



## LAND USE ELEMENT

### City of Plano COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

#### LAND USE ELEMENT

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## **PLATES**

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Plate 1: Land Use Plan

## **APPENDIX**

### **Land Use Categories**

The Land Use Element and Plan establish categories of land use for the city as well as the general pattern in which these will occur. Unlike the zoning map, it is not parcel specific. The map, together with the policies of the plan, is used to determine the appropriate zoning classifications for individual tracts of land.

### **Residential**

#### Neighborhoods

The City seeks attractive, inclusive and cohesive residential neighborhoods with a mix of housing opportunities. Low, medium and high-density residential uses are not individually designated. Specific proposals regarding housing are included in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

#### Non-Neighborhood

With few large tracts left for residential development, many infill and redevelopment opportunities may not fit the traditional neighborhood context. Because of this, some residential development may occur in non-neighborhood settings such as in mixed-use developments and specialized housing complexes.

### **Service and Production**

#### Downtown Business Government Center

Downtown Plano is becoming a 24-hour mixed-use community. Housing, shops, restaurants, cultural facilities and government offices comprise the major uses. Infill and redevelopment projects should be compatible with the historic character of the area. Urban density and transit-oriented design is encouraged.

#### General Commercial

General Commercial areas are intended to provide a wide range of retail, service, office, light production and research and development uses. Residential adjacency standards must be considered when general commercial areas are near residential areas.

#### Major Corridor Development

This designation applies to three areas that are served by major expressway facilities: the Dallas North Tollway Corridor, President George Bush Turnpike, and the S.H. 121, Corridor. Development in these corridors is expected to

include a mix of commercial, office, and technical production uses. Floor area ratios (FAR) should range from 0.4:1 to 1:1, and heights should be limited by proximity to residential areas. Residential development is generally not appropriate within these corridors, although residential development may be considered along the southern edge of the S.H. 121 corridor. This corridor is wider than the others, but residential uses should not be closer than 1200 feet south of the future center line of S.H. 121.

### Freeway Commercial

The Freeway Commercial category is intended to define the unique character of the U.S. 75 corridor. This corridor includes major retail development including Collin Creek Mall, along with general commercial, entertainment, lodging and office uses. Basic components of the category include 1:1 floor area ratios and a 20 story maximum height limit. Lower FAR's and maximum heights are recommended for areas located within 500 feet of residential areas.

### Major Commercial

Major commercial centers may include malls and large shopping centers anchored by department stores, along with specialty shops, restaurants, theaters, offices and other uses. These centers serve both a local and regional population, and are located along regional thoroughfares. Major commercial centers usually contain 500,000 square feet plus of floor area on sites of 50 acres or more. Multi-story buildings with an overall FAR of up to 1:1 may be appropriate in conjunction with retail development.

### Community Commercial

Community commercial centers generally serve a neighborhood area of three to five miles, and include department or discount stores, grocery stores, specialty shops and restaurants along with office uses. These centers are located on sites 15 to 35 acres in size along regional expressways or at intersections of major arterial streets. Typical FAR's are less than 0.4:1. Two or three corners may be developed at intersections designated as community commercial centers on the land use plan.

### Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood commercial centers are intended to serve adjacent residential neighborhoods, and include grocery stores, drugstores and small retail and service uses. These centers serve a one to one and one-half mile radius and contain 100,000 to 150,000 square feet of floor area (at a rate of 30 square feet per resident of the service area). They require a site of 10 to 15 acres, and development intensity less than 0.3:1 FAR.

Neighborhood commercial centers are located at the intersections of major arterial streets. One or two corners may develop with commercial uses at intersections designated as a neighborhood commercial center on the Land Use Plan, based on the size and population of the service area.

The population of some areas of Plano will not support a typical neighborhood commercial center, and smaller neighborhood convenience centers may be appropriate for such areas. Neighborhood convenience centers contain a convenience store with gas pumps and small shops, with total retail space less than 25,000 square feet. Sites are less than five acres, yet they are larger than a single corner convenience store. Neighborhood commercial centers provide an option for partially developed retail corners where there is little chance of additional retail development, and the remainder property is being converted to another use.

### Office

The office categories include a variety of employment uses, including office towers, medical centers, corporate campuses and small neighborhood offices. There are three categories of office development designated on the Land Use Plan – High Intensity Office, Medium Intensity Office and Low Intensity Office. High Intensity Office should include offices with FAR's up to 1:1 and building heights up to 12 stories. Medium Intensity Office areas should include development up to 0.75:1 FAR and eight story building heights. Low Intensity Office development serves local needs and heights are typically less than four stories with FAR's less than 0.4:1.

