# 2014 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## City of Richland Hills

Adopted May 6, 2014



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# Acknowledgements

The City of Richland Hills's elected and appointed officials, staff members, and Advisory Committee members provided knowledge, assistance, and insight throughout the process of developing this plan. The contributions of the following people are appreciated and helped to make this planning process and document possible:

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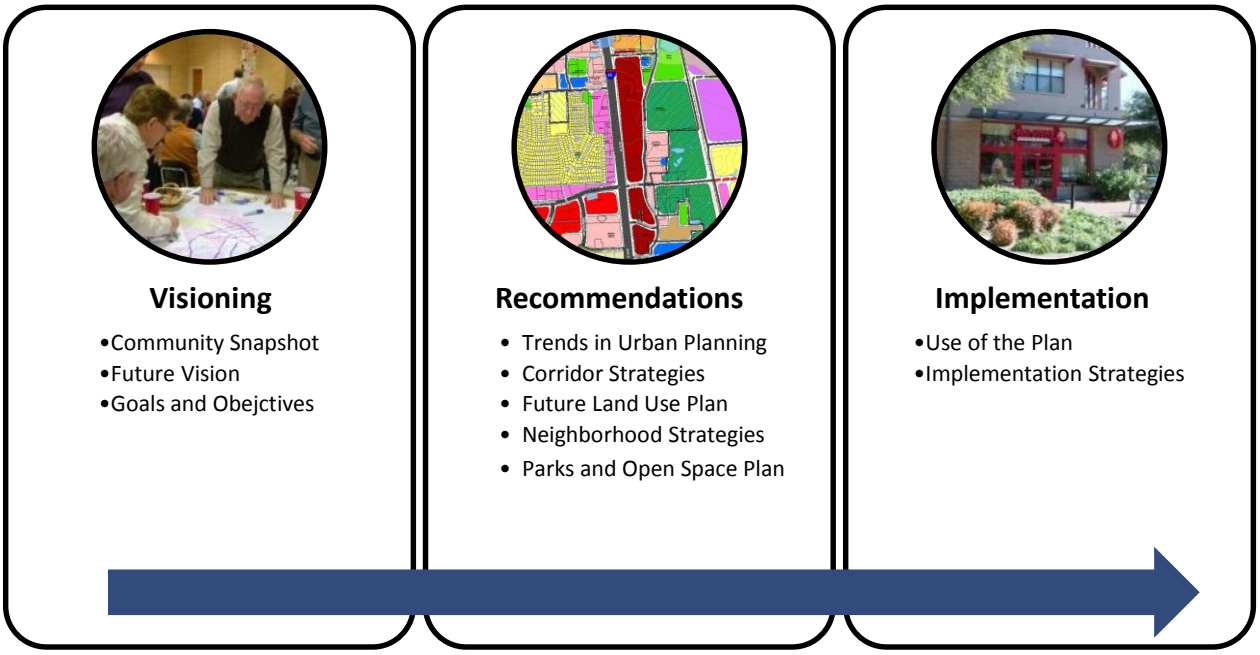
# Introduction to Comprehensive Planning

A city's comprehensive plan can generally be defined as a long-range planning tool intended to be used by municipal staff, decision-makers, and citizens to direct the growth and physical development of a community for 10 years, 20 years, or an even longer period of time. This *2014 Comprehensive Plan* will consist of three basic parts:




This *2014 Comprehensive Plan*, once adopted, will become the official policy of the City. It will help guide zoning and development decisions, and it will serve as a basis for future capital expenditures. The *2014 Comprehensive Plan* should not be viewed as a rigid policy, but as a guide. It is intended to be flexible and to provide latitude for more detailed analyses that are commonly part of zoning and development decisions. These decisions, however, should be consistent with policies established within the *2014 Comprehensive Plan*. In addition, comprehensive planning should not be viewed as a single event, but as a continuous and ever-changing process; therefore, the plan itself is not intended to be a static document; it is intended to be a dynamic, adaptable guide to help citizens and officials shape the City of Richland Hills's future.

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# 1 Visioning

*The Visioning phase is intended to establish an understanding of Richland Hills today, and the community's vision for its future.*

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# Community Understanding

This first part of the Visioning phase is intended to establish a foundation of information for the community visioning process and the development of plan recommendations. It provides information on the City's existing conditions and recent trends, and the overall context in which this planning effort is occurring.


## Population Characteristics

People are the most important component of any community. The following discussion is intended to provide insight into the historic and existing characteristics of the residents of Richland Hills. This demographic analysis will aid in planning for future growth of the City.

### *Population Changes and Growth Trends*

Establishing the City's and region's population changes and growth trends is important to understanding what type of growth the City should expect in the future, both independently and in relation to its larger region. As shown in **Table 1. City and County Population**, the 2010 population of Richland Hills was approximately 7,801 residents, a decrease of 331 people or 4%.

As shown in the table, according to the North Central Texas Council of Governments, the 2012 estimated population for Richland Hills was 7,800, nearly identical to the 2010 Census estimate. However, this growth rate is similar to the comparable cities.

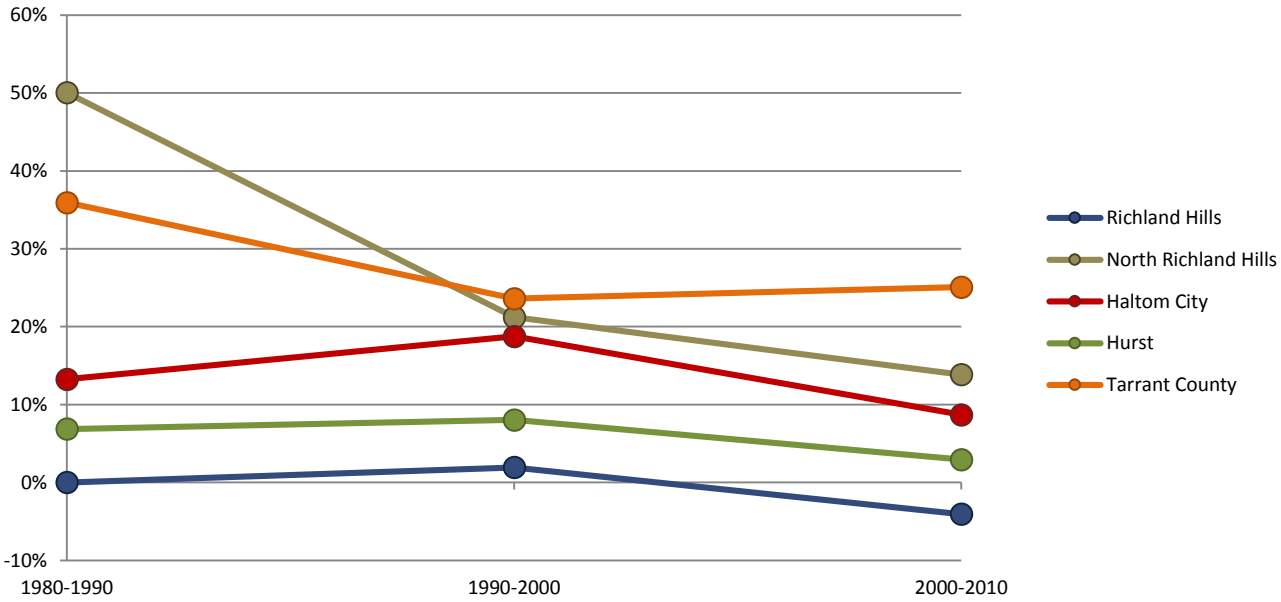
**Table 1. City and County Population**

| Year | Richland Hills | | North Richland Hills | | Haltom City | | Hurst | | Tarrant County | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| 1980 | 7,977 | — | 30,592 | — | 29,014 | — | 31,420 | — | 860,880 | — |
| 1990 | 7,978 | 0.0% | 45,895 | 50.0% | 32,856 | 13.2% | 33,574 | 6.9% | 1,170,103 | 35.9% |
| 2000 | 8,132 | 1.9% | 55,635 | 21.2% | 39,018 | 18.8% | 36,273 | 8.0% | 1,446,219 | 23.6% |
| 2010 | 7,801 | -4.1% | 63,343 | 13.9% | 42,409 | 8.7% | 37,337 | 2.9% | 1,809,034 | 25.1% |
| 2012* | 7,800 | 0.0% | 63,780 | 0.7% | 42,090 | -0.8% | 37,360 | 0.1% | 1,831,230 | 1.2% |

** 2012 data from NCTCOG population estimates*

*Source: U.S. Census*

**Figure 1. City and County Growth Rate**




*Source: U.S. Census*

The City has maintained a relatively constant population the past 30 years, with a slight decrease in population between 2000 and 2010. All of the comparison cities experienced a slowed growth rate during this decade; however, Tarrant County experienced a slight increase (see **Figure 1. City and County Growth Rate**).

**Table 2. Percentage Richland Hills Composes of Tarrant County**

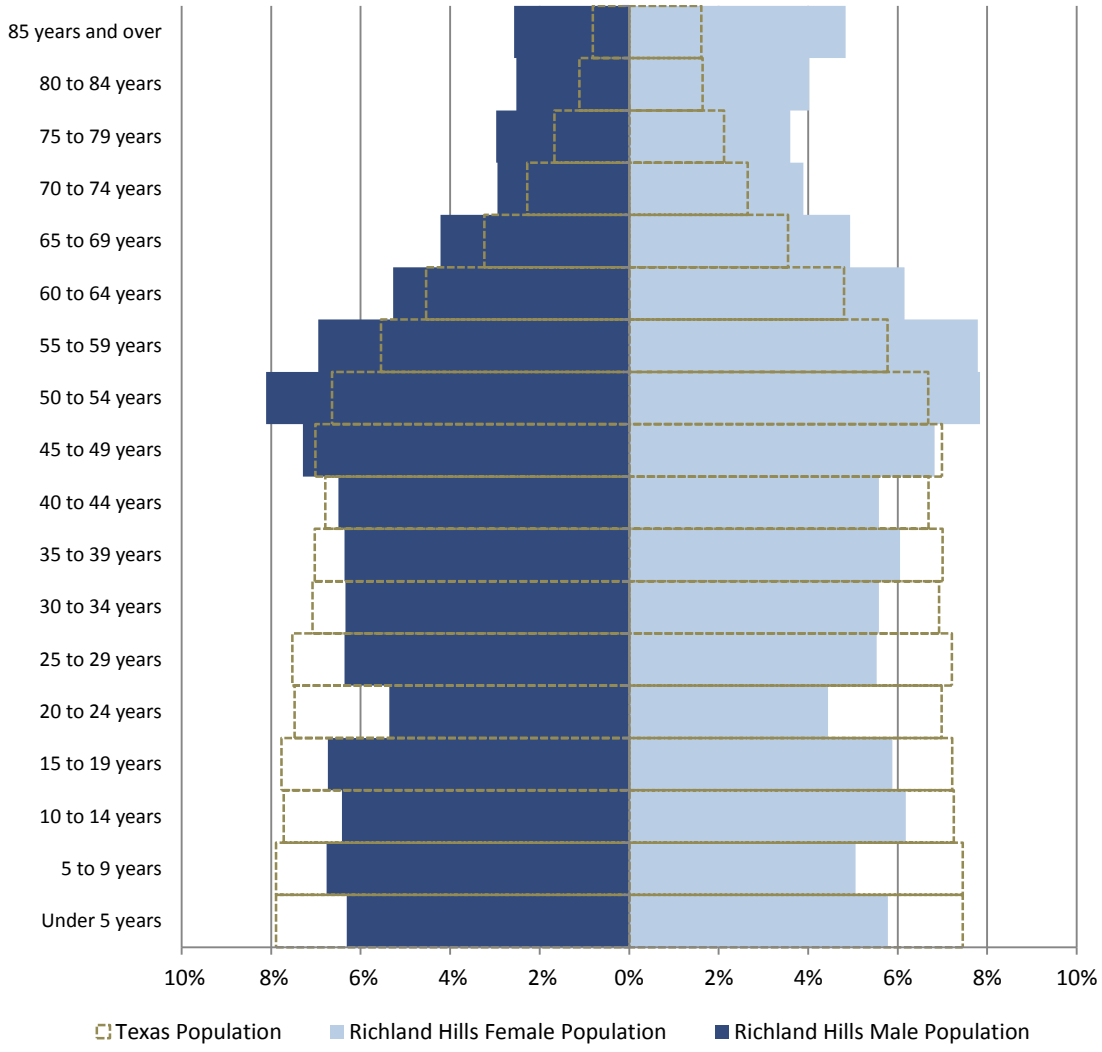
| Year | Richland Hills | Tarrant County | Richland Hills's % of County |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1980 | 7,977 | 860,880 | 0.9% |
| 1990 | 7,978 | 1,170,103 | 0.7% |
| 2000 | 8,132 | 1,446,219 | 0.6% |
| 2010 | 7,801 | 1,809,034 | 0.4% |

Another method of evaluating the City's growth is to compare it to the larger area. The percentage that the City composes of the County allows for a comparison of Richland Hills's growth and that of its surrounding communities. As shown in **Table 2**, the City has consistently remained less than 1% of the County's population since 1980.

### *Gender, Age, and Household Type*

The knowledge of Richland Hills's age composition can assist in planning for future possible needs, such as a senior citizens' center or a new elementary school. **Figure 2. Age and Gender Pyramid** below shows the age distribution by gender for Richland Hills compared to the national average. It is most important to note the decreased percentage of population under the age of 50. Similarly, the City has a large percentage of residents age 50 and older, which is an important planning consideration relating to housing options, neighborhood design, and land uses.

**Figure 2. Age and Gender Pyramid**




*Source: 2010 U.S. Census*

**Table 3. Household Type** includes information regarding the composition of households in Richland Hills and the State of Texas. Consistent with **Figure 2. Age and Gender Pyramid**, this table indicates the population of Richland Hills is older than the average for the State. This is most noticeable in *Households with one or more people under 18 years* at 31 percent in Richland Hills compared to 38 percent in the State, and *Households with one or more people 65 years and over* with 30 percent in Richland Hills compared to 21 percent in the State.

**Table 3. Household Type**

| Household Type | Richland Hills | | Texas |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total households | 2,951 | | 8,850,370 |
| | | | |
| Family households (families) | 1,936 | 66% | 70% |
| With own children under 18 years | 816 | 28% | 34% |
| Nonfamily households | 1,015 | 34% | 30% |
| Householder living alone | 855 | 29% | 25% |
| 65 years and over | 373 | 13% | 7% |
| | | | |
| Households with one or more people under 18 years | 913 | 31% | 38% |
| Households with one or more people 65 years and over | 873 | 30% | 21% |
| | | | |
| Average household size | 2.6 | | 2.8 |

*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

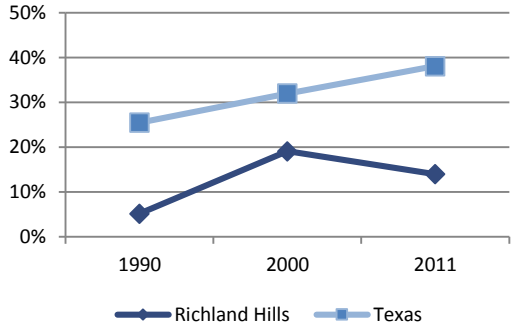
### *Race and Ethnicity*

Information regarding race and ethnicity is important to local governments to know that all of its citizens are being represented in decision-making processes.

The *Black/African-American* population is lower when compared to the State: 3% in Richland Hills versus 12% in the State. Other minority populations are lower in percentage in the City as well, as shown in **Table 4. Racial Distribution and Ethnic Composition**.

The ethnic composition of Hispanic citizens in Richland Hills is also lower than that of the State of Texas. Similarly, **Table 5. Language Spoken at Home** shows that 93 percent of Richland Hills's residents are fluent in English, compared to 85 percent of the State.

**Figure 3. Percent Hispanic/Latino 1990-2010**




*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

**Table 4. Racial Distribution and Ethnic Composition**

| Demographic | Richland Hills | | Texas |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total population | 7,881 | | 25,674,681 |
| | | | |
| One race | 7,763 | 99% | 98% |
| White | 6,820 | 87% | 75% |
| Black or African American | 219 | 3% | 12% |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 67 | 1% | 1% |
| Asian | 47 | 1% | 4% |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | 0 | 0% | 10% |
| Some other race | 610 | 8% | 7% |
| Two or more races | 118 | 1% | 2% |
| | | | |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 1,077 | 14% | 38% |
| Not Hispanic or Latino | 6,804 | 86% | 62% |

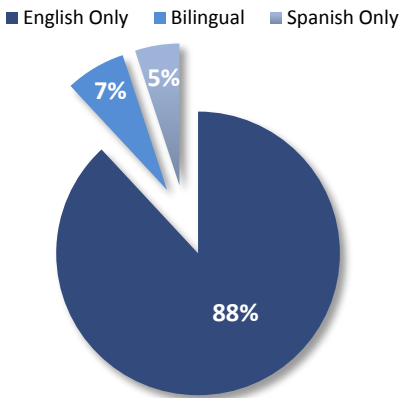
*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

**Table 5. Language Spoken at Home**

| Language Spoken at Home | Richland Hills | | Texas |
|---|---|---|---|
| Population 5 years and over | 7,438 | | 23,721,334 |
| | | | |
| English only | 6,552 | 88% | 65% |
| Language other than English | 886 | 12% | 35% |
| Speak English less than "very well" | 386 | 5% | 15% |
| Spanish | 797 | 11% | 30% |
| Speak English less than "very well" | 377 | 5% | 13% |

*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

**Figure 4. Language Fluency**




*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

**Table 6. Educational Attainment**

| Educational Attainment | Richland Hills | | Texas |
|---|---|---|---|
| Population 25 years and over | 5,577 | | 16,074,391 |
| | | | |
| Less than 9th grade | 258 | 5% | 9.5% |
| 9th to 12th grade, no diploma | 656 | 12% | 9.4% |
| High school graduate (includes equivalency) | 1,746 | 31% | 25.5% |
| Some college, no degree | 1,643 | 29% | 22.6% |
| Associate's degree | 487 | 9% | 6.5% |
| Bachelor's degree | 589 | 11% | 17.7% |
| Graduate or professional degree | 198 | 4% | 8.7% |
| | | | |
| Percent high school graduate or higher | 83.6% | | 81.1% |
| Percent bachelor's degree or higher | 14.1% | | 26.4% |

*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

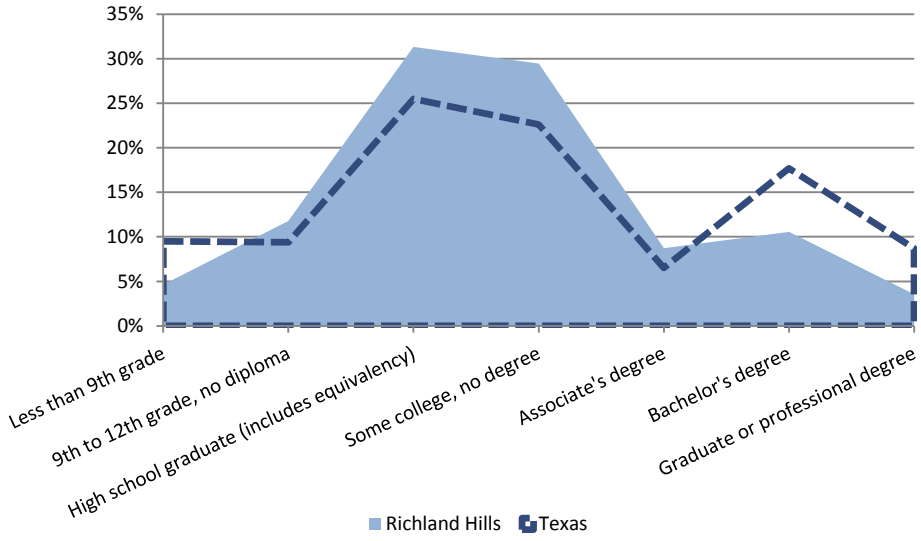
## *Educational Attainment*

The educational attainment of a community can be an indicator of the types of jobs in the region and can provide general information on the skills and abilities of the local workforce. Knowledge of its workforce can also help a city to target and recruit certain types of businesses to the community.

**Table 6. Educational Attainment** provides detailed information regarding the population of Richland Hills compared to the population of Texas. **Figure 5. Graphic Display of Education Attainment** shows more clearly the overall tendency toward lower levels of education when compared to the State. This shift toward lower education levels directly correlates to other factors within the City, such as lower home values and lower median incomes.

As shown, 11 percent of Richland Hills's population has received a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 18 percent of the State population. Although education levels have improved over time, this negative characteristic of Richland Hills can discourage new businesses and industries that require a college-educated workforce from locating within the City.

**Figure 5. Graphic Display of Education Attainment Comparison**



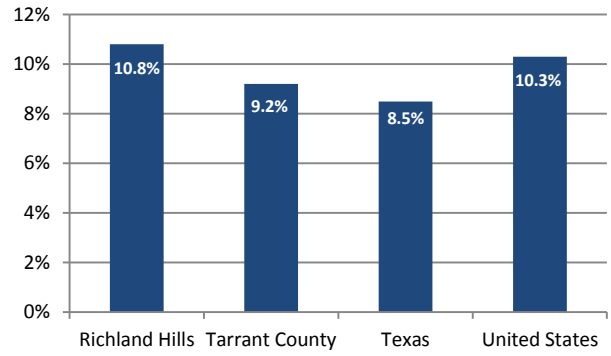

*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

### *Employment and Income Characteristics*

Employment opportunities can affect the growth rate of cities. These opportunities are important because they allow people to settle in a community, establish their home and begin a life – it is employment that makes this possible. If citizens cannot find work in an area, then they are forced to move elsewhere, and to take their property and sales tax revenue with them. Cities are generally dependent on businesses to provide employment opportunities that in turn pay the citizens' salaries and provide them with the ability to buy and sell goods, pay taxes, and so on.

The most recent unemployment data from the Census Bureau is the 2007-2011 American Community Survey, because the 2010 U.S. Census did not survey unemployment (see **Figure 6. Unemployment Rates**). As shown, Texas and Tarrant County had an unemployment rate lower than the national average; however, Richland Hills's unemployment rate is slightly higher than the national average, at nearly 11 percent.

**Figure 6. Unemployment Rates**




*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

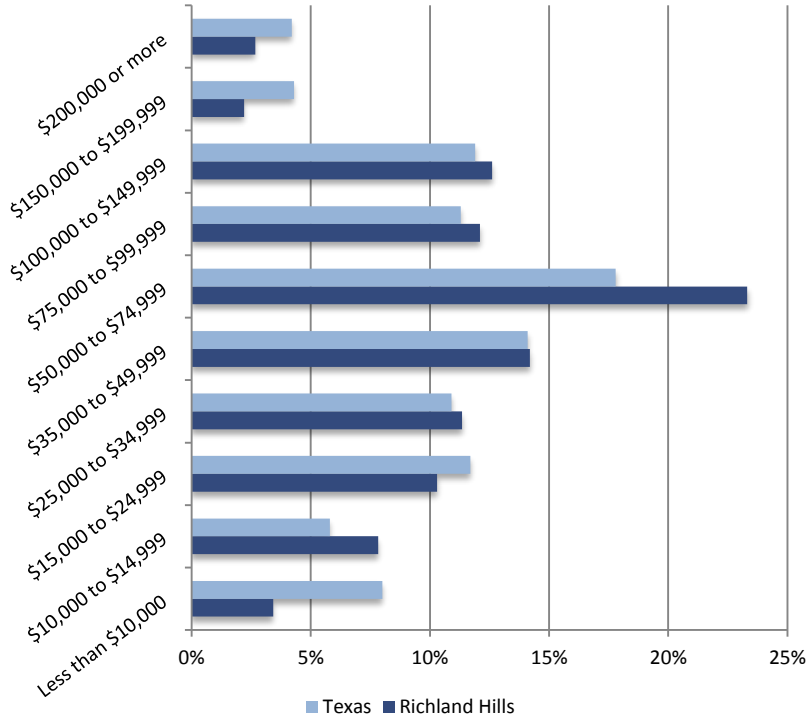
**Table 7. Occupation** compares the percent of each occupational category for the City of Richland Hills and State of Texas. The most noticeable difference is the *management, professional, and related occupations* category, which is a more "white collar" category, with 35 percent in Texas and 26 percent in Richland Hills. A larger percentage of jobs are held in *sales and office occupations*. This data is consistent with the previous information regarding educational attainment (see **Table 6**) – fewer residents with college education, and increased clerical, office, and commercial-type jobs.

**Table 7. Occupation**

| Occupation | Richland Hills | | Texas |
|---|---|---|---|
| Civilian employed population 16 years and over | 3,495 | | 11,455,069 |
| | | | |
| Management, business, science, and arts occupations | 915 | 26% | 35% |
| Service occupations | 468 | 13% | 18% |
| Sales and office occupations | 1,209 | 35% | 25% |
| Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations | 487 | 14% | 11% |
| Production, transportation, and material moving occupations | 416 | 12% | 12% |

*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

**Figure 7. Income Levels**




*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

Household income levels can be an important factor in planning Richland Hills's future. For example, income levels indicate to potential retailers whether or not the City is a prime site to locate their business. The amount of available disposable income is a major factor that influences the type and amount of retail development that a city can support. Also, income is a major determining factor for homeownership; a high level of homeownership is generally seen as a positive characteristic for a community. Income levels, therefore, can play a role in the size, type and quality of residential development a community attracts.

As shown in **Figure 7. Income Levels**, Richland Hills's income levels have a tendency toward mid-range incomes when compared to the State. The most common income levels occur in the $35,000 to $74,999 range; however, Richland Hills's median household income is $52,250, compared to Texas' median household income of $49,392.

### *Housing Data*

The quality of housing and the affordability of housing options are important planning considerations. Among the factors influencing the desirability of Richland Hills as a place to live is the availability of housing and the quality of the existing neighborhoods. Housing also plays an important role in affecting the potential commercial development of various sections of the City and the immediate surrounding area. The community has an interest in the ability to attract new businesses in addition to ensuring adequate habitation for its residents. The following sections discuss various aspects of Richland Hills's housing.

Occupancy rate is an important indicator of the local housing market and housing saturation. A high occupancy rate may indicate a need for additional housing units and/or types to accommodate new population growth, whereas a low occupancy rate may indicate an oversaturation of housing units and/or type.

**Table 8. Housing Occupancy** displays a variety of information regarding occupancy characteristics. There are approximately 3,260 housing units in Richland Hills, 91 percent of which is occupied, which is slightly above the State occupancy level of 88 percent. Richland Hills's homeowner and rental vacancy rates, 2.5 percent and 19.7 percent respectively. This higher vacancy rate for rental residences compared to the State may indicate undesirable rental home types within the City.

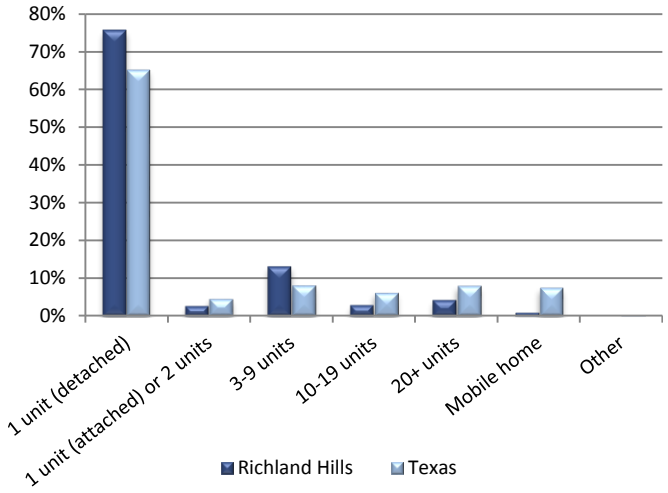
**Figure 8. Housing Type** compares the type of residential structures in the City to the State. As shown, Richland Hills has about 11 percentage points more single family detached homes when compared to Texas. Richland Hills is lacking primarily high density dwellings of 10 or more units.

**Table 8. Housing Occupancy**

| Housing Occupancy | Richland Hills | | Texas |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total housing units | 3,260 | | 10,099,242 |
| | | | |
| Occupied housing units | 2,951 | 91% | 88% |
| Vacant housing units | 309 | 9% | 12% |
| | | | |
| Owner-occupied | 2,040 | 63% | 63% |
| Renter-occupied | 911 | 28% | 37% |
| | | | |
| Homeowner vacancy rate | 2.5% | | 2% |
| Rental vacancy rate | 19.7% | | 9% |
| | | | |
| Average household size of owner-occupied unit | 2.75 | | 2.94 |
| Average household size of renter-occupied unit | 2.26 | | 2.65 |

*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

**Figure 8. Housing Type**




*Source: U.S. Census 2007-2011 ACS*

**Table 9. Home Value**

| Home Value | Richland Hills | | Texas |
|---|---|---|---|
| Owner-occupied units | 2,040 | | 5,568,300 |
| Less than $50,000 | 78 | 4% | 12% |
| $50,000 to $99,999 | 833 | 41% | 25% |
| $100,000 to $149,999 | 736 | 36% | 22% |
| $150,000 to $199,999 | 209 | 10% | 16% |
| $200,000 to $299,999 | 121 | 6% | 14% |
| $300,000 to $499,999 | 51 | 3% | 8% |
| $500,000 to $999,999 | 12 | 1% | 3% |
| $1,000,000 or more | 0 | 0% | 1% |
| Median (dollars) | 107,000 | | 127,700 |

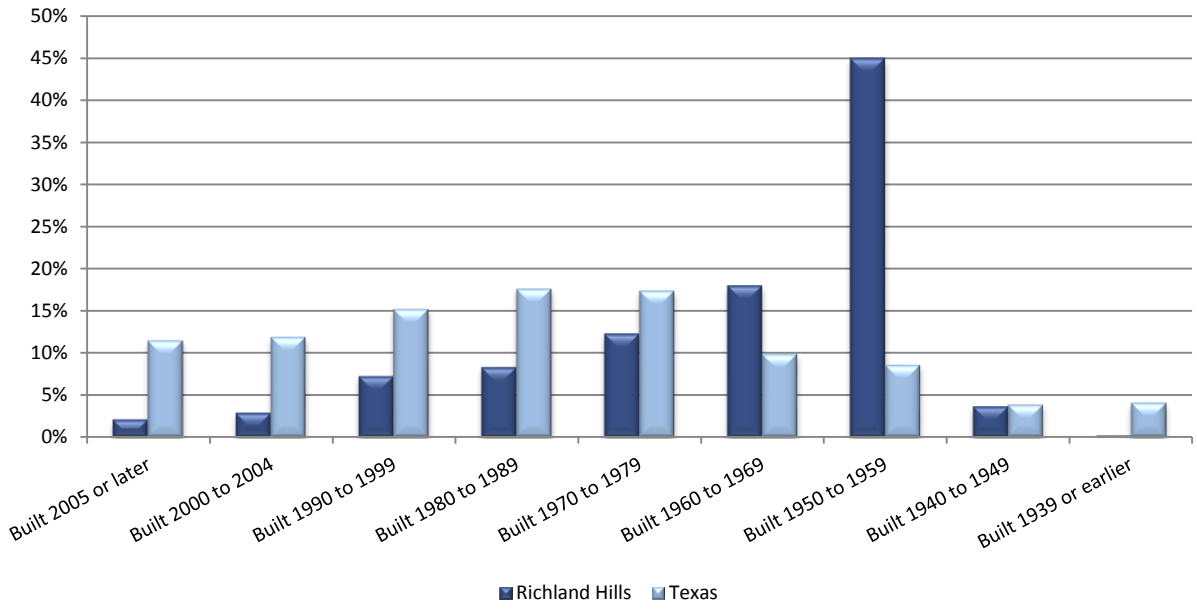
*Source: U.S. Census 2011 ACS*

The value of local residential property is an important factor for cities to consider. Residential property valuation within Richland Hills influences property tax revenues, City services, and City staffing levels.

**Table 9. Home Value** shows the distribution of home values for Richland Hills and the State of Texas. Forty-five percent of homes in Richland Hills are valued at less than $100,000, compared to 37 percent of the State. The median home value is approximately $20,000 less than that of the State.

Structural age often influences the value, physical condition, and desirability of a home. Year of construction for the housing stock within Richland Hills compared to the State of Texas is shown in **Figure 9. Year of Home Construction**. As shown, Richland Hills's housing stock is generally older when compared to the State, with the largest percentage of homes constructed between 1950 and 1959.

