

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS CAMPUS AREA

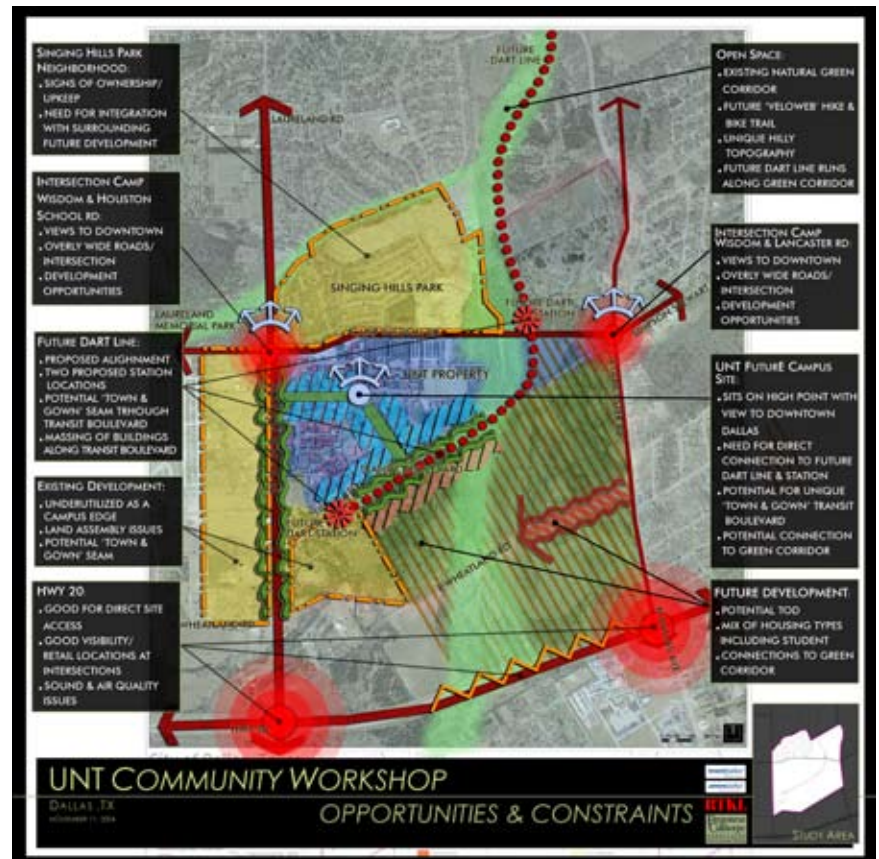


The University of North Texas has already begun construction on its Houston School Road site.

The Southern Sector will be home to Dallas' first four-year university, the University of North Texas. A campus master plan has been created for the Houston School Road site but very little work has been done to plan development around the campus. Campus populations—faculty, staff and students—drive the need for nearby retail and service businesses. And start-up companies, frequently begun by former students or university staff, often locate near campuses. This off-campus economic activity often provides well-paying jobs and spurs the need for housing.

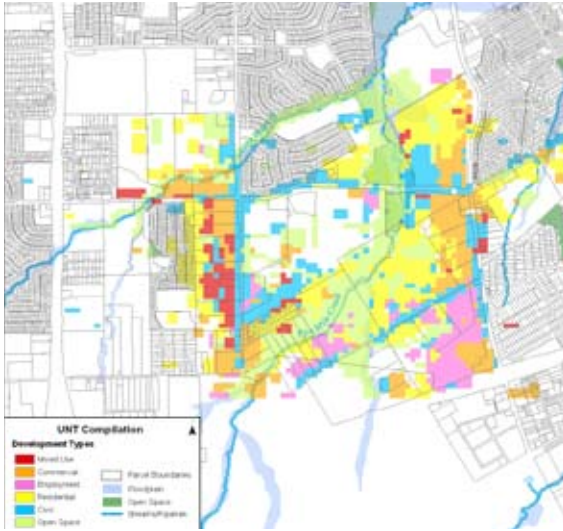
Cursory studies reveal tremendous opportunities in this new campus area and confirms that unplanned development will hinder positive growth. Unguided growth would produce limited development, far less than what could be achieved with planning. The City must develop a specific vision for the UNT campus area and its surrounding areas.