### Light Industrial

The light industrial category includes a variety of industries such as research facilities, assembly or production operations, warehousing and associated administrative offices. Industrial development is limited to a 0.5:1 FAR and a maximum building height of four stories. Light industrial and associated development is appropriate in areas with access to the arterial street system and, where possible, access to the railroad system. Light industrial development is most appropriate in industrial parks or other suitable planned settings.

### Research/Technology Center (RT)

The Research/Technology Center area provides for low-density office, research and development facilities, and limited assembly operations. It is intended to attract high technology businesses similar to those currently in operation south of the President George Bush Turnpike. This area is intended to accommodate multiple users in a campus environment. Warehousing is planned to serve a supporting role in the RT area. Warehousing should generally be an accessory use to limited assembly operation and office/showroom facilities.

### Public and Semi Public (PSP)

The public and semi-public category includes a wide range of public and private uses such as colleges and universities, public and private schools, golf courses, country clubs and large private open spaces. Locations should be provided for institutional and public uses that are appropriate for the intensity and character of each.

### Parks and Recreation (P)

The parks and recreation category includes major public open spaces as well as parks and recreation facilities serving the community. Included are floodplain areas to be preserved such as major parks, linear parks, athletic complexes and City-owned golf courses.

### **Special Areas**

There are several major transportation and land use corridors throughout the City. The four primary corridors are: U.S. 75, Plano Parkway/President George Bush Turnpike, Dallas North Tollway and S.H. 121. Spring Creek Parkway and Preston Road serve as secondary corridors. Legacy and Spring Creekwalk are two other unique land use areas in Plano. Highly visible, these corridors serve as activity centers within the City.

## 2 Land Use

### 2.1 Introduction



Figure 1 - Legacy Town Center

#### **Purpose**

This Land Use Element analyzes land use and development patterns occurring in the City today, provides a general guide for the development and use of all land within the City of Plano, and establishes a vision for the City's future land use patterns. This text is supported by the Land Use Plan, which provides a graphical representation of the City's objectives regarding land use.

#### **Major Issues**

As Plano continues its transition from a developing to a developed city and from an outer tier to a first tier suburb, policies and land uses must be adapted to address these changing conditions. Despite the fact that much of Plano's residential land has been developed, there are a number of

issues related to land use that warrants policy discussion. The Dallas-Forth Worth Metroplex is projected to continue to grow quite rapidly - adding three million people by 2030. Much of this growth will likely take place in cities on the urban fringe. However, Plano should play a leadership role in assuming some of this growth and searching for strategies that can help mitigate impacts, such as road congestion and air and water pollution, as well as to improve the quality of life for Plano's citizens. This will require housing outside of traditional neighborhood areas, redevelopment, urban centers and new and likely denser housing types. It is essential to accommodate this growth while retaining Plano's basic development pattern and character.

Preserving suitable, well located land for economic development is important to Plano's long term viability. Although it may seem expedient to convert land currently undeveloped and zoned for nonresidential use for residential development, properties in major corridors and employment centers should generally be reserved for employment generating uses. The limited availability of undeveloped land will require that its future development is carefully aligned with the City's economic development objectives.

This document addresses ways that Plano can maintain and enhance its position in the region as well as adapt to changing conditions. Striking a balance between competing demands and accommodating some of the population growth projected for the region will be a challenge for the City. This document addresses ways that Plano can maintain and enhance its position in the region as well as adapt to changing conditions. Plano's ability to effectively address infill development and redevelopment will also become increasingly important.

## **MAJOR THEMES**

Three major themes are used throughout the Comprehensive Plan: Livable City, City of Organized Development, and City in Transition. These themes are used here to organize land use strategies according to various goals. The first theme, "LivableCity", addresses issues that impact the sustainability of the city as it relates to Plano remaining an attractive place to live and work. "City of Organized Development" considers existing and future land use patterns. "City in Transition" focuses on the changing regional context, technology and similar influences on Plano's future. These

themes are used to analyze current and future land use needs for the city based on current conditions and trends.

### **Theme I - Livable City**

Quality of life is one of the top priorities of the City of Plano's planning efforts. A careful balance of land use activities helps create a sustainable physical environment which, in turn, enhances the daily lives of those who live and work in Plano. This theme establishes ways in which the city will maintain its livability by effectively integrating daily activities - residence, work, education, culture and leisure - into a diverse environment.

### **Theme II - City of Organized Development**

Plano has experienced significant growth over the past three decades but today that growth is leveling off. The City has relied on a comprehensive planning strategy, supported by the future land use plan, to guide this growth and its physical arrangement. This ongoing process of assessing needs, setting objectives, implementing programs and monitoring progress has resulted in an organized land use pattern. This section examines how existing and future development patterns can be used to further enhance the community.