**Figure 9. Year of Home Construction**




*Source: U.S. Census 2011 ACS*

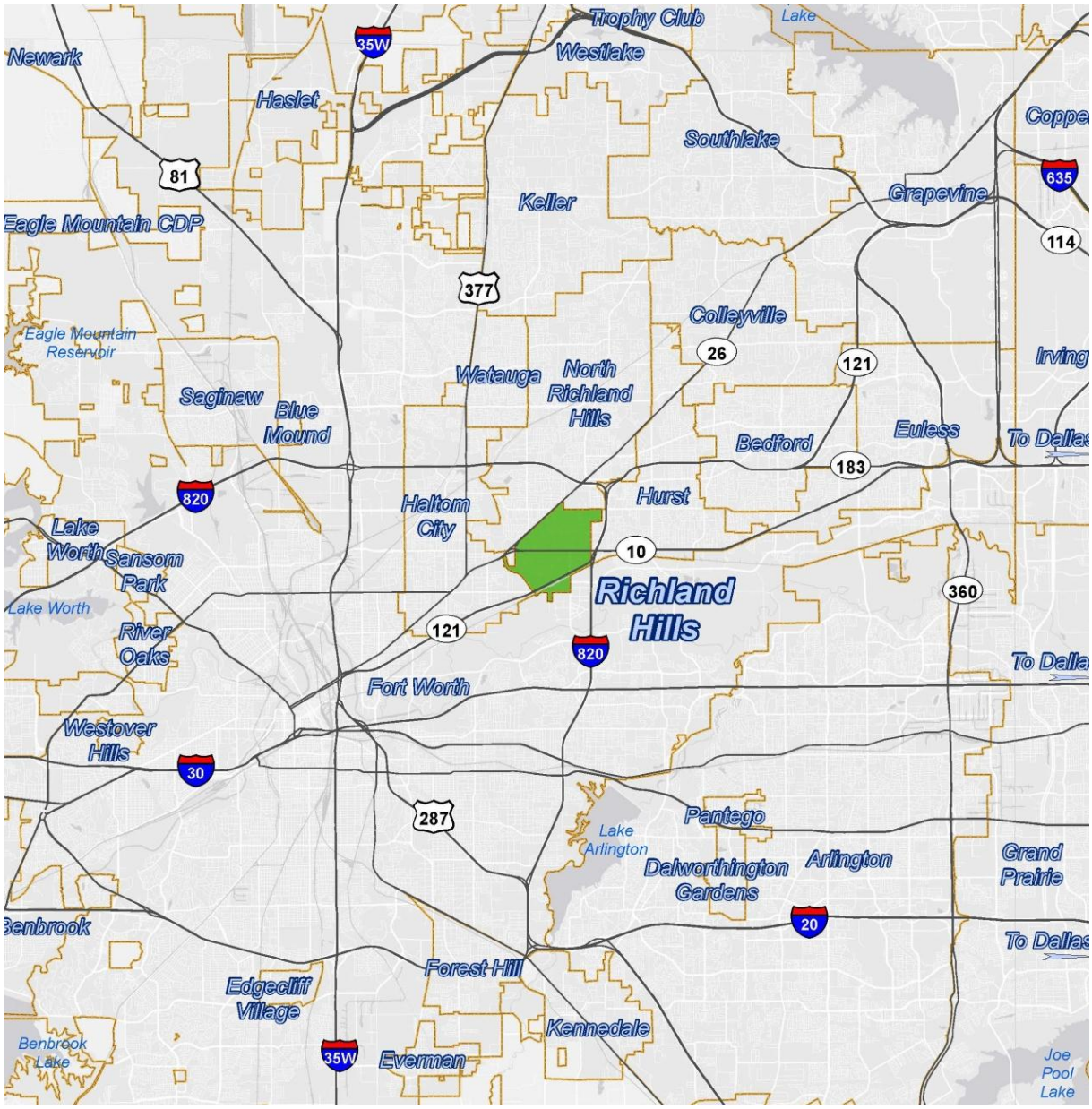
## Planning Context

An understanding of the planning context will help to set the framework for which planning decisions can be made. This includes an understanding of both local and regional planning efforts as well as issues which may significantly impact future planning decisions within the City.

### *Regional Relationship*

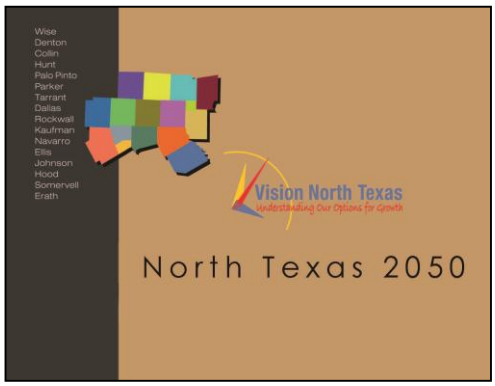
Richland Hills is generally bounded by Interstate 820, SH 121, Glenview Drive, and Grapevine Highway. The City is within Tarrant County, and surrounded by the cities of North Richland Hills, Hurst, and Haltom City. Richland Hills is centrally located within the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, and is easily accessible due to its convenient corridors.

**Figure 10. Regional Relationship**



### *Related and Regional Planning Efforts*

Relevant local and regional planning efforts should be considered when developing a comprehensive plan to ensure coordinated recommendations for the study area. This section provides a brief overview of these related efforts.


**Richland Hills Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Station Transit-Oriented Development Plan** (*URS and NCTCOG, 2009*)

The Trinity Railway Express (TRE) is a commuter rail line between Dallas and Fort Worth with ten stations, including one in Richland Hills. This plan examines opportunities for redevelopment of the areas near the TRE station. These areas, both north and south of SH 121, are currently primarily industrial and commercial land uses. The plan recommends commercial infill development in the northern area, and mixed use (residential, office, and retail) infill/redevelopment in the southern area adjacent to the station.

**Vision North Texas 2050** *(NCTCOG and Strategic Community Solutions, 2010)*

Developed as a private, public, and academic partnership, this plan identifies a unified vision for the future growth of the North Texas region. The plan categorizes Richland Hills as "inner tier", which is considered the core of future development of the North Texas region. As noted in the plan, many of these areas are facing aging infrastructure. Plan recommendations for these areas focus on neighborhood revitalization, building reuse, and infill.

**Mobility 2030: Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Dallas-Fort Worth Area** *(NCTCOG, 2007)*

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a multimodal plan for the 16-county region included in the North Central Texas Council of Governments, which includes Tarrant County and Richland Hills. The plan addresses all modes of transportation, including roadway, rail, bus, bicycle, and pedestrian (among others). These specific recommendations will be discussed in the appropriate sections within this Comprehensive Plan.

**Master Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan** *(City of Richland Hills, 2006)*

This plan was developed by a volunteer committee on behalf of the City to ensure continued planning for Richland Hills's parks system. Goals identified in this plan include more parks (specifically smaller pocket parks), sidewalks, improved recreational and safety amenities, establishment of an indoor community recreation facility, and utilization of the floodway for recreational opportunities.

**South Grapevine Highway Corridor Strategy** *(The Leland Team, 2004)*

This plan was developed in partnership with the City of North Richland Hills to focus on Grapevine Highway/Boulevard 26. This corridor is shared by both cities and reflects on the image of both communities. This plan will be discussed in greater detail within the Corridors element.

## Existing Land Use and Physical Constraints

Providing for the orderly and efficient use of land should be a major planning consideration in Richland Hills. The pattern of land use that exists today has evolved to accommodate the City's past needs. The activities of local residents create a need for various land uses, as well as for the supplemental systems that support the land uses (e.g., thoroughfare systems). The relationships of existing and future land uses will shape the character and quality of life of the community for many years to come. In order to accurately assess the City's future land use needs, an analysis of past land use trends and present land use patterns is of primary importance.

Additionally, Richland Hills's man-made and physical environment greatly influences its future land use pattern and rate of growth. It is important to document and analyze the physical factors that will ultimately contribute to the City's urban form and content. Each element of this plan must be fashioned with these physical factors in mind.

### *Existing Land Use Analysis and Map*

Future growth and development occurring within Richland Hills will require the redevelopment of existing uses to more intensified urban uses. The conversion process and how it occurs will be very important to the City in that it is one of the factors that will determine the community's future urban form, and in turn, its attractiveness and desirability. The relationships of existing and future land uses will not only have an impact upon Richland Hills economically, but will also shape the character and livability of the community in the years to come. Likewise, these relationships will be reflected in the provision of services and facilities throughout the community. An orderly and compact land use arrangement can be served more easily and efficiently than a random and scattered association of unrelated uses.

In order to analyze the land use trends within Richland Hills, aerial photography supported by field verification was used to identify existing land uses in the preparation of this chapter. This survey occurred in March 2013, and each parcel of land was color-coded according to various land use types. The information obtained from the survey is used herein to create **Figure 11. Existing Land Use Map** and discuss Richland Hills's current land use pattern. The following section provides an overview of the different types of land uses included within the survey.

## Residential Land Uses

The following is an overview of land uses that are primarily residential, including single family, two family, multiple family, and manufactured homes.

### Single Family

A single dwelling unit that is detached from any other dwelling unit, is built on-site, and is designed to be occupied by only one family. Single family homes are the more prevalent housing type and developed land use type.

### Two Family

A structure with two attached dwelling units that is designed to be occupied by two families (one in each unit). Two-family units are also commonly referred to as duplex units.

### Multiple Family

A structure with numerous attached dwelling units that is designed to be occupied by several families (one in each unit). This term can be used to describe a single structure or series of structures in a complex. Multiple family homes are also commonly referred to as apartments.

## Nonresidential Land Uses

Nonresidential land uses include areas in which people typically do not reside, although some residential units may occasionally be included as mixed use type developments.

### Public/Semi-Public

Uses that are generally accessible to the public, such as schools, churches, public buildings, cemeteries, and some medical facilities. Also includes some support services, such as a school bus storage lot.

### Parks and Open Space

Public or private park land, open space, and/or recreation area that is outside. May include recreational facilities, such as tennis courts, public swimming pools, picnic pavilions, and basketball courts.

### Office

All types of professional and administrative offices, including those of doctors, lawyers, dentists, realtors, architects, and accountants.

### Retail

Businesses that primarily sell commodities or goods to consumers. Examples include restaurants, grocery stores, beauty salons, and shopping centers.


### Commercial

Establishments that primarily provide a service to consumers. Examples include hotels, automobile services stations, automobile sales lots, self-storage businesses, and welding shops.

### Industrial

Allows for the processing, storage, assembly, and/or repairing of materials. Ranges from light industrial with all activity occurring indoors, to heavy industrial with activity occurring outside.

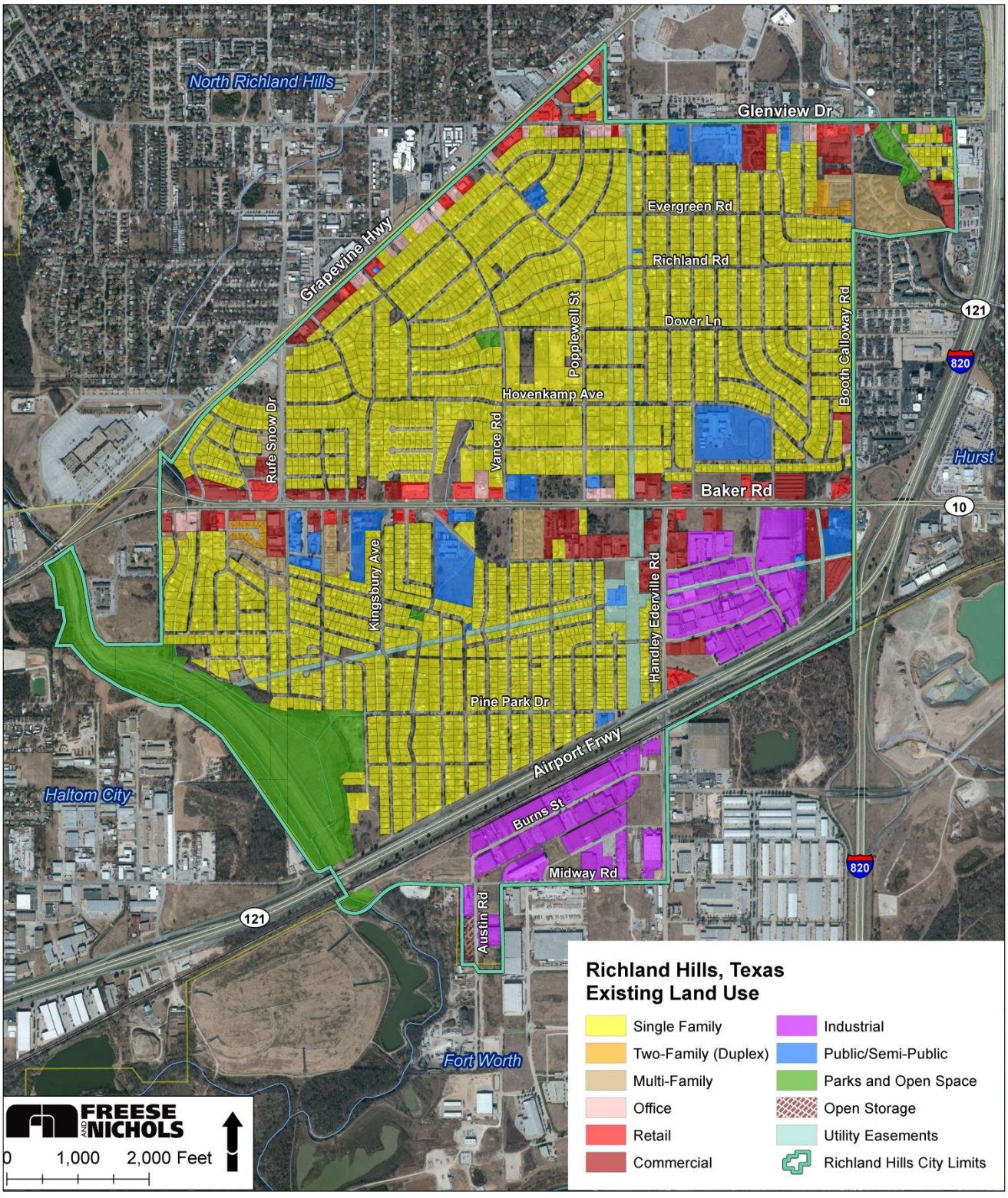
### Open Storage

Land used for open storage of equipment and other materials.

### Utility

Land used for placement of public facilities.

**Figure 11. Existing Land Use Map**



As shown in **Figure 12. Land Use Development**, approximately 69 percent of the City limits area has been developed and 24 percent is used for other purposes including easements and right-of-way. Only 7 percent or 138 acres is truly vacant land. These vacant areas are scattered throughout the City and few large vacant parcels remain. Additionally, about 17 acres are located within the floodplain, leaving about 121 developable vacant acres.

**Table 10. Existing Land Use Categories** shows the existing land use characteristics of Richland Hills's City limits. As shown, the largest single category is single family residential, 65 percent of all land within the City, or 893 acres. The next most common uses of developed land are Industrial and Parks and Open Space (including the floodway area).

Calculating the acres per 100 persons is an important measure for a city's retail base. A high ratio, between 0.6-0.7 acres per 100 persons, is representative of a community that is capturing the retail demand generated by the local population, as well as that of other nearby communities or the county. A ratio of around 0.5 acres per 100 persons is considered average, meaning that a community is capturing most of the retail demand generated by the local population. A low ratio, between 0.3-0.4 acres per 100 persons results when the local population is traveling elsewhere to patronize retail establishments. Based on the total retail acreage of approximately 30 acres, Richland Hills's retail ratio is 0.4 acres per 100 persons, which is a somewhat low retail ratio and indicates that the residents of Richland Hills are likely forced to leave the City limits for retail shopping needs.

**Figure 12. Land Use Development**

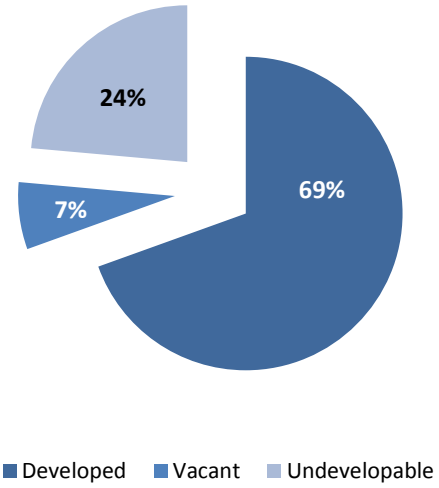



**Table 10. Existing Land Use Categories**

| Land Use | Acres | Percent of Developed |
|---|---|---|
| Single Family | 893 | 65% |
| Two Family | 7 | 0% |
| Multiple Family | 41 | 3% |
| Office | 17 | 1% |
| Retail | 30 | 2% |
| Commercial | 85 | 6% |
| Industrial | 119 | 9% |
| Public/Semi-Public | 69 | 5% |
| Parks and Open Space | 122 | 9% |
| **Total Developed** | **1,384** | |
| Open Storage | 4 | |
| Utility Easements | 38 | |
| Right-of-Way | 428 | |
| Vacant | 138 | |
| **Total** | **1,991** | |

### *Municipal Boundaries and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction*

Richland Hills contains 1,991 acres within its current City limits. The City is landlocked by the adjacent cities and no longer has the potential to expand outward. This emphasizes the importance of focusing on redevelopment efforts within the City.

### *Natural and Manmade Features*

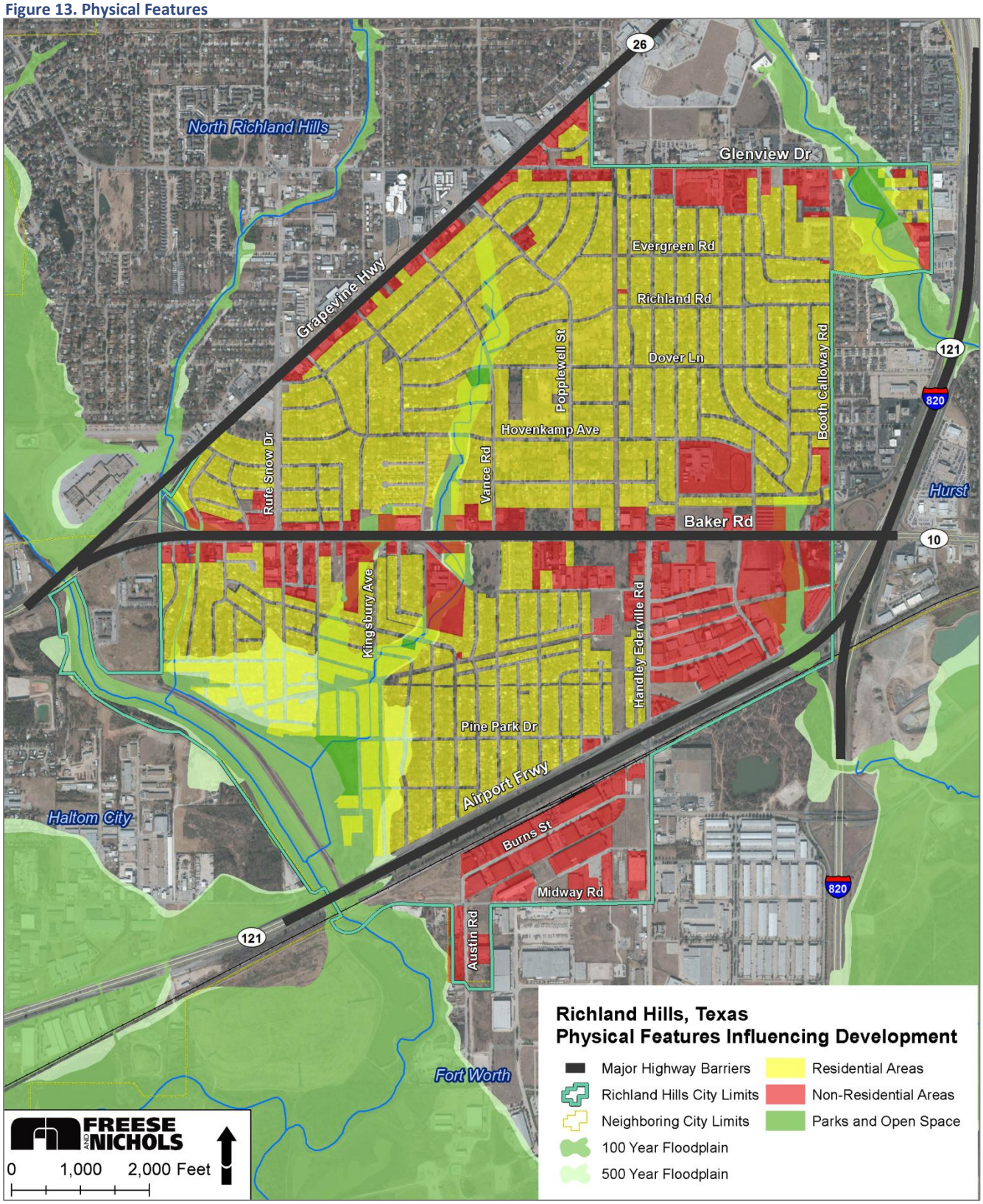
Floodplain boundaries and topographic features are important to understanding where development should and should not occur. **Figure 13. Physical Features** shows the primarily physical constraints affecting Richland Hills. Land within the floodplain is typically appropriate for parks and open space, parking areas, and similar low-impact uses. This information is also important because topography influences the development and design of infrastructure systems such as water, wastewater, and storm water systems.

Land designated as floodplain is typically difficult to develop with increased development costs and environmental concerns regarding preservation and protection of wetlands. Approximately 266 acres of the City is within the floodplain, which means much of this land should and will likely remain undeveloped and be used primarily for parks and open space. As shown in **Table 10. Existing Land Use Categories**, 138 acres are currently vacant. However, 17 of these acres are included within the floodplain, therefore 121 acres are vacant and developable.

Steep slopes can restrict development; however, Richland Hills's topography is generally flat and does not restrict development.

Additionally, manmade physical constraints must be considered. State Highway 121 and State Highway 183/Baker Boulevard provide access and an opportunity for economic development for the City. However, these thoroughfares also bisect the community, causing a disconnect in the urban fabric of Richland Hills and creating separate communities.

**Figure 13. Physical Features**



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# Future Vision

This second part of the Visioning phase involves collecting information from the community – residents, business owners, and other stakeholders and community representatives. This input will be used to identify Richland Hills's vision for its future, which will help shape and direct growth and development for the next twenty years and beyond. This plan is premised upon a shared vision of what Richland Hills should be as it continues to grow and become an increasingly mature city.

This shared vision was the culmination of a twelve-month public involvement process that started in January 2013. Nine meetings were held to obtain input for the plan, including seven Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) meetings, and two public hearings during the adoption of the plan. The seven CPAC meetings focused on the following discussion topics:

**Meeting #1:** Project kick-off and process overview

**Meeting #2:** Visioning discussion, including SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, goals, and vision statement

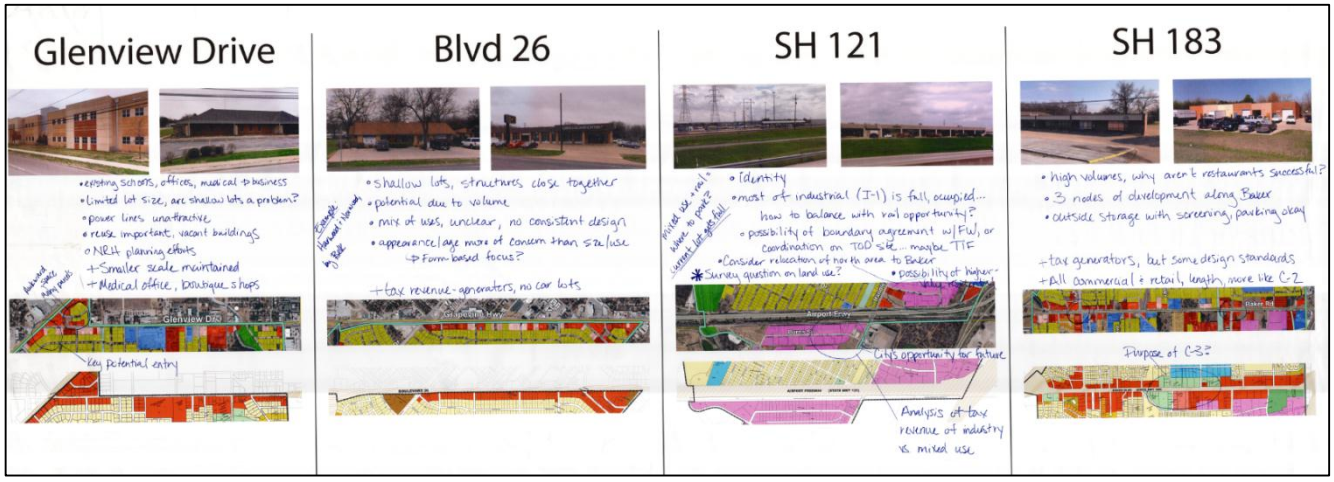
**Meeting #3:** Corridors, including land use and character for Baker Boulevard/SH 183, Airport Freeway/SH 121, Grapevine Highway/Boulevard 26, and Glenview Drive

**Meeting #4:** Future land use

**Meeting #5:** Neighborhoods and parks

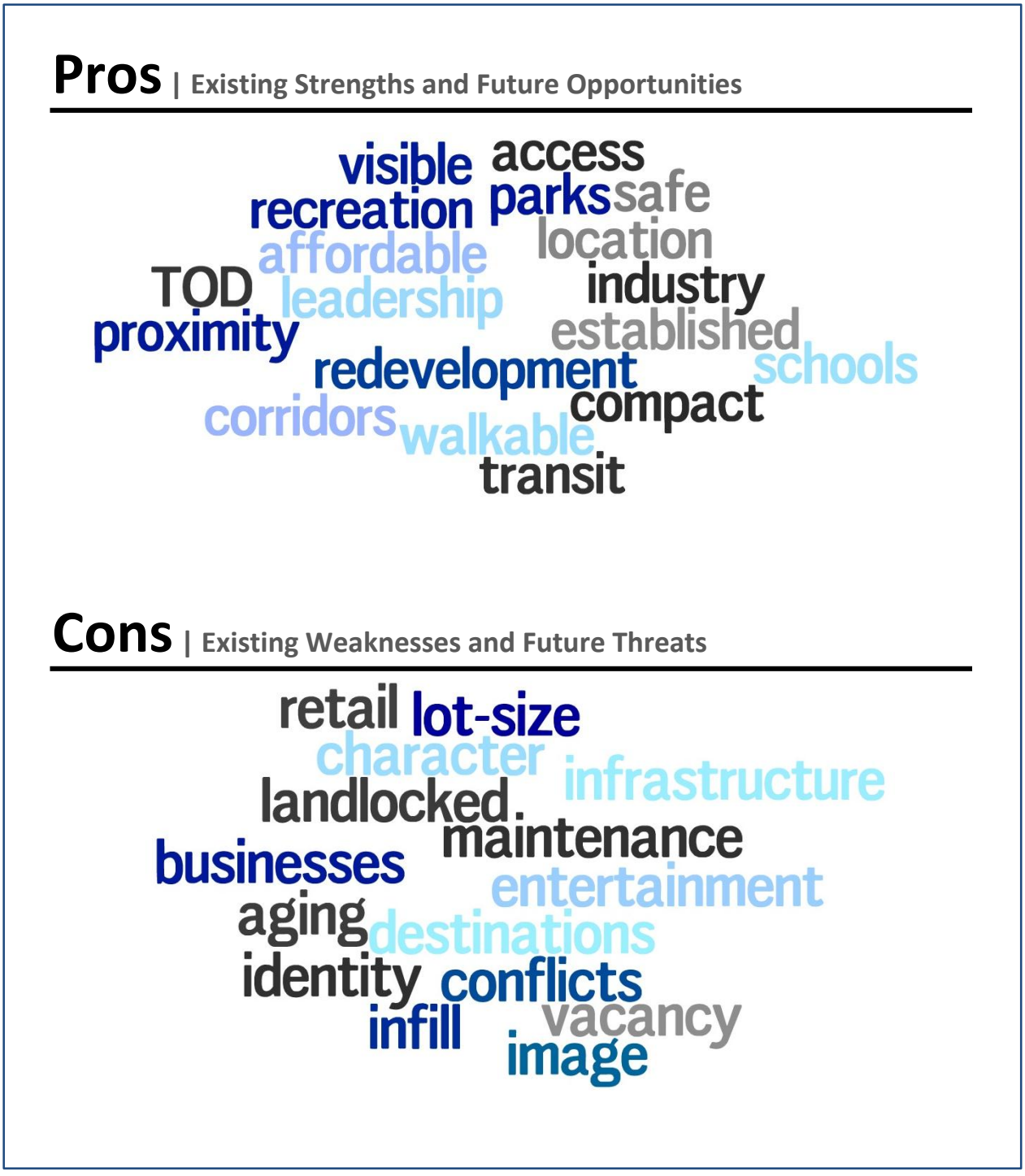
**Meeting #6:** Overview of the draft plan recommendations

**Meeting #7:** Final review of the draft plan recommendations



During the SWOT analysis, the CPAC identified "Pros" (existing strengths and future opportunities) and "Cons" (existing weakness and future threats), shown in **Figure 14. Characteristics of Richland Hills**. Although not every item is within the scope of this plan, these characteristics are important to consider during plan development in order to preserve desirable features and take advantage of future possibilities, while addressing the community's concerns in preparing for the future.

**Figure 14. Characteristics of Richland Hills**

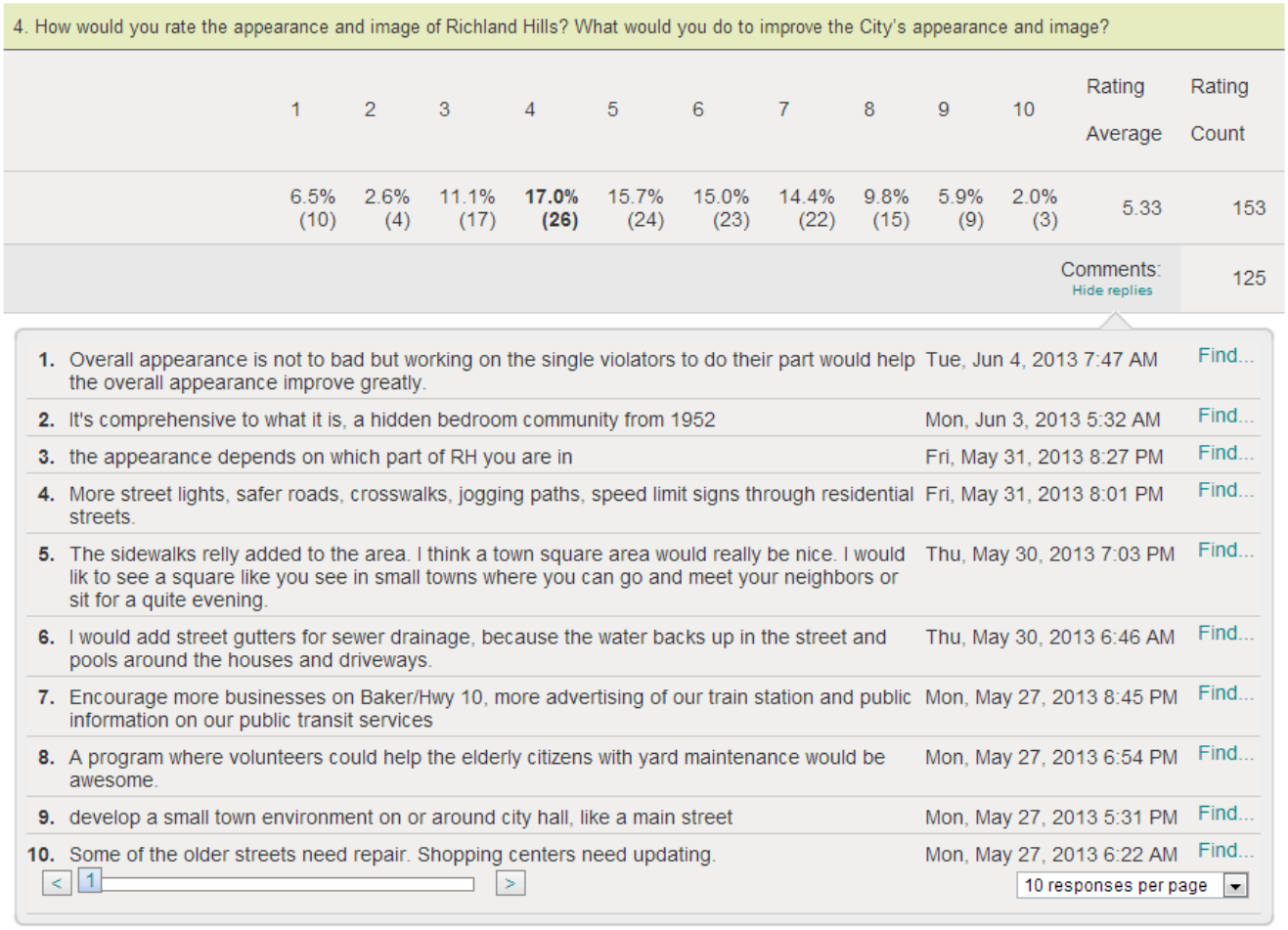


In addition to the input received from the CPAC, the community was invited to participate in an online survey (via SurveyMonkey). Over 150 residents and/or business owners participated in the survey, which included ten questions related to the future land use, appearance, and overall quality of life in Richland Hills. **Figure 15. Sample from Online Survey** shows an example of a survey question and the responses received. The following is a brief summary of the input received through the survey:

1. Residents chose Richland Hills as their home for reasons such as the small-town feel, location, schools, larger lots, quiet community, affordability, and safety.
2. If participants could pick one thing to change about Richland Hills, the top priorities would include the aging infrastructure, grocery store, more restaurants, more businesses, higher quality retail, and improved "curb appeal" appearance.
3. The largest majority of participants rated the appearance and image of Richland Hills at 4 points of a possible 10 points.
4. The most desirable future land uses include a grocery store, "sit down" restaurants, retail, and single family homes.
5. Many of the write-in comments expressed desire for more modern development types, focusing on pedestrians, connectivity, and public spaces.

