

City of Rowlett, TX  
Strategic Downtown Plan

Fall 2012



# Strategic Downtown Plan – Rowlett, Texas

Fall 2012

**Prepared for:**

City of Rowlett, Texas

**Prepared by:**

**Anne Ricker**, Ricker | Cunningham

**Bill Cunningham**, Ricker | Cunningham

**Dennis Wilson**, Townscape

**Mark Bowers**, HOK

**Abbey Roberson**, HOK

**Ignacio Mejia**, HOK

**Kurt Schulte**, Kimley-Horn

**Robert Rae**, Kimley-Horn

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### **Downtown Task Force (in alphabetical order)**

**Russ Carroll**, Real Estate Agent

**Randy Crawford**, Property Owner

**Tammy Dana-Bashian**, First United Methodist Church

**Mick Donnelly**, D4 Construction

**Mike Freauf**, Crescent Gage & Tool Sales

**Nathan Frumkin**, Property Owner

**Karen McPhail**, Lilly B's

**Doug Phillips**, City Councilmember

**Robbie Ryan**, Downtown Rowlett Association

**Steve Schrade**, Schrade Plumbing

**Julie Tomko**, First Baptist Church

**Jack Wierzenski**, DART

### **City Council**

**Mayor Gottel**

**Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Kilgore**

**Mayor Pro Tem Phillips**

**Councilmember Miller**

**Councilmember Davis**

**Councilmember Gallops**

**Councilmember Pankratz**

### **Planning and Zoning Commission**

**Gregory Peebles**, Regular Member

**Joe Charles**, Regular Member

**Greg Landry**, Regular Member

**Rick Sheffield**, Regular Member

**Michael Lucas**, Regular Member

**Rosalind Jeffers**, Regular Member

**Karl Crawly**, Regular Member

### **Planning and Zoning Commission (cont'd)**

**Jonas Tune**, Alternate Member

**Ronald Meyer**, Alternate Member

**Tina Dorenbecker**, Alternate Member

### **City Staff**

**Lynda Humble**, City Manager

**Erin Jones**, Planning Director

**Jim Grabenhorst**, Director of Economic Development

**Michele Berry**, Planner II

**Arti Harchekar**, Senior Planner

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## How to Build Community

Turn off your tv  
Leave your house  
Know your neighbors  
Look up when you are walking  
Great people  
Sit on your stoop  
Plant flowers  
Use your library  
Play together  
Buy from local merchants  
Share what you have  
Help a lost dog  
Take children to the park garden  
Together, support neighborhood schools  
Fix it even if you didn't break it  
Have potlucks  
Honor elders  
Pick up litter  
Read stories aloud  
Dance in the street  
Talk to the mail carrier  
Listen to the birds  
Put up a swing  
Help carry something heavy  
Barter for your goods  
Start a tradition

Ask a question  
Hire neighborhood young people for odd jobs  
Organize a block party  
Bake extra and share  
Ask for help when you need it  
Open your shades  
Sing together  
Share your skills  
Take back the night  
Turn up the music  
Turn down the music  
Listen before you react to anger  
Mediate a conflict  
Seek to understand  
Learn from new and uncomfortable angles  
Know that no one is silent, though many are not heard  
Work to change this

Source: National Housing Trust

## **Realize Rowlett 2020 Vision Statement**

### Rowlett in 2020

In 2020, Rowlett will be a community with diverse lifestyle choices for living, working, playing and learning. While the community will continue to provide single-family housing choices ranging from starter homes to executive estates, additional housing choices will be available for individuals and families that desire homes needing lower maintenance. Aging “baby boomers” will be able to age in place, and stay connected to their friends, churches and doctors because Rowlett will offer a variety of neighborhoods including those geared towards an “empty nester” lifestyle.

Young professionals will be attracted to low maintenance, dense housing found in urban or mixed-use neighborhoods, and will be able to return to Rowlett after attending college. Ultimately, those younger residents will have the option to attend college in Rowlett, find the job and lifestyle choices they desire and remain a part of the community throughout their lives. Employment opportunities will be available for individual entrepreneurs who want to establish a “home grown” business, as well as corporate executives who want the views of Lake Ray Hubbard and Downtown Dallas as part of their corporate identity. Retail and professional service jobs will be

available within a redeveloped downtown area, as well as along the PG&T corridor in several mixed-use projects or a thriving medical district. Corporate and high tech jobs will be available within a new campus in Northshore, surrounded by new urban neighborhoods and a commercial town center.

After-hours entertainment venues will attract residents and businesses to the community. Rowlett will become a community of the lake, not just on the lake. Active water sports on Lake Ray Hubbard will be enhanced by lower intensity activities such as birding and kayaking. The community will be accessible by high- and low-intensity recreational trails, as well as water taxis and trolleys.

Quality education for all residents will be the norm. In addition to formal learning opportunities that could be enhanced with a higher education campus, continuing education opportunities will be available through a variety of partnerships for seniors and others in the community desiring to refine and enhance their professional skill-sets and share their expertise.

## Section 1: Introduction

*“Commitment to downtown revitalization and reuse of historic buildings may be the most effective single act of fiscal responsibility a local government can take.”*

*Source: Economist Donovan Rypkema*

In January 2012, Ricker|Cunningham (RC), Real Estate Economists and Community Strategists, together with Townscape, Urban Designers; HOK, Landscape Architects and Land Planners; and, Kimley-Horn, Transportation Planners (the Consultant Team), were retained by the City of Rowlett, Texas (the City) to assist in preparing a *Strategic Downtown Plan* (the Plan). Properties that were the subject of this effort are generally located south of State Highway 66 (S.H. 66 and Lakeview Parkway), east of Rowlett Road, north of and including the Oliver’s Addition and South Ridge Subdivisions and west of the President George Bush Turnpike (PGBT). Collectively they represent the Downtown Study Area (the Study Area, the Area or Downtown). The intent of this downtown planning effort was twofold: to confirm the community’s vision for the Area as described in the City’s Comprehensive Plan, [Realize Rowlett 2020](#), and presented in the Appendix; and, ensure that public initiatives, policies and regulations are aligned in an effort to protect and advance this vision.



During the eight month planning process, the Consultant Team conducted primary and secondary research including detailed analyses of: conditions within the Study Area which could influence its redevelopment potential; prevailing market conditions and anticipated trends; the community’s vision for downtown and the vision’s alignment and conflicts with market and economic realities; and, regulations and policies under which current projects and programs are being implemented. From this work, conclusions were drawn regarding the Area’s role in the community and region; development opportunities available in the near-, mid-, and long term; and, the framework and resources necessary to advance a

long-term strategy for Downtown. Specific strategies for change, both citywide and downtown-specific, necessary to implement the Plan are provided in the Implementation section of the Plan.

### Why a Healthy Downtown

It is an undisputed truth that a community's downtown is a barometer of its health and a reflection of its values and overall quality-of-life. Area-wide and local chamber of commerce executives, economic development specialists, and industrial recruiters have found time and again that projects are often won or lost based on one single criterion - the economic condition of a community's downtown. Employers have found that a vibrant downtown significantly increases their ability to attract and retain high quality employees - whether or not the business is located in downtown - thereby minimizing turnover and associated personnel costs. City officials have found that bond rating companies often include the economic prosperity of the downtown as one criterion they consider when determining a city's bond rating.

Throughout the country, public and private entities have participated in the revitalization of their downtown core. In a report prepared for the American Public Power Association, several utility companies surveyed explained the basis for their participation in downtown enhancement efforts, citing the following:

Attributes of a Healthy Downtown	Status To-Date
▪ Compact Urban Form	▪ ▲
▪ Pedestrian Amenities	▪ ▼
▪ Secure Environment	▪ ►
▪ Attractive Housing	▪ ▼
▪ Lodging	▪ ►
▪ Civic and Cultural Uses	▪ ▼
▪ Entertainment	▪ ▲
▪ Historical Connection	▪ ▲
▪ Diverse Activity Mix and Tax Base	▪ ▼
▪ High Retail Sales	▪ ▲
▪ Strong Local Leadership	▪ ▼
▪ Supportive Zoning	▪ ►
▪ Effective Downtown Organization	▪ ▲

- a thriving downtown is a good recruitment tool for industry;
- downtown's enhancement stimulates the economy and adds jobs;
- economically, everyone benefits from a healthy downtown;
- a viable downtown infrastructure is essential to economic development in the whole area;

- a better downtown increases tourism in the area; and,
- downtown is a good investment.

Cities throughout the country who have undertaken similar efforts have found that benefits to the community are multi-faceted and multiplicative. Specifically, quality of life is enhanced, the number and diversity of job opportunities are increased, and dollars are invested. **According to the National Historic Trust, every dollar a community spends on downtown revitalization brings in \$30 in new investment.**

The City of Rowlett has long considered Downtown both its heart and its future. For more than four decades, City leaders have planned for improvements in and around Downtown that would solidify its position as a region-serving destination. Two of those planning initiatives came to fruition this year with completion of the President George Bush Turnpike (PGBT) and the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Light Rail Station. Downtown hosts both of these infrastructure improvements. Proximity to PGBT is already proving beneficial, not just for residents and business in Downtown, but for the community as a whole. Stronger connections east and west and shorter commute times were highly anticipated and have been well-received. The introduction of transit, while also benefitting the entire City, will have a particular important influence on Downtown. As an “end of line station,” on-going provisions for parking will be essential as riders travel from beyond the municipal boundaries to

use the train. Over time, and as DART strengthens its connections throughout the Metroplex, the value of properties in direct proximity of the station will exceed their current worth as a location for parking in favor of development. The Plan anticipates this evolution and provides strategies for near- and long-term investment.

### **Transit as an Anchor**

The downtown Rowlett light rail station serves as the “end of line” station for DART’s Blue Line, connecting over 4.8 miles of light rail (LRT) between Downtown Garland and Downtown Rowlett. Investment in the line exceeds \$360 million. In order to understand the effects of rail transportation on the demographics, design and value of surrounding neighborhoods, a literature search, including review of case studies from across the nation, was completed. Select case study examples are presented in the Appendix section of the Plan. The results of this research are summarized below.

### **The Demographics of Rail-Based Housing**

- The **presence of rail transit draws a higher proportion of managerial and professional employees** than exists in

surrounding areas without rail transit. The original character of the area seems not to affect this.

- **Households at rail transit are smaller** (around 1.65 to 1.9 persons) irrespective of the surrounding area household size. Within built environments, approximately half of households at rail station areas are one-person while only one-quarter of the households in surrounding areas are one-person households.
- Rail-based housing tends to draw **two age groups**: individuals between 25 and 45 and over 65.