### **Theme III – City in Transition**

For many years Plano has been a “developing” community and its planning efforts have been primarily focused on addressing issues related to this new growth. Now that the majority of the City’s development and infrastructure is in place, infill development, redevelopment and revitalization are becoming the City’s primary opportunities for new development. In its new role as an inner tier suburb, the City is also seeing new types of development, including mixed use and higher density projects such as LegacyTownCenter. This theme examines factors contributing to and resulting from the transition to a maturing city.

#### **Key Factors**

Key factors have been identified for each of the major themes. The discussion of these factors in each section will further explain the major themes as well as provide a basis for the objectives and strategies outlined for each theme.

## **2.2 Theme I - Livable City**

### **Regional and Local Changes**

As noted earlier, Plano is located in one of the fastest growing regions and counties in the country. The population of the DFW area is projected to grow by three million by 2030. Collin County, with Plano and rapidly developing cities such as Allen, Frisco, and McKinney, is going to be home to a major portion of this growth. Between 1990 and 2000, Collin County increased in population by over eight percent annually, reaching a total of 491,675 persons.

Forecasts for Collin County project more than 1.1 million residents by 2030.

Despite the limited availability of raw land, Plano’s location and multitude of assets - including the availability of mass transit, proximity to post-secondary educational institutions and abundant employment opportunities - will continue to make it a very desirable place to live and work. As regional growth and development proceeds Plano must continue to work with neighboring cities to address land use, transportation, environmental issues and other matters of mutual concern.

#### **Mobility**

Quality of life is heavily influenced by the level of local and regional mobility. For many years Plano has benefited from a very efficient roadway system that has made it easy to travel within the City and to make connections to other cities in the region. Projected local and regional growth, coupled with limited opportunities to expand the roadway system, will place increase interdependence between land use and transportation.

Expanded employment opportunities through economic development can actually have a positive impact on mobility. More Plano residents can travel shorter distances to and from work and wide array of shopping, dining, and entertainment establishments. Persons living in other cities and working in Plano can also travel in the opposite direction of the primary traffic flow during peak hours.

### **Environmental Impacts**

The City of Plano values the environment and actively seeks ways to enhance the quality of life by improving air quality as well as protecting and conserving water resources. Air pollution comes from many sources including factories, power plants, dry cleaners, cars, buses, trucks and even windblown dust and wildfires. Because it is diffused, air quality is a concern that impacts all residents in the DFW region. This pollution can threaten the health of human beings, trees, lakes, crops, and animals, as well as damage the ozone layer and buildings. Under the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates air pollution for the region as a whole.

Water pollution impacts the use of water for drinking, household needs, recreation, fishing, transportation and commerce. Because of this, water quality is a concern shared by many cities in the Metroplex. Water quality is affected by the design and layout of development. Plano's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances have recently been updated to include storm water management practices and additional updates may be necessary in the future.

Water is supplied to Plano and many other cities in the region by the North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD). However, each city is responsible for implementing its own policies governing local water consumption. Contracts with the water district are often structured so that cities must commit to purchasing a set amount of water, which provides little financial incentive for water conservation. At the same time, NTMWD must have a dependable return on investment in order to meet the current and future needs of the

cities it serves. The district must cover the costs of its fixed assets and develop new water resources for its growing customer base. This would not be possible with fluctuating revenues. Therefore, NTMWD and its member cities will need to continue exploring alternatives that encourage water conservation without inhibiting system maintenance, upgrades, and capacity increases.

The availability of natural resources will have an increased impact on the ability of the region and individual cities to support livability. It will become increasingly incumbent upon the City of Plano to facilitate the efficient use of water, energy, and other critical resources. The availability of natural resources also impacts building design and construction materials. Properly formulated codes and ordinances can support the use of energy efficient and sustainable development and construction practices while promoting quality and cost effectiveness.

### **Objectives for Theme I – Livable City**

- **Objective A.1** Provide for local land use strategies that reflect changing regional and local trends and conditions.
- **Objective A.2** Continue to implement development policies that ensure the protection of the environment and the supply of essential resources.

### **Strategies for Theme I – Livable City**

- **Strategy A.1** Regularly monitor, review, and update the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and related documents to ensure their effectiveness in meeting

the needs of the community. Update the Land Use and Transportation Elements every three years.