This input was presented to the Advisory Committee and incorporated into the development of plan recommendations throughout the process.

**Figure 15. Sample from Online Survey**



4. How would you rate the appearance and image of Richland Hills? What would you do to improve the City's appearance and image?

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Rating Average | Rating Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.5% (10) | 2.6% (4) | 11.1% (17) | **17.0% (26)** | 15.7% (24) | 15.0% (23) | 14.4% (22) | 9.8% (15) | 5.9% (9) | 2.0% (3) | 5.33 | 153 |

Comments: Hide replies 125

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Overall appearance is not to bad but working on the single violators to do their part would help the overall appearance improve greatly. | Tue, Jun 4, 2013 7:47 AM | Find... |
| 2. | It's comprehensive to what it is, a hidden bedroom community from 1952 | Mon, Jun 3, 2013 5:32 AM | Find... |
| 3. | the appearance depends on which part of RH you are in | Fri, May 31, 2013 8:27 PM | Find... |
| 4. | More street lights, safer roads, crosswalks, jogging paths, speed limit signs through residential streets. | Fri, May 31, 2013 8:01 PM | Find... |
| 5. | The sidewalks relly added to the area. I think a town square area would really be nice. I would lik to see a square like you see in small towns where you can go and meet your neighbors or sit for a quite evening. | Thu, May 30, 2013 7:03 PM | Find... |
| 6. | I would add street gutters for sewer drainage, because the water backs up in the street and pools around the houses and driveways. | Thu, May 30, 2013 6:46 AM | Find... |
| 7. | Encourage more businesses on Baker/Hwy 10, more advertising of our train station and public information on our public transit services | Mon, May 27, 2013 8:45 PM | Find... |
| 8. | A program where volunteers could help the elderly citizens with yard maintenance would be awesome. | Mon, May 27, 2013 6:54 PM | Find... |
| 9. | develop a small town environment on or around city hall, like a main street | Mon, May 27, 2013 5:31 PM | Find... |
| 10. | Some of the older streets need repair. Shopping centers need updating. | Mon, May 27, 2013 6:22 AM | Find... |

< 1 >

10 responses per page

The CPAC was also tasked with the development of a vision statement. The purpose of a vision statement is to clearly identify what the community hopes to be "when Richland Hills grows up", which is used to guide the planning process and recommendations. Members identified key words they felt were important to reflect the community's vision, and crafted these characteristics into the following vision statement:

*Richland Hills is a welcoming and diverse community with a hometown atmosphere and strategic location within the DFW Metroplex. Our City is known for its safe and affordable neighborhoods, unique character, and accessibility. We are building for our future by creating a business-friendly environment, planning a vibrant transit oriented development site, improving our corridor image, and focusing on the overall quality of life in our community.*

# Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives are created to define what the City wants to accomplish. Goals are broad ideas, and objectives are steps to achieve the goals. The goals and objectives are identified within this section, and relate to various sections of the comprehensive plan. These goals and objectives will be addressed with more specific action-oriented recommendations throughout this plan.

## Corridors

***Goal 1. Create a unique identity for Baker Boulevard, Boulevard 26, SH 121, and Glenview Drive.***

- Objective 1.1 Establish a vision for each corridor.
- Objective 1.2 Identify land uses appropriate for each corridor.

***Goal 2. Improve the appearance of Baker Boulevard, Boulevard 26, SH 121, and Glenview Drive.***

- Objective 2.1 Establish guidelines to enhance aesthetics of existing and future developments along the corridors.
- Objective 2.2 Address the aesthetics of business signage along the corridors.

***Goal 3. Improve the safety and functionality of the corridors.***

- Objective 3.1 Identify problematic areas and identify necessary improvements that promote safety and efficient flow of vehicular traffic.
- Objective 3.2 Identify and implement appropriate access management and corridor management strategies.
- Objective 3.3 Identify improvements to promote safety and connectivity within the pedestrian realm.

## Future Land Use

***Goal 4. Create an identity for the City of Richland Hills.***

- Objective 4.1 Develop a vision for the community and identify a consistent theme.
- Objective 4.2 Designate locations for gateway signage at entrances into Richland Hills.

***Goal 5. Encourage a desirable mix of land uses within the City.***

- Objective 5.1 Designate areas ideal for future restaurants.
- Objective 5.2 Designate areas appropriate for industrial and heavy commercial uses.
- Objective 5.3 Designate areas appropriate for higher density residential development.

***Goal 6. Continue to plan for the future transit-oriented development area.***

- Objective 6.1 Review the 2009 "Richland Hills TRE Station TOD Plan" and identify which recommendations should be implemented and/or prioritized.
- Objective 6.2 Encourage use of the TRE Railway among Richland Hills's residents.

## Neighborhoods

***Goal 7. Encourage and protect investments in residential neighborhoods.***

- **Objective 7.1** Improve the appearance of future residential development.
- **Objective 7.2** Promote proactive maintenance of existing residential development.

***Goal 8. Ensure safe and convenient connectivity throughout Richland Hills's neighborhoods.***

- **Objective 8.1** Encourage a more walkable community for pedestrians.
- **Objective 8.2** Continue to promote bicycle safety and connectivity.

***Goal 9. Ensure adequate and desirable housing options.***

- **Objective 9.1** Assess the need for additional variety of housing types.
- **Objective 9.2** Examine opportunities and appropriate areas for infill housing.
- **Objective 9.3** Provide recommendations for development standards for multiple family housing developments.
- **Objective 9.4** Identify strategies for redevelopment and/or improvement of existing multiple family developments.

## Parks

***Goal 10. Leverage the City's existing parks wherever possible.***

- **Objective 10.1** Identify existing parks in need of maintenance and updates.
- **Objective 10.2** Identify opportunities for additional improvements through new amenities and facilities.

***Goal 11. Address any current deficiencies and ensure adequate facilities for the future population.***

- **Objective 11.1** Determine if any new parks are needed based on the current and projected populations.
- **Objective 11.2** Identify opportunities to incorporate public space into new developments.
- **Objective 11.3** Plan for trail connectivity within the City and the region.

# 2 Recommendations

*This phase of the comprehensive plan provides recommendations and strategies related to the physical and economic development of the City.*

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# Trends in Urban Planning

The purpose of this section is to provide an informative introduction to several current trends in planning. Various concepts of these trends may be applied to this plan for Richland Hills, as appropriate. Note that not all of the referenced concepts may be appropriate for Richland Hills.

## Smart Growth Principles

The term "Smart Growth" refers to a modern urban planning concept which is intended to improve quality of life and create more desirable and sustainable neighborhoods. Smart Growth aims to accomplish this through increasing neighborhood walkability, decreasing urban sprawl, encouraging community involvement, and developing vibrant neighborhoods. The following is an overview of the ten principles of Smart Growth, which more specifically define the movement's goals.

### *Mix Land Uses*

A variety of land use types contributes to a neighborhood's walkability and vibrancy. Providing a mix of land uses increases pedestrian activity, thereby decreasing driving time and traffic congestion within the community. Mixed land uses can come in the form of vertical mixed use (typically retail at ground level and office and/or residential on upper levels), or horizontal mixed use (each use is contained within its own structure but planned into a single development).

### *Take Advantage of Compact Building Design*

Higher density development reduces urban sprawl, which decreases the cost of extending infrastructure and preserves agricultural and low density development. Increased density also supports pedestrian-oriented mixed use developments by increasing activity within the development. Other benefits include a reduction of the negative environmental impacts of storm water runoff created by vast expanses of impervious surfaces (parking lots, buildings, concrete). Higher density development can refer to more compact building design, infill development, higher density housing, and vertical building design.

### *Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices*

A range of housing opportunities and choices refers to a community's housing stock. A range in housing options is important to ensure that "full life cycle" housing is available; this means that a person can reside in Richland Hills for his entire life, regardless of his housing need. Smaller starter homes, larger homes, apartments, townhomes, and retirement facilities are important to ensure adequate housing for young adults, families with children, empty-nesters, and retirees.



### *Create Walkable Neighborhoods*

Walkable neighborhoods are residential and nonresidential areas that are designed to be pedestrian-friendly through the use of sidewalks, signage, connectivity, seating, landscaping, and lighting. This type of neighborhood design creates more vibrant communities with streetlife, which has a positive impact on the community's health, and increases safety with more "eyes on the street".

### *Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place*

Aesthetic appearance and improvements strongly affect a community's desirability. Neighborhoods with detailed building design, streetscaping, and pedestrian amenities create local character and charm, which helps to maintain property values over time. By creating a distinct identity, a city can set itself apart from its surrounding areas, which is important in the wake of a metropolitan area such as the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.

### *Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas*

Guiding development toward existing neighborhoods allows for the preservation of farmland and open spaces, which supports local agriculture, natural resources, and overall desirability of an area. Additionally, limiting development within floodplains and other environmentally-sensitive areas preserves natural drainage systems and decreases development costs. Richland Hills has a large area of natural, undeveloped floodplain in the southwestern portion of the City that could be further expanded as active or passive recreation, taking advantage of this unique asset to the community.

### *Strengthen and Direct Development towards Existing Communities*

Similar to the previous principle of preservation of natural areas, growth should be encouraged within previously developed areas currently served by public services. Infill development helps to revitalize existing neighborhoods, and decreases the public cost of extended infrastructure to undeveloped areas.

### *Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices*

Transportation variety generally evokes images of light rail and bus public transit service, but it can also refer to pedestrian connectivity, bike lanes, park-and-rides, and shuttles/streetcars. These transportation options are important particularly in communities with high traffic congestion and lower incomes to provide an alternate means of access to workplaces, shopping, and other daily needs.

### *Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective*

Ease of development processes can have a major impact on the type of developments that a city attracts. Zoning and subdivision processes should be clear, streamlined, and readily available. Development controls should be fair to the developer and result in development that is desirable by the citizens. Improving development standards is the primary step for cities to improve the look and type of future development; however, cities should exercise caution when implementing new regulations, which may cause existing developments to be considered nonconforming uses and/or structures.

### *Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Development Decisions*

Three parties play major roles in this collaboration. First, citizens should be encouraged to participate in visioning exercises for planning efforts, such as this comprehensive plan, to identify the types of development that are desirable for Richland Hills. Citizen involvement also creates a sense of ownership in the plan and future development, which supports the overall wellbeing of the community. Second, stakeholders – primarily developers – should be involved in the review of development regulations to ensure that standards and processes are reasonable and fair to developers, while reflecting the community's vision. Third, City staff should participate in coordinating and encouraging collaboration between these different groups.

## Community Health

The health of a community's residents can be directly impacted through development decisions. Physical design of the built environment, availability of recreational facilitates/activities, and incentivized uses are opportunities for cities to have a positive impact on the health of their citizens. These considerations are particularly important for communities with lower median income levels where residents may not have as many options or opportunities as other families or communities.

### *Walkable Neighborhoods*

A city's walkability is determined by the availability of pedestrian connections and proximity of residential and retail land uses. By offering an alternative to driving for basic errands, citizens have a healthier option that saves money for gas and helps to improve air quality. Sidewalks and bike lanes allow for safe pedestrian travel. With neighborhood support services incorporated within neighborhoods, citizens can walk or bike to a grocery store, restaurant, or convenience store.

### *Recreation*

Recreational amenities should provide opportunities for increasing physical activity and social interaction. In addition to providing traditional park space, cities should consider development of a trail network with adequate signage and instructional workout stations located along the trails. Other park options include dog parks, or smaller "pocket parks" that are typically located in a vacant lot of a developed neighborhood. Community gathering places should also be available, such as pavilions, theaters/amphitheaters, and seating areas near water features or public art. Organized events including festivals and parades can encourage community activity, with both physical and social involvement.

### *Land Uses*

Certain land uses can be more conducive to promoting public health, such as the availability of medical care and access to fresh, healthy foods. Cities can encourage these uses by ensuring they are permitted uses within the zoning ordinance, and developing incentives to encourage these businesses to locate within the city. Doctor and dentist offices and urgent care centers are often important destinations for families with young children or elderly people.

Grocery stores, small neighborhood markets, farmers markets, and community gardens are different options for addressing areas in need of additional access to healthy foods. The number of farmers markets nationwide has increased 17 percent from 2010 to 2011, with the second largest growth occurring Texas at 38 percent (US Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Marketing Service news release, Aug 5, 2011).


Farmers markets and community gardens can also be beneficial in supporting the local economy, encouraging social interaction, and are typically more environmentally-friendly with reduced transportation and packaging needs. Lower income areas can sometimes become "food deserts", which are less likely to have access to fresh, healthy foods, and more likely to have easier access to fast food restaurants and gas station snacks.

## Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a design approach that originated in the 1960s to deter criminal behavior in public spaces and private areas by relying on the design of the built environment to affect human behavior. CPTED can be an inexpensive method for cities to deter crime if incorporated into the initial design. Developed areas can often be retrofitted with some CPTED principles; however, the cost of modifying existing developments is typically more costly. The following four CPTED principles can be used to design areas to increase perceived safety and discourage criminal activity.

### *Natural Surveillance*

Increasing visibility can have positive impacts on reducing the likelihood of criminal activity while increasing the feeling of pedestrian safety. The feeling of "being seen" is created by ensuring clear lines of sight, the placement of windows facing onto streets, and shorter fences with open designs. Also, pedestrian scale lighting (i.e., lighting that increases the visibility of a person's face) helps to deter crime because a person can be more easily identified and is less likely to be disguised in shadows.

### *Natural Access Control*

Environmental design can be used to limit access by having designated points of entry, which increases the public awareness of a person entering the area. The placement of thorny bushes under low windows and around fencing is an easy method to discourage intruders from "sneaking in". While open-style fencing is appropriate for front and side yards to increase visibility, taller masonry walls should be used along alleys.

### *Natural Territorial Reinforcement*

Public areas should be clearly distinguished from private areas. Common areas should be designated by the presence of signage, seating, and other public amenities, and should be used to host community gathering activities. Security signage should be used for private areas and public spaces accessible during evenings, such as parking lots. Creating a sense of ownership in private areas discourages unwanted persons from entering the area. Private land should be delineated by landscaping or short, open fencing.

### *Maintenance*

Adequate maintenance of public and private areas helps to discourage criminal activity, and supports a sense of ownership for residents to protect their community. According to the "Broken Windows" theory, even small acts of vandalism or neglect can attract acts crime. Code enforcement and timely removal of graffiti and litter are relatively low-cost efforts to improve the City's appearance and deter criminal activity.

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# Corridor Strategies

The purpose of this section is to promote Richland Hills's community image and identify strategies for achieving its vision for future growth and redevelopment of its major corridors. This plan is in response to recent development activity, a zoning update process, planned activities along the corridors, and the growth potential for the next 10 to 30 years. Due to its strategic location and the growth projections for the Dallas-Fort Worth region, Richland Hills is in a prime location for significant growth.

The City of Richland Hills is located adjacent to four major corridors (see **Figure 16. Corridor Location Map**) that are vital thoroughfares for connectivity within the Dallas-Fort Worth "mid-cities":

- State Highway 121/Airport Freeway
- State Highway 183/Baker Boulevard
- Grapevine Highway/Boulevard 26
- Glenview Drive

Not only do these roadways carry high volumes of traffic through the City, the corridors play an important role in the ultimate perception and identity for the community. Each of the four corridors is unique in functionality and character; this plan will build upon those elements to recommend strategies for the enhancement of these corridors.

Although each is unique, the corridors currently face many common challenges. Vacant buildings, deteriorating structures, inconsistent land use types, and unattractive areas result in lack of continuity and limit the area from reaching its full potential. The following recommendations have been developed based on input from the community, the advisory committee, and analyses of each of the corridors' issues.

**Figure 16. Corridor Location Map**

## State Highway 121/Airport Freeway

State Highway 121, also known as Airport Freeway, is located in southern Richland Hills, with only a small portion of the city limits located south of the highway. The roadway is a high-capacity six lane divided TxDOT facility with a west-bound frontage road. Total combined east- and west-bound traffic volume on this roadway is 100,649 vehicles per day (NCTCOG, 2009), making SH 121 the most heavily-traveled roadway in Richland Hills.

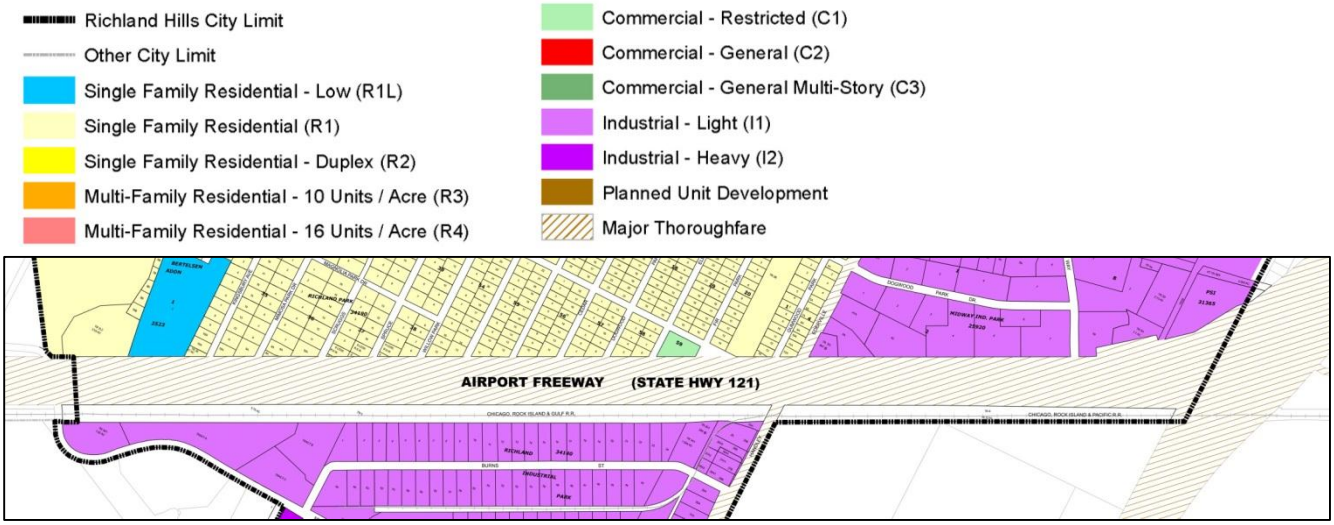
The character of the corridor is generally undistinguishable from the surrounding communities, with no major visible features unique to Richland Hills. The Trinity Railway Express Richland Hills station is visible from the roadway (see top photo). Residential homes are located along the frontage road, along with offices and other businesses.

**Figure 17** shows the existing land uses and the existing zoning along the corridor; each color represents a land use type. The north side of the roadway is adjacent to residential development (yellow). Also on the north side are a church (blue), a gas station and fast food restaurant (bright red), and a variety of commercial and industrial businesses (dark red and purple).

The south side of the roadway is the site of the Trinity Railway Express Richland Hills Station and industrial businesses (purple). Many of these businesses are located in this area due to its proximity to the railroad, prior to conversion to commuter/passenger rail. The rail no longer serves these businesses; however, direct access to SH 121 is desirable for much of the truck traffic in this area.

Also located along the south side of the roadway is a relatively wide buffer zone between the roadway and the railroad tracks/industrial businesses. This buffer is a wide grassy area with some tree plantings, partially screening the view of the industrial area to the south.

**Figure 17. SH 121/Airport Freeway Existing Land Use (top) and Existing Zoning (bottom)**


## *Focus of SH 121:*
## *Establish an identifiable positive image for the City of Richland Hills*

As the most heavily-traveled corridor in the City, SH 121 provides a significant opportunity to establish a positive identity for Richland Hills and to take advantage of the TRE Rail Station. With an estimated daily traffic volume over 100,000 vehicles traveling through the City each day, it is important that the development along the roadway portray a desirable image of the community. An attractive appearance from the roadway is important to ensuring a positive perception of Richland Hills.


## State Highway 183/Baker Boulevard

Baker Boulevard, also known as SH 183 or Highway 10, is a central arterial through the City that provides east-west access from Interstate 820 to Rufe Snow Drive and Boulevard 26. The roadway is a four-lane divided thoroughfare with left turn lanes. Total east-bound and west-bound vehicle volume is 13,214 near the intersection of Rufe Snow Drive, compared to 22,222 near Interstate 820 (NCTCOG, 2009), which indicates much of the traffic using the eastern portion of Baker Boulevard may be accessing the commercial businesses in this area.

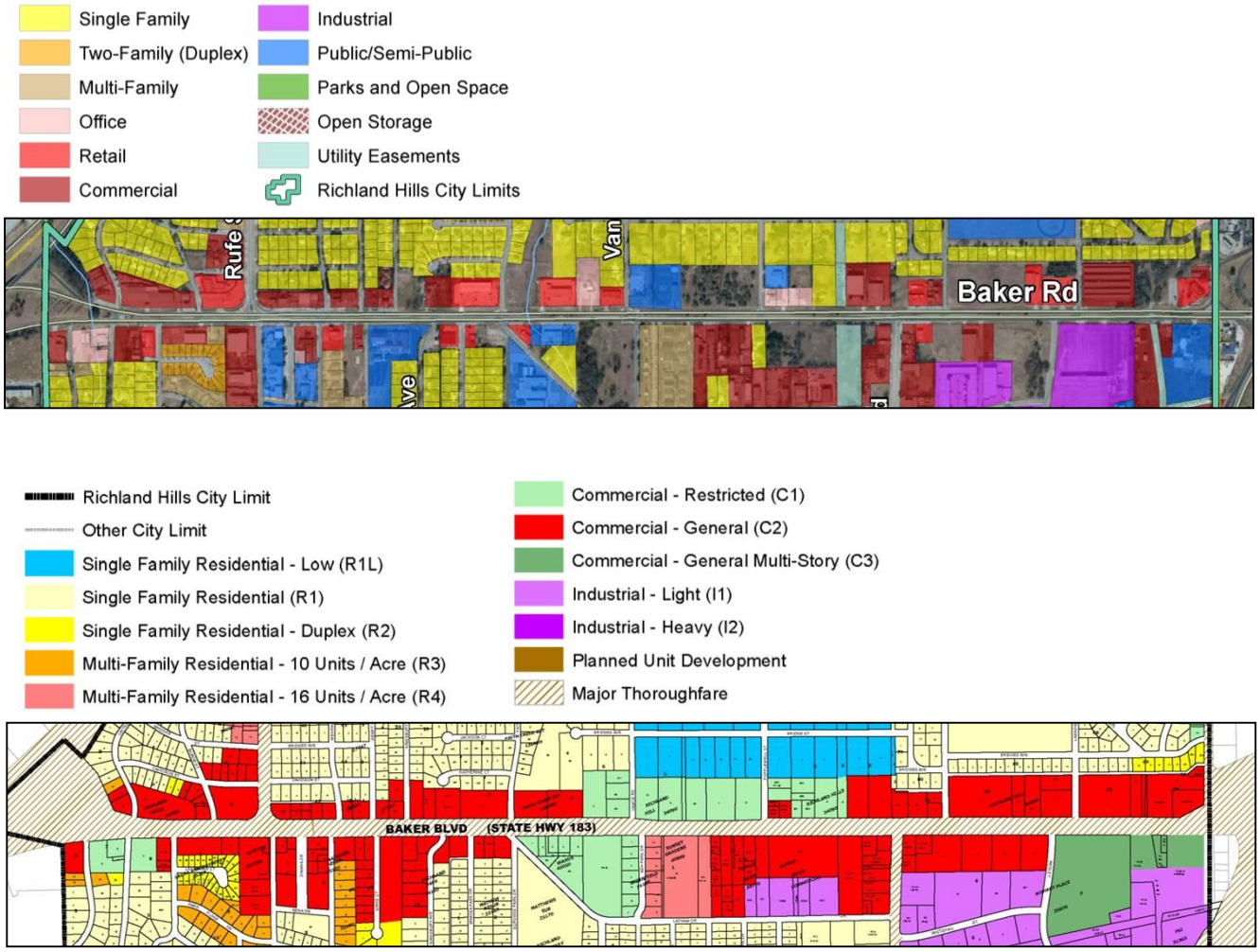
The overall character of the corridor is a "hodgepodge" blend of businesses, with no clear vision or purpose for the roadway. Many of the businesses are located in buildings that are deteriorating with age and lack of maintenance. However, one positive attribute is the landscaped median along much of the roadway, which greatly improves the appearance of the corridor.

**Figure 18** shows the existing land uses and the existing zoning along the corridor; each color represents a land use type. Much of the frontage is currently used for retail/commercial (red) uses, with some public/semi-public (blue) uses such as churches and municipal buildings. The southeast portion of the corridor is adjacent to a large concentrated area of light industrial/heavy commercial (purple) uses. These uses are located adjacent to residential uses (yellow). The business uses are typically buffered only by wood fences, which age and deteriorate over time.

Most properties along this corridor have existing buildings, which future owners will likely desire to reuse; therefore, few upgrades have been made as the corridor's development ages.

Some of the existing uses along the corridor have outside storage, many in the form of vehicles for repair or storage. Additionally, applicants interested in properties along this corridor often request outside storage of building materials and heavy equipment/ machinery.

**Figure 18. SH 183/Baker Blvd Existing Land Use (top) and Existing Zoning (bottom)**




## Focus of Baker Boulevard:

### *Provide a location for larger lot commercial and business uses*

Baker Boulevard provides an opportunity to Richland Hills for larger lot business uses with convenient access to major highways, which is unique to this corridor. This corridor should focus on allowing for a range of businesses, including retail, commercial and limited industrial. It is important to keep in mind that this corridor is the central route through Richland Hills and should be aesthetically-pleasing to passersby.



## Grapevine Highway/Boulevard 26

Grapevine Highway, also referred to as Boulevard 26, runs diagonally southwest-northeast and serves as a City limit boundary between Richland Hills and North Richland Hills. This is a five lane undivided roadway (four travel lanes with a continuous left turn lane). Total traffic volume on Grapevine Highway is 16,450 vehicles per day (NCTCOG, 2009).

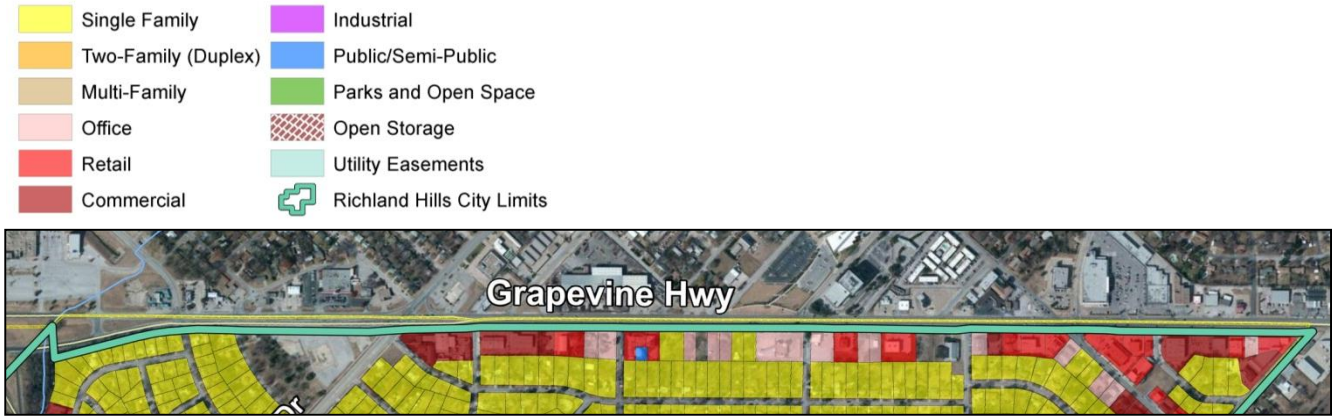
Development along the corridor is vehicle-oriented, with a mix of generally newer pad site or strip development and reuse of existing residential structures for businesses. Small parcel size is a challenge for development in this area. Several of the nonresidential properties have been replatted to combine adjacent lots.

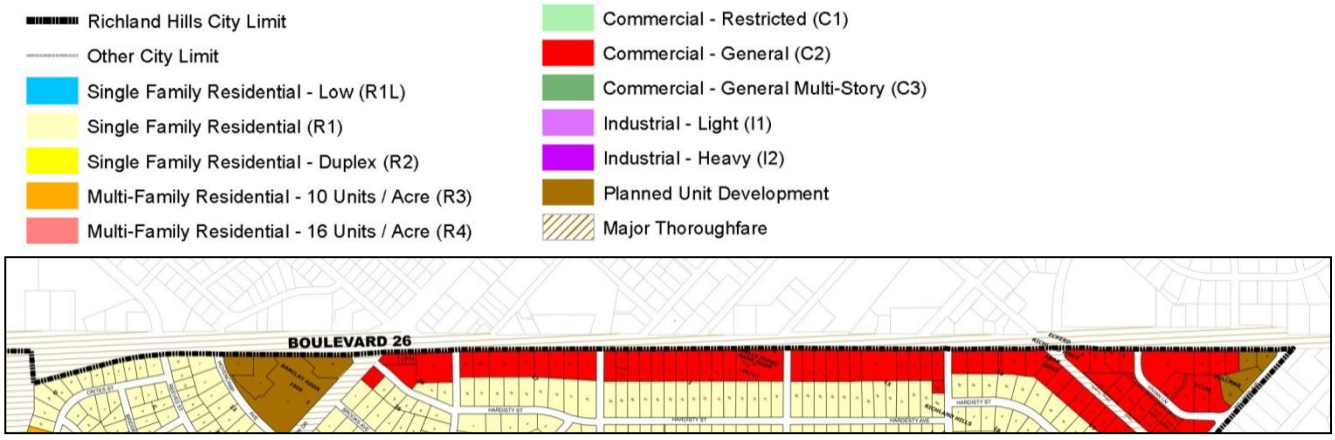
A study was conducted in conjunction with the City of North Richland Hills in 2004 to evaluate and plan for the future redevelopment of this shared corridor. This study will be discussed in further detail in the Future Land Use Plan; however, it is important to note that recommendations of this 2004 study are generally consistent with recommendations of this plan. **Figure 19** below displays graphics from this study. The large vacant parcel at Grapevine Highway and Rufe Snow Drive, shown in the left image, was identified as an area for a grocery store with out-parcels for smaller retail development. The area at the intersection of Grapevine Highway and Glenview Drive, shown in the image to the right, was identified as a redeveloped mixed use area for residential and retail uses.

**Figure 19. Graphics from 2004 Study - Grapevine and Rufe Snow (left) and Grapevine and Glenview (right)**

**Figure 20** shows the existing land uses and the existing zoning along the corridor; each color represents a land use type. Existing land use along the frontage is a blend of retail/commercial (red), office (pink), and single family residential (yellow). The corridor is mostly developed; however, a large parcel at the Rufe Snow Drive intersection is currently vacant, which could be an asset to the City.

**Figure 20. Blvd 26/Grapevine Hwy Existing Land Use (top) and Existing Zoning (bottom)**




## Focus of Grapevine Highway:

### *Provide a location for retail shops and commercial uses*

As this roadway continues to redevelop over time, it should become the commercial and retail focus of the City, providing goods and services to the community. This roadway is shared with North Richland Hills, and development should be complementary on both sides of the road.