Map III-2.21 Constraints for the UNT Campus Area



This figure illustrates opportunities and constraints for the UNT campus area as defined by community members during the workshop and outreach process.

Map III-2.22 Proposed Future Development Types



The map above illustrates where future development types should occur based on community input. In addition, floodplains and riparian areas are shown here.

This Area Plan will include completing a plan for areas surrounding the Houston School Road campus and examining the community expected to grow near this Southern Dallas site.

Land Use and Housing

The area, which includes the stable single-family neighborhoods of Singing Hills and Hidden Valley, was last studied in 1990 as part of the Southeast Oak Cliff Land Use, Housing, and Economic Study—Master Plan and Development Strategy. There is a significant amount of vacant land, zoned predominantly for 7,500 and 5,000 square foot lots in R-7.5, R-5.0 zoning. There is also significant vacant land with planned development zoning for mixed uses. The City owns a stretch of parkland from Five Mile Creek to the UNT campus.

The creeks of Runyon Springs and Ricketts Branch run through the area providing drainage and causing some areas to be susceptible to flooding. The entire area has significant natural drainages that include native riparian vegetation. These areas should be targeted for protection and enhancement in the Area Plan.

The Villages of Runyon Springs, a residential subdivision now being built between Houston School and Lancaster roads near Camp Wisdom Road, has 1,495 lots for single-family homes. These will range from 1,200 to more than 2,400 square-feet in size. Under current zoning, this entire area would allow 3,356 new households and only 319 new employees.

Roads

Houston School Road will be improved in 2006 to a four-lane boulevard with on-street parking. It was originally planned as a six-lane arterial with a median, however based on research that showed a six-lane road would provide more capacity than needed in the next 30 years, those initial plans were scaled back. Many roads in this area remain unpaved.

Infrastructure

This area is quite undeveloped. Most of the area is without sewer or water service. A sewer line extension is planned to the campus entrance at the corner of Houston School Road and Camp Wisdom Road. Also, DART plans to extend its South Oak Cliff light rail line to the new campus. Two stops are proposed but no plans have been made at this time for those stations or the areas around those proposed stations.

Local Residents

Local property owners have met frequently with the forwardDallas! planning team as well as UNT officials and have organized an ad-hoc neighborhood group. Property owners are specifically interested in developing the local street and infrastructure network, looking at mixed-use areas and integrating the possible DART stations into these plans. Work on an Area Plan will tap into and be guided by this increased local interest during this early, critical stage of development.

The area's population has declined 10 percent between 1990 and 2000 although the number of households increased. Other statistics include:

- 16 percent of residents are over 65 years of age, double the number since 1990;
- 90 percent of housing is owner-occupied;
- The median household income is \$43,000, higher than the city median of \$37,628;
- The poverty rate has increased from 8 percent to 13 percent.

Involving the Community

ForwardDallas! held workshops to identify what area residents wanted to preserve and what they wanted to change in their communities as well as how they wanted those communities to look and function in the near and distant future. These forums were open to all city residents, businesses and organizations, but extra effort was made to attract people who live, work or are directly impacted by the UNT campus. The UNT campus area is a pilot project in the city to see how different planning tools can be used to address future growth and development.

Workshop participants gathered in groups to create ideas for accommodating the area's projected growth. Using "game pieces" representing different development types (single-family homes, small-scale stores, office complexes, schools, etc.), each group came up with a plan. Ideas from the workshop were incorporated in a draft concept plan for the area.



Residents were given an opportunity to provide their input on the UNT campus project by participating in a series of public forums. The map image shows what development participants desire to see in the UNT campus area.