- **Strategy A.2** Where possible, zone property and configure development to provide complementary uses and to foster good connections between them using a combination of streets, trails, and sidewalks for vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation.
- **Strategy A.3** Regularly monitor development and building regulations to ensure that they provide for the efficient use of natural resources and promote environmental quality. When possible, incorporate sustainable building and design practices into development regulations.
- **Strategy A.4** Continue to work with adjacent cities and regional agencies to develop land use patterns that promote enhanced regional mobility.

## 2.3 Theme II - City of Organized Development

### Local Context

Today, much of the residentially zoned land in Plano is developed and there are few large undeveloped properties of any type remaining in the City. As Plano matures, the focus of development is shifting towards infill tracts that have been passed over for development for various reasons, as well as the redevelopment of under-performing and obsolete properties.

Careful consideration should be given to compatibility when new uses are being introduced into developed areas. This is

especially true when nonresidential uses are developed in close proximity to residential uses. The City currently has zoning standards for certain types of activities when placed in proximity to residential districts (residential adjacency standards). These standards should be monitored regularly to ensure that they provide the desired guidance for infill development.

### Land Use Absorption

Plano experienced development at an extremely rapid pace during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Today, over 95 percent of the land zoned for residential use in the City has been developed. Further residential development is expected over the next few years, albeit at a slower rate. Retail and office development typically trail residential because these uses are generally dependent on the number of households within a certain distance. Plano still has a significant amount of nonresidential land available for development. In fact, only about 60 percent of “Commercial” land has been developed to date. As this land is absorbed, it will be important to monitor any shifts in the land use mix as this information will be a key indicator of the need for City services including the provision of parks and open space. (The Land Use Absorption Table can be found in the appendix).

### Variety of Land Uses Opportunities

A community’s land use system should accommodate a wide range of opportunities for its existing and future residents. Sometimes, efforts to create more pleasant and appealing surroundings can result in a narrow range of land uses that actually detract from the “Livable City” concept. For

example, opportunities for persons of various ages and life styles to live in a community can be hampered by limited the range of housing types permitted in a city. In addition, residents require the availability of a broad range of services. Some of these services, such as automobile repair, are less than attractive and appealing than others and there is a tendency to reduce or isolate their locations.

Plano's Zoning Ordinance and Atlas generally provides for a broad range of residential and nonresidential uses. The ordinance also includes development standards that reduce the impacts of certain uses on their surroundings. The Residential Adjacency Standards are a good example of this approach. As Plano reaches full development, there will be more situations in which uses that traditional considered to be less desirable, are more desirable uses. It will be important for the City to find ways to enhance the transitions between uses as opposed to reducing the opportunities for uses that are necessary to serve the needs of Plano residents.

### **Balanced, Consistent Zoning\***

Plano's land use pattern is generally organized around a system of major, east-west and north-south thoroughfares spaced at one mile intervals. Each one square mile of land area has developed as a neighborhood with low density single-family housing surrounding an elementary school and city park. The outer edges of the neighborhoods often include higher density housing with direct access to the major thoroughfares. Most of the corners of the intersections of the thoroughfares are zoned for retail uses.

(This typical neighborhood format is described in more detail in the Housing Element.)

Although this arrangement is very efficient and easy to navigate, it has contributed to a zoning imbalance. The City currently has more land zoned for retail and office uses than is likely to be supported by the market over time. Much of this land is located at major intersections. In the past, all four corners at many of these intersections were zoned for some form of retail or commercial use. This resulted in the development of almost 60 square feet of retail per capita (approximately three times the national average). As new retail centers are developed in surrounding cities, this amount of retail can no longer be fully supported and some retail facilities have become vacant or underused. It is unlikely that the City will need to rezone additional property for retail use unless a certain market area is clearly lacking locations for shopping and service facilities.

Economic conditions and the development market trends sometimes change quickly, resulting in an imbalance in the amount of land for a given use. Periodic monitoring of development activity and the zoning classifications of remaining undeveloped properties assists the City in projecting and preparing for future land use needs. It will be necessary to convert some of the undeveloped or under-producing retail properties to other uses. While residential development may be difficult to accommodate because of the limited size of these parcels (as defined in the Housing Element), it may be possible to create mixed-use environments including mutually supportive uses such as residential and neighborhood retail or office.

As Plano matures, some zoning imbalances are becoming more apparent. As the supply of undeveloped land diminishes, properties that were previously overlooked are being considered for development. Many of these properties will require rezoning to accommodate development supported by the market. Some of these sites, because of their size, shape, location, and/or access will not be well suited for their proposed uses. The City will have to make difficult decisions regarding the long-term use of these “leftover” tracts.

*\*Please refer to Policy Statement No. 2.0 for detailed strategies on addressing this issue.*

### **Coordination with Public Infrastructure, Facilities and Services**

Plano’s development pattern is carefully intertwined with its system of public infrastructure, facilities and services. As noted previously, most neighborhoods are organized around an elementary school and neighborhood park.