## Glenview Drive

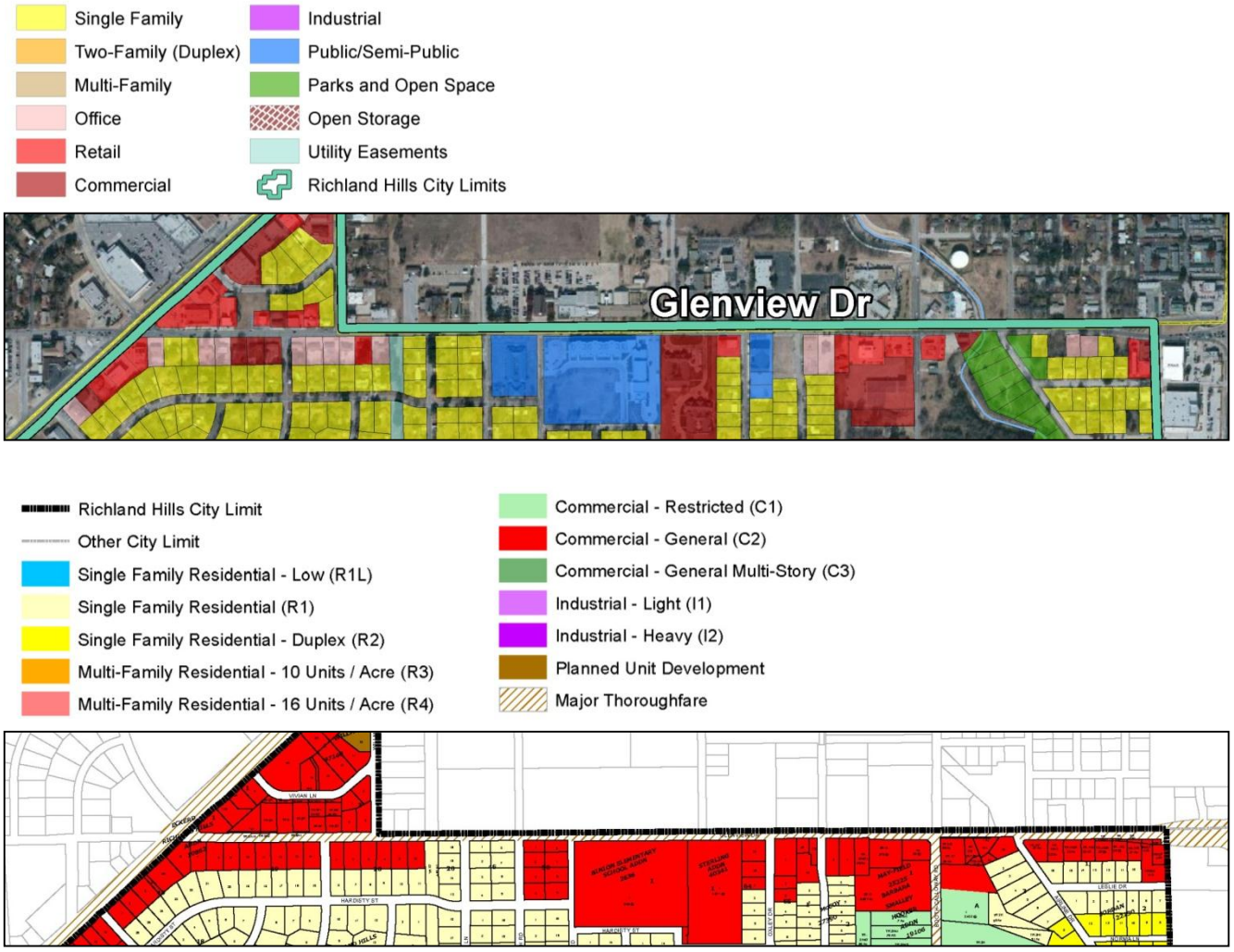
Glenview Drive is an east-west thoroughfare at the City limit boundary between Richland Hills and North Richland Hills. It is a four lane undivided roadway, with total traffic volume of 10,719 (NCTCOG, 2009). In contrast to the other corridors, Glenview Drive is lined with sidewalks. However, additional pedestrian amenities, such as seating, lighting, and crosswalks, are limited.

Similar to Grapevine Highway, many of the lots are small in size unless the lots have been replatted. Development along the corridor is a blend of new construction and reuse of residential structures.

**Figure 21** shows the existing land uses and the existing zoning along the corridor; each color represents a land use type. The corridor is a blend of uses, including commercial/retail (red), offices (pink), public/semi-public uses such as schools or churches (blue), and several single family homes. The existing land uses are generally consistent with the current zoning.

Many of the smaller professional offices are located in the reused residential structures. These are typically small lots with minimal side yard setbacks, restricting full use of the rear property for some businesses. Note that many of these businesses along the corridor abut residential uses, typically separated by wood fences and landscaping.

**Figure 21. Glenview Drive Existing Land Use (top) and Existing Zoning (bottom)**




## Focus of Glenview Drive:

***Provide a pedestrian-oriented location for office, medical, and restaurant uses***

As Glenview Drive continues to redevelop, the existing character with small-scale buildings, sidewalks, and office-type businesses should be continue and enhanced.

## Corridor Strategies Recommendations

The following recommendations relate to the major corridors of Richland Hills, focusing on individual corridors as well as the overall corridor network.

### Ensure Desirable Land Uses along the Corridors

The following are examples of appropriate land uses for each corridor, based on the existing land uses and the identified vision for the character of each area.

**Airport Freeway/SH 121**

- Mixed use (retail/office/high density)
- Highway-oriented retail
- Office


**Baker Boulevard/SH 183**

- Office/showroom
- Building material sales
- Hospital
- Drycleaner
- Funeral home
- Car wash

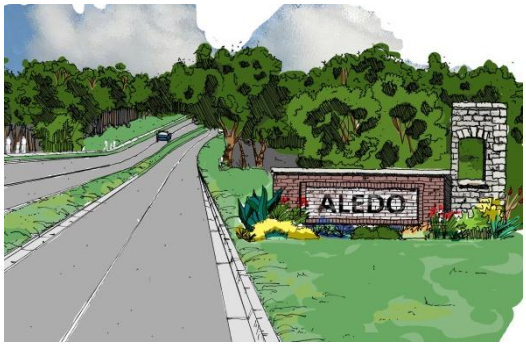
### Glenview Drive

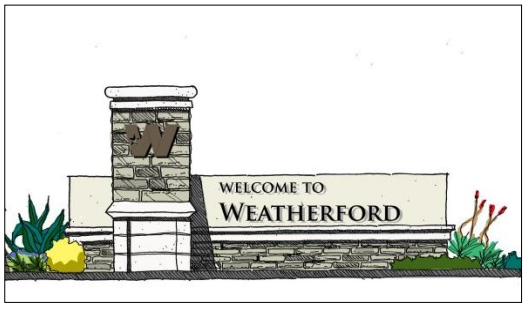
- Professional offices
- Medical (dentist, doctor, lab, hospice, clinic)
- Veterinarian office (no outdoor kennels)
- Restaurants (sit-down or fast food)
- Retail shops
- Beauty salon
- Dance studio


### Grapevine Highway/Boulevard 26

- Auto repair and service, tire sales
- Locksmith, hardware store, appliance store
- Restaurants (sit-down and fast food)
- Office supply store
- Florist
- Grocery store






## Install Gateway Elements at Key Locations

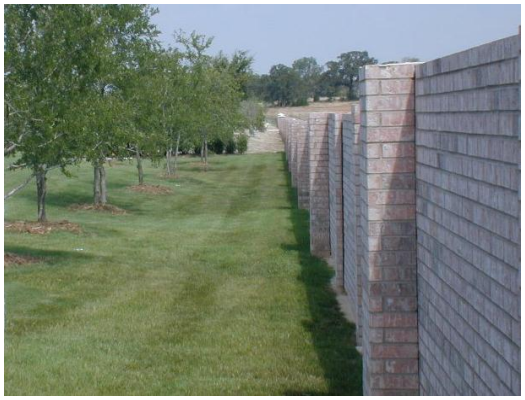
Communities often lose their distinct identities in the wake of major metropolitan areas, such as the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Due to the prominence and visibility of these four corridors, gateway features are recommended. As shown in **Figure 22. Proposed Locations for Gateway Signage**, features are recommended at each of the major entries into the City.

The City currently has several existing examples of entry features located along Glenview Drive (traveling westbound) and Baker Boulevard (traveling eastbound). These features appear outdated, and should be related with a more modern, vibrant, and attractive design.

Entry features should be of a consistent theme and design, but scaled appropriately for each corridor. The SH 121 gateway should be a larger feature visible to passing traffic traveling at high speeds, whereas smaller features would be more appropriate for the other three corridors. Feature design may take advantage of existing vegetation and topography with the use of retaining walls. Appropriate landscaping and/or statuary could accompany any signage.

The signs would ideally be located at the City limit lines; however, current land uses and appearances may conflict with branding considerations. Site selection should consider visual backdrop and adjacent uses as viewed from the roadways.

**Figure 22. Proposed Locations for Gateway Signage**

**Require Screening of Outside Storage along Baker Boulevard**

Many of the uses locating along Baker Boulevard have or request outside storage and extended parking of vehicles. Many of the lots along the corridor are large enough to accommodate this storage; however, it is often visible from the roadway. Standards should be implemented requiring screening for storage and long-term parking, either to be located behind the building and out of sight, or to be screened by masonry fences and/or landscaping.

**Protect the Neighborhoods with Residential Buffer Standards along Glenview Avenue and Baker Boulevard**

Nearly all of the businesses located along Glenview Avenue and Baker Boulevard back to residential properties. The current zoning ordinance requires a "decorative solid screening fence" to be installed along the property line, which includes masonry materials along with several types of wood. Wood fences deteriorate over time and are generally not acceptable for buffering single family homes from nonresidential uses. The regulations should be revised to require a solid masonry fence and possibly additional landscaping to reduce the impacts of the nonresidential use on the adjacent neighborhoods.

**Enhance the Landscape Buffer along SH 121**

A landscape buffer is currently in place along the south side of the roadway, which is an aesthetically-pleasing amenity unique from other communities along SH 121. It is recommended this buffer be improved with increased planting of trees and other drought-tolerant landscaping. The north side of the corridor should be improved similarly, which would provide a buffer between the highway and the nearby residential properties.

### Develop Structure Reuse and Alternative Compliance Standards for Existing Buildings

Many existing buildings in the City will be reused for new businesses or purposes, and standards should be in place to address these issues. It is recommended that an alternative approval process be added to the zoning ordinance. The purpose of the alternative compliance process is to allow for different standards that are in agreement with each corridor's vision and will produce an equivalent or enhanced level of results. Approval of alternative compliance standards should occur during the site plan review process.

### Review Parking Design and Access Management, Particularly along Grapevine Highway

Many lots along this corridor are fully open to the roadway and do not have a defined driveway entry. This creates confusion and traffic hazards for vehicles entering/existing the parking lot. As these properties are redeveloped or improved, it is important to remediate this issue by installing landscaped islands directing traffic to designated points of ingress/egress.


### Review Signage Regulations along Glenview Drive

Signage establishes building and site identity. As one of the most visible elements for any corridor, signs have a significant influence on the visual environment. Effective signage contributes to a positive community image, thereby preserving property values and promoting the economic health of a community.

As a pedestrian-oriented corridor with more of a unique, small-town feel, another recommendation to improve the Glenview Drive image is to restrict the installation of pole signs and require monument signs. Several businesses along the corridor have already opted for these monument signs, which reduce the visual clutter and create a higher-quality image from the road.

### Ensure Pedestrian-Orientated Design along Glenview Drive

The corridor is currently lined with sidewalks, making Glenview Drive the most pedestrian-oriented major roadway in the City. However, the sidewalks are narrow, and do not include other pedestrian amenities such as adequate lighting, seating, waste receptacles, and landscaping. Several signaled intersections are in place along the roadway, but marked pedestrian crossings are limited. Pedestrian amenities, roadway paintings and wayfinding signage should be a priority for improvement along this roadway. Additionally, as this corridor redevelops, an increased right-of-way to allow for on-street parking and expanded pedestrian areas.



**Evaluate Other Special Design Standard Considerations along Baker Boulevard**

The existing development standards for building design, landscaping, and parking design should be evaluated to ensure the vision for Baker Boulevard is reflected – a location for businesses, while maintaining a desirable view from the roadway. Additionally, since redevelopment and reuse of existing structures is common along this corridor, the zoning ordinance should be revised to address these issues. Alternative standards should be in place for nonconforming uses/structures and for the reuse of structures.

**Evaluate Other Special Design Standard Considerations along Grapevine Highway**

Grapevine Highway is one of the most visible areas of Richland Hills and should have quality development to reflect the City's image. Several new developments along this corridor have set a positive example for future redevelopment – replatting small lots into one larger lot, use of quality building materials, and incorporation of landscaping.

Development regulations in this area should focus on ensuring quality building materials on future development. Masonry materials should be used on all visible facades, with other materials permitted up to a certain percentage (i.e., 25 percent per facade).

Another topic that should be evaluated is ensuring adequate site landscaping. Most businesses along the corridor have parking located in front of the building. Landscaping should be used to improve the appearance of these parking areas.

As mentioned with the other corridors, standards should also address the reuse of existing structures and how quality design standards can be applied to these buildings.

**Evaluate Other Special Design Standard Considerations along Glenview Drive**

As lots redevelop, future construction should be complementary to the existing structures – smaller scale buildings, pitched roofs, masonry materials, and architectural details. When possible, smaller lots should be combined and replatted to ensure adequate lot size for nonresidential users.

**Adopt New Base or Overlay Zoning Districts to Address Corridor Needs**

Revising development regulations for these areas is a major step to improve appearance and functionality. Additional design, landscaping, site requirements and character continuity could be achieved through the development of new zoning districts or the application of an overlay zone. Part of the zoning ordinance revision process should evaluate whether a new zoning district would be beneficial for each of the corridors, or whether an overlay district would have a more desirable effect.

An overlay zoning district has two key components. First is an identifiable boundary that may share common boundaries with an underlying base district. Second, the overlay district will provide regulations, procedures and/or incentives to protect or enhance the resources within the area. It will require amendment to the zoning text regulation.

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# Future Land Use Plan

The right of a municipality to manage and regulate land use is rooted in its need to protect the health, safety, and welfare of local citizens. The first step in establishing the guidelines for such oversight is the community's comprehensive plan. Although it is one of several components of this *2014 Comprehensive Plan*, the significance of the Future Land Use Plan text and map cannot be overstated. Similar to the way in which a map serves as a guide to a particular destination, the Future Land Use Plan should serve Richland Hills as a guide to its unique vision of its future form as the City continues to redevelop.

A community's roadway network forms one of the most visible and permanent elements of a community. The thoroughfare network is vital to the City's ability to grow and attract businesses, and as such it is directly linked to land use. The type of roadway dictates the use of adjacent land, and conversely, the type of land use dictates the size, capacity and flow of the roadway.

A prime example of the interrelated nature of land use and transportation within Richland Hills can be seen along the City's four major corridors – the high traffic volumes have resulted in an abundance of nonresidential development along the frontages. Retail, commercial, and other nonresidential land uses have and will continue to seek locations in areas with high visibility and accessibility.

## Future Land Use Plan

Each place that is represented on a map can also be compared to each individual decision that the City makes with regard to land use and zoning; these individual decisions can either lead to, or away from, the City attaining its vision. In order to serve as the City's long-range "roadmap", the Future Land Use Plan establishes an overall framework for the preferred ultimate development pattern of the City based principally on balanced, compatible, and diversified land uses. The Future Land Use Map should ultimately reflect the City's long-range statement of public policy and it should be used as a basis for future development decisions.

It is important to note that the Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map, which legally regulates specific development requirements on individual parcels. The zoning map should be guided by the graphic depiction of the City's preferred long-range development pattern as shown on the Future Land Use Map. It is also important to note that while the Future Land Use Map itself is an integral part of the Future Land Use section, the land use policy recommendations that support the map and that relate to how land use development should occur are also important. These policy recommendations are contained in the last section of this Future Land Use section.

### *Future Land Use Development*

The Future Land Use Map was developed through collaboration with Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC), based on the input from the online community survey and the vision for the corridors. The map also considered recent applications and requests that have come before the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council, in an effort to ensure the plan addresses the demands of its residents and businesses. The Future Land Use Map was continually adapted by the CPAC through the process, and ultimately resulted in **Figure 24. Future Land Use Map**.

### *Thoroughfare Network*

Many of the decisions regarding land uses and roadways within Richland Hills have already been made; rights-of-way in the developed areas of the City were established and roadways were constructed years ago. Major challenges for Richland Hills include:

- Effective utilization of frontages as redevelopment continues;
- Creating an identity for the City along frontages, particularly SH 121;
- Creation of a safe pedestrian system to provide interconnectivity between homes, public facilities, and employment/retail areas; and
- Monitoring regional growth implications in order to proactively address mobility and accessibility issues to and from Richland Hills.

This plan recommends various ways in which the City can effectively meet these challenges.

## *Future Land Use Categories*

This section of the Future Land Use Plan reviews each type of recommended land use as shown on the map. Land use types are grouped into two primary categories – residential land uses and nonresidential land uses.

### Residential Land Uses

#### Low Density Residential

This category refers to smaller single family homes and some duplex units. This density is similar to the current development in the majority of Richland Hills. Approximately two to six dwelling units per acre are appropriate for this category.

#### Medium Density Residential

Medium density residential refers to townhouses, duplexes, condominiums, and apartment developments, which are intended to accommodate the City's need for diversity of housing choices, such that Richland Hills can become a "full life cycle" community.

#### High Density Residential

High density residential land use is characterized by traditional apartment- and condominium-type units in attached living complexes. These developments may take a variety of forms. Traditional garden style apartments have, over the past few decades, been the primary design for multiple family units. However, courtyard apartments have grown in use and popularity due to their focus upon situating dwelling units around a courtyard or common space. A typical apartment complex is generally at least 24 dwelling units per acre.




## Nonresidential Land Uses

### Mixed Use

Mixed Use areas support a compact mix of office, retail, cultural facilities, and medium-to-high density housing, providing the residents with a vibrant blend of opportunities to live, work, shop and play within a closely defined area. This land use category should incorporate a range of building structures and land uses, including multi-story residential above retail, townhomes and single family residences.

### Office/Professional

This land use type is intended to provide offices for doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects, insurance agents, real estate professionals, etc. Small-scale office land uses are generally compatible with the neighboring residential areas. These areas should be pedestrian-friendly, with sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting.

### Retail

This land use type is intended to provide for a variety of restaurants, larger shops, and personal service establishments. These uses are envisioned to provide goods or services directly to the community. Other examples of uses in this area include florists, grocery stores, and light auto service.

### Light Commercial

The business land use designation is intended for a variety of retail and commercial uses that provide employment opportunities and support the City's tax base. Examples of such uses include hardware stores, offices, and distribution centers. Some heavy commercial uses may be permitted, subject to special conditions such as increased screening.

### Heavy Commercial

This land use designation is intended for a range of light and heavy commercial, assembly, warehousing, and manufacturing uses. These businesses can be advantageous for a municipality in terms of providing employment and an increased tax base.


### Industrial

The industrial land use designation is applied to areas intended for a range of heavy commercial, assembly, warehousing, and manufacturing uses. Large tracts of land with easy access to roadway transportation are becoming increasingly hard to find for the industrial business community. However, these businesses can be advantageous for a municipality in terms of providing employment and an increased tax base.


### Parks and Open Space

Areas with this land use designation are representative of parks and open spaces that are currently in existence or planned; however, parks and open spaces are permitted within any area.

### Public/Semi-Public

This land use category includes uses that are governmental, institutional, or religious in nature. These uses are generally permitted in any area; therefore, areas shown on the Future Land Use Map include the uses that are currently in existence. However, it is anticipated that there will be a need for additional public uses with future population growth.

### Town Center

The Town Center area is intended to serve as a core area for the City that creates a sense of place and identity for the community. It is intended to meet the needs of residents, offering a central gathering space, small-scale shops and offices, and community facilities. Future development should complement the City's municipal services located in this area.

### Transit-Oriented District

The Transit-Oriented District (also called Transit-Oriented Development) is intended to capitalize on the existing TRE Richland Hills station. This area should be utilized to attract visitors and provide an interesting, vibrant area in Richland Hills that offers a different lifestyle or destination point. Uses in this area should be similar to the Town Center, with multi-story developments focusing on the pedestrian realm. This area should also continue to facilitate commuter ridership, as the station functions today.

## *Future Land Use Map*

**Table 11. Future Land Use Acreage** and **Figure 23. Percent of Future Acreage** show acreage according to the Future Land Use Map. As shown, if Richland Hills redevelops as shown in the Future Land Use Map, the largest categories of development will continue to be Low Density Residential at 59 percent, with Mixed Use at 15 percent, and Parks and Open Space at 8 percent of the total acreage.

**Figure 23. Percent of Future Acreage**

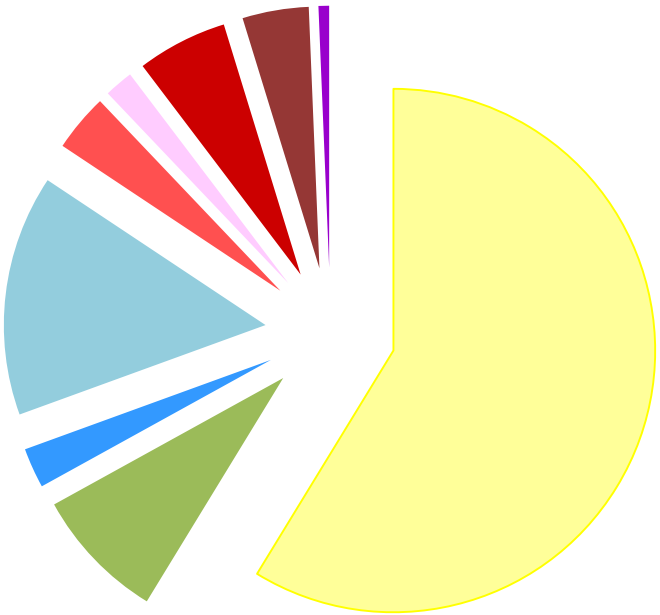
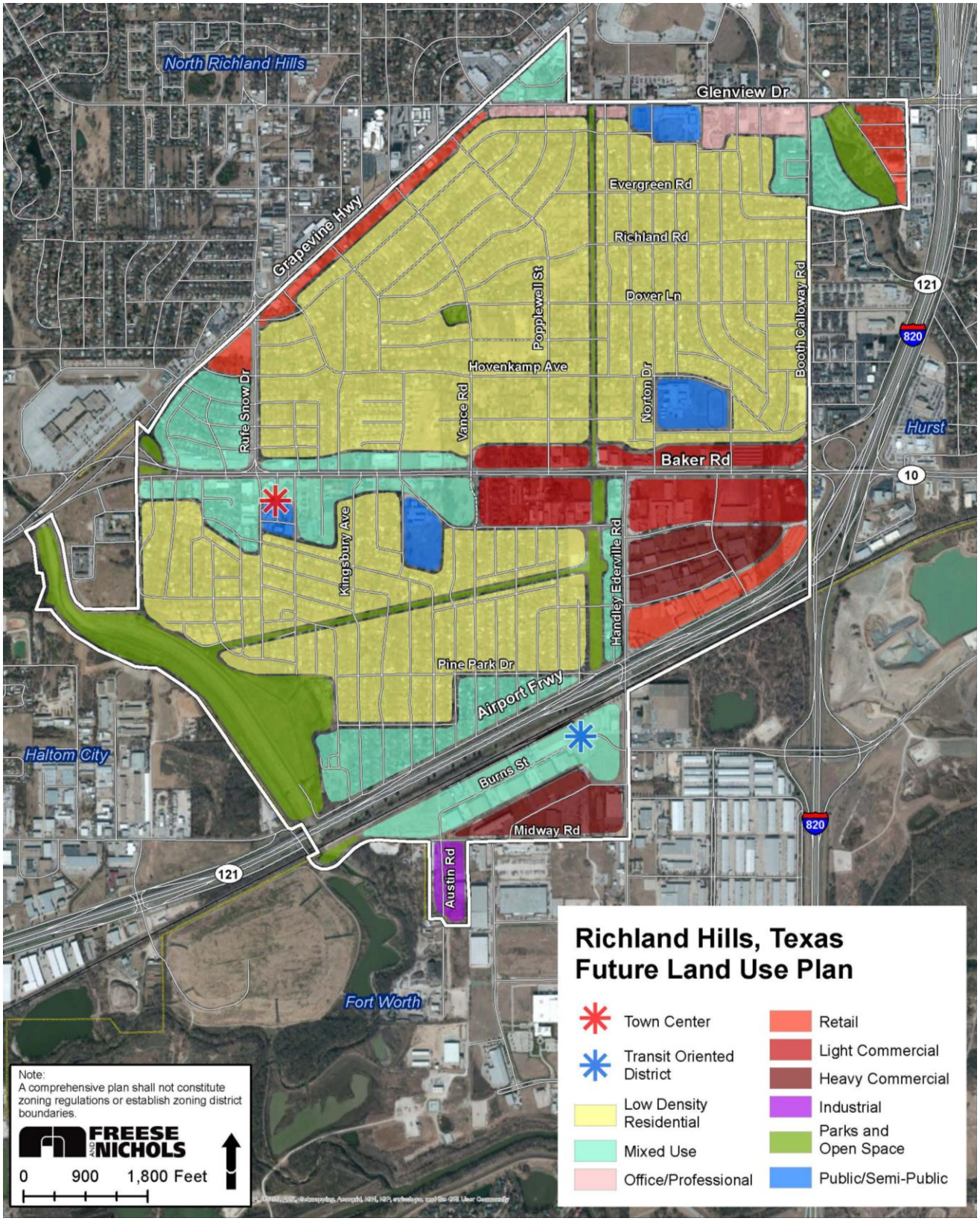


**Table 11. Future Land Use Acreage**

| Future Land Use Category | Acres | % of Total |
|---|---|---|
| Low Density Residential | 1,169 | 59% |
| Medium Density Residential | - | 0% |
| High Density Residential | - | 0% |
| Parks and Open Space | 164 | 8% |
| Public/Semi-Public | 49 | 2% |
| Mixed Use | 296 | 15% |
| Retail | 71 | 4% |
| Professional Office | 35 | 2% |
| Light Commercial | 111 | 6% |
| Heavy Commercial | 81 | 4% |
| Industrial | 13 | 1% |
| **Total Acres** | **1,991** | |

**Figure 24. Future Land Use Map**



### *Administration of the Future Land Use Plan*

The following sections discuss the integration of the Future Land Use Plan into daily planning tasks – specifically development proposals and zonings. The purpose of this information is to help guide City Staff, City Council, and other decision-making bodies in upholding the intent of the Comprehensive Plan.

#### Development Proposals and the Future Land Use Plan

At times, the City will likely encounter development proposals that do not directly reflect the purpose and intent of the land use pattern shown on the Future Land Use Plan (**Figure 24. Future Land Use Map**). Review of such development proposals should include the following considerations:

- Will the proposed change enhance the site and the surrounding area?
- Is the necessary infrastructure already in place?
- Is the proposed change a better use than that recommended by the Future Land Use Plan?
- Will the proposed use impact adjacent residential areas in a negative manner? Or, will the proposed use be compatible with, and/or enhance, adjacent residential areas?
- Are uses adjacent to the proposed use similar in nature in terms of appearance, hours of operation, and other general aspects of compatibility?
- Does the proposed use present a significant benefit to the public health, safety and welfare of the community? Would it contribute to the City's long-term economic well-being?

Development proposals that are inconsistent with the Future Land Use Plan (or that do not meet its general intent) should be reviewed based upon the above questions and should be evaluated on their own merit. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide evidence that the proposal meets the aforementioned considerations and supports community goals and objectives as set forth within this Plan.

It is important to recognize that proposals contrary to this *2014 Comprehensive Plan* could be an improvement over the uses shown on the map for a particular area. This may be due to changing markets, the quality of proposed developments and/or economic trends that occur at some point in the future after the plan is adopted. If such changes occur, and especially if there is a significant benefit to the City, then these proposals should be approved, and the Future Land Use Map should be amended accordingly.

#### Zoning and the Future Land Use Map

The City's zoning map is shown in **Figure 25. Current Zoning Map**. A zoning map should reflect the Future Land Use Map to the fullest extent possible. It is important to note that the Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map, which legally regulates specific development requirements on individual parcels. Rather, the zoning map should be guided by the graphic depiction of the City's preferred long-range development pattern as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Chapter 211 of the Texas Local Government Code states that "zoning regulations must be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan." Consequently, the zoning map and zoning decisions should reflect the Future Land Use Map. Therefore, approval of

development proposals that are inconsistent with the Future Land Use Plan should be avoided.

It is recommended that the City amend the Future Land Use Map prior to rezoning land that would result in such inconsistency. In order to expedite the process of amending the Future Land Use Plan to ensure zoning regulations correspond, the related amendment recommendation(s) may be forwarded simultaneously with the rezoning request(s). If a rezoning request is consistent with the plan, the City's routine review process would follow. It is recommended that the City engage in regular review of the Future Land Use Plan to further ensure that zoning is consistent and that the document and the map reflect all amendments made subsequent to the plan's initial adoption.

**Reactive and Proactive Use of Zoning and the Plan**

Approval of development proposals that are inconsistent with the Future Land Use Plan will often result in inconsistency between the Future Land Use Plan and zoning regulations. As previously mentioned, it is recommended that the City amend the Future Land Use Plan prior to rezoning land that would result in such inconsistency. In order to expedite the process of amending the Future Land Use Plan to ensure zoning regulations correspond, the related amendment recommendation(s) should be forwarded simultaneously with the rezoning request(s).

A proactive approach is the opposite of a reactive approach. In the reactive approach, the landowner or developer applies for a zoning change and the Future Land Use Map is updated accordingly. In a proactive approach, the City leads the effort to rezone land according to the Future Land Use Map.

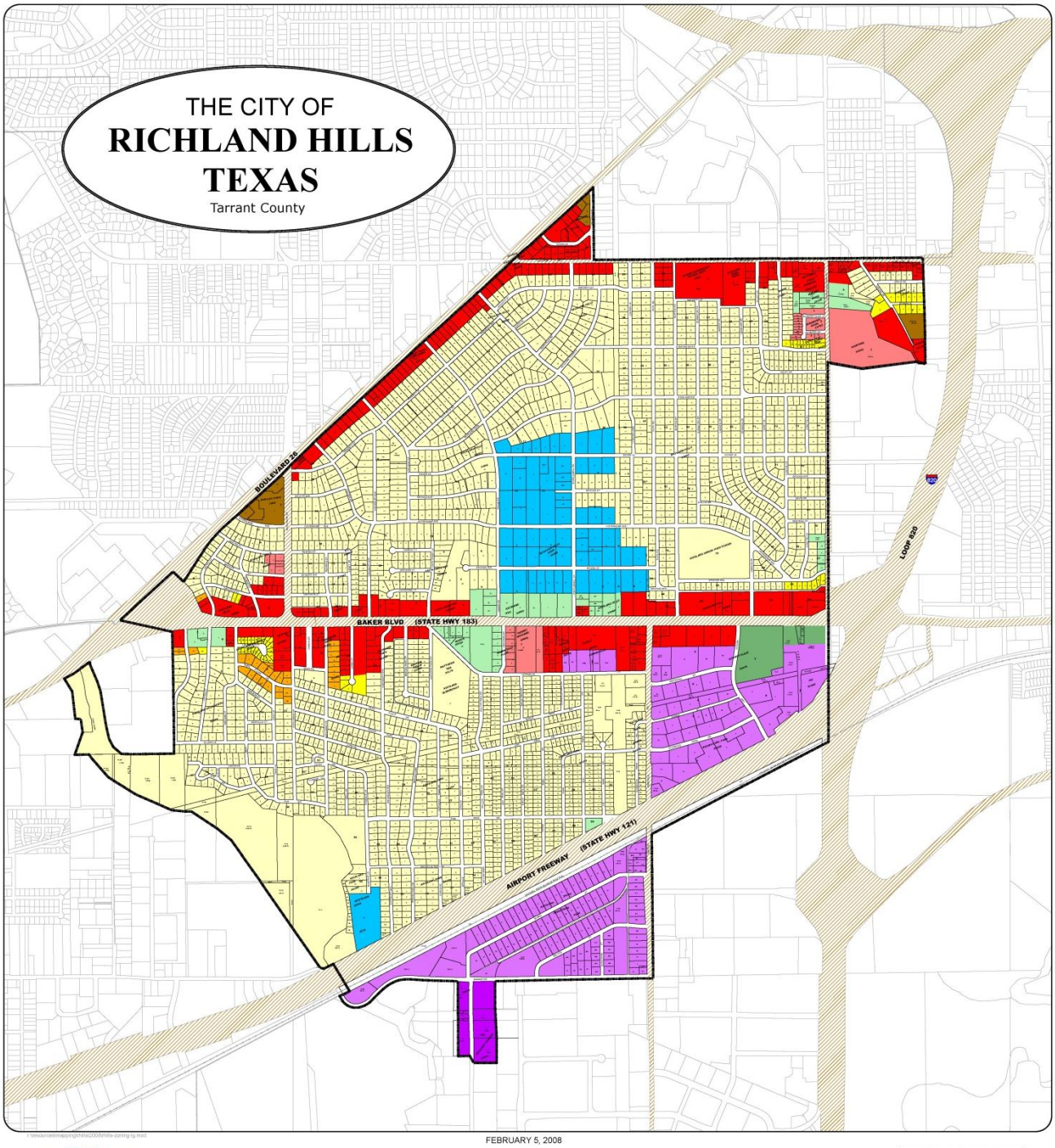
### *Future Development and Existing Infrastructure*

Encouraging new growth in a community can be a controversial issue. While some like growth and change, others question the value, especially if it is at the expense of existing taxpayers. Residents are often concerned about encouraging new growth when existing streets, parks, and other facilities are in need of significant improvements. Numerous studies have been made of different types of land use and the fiscal impact of their growth. In general, industrial and retail uses contribute more revenues through increased jobs, sales and property taxes, and other revenues than they cost a city.