- Given that many station area households are one-person households, **individual earnings are higher** in rail-based housing than in surrounding areas.
- Since there are few households with children, station-based households have **more disposable income** than their surrounding neighborhoods.

#### Design of Neighborhoods and Rail Transit Use

- **Proximity and density are two important indicators for rail transit ridership.** The quality of the walking environment may make some difference in rail transit ridership, but compared with the direct effect of increasing density, the impact is not significant. For instance, a doubling of density will double rail transit use, while improving pedestrian amenities may only incrementally increase ridership by encouraging a higher modal split and further walking distance from the station.
- Most trips by rail transit are to and from work. **Having work destinations at rail transit station areas and residential uses at the origin point of the trip can contribute to higher rail transit use** as long as the employment characteristics of residents and the employment opportunities are matched.

## Residential Development and Rail Transit Use

- **Rail mode share varies by distance** from up to 50 percent at the station to a few percent at approximately 2,900 feet from the station. Mode share refers to the percentage of trips taken by one means of transportation; walking, bicycling, public rail transit, personal vehicle, or other mode.



- Because of its demographics, **rail-based housing is primarily upscale** multi-family (rental) or higher density single family (ownership) attached housing. Many cities, including Dallas, have adopted incentive programs to

encourage affordable housing around rail since prices are generally higher than in other locations.

## Office Development and Rail Transit Use

- Most office workers whose place of work was more than 500 feet from rail transit will not use the rail transit system. This corresponds with the fact that **85 percent of all workers using rail transit walk to their workplace after getting off the train.**
- **Of office workers whose workplace is at a rail station, about 15 percent** use rail to get to work with the majority of employees arriving by automobile.
- **Higher density employment at a station area causes higher rail transit use.** Every extra 100 employees per acre within the station influence area (one-quarter to one-half mile) leads to an increase of 2.2 percent in ridership.

## Retail and Rail Transit Use

- **Evidence is inconclusive** whether retail may or may not benefit significantly from a location at or within rail transit stations.

One study shows rates of arrival by rail transit that may or may not be as high as arrival by walking, but in all cases arrival by automobiles is the dominant mode of transportation to retail.

### Real Estate Values and Rail Transit

- Rail transit can generate a **seven to ten percent increase in house unit pricing** near the station with the price effect noted to around 1,800 feet from the station.
- **Apartment rents are higher per square feet**, by as much as ten percent, at rail-based housing, but the real value to be captured at rail-based housing is by serving the **higher-end demographic market** that prefers these locations.
- **Office rents are higher at rail transit stations** and decline in a radius of about one and a half miles.
- **Retail rents are higher at rail transit stations** with the effect declining in a radius of about four tenths of a mile.

### Rail Transit and Market Development Densities

- Rail-based housing tends to be **higher density** than housing in surrounding areas, but **does not rise above prevailing** market densities.

### Past and Parallel Efforts

Prior to 2011, the City of Rowlett made land use decisions in accordance with the Rowlett Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 1986 and updated in September of 2001. Interestingly, that Plan was forecasted to only serve the community through 2010. This proved to be the case when in 2010 it became obvious that the 1986 Plan did not adequately reference issues related to the City's pace of growth, nor the impact of the President George Bush Turnpike (PGBT) and DART Light Rail Station. Recognizing their significance, as well as challenges associated with -- limited land resources to accommodate a near doubling of population; fiscal consequences associated with the planned land use mix; deficiencies in infrastructure capacity; and, reliance on planning documents loosely tied to dated assumptions of growth -- the City initiated preparation of Realize Rowlett 2020 which was adopted in September of 2011. Subsequent to its completion, City leaders contracted for services associated with preparation of a Downtown Plan and Form Based Code for application in select areas of the

community. These planning initiatives, including this Strategic Downtown Plan, were the City's effort to proactively manage growth and align its guiding documents and strategic course of action.

Past plans from which informed this Downtown Plan include:

***The Downtown Rowlett Development Plan (1992)*** – The *Downtown Rowlett Development Plan* states that it was initiated to address two major issues: (1) the City of Rowlett's rapid growth and development over the previous two decades and the role the downtown area had in that growth; and (2) the significant demand for municipal office space and public facilities created by growth. The boundaries of this downtown planning effort extended from State Highway 66 (Lakeview Parkway) on the north, Rowlett Road on the west, Kirby Road on the east (now the PGBT) and portions of neighborhoods located south of Main Street. Stated goals of the Plan were to prepare a Plan which would be (1): a planning tool to guide the development and / or redevelopment of public and private facilities in the downtown area; (2) a plan to direct revitalization of the downtown area; and, (3) a plan which had the potential to create an economic benefit to the City of Rowlett and local merchants, if implemented.

***City of Rowlett Downtown Master Plan and Downtown District Land Use Plan (November 2002)*** – The City of Rowlett Downtown Master Plan and Downtown District Land Use Plan states as its goal "the goals of the Original Downtown Master Plan." It states that, "At the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in August of 2001, the Rowlett City Council adopted as one of its eight major goals to 'Initiate Downtown Development.'" It goes on to say that, "As the City celebrates her 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; there is no better opportunity to recapture our sense of home and once again establish Downtown Rowlett as the community's heart." The boundaries of this downtown planning effort were similar to those of the previous planning effort, yet extended further west beyond Rowlett Road and further east to the water's edge. The vision expressed in this Plan reads:

*"It is the vision of the citizens of Rowlett to create a true heart for the community. This heart will be a revitalized and energetic downtown area hosting a large variety of residential, civic, commercial, and recreational uses. Citizens will be drawn to the downtown area twenty-four (24) hours a day to enjoy the new quality of life it offers. Urban planning will ensure that the community's heritage is preserved and at the same time offer opportunities for modern amenities and uses. The new downtown will consist of six (6) sub-districts; the Downtown Central Sub-District, the Downtown Crossroads Sub-District, the Downtown Oliver Village Sub-District, the Downtown Railhead Village Sub-District, the Downtown Town Square Sub-District, and the Downtown Waterfront Sub-District. While each district*

*will offer unique and specific uses, a common theme of community will bind the districts together. The downtown area will be as pedestrian-friendly as possible with the DART light rail facility becoming a strong focal point of the region. Buildings in the Downtown Town Square Sub-District should reflect architectural standards of the early 20th Century. A variety of mixed uses will be encouraged to foster an area where the citizens of Rowlett can live, work, shop and enjoy entertainment together.”*

## **Input**

In a resolution passed by the Rowlett City Council in December 2011, a 12-person Downtown Task Force was appointed to provide oversight to the Strategic Downtown Planning process. The mission statement that guided the work of the Task Force is presented as follows:

### Downtown Task Force Meetings

1 March 2012 No. 1

23 April 2012 No. 2

7 June 2012 No. 3

6 August 2012 No. 4

### Downtown Public Information Meeting

5 April 2012 No. 1

25 June 2012 No. 2

*“The Downtown Task Force will help the downtown planning process by representing the diverse interests of business and property owners in the Study Area, while upholding the Community’s Vision established in the Realize Rowlett 2020 Comprehensive Plan.”*

During the eight months that the Consultant Team worked with the Task Force, they facilitated four Downtown Task Force Meetings and two Public Input Meetings. Through these efforts, the Consultant Team sought to raise awareness about the project, as well as solicit the institutional knowledge of area residents and Downtown stakeholders. In all, more than 60 individuals participated in each of the two forums. Input was requested regarding what they valued in downtown, what they wanted to see, and what they wanted it to look like in terms of building form. Among the participants, all appeared to understand that opportunities existed for: a diversity of housing products; growing the commercial and business base; attracting users which would diversify both the daytime and nighttime populations; expanding and retaining cultural and civic venues; and, making infrastructure improvements in the Area a public priority. Collectively, they identified rail transit, schools, geography, personal values, and parks / open space as valued community assets which needed to be enhanced and preserved. Public input guided creation of the vision statement and guiding principles, and identification of Downtown’s valued assets. With this guidance, the Consultant Team, together with City Staff and elected and appointed officials prepared this Strategic Downtown Plan for the citizens of Rowlett.

## Strategic Objectives

The outcome of the effort described above is the Rowlett Strategic Downtown Plan. It identifies specific objectives and strategies in order to make the Downtown Study Area a better place to conduct business, shop, visit, live, learn and play. It is based on a realistic understanding of physical and market conditions, and is intended to be responsive to the community's needs. Its content includes: a statement of purpose and objectives; a description of current conditions as analyzed by the Consultant Team; clarity regarding supportable niche opportunities; a description of concept alternatives which the Study Area could capitalize on; and, details about actions for change designed to advance investment and reinvestment.

While a policy document, this Strategic Downtown Plan is also a document designed to target public investment and leverage public sector initiatives. Strategic objectives of the Plan include:

- protecting existing downtown investments
- establishing enhanced connections between neighborhoods and activity areas
- stabilizing compatible uses and products in the commercial core and industrial fringe

- promoting strategic investment which leverages both rail transit and region-serving roadway improvements
- adopting the associated code which encourages a quality and character of development that is market-supported, yet superior to what exists today

This Plan and the recommendations presented herein acknowledge conditions today and anticipates the future. Whereas regional growth pressures will continue to force Downtown to decide to what degree it wants to be a receiving ground for investment, the City must continually monitor and evaluate the place that Downtown will be for its residents, visitors, and other stakeholders. Therefore, while this Plan is intended to have a 20-year life span, it will need to be frequently revisited as strategic actions are accomplished and market demands change.

## Conclusion

Embodied in the vision for Downtown Rowlett stated herein is the on-going presence of a



range of civic and cultural venues, supported by a variety of residential, commercial retail and office, and entertainment uses. Anchoring the entire Area is the newly completed DART light rail station which will inform densities of development and a network of non-vehicular connections – pedestrian, bicycle and trail. Given the Area's proximity to PG&T, some existing and future uses will attempt to leverage this region-serving roadway, while others will attempt to leverage DART and still others will try and take advantage of both. The strategy for the City will be to encourage those uses to locate where they will benefit the community the most. Experience would suggest that the timing of this Plan is nearly ideal. With the recent completion of two major infrastructure projects and renewed interest by lenders in supporting private investment, the City should be well positioned to take advantage of the next development cycle.

Surrounding neighborhoods together with existing industry are considered an asset in the context of this Downtown Plan. This said, two paramount objectives are to improve and stabilize existing neighborhoods and phase investment so that existing businesses and industries are allowed to stay as long as it is feasible.