The City has also made a concerted effort to acquire flood plains and adjacent properties to create an elaborate system of greenbelts, hike and bike trails, and parks of various sizes and types. Other facilities such as libraries, recreation centers, fire stations, and police stations are carefully located to serve efficient, effective service to Plano residents and businesses. (For more information, see the Parks and Recreation and Public Services and Facilities Elements.)



Figure 2 - Clearview Park -  
Example of neighborhood park

Changes to the City’s development pattern can impact to the public sector’s ability to provide the level of services that its citizens have come to expect. They can even affect health safety, and welfare. For instance, adding residential units to an area may impact the ability of the Police and Fire Departments to provide adequate and timely emergency services. Similar issues arise in regard to roadways, utilities, and related public infrastructure. High intensity nonresidential uses typically generate more traffic trips than low intensity residential areas. On the other hand residential uses sometimes have a greater impact on utility requirements like sanitary sewer. (See Utilities Element.) Therefore, land use and development decisions must be carefully coordinated with the public sector’s ability to provide public infrastructure, facilities and services in an orderly and timely fashion.

### **Continuous Planning Process**

The City's planning program is necessarily an ongoing and cyclical process of assessing needs, setting goals, implementing programs, and monitoring progress. The Land Use and Transportation Elements are regularly updated. An extensive effort to identify and prioritize key issues is an integral part of the plan revision process, as is community participation and regional coordination. This effort includes public meetings to solicit concerns and ideas from the citizens. Modifications to the Land Use Element often lead to changes in development review procedures, zoning, and other City policies. The Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Master Facilities Plan, and the Community Investment Program (CIP) are examples of "next step" documents and are critical to the success of the City's planning and development process. The Comprehensive Plan should continue to be utilized for general guidance for policy formulation in these areas.

### **Objectives for Theme II – City of Organized Development**

- **Objective B.1** Ensure that the provision of City infrastructure, facilities and services is coordinated with development and maintained or modified as needed to meet required service levels and the needs of a changing population.
  - **Objective B.2** Provide for a balanced and efficient arrangement of Plano's land resources to accommodate housing, employment, shopping, entertainment, and recreation.
  - **Objective B.3** Ensure land use compatibility by grouping complementary land use activities, especially those that are mutually supportive, and continuing to implement policies that minimize the impact of potentially incompatible activities.
- ### **Strategies for Theme II – City of Organized Development**
- **Strategy B.1** Maintain the Master Facilities Plan as the interdepartmental guide to coordinate the planning, development and redevelopment of City of Plano facilities in concert with changing community needs and expectations. Coordinate the Community Investment Program (CIP) process with the objectives in the Master Facilities Plan.
  - **Strategy B.2** Annually formulate and update a five-year CIP based on the Comprehensive Plan. Review annual updates to the CIP with the Planning & Zoning Commission.
  - **Strategy B.3** Consider requests for rezoning areas planned or zoned for nonresidential use to residential districts based on the guidelines included in Policy Statement 2.0.
  - **Strategy B.4** Use Plano's Comprehensive Plan, particularly the Land Use Plan, and related policies,

to guide the zoning of properties in a manner that minimizes incompatibilities between uses.

- **Strategy B.5** Regularly meet with City departments and other local government entities to ensure development and redevelopment within the City can be supported with the necessary facilities and services
- **Strategy B.6** Make amendments to the Zoning Ordinance (text and atlas) based on the strategies of the Comprehensive Plan. This consideration should include evaluation of the following:
  - Intent of the plan in its entirety;
  - Physical character of the property affected;
  - Adequacy of public facilities (existing and proposed); and
  - Relationship to adjacent land uses (existing and proposed).

For detailed description of land use categories and distribution of land by zoning designation, please refer to the 'Appendix'.

## 2.4 Theme III - City in Transition

Cities evolve over time and as they do new challenges and opportunities emerge. Plano developed very rapidly during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Today that growth is slowing and the City is challenged with some aging and dated development.



Figure 3 - Abandoned anchor within retail center

The City also has an overabundance of retail development that, in some cases, is struggling. The long-term vitality of the City will depend on its ability to address issues such as these in a timely and appropriate manner.