On the other hand, residential growth rarely pays its own way and generally costs a city; however, an increase in the number of dwellings in a community does attract retail growth, which increases revenues. Providing sufficient housing for new industries is also a benefit.

The City of Richland Hills currently has a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) in place along Baker Boulevard. The City should explore other methods to ensure that new growth benefits the existing City of Richland Hills, including the possibility of other Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones or Municipal Management Districts to utilize the future growth along SH 121, Boulevard 26, and Baker Boulevard to benefit the City.

**Figure 25. Current Zoning Map**



## Transportation Network

A community's roadway network forms one of the most visible and permanent elements of a community. It establishes the framework for community growth and development and, along with the Future Land Use Plan, forms a long-range statement of public policy. The thoroughfare network is vital to the City's ability to grow and attract businesses, and as such it is directly linked to land use. The type of roadway dictates the use of adjacent land, and conversely, the type of land use dictates the size, capacity and flow of the roadway.

### *Functional Street Classification*

Functional street classification recognizes that streets are part of a system having diverse origins and destinations. A typical trip involves the following stages: primary movement, transition, collection/distribution, access and termination. Functional classifications also describe and reflect a set of characteristics common to all roadways within each class. Functions range from providing mobility for through traffic and major traffic flows, to providing access to specific properties. Characteristics unique to each classification include the degree of continuity, general capacity, and traffic control characteristics. **Figure 27. Relationship between Access and Movement** and **Figure 26. Functional Classifications** illustrate the relative roles of each classification to achieve its intended function.

In short, the functional classification of streets provides for the circulation of traffic in a hierarchy of movement from one classification to the next. Functional classes can be subdivided further into major and minor designations to further detail their role in the community. For each classification, there is typically a recommended set of operational and design criteria.

This plan recognizes four general classes of roadways that are based on a hierarchical function that include: Arterial, Major Collector, Minor Collector, and Local Streets.

Highways, such as SH 121, are multi-lane divided roadways with a high degree of access control and

**Figure 27. Relationship between Access and Movement**

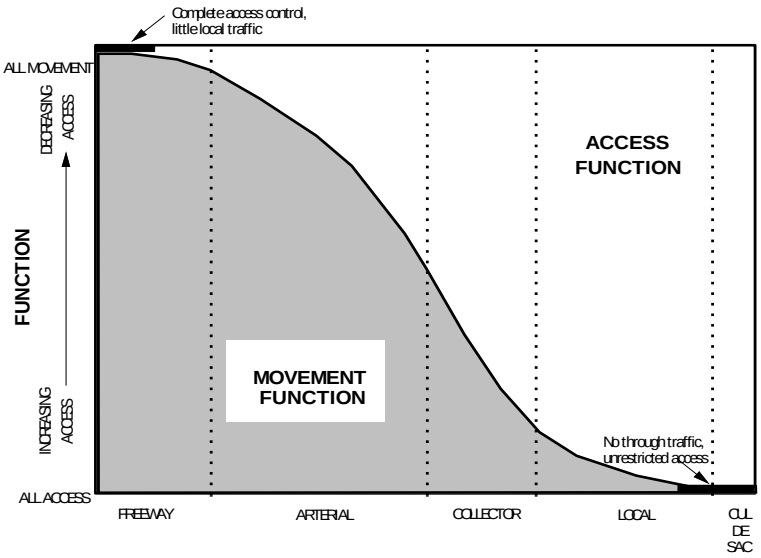
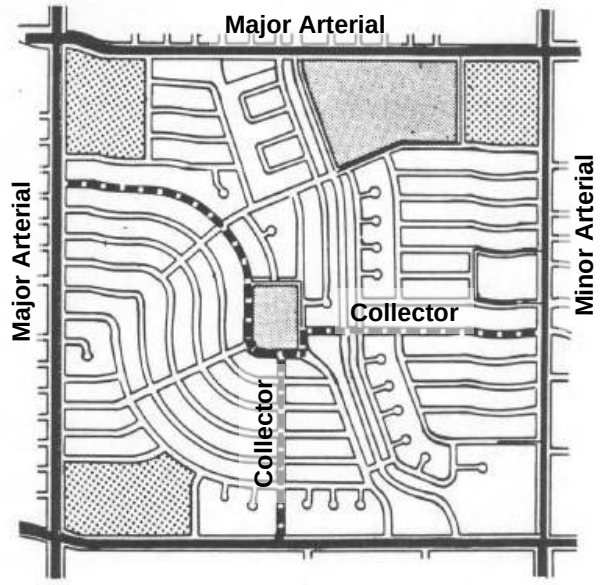



**Figure 26. Functional Classifications**



grade-separated intersections. Full or partial control of access distinguishes highways from other classes of roadways. Highways serve large volumes of high-speed traffic, are intended to serve inter-regional trips, and typically fall under design guidelines established by TXDOT. State Highway 121 is considered a highway and is not included in this analysis of the City's transportation network.

Arterial Streets are streets that provide a high degree of mobility, service relatively high traffic volumes, have high operational speeds, and service a significant portion of through travel or cross-town trips. Arterial roadways serve as connections between major traffic generators and land use concentrations. Minor arterials serve as connections between collectors and principal (also referred to as "major") arterial streets. Because direct access is a secondary function of arterial streets, access should be carefully managed. Examples of arterial class facilities include Baker Boulevard and Grapevine Highway.

Collector Streets serve as connections between arterials and local/residential streets and serve to collect and distribute traffic to the arterial network. Collectors also serve to provide direct service to neighborhoods, commercial developments, and other local areas and their design involves site specific considerations. Collectors accommodate smaller volumes of traffic over shorter distances and may border or traverse neighborhood boundaries. Collector streets should be discontinuous to discourage cut-through traffic through neighborhoods. Examples of collector class facilities include Glenview Drive, Rufe Snow Drive, and Handley-Ederville Road.

Residential or local streets are intended to provide direct access to abutting property and to collect/distribute traffic form individual parcels. These streets are intended for short, low volume and slow speed traffic movements.

**Table 12. Typical Roadway Functional Classifications and General Planning Guidelines** describes characteristics of the various functional street classes. The arterial and collector classifications have been divided to include major and minor subclasses. These planning guidelines are utilized, in developing areas, to form a basic framework for the thoroughfare system.

Also included in **Table 12** is information on the typical level-of-service each roadway class is intended to provide. Level-of-service refers to a measure of capacity that a section of roadway or intersection can accommodate during peak traffic conditions. It is defined in terms of delay with six categories ranging from "A" through "F" being assigned to reflect the relationship between the design capacity and the traffic demand upon a particular segment. As demand approaches capacity, the level of service decreases. Level of service "C" is typically recommended for design purposes.

While the described conditions are ideal, it may not be possible to modify existing streets in already developed areas to conform to the desired design standards for all the street functional classifications. In these cases, alternative cross-sections may be applied to assure that neighborhood integrity is preserved while providing traffic access.

**Table 12. Typical Roadway Functional Classifications and General Planning Guidelines**

| Type of Roadway | Level of Mobility | Level of Accessibility | Spacing (Miles) | Direct Land Access | Roadway Intersection Spacing [3] | Volume Ranges (veh./day) | Speed Limit (mph) | Planning LOS | Parking |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Highway | Connects urban and rural service, connects urban subregions, connects urban areas. | No direct land access unless frontage roads are provided. Used for long trips at high speed. (Note frontage roads are classified as collectors.) | 4-5 | None | 1 mile | 45,000 to 125,000 | 55-70 | D-E | None |
| Major Arterial | Connects two or more subregions, complements expressways in high volume corridors. | No direct land access except for major traffic generators. Used for medium to long distance trips at moderately high speeds. Access is subordinate to traffic movement. | ½ - 1 ½ | Restricted – some movements may be prohibited; number and spacing of driveways controlled. | ¼ mile | 36,000 to 45,000 | 40-55 | C-E | |
| Minor Arterial | Connects adjacent subregions, connects activity centers within a subregion, provides intracommunity continuity. Ideally does not penetrate into neighborhoods. | Land access restricted to major and minor traffic generators in industrial and commercial uses. Used for moderate to short length trips at moderate speed. | | May be limited to major generators; number and spacing of driveways controlled. | 1/8 mile | 20,000 to 34,000 | 30-45 | | |
| Collector | Connects neighborhoods and connects land uses with the arterial system. | Unrestricted land access to residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas. Used for collection and distribution to arterial facilities at moderate to low speeds. | ¼ - ½ | Safety controls; limited regulation. | 300 feet | 12,000 to 28,000 | 30-40 | B-C | Limited |
| | | | | | | 1,000 to 15,000 | 30-35 | A-B | Limited |
| Local | Connects facilities within neighborhoods, connects land uses within transportation facilities. | Unrestricted land access. Used for collection and distribution to collector facilities at low speeds. | 2 lot lengths | Safety control only. | | 200 to 1,500 | 20-30 | | Permitted |

**Figure 28. Transportation Network**

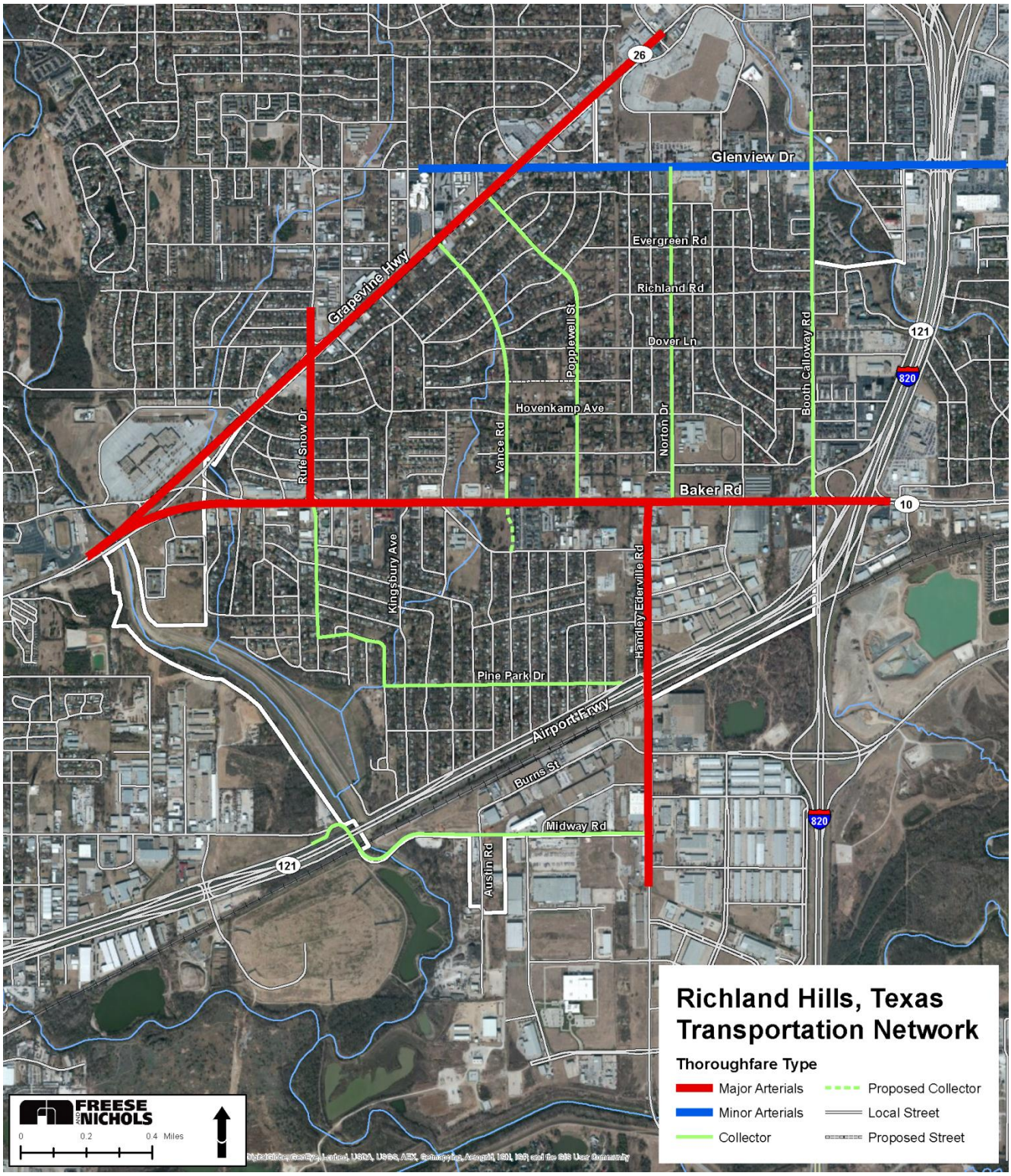
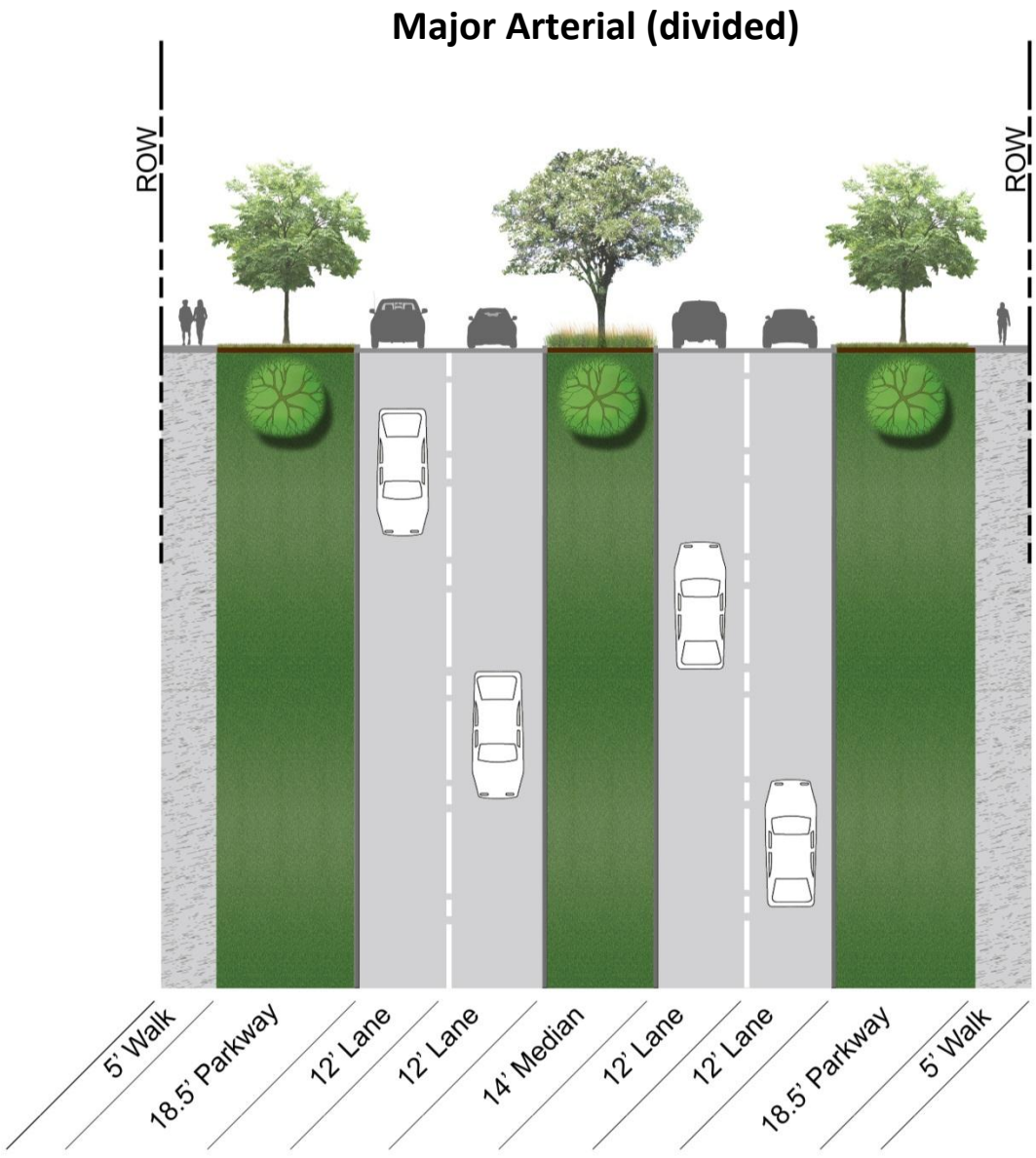
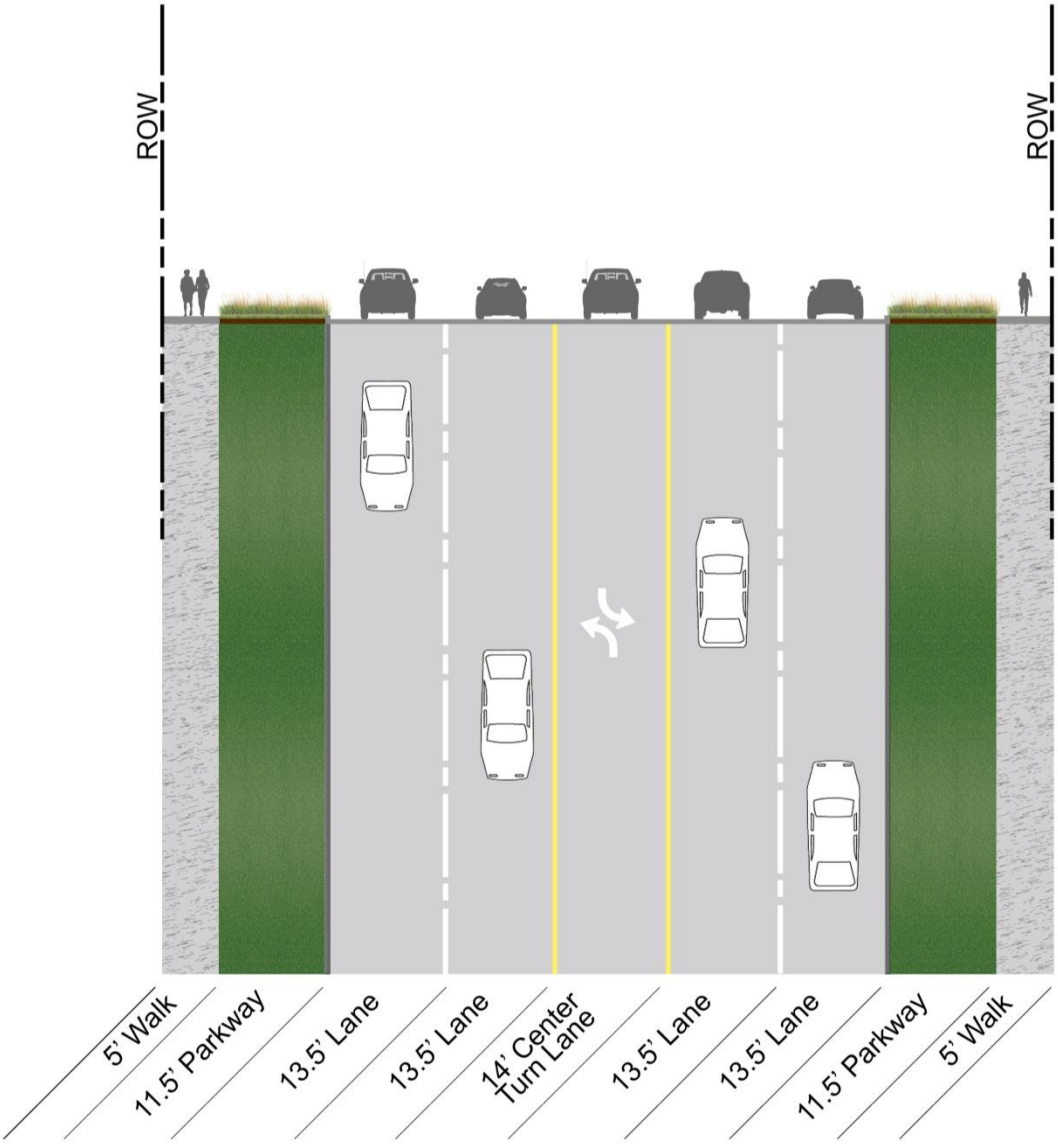


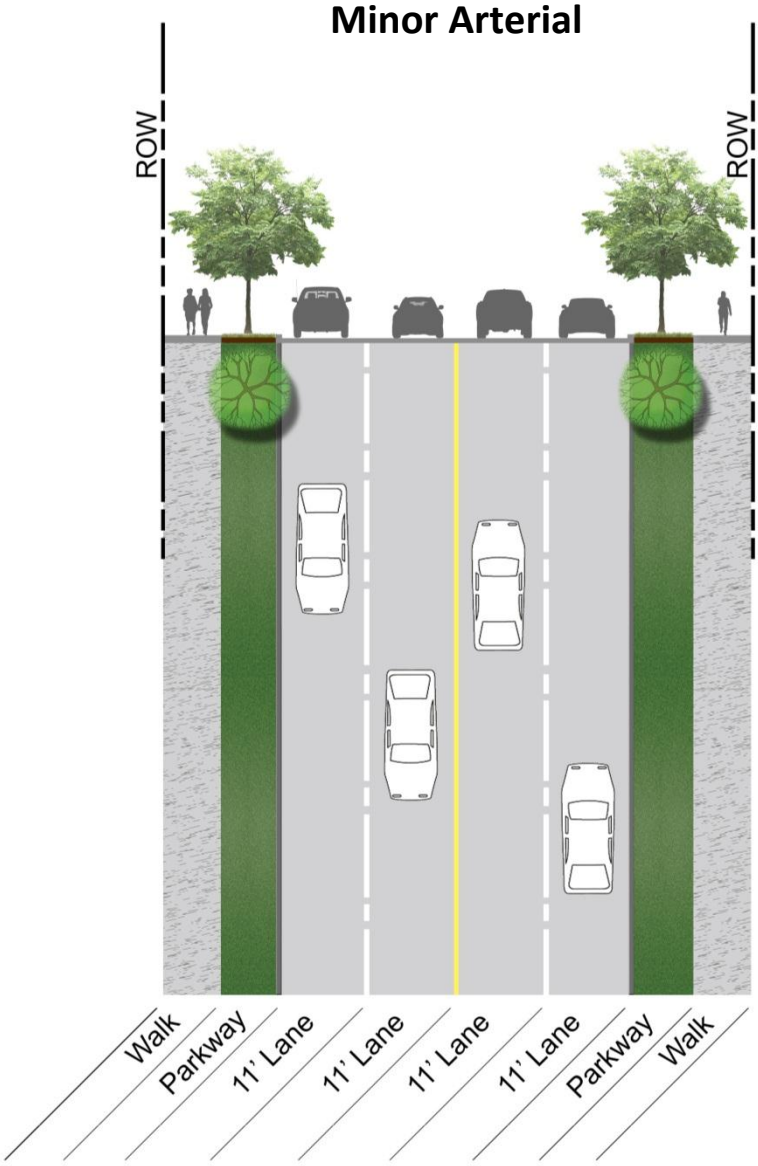
**Figure 29. Recommended Roadway Cross-Sections**

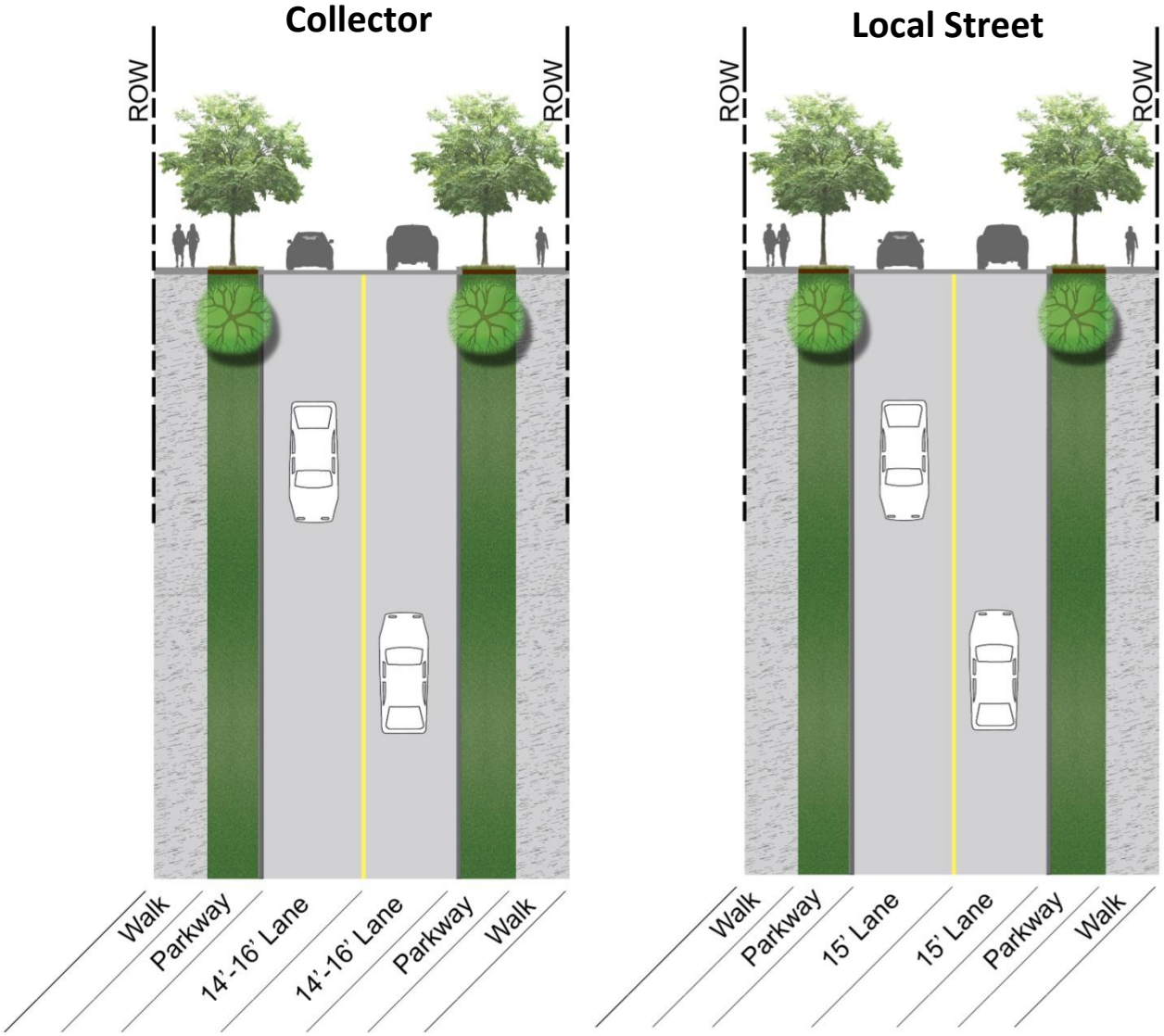


# Major Arterial (undivided)



## Minor Arterial




Collector
ROW
ROW
Walk
Parkway
14'-16' Lane
14'-16' Lane
Parkway
Walk
Local Street
ROW
ROW
Walk
Parkway
15' Lane
15' Lane
Parkway
Walk

## Future Population

Increased demand for all types of land uses must be taken into account when establishing the City's Future Land Use Plan. Such increased demand is inevitable with population growth and subsequent increases in economic demand. The ultimate population capacity and population projections contained herein will also assist in planning the City's future infrastructure needs.

### *Past Growth Rates*

A city's past growth rates can often be the best indicator of future growth rates. **Table 13. City's Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)** shows Richland Hills's population, percent change, and compound annual growth rate by decade. As discussed in the Community Snapshot, the City's population has remained basically constant, due to the Richland Hills being constrained by neighboring cities and the lack of redevelopment of new higher density housing.

**Table 13. City's Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)**

| Year | Population | Change | CAGR | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1980 | 7,977 | --- | --- | --- |
| 1990 | 7,978 | 1 | 0% | |
| 2000 | 8,132 | 154 | 0.19% | -0.07% |
| 2010 | 7,801 | -331 | -0.41% | |

*Source: U.S. Census*

### *Ultimate Capacity*

Ultimate capacity, or build-out, is the maximum number or residents the City can support given its current City limits. It is important to note, as future housing developments occur within the City, a reevaluation of ultimate capacity may be necessary to maintain an accurate projection.

**Table 14. Ultimate Capacity of City Limits**

| Added Residential Areas | Acreage Change | DUA | Occ. Rate | PPH | Housing Units | Households | Population |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Low Density Residential | -83 | 4 | 91.5% | 2.75 | -332 | -304 | -835 |
| Medium Density Residential | -11 | 8 | 91.5% | 2.26 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| High Density Residential | -12 | 24 | 91.5% | 2.26 | -288 | -264 | -596 |
| Mixed Use* | 296 | 8 | 91.5% | 2.26 | 2,368 | 2,167 | 4,897 |
| Added Future Population | | | | | 2,080 | 1,903 | 4,301 |
| Current Population | | | | | | | 7,800 |
| Ultimate Population Capacity | | | | | | | 12,101 |

**Note that the Mixed Use category is a blend of nonresidential and higher density residential uses. This estimate assumes that 30% of the acreage will be used for residential purposes at a density of 24 dwelling units per acre, which results in 8 dwelling units per acre overall.*

*Source: U.S. Census and FNI data*

As shown in **Table 14. Ultimate Capacity of City Limits**, Richland Hills's build-out population is estimated to be approximately 12,100 residents, which means the City can add about 4,300 new residents to its existing population. This calculation accounts for the anticipated future Mixed Use development, which will include higher density housing; the calculation also accounts for the reduced number of acres currently developed as single-family, duplexes, and apartments that are included in the Mixed Use category.

Table 15. Growth Rate Scenarios

| Year | Growth Rate Scenarios | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1.0% | 3.0% | 5.0% |
| ***2010*** | ***7,801*** | ***7,801*** | ***7,801*** |
| 2011 | 7,879 | 8,035 | 8,191 |
| 2012 | 7,958 | 8,276 | 8,601 |
| 2013 | 8,037 | 8,524 | 9,031 |
| 2014 | 8,118 | 8,780 | 9,482 |
| ***2015*** | ***8,199*** | ***9,043*** | ***9,956*** |
| 2016 | 8,281 | 9,315 | 10,454 |
| 2017 | 8,364 | 9,594 | 10,977 |
| 2018 | 8,447 | 9,882 | 11,526 |
| 2019 | 8,532 | 10,179 | 12,100 |
| ***2020*** | ***8,617*** | ***10,484*** | ***12,100*** |
| 2021 | 8,703 | 10,798 | 12,100 |
| 2022 | 8,790 | 11,122 | 12,100 |
| 2023 | 8,878 | 11,456 | 12,100 |
| 2024 | 8,967 | 11,800 | 12,100 |
| ***2025*** | ***9,057*** | ***12,100*** | ***12,100*** |
| 2026 | 9,147 | 12,100 | 12,100 |
| 2027 | 9,239 | 12,100 | 12,100 |
| 2028 | 9,331 | 12,100 | 12,100 |
| 2029 | 9,424 | 12,100 | 12,100 |
| ***2030*** | ***9,519*** | ***12,100*** | ***12,100*** |

### *Population Projections*

Population projections are based on past growth rates and anticipated future development. **Table 15. Growth Rate Scenarios** shows three different growth rate scenarios projected through 2030. The 1.0% growth rate is a very conservative estimate, and is more similar to the City's recent growth history. The 3.0% and 5.0% projections are aggressive based on the City's previous trends; however, the developments anticipated to produce population increase are multiple-family and mixed use developments, which would result in a more immediate impact.

As noted in **Table 14. Ultimate Capacity of** City Limits above, the ultimate capacity of Richland Hills is approximately 12,100 residents. As shown in **Table 15**, this population would be reached after 2030 using a 1.0% growth rate, around 2025 using a 3.0% growth rate, or around 2019 using a 5.0% growth rate.

It is important to keep in mind that population projections can be impacted by a number of factors; therefore, it is important for the City to closely monitor the growth rate and adjust the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) accordingly.

The City is landlocked with no room for expansion, and is fully developed. This should be taken into account when planning for the City's future. The City should consider, for example, acquiring vacant land for permanent open space and adopting more strict development regulations before additional development occurs.

## Future Land Use Recommendations

The following recommendations relate to the future land use of the community as it continues to mature and redevelop over time.