The last Downtown Plan was completed 10 years ago. Since that time, the country and state have endured a recession, retrenchment in lending, and marked interest in the number of individuals entering their retirement years. This, together with

completion of two major infrastructure projects, highlights the necessity for a new vision and roadmap for the future. In the sections which follow, this new vision is described. While it is intended to be specific about what is desired, it is designed to be flexible enough to respond to conditions which might change over time. As explained earlier, it assumes that private investment will follow public commitment and that the community will benefit from a thoughtful strategy, based in market realities and sound development practices.

## Section 2: Conditions

Planning for the redevelopment of communities and markets within them requires an understanding of the built environment and climate for change. The information which follows section includes an overview of conditions in Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Implementable redevelopment strategies must be rooted in an understanding of existing conditions in combination with market opportunities and a desired community vision, both of which are presented in subsequent sections of the Plan.

### Study Area Boundaries

As explained earlier, the Downtown Study Area is bounded on the north by State Highway 66 or Lakeview Parkway, on the east by Rowlett Road, on the south by the Oliver's Addition and South Ridge Subdivisions, and on the west by the President George Bush Turnpike (PGBT). Main Street serves as the spine of the Area and runs parallel to the Missouri-Kansas-Texas (MKT) railroad corridor which also serves as DART's Blue Line.

The boundaries of the Study Area were defined by members of the Downtown Task Force, with input from the community. The initial study area, for which the analyses on the following pages were completed, did not include properties in the NWQ of Lakeview

Parkway and Rowlett Road or several parcels fronting Lakeview Parkway along its southern edge. These parcels were later added. (See map below.) In a survey of participants at the first of two public information meetings, 80 percent of respondents (nearly 60 percent of which were both residents and homeowners) strongly agreed that the Downtown Area should include properties north and south of the rail corridor, between Rowlett Road and PGBT. While earlier downtown planning efforts considered an area larger than this (extending to the water's edge), the Downtown Task Force believed that for the purposes of this effort, the Area's eastern extent should only extend to PGBT.

Figure 1

### Initial Study Area Map



As defined, the Study Area represents a combined total area of approximately 160 acres and 195 parcels, most of which are locally owned.

## **Parcels**

### **Ownership by Geography**

Properties in the Study Area are owned by a diversity of agencies, organizations and individuals highly reflective of a tradition of small-scale entrepreneurship. Several blocks within the Study Area are owned by the City of Rowlett. Of the 195 parcels, 58 percent are owned by an interest with a Rowlett address, representing 56 percent of the area acreage. Thirty-six percent of the Downtown parcels are held by a Texas interest with the balance owned by individuals and organizations located out-of-state.

With the exception of a limited number of institutional ownerships, the vast majority of parcels in the Study Area are smaller than one acre. With few large parcel assemblages, revitalization of the Study Area is made more difficult. The task of assembling properties into parcels large enough for efficient and cost-effective redevelopment can be costly and time consuming. Additionally, it requires thoughtful collaboration in the form of public-private partnerships

and a shared vision. Strategies to advance both are described in greater detail in the Implementation Section of the Plan. See Figure 2 in the Appendix for an illustration of ownership patterns.

### **Total Assessed Values by Parcel**

Parcel values (improvement and land) within the Area range from <\$100,000 to more than \$1 million. One hundred and twenty three parcels, or 63 percent have a total assessed value of <\$100,000. Six parcels or three percent have a total assessed value over \$1 million. Understanding parcel values helps establish the magnitude of acquisition costs for redevelopment. See Figure 3 in the Appendix for an illustration of assessed values by parcel.

### **Improved Values by Parcel**

Similar to total assessed value, understanding improvement values provides perspective on the relationship between improvement and land costs, and ultimately its impact on the redevelopment cost equation. Improvement values within the Area range from <\$50,000 to more than \$1 million. One hundred and twenty-seven parcels, or 65 percent have an improvement value of <\$50,000. Three parcels or three percent have an improvement value of over

\$1 million. See Figure 4 in the Appendix for an illustration of improvements values by parcel.

### **Parcel Utilization**

While vacant parcels of land seem like obvious opportunities for redevelopment, improved parcels may be as well if the value of the improvement is such that the land could support a higher and better use. Within the Area, approximately 46 percent of parcels have an improvement value that is 20 percent of total assessed value - making them potentially viable candidates for redevelopment. An additional 12 percent of parcels have an improvement value below 60 percent of total assessed value. See Figure 5 in the Appendix for an illustration of parcel utilization as measured by the relationship of improvement to land value.

### **Infrastructure**

According to City staff, many neighborhoods and subdivisions have sufficient infrastructure capacity to support redevelopment, however it is aged and in some instances in need of repair and / or replacement. It was stated that over \$100 million worth of utility improvements are needed in existing neighborhoods, a portion of which in the area surrounding Downtown. Given the likelihood that redevelopment Downtown will be phased as new projects are

brought forward, to the extent possible, the City should attempt to identify potential early projects and prioritize improvements in these areas so as to effectively leverage private investment. These priorities should be reflected in the City's Capital Improvement Plan and updated regularly.

### **Transportation**

Street design and thoroughfare planning is an important element of comprehensive city planning that can be used to guide municipal engineers, roadway designers and private developers. When considered in concert with land use planning, appropriate standards can be established to facilitate safe and livable streets. Currently, Rowlett has a series of seven different roadway standards that are used to differentiate between thoroughfares. These standards have been codified and give guidance to the forms of new roadway construction. In Downtown Rowlett, a number of thoroughfares surround and bisect the Area in varying right-of-way widths and for different functions. See Figure 6 for an illustration of existing roadway standards.

Going forward, and in support of the vision stated herein, the City intends to approach thoroughfare design with greater flexibility. Recent trends in development, locally and across the nation, have significantly changed the approach to roadway planning, allowing

for designs which better compliment surrounding land uses and activities. This new flexible approach to street design provides an opportunity for alternative cross section designs and an improved transportation-land use connection.

In Downtown Rowlett this approach will be critical for success of mixed urban uses with a multi-modal focus. The intent is for higher rates of walking, biking and with the new DART station, rail transit use. The Downtown Regulating Plan (presented in the Appendix) identifies existing roadways, future connections and new street cross sections to improve the existing street design, as well as overall multi-modal mobility within the Area.

### **Transit**

Currently, Rowlett is served by DART with three routes that connect the Park and Ride lot in Downtown Rowlett with Downtown Garland, Downtown Dallas and Lake Ray Hubbard Transit Station. These routes are:

- Express Route 207 – Rowlett Park and Ride to Downtown Dallas
- Express Route 283 – Rowlett Park and Ride to Lake Ray Hubbard Transit Center and Downtown Dallas
- Route 887 – Garland / Rowlett FLEX

With the opening of the DART station, it will be important that new collection routes be implemented to allow Rowlett residents to access the station without having to drive to the station. Due to the station's proximity to PGBT and the fact that it is the end of the line, it is anticipated that a number of riders will originate from outside the city, yet use its services and parking. Regular bus service connecting to the new station will provide better connections for users and reduce demands on parking; however, parking will likely be a challenge for the foreseeable future.

### **Parking**

In urban areas like Downtown Rowlett, parking can be a major issue for consumers and businesses. Currently in Downtown, there are a number of surface parking lots supported by additional on-street parking. Being an end-of-line station for the DART Blue Line, however, it is likely that Downtown Rowlett will face parking challenges. DART currently has 326 parking spaces completed with another 414 planned for construction in 2013. These will supplement the existing 1,014 spaces currently located Downtown. See Figure 7 in the Appendix for an illustration of parking areas.

In order to anticipate increased demand in parking as a result of higher intensity land uses and transit demand at the station, the Downtown Regulating Plan recommends a number of new street

design approaches that include on-street parking. Requirements for surface parking are provided in the regulating code for the Area.

### **Development Patterns / Urban Form**

The existing development pattern varies widely from block to block within Downtown Rowlett. In its southwest quadrant along Larry, Delia, Christine and Dennis Streets there is a mix of residential structures with construction dates ranging from the 1930's through the early 1970's. Older structures have wood siding, and much of the newer construction has brick veneers. The development pattern is relatively low density with lot sizes ranging from 10,000 square feet to upwards of ¼ acre. Some of the properties along Rowlett Road within this neighborhood have transitioned into commercial uses. A floodplain is located along the residential area's eastern edge which adds to its low density feel and character.

To the north of the existing residential area, Main Street provides the primary east / west connection within the Downtown Area. Main Street was the location of many of the original institutional uses in the City including First United Methodist Church, First Baptist Church, First Christian Church, Sacred Heart Catholic Church (subsequently relocated to Hickox Road), the original fire station, and Rowlett School (now Rowlett City Hall). In addition to these institutions, a cotton gin, the original Rowlett water tower, the

City's first park (Herfurth Park), and many of the City's original commercial and residential buildings were also located along Main Street. Main Street (and the rail line to the north of Main Street) provided the City's first connections to Garland to the west, and Rockwall, Royce City and Greenville to the east.

Today, many of the existing buildings still remain, and have been supplemented with infill commercial development, as well as additional institutional uses such as the Rowlett Public Library and Veteran's Park. Much of the newer commercial development has been created with materials characteristic of residential architectural. Just to the south of Main Street (behind the existing City Hall and Library), a relatively large vacant property exists that is currently owned by the City and which has the potential to accommodate additional Downtown development if access from the north can be provided. Additionally, Coyle Middle School is located within the Downtown Area just to the south of Main Street on Skyline Drive. With the exception of the portion of Main Street between Commerce Street and the Library, the development pattern in this area is suburban in character with relatively large building setbacks from the street and on side yards between buildings. Main Street between Rowlett Road and Skyline Drive has been reconstructed as a more urban roadway with wide sidewalks, street trees, street furniture, and on-street parking, all of which provide a framework for a more urban development pattern.

To the north of the DART rail line, the development patterns are light industrial in form. Melcer Drive and Industrial Street parallel Main Street, and together provide the major east / west connection within the northern portion of the Downtown Area. The existing DART Park and Ride Facility is located near Downtown's geographic center, and is quickly transforming into the new DART Downtown Rowlett Light Rail Station. Surrounding the area are predominately light industrial buildings and vacant industrial lots. Light industrial buildings are relatively dense with 25-30 foot front setbacks and parking located primarily along the fronts and sides of the buildings.

Martin Drive provides the main north / south connection in the northern portion of Study Area, and will soon be extended to the south of the DART rail line, providing much needed pedestrian and vehicular connectivity between the north and south sectors of Downtown.

