

# CITY OF DALLAS

## Trinity River Corridor

### COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN



## Final Report

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## 6. Creating This Plan

The Trinity River Corridor is a vital part of Dallas' future and a comprehensive land use plan is an essential tool for shaping that future. The process for creating the "Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan" was ambitious in its scope and intentionally inclusive in its public involvement. The consultant team responsible for the project brought national expertise that, in conjunction with the expertise of local staff, contributed the highest level of professional input as well. The resulting plan should be an effective guide for the Dallas community as it reshapes this central part of the city.

The creation of the plan builds on activities during the 1990's that raised public awareness about the Trinity River Corridor's potential. The Dallas Plan, adopted by the City Council in 1994 as the citywide strategic plan for the future, included The Trinity River Corridor as one of six strategic initiatives. It supported action for public investment and community revitalization along the corridor. In 1995, a set of recommendations from the Trinity River Corridor Citizens Committee was accepted by the City Council. It also focused on public and private investments in the corridor. A major step in Dallas' efforts to fund these investments was the passage of the Trinity River Corridor bond proposition in 1998. The \$246 million approved by the voters enabled the city's designers and engineers to move forward on the design of major public improvements that addressed flood protection, transportation and recreation. As work on those projects began, it became clear that a land use plan was needed to guide future development of the neighborhoods and business areas along the river, and to ensure the greatest benefit from the significant investment in public facilities. After a national proposal process, the HNTB Team was selected to carry out the Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

The process of creating the plan was organized in five phases, each of which is summarized below. Public involvement was a part of all five phases of work and essential to the plan that resulted. The methods used to engage the public area also summarized below. Since this land use planning study occurred while design studies were underway on major public facilities, such as the Trinity Parkway, the process for creating this plan includes a significant amount of interaction with these infrastructure studies.

### ***Purpose of the Plan***

The purpose of the Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan was to develop a long-range land use plan and implementation strategy for the Trinity River Corridor. In addition, economic analyses of the Trinity River Corridor Project and Trinity Parkway alignment options, which were being evaluated by the North Texas Tollway Authority, would be prepared.

### ***Phases of Work***

The Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan had five phases:

- Inventory and Database Development
- Community Assessment and Analysis
- 2050 Vision Analysis and Cost-Benefit Analysis Options
- Alternative Land Use Scenario Assessment
- Comprehensive Land Use Plan Creation

The work conducted during each phase built upon the previous phase's results and conclusions. Each phase included professional research and assistance as well as extensive public involvement.

### **Inventory and Database Development**

Phase one of the project provided the data and policy foundation for all later phases. It investigated existing plans and policies, existing physical conditions, existing infrastructure, and the proposed components of the Trinity River Project necessary for identifying potential boundaries for both primary and secondary areas of study. Based on the stakeholders' input, primary study areas were identified and their boundaries were developed. Also, the stakeholders' feedback provided insight into the community's perceptions and issues related to land use within each primary study area. A number of technical reports were produced during this phase. This research provided a better understanding of stakeholders' desires for their neighborhoods and business districts' future.

### **Community Assessment and Analysis**

The Community Assessment and Analysis was the second phase of the project. The assessment and analysis included: a market assessment to identify priority development opportunity sites; urban design and development principles; housing and neighborhood revitalization strategies for corridor neighborhoods; and a target industry/cluster industry analysis. This phase of the project produced the initial drafts of the Land Use Opportunity Plans, Urban Design Framework Plans and Prototype Site Plans. Public input during the second phase focused on these plans for specific areas, and was instrumental in shaping the study area and prototype site plans.

### **2050 Vision Analysis and Cost-Benefit Analysis Options**

The third phase of the project included work with two very different perspectives: creation of a long range vision for the entire corridor and detailed fiscal and economic impact analysis of the Trinity River Corridor Project and the Trinity Parkway alignment options.

By imagining the desired vision of the Trinity in 2050, planners and citizens were able to look beyond the immediate issues of short-term investment. The vision statement and the set of maps and framework concepts developed in this phase of the project built on Phase 1's analysis and Phase 2's creation of draft plans depicting the future of key sub-areas within the corridor. They create the overall image of this revitalized and thriving corridor's future.

The fiscal and economic impact analysis made an important connection between this study of future development opportunities and the North Texas Tollway Authority's Trinity Parkway Environmental Impact Statement. Twelve alternatives for public investment were defined that ranged from the 'true no-build' in which none of the improvements associated with the Trinity River Corridor Project were completed, to the 'Trinity Parkway Only' alternative, which assumed that the parks and flood protection improvements would be completed but the Trinity Parkway would not, to alternatives reflecting the five roadway alignment options for the Trinity Parkway. For each of these public investment alternatives, a future land use scenario was developed. Next, the amount of development that was expected during the first twenty years after project completion was projected based on two different levels of public involvement in supporting redevelopment. The alternative land use scenarios were modeled to determine their impacts on the fiscal health of the City of Dallas, Dallas County and the Dallas Independent School District. The economic impact analysis measured the effects of these alternatives on the city's economic base and job creation.