### Adopt the Future Land Use Map

The adoption of this *2014 Comprehensive Plan* includes the adoption of the Future Land Use Map shown in **Figure 24**. This map has been developed with existing land use, public input, and existing infrastructure in mind. As discussed in Administration of the Future Land Use Plan (page 62), future rezonings should be made in accordance with the Future Land Use Map. If for some reason a rezoning that does not conform to the Future Land Use Map is desirable, the Future Land Use Map should be amended prior to the rezoning to ensure consistency.

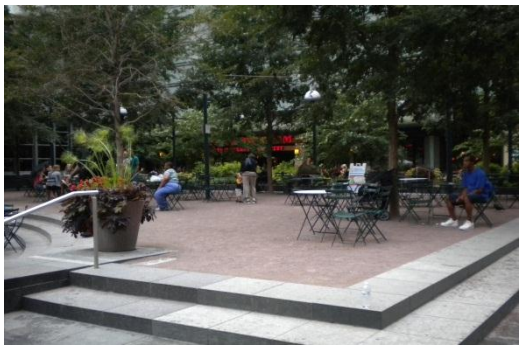
### Update the City's Zoning Map

As discussed in **Administration of the Future Land Use Plan**, proactive implementation of this plan includes updating the zoning map to be in accordance with the Future Land Use Map. Following adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, City Council will consider adoption of a new zoning map, intended to support implementation of many of the recommendations outlined in this plan. As noted previously, if in the future a rezoning that does not conform to the Future Land Use Map is desirable, then the Future Land Use Map should be amended prior to the rezoning to ensure consistency.

### Update the City's Zoning Ordinance

Many recommendations identified in this plan utilize the City's zoning ordinance as the primary implementation mechanism. In addition to the updated zoning map, City Council will also consider approval of a new zoning ordinance. This ordinance should incorporate the recommendations from this plan, and should be adopted to ensure a quality image and desirable redevelopment within Richland Hills through permitted land uses, building materials, screening, landscaping, and other development regulations.

The Zoning Ordinance is currently being rewritten to reflect address the community's needs and the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan. Adoption of the new Zoning Ordinance is anticipated to occur concurrent with this Comprehensive Plan.



## Plan for a Town Center Area

The Town Center land use designation was established to create a central core for the City, a gathering place for the members of the Richland Hills community. As described above, a mixture of land uses is appropriate for the Town Center, as it is also intended to be a place for local residents to enjoy recreational activities, conduct personal and government-related business, meet with neighbors, gather for community events and festivals, and other similar activities.

The following are design elements that should be incorporated within the Town Center development:

- Ensure the area is pedestrian friendly.
- Ensure connectivity between the Town Center and adjoining neighborhoods while minimizing conflict.
- Ensure the Town Center contains an integrated mix of uses.

This area should strive for vertical mixed use development with public plazas. Additionally, the wide pavement width of Diana Drive allows for a landscaped median, or possibly limiting the street to pedestrian traffic (i.e., the closure of the street to vehicular traffic) to create a unique public gathering space. Many of the properties along Diana Drive are owned by the City, which provides a tremendous opportunity for the City to initiate the redevelopment of this area.

## Expand the Existing TRE Rail Station into a Transit-Oriented Development

The Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Richland Hills Station provides a tremendous opportunity to the City that cannot be overstated, in terms of attracting residents, visitors, and businesses. The surrounding area is currently developed as commercial and light industrial uses. These uses likely located in this area due to the proximity to the railroad when it operated as a freight railroad; however, now that the rail line has converted to a commuter rail system, these uses are not ideal for this location.

The term "transit-oriented development" or "TOD" refers to a mix of land use types surrounding and oriented toward a source of public transit. Development is oriented toward sidewalks and public spaces, centered around or near the train station. These areas are typically vibrant neighborhoods with a blend of higher density housing, offices, and retail shops.

The community survey supported this type of development in this area, specifically identifying desirable uses such as coffee shops, apartments, bookstores, and other shops. "Big box" type development may be included in this area if designed for a pedestrian scale and orientation; however, the majority of the development should be smaller-scale, as the focus should remain on the pedestrian rather than the vehicle when possible.

As noted on page 14, the City and NCTCOG retained the consulting firm URS to develop a plan for this area in 2009. The plan recommended strategies for the area north of SH 121/east of Handley Ederville Road, and the area south of SH 121/west of Handley Ederville Road.

The north area (see **Figure 30**) proposed limited amounts of commercial infill and redevelopment, focusing primarily on the former Sam's Club site and the vacant lot to the west, and the vacant area near the existing McDonald's restaurant at SH 121 and Handley Ederville Road. Additionally, the plan encourages preservation of the existing floodplain and the incorporation of additional landscaping along the corridors within this area.

While it would be desirable to replace this "big box" structure with smaller, more appropriately-scaled buildings, it is anticipated that the existing building will likely be reused for the foreseeable future; however, this plan should be referenced as future redevelopment and infill occur in this area.

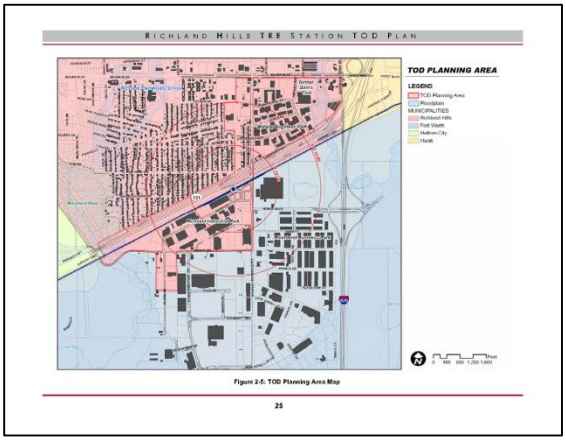
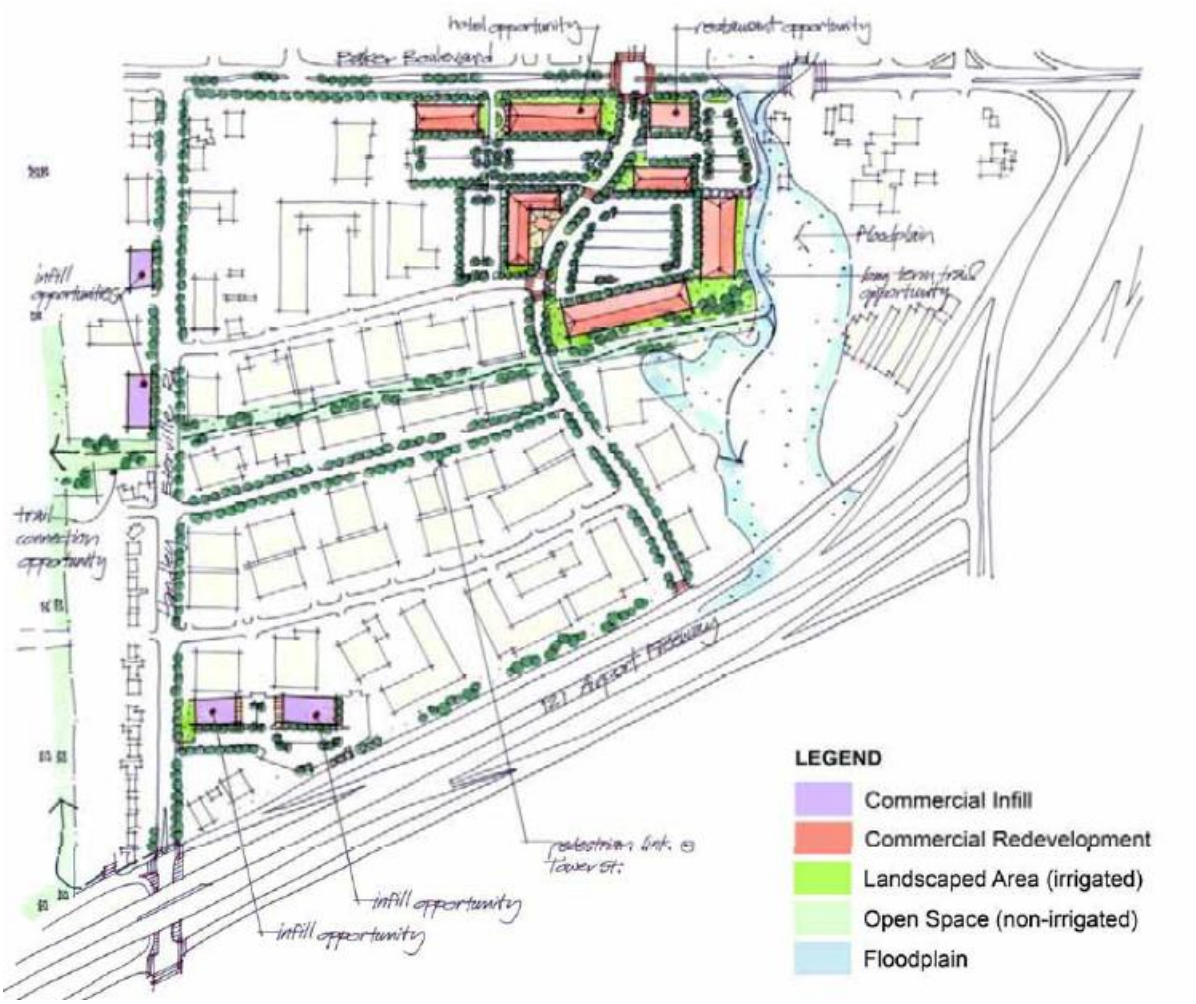



Figure 30. Richland Hills Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Station Transit Oriented Development Plan - North Area




The plan addressed the area south of SH 121, located in close proximity to the TRE Richland Hills Station, with two scenarios: 1) infill and gradual redevelopment (see **Figure 31**), and 2) coordinated redevelopment (see **Figure 32**). The first scenario proposes incorporating the existing buildings for future uses. The warehouses would be converted into live/work uses, new mixed use development along Handley Ederville Road, and new townhomes would be constructed in the western portion. The second scenario proposes demolition of all existing structures and coordinated redevelopment of the entire site. This scenario includes mixed use along Handley Ederville Road, a large neighborhood park, live/work units with retail nodes, and townhomes in the western portion.

The second scenario would require a developer to acquire the various properties within the site and develop a plan to redevelop the site. This scenario, while more likely to produce a well-planned development, may be less likely to happen than the first scenario. The first scenario would allow for individual property owners to sell the properties for gradual redevelopment, creating a more transitional environment.

**Figure 32. Richland Hills Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Station Transit Oriented Development Plan - South Area (Infill Scenario)**

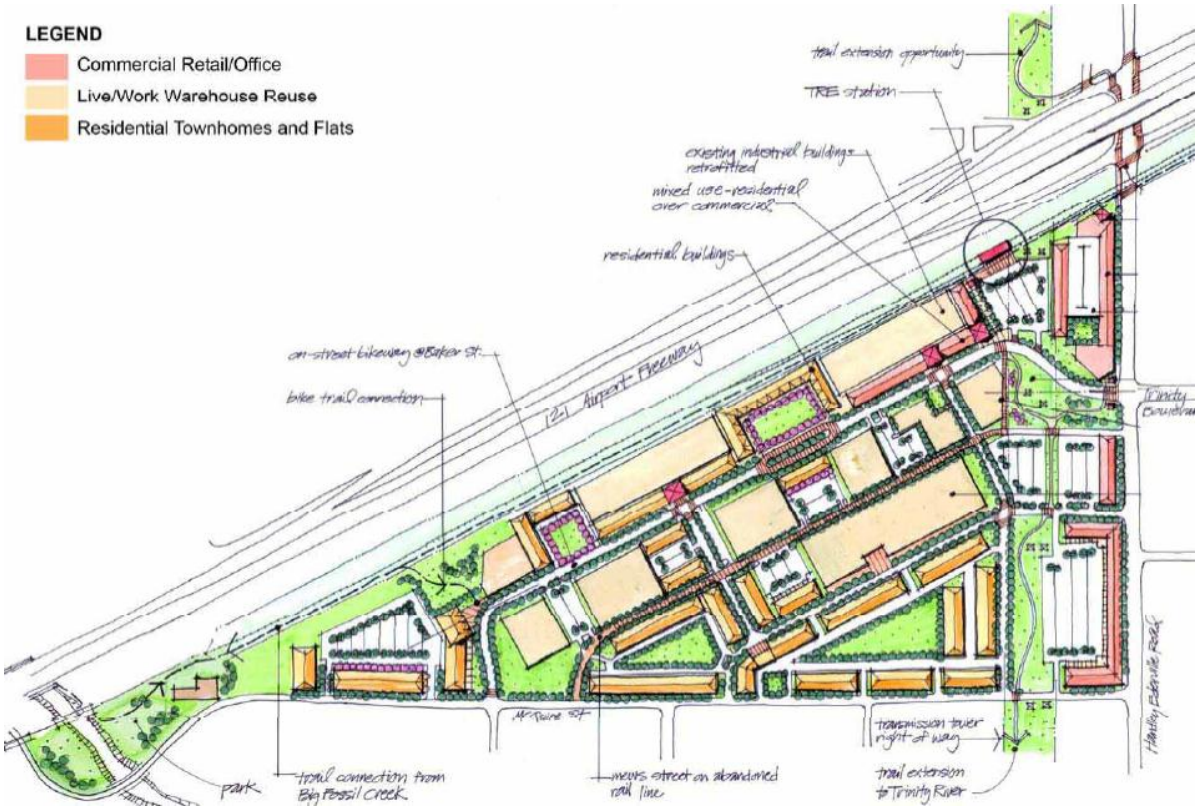



**Figure 31. Richland Hills Trinity Railway Express (TRE) Station Transit Oriented Development Plan - South Area (Redevelopment Scenario)**


The TRE station area could be poised on the brink of tremendous opportunity. The creation of a true gathering area can emerge into a comprehensive system of attractive mixed use development with walkable blocks and pedestrian plazas. Regardless of the TRE Station, the TOD itself – a balanced mix of employment-intensive uses, ground-level shops and restaurants, lodging, entertainment venues, and moderate- to high-density housing – will help achieve the following significant benefits:

- Attract investment into the City;
- Create a destination for entertainment, nightlife, and family activities;
- Promote a more energy-efficient and sustainable pattern of development by encouraging walking, biking, transit, and regional rail travel as convenient alternatives to automobile travel;
- Reduce demand on the local and regional street network by maximizing opportunities for the localization of work, shopping and leisure trips; and
- Provide an expanded range of living, working, shopping, and entertainment options for an increasingly diverse population.

Development within this area should have an urban rather than suburban character and support a higher intensity of uses than are allowed elsewhere in the City. Mixed use development should be incorporated when possible to encourage activity along the streetscape and key commercial corners. Such streetscapes should connect the sidewalk adjacent in a direct and simple manner. The landscaping should include street trees and pedestrian lighting on regular intervals, and emphasize street intersections and corners with special paving, seating areas, trash receptacles, bike racks, and other pedestrian amenities. Further, front yard plantings should emphasize building entries and provide a pleasant sidewalk experience.

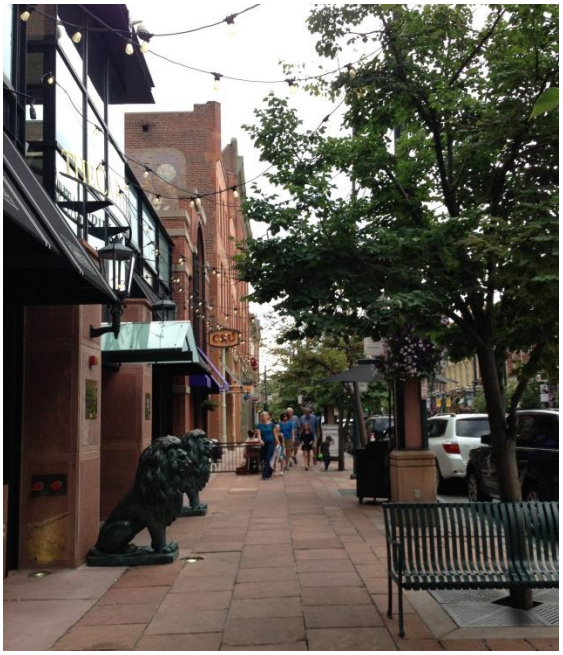
Most streets and public spaces should be lined with high-quality mixed use building types and contribute to the creation of a lively urban environment. To define the pedestrian realms and create a distinctive sense of place, buildings should be placed along block perimeters with modest or no setbacks, heights should be generally consistent along block frontages and across streets, and parking should be located in mid-block lots and parking structures.

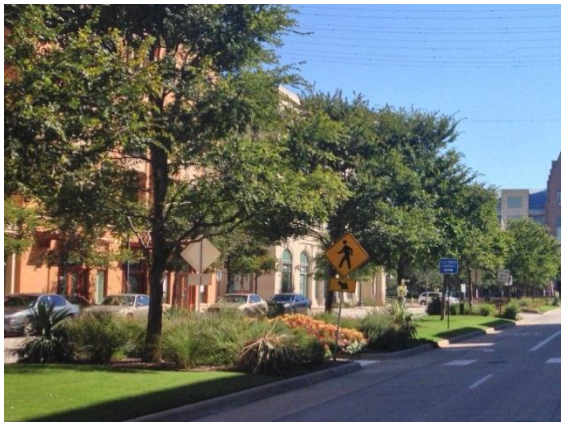
Walkable streets are designed for all people, whether in cars, on foot, in wheelchairs or on bicycles. Just some of the factors enhancing walkability include but are not limited to:

- Street connectivity;
- Land use mix and residential density;
- Frequency of entrances and other sensations along street frontages including the "transparency" of adjacent buildings, orientation and proximity of homes and buildings to watch over the street;
- Presence and quality of sidewalks, ramps, trails and street crossings;
- Buffers to moving traffic, street landscaping/furniture traffic; and
- The volume and speed of adjacent traffic.

Finally, a walkable street leads to desired destinations, whether they are retail or commercial establishments, the bus stop, neighbors, jobs or a park.

Ensuring safe and inviting pedestrian and bicycle connections to and within this TOD area is critical to its success. Although sidewalks are currently in place to access the rail station, the area does not appear or feel safe to a pedestrian due to heavy truck traffic, poor lighting, and narrow sidewalks. This topic is also addressed in the Parks and Open Space Plan section on page 113.





## Evaluate the Glenview Drive Possible Redevelopment Area

This area, identified in **Figure 24**, is an existing residential neighborhood located along Glenview Drive. Although no redevelopment is proposed at this time, it should be noted that redevelopment pressures are likely to arise as Glenview Drive and Grapevine Highway increase in traffic volume. As this area redevelops, parcel consolidation and a transition to retail or mixed use development should be considered.

## Plan for a Food Truck Park within the City

The City has received several Special Use Permit (SUP) requests within the past year to locate portable trailers in the City and prepare/sell food to customers. In the online survey, many citizens expressed interest in establishing a food truck park within the community.


The term "food truck park" refers to a designated, concentrated area in which these food vendors may locate. Because infrastructure required to support these uses is limited, temporary food truck parks are also an option. The City should adopt appropriate zoning regulations to ensure that these parks meet the community's standards of quality and safety. Recommended locations for include the proposed Town Center area, the intersection of Baker Boulevard and Vance Road, the future TOD site, and Creek Trail Park. This concept is included in **Figure 38. Creek Trail Park Improvements Concept Illustration** of the Parks and Open Space element.

## Identify Incentives to Attract a Grocery Store

The most-highly desired land use identified in the community survey is a grocery store to serve Richland Hills. It should be noted that several grocery stores are currently located within close proximity to the City limits, including Kroger locations in both nearby North Richland Hills and Haltom City. The City's economic development corporation should identify grocery store chains that should be targeted by the City's efforts (e.g., Aldi's, Albertson's, Tom Thumb), and examine possible incentives to attract desirable businesses. Ideal locations for a grocery store include the central area of Baker Boulevard, the intersection of Rufe Snow Drive and Boulevard 26, or the future TOD site.

The primary mechanism that major industries use to relocate is specialized consultants that find suitable sites for their intended uses; industries themselves usually do not do their own searches. Industries often hire firms to research multiple sites and narrow the choice to a few communities with the best sites. The City, economic development corporation, and the Chamber of Commerce should embark on an intensive search to seek out these consultants and ensure that Richland Hills and the surrounding region are high on the list of possible sites for target businesses, including grocery stores.

As a result of the City's efforts to attract a grocery store, at the time of this Comprehensive Plan creation, the City is currently anticipating the development of a grocery store located at the intersection of Rufe Snow Drive and Boulevard 26.

# Neighborhood Strategies

Neighborhood planning plays an important role in the Comprehensive Plan because it guides the preservation and enhancement of existing neighborhoods and recommends for new neighborhoods in future redevelopment areas. The purpose of this Neighborhood Strategies section is to address the characteristics of existing housing conditions in Richland Hills and serve as a tool for City staff and for residents and business owners of each neighborhood setting. It is in the public interest to maintain the local housing stock, and to improve it wherever necessary. It is also in the public interest to ensure that new housing and neighborhoods are created to the highest level of quality possible, so that new areas maintain their value and are sustainable in future years. It will take cooperative action by the City and property owners to achieve the highest possible housing quality and character within each neighborhood area of Richland Hills.

## Neighborhood Strategies

The following recommendations relate to building and site design, as well as housing type and variety, to promote desirable neighborhoods.

**Review Development Regulations Related to Lot Size and Setbacks**

Currently, the City of Richland Hills has small housing lots that are nonconforming to codes. It is recommended that the City revise its zoning ordinance to ensure that these lots are considered conforming. Additionally, setbacks in mixed use and nonresidential districts should be reduced to comply with new zoning ordinances.

**Update the City's Multiple Family Design Requirements to Improve Quality**

Standards specific to multiple family developments should be developed to address the future recommended higher density residential development and redevelopment. Specifically, maximum density, building design, common areas, parking, and landscaping should be addressed. Multiple family land uses can be designed in such a way that they are assets to the community, and are integrated within the residential fabric of the community.

Many participants in the community survey expressed significant concern relating to the condition and design of the existing multiple family apartments in Richland Hills today. Quality standards must be in place to ensure that future high density developments contribute to the City's image. The City should consider revising the zoning ordinance to require Special Use Permits (SUPs) for future multiple family developments.

**Incorporate Safety Design Principles as Possible**

The City may wish to investigate means of incorporating CPTED design principles and pedestrian friendly design in residential areas to increase safety. City ordinances can require residential design to promote CPTED design principles (see Crime Prevention through

Environmental Design (CPTED) on page 35). City Staff should be educated on CPTED design principles and the integration of such principles in development ordinances. The following requirements should be incorporated into the City's zoning ordinance, as appropriate and possible:

- Property address should be well lit and visible from the roadway;
- Front doors should be visible from the street;
- Unlocked porch areas should utilize open design with columns or pillars;
- Walkways approaching homes should be well-lit; and
- Separation from the public realm to private property should be clearly marked by low open fencing, hedging, or gates.

The City should also consider developing an informational sheet to provide to developers regarding CPTED design. For example, the City should encourage developers to place thorny bushes below windows and ensure windows are placed at least 40 inches from a door.

### Consider Expanding the List of Acceptable Building Materials

Quality building materials contribute to the longevity of neighborhoods. They also have the ability to significantly impact the visual perception of the community. The City should encourage anti-monotony standards for new developments as well as existing structures. Neighborhood uniqueness can be achieved by moving away from the cookie-cutter format (where homes are virtually identical), which lacks diversity and visual interests.

The City should review the existing list of acceptable exterior materials to be used and consider allowing additional material types to increase variety. Certain materials reduce maintenance and preserve long-term appearance, such as fiber cement siding (i.e., HardiePlank), stucco, and possibly Exterior Insulation and Finish System (EIFS). Choosing the right materials can achieve the intended character of the area as well as ensuring the long term sustainability and quality of the area.

### Review Current Landscaping Requirements

People are more aware of the need to protect and conserve the environment, and are becoming more receptive in determining ways of mitigating the problems. Landscaping plays a big role in sustainable living. It is also considered an essential element of a property, both public and private where they can enhance the aesthetics quality of a community and add value to a property. Landscaping also encourages neighborhood pride which promotes a healthy lifestyle.

The City should encourage single family housing to have plantings in the front and corner front yard. Areas that are zoned for multi-family such as apartments are also encouraged to have plantings around the perimeter of the property to appeal to tenants. Choosing the right plants can be one of the biggest contributors to practicing sustainability because it has a direct impact on water conservation. Landscape maintenance is also critical and should be highly enforced. This include proper watering, weed control, insect control and even the replacement of plant materials and irrigation equipment that is needed to preserve the health and appearance of plants.

Higher degrees of landscaping should be required on all new construction, and a landscaping buffer should be used to delineate private property from the public right of way. As roadway improvements are made, median landscaping should be considered and allow for plantings

to act as a traffic calming device. There are certain plant materials that are more appropriate than others that will thrive well in Richland Hills. Those include drought-tolerant and native plants such as the ones listed below.

**Shade Trees**
Bigtooth Maple
Bur Oak
Caddo Maple
Cedar Elm
Chinquapin Oak
Mesquite
Post Oak
Shumard Red Oak
Southern Magnolia
Texas Ash
Texas Red Oak

**Ornamental Trees**
Carolina Buckthorn
Cherry Laurel
Crepe Mrytle
Desert Willow
Eastern Red Cedar
Eve's Necklace
Roughleaf Dogwood
Texas Persimmon
Texas Redbud
Wax Myrtle
Yaupon Holly

**Shrubs**
American Beautyberry
Autumn Sage
Coralberry
Dwarf Wax Mrytle
Fragrant Sumac
Indigobush
Mountain Sage
Red Yucca
Smooth Sumac
Texas Barberry
Texas Sage
Turk's Cap

**Groundcover**
Cedar Sage
Frogfruit
Horseherb
Lyreleaf Sage
Pigeon Berry
Virginia Creeper
Wood Fern

**Ornamental Grass**
Switchgrass
Big Bluestem
Buffalograss
Bushy Bluestem
Eastern Gamagrass
Gulf Muhly
Indiangrass
Inland Seaoats
Lindheimer Muhly
Seep Muhly
Sideoats Gama

**Vines**
Cedar Sage
Frogfruit
Horseherb
Lyreleaf Sage
Pigeon Berry
Wood Fern

## Promote Connectivity throughout the Community

Connectivity between neighborhoods is an important element in promoting a healthy lifestyle. A neighborhood that is walkable includes connected sidewalks and trails that allow the residents to walk to a store, park, and school or through an adjoining neighborhood. Approximately 67 percent of Americans are overweight and 33 percent are obese[1] (which increases a person's risk of diabetes, heart disease, and other health issues). A neighborhood should be a place where people can get physical exercise in a comfortable and enjoyable environment. The physical health of individuals is an important part of neighborhood livability and sustainability.

All subdivisions should provide connections to existing or planned trails, parks, open space areas, and sidewalks. Connections should allow pedestrians to walk safely from the subdivision to surrounding trails, parks, open space areas, subdivisions, and nonresidential developments.

### Shading and Landscaping Connections

Connections should be landscaped or located such that a majority of the pedestrian-way receives shade for much of the day.

### Regional Connections

Neighborhoods should be linked to each other as well as to the community as a whole. The Regional Veloweb plan adopted by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) has a planned route that travels through Big Fossil Creek open space in Richland Hills. The City is encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity and apply for a grant from the RTC when funding becomes available. Primary design considerations for the Veloweb trails include:[2]

- Easy access to neighborhoods, schools, parks, transit stops, employment centers, shopping, and other common trip destinations;
- Minimum 12-foot width for heavily traveled shared-use paths
- 16-to-24-foot sections or separated facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists in areas with high peak volumes of users;
- Long-lasting impervious surfaces;
- Grade-separated crossings of roadways with significant traffic flow; and
- Few, if any, signalized or stop sign intersections.

### Sidewalks

Perhaps the most basic element necessary for a pedestrian environment, sidewalks allow people to move freely. With the advent of the automobile and the post-1950s development design that is based on automobile-oriented consumers, pedestrian

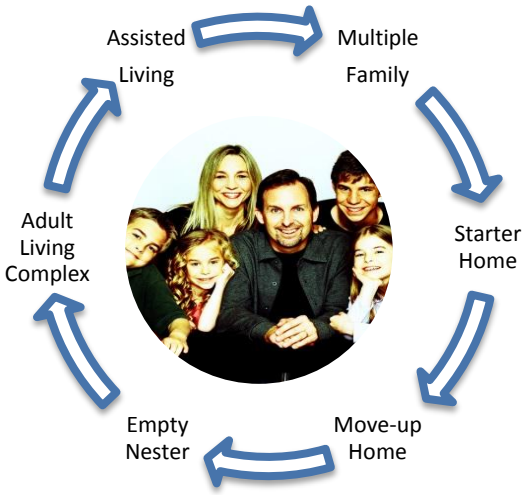
[1] BBC News, Obesity 'Epidemic' Turns Global, OCT 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/health/7057951.stm
[2] NCTCOG, The Regional Veloweb, AUG 2013, http://www.nctcog.org/trans/sustdev/bikeped/veloweb.asp

activity is not as prevalent as it once was in American cities and towns. However, sidewalks remain a significant method of transportation for many people in a small community like Richland Hills. Sidewalks and their design, notably their relationship to the street, can either discourage or encourage their use. The design of sidewalks can either be inviting for a pedestrian by having tree cover and a landscape buffer from the street or not inviting by placing pedestrians in the direct sun and placing them closer to moving vehicles.

It is recommended that sidewalks be incorporated in all new subdivisions. Furthermore, sidewalks should be designed with a landscaped buffer and should be wide enough to accommodate pedestrian traffic to reduce automobile dependency. The drawing below is the ideal concept for sidewalks within new neighborhoods. As shown, the landscape buffer helps shield pedestrians from traffic and the trees planted within the landscape buffer provide shade for both pedestrians on the sidewalk and cars parked on the street. Also, the aesthetics of this sidewalk design would enhance almost any neighborhood.

## Allow for Full Life Cycle Housing within the City

A quality community is one that provides a variety of housing options for the full cycle of life. It is important to understand the implications that the type of housing has on Richland Hills. It is generally recognized that as an individual progresses through life, their requirements, necessities, and general expectations for what they consider to be "home" will change. For example, young singles and young couples without children may wish to live in a location where activities are present or within close proximity to transit and/or work. Such options are considered amenities which contribute to their particular needs. The next stage of life may require additional space as the family start to grow. They may desire larger family space, more number of bedrooms, and a yard, among other things. Empty nesters, generally those households without the presence of children, may also require different housing options. A growing trend, particularly among baby boomers, is for smaller houses with less yard space. This trend may indicate that yard and house maintenance may become less of an amenity and more of a liability as the population ages.




Richland Hills should aim to provide housing options that are available in all types and sizes to accommodate different stages of life including the young and singles population, the married couple, families with children, empty nesters, retirees and seniors (including independent, assisted living and nursing homes). Planning a life-cycle community takes into consideration that housing preferences may change throughout one's life.

## Respond to Housing Issues as Necessary based on Conditions

The quality of Richland Hills's neighborhoods is integral to the community's overall character. Property maintenance is critical to neighborhood safety, viability, and sustainability. Maintenance of neighborhoods and facilities also affects the larger community. If left unabated, blighted areas create a 'ripple effect,' which impedes other civic objectives, including economic development and private investment. Another important reason to assess housing conditions is to monitor home values, which affect the income the City receives from property taxes.

Understanding the City's existing housing stock plays an important role in developing strategies to preserve and improve Richland Hills's neighborhoods. Additionally, knowledge of the existing housing stock is useful to identify which housing types may be lacking in the City. A large portion of the housing stock in Richland Hills was built between 1950 and 1959, an indication that new housing developments are needed to supply the expected population growth in the future.

Richland Hills's current mix of housing is primarily smaller single family detached homes, with some multiple family developments. Richland Hills has approximately 893 acres of existing residential land use, accounting for 65 percent of the acreage within City limits; therefore, efforts should be made to continually improve the existing neighborhoods. There are three types of conditions that were used to analyze the housing in Richland Hills. The category used to identify the area refers to the overall character of the neighborhood and is not specific to any home within the area.

### Type 1 Structures

This refers to sound neighborhoods that appear to be very well-maintained. For these areas, a neighborhood preservation strategy is appropriate to recognize areas in which the City should sustain and protect existing desirable conditions.

This can most successfully be achieved by proactive code enforcement in and around these areas and by ensuring complementary relationships with adjacent land uses. In addition, an effective neighborhood preservation strategy includes the continued provision and maintenance of adequate utilities and community facilities, such as parks, schools and streets. Preservation efforts by the City within these areas should minimize the need for future rehabilitation programs. As part of the activity of normal planning and code enforcement practices, the neighborhood preservation strategy can be furthered by appropriate City departments on an on-going basis.