In 1998, the City initiated a Neighborhood Planning Program focused on older, at-risk neighborhoods. This program creates partnerships with residents to develop strategies for improving and sustaining their neighborhoods. Another project that is helping the City gracefully evolve is the enhancement of downtown Plano and the older neighborhoods surrounding it. This example is illustrative of both historic preservation and redevelopment. The original business core and the Haggard Park neighborhood have been designated as Heritage Resource Districts. Compatible mixed-use projects, Eastside Village I and II, have been developed alongside older downtown structures. New single-family homes have also been constructed in Haggard Park and in the Douglass Community. These neighborhood planning and revitalization efforts have contributed to extensive improvements to the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. These range from investment in infrastructure to

loans and grants for the rehabilitation of private homes. Funds for the latter often originate from federal programs. While these exact strategies are not appropriate for all areas of Plano, the City should continue to ensure that policies and regulations support redevelopment efforts.

The City's workforce housing initiative focuses additional attention on the need to preserve and enhance Plano's older housing stock and neighborhoods, in addition to creating viable housing options within a reasonable driving distance of Plano's employment centers. The relationship between land uses should be balanced and mutually supportive. Plano's housing stock must be varied enough to support a broad range of income levels and household preferences. This will help to ensure that the supply of housing continues to accommodate the needs of those employed by local businesses. Most of Plano's more affordable housing stock is comprised of older homes (25 years or older); these are not always compatible with the expectations of modern buyers. Further, these homes are typically less energy efficient than newer homes and more costly to maintain. It is important that Plano continue with proactive strategies to ensure the health of neighborhoods while providing for a wide range of housing options within the City.

### **Changing Demographics**



Figure 4 - Plano businesses serve diverse populations

As the City matures, its population and employment characteristics are changing. Plano's population and employment are not only growing in number but also in diversity. Factors such as age, ethnicity, culture, and income directly impact the types of public and private services and facilities which a community must provide to its residents and workforce. The 2005 ACS data suggests continued significant growth among minority populations in Plano. Hispanic and Asian sectors have grown significantly in recent years.

The white population now represents approximately 65% of Plano's population compared to almost 85% in 1990. As Plano becomes a more diverse community of different backgrounds and cultures, it will need to offer a wider range of public and private services and programs. Joint efforts with the school districts and other entities will be necessary to celebrate and take advantage of Plano's diversity.

Plano's population is also aging; the population over age 65 was approximately 16,000 at the time of the 2005 American Community Survey (ACS) census and is expected to more than double by 2020 (to a projected 40,000 residents). This will have a impact on Plano's housing requirements and land use demands. Currently Plano's Zoning Ordinance provides for a range of senior housing options in several district categories. It also includes reduced requirements for parking, dwelling size, and similar accommodations based on the actual needs of senior residents. The City should also encourage the development of senior housing in urban centers which can provide a variety of services within walking distance.

### **Economic Development**

In the 1980s Plano began to attract a number of corporate citizens and emerge as an employment center. Today, Plano has a significant amount of office development in the Legacy area, along U.S. Highway 75 and within the Plano Parkway/President George Bush Turnpike (S.H. 190) corridor (including the Research/Technology Crossroads area). There are about 125,000 jobs in Plano and recent employment data indicates that number is expected to grow to approximately 167,000 by 2025.

Plano's economy also has a significant retail and service sector component. New competition from retail development is emerging in outer tier suburbs and Plano is challenged with maintaining its retail market share. The Tri-City Retail study, completed in 2003, explored this issue in-depth and identified challenges such as municipal planning practices which led to retail over-zoning; rapidly changing retail

formats (nationally and regionally); and dramatic shifts in demographic characteristics, particularly age and ethnicity. Continued success of the City's retail sector will depend on its ability to address these issues appropriately.

Plano has four regional development corridors running through it or along its boundaries (S.H. 121, U.S. 75, the Bush Turnpike, and the Dallas North Tollway). These are generally comprised of the expressways themselves, two parallel arterial streets, and the land in between. Properties in these corridors tend to be highly visible, readily accessible, and suitable for many types of commercial uses. The resulting land areas are typically adequate to provide flexibility in the design and orientation of development and therefore a variety of uses are appropriate. However, the noise and traffic generated by major expressways are often not conducive to residential uses.



Figure 5 - Undeveloped land along Dallas North Tollway

Two other major areas (Legacy and Research/Technology Crossroads) in northwest in southeast Plano combine with the four regional development corridors to comprise Plano's primary bases for economic development. A significant

portion of Plano's undeveloped land also lies within these six areas. Because of this and the current demand for residential development, the City has fielded a number of requests to convert properties in these locations to residential use. It is important for the City to retain an adequate supply of undeveloped nonresidential land for future economic development opportunities. Therefore residential rezoning in these prime economic development bases is generally not recommended. Accommodating immediate development opportunities is not an adequate reason alone for rezoning nonresidential properties for residential purposes.