Along Lakeview Parkway, the development pattern is representative of suburban strip commercial development. Existing uses are primarily auto-related, and the City has worked closely with property owners to provide a single bay of parking and continuous vehicular and fire access between sites. Building footprints are relatively small with a substantial portion of each site being dedicated to surface parking.

On the whole, while existing development patterns and uses in the Downtown Area are largely suburban, the diversity of block patterns, location of institutional uses, and underlying trends in sub-uses and patterns, offers significant opportunities to create a downtown neighborhood that responds to a variety of uses, demographics and urban design themes.

## Regulations

Existing zoning, established in 2004 designates most of the Downtown Area as one of three districts. See Figure 8 for an illustration of existing zoning in the Downtown Area.

**Mixed-Use Downtown District—MU-DT.** The MU-DT district is intended to accommodate both residential and non-residential uses of moderate intensity, and to serve as a transition area between these more intense mixed-use areas and less intense residential and nonresidential land uses. Min 2 stories, Max 3 stories

**Mixed-Use Transit District—MU-TR.** The MU-TR district is intended to accommodate high-intensity residential and nonresidential uses in areas surrounding transit centers. Min 4 stories, Max 5

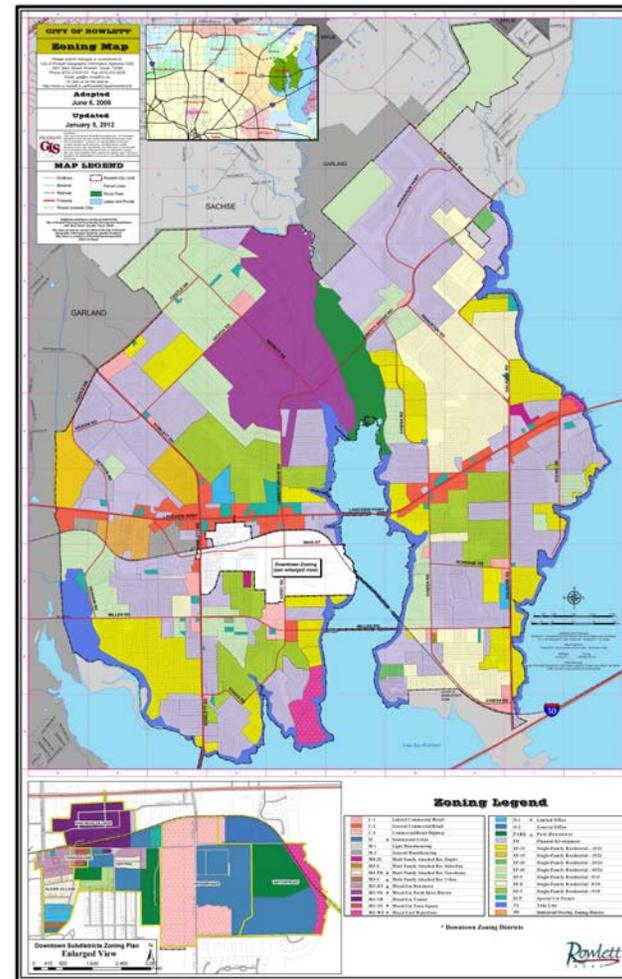
**Mixed-Use Town Square District—MU-TS.** The MU-TS district is intended to accommodate a wide variety of moderate- to high-intensity nonresidential uses in a configuration designed to serve as a focal point for the downtown area. Max 2 stories

These districts impose a mix of uses and, for the MU Downtown and MU Town Square Districts, a minimum building height and site layout standards. These rules have proved to be ineffective in encouraging development in the Downtown Area, and based on current conditions and market opportunities, a more appropriate form of zoning is being advanced in support of this Plan.

Overall, Downtown Rowlett has more strengths than liabilities, and many of its strengths are effectively permanent (civic center, transportation access and unique businesses, etc.). Downtown’s liabilities, with a few exceptions, are relatively temporary (economics of development / redevelopment, limited examples of creative financing, etc.) and many will can be reversed within the context of an overall strategy which addresses the underlying cause of these liabilities and contributes to their resolution.

Figure 8

**City of Rowlett Zoning Map**



## Section 3: Markets

### Trade Area Definition

Planning for quality sustainable development within a community's downtown requires an understanding of not only the physical environment, but the market. The physical environment was catalogued in Section 2. The market analysis portion of the Strategic Downtown Plan summarized herein focuses on identifying market opportunities within the project Study Area and a larger trade area. A trade area is that area from which a project(s) or area will draw the majority of its residents (housing), patrons (retail) and employees (office). The trade area will likely be a source of competition and demand. The boundaries of the trade area are often irregular as they are influenced by the following conditions:

- **Physical Barriers** – the presence of certain physical barriers including highways, arterials, and significant structures which influence driving and shopping patterns;
- **Location of Possible Competition** – inventory of potentially competitive project which could diminish the market share available to the project;
- **Proximity to Population and/or Employment Concentrations** – concentrations in an area which could translate into more

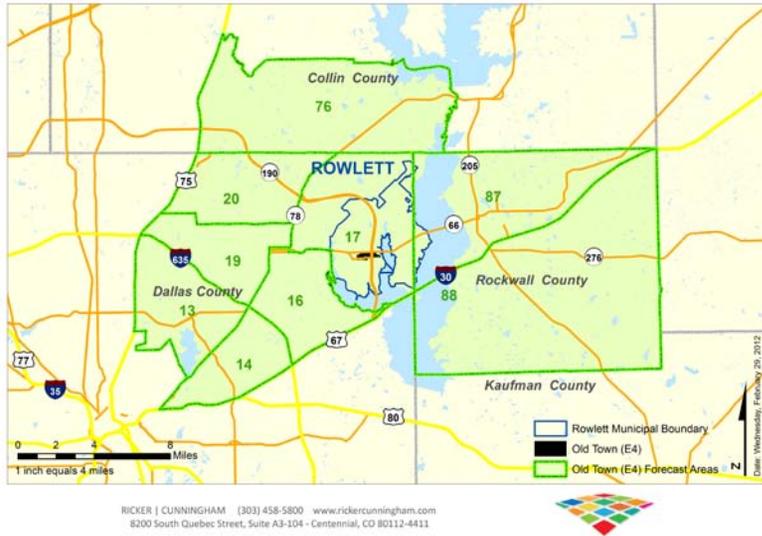
population and households to support the project (“rooftops”);

- **Zoning** – restrictive or favorable regulatory environment which will influence a developer's interest in delivering projects in one location vs. another;
- **Market Factors** – conditions which will set sale and lease prices, influence a developer's interest, or impact the project's revenue potential (value);
- **Drive Times, Spending and Commuting Patterns** – habits and patterns that have been established which could impact the project's ability to capture market share (or require re-education).

The trade area used here is irregular in shape (see Figure 9), yet considered to be reflective of the range of uses considered for development or redevelopment. What the analysis of uses within this area showed was that there is current and future market demand and that the Study Area, with strategic public and private investment and supportive policies, could be positioned to capitalize on select niche and destination opportunities which will serve the community and region.

Figure 9

### Trade Area Map



### Economic and Demographic Indicators

The information below presents an overview of current and future economic and demographic conditions in the Study Area. Since the Study Area represents a submarket within the City of Rowlett, and as such will likely compete with projects from a broader influence (trade) area (the Trade Area), indicators and conditions for Rowlett, the Trade Area, and the DFW Metroplex were analyzed.

Economic and demographic characteristics in the market are indicators of overall trends and economic health which may affect private and public sector development. The discussion below highlights those trends which will affect development demand within the Study Area over the next 10 years.

### Population and Household Growth

The City of Rowlett population represents 7 percent of the total Trade Area population. The Trade Area population, in turn, represents 13 percent of the DFW Metroplex population. Between 2000 and 2012, the Trade Area grew at an annual rate of 1.0 percent, while the Metroplex grew at a rate of 2.3 percent. During this same period, the City of Rowlett grew at a rate of 2.0 percent. The lower growth rate in the Trade Area in the midst of healthy regional growth is reflective of the capacity of this Area to accommodate new development. Much of the Trade Area is located within Dallas County, where infill development and redevelopment are more prevalent. Household growth in these areas followed similar patterns, with the Trade Area lagging behind both the City and Metroplex.

Table 1

**Population and Household Characteristics**

	City of Rowlett	Trade Area	DFW Metro
<b>Population</b>			
2000 Census	44,503	738,954	5,197,317
2010 Census	56,199	811,973	6,417,724
2012 estimate	56,310	832,672	6,515,710
2017 projected	60,700	888,221	7,257,611
2000-2012 CAAGR*	2.0%	1.0%	2.3%
2012-2017 CAAGR*	1.5%	1.3%	1.8%
<b>Households</b>			
2000 Census	14,266	287,153	1,881,056
2010 Census	18,371	316,304	2,298,498
2012 estimate	18,926	299,197	2,367,002
2017 projected	20,389	335,668	2,582,386
2022 projected	21,965	344,652	2,829,283
2000-2012 CAAGR*	2.4%	1.0%	1.9%
2012-2022 CAAGR*	1.5%	1.4%	1.8%

\* Compound Average Annual Growth Rate

Source: U.S. Census; NCTCOG; Claritas, Inc.; and Ricker | Cunningham.

**Household Characteristics**

Average household sizes in the City of Rowlett and Trade Area are larger than in the Metroplex, reflective of higher concentrations of lower density housing forms. One- and two-person households, an indicator of demand for higher-density housing products, are higher in the Trade Area and Metroplex than in the City. Renter-occupied households are also significantly higher in the Trade Area and Metroplex, as are the percentage of non-family households. All of these characteristics are indicative of a suburban development pattern located at the edge of denser urban development. See Figures 10 and 11 in the Appendix for an illustration of average household sizes and rental housing units by census tracts in the region.

Table 2

**Select Household Characteristics (2010)**

	City of Rowlett	Trade Area	DFW Metro
Average Household Size	3.04	2.90	2.75
1- and 2-Person	43.0%	48.1%	54.4%
Non-Family	15.7%	27.2%	30.8%
Renter-Occupied	11.8%	33.2%	38.4%

Source: U.S. Census; Claritas, Inc.; and Ricker | Cunningham.

## Age Distribution

The current median age in the City of Rowlett is 36.7 years, slightly higher than the Trade Area’s 35.4 years. More significant than this are the similarities across select age groups – 12 percent 20 to 29 years in the Trade Area vs. 10 percent in the City, and 15 percent 30 to 39 years in the Trade Area vs. 14 percent in the City. In general, the Trade Area (and Metroplex) skews younger than the City. See Figures 12 and 13 in the Appendix for an illustration of the population age 12 – 29 and 65 plus years by census tracts in the region.