### Type 2 Structures

This refers to a significant portion of homes that need repairs that could be performed by homeowner, such as repainting or minor code enforcement issues. A Housing Maintenance strategy is appropriate to reduce the incidence of further deterioration of these housing units. If minor repairs are not accomplished on Type 2 units, such units may fall into the Type 3 category, making rehabilitation a challenge, if possible at all.

Example of a Type 1 Structure

Example of a Type 2 Structure

Example of a Type 3 Structure

It is recommended that the Type 2 areas be immediately addressed for several reasons:

- The structures will contribute to the City's future stock of affordable housing. New housing of equal size and quality could not be constructed and sold at the same prices of these units;
- Over a period of time, if neglected, these areas can further deteriorate such that preservation or rehabilitation will no longer be a realistic option (i.e., demolition will be the only feasible possibility);
- If the deterioration of housing/neighborhoods is not addressed, the decline may negatively impact surrounding areas with sound housing;
- The overall image of the community can be enhanced through consistent action, by the City and the general public (i.e., volunteerism), targeted in areas of decline.

In addition, the City should consider being involved with the Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) program, which is a formal neighborhood/community clean-up program. The program is "the grassroots arm of the Texas Department of Transportation's 'Don't Mess with Texas' litter prevention campaign and its 'Adopt-a-Highway' program." The program has been adopted by over 300 communities in Texas and offers its affiliates a variety of services to promote grassroots beautification efforts. The City should participate in KTB-sponsored programs and events such as the "Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off." The KTB reports this event is the single largest one-day clean-up event in the state, with nearly 200,000 volunteers each year.

### Type 3 Structures

This refers to neighborhoods with many homes that require significant repairs that would require a professional, such as replacing a roof, or are beyond repair and likely require demolition. A Rehabilitation/Redevelopment strategy is appropriate. There are two primary purposes behind this strategy: 1) in cases of rehabilitation, to reduce the likelihood of further decline of units in the identified areas; and 2) in cases of redevelopment, to prevent further deterioration of the overall area. If the necessary repairs are not accomplished, these units may deteriorate further, making them virtually uninhabitable. The City should not allow such units to become a serious public safety concern; therefore, action to improve the conditions of the Type 3 structures is extremely important to avoid having a negative impact on neighboring Type 2 structures, as well as adjacent neighborhoods.

It is recommended that the City address residential areas that are in need of major repair or redevelopment by allocating funding for prioritized demolition, as necessary, to protect public health and safety. Redevelopment is the demolition, removal, or clearance of structures and preparation of the lot for new construction. Redevelopment is

necessary when a housing unit reaches such a state of deterioration that a rehabilitation strategy becomes unfeasible.

At the point where housing units need to be cleared, they pose a significant health and safety issue for local citizens; the City, therefore, should be proactive in addressing such structures through demolition. It is recommended that the City maintain a budget for demolition, and may consider identifying a set number of dilapidated housing units per year that need to be demolished and allocate funds accordingly within areas designated as Type 3.

Code enforcement can have a major impact on rental housing by inspecting units whenever they become vacant. When a rental unit is vacant, repairs to meet a minimum housing code can be required before it may be reoccupied. Vacancy can be found by looking for "for rent" signs, reviewing newspaper ads and monitoring utility hookups. A City can have a significant impact on rental housing quality at very little expense to the taxpayer.

The City may also wish to consider establishing a low interest housing rehabilitation loan fund. Single family homeowners, especially the elderly, at times do not have sufficient funds to rehabilitate homes, which can drag down the quality of an entire neighborhood. Selective loans or even grants can be used to not only rehabilitate one structure, but to have a significant impact on an entire flock or neighborhood.

**Encourage Appropriate Residential Infill Development and Redevelopment**

Residential infill refers to the development of a single lot within an existing neighborhood that is currently served by the City's utilities, thus promoting sustainability. Infill development is important for making use of the existing infrastructure to avoid the cost of installing utilities in new areas, and for preserving rural areas (see Smart Growth Principles on page 31). The City can encourage infill development through incentives such as reduced fees during the development process or reducing the required setback.

Existing buildings should be well maintained, but when necessary, teardowns may be required for construction of new homes. The City should encourage such development to take place but also require that new development reflect the general character of the surrounding neighborhoods. The City should therefore ensure that when such developments occur, they are complementary to existing residential areas and use proper screening and buffering. This can be achieved through similarities in architectural styles, building materials, gateways and connectivity.

Additionally, when planning for infill, it is important to ensure that the development is consistent with the City's vision and is designed to coordinate and connect with the existing surrounding developments. Generally, residents in the area surrounding an infill site desire to have the infill development match the character of the existing area.

The large lot residential estate area currently zoned as R-1L (or SF-E on the new zoning map) is important to note in relation to infill and redevelopment. These lots range in size from a half-acre to about 2.5 acres and generally have an open, rural atmosphere compared to the surrounding neighborhoods. During the citizen survey, many of Richland Hills's residents identified these large lots as a desirable trait of the community, and therefore no changes in the character or zoning of this area are proposed at this time. However, as future redevelopment of this area occurs, a variety of large lot and home sizes may be appropriate. If such redevelopment occurs, the design should place an emphasis on larger home sizes,

quality design, and pedestrian connections. Additionally, roadway connections, particularly a connection of east-west Brooks Avenue, may be desirable in this area, as shown on **Figure 28. Transportation Network**.

## Ensure that Future Redevelopment Complements Existing Neighborhoods

Several areas on the Future Land Use Map are not reflected on the new zoning map. These areas are residential neighborhoods that are envisioned to redevelop as the uses identified on the Future Land Use Map at some point in the future, however no major changes in zoning are recommended at this time.

It should be noted that the area along Hardisty Street between Popplewell Street and Norton Drive (shown in **Figure 33. Hardisty Street Area**) has not been shown with any changes on the Future Land Use Map, but is highlighted in the figure by a dashed red line. The City does not promote a change from residential in this area; however, the City does recognize that natural market-driven pressures might be brought forth with plans that involve nonresidential uses. While the City does not endorse or promote nonresidential uses in the area shown in **Figure 33**, if nonresidential uses are ever considered, the following guidelines should be strongly considered as a part of any redevelopment plan.

**Figure 33. Hardisty Street Area**

The following guidelines are in place to protect the residential nature of the neighborhoods:

- Redevelopment should occur in a coordinated manner, rather than individual parcels in a piecemeal fashion.
- The reuse of a previously residential structure for a business within a neighborhood is not desirable.
- Nonresidential uses should be buffered from residential neighborhoods with a masonry screening wall, a landscape buffer of at least 10 feet, adequate landscaping, and possibly sidewalks to create an asset to the neighborhood.
- Truck and other heavy traffic should access the nonresidential development through dedicated entrances from major roadways; redevelopment should not create an additional burden on residential streets.

**Provide Information to the Community on Grants and Funding**

Grants and funding may be used to improve the condition of a neighborhood. There are numerous federal and state funding programs, some of which the City can initiate to begin to improve these areas. Further, the City should provide assistance to citizens in need of funding (i.e., information on grants), and should establish a system for feedback and maintain contact with property owners to encourage continued maintenance of the structures.

The City should pursue annual financing of the program, and should continue to increase the number of rehabilitated homes each year when possible. It is recommended that the City identify possible funding options for residential improvements and maintain a list of resources for homeowners. The following are some of the available programs currently available. The City should investigate these programs to determine which would be most helpful in addressing local housing challenges. The City may not be able to utilize some block grant programs until it attains a certain population. However, many of these state and federal programs would not require any monetary contribution from the City, and they would benefit the community through the infusion of funding and related volunteerism that would be part of the implementation of such programs.

| Program Name | Purpose | Funding Information |
|---|---|---|
| Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) | Allocates funds for neighborhood revitalization, economic development and the provision of improved community facilities and services. | Participation can be through funds allocated by the State (through the Texas Office of Rural Community Affairs), the County, or the federal HUD Department; the availability of matching funds is considered in the criterion of whether to approve the grant application. |
| Down Payment Assistance Program (DPAP) | Helps very low- and low-income families purchase a home by providing an interest-free loan ranging from $5,000 to $10,000- depending on the county in which the property is located; assistance is for down payment and eligible closing costs, and the borrower pays the loan when the home is either sold or refinanced, or at the maturity of the original mortgage. | No City participation in funding is necessary. |
| Fair Housing Initiative Program (FHIP) | Designated for those who feel they have been victims of housing discrimination. | Federal; administered by the Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Office; allocates funds on a competitive/discretionary basis; generally no requirement for matching funds on the part of the receiver. |
| Habitat for Humanity | Houses, sold at no profit to pre-qualified, low-income families, are financed through no-interest mortgages. Mortgage payments are returned to a revolving fund, which is used to finance more construction. Pre-qualified homeowners are required to invest hours directly working on the Habitat project. | A 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that builds and rehabilitates homes in partnership with low-income residents. The organization utilizes volunteer labor, monetary, and in-kind donations to build houses. |
| Healthy Homes Program | Focuses on housing-related health hazards; given to non-profits, local governments, and other agencies, not to individuals. | Federal; administered by the Lead Hazard Control Office and builds upon the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Department's existing housing-related health and safety issues; generally no requirement for matching funds on the part of the receiver. |
| HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) | Provides grants and loans to help local governments, nonprofit agencies, for-profit entities, and public housing agencies provide safe, decent, affordable housing to extremely low-, very low- and low-income families. | Funds are through four basic activities: Homebuyer Assistance, Rental Housing Development, Owner-Occupied Housing Assistance, and Tenant-Based Rental Assistance; requires matching funds of at least 25%, which must come from state or local, non-federal sources. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Housing Trust Fund | Awards funds on a competitive basis to nonprofit and for-profit organizations, local governments, public housing authorities, community housing development organizations, and income eligible individuals and families for the acquisition, rehabilitation, and new construction of affordable housing. | The program provides funds in the form of 0% interest loans for predevelopment expenses including market studies, site plans, architectural and engineering studies, and other pre-construction expenses; no matching funds are required. |
| Texas Bootstrap Loan Program | Provides mortgage loans to very low-income families (60% Area Median Family Income) not to exceed $30,000 per unit. | Nonprofit organizations can combine these funds with other sources such as those from private lending institutions, local governments, or any other sources. |
| | This program is a self-help construction program, which is designed to provide very low-income families an opportunity to help themselves through "sweat equity." All participants under this program are required to provide at least 60% of the labor necessary to construct or rehabilitate their home. | |
| Housing Tax Credit (HTC) Program | Directs private capital towards the creation of affordable rental housing. To qualify for the tax credit, either 20% or more of the project's units must be rent-restricted and occupied by individuals whose income is 50% or less of the median family income; or 40% or more of the units must be rent-restricted and occupied by individuals whose income is 60% or less of the median family income. | Developers of low-income rental housing use the tax credit to offset a portion of their federal tax liability in exchange for the production of affordable rental housing. |

# Parks and Open Space Plan

A vital component of an urbanized area is the amount of space devoted to satisfying active and passive community recreational needs. The quantity of the space, as well as its distribution within the population, is generally indicative of the quality of parks and recreational services available to the citizens. Parks and open space also have a lasting economic aesthetic value to the community. Furthermore, all these spaces collectively enhance and contribute to the quality of life found within the community.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine and analyze existing park and recreational spaces and facilities and to plan the City of Richland Hills's parks, recreation and open space system to accommodate present and future community needs. The following sections evaluate existing park and recreational facilities, identify and document the various elements of this Parks and Open Space Plan, establish park/recreational facility criteria and standards, and provide for a comprehensive parks and open space system with procedures for implementing various components of the plan.

## Parks, Recreation & Open Space Classification

A complete park and playground system would consist of a variety of open space facilities to meet the varied, and both passive and active recreational needs of the population which it serves. In order to provide the parks, recreation, and open space facilities needed by the City's residents, a set of standards and design criteria should be followed. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has developed such standards for parks, recreation and open space development, which are intended to guide communities in establishing a hierarchy of park areas.

The general standard established by the NRPA for park acreage per 1,000 people is approximately 15 acres, or 1.5 acres for every 100 people. As mentioned in *Visioning* in **Table 10. Existing Land Use Categories**, Richland Hills currently has approximately 122 acres of parkland, including Rosebud Park, Windmill Park, Kate Baker Park, Creek Trail Park, and Big Fossil Creek open space. This amount of park acreage calculates into approximately 1.56 acres of parkland for every 100 people in the City.

The following sections describe a commonly used classification system that follows guidelines similar to those set forth by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The park areas discussed are defined by 1) the various types of activities that are to be furnished, and 2) their type, size, and service area. Each park type is discussed below in order to:

- Identify the function of each park type;
- Identify the recreational activities generally associated with each park type; and
- Define the general service area and the physical relationship of each type of park to the population residing within its service area.

These various park types will be used within this Parks and Open Space Plan as a basis for Richland Hills's park system.

### *Pocket Park*

A pocket park is a small area, generally less than five acres and used as a children's playground or as a passive or aesthetic area by senior citizens. Pocket parks are designed to serve a very small population area and are often owned or maintained by a property association. These parks normally serve a population base of 500 to 1,000 persons, and although they range in size, they are typically about one acre or smaller. The primary function and use of this type of park should be to provide recreational space for preschool-age children and elementary school-age children near their residences. Where substantial development of higher-density residential uses including apartments is proposed, it is appropriate that pocket parks be incorporated as part of the high-density development.

The future development of pocket parks should be private in nature and the ownership and maintenance should be through a private entity as well, such as a homeowners association. These parks, although they should be used to calculate the amount of park acreage a community has, are generally not conducive to ownership by municipalities due primarily to required maintenance costs. Windmill Park is considered a pocket park.

**Figure 34. Example of a Pocket Park**

### *Neighborhood Park*

The neighborhood park, sometimes referred to as a playground, is deemed to be one of the most important features of a park system, and is often considered to be one of the major cohesive elements in neighborhood design. Its primary function is the provision of recreational space for the neighborhood that surrounds it.

When it is possible to combine an elementary school with this type of park or to locate the two adjacent to each other, the two features further enhance the identity of the neighborhood by providing a central location for recreation and education, and by providing a significant open space feature within the neighborhood. A neighborhood park should be located near the center of the neighborhood, and should have a service area of approximately one-half mile to three-fourths mile.

Safe and convenient pedestrian access (sidewalks or hike-and-bike trails) is important to a neighborhood park location. Generally, the location should not be adjacent to a heavily traveled major thoroughfare. A neighborhood park typically provides the following facilities:

- Playground equipment for small children;
- A multiple-purpose, surfaced play area;
- An athletic area (non-lighted) for games such as baseball, football and soccer, and a surfaced area for such sports as volleyball, basketball and similar activities.
- Other desirable elements for neighborhood parks include:
    - Pavilions with tables and grills for picnics;
    - Restrooms and drinking fountains;
    - Tennis courts; and
    - A passive area with landscaping, trees and natural elements.

Neighborhood parks are designed to serve a small population area. An appropriate standard in relation to size and population for this type of park is 2.5 acres per 1,000 persons. These parks normally serve a population base of 1,000 to 2,500 persons, and they generally range in size from five to 10 acres. Kate Baker is considered a neighborhood park.

### *Community Park*

A community park is larger than a neighborhood park, and is oriented toward providing active recreational facilities for all ages. Community parks service areas are community-wide, serving several neighborhood areas; therefore, they should be conveniently accessible by automobile, and should also include provisions for adequate off-street parking. Community parks are ideally located adjacent to, or as a part of, a junior high or high school.

These parks generally provide sports facilities such as:

- Game and practice fields for baseball, football, soccer and softball;
- A community building/recreation center;
- Tennis courts;
- A surfaced multiple-purpose play area;
- Playground structures;
- A passive area for picnicking; and,
- Other special facilities, such as disc golf, if space is available.

The service radius of a community park play field is one-half to two miles. Community parks are designed to serve a medium population area. An appropriate size standard for these parks in relation to size and population is five acres per 1,000 persons. These parks normally serve a population base of 2,500 to 5,000 persons, and they generally range in size from 40 acres to 100 acres. Creek Trail Park and Rosebud Park are considered community parks.

### *Large/Regional Parks*

Areas that are 100 or more acres in size, which provide both passive and active recreational facilities, are considered to be large/regional parks. These parks can serve all age groups, and often have athletic fields. It is desirable that a balance of active and passive recreational facilities be provided in a large park. Such facilities may include picnicking, fishing, water areas, and hiking and natural areas. Dependent upon location, need, and possibly topography, some community park features may be placed in the large park. These parks are often lighted and have multi-purpose functions.

A standard of 7.5 acres per 1,000 persons is commonly recommended for large or regional parks, and they normally serve a population base of 5,000 to 7,500 persons. There are no large or regional parks within Richland Hills at this time; however, citizens of Richland Hills have access to several regional parks located in and around the nearby communities, such as Central Park in Hurst and the Trinity River trails in Fort Worth.

### *Special Recreation Areas*

Golf courses, linear parks/greenbelts, trails, country clubs, school parks, botanical gardens and special athletic and community centers, including youth centers (e.g., YMCA), are considered to be special types of recreational facilities. Standards for this type of facility are variable and dependent upon the extent of services provided by the special facility. The Big Fossil Creek open space can be considered a Special Recreation Area for its trails.

### *Parkways and Ornamental Areas*

Plazas, street medians, scenic drives and grounds of public buildings and similar facilities are important aspects of the overall park system and should receive careful attention for their development and maintenance. They are also often a pleasant passive place that may be provided as part of a hike-and-bike trail system. There are no recognized parkways or ornamental areas within Richland Hills at this time.

### *Open Space, Reservations, Preserves and Greenbelts*

These areas are natural and are generally left undisturbed, and can be referred to as preserves. Although active recreation can be accommodated within these areas, they are primarily intended for passive recreational use. Richland Hills has several undeveloped floodplain areas, which are shown on **Figure 13. Physical Features**, in which all four parks have been designated within the area.

## Inventory of Existing Facilities

The following information documents existing park and recreational facilities in Richland Hills. The descriptions are an enumeration of the existing parks, their size and the NRPA park classification which best describes their function within the City's park system. Richland Hills currently has four parks and one large area of open space, for a total of 125.9 acres (see **Figure 35. Existing Parks and Open Space** on page 104).

### Rosebud Park

| | |
|---|---|
| Size: | 6.4 acres |
| Location: | 2600 Rosebud Lane |
| Classification: | Community Park |

| FACILITIES/FEATURES | QUANTITY |
|---|---|
| Double picnic table | 11 |
| Water fountain | 2 |
| Park bench | 10 |
| Bike rack | 1 |
| Trash can | 10 |
| Pavilion | 1 |
| Cooking grill | 6 |
| Basketball court | 1 |
| Lighted basketball court | 2 |
| 6-Set swing set | 2 |
| 5-Row bleacher | 2 |
| Baseball backstop | 1 |
| Double benches | 2 |
| 3-Row bleacher | 1 |
| Playground equipment area | 2 |
| Lighted walking path | 1 |

### Windmill Park

| | |
|---|---|
| Size: | 0.5 acres |
| Location: | 6936 Park Place Drive |
| Classification: | Pocket Park |

| FACILITIES/FEATURES | QUANTITY |
|---|---|
| Gazebo | 1 |
| Small table | 1 |
| Bench swing | 1 |
| Old style lamp post | 1 |
| Fixed park bench | 2 |
| Trash can | 1 |

## Kate Baker Park

| | |
|---|---|
| Size: | 1.7 acres |
| Location: | 3555 Vance Road |
| Classification: | Neighborhood Park |

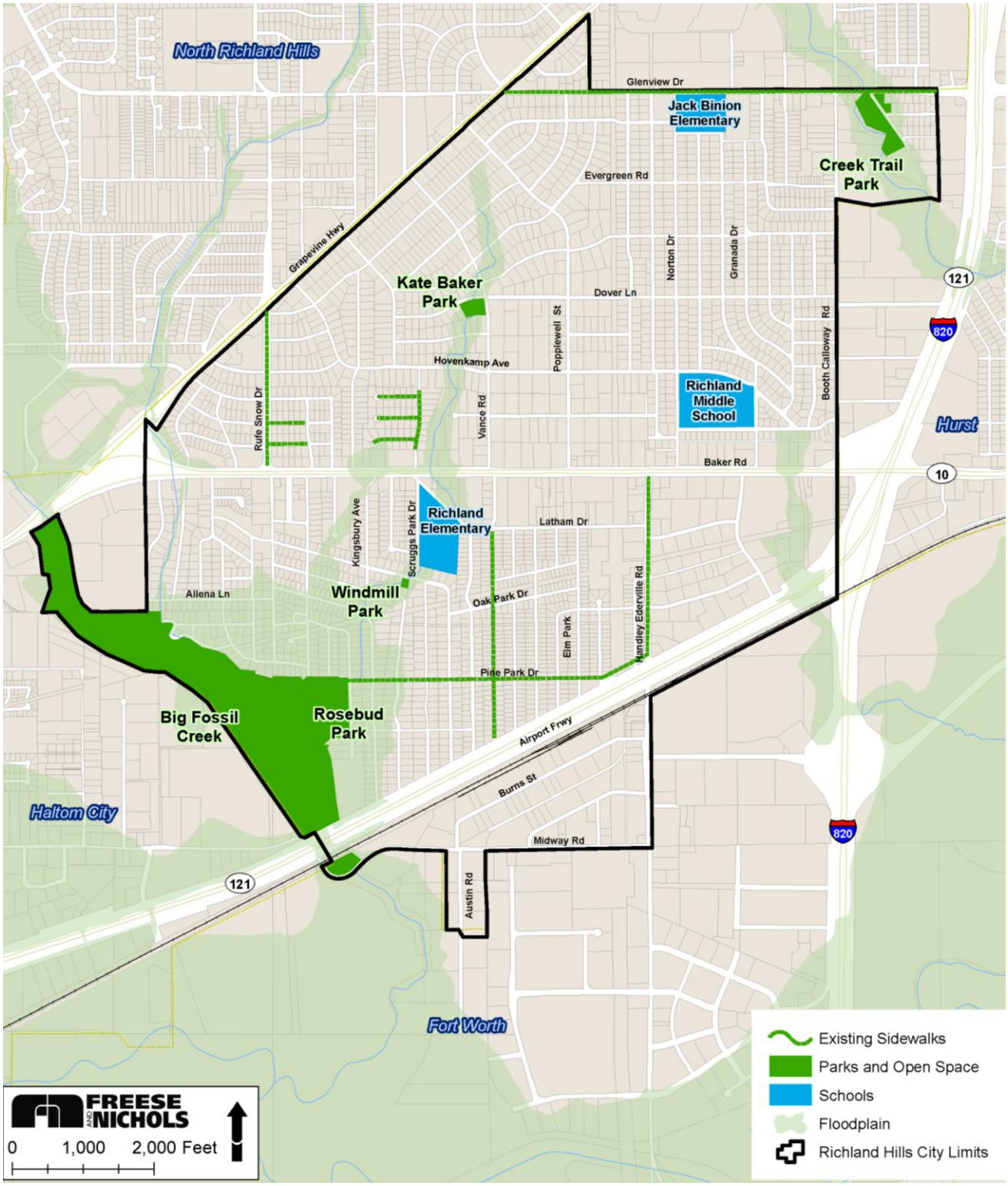
| FACILITIES/FEATURES | QUANTITY |
|---|---|
| 4-Seat swing set | 1 |
| 3-Seat swing set | 1 |
| Playground equipment area | 1 |
| Small table | 3 |
| Picnic table | 1 |
| Cooking grills | 4 |
| Fixed park bench | 3 |
| Portable restroom | 1 |
| Metal slide | 1 |
| Jungle gym | 1 |
| Spinning table | 1 |
| Water fountain | 1 |


## Creek Trail Park

| | |
|---|---|
| Size: | 5.8 acres |
| Location: | 3925 Airline Drive |
| Classification: | Community Park |

| FACILITIES/FEATURES | QUANTITY |
|---|---|
| Gazebo | 1 |
| Portable restroom | 1 |
| Park bench | 3 |
| Trash can | 9 |
| Cooking grill | 2 |
| Water fountain | 1 |
| 6-Seat swing set | 1 |
| Concrete walking path | 1 |
| General playground area | 1 |
| Walking trail | 1 |

**Figure 35. Existing Parks and Open Space**



## Needs Assessment

Recreation needs are assessed by evaluating public input and the NRPA standards to determine the appropriate mix of amenities for Richland Hills. A needs assessment is an objective planning tool to determine whether parks and trails are effectively supplied to meet the needs of the community. The information being assessed is based upon existing conditions, community input, community resources and area trends.

While many park plans rely heavily on national standards, it is important to note a general challenge facing park planning for small communities such as Richland Hills. Often, as is the case for Richland Hills, the City has very limited available land for new parks. In addition, the small population often results in park plans that are without the wide range of national park types being represented; pocket, neighborhood, community, special and regional. While national standards first appear difficult to apply, they are only a guideline. Therefore, this planning effort finds it valuable to compare as a benchmark but will use other methods of assessment to aid in determining needs.

## Standard-Based Analysis

As previously mentioned, the general park-acreage-to-population standard set by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is approximately 1.5 acres per 100 people, or 15 acres per 1,000. NRPA-recommended park acreage standards for each type of park that should be generally found in a community's park system are summarized in **Table 16. Future Parkland Calculations per 1,000 Persons**. Calculations for future park needs based on the projected population in the planning area of about 8,617 in 2020 and about 9,519 people in 2030 are also included.

The NRPA standards do not consider open space areas, only developed park land. Based on this requirement, Richland Hills's current park acreage is about 1.5 acres per 1,000 persons; however, with open space areas included, the acreage is about 15 acres per 1,000 persons, meeting the NRPA standard for the current population. This indicates that if the City were to develop the existing open space areas as active park areas, the recommended park acreage would be met. It is important to note, however, that in recent years, park and recreation experts have begun to rely more heavily on facility-based park planning than on acreage-based. It is important that Richland Hills concentrate on providing citizens with quality facilities rather than on ensuring that the proper amount of acreage is available.

**Table 16. Future Parkland Calculations per 1,000 Persons**

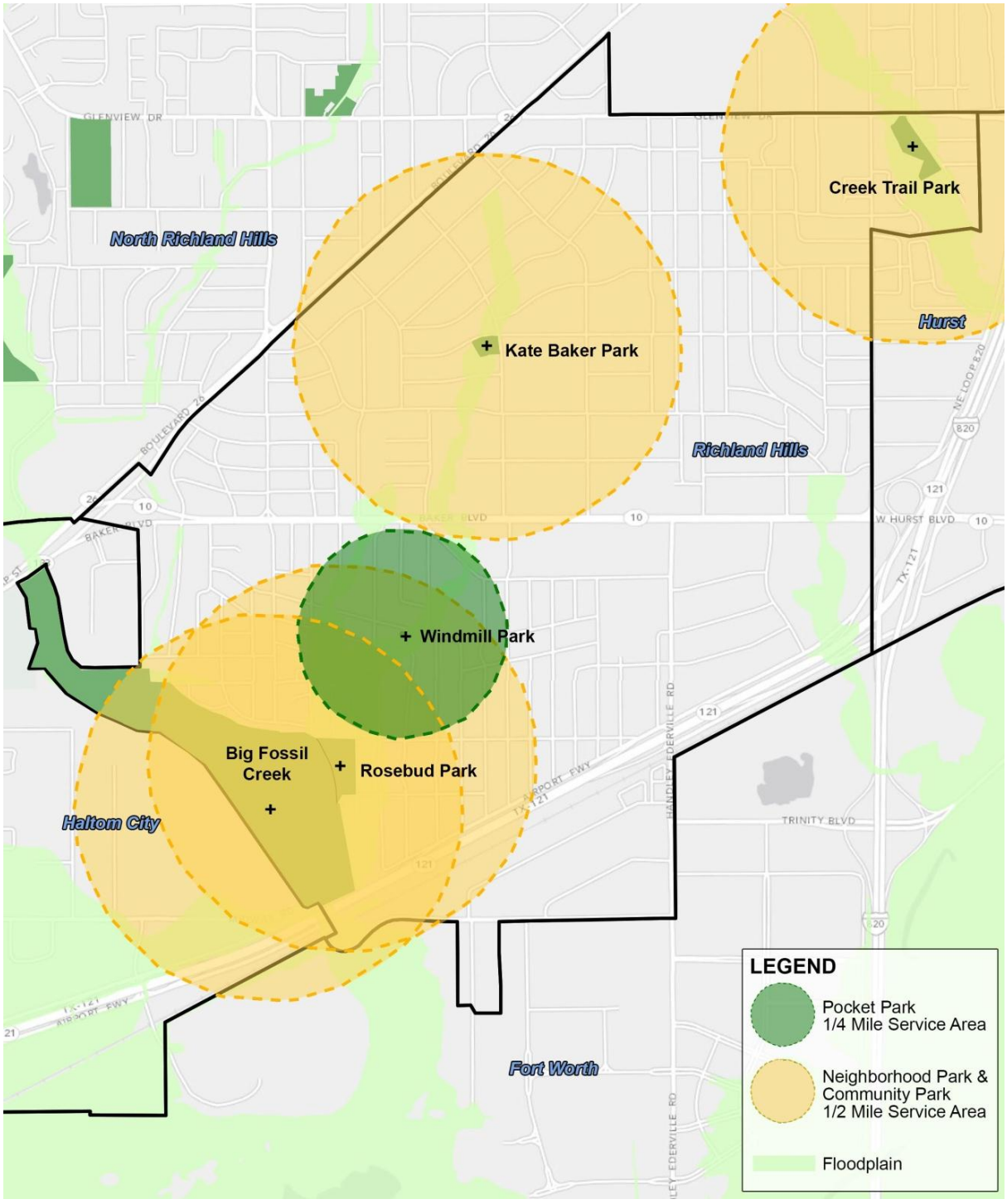
| Park Type | NRPA Standard Acres per 1,000 Persons | Existing Park Acreage | Recommended Acreage | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Current Population 7,801 | 2020 Population(1) 8,617 | 2030 Population(1) 9,519 |
| Pocket | n/a | 0.25 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Neighborhood | 2.5 | 1.7 | 19.5 | 21.5 | 23.8 |
| Community | 5 | 12.2 | 39.0 | 43.1 | 47.6 |
| Large/Regional | 7 | 0 | 54.6 | 60.3 | 66.6 |
| Total Acreage | 14.5 | 14.2 | 113.1 | 124.9 | 138.0 |
| Special/Open Space | Variable | 112.0 | 112.0 | 112.0 | 112.0 |
| Total Acreage (including open space) | n/a | 126.2 | 225.1 | 236.9 | 250.0 |

(1) Based on the 1.0% growth rate projections in **Table 15. Growth Rate Scenarios**.

## Spatial Level of Service

Spatial analysis is general in nature. The goal is to minimize service area overlap while maximizing service coverage. Spatial LOS has been documented for parks and open space systems in Richland Hills. Pocket parks generally serve no more than 1/4 mile radii respectively while neighborhood parks serve 1/2 mile radii. Community parks generally serve between 3/4 to 1 mile radii. Based on **Figure 36. Spatial Level of Service Analysis**, the south eastern area of Richland Hills is under served in all park types.

**Figure 36. Spatial Level of Service Analysis**



## Parks and Open Space Recommendations

The following section provides a set of recommendations for the City of Richland Hills to consider for improvements and or development of parks and open space. Because Richland Hills has limited available land for the development of new parks, existing parks and open space should be maximized by incorporating amenities and providing connections to meet the community's needs.

### Capitalize on the Big Fossil Creek Area with Proposed Improvements

The open space area along Big Fossil Creek is currently underutilized and could serve as an opportunity to invest in a new neighborhood park. Important attributes of this area include the large size, the proximity to the planned regional Veloweb trail, the proximity to Rosebud Park, and the pedestrian connection underneath SH 121.

Although the area is subject to flooding, certain park amenities can be incorporated that can withstand high waters. As shown in the conceptual drawing (**Figure 37. Big Fossil Creek Park Improvements Concept Illustration**), amenities could include low-impact uses such as a dog park or a disc golf course, picnic tables, entrance signage, benches, pedestrian bridges, and a walking path. Additionally, a parking area is shown on the illustration, which is accessible from Matthews Drive. It is crucial to the long-term viability of this park to be resilient after flooding.