Public input during this phase contributed to the creation of the 2050 Vision for the Trinity. Stakeholder input was also used to refine the future land use scenarios that were used in the fiscal and economic analysis.

### **Alternative Land Use Scenario Assessment**

The fourth phase in the project continued to build on the information and plans developed in the earlier phases. This phase focused on the creation and review of two corridor wide scenarios of possible future development. Such scenarios allow urban planners to geographically define land use patterns, establish numerical data for understanding and evaluating each option, and evaluate the implications of each conceptual land

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use/development pattern. Two scenarios were considered – the River Oriented Scenario, which concentrated higher density and economic development-driven land uses along the river’s edge; and the Dispersed Scenario, which decentralizes the focus of higher density and economic development-driven uses in a dispersed manner. Importantly, these scenarios were created after the selection of a locally-preferred alignment for the Trinity Parkway. As a result, the land use patterns illustrated by the scenarios could reflect development possibilities related to a particular roadway location and design.

Stakeholders participated in this phase of the project, and provided feedback about each of these scenarios and its ability to achieve the goals of individual communities and the overall city. The “Preferred Land Use Plan” resulted from this input.

### Comprehensive Land Use Plan Creation

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan Creation is the fifth phase of the plan. This phase incorporates the work of all earlier phases, and creates a document that will serve as a guide for City staff, the City Plan Commission, and the Dallas City Council in considering development proposals and investment decisions within the corridor. This phase was completed when the Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan was unanimously adopted by the Dallas City Council on March 9, 2005.

### Role of Special Area Plans

The consultants and staff for this project gained insight, information and recommendations from the review of many previous plans for areas within the Trinity River Corridor or studies of functional issues (such as wastewater and transportation) within the corridor. Three special area plans were developed while this Comprehensive Land Use Plan was being prepared. Stakeholders involved in these three studies also participated in this study. These area plans are:

- **The Joppa Community Development Plan: Gateway to Joppa Preserve;** prepared for the Joppa community by the University of Texas at Arlington, School of Urban and Public Affairs.
- **The St. Philips Neighborhood Community Development Strategy;** prepared for the St. Philips (Forest Heights) Neighborhood Development Corporation by Antonio DiMambro and Associates.
- **Oak Cliff Dallas, Texas: A Strategy for the Oak Cliff Gateway District and Trinity Place;** prepared for the City of Dallas by the Urban Land Institute

The ideas and recommendations of these plans were incorporated in the Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

### Communications and Public Involvement

The success of the Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan required a two-way communications and public input program developed at the beginning of the project and followed throughout all five phases of work. The public involvement effort for this plan was one of the most extensive undertaken in Dallas. The results informed the recommendations found in the final comprehensive land use plan.

### Communications Tools

Three primary tools were used to communicate information about the Trinity River Corridor and this planning process to the public.

First, the Trinity River Project’s website ([www.trinityrivercorridor.org](http://www.trinityrivercorridor.org)) provided up-to-date information about the study and schedules of meetings and workshops.

Second, a newsletter - *Trinity Vision* – was used to provide updates to interested citizens and businesses concerning upcoming meetings and the meeting’s focus. Printed in English and Spanish, the *Trinity Vision* also provided contact information, a study area map, and the times, dates, and locations for upcoming stakeholder meetings. Three editions of *Trinity Vision* were mailed to over 50,000 households; copies were also distributed at city facilities in the corridor.

Third, Trinity River Project Office staff and consultant team members made frequent presentations to the meetings of groups throughout the corridor as a way to inform them about the progress of the study.

### Opportunities for Stakeholder Input

As noted, each of the five phases of this planning process included opportunities for input by interested individuals, area stakeholders and city leaders. Five primary methods were used, which are summarized below and on the following table.

#### Individual Comment

Interested individuals provided comments on a wide variety of issues related to this Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Comments were received electronically from the project website’s comment forum, as letters mailed to the Trinity River Corridor Project Office, and as individual comments written on comment forms at public meetings.

### Stakeholder Meetings

Throughout the project, stakeholder meetings were held at facilities that were convenient and familiar to community residents. Most stakeholders were local residents, employers, or property owners who would be impacted by the project’s development, or who were concerned about the future of their communities. Meeting locations were selected with regards to the location’s accessibility for local residents and the meeting location’s availability, size, and parking options. Stakeholder meetings held at the neighborhood level allowed for locally-oriented public input sessions for soliciting community values, which in turn helped enrich the plan. These meetings were staffed by the City of Dallas and The Dallas Plan. Each phase included a series of workshops, with the same format and content, at numerous locations throughout the corridor. As a result, stakeholders could choose to attend a meeting that fit their own schedules.