Table 3

### Population Age Distribution (2010)

	City of Rowlett	Trade Area	DFW Metro
0-17	27%	27%	28%
18-24	9%	9%	9%
25-34	11%	14%	15%
35-44	17%	16%	15%
45-54	17%	14%	14%
55-64	11%	11%	10%
65 and up	8%	9%	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Age 20 to 29	10%	12%	14%
Age 30 to 39	14%	15%	15%
Median Age	36.7	35.4	34.4

Source: U.S. Census; Claritas, Inc.; and Ricker | Cunningham.

## Household Incomes

The 2010 median household income for the City of Rowlett was \$82,466 while the Trade Area and Metroplex median household incomes were significantly lower at \$61,248 and \$55,943, respectively. In addition, the City has a significantly higher concentration of high-income (\$100,000+) households than either the Trade Area or the Metroplex. See Figure 14 in the Appendix for an illustration of median household income by census tracts in the region.

Table 4

### Household Income Indicators (2010)

	City of Rowlett	Trade Area	DFW Metro
Median Household Income	\$82,466	\$61,248	\$55,943
Average Household Income	\$95,037	\$78,883	\$74,845
Per Capita Income	\$30,836	\$27,710	\$26,929
% Earning < \$35,000	11%	24%	30%
% Earning \$100,000+	36%	25%	22%

Source: U.S. Census; Claritas, Inc.; and Ricker | Cunningham.

## Education

Based on a combined total of residents who have received either a Graduate or Bachelor’s Degree, the City is slightly more educated than both the Trade Area and Metroplex. In every category from High School graduation on, the City is consistently higher than the both the Trade Area and Metroplex.

Table 5

### Population 25+ By Educational Attainment (2010)

	City of Rowlett	Trade Area	DFW Metro
Graduate Degree	9.3%	9.4%	10.1%
Bachelor's Degree	24.2%	22.5%	21.3%
Some College	27.5%	24.2%	22.7%
High School Graduate	92.6%	88.3%	83.6%
No High School Diploma	7.4%	11.7%	16.4%

Source: U.S. Census; Claritas, Inc.; and Ricker | Cunningham.

## Ethnicity

The Trade Area and the Metroplex exhibit more diverse population bases than the City. While Black and Asian population

concentrations are relatively similar, the Hispanic population comprises 17 percent of the City, compared to 25 percent of Trade Area residents 27 percent of Metroplex residents. See Figures 15 – 17 for illustrations of ethnicity by census tracts in the region.

Table 6

### Ethnicity (2010)

	City of Rowlett	Trade Area	DFW Metro
White	72%	68%	65%
Hispanic/ Latino	17%	25%	27%
Black/ African-American	14%	14%	15%
Asian	7%	6%	5%
Other or Multi-Race	6%	13%	14%

Source: U.S. Census; Claritas, Inc.; and Ricker | Cunningham.

## Psychographics

Psychographics is a term which describes peoples’ psychology, as distinct from physical characteristics. Psychographic analyses identify personality characteristics and attitudes that affect a person's lifestyle and purchasing behavior. Commercial retail developers are interested in understanding a community’s psychographic profile, as this is an indication of its residents’ propensity to spend across select retail categories. Residential

developers are particularly interested in understanding these profiles as they speak to the housing preferences and needs of their target population. The top 13 household psychographic clusters present within the Study Area are described in the Appendix. When all of the groups are categorized by housing consumer groups, Trade Area residents are distributed as presented in the box to the right. See Figure 18 in the Appendix for a detailed description of these top clusters.

## Employment

The Rowlett Trade Area, which includes Rockwall County and portions of Dallas and Collin County, had a 2012 adjusted total of 135,916 employees, according to the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). Total employment growth in the Trade Area is expected to reach nearly 165,000 employees over the next 10 years, increasing at an annual rate of approximately 2.0 percent. Employment growth is largely being driven by expansion in the Professional and Business Services; Education and Health Care; Trade, Transportation and Utilities; and Financial Services Industries.

Diversity in the employment base is illustrated by the percentage of employees within the Rowlett Trade Area by industry category: the Professional and Business Services (14.5 percent), Government

## Housing Consumer Groups

1. **Entry Level** – Seeks pure basics of a home; price is key determinant; desire home ownership, but often credit challenged – **10% of market area households**
2. **Feature & Location** – Active young professional singles and couples and career-focused upper middle class professionals; will sacrifice bedrooms for features; values convenience over price – **13% of market area households**
3. **Simple Life** – Active, laid-back middle class singles, couples and families; high rate of homeownership – **13% of market area households**
4. **Family Life** – Traditional middle to upper middle class families; prefer mid-sized suburban homes – **20% of market area households**
5. **Elite** – Affluent families, older couples; custom tastes; location and size are both important – **22% of market area households**
6. **Active Adult Entry Level** – Semi to fully retired lower-middle class adults; ethnically and racially diverse; individuals with strong ties to communities – **10% of market area households**
7. **Active Adult Elite** – Wealthiest of the active adult segments; community / sense of place is important; very active and social lifestyle – **5% of market area households**

(13.6 percent), Educational and Health Services (11.9 percent), Retail (10.5 percent), Leisure and Hospitality (9.8 percent) and Manufacturing (9.1 percent).

### **Development Conditions Analysis**

The Study Area is generally bound by Lakeview Parkway on the north, Rowlett Road on the east, the Oliver's Addition and South Ridge Subdivisions on the south and the President George Bush Turnpike (PGBT) on the west. Collectively, the Area benefits from a number of characteristics that make it appropriate for the development and redevelopment of retail, office, residential, institutional and community uses. These include:

- Limited competition from other infill developments in the community, despite significant demand;
- Access to a critical regional roadway (PGBT) and regional transit system (DART);
- Inventory of publicly-owned land in the Study Area;
- Established businesses, both industrial and commercial;
- Existing concentration of rooftops (albeit low density); and
- Limited inventory of alternative residential products in the market (homogenous market).

The strengths of the Area are countered, however, by select drawbacks (primarily market-driven) that need to be addressed if the benefits of development efforts are to be maximized. These drawbacks include:

- Located along an older corridor with primarily highway-serving uses and aged commercial centers;
- Industrial layout that does not support an urban mixed-use environment;
- Established residential neighborhoods at a low- to moderate-density, insufficient to support a significant concentration of "main street" or boutique retail;
- Recent competitive commercial development on the fringe of the Trade Area in an adjacent community, yet limited recent activity within the Downtown Area; and
- Local familiarity with the history of the Study Area which serves to limit the citizenry's ability to see its potential as a mixed-use urbanized redevelopment downtown with transit-supportive uses at its core.

### **Real Estate Market Supply and Demand**

An analysis of the performance of real estate products within a market, as well as competitive projects within a trade area can

provide an indication of whether an area may be ready for new development. Figure 19 illustrates the nationally accepted cycle of real estate as presented by Legg Mason Wood Walter, Inc. and Leland Consulting Group (Ricker | Cunningham was formerly Leland Consulting Group). Based on the experience of markets across the United States (U.S.), both small and large, this illustration highlights ways in which real estate reacts to changing market conditions. Based on current and short-term real estate trends, most real estate professionals believe that many markets in the Metroplex are likely in the throes of Phase I (Recovery). Historically, the Phase IV segment has proven to be the perfect time to prepare for opportunities to capitalize on growth and/or unmet niches for certain real estate products. Assuming that Rowlett is similarly positioned in Phase I, this planning effort for Downtown and the Study Area could be considered slightly beyond the ideal window of opportunity, yet nonetheless essential.

Keeping in mind where the market is in relation to the real estate cycle, the information which follows presents a summary of current forecasts for retail, office and residential space in the region and Study Area.

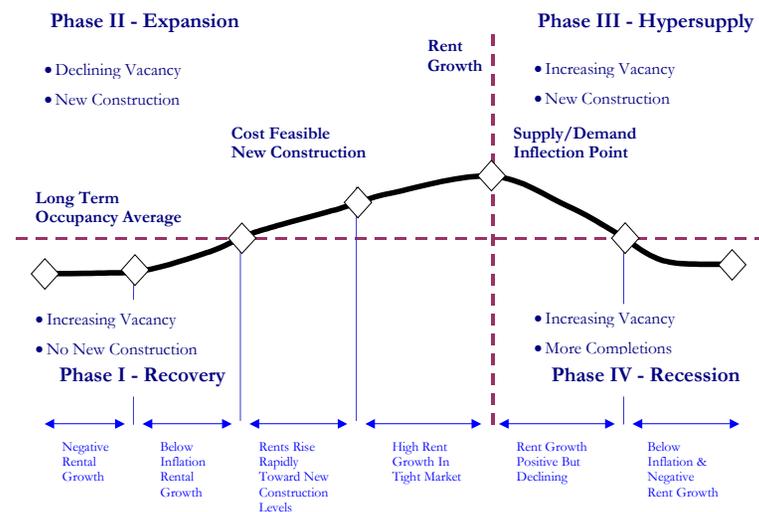
### Market Indicators by Land Use

Critical to promoting the Study Area’s competitive position within

the Rowlett Trade Area is an understanding of support for select land uses and product types. The following discussion presents estimates of future demand by land use type.

Figure 19

### Real Estate Market Cycles



Source: Legg Mason Wood Walker, Inc. and Leland Consulting Group

### Housing

Historically, a community’s downtown served as the commercial retail, employment, government and financial center for the

community. Today, while downtowns across the country continue to play a role in these arenas, their function and purpose has changed markedly. From Portland, Maine to Portland, Oregon, in communities ranging from 2,500 to 2.5 million, downtowns are experiencing a redevelopment and evolution, not only as centers for services, products and employment, but as urban neighborhoods with residences, entertainment venues and community gathering places.



Demand for new residential units is primarily a factor of the growth in households in specific income bands that support various product types within a trade area. Projected household growth within the Rowlett Trade Area was analyzed along with historical patterns of

single family attached and detached and multi-family development to arrive at an estimate of annual demand Downtown of 90 to 110 single family detached units (10 percent of Trade Area supported units), 80 to 90 single family attached units (15 percent of Trade Area supported units) and 70 to 80 rental apartments (15 percent of Trade Area supported units) in the Study Area over the next 10 years. The total number of new units that get built will depend entirely on the private sector's willingness to develop, as well as the on-going capacity of the Area to support a new mix of uses. Put another way, just because there is market support for a specific product type, does not mean that it is an appropriate use for the Study Area. For example, the vision for Downtown does not include any additional single family detached units while several other opportunity areas identified in [Realize Rowlett 2020](#) do envision this type of residential product. See Figures 20 and 21 in the Appendix for details on demand for residential units in the Trade Area by product type and price point.