### **Development Trends**

Changes in business operations and marketing approaches often affect development and land use patterns. This is particularly evident in the retail industry where major grocery, appliance, computer, discount department, and home improvement chains are building stores in locations where they can attract business from regional or community-wide service areas. In the past, this type of store typically anchored a small- to medium-sized neighborhood shopping center. Smaller retail stores and shops in these same centers often depend on anchor stores to attract customers. As these stores move to more regionally accessible locations, the resulting vacant spaces can be hard to fill. Creative strategies for filling these vacant "big-box" stores will be important to continued success of smaller retail centers. In some cases, the lack of demand and market saturation may make it necessary to redevelop these properties for different uses that cannot be accommodated by the current building configuration.

Another development trend that warrants discussion is the concept of "new urbanism." Proponents of new urbanism suggest that



Figure 6 - Legacy Town Center North

a return to more traditional forms of urban development could provide better living environments. Plano, like most suburbs, predominantly consists of a low-density, automobile-oriented development pattern. However, the success of urban centers in Downtown Plano and the Legacy Town Center has demonstrated that new urbanist concepts can be successfully incorporated into the City.

The Urban Centers Study states that development of additional urban centers may be appropriate in a few additional locations in Plano. These compact, mixed use environments can not only increase the variety of land uses within the City, but can support additional mass transit service and reduce automobile traffic. However, this style of development should not be used merely as a means of gaining additional density and zoning flexibility. This Study defines the key characteristics and design elements of urban centers and the site attributes that should be used in finding suitable locations for this form of development. True urban centers should provide opportunities for residence, employment, shopping, and entertainment in a pedestrian oriented neighborhood

environment. Such centers will typically require fifty acres or more to create a successful, balanced development.

The development community is increasingly interested in mixed-use developments. Plano currently has more retail uses that can be supported in the long-term and some existing retail centers are experiencing difficulties. In recent years, the City has received inquiries and some rezoning applications for mixed-use projects on properties that are currently zoned for nonresidential use. The inclusion of residential and nonresidential uses on the same site does not constitute mixed-use development. A typical in-line shopping center or big box store with parking in front and apartments in the rear connected by a street or driveway is more representative of two separate projects sharing a common property line. The proposed apartments or other forms of residence should be more than just “filler” for the portion of the property that cannot be marketed for retail use. Instead, the vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, parking configuration, building layout, and architectural design should all be integrated in a manner that creates a single development project.

In some cases, the subject sites may be appropriate for urban center development in accordance with the criteria established in the Urban Centers Study. In other cases, the size, location, and other factors may make such sites appropriate for a condensed mixed-use development that does not result in a fully functional neighborhood like an urban center. Mixed-use development outside the context of an urban center should occur only when there is reasonable evidence to indicate that development of the site for nonresidential uses would not add to

current market saturation and the proposed uses are integrated into a cohesive development plan.

Plano is also becoming a major medical center within the Dallas/Fort Worth region. With three major hospitals and another under



Figure 7 - Presbyterian Hospital of Plano

construction, medical services are becoming a major component of the City's economy. This emerging trend will ensure that Plano's residents have access to excellent health care and expand the City's employment base.

### **Changing Technology**

Technological advances have greatly impacted the design and development of cities over the decades. The most obvious example is the automobile, which has affected both the overall development of cities and the design of individual site plans and subdivision plats. Other technological advances have been more subtle.

Today, advances in telecommunications and information technology are reinventing the way we live, work, and play, making it possible for more Americans to work, shop, and even socialize at home. This in turn impacts the form of our cities and service needs. For example, the ability to telecommute allows residents to reduce trips to and from work and in turn, helps reduce traffic congestion and air pollution. These technological advances have facilitated an increased number of home-based businesses.

Home-based businesses could greatly benefit the viability of Plano's neighborhoods by increasing the "daytime population" and, in effect, helping deter crime. Plano should work to ensure that its codes and ordinances accommodate home-based businesses, without compromising the character and integrity of its neighborhoods. (The Technology Element of the Comprehensive Plan contains a more detailed description of this issue).

### **Objectives for Theme III – City in Transition**

- **Objective C.1** Ensure continued vitality of existing residential neighborhoods throughout the City.

- **Objective C.2** Ensure that zoning and development regulations are consistent with changing land use needs
- **Objective C.3** Ensure development standards and zoning are consistent with city-wide goals established in other policy documents, such as sustainability, workforce housing, economic development and urban centers.
- **Objective C.4** Encourage continued growth of Plano's economy by supporting appropriate infill and redevelopment initiatives.

adversely impact the planned land use pattern for the surrounding area.