### Community Workshops

After each series of stakeholder meetings was completed, the HNTB Team conducted a community-wide public input session. These workshops discussed the issues and developments that had been presented during the stakeholder meetings. The community workshops also sought a broader view of the matters discussed.

### Meetings with Interested Organizations

Throughout the planning process, input from many civic, neighborhood and business organizations was sought. Some groups, such as individual neighborhood groups or business associations, focus on a specific part of the corridor. Other groups represent particular perspectives or address citywide concerns; these include groups such as Save Open Space, AIA Dallas and the Greater Dallas Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. These interested organizations provided input in several ways. They held discussions of the plan at their own meetings, sent representatives to the stakeholder meetings and community workshops, made written recommendations and met individually with staff and consultants. Comments from interested organizations were considered in the recommendations at each phase of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan project. Among the participating organizations are:

- Central Dallas Association
- Clean South Dallas / Fair Park, Inc.
- Dallas Area Interfaith
- Dallas Environmental Organizations, including Save Open Space, Texas Committee on Natural Resources, Dallas Audubon, Sierra Club, Friends of the Trinity and others

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- Dallas Housing Authority Resident Council
- Elm Fork Area Property & Business Owners
- Forest Heights Neighborhood Development Corporation
- Greater Dallas Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Dallas Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Inner City Development Corporation
- Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce
- Rochester Park Neighborhood Association
- South Central Civic League
- South Central Community Development Committee
- South East Dallas Chamber of Commerce
- Stemmons Corridor Business Association
- The University of Texas at Arlington, School of Urban and Public Affairs
- T. R. Hoover Neighborhood Development Corporation
- Trinity Commons, Economic Development Committee
- Trinity River Corridor Citizens Committee, Economic Development Subcommittee
- Trinity River Corridor Citizens Committee, Transportation Subcommittee
- Vecinos Unidos
- West Dallas Chamber of Commerce
- West Dallas Neighborhood Development Corporation

### **City of Dallas Elected and Appointed Officials**

City of Dallas elected and appointed officials were briefed on the progress of the project at key points during the process; they provided input and gave direction for the next phase of the effort. These official groups included the Dallas City Council, City Council Trinity River Committee, City Plan Commission, and the Park and Recreation Board.

### **Event Summary**

The table below lists each phase of the Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan and summarizes key aspects of the

stakeholder input process for that phase. Individual communications, briefings for elected officials, and presentations to interest groups are not included in this table.

Project Phase and Meeting Type	Dates & Locations	Number of Meetings	Number of Participants (estimated)	Key Topics
<b>Phase One</b>				
Stakeholder Meetings	October 2 through October 19, 2000; held in locations throughout the corridor	18	650	Learn from stakeholders their perceptions & understanding of issues related to land use in each of the primary study areas. Know stakeholders' desires for the future of their neighborhoods and business districts.
Community Workshop	October 21, 2000; held at Yvonne Ewell Townview Magnet School	1	139	Review Primary Study Area Opportunities Maps and establish land use principles for each area
<b>Phase Two</b>				
Stakeholder Meetings	May 17 through June 14, 2001; held in locations throughout the corridor	16	627	Provide feedback on land use concepts. Share thoughts about the findings of studies regarding the corridor's economic base and the costs and

Project Phase and Meeting Type	Dates & Locations	Number of Meetings	Number of Participants (estimated)	Key Topics
				benefits of the recreational and roadway projects.
Community Workshop	June 16, 2001; held at Yvonne Ewell Townview Magnet School	1	118	Review results of stakeholder meetings & provide additional input on land use concepts.
<b>Phase Three</b>				
Stakeholder Meetings	February 25 through March 7, 2002	15	279	Review proposals for the 2050 Vision Plan for the Trinity River Corridor; Review the fiscal impact analysis of alternative Land Use Plans for the corridor
Community Workshop	March 9, 2002; held at Yvonne Ewell Townview Magnet School	1	89	Review results of stakeholder meetings
<b>Phase Four</b>				
Stakeholder Meetings	November 8 through 10, 2004	7	308	Consider 2 land use scenarios for the corridor & implications for

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Project Phase and Meeting Type	Dates & Locations	Number of Meetings	Number of Participants (estimated)	Key Topics
				each study area
Community Workshop	November 20, 2004; held at Yvonne Ewell Townview Magnet School	1	77	Review results of stakeholder meetings
<b>Phase Five</b>				
City Plan Commission	January 20, 2005; Dallas City Council Chambers	1	Not available	Review and recommend Plan to City Council
City Council	March 9, 2005; Dallas City Council Chambers	1	Not available	Review and adopt Plan