A university campus district rendering showing a pedestrian friendly design that links the university with the surrounding community.

Campus District

Campus District Building Blocks focus on master-planned educational, institutional or business facilities outside the Downtown that provide jobs for specially skilled people. The University of North Texas campus at Houston School Road was the motivating factor for creating this Building Block, although other examples exist, such as the areas around University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, the Baylor University Medical Center, the Veterans Administration Hospital and Pinnacle Park. Campus districts often act as smaller versions of a complete community and include a range of single-family and multifamily housing for students, employees and visitors. A variety of offices, shops and services should exist to support the major campus employer and area residents. Over time, areas such as UNT can take on a “university town” feel as they mature. All campus districts should have convenient transit options as an integral component. Economic development efforts in this district should capitalize on the spin-off employment opportunities generated by the primary employers.

In the Southern Sector, the UNT campus will provide the core of the Campus Building Block, and is expected to include 5,000 staff and 20,000 students, and include 3,000 on-site housing units. The area surrounding the campus should address:

- Housing for campus students, staff and faculty;
- Lodging for visitors and temporary faculty;
- Office space for research and development tied to campus activities; and
- Shopping and entertainment areas, mostly along Houston School Road.



Campus Setting

Neighborhood Scale

"Town & Gown"

Single Family/Townhomes

Mixed-Use/Retail

Student Housing/Transit Oriented Residential

UNT COMMUNITY WORKSHOP
DALLAS, TX
NOVEMBER 14, 2024

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

ITTEI
Institutional Transformation & Technology Institute

STUDY AREA

The UNT campus is within the Campus District Building Block and will likely include some or all of the building types depicted in the image above.

Map III-2.23 Possible illustration of the UNT Campus Area



The rendering above illustrates what the UNT campus area will potentially look like.

Developing an Area Plan

Key stakeholders in this area, including UNT officials, nearby property owners and residents, will be asked to take part in structured interviews to give their opinions about the existing neighborhood and future opportunities. The City will use this input to create a “base case scenario” that shows what will happen if existing zoning and planned development is built out. Then the City will develop alternative ideas based on community input in order to visualize other opportunities. After reviewing these options, plan recommendations and an implementation plan will be drawn up.

Recommended changes to zoning will be necessary to implement the plan. The City also will draft urban design standards to attract preferred development and create an appealing and high-quality district.

The Area Plan also will include a market feasibility study to develop an area forecast, which will project increases in jobs and housing, and determine the building types necessary to accommodate those increases. Also included will be a return on investment (ROI) analysis using market rate assumptions.

The plan also will identify the location of street improvements and where additional street connections will be needed. This is especially important in the UNT area as many of the parcels are large and could become landlocked if street planning is not conducted.

Context Sensitive Design, or “livable street design,” will also be used to match street design to the anticipated adjacent land uses. Street elements required near a campus will be different than those used at DART stations or in residential areas. The plan will identify where amendments must be made and where capital investments will be needed.

The City also will review the following issues to determine if service levels will be able to accommodate the envisioned development in the UNT area: sewer; water; drainage; energy; Internet; police, fire and public safety; schools; and parks.

Next Steps

Based on the wide-ranging set of ideas garnered from workshops and various sources of public and City input, the staff will create an Implementation Plan which includes specific implementation techniques, a matrix detailing potential implementation strategies and overall project parameters.

This project will require a review of the City's Capital Improvement Program. The City will identify a proposed capital improvements budget and funding methods for this plan, including tax increment financing (TIF), local improvement districts and other methods to develop funds for improvements. The City also will conduct reviews to determine the likely effect that the plan's implementation will have on tax increment income.

Finally, the City will determine the best way to leverage public investment dollars in order to stimulate the area job market. The program will also identify key private investments and target industries to jump-start the plan.



Houston School Road is intended to be a pedestrian-friendly road linking the UNT campus and the district, similar to the illustration showing the potential transformation of Buckner Boulevard.