- p. A plan that provides for the integration of vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, parking, building location, and architectural design into a cohesive development.

**Strategies for Theme III – City in Transition**

- **Strategy C.1** Utilize the Neighborhood Planning Program and other initiatives to facilitate the stabilization of existing neighborhoods. Continue to evaluate and update the program as needed to ensure its success as a planning tool.
- **Strategy C.2** Consider the use of creative and alternative suburban land use concepts, including mixed-use development in appropriate infill and redevelopment areas of the City. Review requests to rezone properties for mixed-use development in accordance with the following:
  - o. Finding that the conversion of nonresidential property for residential or another nonresidential use would not
- **Strategy C.3** Regularly monitor and report on changing population and employment characteristics to determine if public and private services and facilities are consistent with needs and expectations of the community. Make adjustments to applicable ordinances, policies, and programs as needed to address these changes.
- **Strategy C.4** Where appropriate, support opportunities and efforts to develop and redevelop properties in ways that are consistent with established policy goals, such as enhancing the local economy, providing jobs to Plano residents, and improving the City's tax base.
- **Strategy C.5** Work with developers to ensure that infill and redevelopment occur in appropriate locations. In particular, the location and design of urban centers should be consistent with the guidelines established by the Urban Centers Study.
- **Strategy C.6** Regularly monitor zoning, development and building regulations to ensure that they do not inadvertently deter redevelopment or prevent business relocation or expansion.

- **Strategy C.7** Preserve land for future employment generating opportunities, particularly within major development corridors and business parks..
- **Strategy C.8** Continue to identify and consider initiatives for Plano's existing urban centers in terms of their impact on the viability of these locations for residential, employment, entertainment and cultural activities.
- **Strategy C.9** Develop and implement specific initiatives to encourage infill and redevelopment. These initiatives should seek to promote land use compatibility and connectivity especially between residential and nonresidential uses.
- **Strategy C.10** Conduct periodic evaluations of the changing demographics, market trends, and regional influences and determine their potential impacts on infrastructure and facilities.
- **Strategy C.11** Monitor and evaluate growth in Plano's population and employment and changes in population characteristics to determine their impact on service and facility requirements.

## 2.5 2012 Interim Amendment Redevelopment and Undeveloped Land Policies

Since 2007, the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council have been asked to consider approval of requests to rezone land located within the city's expressway corridors and major employment areas to allow for additional

residential development. City policies regarding undeveloped land in the Comprehensive Plan were written from 2004 to 2009 and encouraged preservation of land within the expressway corridors and major employment areas for economic development and employment opportunities. Since that time, numerous requests to rezone land for additional housing has challenged the relevance of the current policies and prompted a study starting in the fall of 2010 to determine if changes were necessary to the policies. The results of this study and discussions with the Council and the Commission produced six recommendations regarding undeveloped land and redevelopment. The recommendations with supporting explanations are found in the following text.

1. All residential rezoning requests should be evaluated to determine the impact on infrastructure, public safety response, school capacity, and access to and availability of amenities and services.
2. Isolated residential development should not be permitted; residential rezoning requests need to establish a complete new neighborhood or expand an existing neighborhood or an urban mixed-use center. Mid-rise multifamily development (5 to 12 stories) and special needs housing (i.e. senior housing) could be an exception if the surrounding land use is compatible.
3. The 1,200-foot setback for residential uses from the centerline of State Highway 121 should be retained, and applied to the Dallas North Tollway, State Highway 190/President Bush Turnpike, and U.S. Highway 75. Factors including topography, creeks,

vegetation, and existing development patterns should be considered in applying this standard.

districts where designated as appropriate in the Comprehensive Plan.

4. No new low-rise multifamily development less than five stories in height should be allowed south of Windhaven Parkway, along the Dallas North Tollway between Communications Parkway and Parkwood Boulevard. However, mid-rise multifamily development (5 to 12 stories) may be considered by specific use permit (SUP) in this corridor.
5. New multifamily zoning should require a minimum density of 40 dwelling units per acre on the project site. Phased development should have a minimum average density of 40 dwelling units per acre. However, no phase having less than 40 units per acre may be constructed, unless preceded by or concurrently built with a phase which maintains the minimum 40 dwelling units for the overall project. Additionally, mid-rise multifamily development and neighborhood mixed-use zoning districts could be exceptions to this minimum density requirement.
6. Establish two new zoning districts - an urban mixed-use district and neighborhood mixed-use district. An option to allow mid-rise residential buildings (5 to 12 stories) by specific use permit should be available in major corridors (State Highway 121, Dallas North Tollway, State Highway 190/President Bush Turnpike, and U.S. Highway 75) and in urban mixed-use