## Retail

One of Rowlett's greatest assets is its unique downtown shopping experience. Today, the downtown market is represented by a sampling of regional and national chains primarily located along Lakeview Parkway and smaller local stores located along Main Street.

Demand for retail space is determined by existing and projected levels of retail expenditures in a given trade area. Existing and future total household retail expenditures in the Rowlett Trade Area were determined by multiplying growth in households with that portion of household income typically spent on select retail purchases. Additional adjustments were made to account for sales imported from outside the market and demand from tenant turnover and space obsolescence. The results of this analysis indicated demand for approximately 930,000 square feet of additional retail space over the next 10 years in the City of Rowlett. At a 10 percent capture rate, approximately 93,000 square feet could be supported Downtown, likely falling into the following categories: smaller neighborhood-serving stores, entertainment-related (theaters, restaurants, clubs), health and personal care and



clothing and accessory stores. See Figure 22 in the Appendix for details on demand for retail space in the Trade Area.

## Office

Commitment to a healthy downtown is best evidenced by investment in private industry. The Downtown Study Area works as a business address because of the presence of business support, retail services, eating and drinking establishments, and government and other institutional tenants. The Trade Area, overall, has experienced steady growth in a range of industries supporting office and industrial space. While the office space that has been developed within the City of Rowlett in recent years could have been well-suited to a condensed downtown environment, instead it is located along Lakeview Parkway, much of it at Scenic Drive in support of the hospital (Lake Pointe Medical Center). Future efforts to attract office space Downtown will be largely dependent on the City's ability to provide an attractive business environment with supporting commercial services similar to those currently offered in other locations.

Demand for new office space is derived from two primary sources -- expansion of existing industries and the relocation of new companies into the market. Employment projections by industry classification for the Rowlett Trade Area were used to estimate demand for approximately 1.8 million square feet of office space over the next 10 years. A capture rate of approximately 25 percent would suggest demand for approximately 450,000 square feet of office space in the City a portion of which could easily be located

Downtown. At a 20 percent capture rate, demand for new office space Downtown could total 90,000 square feet. Again, whether or not to encourage a significant concentration of office space is something that will need to be continually evaluated. See Figure 23 in the Appendix for details on demand for office and industrial space in the Trade Area.

## **Hotel**

A significant amount of quality hotel rooms and meeting facilities is a critical indicator of the economic health of a downtown area. To-date, neither the City of Rowlett nor Downtown, have any full-or limited-service hotel rooms. With completion of the PGBT, however, and corresponding growth anticipated in the region's office and industrial bases, it is reasonable to assume that a hotel project is imminent. Given the Area's access to the Tollway and Lakeview Parkway, a project within or proximity to the Study Area is not unreasonable.

Meeting facilities, such as conference and convention centers, help to maintain and enhance existing business and tourism, and can also act as a catalyst for urban revitalization. The economic importance of visitors to a community cannot be overstated. Not only do they generate spending which creates positive spin-off activities, but they become potential "ambassadors" for downtown,

marketing its attributes to other cities and communities. However, given the physical size of Downtown and the necessity for a strong mix of residential and non-residential uses, it is unlikely that any significant amount of meeting space will be developed Downtown. Correspondingly, it is the City's intent to encourage this type of use south on PGBT near Interstate 30 in an area of the community referred to as Signature Gateway.

Demand for hotel rooms are derived from corporate and government travelers, groups and/or tours, and leisure travelers. These demand generators comprise the corporate, group and tourist segments of the lodging market. Support for additional hotel rooms within a market results from increases in the employment base (corporate segment), as well as increases in travel by the other demand generators (group and tourist segments).

Growth in the corporate, tourist and group hotel market segments over the next five years is expected to generate demand for approximately 150 to 200 rooms in the City of Rowlett. If development in targeted investment areas of the City exceeds near-term expectations, these figures could double.

This level of demand in the Rowlett market will likely translate into support for the addition of at least one new hotel property within the next 1 to 3 years in Downtown. An early supportable hotel

facility type could include a smaller, limited-service boutique hotel, with appropriately-scaled meeting facilities and services targeting the business and visitor traveler markets.

### **Market Opportunities for Downtown**

Historically, Downtown Rowlett has been a good investment, but it will become an even better investment with the completion of the DART station and expansion and diversification of the Area's commercial and residential bases. The market analysis presented here will provide the foundation on which to build sound investment strategies in Downtown Rowlett. Among those strategies should be a communication program to outside interests. It will be the responsibility of the City and its advocacy partners, to communicate progress in this arena to potential investor audiences. Key market observations that should be part of any communiqué should include the following:

- Thirty-five percent of Trade Area psychographic segments are characterized as having urban living attributes;
- Two age segments (Baby Boomers and Echo Boomers) are gravitating to lower maintenance housing options (i.e., downtown apartments and condos, townhomes and rowhouses, flats and co-ops);

- Baby Boomer population in the Trade Area is expected to grow 5.3 percent annually over the next five years – over 3.5 times faster than the total population;
- Echo Boomer population is expected to grow 2.5 percent annually over the next five years – nearly 70 percent faster than the total population;
- The quality of public infrastructure in the Area will go a long way in increasing densities and price points of real estate;
- Downtown commercial vacancy and rental rates are approaching levels required to support new development and/or redevelopment but are not necessarily there for a mixed-use product.
- Among the higher growth employment sectors in the Trade Area are service industries often consisting of small businesses. This represents an opportunity for Downtown to develop not only additional live/work units, but also to promote the adaptive re-use of industrial buildings and less traditional spaces including vacated institutional facilities.

Taking into consideration these market analysis conclusions, specific development opportunities were identified for the Downtown Study Area. These not only represent market-driven trends supporting development and redevelopment, but products which have the potential to strengthen and link these opportunities to Downtown's

existing neighborhoods. Table 7 below presents a summary of market opportunities and their potential timing.

### Development Opportunities

Looking to the experience of similar markets which have revitalized over the past decade, as well as the vision for Downtown, principle land uses / products were identified for analysis including attached and detached ownership and rental housing units, commercial retail space (in mixed-use developments and free-standing), and employment / office space. As concluded here and taking into account future area improvements, coordinated planning efforts, and certain other catalyst events, the Study Area is strategically located to capture a substantial share of the region’s traffic and business growth. Forecasts indicate that more than 4.4 million square feet of employment space (office and industrial) more than 2.3 million square feet of retail space and nearly 22,000 residential units could be absorbed in the Trade Area over the next ten years, from which the Study Area could benefit. The level of investment that actually occurs within the Study Area will be directly proportionate to the City’s and property owners’ commitment to wait for the “right” investment (consistent with the Plan).

Table 7  
Downtown Rowlett Product Opportunities

Land Uses	Short-Term 1 to 5 Yrs	Mid-Term 5 to 10 Yrs
<b>Retail</b>		
Specialty Retail	X	
Restaurants	X	
Entertainment Retail	X	
Neighborhood-Serving	X	
Highway Commercial	X	
<b>Office</b>		
Class A		X
Corporate Campus		--
Class B	X	
Incubator Space	--	
Local Service	X	
<b>Hotel</b>		
Full-Service		X
Boutique		X
Limited Service	X	
Budget		X
<b>Housing</b>		
Rental Apartments	X	
Rowhouse/Townhouse	X	
Condominiums	X	
Live/Work Lofts	X	

Given the highly competitive nature of new development, and the heightened challenges of developing in infill environments, success will depend on defining a “place” in the minds of the region’s residents and area visitors. Developing key catalyzing projects as retail, residential, employment and community destinations will increase Downtown’s ability to capture not only a greater share of the Trade Area demand, but also to reach beyond those boundaries. This evolution will obviously be expedited with assistance from a favorable regulatory environment (Form Based Code) which encourages a flexible land use model, tighter building form, balanced parking requirements and stronger connections.



## Section 4: The Downtown Plan

Many communities have designed their downtown revitalization strategies around themes such as entertainment, housing, sports, meetings, conventions, and others. Although successful in select markets, many failed. The root of the problem being, few communities defined their own “brand” around existing community assets - those assets that make a community unique. Rather, the same concepts were replicated hundreds of times in hundreds of markets, and frequently with little or no impact.

Among the many lessons learned, the most prevalent over the last two decades has been that success is directly linked to authenticity. Revitalization themes must be a reflection of the local market’s historical character, its resources, amenities, and people. As stated by one observer, “Downtowns represent the old home town in our consciousness and therefore exert an emotional pull.” People are seeking out downtowns because of their ambiance and experience. They want efficiency, but they also want to feel part of a community.

It was with this understanding, as well as a thorough analysis of local conditions in the Downtown Study Area, that the Rowlett Strategic Downtown Plan was prepared. Its intent is to assist the City of Rowlett, property owners and other project partners with a

technical framework for discussions regarding market opportunities, development programming alternatives, and partnership strategies. The vision and directives referenced herein were developed with guidance from the Consultant Team and input from the Downtown Task Force, property owners, and representatives of the City. As such, they are unique to the City of Rowlett.

Following is a series of observations about the Downtown Study Area and issues which informed the Plan.



## The Opportunity

The Downtown Area was studied to understand opportunities and issues that may influence investment and reinvestment. These issues are market, physical, regulatory, financial, political and organizational. Each of them will inform the revitalization of Downtown. A synthesis of these observations and conclusions drawn from the analysis are presented as follows. An illustration of these opportunities and constraints appears as Figure 24 in the Appendix.

## Overall

- There is great opportunity in the Downtown Area to provide a wide variety of housing, parks, urban open spaces, art, and commercial venues that could serve to distinguish Rowlett in the region as a desirable place not only to raise children, but where young professionals, couples and the elderly can live, work, and play.
- Proximity to schools, trails, the lake, park land and a DART station provides an extraordinary level and diversity of amenities with which to attract new development, residents and businesses.
- There is a prime, high-image development area at the southwest corner of Lakeview Parkway and PGBT that could greatly strengthen the image of Downtown Rowlett within the region. Ultimately, the magnitude of development will be largely dictated by the relocation of existing City facilities in the Area.
- In addition to the above, there are three other key identity gateways to Downtown – the intersection of Main Street and Rowlett Road, Martin Drive and Lakeview Parkway, and Main Street and PGBT. The development that occurs in these areas could be reflective of the mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly character of Downtown, beckoning visitors to “check it out”.
- There are several locations, at entries into Downtown and on sites that are in-line with terminated street vistas, which provide opportunities for landmark features on buildings such as increased height, changes in building form, and unique roof treatments. These locations could help to provide interest and identity within Downtown, benefiting all of the property owners.

