

MONITORING

It is imperative that the City has a method to make sure progress is being made toward achieving the forwardDallas! goals. A monitoring program can provide an early warning system if goals are not being met. It also can alert the City to early successes, providing valuable input for achieving the Vision's goals. ForwardDallas! includes a way to measure progress on its Vision and determine if its policies are helping achieve that Vision by getting feedback from both citizens and policymakers. This monitoring program has two components—implementation monitoring and performance monitoring.

Implementation Monitoring

Public agencies, neighborhoods and private-sector groups and organizations all play an important role in implementing forwardDallas! Tracking all this activity is critical to making sure the Vision is realized and one aspect of this tracking is the monitoring program. Implementation monitoring will identify an action, or “cause” (eg: adoption of policies and regulations, or adding certain transportation programs) that must occur before the result or “effect” can be measured (eg: changes in land use or improved economic life). Implementation monitoring will be reviewed annually as the City Council reviews forwardDallas! and will include updates on significant public and private development, infrastructure improvements and transportation enhancements.



Monitoring indicators such as transit ridership and homeownership rates will be tracked in Dallas in order to determine how implementation efforts including the action and program plans are working to achieve the Vision.



Monitoring homeownership rates by council district will help the City determine whether it is meeting its housing targets and to what degree.

Performance Monitoring

Performance monitoring will show whether actions taken by the public and private sectors in Dallas are achieving the desired results. Once a specific action has been taken, such as establishing an action plan for a certain area, performance monitoring will assess whether improvements are taking place. In order for performance monitoring to work, the City must establish benchmarks on what each activity aims to achieve (eg: reducing travel time). This will be broken down to three components—key objectives, corresponding indicators and targets. These will be called benchmark objectives, indicators and targets.

The City does not have a system for monitoring land use and transportation changes. Developing a performance monitoring system quickly is a top priority so the City can assess growth in Dallas on a continual basis.

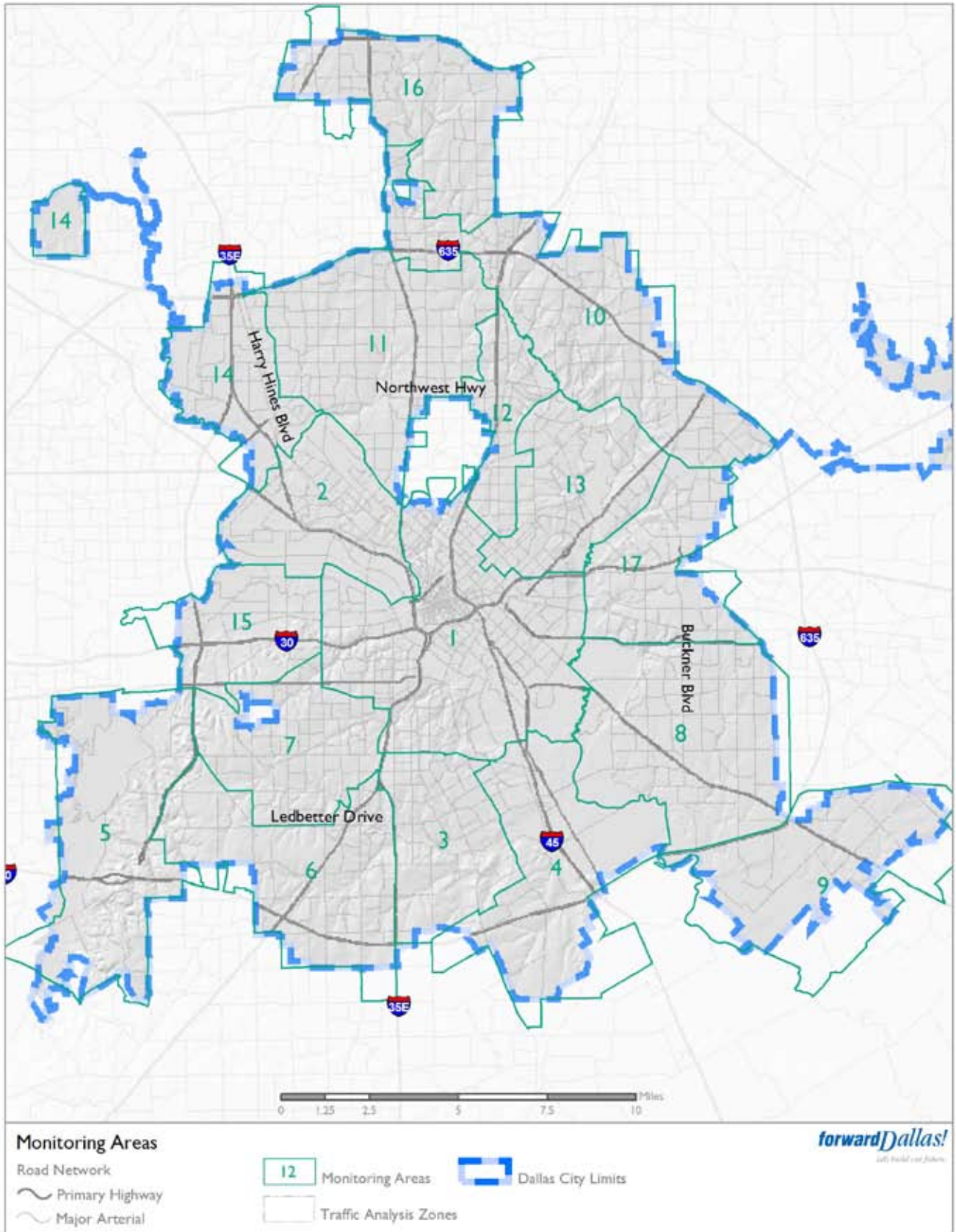
The forwardDallas! Monitoring Program will evaluate economic development, transportation and land use benchmarks based on citywide “growth targets” for population, employment and housing. These targets are based on the Vision (Component 1 of forwardDallas!), economic analysis, land capacity analysis, citizens and Advisory Committee input and practical approaches for sustaining growth. Included in these targets are numbers of households and jobs, changes in property values by census tract, retail sales tax by zip code, and work to achieve citywide transportation goals by 2030. In addition to changes in land use and transportation indicators, the City will monitor growth capacity, which is calculated by monitoring the amount of vacant, unconstrained land, and the amount of land that would be economically feasible to redevelop as well as include the amount of development permitted by right (without zone changes).