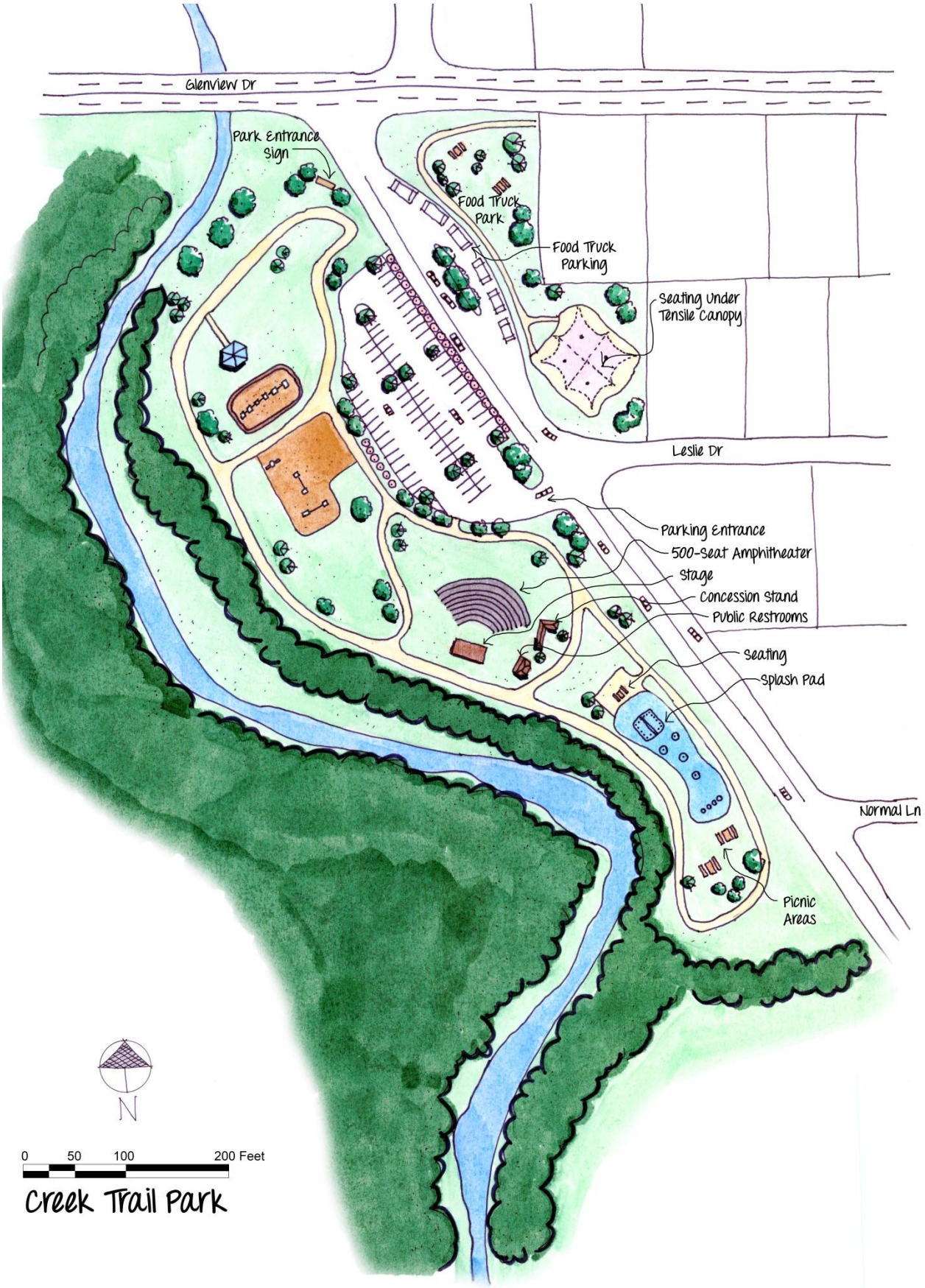
Pedestrian connectivity plays a strong role for this park, with proposed connections to Rosebud Park, leading out into the neighborhoods. The connection to the regional Veloweb connects Richland Hills into the 1,728 mile network of existing and planned trails throughout the Metroplex (see **Figure 39. Proposed Parks and Pedestrian Connections Plan** for an illustration of the regional Veloweb trail plan through Richland Hills). The final important connection of this area is the pedestrian walkway underneath SH 121, providing access to the TRE Rail Station and proposed TOD area. This is an existing connection; however improvements to the safety, aesthetics, and signage would be necessary to encourage use of this pathway.

### Continue to Develop Creek Trail Park with Proposed Improvements

Creek Trail Park is an opportunity to create a unique and easily accessible recreational area that would attract visitors into Richland Hills. As shown in **Figure 38. Creek Trail Park Improvements Concept Illustration**, active recreation features could be added to the park's existing play area and trail loop to increase the usability and appeal of the park. Amenities such as an amphitheater, splash pad play area, and possibly a food truck park with dining areas would create a vibrant and interesting recreation destination for Richland Hills. Additionally, this park could serve as a major entryway feature into the community along Glenview Drive, promoting a unique and positive image of Richland Hills.

**Figure 37. Big Fossil Creek Park Improvements Concept Illustration**

**Figure 38. Creek Trail Park Improvements Concept Illustration**



## Plan for Pedestrian Connectivity and Enhancements throughout the Community

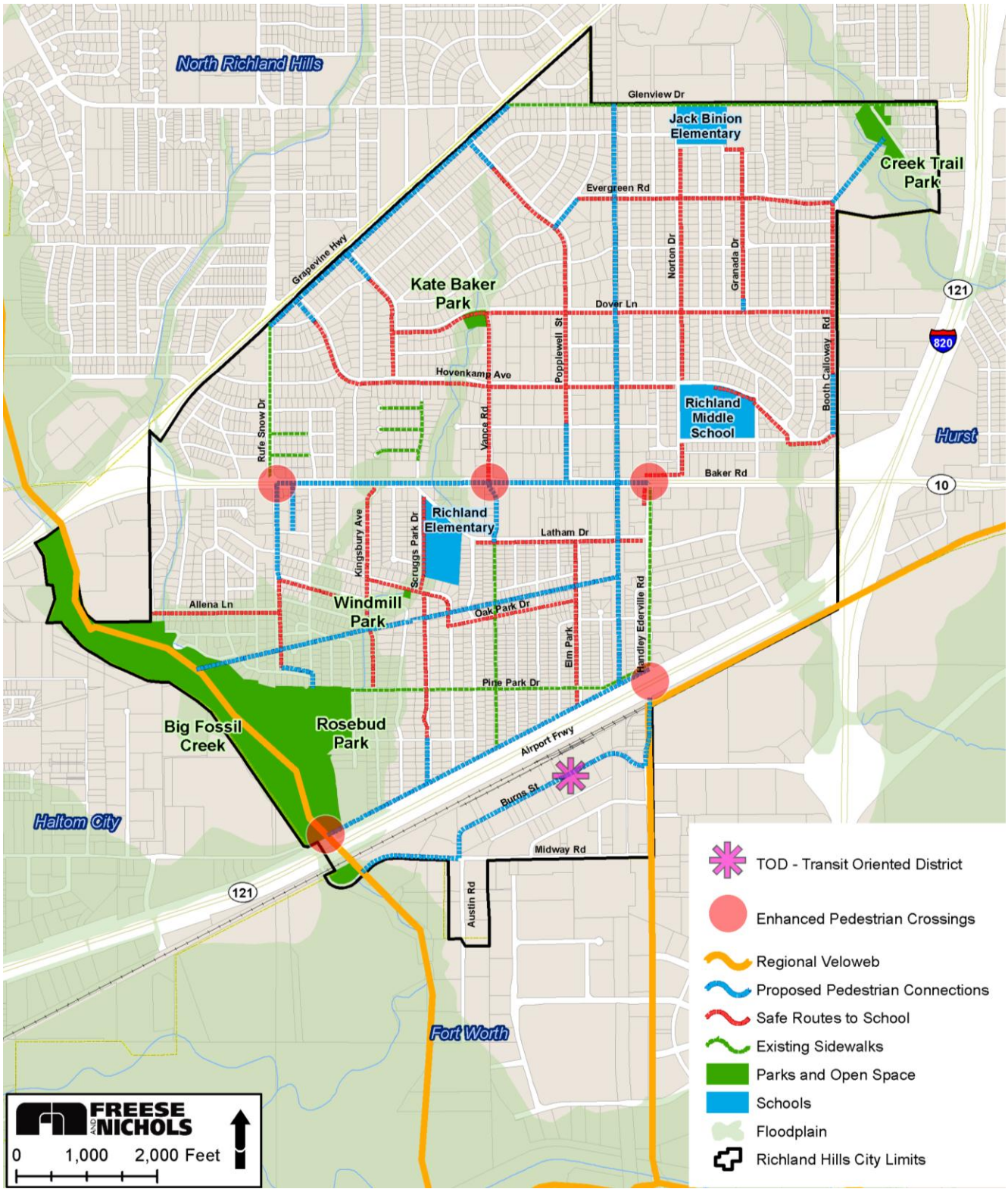
**Figure 39. Proposed Parks and Pedestrian Connections Plan** on the following page identifies existing points of interest and existing sidewalk connections within Richland Hills. The City is participating in the Safe Routes to Schools program, which is a federally funded program providing funding to local communities to improve pedestrian connections while focusing on reducing traffic congestion, improving safety and health, reducing pollution, and reducing the cost of bus transportation (*Safe Routes to School National Partnership 2013*). These sidewalks have been indicated on the map, however it should be noted some have been installed while others are currently under construction.

Utilizing this network of existing connections as a framework, future pedestrian connections have been proposed. These connections may be sidewalks, off-street multi-purpose paths, or possibly on-street marked lanes. Off-street multi-purpose paths are essentially wider sidewalks or trails that are intended for both pedestrians and bicycles. These off-street paths are appropriate for use in higher-traffic areas, such as Baker Boulevard, where shared lanes may be dangerous. The City should plan the exact route of the pedestrian connections and begin property or easement acquisition.

A significant opportunity for establishing pedestrian connections is the possibility of utilizing the existing Oncor utility easements for trails. These easements, identified on **Figure 39** as Proposed Pedestrian Connections, bisect the community running north-south and a second easement running southwest-northeast. Improving these easements into trails provides a unique amenity for the community and provides major connections throughout the neighborhoods.

To support the pedestrian connectivity, certain intersections may require improvements to ensure pedestrians feel safe and welcomed, which are also indicated on **Figure 39**. The City is currently undergoing a roadway design project to realign the Ash Park Drive and Vance Drive intersection, and to improve the intersections of Rufe Snow Drive, Ash Park Drive/Vance Drive, and Handley-Ederville Road at Baker Boulevard. In addition, the two crossings at SH 121 should be improved to promote pedestrian safety and access to the TRE Rail Station. Improved paving, signage, landscaping, and barriers should be installed to encourage pedestrian access.

**Figure 39. Proposed Parks and Pedestrian Connections Plan**



## Improve Connectivity around the TRE Rail Station

The Trinity Railway Express Richland Hills station (see **Figure 40**) is a tremendous asset to the community and its benefits should be maximized. The TRE station should be well-advertised and visible from the SH 121 corridor. Additional signage should be located near the entrance at Handley-Ederville Road.

The land uses around the station will be discussed in further detail in the Future Land Use Plan; However, as this area gradually redevelops into a transit-oriented development (TOD), it is important for the area to include safe and well-lit pedestrian routes. The current design and condition of pedestrian amenities (middle photo) such as sidewalks, well-marked crosswalks, signage, and lighting, are insufficient for pedestrians to feel safe walking to and from the rail station.

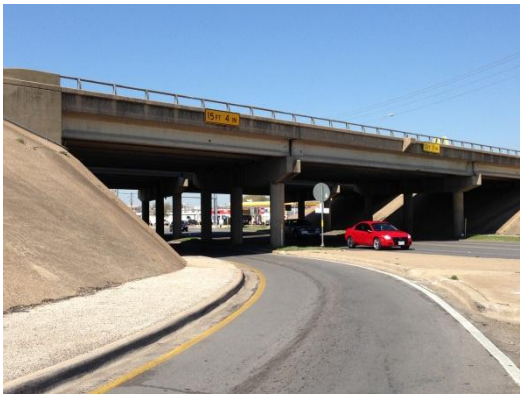
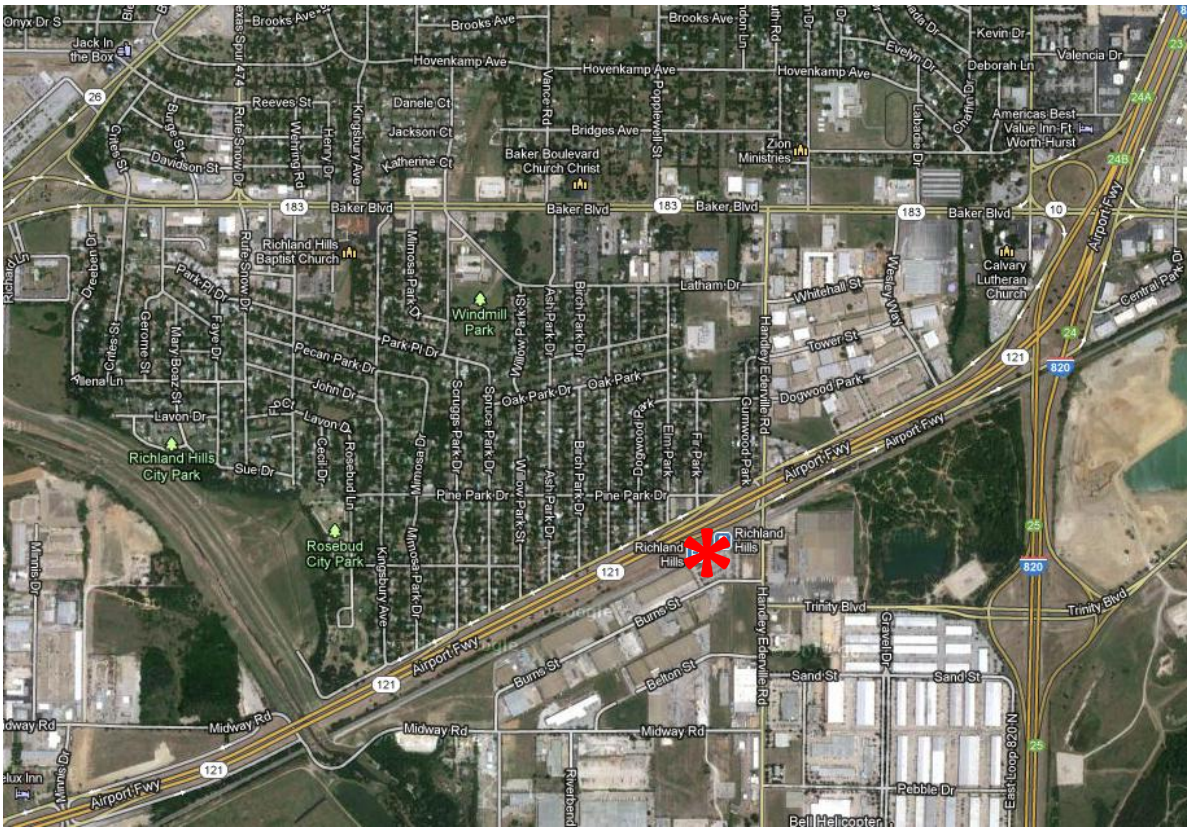


**Figure 40. Location Map of TRE Richland Hills Station (Google Maps Image)**



## Consider a Variety of Possible Funding Options for Park Facilities

Four of the City's parks currently have playground equipment, picnic tables and benches that are frequently used. Some facilities are in need of improvements and/or replacement. Richland Hills is recommended to consider the list of funds and programs displayed below.

| Program Name | Purpose | Funding Information |
|---|---|---|
| Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Outdoor Recreation Grants | Provides 50% matching grant funds to municipalities, counties, MUDs and other local units of government with populations less than 500,000 to acquire and develop parkland or to renovate existing public recreation areas. | Eligible sponsors include cities, counties, MUDs, river authorities, and other special districts. Projects must be completed within three years of approval. |
| Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Small Community Grants | Created to meet the recreation needs of small Texas communities with a population of 20,000 and under. The grant provides 50% matching grant funds to eligible municipalities and counties. Eligible projects include ball fields, boating, fishing, and hunting facilities, picnic facilities, playgrounds, swimming pools, trails, camping facilities, beautification, restoration, gardens, sports courts and support facilities. | Funds must be used for development or acquisition of parkland. |
| Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Regional Grants | Created to assist local governments with the acquisition and development of multi-jurisdictional public recreation areas in the metropolitan areas of the state. The program provides 50% matching fund, reimbursement grants to eligible local governments for both active recreation and conservation opportunities. | Funds allow cities, counties, water districts, and other units of local government to acquire and develop parkland. |
| Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Recreational Trail Grants | TPWD administers the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). | This federally funded program receives its funding from a portion of federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in non-highway recreational vehicles. |
| North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Sustainable Development Funding Program | Created by its policy body, the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), to encourage public/private partnerships that positively enhance existing transportation system capacity, rail access, air quality concerns, and mixed land uses. | By allocating transportation funds to land use projects promoting alternative transportation modes or reduced automobile use, NCTCOG and its regional partners are working to address escalating air quality, congestion, and quality of life issues. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Regional Transportation Council Partnership Program | Through the Local Air Quality Program, NCTCOG's Regional Transportation Council funds transportation projects that address the new air quality standard. | Projects include traffic signal timing, trip reduction, air quality outreach and marketing programs, vanpool programs, bicycle/pedestrian regional connections, high-emitting-vehicle programs, diesel freight programs, off-road construction vehicle emissions reduction programs, park-and-ride facilities, and other air quality strategies. |
| Safe Routes to School Program | Safe Routes to School programs create practical projects to make school routes safer for children to walk and bicycle, such as sidewalks, crosswalks and bicycle facilities. | Community leaders, parents and schools also use education programs to help children travel safety to and from school. |
| Sponsor-Based Funding | Several cities have begun to use sponsor-based funding for public improvements; these allow for increased community ownership, support and buy-in for many projects. Fund-raising or donations by community organizations or citizen-sponsored improvements could include public art, park amenities, landscape enhancements, trails or signage. Such sponsor-based funding could be marketed towards a promotion campaign for the new parks. | Sponsor-based funding projects create opportunities for community participation by engaging and encouraging businesses and citizens to take an active role in the beautification of the City. |

### Enhance and Increase Park Signage

Park signage refers to entrance signs, posted trail network maps, and posted hours and rules information. Entrance signage should be visible from the roadway and designate clear entrance points to the park area (see Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) on page 35). Park signage should be consistent with the branding design established for all directional signage within the City.

### Continue Coordination with Public Agencies to Promote Parks

The City should continue active coordination with public agencies, such as the Birdville Independent School District and North Central Texas Council of Governments, to ensure that recreational planning efforts are coordinated and available resources are maximized. Such coordination will support the development of joint park, open space, and recreational facilities.

### Develop and Advertise a Community Event Schedule

Hosting outdoor events at park sites attracts families to participate in community events. The City should consider organizing family-oriented events such as Easter egg hunts, pumpkin carving contests, and Christmas in July donation drives. Local businesses should be contacted regarding sponsorship and/or donations for the events.

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# 3 Implementation

*Implementation is necessary for this plan to be successful in realizing the community's vision. The purpose of this element is to identify the "what, when, who, and how" of the recommended action items.*

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# Use of the Plan and Regulatory Mechanisms

The importance of city planning can never be overstated. The future of Richland Hills will be shaped with the policies and recommendations developed in this *2014 Comprehensive Plan*. Based on this plan, decisions will be made that will influence many aspects of the City's built and social environments. Richland Hills has taken an important leadership role in defining its future, with the adoption of this Plan. The Plan will provide a very important tool for City staff and civic leaders to use in making sound planning decisions regarding the long-term growth and development of Richland Hills. The future quality of life in Richland Hills will be substantially influenced by the manner in which Comprehensive Plan recommendations are administered and maintained.

Changes in Richland Hills's socioeconomic climate and in development trends that were not anticipated during preparation of the plan will occur from time to time, and therefore, subsequent adjustments will be required. Elements of the City that were treated in terms of a general relationship to the overall area may, in the future, require more specific and detailed attention. Planning for the City's future should be a continuous process, and this Plan is designed to be a dynamic tool that can be modified and periodically updated to keep it in tune with changing conditions and trends.

Plan policies and recommendations may be put into effect through adopted development regulations, such as zoning and subdivision, and through capital improvement programs. Many recommendations within the plan can be implemented through simple refinement of existing regulations or City processes, while others may require the establishment of new regulations, programs, or processes. This final section of the Comprehensive Plan describes specific ways in which Richland Hills can take the recommendations within this Plan from vision to reality.

## Proactive and Reactive Implementation

There are two primary methods of Plan implementation: proactive and reactive methods. To successfully implement the plan and fully realize its benefits, both methods must be used in an effective manner. Both proactive and reactive actions that could be used by Richland Hills are described within this Implementation Chapter.

Examples of proactive methods include:

- Developing a capital improvements program (CIP), by which the City expends funds to finance public improvements to meet objectives cited within the plan;
- Establishing/enforcing zoning regulations; and
- Establishing/enforcing subdivision regulations.

Examples of reactive methods include:

- Rezoning a development proposal based on the Comprehensive Plan that would enhance the City;
- Site plan review; and
- Subdivision review.

## Roles of the Comprehensive Plan

### *Guide for Daily Decision-Making*

The current physical layout of the City is a product of previous efforts put forth by many diverse individuals and groups. In the future, each new development that takes place, whether a subdivision that is platted, a home that is built, or a new school, church or shopping center that is constructed, represents an addition to Richland Hills's physical form. The composite of all such efforts and facilities creates the City as it is seen and experienced by its citizens and visitors. If planning is to be effective, it must guide each and every individual development decision. The City, in its daily decisions pertaining to whether to surface a street, to approve a residential plat, to amend a zoning ordinance provision, to enforce the building codes, or to construct a new utility line, should always refer to the basic proposals outlined within the Comprehensive Plan. The private builder or investor, likewise, should recognize the broad concepts and policies of the plan so that their efforts become part of a meaningful whole in planning the City.

### *Flexible and Alterable Guide*

This Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a dynamic planning document for Richland Hills – one that responds to changing needs and conditions. Plan amendments should not be made without thorough analysis of immediate needs, as well as consideration for long-term effects of proposed amendments. The City Council and other Richland Hills officials should consider each proposed amendment carefully to determine whether it is consistent with the plan's goals and policies, and whether it will be beneficial for the long-term health and vitality of Richland Hills.

At one-year intervals, a periodic review of the plan with respect to current conditions and trends should be performed. Such on-going, scheduled reevaluations will provide a basis for adjusting capital expenditures and priorities, and will reveal changes and additions that should be made to the plan in order to keep it current and applicable long-term. It would be appropriate to devote one annual meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission to reviewing the status and continued applicability of the plan in light of current conditions, and to prepare a report on these findings to the City Council. Those items that appear to need specific attention should be examined in more detail, and changes and/or additions should be made accordingly. By such periodic reevaluations, the plan will remain functional, and will continue to give civic leaders effective guidance in decision-making. Periodic reviews of the plan should include consideration of the following:

- The City's progress in implementing the plan;
- Changes in conditions that form the basis of the plan;
- Community support for the plan's goals, objectives, and recommendations; and,
- Changes in State laws.

The full benefits of the plan for Richland Hills can only be realized by maintaining it as a vital, up-to-date document. As changes occur and new issues within the City become apparent, the plan should be revised rather than ignored. By such action, the plan will remain current and effective in meeting the City's decision-making needs.

### *Complete Review with Public Participation*

In addition to periodic annual reviews, the plan should undergo a complete, more thorough review and update every five or ten years. The review and updating process should begin with the establishment of a steering committee that was appointed to assist in the preparation of this Plan. If possible, this committee (the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee) or the Planning & Zoning Commission should be in charge of periodic review of the plan. Specific input on major changes should be sought from various groups, including property owners, neighborhood groups, civic leaders and major stakeholders, developers, merchants, and other citizens and individuals who express an interest in the long-term growth and development of the City.

## Regulatory Mechanisms

The usual processes for reviewing and processing zoning amendments, development plans, and subdivision plans provide significant opportunities for implementing the plan. Each zoning, development and subdivision decision should be evaluated and weighed against applicable proposals contained within the plan. If decisions are made that are inconsistent with plan recommendations, then they should include actions to modify or amend the plan accordingly in order to ensure consistency and fairness in future decision-making.

### *Zoning Ordinance*

Zoning is perhaps the single most powerful tool for implementing plan recommendations. The City's zoning ordinance should be updated with the recommendations contained within the chapters of this *2014 Comprehensive Plan*. All zoning and land use changes should be made within the context of existing land uses, future land uses, and planned infrastructure, including roadways, water and wastewater.

#### Zoning Text Amendments

There are numerous recommendations within this comprehensive plan that relate to enhancing design standards. Their implementation will not only improve future development and interaction between land uses, but will also improve Richland Hills's overall image and livability. Such recommendations involve landscaping, nonresidential building design, and compatibility, to name a few. These recommendations should be incorporated into the zoning ordinance accordingly.

#### Zoning Map Amendments

State law gives power to cities to regulate the use of land, but regulations should be based on a plan; therefore, Richland Hills's zoning map should be as consistent as possible with the *2014 Comprehensive Plan*, specifically the Future Land Use Map. It may not be practical for the City make large-scale changes in its zoning map changes immediately. The City may wish to prioritize areas where a change in current zoning is needed in the short-term and that efforts be concentrated on making such changes. In the long-term, consistent zoning policy in conformance with the Future Land Use Map will achieve the City's preferred land use pattern over time.

### *Subdivision Ordinance*

The act of subdividing land to create building sites has a major effect on the overall design and image of Richland Hills. Much of the basic physical form of the City is currently created by the layout of streets, easements, and lots. Although Richland Hills is nearly completely developed, the subdivision ordinance still plays a major role in the replatting process and ensuring adequate infrastructure.

# Implementation Strategies

Implementation is one of the most important, yet most difficult, aspects of the comprehensive planning process. Without viable, realistic strategies for implementation, the recommendations contained within this Comprehensive Plan will be difficult to realize.

## Implementation Matrix

The following matrix is a summary of the recommendations within this *2014 Comprehensive Plan*. The columns *What*, *When*, *Who*, and *How* are intended to provide the City with specific tasks to work toward implementing the vision of this plan.

### *"What"*

This table is a summary of the plan's recommendations that are included throughout the document.

### *"When"*

Short term items should be targeted for implementation within the first five years of plan adoption; long term items should be targeted within five to ten years; ongoing items cannot be completed with a single action and should be continually addressed.

### *"Who"*

Although the responsibility for accomplishing a task may include additional parties, the purpose of this column is to identify the main player(s) in completing the recommended item.

### *"How"*

This column identifies generally how each recommendation task can be accomplished, such as a project that City Staff can lead, further study that is required, or necessary funding to be allocated.

## The "Next Big Things" in Richland Hills

Once the plan recommendations were developed, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee was asked to identify the top priorities, or "next big things", for Richland Hills. These projects are considered to be crucial to the realization of the community's vision, and should be initiated and/or investigated as soon as possible. These projects are identified by blue shading in the implementation matrix, and include the following (in no particular order of importance):

- Update the City's Zoning Ordinance
- Plan for a Town Center Area
- Expand the Existing TRE Rail Station into a Transit-Oriented Development
- Identify Incentives to Attract a Grocery Store
- Capitalize on the Big Fossil Creek Area with Proposed Improvements
- Continue to Develop Creek Trail Park with Proposed Improvements
- Plan for Pedestrian Connectivity and Enhancements throughout the Community

| What | | When | | | Who | How |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Short Term | Long Term | On Going | | |
| **Corridor Strategies** | | | | | | |
| **1** | Ensure Desirable Land Uses along the Corridors | ■ | | ■ | City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission | Zoning ordinance and map update, careful consideration of SUP and PD applications |
| **2** | Install Gateway Elements at Key Locations | | ■ | | City Council | CIP funding and design development |
| **3** | Require Screening of Outside Storage along Baker Boulevard | ■ | | | City Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and Consultants | Zoning ordinance update, careful consideration of SUP and PD applications |
| **4** | Protect the Neighborhoods with Residential Buffer Standards along Glenview Avenue and Baker Boulevard | ■ | | | City Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and Consultants | Zoning ordinance update, careful consideration of SUP and PD applications |
| **5** | Enhance the Landscape Buffer along SH 121 | | ■ | | City Council | CIP funding allocation |
| **6** | Develop Structure Reuse and Alternative Compliance Standards for Existing Buildings | ■ | | | City Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and Consultants | Zoning ordinance update |
| **7** | Review Parking Design and Access Management, Particularly along Grapevine Highway | ■ | ■ | | City Staff and Consultants | Zoning ordinance update and further study as needed |
| **8** | Review Signage Regulations along Glenview Drive | | ■ | | City Council and City Staff | Conduct analysis of existing and desired signage regulations; update with consultants or City staff |
| **9** | Ensure Pedestrian-Orientated Design along Glenview Drive | | | ■ | City Council | Zoning ordinance update and CIP funding allocation |
| **10** | Evaluate Other Special Design Standard Considerations along Baker Boulevard | ■ | | | City Council | Zoning ordinance update |
| **11** | Evaluate Other Special Design Standard Considerations along Grapevine Highway | ■ | | | City Council | Zoning ordinance update |
| **12** | Evaluate Other Special Design Standard Considerations along Glenview Drive | ■ | | | City Council | Zoning ordinance update |
| **13** | Adopt New Base or Overlay Zoning Districts to Address Corridor Needs | ■ | | | City Council | Zoning ordinance update |

| What | | When | | | Who | How |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Short Term | Long Term | On Going | | |
| **Future Land Use Plan** | | | | | | |
| **14** | Adopt the Future Land Use Map | ■ | | | City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission | Comprehensive Plan adoption |
| **15** | Update the City's Zoning Map | ■ | | | City Council | Zoning map update |
| **16** | Update the City's Zoning Ordinance | ■ | | | City Council | Zoning ordinance update |
| **17** | Plan for a Town Center Area | | ■ | | City Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and City Staff | Coordination between elected/appointed officials, Community Services Dept, and Economic Development Dept |
| **18** | Expand the Existing TRE Rail Station into a Transit-Oriented Development | | ■ | | City Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and City Staff | Zoning ordinance and map update, careful consideration of SUP and PD applications, Economic Development Dept support |
| **19** | Evaluate the Glenview Drive Possible Redevelopment Area | | ■ | | City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission | Consider future rezoning possibility |
| **20** | Plan for a Food Truck Park within the City | ■ | | | City Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and City Staff, possibly property owners | Acquire or lease land, establish regulations, and attract vendors |
| **21** | Identify Incentives to Attract a Grocery Store | ■ | | | City Staff | Economic Development Dept |
| **Neighborhood Strategies** | | | | | | |
| **22** | Review Development Regulations Related to Lot Size and Setbacks | ■ | | | City Council and Consultants | Zoning ordinance update |
| **23** | Update the City's Multiple Family Design Requirements to Improve Quality | ■ | | | City Council and Consultants | Zoning ordinance update |
| **24** | Incorporate Safety Design Principles as Possible | | | ■ | City Council, Planning & Zoning Commission, and City Staff | Encourage or require in site plans, provide information |
| **25** | Consider Expanding the List of Acceptable Building Materials | ■ | | | City Council and Consultants | Zoning ordinance update |

| What | | When | | | Who | How |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Short Term | Long Term | On Going | | |
| **26** | Review Current Landscaping Requirements | ■ | | | City Council and Consultants | Zoning ordinance update |
| **27** | Promote Connectivity throughout the Community | | | ■ | City Council | CIP funding allocation |
| **28** | Allow for Full Life Cycle Housing within the City | ■ | | | City Council and Consultants | Zoning ordinance and map update |
| **29** | Respond to Housing Issues as Necessary based on Conditions | | | ■ | City Council and City Staff | Continue budget allocation for demolition, code enforcement |
| **30** | Encourage Appropriate Residential Infill Development and Redevelopment | ■ | | | City Council and Consultants | Zoning ordinance update |
| **31** | Ensure that Future Redevelopment Complements Existing Neighborhoods | | | ■ | City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission | Careful review of PD and rezoning requests |
| **32** | Provide Information to the Community on Grants and Funding | | | ■ | City Staff | Develop database or list of resources |
| **Parks and Open Space Plan** | | | | | | |
| **33** | Capitalize on the Big Fossil Creek Area with Proposed Improvements | | ■ | | City Council and City Staff | Coordination with NCTCOG, CIP funding allocation, and detailed plans |
| **34** | Continue to Develop Creek Trail Park with Proposed Improvements | | ■ | | City Council and City Staff | CIP funding allocation and detailed plans |
| **35** | Plan for Pedestrian Connectivity and Enhancements throughout the Community | | ■ | | City Council | Zoning ordinance update, CIP funding allocation, City policy |
| **36** | Improve Connectivity around the TRE Rail Station | ■ | ■ | | City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission | Zoning ordinance and map update, careful consideration of SUP and PD applications, City policy |
| **37** | Consider a Variety of Possible Funding Options for Park Facilities | ■ | | | City Staff | Develop/maintain a database of possible funding sources and application deadlines |
| **38** | Enhance and Increase Park Signage | | ■ | | City Council | CIP funding allocation |
| **39** | Continue Coordination with Public Agencies to Promote Parks | | | ■ | City Staff and City Council | Regular coordination meetings and designated representatives |
| **40** | Develop and Advertise a Community Event Schedule | | | ■ | City Staff | Develop/maintain a calendar of local community events published on the City's website and local businesses |