## North of Dart

- The area north of the DART station has a large block structure based on historic industrial development that could be readily broken down into smaller, walkable blocks as property is redeveloped in the Area. This will be crucial for increasing accessibility for pedestrians, bicycles and cars.
- The light industrial uses that currently exist will have a marginal impact on new urban residential, office and restaurant uses envisioned over the long-term and may actually catalyze early projects.
- Properties located adjacent to six-lane divided and larger roadways (Rowlett Road, Lakeview Parkway and PGBT) should provide a transition between the heavy, auto-oriented traffic and the envisioned, pedestrian-oriented urban neighborhoods. One strategy is the introduction of “browsing lanes.” “Browsing lanes” provide retailers the necessary convenience parking in front of the buildings and would allow for the possibility of drive through facilities.
- At least three envisioned urban open spaces would provide a finer grain of identity within the Downtown Area. Flex space

adjacent to these urban open spaces would offer the opportunity for concentrated retail and restaurant uses and gives a distinct focus to smaller sectors of the Area, while enhancing property values.

## Old Downtown

- The City owns a large number of key properties that could be used to catalyze development.
- The Area is largely comprised of small lots which make redevelopment of any significance difficult, largely because of their limited ability to accommodate parking. There are, however, several locations where district-wide shared parking could be provided.
- The focus of retail and restaurant uses in the Downtown Area should be on Main Street where the existing historic buildings are located (east of Commerce Street and adjacent to the traffic circle).
- Land located south of the existing Library and City Hall is owned by the City and offers a significant opportunity for infill development.

- There is a major underground storm drain originating from the north and traversing Veterans Park, which discharges into the creek. If the outflow was to be relocated slightly to the west before entering the creek, it could create a more developable parcel of land that could correspondingly take advantage of the creek as an amenity.
- Herfurth Park is a large open space which currently hosts a range of sports activities. Redesign of the northern portion could provide the Downtown Area with a significant urban park.
- Trail connections to Rowlett High School, the Lake Ray Hubbard and other adjacent areas should be provided.

### Residential Neighborhoods

- The existing neighborhood between the creek and Rowlett Road could be redeveloped to support a variety of single family housing types that more closely meet the demand of new homeowner markets.
- This neighborhood is in close proximity to a wealth of amenities that will be afforded to Downtown and which could attract new development.



### The Place

As explained to the project participants, no one initiative will advance the vision for the redevelopment of Downtown; rather, it will be a series of efforts occurring simultaneously over time. These efforts will serve to stabilize the environment for investment and define a place in the minds of residents, businesses and other visitors to the Area. The information which follows describes the initiatives needed to accomplish this desired outcome in the Downtown Study Area. The recommendations presented herein are

intended to provide enough detail to guide future efforts and inform capital budgets, yet be flexible enough to allow for future action which cannot be anticipated today.

### **Design Context**

In a downtown, the design context should serve to: integrate new structures with existing and historic buildings; blend existing materials and patterns with new infill buildings; and, use streetscape amenities in an effort to solidify a “sense of place.” In a survey of participants who attended a public information meeting held during the planning process, 43 percent were neutral as to whether new development and redevelopment needed to match what is in place today. However, 43 percent did believe that development Downtown should be distinctly different from what exists in other areas of the City. The full survey results are presented in the Appendix.

### **Plan Principles and Elements**

The observations described above, together with the input of the Downtown Task Force and public meeting participants provided the foundation from which the following plan principles and elements were developed.

- Civic Anchors – near-term and long-term
- Existing Commercial Strip - adapted for consistency with the Code
- Existing Industrial – will continue and some buildings will be redeveloped into industrial residential products
- Street Grid – will be reflected in policy and regulating documents, but phased in collaboration with private redevelopment initiatives
- Pedestrian Connections – to DART and within Downtown will be established in an early phase
- Slip Road (Browsing Lane) – will be added along the northern and eastern boundaries of the Area
- Open / Public Spaces – will be acquired (publically and privately) and set aside in perpetuity
- Creek – relocated and made to serve as an amenity
- Alley Parallel to 66
- Parking District – established once parking demand understood with opening of DART station
- Urban vs. Suburban Park – Herfurth Park will redeveloped to serve both urban and suburban functions

### **Downtown as a Destination**

Within the context of the Plan, Downtown will retain its role as the City’s civic core and grow its role as a commercial destination. With a diverse mix of land uses, civic facilities and public amenities, the

Area will be recognized as a hub of activity that supports and reflects the regional demographics.

### **Pedestrian Connectivity**

There are a limited number of areas in Downtown that are conducive to pedestrian activity and even fewer which offer safe, comfortable north – south connections along the rail corridor. Streetscape amenities are few beyond Main Street, offering a lack of visual continuity along the street edge and disconnects between origins and destinations. Discontinuity of clearly defined, safe, and accessible sidewalks can be a significant impediment to infill and redevelopment. Along the periphery of the Study Area, especially adjacent to Lakeview Parkway, traffic volumes, speeds, and expansive curb cuts jeopardize pedestrian safety. Large expanses of surface parking, vacant lots, and fragmented development patterns discourage pedestrian connectivity. In this area, ill-defined access and parking create safety concerns. Crosswalks and intersections are also inconsistent and the lack of pedestrian crossing signals and crosswalks weaken overall connectivity within the Downtown Area. A more fully developed system of non-vehicular connections needs to be identified and improvements phased in as properties redevelop. To the extent the City may participate in the cost of these improvements, identified improvements need to be identified as priorities in all City plans and budgets.

### **Development and Design Goals**

- High quality development
- Pedestrian-friendly
- Higher density (comparatively)
- Strategic distribution of urban open spaces
- Destination land uses
- Sustainable buildings and landscaping
- Improved physical environment
- Transit-supportive development pattern
- Greater variety of land uses
- Unified district (north and south tracks)
- Downtown development pattern (versus suburban)
- Locally-serving land uses, as well as region-serving
- Distinctly different districts

### **Vehicular Connectivity**

High traffic volumes along Rowlett Road and Lakeview Parkway create pedestrian access issues. Truck traffic and through-traffic are perceived as issues that discourage pedestrian connectivity to portions of the Study Area. Although convenient automobile access

to and into Downtown is important to its economic vitality, it should not constrain pedestrian activity or redevelopment. Current conventional roadway standards result in a street character that provides a further disincentive to pedestrians and limits the development potential of key parcels along these streets.

Traffic congestion and speeds, especially through the residential neighborhoods, were cited by process participants as a potential safety hazard and impediment to pedestrian and bicycle access to Downtown. Of particular importance was an expressed need for additional pedestrian safety improvements including: complete sidewalks, lighting and bike lanes. As with non-vehicular improvements, vehicular improvements need to be identified and made a priority early. While a goal of the Plan is to encourage pedestrians and bicycles over cars through an improved road alignment, consideration will be given to the impact of future alignments on existing property owners.

### **Parks and Urban Open Space**

The amount of land dedicated and managed as parks and open space within the Study Area is largely restricted to Herfurth Park, creating pressure to ensure that publicly-accessible urban open space is incorporated into all future large-scale redevelopment projects.

### **Transitional Zone**

Infill and redevelopment in areas located adjacent to alternative and established uses (transitional zone) will be informed by the character of the adjacent uses; site and building improvements will respect the prevailing development patterns of the adjacent properties. Properties located on the southern edge of the Transitional Zone will respect the residential character of existing neighborhoods, while properties located along the northern edge of the Transitional Zone will be more commercial in appearance with minimal setbacks, taller structures and hardscaped pedestrian plazas along the street.

### **Streetscape Improvements and Furnishings**

In order to preserve and enhance the character of the Study Area, the overall appearance of streetscape improvements throughout Downtown will be unified for visual continuity. In the same survey of participants referenced above, slightly more than 48 percent believed that improvements north and south of the rail corridor needed to be similar in character.

## Wayfinding

While Downtown has a strong base of local and regional users, approaches to the Area offer no distinguishing features or directional signage to orient first time visitors. When approaching or traversing perimeter streets, visitors have no sense that they are within eyesight of the original downtown or even that they are headed in the right direction toward the Downtown Area. Creating gateways at key entry points, as well as simple perimeter identifiers, will orient visitors, as well as strengthen and celebrate the heritage of the Study Area.

## Regulations

Zoning and development standards in Downtown will reflect the opportunities and recommendations described here. As illustrated in the Regulating Plan, the Downtown Area will be zoned Urban Village FB District with special transitions identified for properties adjacent to the surrounding arterial streets. The residential neighborhood located west of the creek will be zoned New Neighborhood FB District with appropriate transitions using building types and building heights to ensure the Regulating Plan to ensure compatibility along the south side of Christine Street. Flex space will be required along much of Main Street between Commerce Street and the traffic circle to ensure that retail and restaurant

activity can be accommodated in the center of the Downtown Area over the long-term. Greater detail regarding the guidelines that will inform development and redevelopment in the Area are presented in Section 6.

## The Vision

*“A vision is an image of the future shared by the people of a region and comprehended in physical, social, economic, and environmental terms.” Urban Land Institute*

Some widely accepted truths about vision statements include:

- A well-crafted vision is realistic and recognizes economic, political and environmental constraints.
- Successful visions must have their roots in the community and accurately reflect the views and aspirations of those who live and work there.
- A vision statement should be regularly evaluated and, if necessary, modified.
- Implementation of the vision requires consistent and disciplined public policy.

- Courage, patience, good planning, commitment, and money are also necessary in order to maintain the vision over a long period of time.

One of the key directives for this strategic plan by participants in the process was articulation of a vision for the Study Area. Experience has shown successful communities are those which leverage their land use, open space, and transportation elements in a manner which creates strong and memorable identities for the various neighborhoods and districts within them. This was the goal behind the vision for Downtown Rowlett. Ultimately, the Area should become a host for identifiable places rather than “a collection of developments.”