Monitoring Areas

The Monitoring Map will be used to establish performance benchmarks. The map was developed using detailed land use, economic and transportation data and each of the 17 sub-areas identified on the map are sized, like Goldilocks, “just right”—not too large and not too small but of an appropriate size to observe emerging trends. Benchmarks should be developed for assessed value, retail sales and other related data that can be effectively projected and monitored.



Map I.1 Dallas Monitoring Areas





DART ridership data such as boardings by stop will help the City determine how investment in transit oriented development is facilitating new ridership.

Using Current and Reliable Data

ForwardDallas! outlines policies that impact land use, transportation and economic development. The Monitoring Program will measure and evaluate work in these two areas using data already collected by the City's Economic Development Department, Development Services Department and Dallas Central Appraisal District. This data can be compiled and geographically represented by geocoding information within a central geographic information systems (GIS) database. This GIS database can be updated with data collected by the City, including building permits, payroll data and transit ridership numbers. This will allow City staff to assess and monitor new households, population changes, travel and business activity by parcel, neighborhood, city sector or citywide. Information from DART and NCTCOG can also be added to this database. This data will allow planners to see, for example, if transit ridership increases near stations as a result of new mixed-use development.

Data collected for the Monitoring Program must meet these basic criteria:

1. The data must be collected at the census tract or parcel scale to allow for consistent analysis.
2. The data must be quantifiable, and not based on abstractions or model assumptions.
3. The data must be easy to obtain from reliable, consistent sources.
4. The data should be understandable, relevant and honest and must accurately and directly portray the subject in a clear fashion.

Generally, monitoring programs with a few high-quality key indicators are more effective than those with lots of indicators of dubious quality. The Monitoring Program will use geographic boundaries that identify areas where growth should occur, as indicated in Area Plans. These areas must be scaled at the same census tract level with areas not undergoing development or revitalization, in order to compare results.

The baseline for comparison will be conditions in 2000 in all categories. Each annual update will evaluate current conditions in comparison to 2000 and the 2030 benchmarks established by forwardDallas! As data becomes available, new baselines will be created. An annual report will highlight progress made toward the Vision. When progress falls behind the 2030 benchmark schedule, the Monitoring Program will highlight the need for corrective actions to get back on course.

Performance Measures Evaluation

All the Guiding Principles—economic development, housing and community, social equity, environmental sustainability and transportation and public infrastructure—of the forwardDallas! Vision are impacted by arrangement of land use and transportation infrastructure and services. The Monitoring Program will collect data to narrowly and carefully monitor the aspects and fluctuations of these two categories.

Data from the land use and transportation infrastructure components will show how development in those sectors impacts economic conditions on a local and citywide scale. For example, new housing, transit statistics and assessed property values are key indicators to the type of investment and growth taking place. Monitoring this data on a year-to-year basis in key geographic areas, such as census tracts around transit stations, will allow the City to determine how forwardDallas! policies and strategies are influencing growth and investment and fulfilling the forwardDallas! Vision.

The City will specifically monitor population, housing and job growth in small and consistent geographic areas. This Monitoring Program will intentionally remain simple allowing the City to start small and build a manageable and reliable system for consistently evaluating its policies over time.

A more complex monitoring program, developed over several years, could describe a robust range of conditions affecting residents' quality of life and might include air quality, water consumption, school enrollment, public health and financial condition and average rent rates. These detailed evaluations are exceedingly valuable but require coordinated work with other agencies. ForwardDallas! will focus its monitoring, however, on the core issues of land use, transportation and economic development.



By monitoring tree canopy coverage throughout Dallas, the City can determine whether investments in natural landscaping contribute toward increased pedestrian activity.