that tend to overlap to varying degrees, and in some cases, are expressly interdependent. It is where the concepts, principles and strategies intersect that the unifying themes emerge which form the true heart and spirit of the West Side Plan.



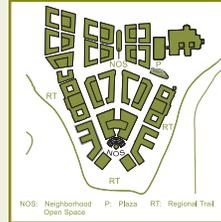
## Regional Opportunities

Farmers Branch is necessarily linked to the region. More than 90 percent of vehicle trips having destinations in Farmers Branch originate elsewhere in the region.

The West Side must be viewed as a cohesive unit - economically, ecologically, and socially - made up of coherent neighborhoods, all of which play a vital role in the region. The West Side Plan advocates a more sustainable community and region where transportation connects and enhances neighborhoods and is environmentally, aesthetically and functionally compatible with land use objectives.

An interconnected regional and local system of trails, paths and walkways will further invigorate Farmers Branch as a "walking city," connecting open spaces and neighborhoods through use of linear green space, and riparian corridors in the greater Dallas area. Transit and roadway improvements will increase the accessibility of West Side.

The West Side's designation as a Texas Enterprise Zone will allow Farmers Branch to offer incentives specifically intended to stimulate job creation and retention, an economic incentive program unique in the north Dallas region. Establishment of the triple freeport tax exemption in Farmers Branch is critical to the ongoing viability of the region-serving commercial business parks located on the West Side.

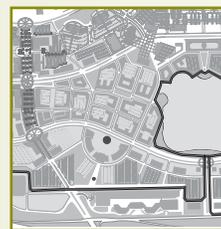


## Open Space & the Natural Environment

Open spaces such as parks and plazas can serve as focal points of neighborhood activity. Every neighborhood should have convenient access to the full complement of public open space from localized neighborhood parks and greens, to community parks, plazas and gathering places, to regional open space facilities such as the Trinity Trails system.

Designing and developing distinctive places can best be achieved when natural surroundings are respected and integrated into the design process. The existing sumps, creeks and lakes should be protected and accentuated through sensitive site planning, building placement, landscaping and other measures. Natural creeks and drainage channels also present excellent opportunities to provide for non-motorized connections between neighborhoods, to places of employment, and to access other forms of transportation.

Preserve critical open space and maximize opportunities for creation of new open space by encouraging compact, land-efficient development patterns.



## Sustainable Neighborhoods

The West Side Plan advocates land development patterns and design concepts intended to reduce sprawl and create neighborhoods. These objectives are to be achieved through a holistic planning approach that joins together the districts, centers, corridors and preserves that comprise the West Side.

One key to establishing more sustainable forms of development is the practice of uniting the roadway design process and the land development process. Street design that is responsive to the type and character of adjoining land uses makes for improved traffic management while supporting development patterns that maximize community investment and contribute to neighborhood character.

Compact, mixed-use development practices reduce infrastructure costs; preserve green spaces; support a broader range of transportation choices; induce urban synergy; and decrease crime. All of these qualities substantially contribute to the establishment of neighborhoods that in turn foster a sense of place and community.

Not all development on the West Side will take place in mixed-use centers. Even in those areas where a more land extensive suburban style of development may occur, the West Side Plan offers guidance to establish a successful environment that keeps these areas walkable, transit accessible, respectful of the natural environment and integrated with neighboring development and the region.



### Planning for People

Recommended policies and strategies are aimed at improving public accessibility to governmental, health and social services; providing a full array of recreational opportunities; and shaping development that is overtly

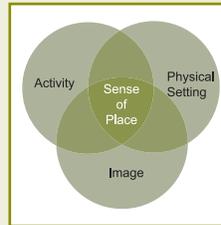
human in scale and orientation.

The establishment of info centers on the West Side will decentralize governmental services, improve public access, and likely reduce costs. Partnering opportunities between the City and faith-based organizations and other community associations will broaden access to governmental, health and social services.

Through a recipe that blends multi-sensory imagery with events and activities in distinctive physical settings, memorable places for persons to experience can be created.

As new development occurs, emphasis should be given to moving people instead of cars and minimizing travel demand by encouraging development practices that allow many more trips to be made by walking and transit. Neighborhood and urban centers should promote safety through pedestrian-friendly street design, traffic calming and crime prevention.

Development of residential units on the West Side is to be limited to a maximum number of 5,000 and located exclusively within the centers. Restricting the number and location of housing units will engender the establishment of complete neighborhoods and better ensure that services and amenities equivalent to those provided to residents elsewhere in Farmers Branch can likewise be provided to residents of the West Side.



### Strengthening Identity

A community's identity is primarily perceived in terms of the type and character of development present in the community and how the community's streetscapes are designed and function.

The future character of the West Side was largely determined through visual preference exercises that built consensus among the public and City advisory bodies. The images that best represent the vision have been incorporated the West Side Plan to bring greater detail and clarity to the vision.

Transforming major vehicular entry points into gateways to the City can strengthen the image and identity of the West Side. Gateways may be created through the conscientious placement of buildings on adjoining properties, use of signage, special landscaping and even the design of the roadway pavement surface itself.

The segments of Luna Road and Mercer Parkway that frame the urban center should be designed as boulevards having a central roadway for fast moving, through traffic and access lanes on either side for local traffic. These and other multi-way boulevards can be designed both for mobility and as memorable spaces that introduce aesthetic beauty and provide pedestrian opportunities.

Future utilities and similar structures should be located underground; incorporated in the overall design of projects to minimize their visual presence; or screened through the use of landscaping and architecturally compatible screening structures.

## Purpose

### The West Side Plan:

**Will amend** and replace portions of the 1989 Comprehensive Plan related to the West Side. The West Side Plan represents the first of a three-phase update of the 1989 Comprehensive Plan based on the three distinct geographical areas of Farmers Branch: West, Central, and East.

**Articulates** the City's vision of a prosperous community that supports an ultimate employment base of approximately 46,000 jobs and a residential population of about 7,500 people.

**Represents** a commitment to Farmers Branch residents and corporate citizens to manage growth and channel it in ways that will enhance the community.

**Establishes** policies, articulates principles and identifies programs that are intended to inform both public and private decision makers, particularly concerning land use, infrastructure, and private investment decisions.

**Is long-range** in its scope, acknowledging issues, setting forth goals, and recommending strategies that will tangibly affect the character of the West Side for the next 20-plus years. The West Side Plan is also dynamic -- it is a document that should be regularly reviewed and amended as necessary to maintain its currency and accurately reflect changes in City policies, programs and priorities.

### Infrastructure

The cost of infrastructure has been perhaps the greatest obstacle to development of the part of the West Side that is presently vacant. In 1998, a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District was created to provide a means to finance critical infrastructure to serve the undeveloped portion of the West Side. Improvements resulting from creation of TIF include a new street and related streetscape improvements.

Substantial progress has been achieved toward the creation of a third, independent water pressure plane adequate to serve West Side needs through build-out.

While there is sufficient sanitary sewer capacity to serve existing development, additional improvements including lift stations must be constructed to provide service to some undeveloped areas of the West Side.

The volume of storm water sump storage must be increased to accommodate significant additional development in certain parts of this area.