The vision statement and a final list of concept principles (presented below) provided the foundation for the Plan:

*Downtown Rowlett will reflect the City’s history in a fully-integrated and walkable environment that favors the pedestrian over the vehicle with capital improvements strategically located to leverage public investment.*

- *Given its enhanced access by both rail and roadway (PGBT), Downtown will attract a greater variety of high quality product types both vertically and horizontally integrated.*

- *Downtown will continue to be the community’s civic and cultural core with institutional facilities and a variety of public spaces anchoring commercial and residential uses.*
- *Commercial products will be local- and region-serving, and the entire Area will be accessible by pedestrians and bicycles first, and vehicles second.*

## **The Catalyst**

As explained above, the strategy for redevelopment of Downtown is based on the premise that *private investment follows public commitment*. Fundamental to this approach is identification of “catalyst concepts” which hold investment potential despite select economic and other development challenges. Some catalysts are site-specific and others are not (floating), but both are purely conceptual. They are possible project concepts which serve to prove up market potential in a previously unproven location. Predominant land uses can be residential, non-residential, institutional, and public. Within what are often relatively compact geographic areas, such as the urban condition in Downtown, a variety of land uses are presumed to be located side by side or within the same structure. Structures are assumed to be taller with minimal setbacks and reduced parking requirements, all in an effort to achieve rent and sale prices necessary to support higher infrastructure and construction costs. Catalyst concepts are intended to inform public and private investment, as well as

municipal policies and regulations, as they are designed to highlight opportunities for, and challenges to, development and redevelopment. Whereas experience has proven that implementable plans must maintain a high degree of flexibility, the physical realm must be able to evolve with changing market conditions. Therefore, while these concepts have been identified as offering potential for investment, it is less important that they occur exactly as presented and more important that whatever project does happen, that it embody sustainable elements which will advance the community's vision for Downtown over the long-term.

For the purposes of the Downtown Plan, the following criteria were used to define the concepts which follow:

### **Catalyst Concept Characteristics**

- Stimulate market supported private investment (Downtown)
- Inform early priority public investments
- Demonstrate potential for uses which do not exist today
- Prototypical in nature – could occur in multiple locations (floating)
- Not prescriptive – owner initiated / owner buy-in (unless city-led)

Among the most significant challenges facing early catalyst projects in a redeveloping area are those presented below:

- Level of market “education” required to achieve project rents or sale prices at the high end of the market;
- Higher development costs associated with creating a “place” unique enough to attract tenants willing to pay a premium to live/work there; and
- Ability to overcome investor perceptions of the projects’ location as a higher risk environment.

The information below provides a brief description of the catalyst concepts identified for the Rowlett Downtown Plan. Each description is presented along with a preliminary economic analysis and supporting illustration. The purpose of this work was to provide the City and other advocacy organizations with tools to “tell the investment story” of Downtown Rowlett. The economic analyses begin to quantify the order of magnitude of any financial “gap” that might result from development and / or redevelopment of these or similar projects within the Study Area. In the case of the economic analyses, since assumptions are based on findings from a market analysis which captures a moment in time, final figures associated with actual projects will likely be different as conditions and markets change. Conclusions derived to-date can best be used

to understand the range and number of financing mechanisms and strategies which will be needed to deliver projects of these types to the market.

**Downtown Catalyst.** The Downtown Catalyst vision suggests a new horizontal and vertical mixed use-environment located on properties that are principally City-owned at the center of the Downtown Area. Martin Drive, which was recently extended from the north side of the DART rail line to terminate at Coyle Street, would be extended one more block to a new terminus at Main Street. This extension would open up both sides of the rail line for vehicular and pedestrian movement, and would be a first step in establishing a unified Downtown District. Mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail and office on upper floors are proposed on the northeast and northwest corners of this new intersection. The old Cotton Gin would be transformed into retail or restaurant uses, and a new downtown plaza would be created at the existing site of the Farmer’s Market. Coyle Street would remain as an active roadway, but could function as a public plaza by being closed to vehicular traffic on the week-ends or when special events are planned. An older warehouse building next to the Cotton Gin is currently being re-purposed as a community theater, a concept which would further increase the number of entertainment venues Downtown.

Figure 25a

**Development Economic Analysis: Main Street Phase 1**

	Units/Spaces	Square Feet	
Retail/Restaurant/Flex		17,100	
Office/Employment		20,700	
Residential (Rental)	40	40,000	1,000 SF/Unit
Residential (For-Sale)	0	0	1,800 SF/Unit
Gross Floor Area		77,800	
Project Land Area		130,680	3.0 Acres
Floor Area Ratio		60%	
Surface Parking	0	0	320 SF/Space
Structured Parking	254	81,438	320 SF/Space
<b>Estimated Project Value (Stabilized Yr)</b>			
Total Retail/Restaurant Flex Rentable SF		15,390	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*		\$16.00	
Total Office/Employment Rentable SF		18,630	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*		\$16.00	
Total Residential Rentable SF		32,000	80% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF		\$15.00	\$1.25 Monthly Rent/SF
Total Parking Spaces (Structured)		254	
Rent/Space		\$300	\$25 Monthly Rent/Space
Gross Income		\$1,100,668	
Occupancy		95%	
Effective Gross Income		\$1,045,635	
Operating Costs		\$272,300	\$3.50 \$/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)
Net Operating Income		\$773,335	
Capitalization Rate		8.0%	
<b>Project Value -- Office/Retail/Rental Hsg</b>		<b>\$9,666,682</b>	
<b>Total Project Value</b>		<b>\$9,666,682</b>	
* Retail based on triple net lease; Office based on gross lease.			
<b>Development Cost Estimate</b>			
Property Purchase (Acquisition/Demolition)		\$1,110,780	\$8.50 \$/SF Land
On-Site Improvements (Surface Parking)		\$0	\$2,500 \$/Space
On-Site Improvements (Structured Parking)		\$3,817,397	\$15,000 \$/Space
Site Development/Infrastructure		\$392,040	\$3.00 \$/SF
Building Construction (Hard Costs)		\$4,950,414	\$64 \$/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)
Construction Contingency		\$457,993	5% % of Construction Costs
Soft Costs (% of Hard Costs)		\$915,985	10% % of Hard Costs
Developer Profit		\$1,164,461	10% % of Total Costs
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>\$12,809,069</b>	<b>\$164.64 \$/SF</b>
<b>Development Economic Summary</b>			
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>\$12,809,069</b>	
<b>Total Project Value</b>		<b>\$9,666,682</b>	
<b>Project Margin/"Gap"</b>		<b>(\$3,142,387)</b>	
<b>% Project Margin/"Gap"</b>		<b>-25%</b>	

Source: Ricker | Cunningham.

<b>Potential Contributions to "Gap":</b>			
Land Acquisition/Writedown	\$555,390		50% of Land Cost
Site Improvements Contribution	\$2,104,718		50% of Total Site Costs
Sales Tax Sharing (380 Loan -- 10 Yrs)	\$200,000		50% % of Local Sales Tax
Municipal Management District (20 Years)	\$348,001		0.20 Total Property Tax Rate
<b>Subtotal Contributions to "Gap"</b>		<b>\$3,208,109</b>	
Supportable TIF (25 Years)	\$2,700,000		1.390585 Total Property Tax Rate
<b>Total Contributions to "Gap" With TIF</b>		<b>\$5,908,109</b>	

Source: Ricker | Cunningham.

The eastern and western edges of this new development would be dedicated to higher density residential uses, either in the form of mixed residential buildings, or townhomes. These residential uses would offer a transitional product between the older commercial buildings to the west and potential redevelopment sites to the east. See the illustration and financial analysis presented here.



Figure 25b

**Development Economic Analysis: Main Street Phase 2**

Development Program		Assumption Factors	
Retail/Restaurant/Flex	Units/Spaces	Square Feet	
Office/Employment		8,950	
Residential (Rental)	146	146,000	1,000 \$F/Unit
Residential (For-Sale)	0	0	1,800 \$F/Unit
Gross Floor Area		154,950	
Project Land Area		174,240	4.0 Acres
Floor Area Ratio		89%	
Surface Parking	219	70,080	320 \$F/Space
Structured Parking	0	0	320 \$F/Space
<b>Estimated Project Value (Stabilized Yr)</b>			
Total Retail/Restaurant Flex Rentable SF		8,055	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*		\$16.00	
Total Office/Employment Rentable SF		0	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*		\$16.00	
Total Residential Rentable SF		116,800	80% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF		\$15.00	\$1.25 Monthly Rent/SF
Total Parking Spaces (Structured)		0	\$25 Monthly Rent/Space
Rent/Space		\$300	
Gross Income		\$1,880,880	
Occupancy		95%	
Effective Gross Income		\$1,786,836	
Operating Costs		\$588,810	\$3.80 \$/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)
Net Operating Income		\$1,198,026	
Capitalization Rate		8.0%	
<b>Project Value -- Office/Retail/Rental Hsg</b>		<b>\$14,975,325</b>	
Total Housing Units		0	
Sales Price/Unit (Wtd Avg)		\$200,000	
Gross Revenue		\$0	
Less Marketing Costs		\$0	7% % of Sales
Net Sale Proceeds		\$0	
<b>Project Value -- For-Sale Housing</b>		<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Total Project Value</b>		<b>\$14,975,325</b>	
* Retail based on triple net lease; Office based on gross lease.			
<b>Development Cost Estimate</b>			
Property Purchase (Acquisition/Demolition)	\$2,090,880	\$12.00 \$/SF Land (25% Premium)	
On-Site Improvements (Surface Parking)	\$547,500	\$2,500 \$/Space	
On-Site Improvements (Structured Parking)	\$0	\$15,000 \$/Space	
Site Development/Infrastructure	\$522,720	\$3.00 \$/SF	
Building Construction (Hard Costs)	\$9,295,605	\$60 \$/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)	
Construction Contingency	\$518,291	5% % of Construction Costs	
Soft Costs (% of Hard Costs)	\$1,036,583	10% % of Hard Costs	
Developer Profit	\$1,401,158	10% % of Total Costs	
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$15,412,737</b>	<b>\$99.47 \$/SF</b>	
<b>Development Economic Summary</b>			
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$15,412,737</b>		
<b>Total Project Value</b>	<b>\$14,975,325</b>		
<b>Project Margin/"Gap"</b>	<b>(\$437,412)</b>		
<b>% Project Margin/"Gap"</b>	<b>-3%</b>		

Source: Ricker Cunningham.

Potential Contributions to "Gap":		
Land Acquisition/Writedown	\$1,045,440	50% of Land Cost
Site Improvements Contribution	\$535,110	50% of Total Site Costs
Sales Tax Sharing (380 Loan -- 10 Yrs)	\$100,000	50% % of Local Sales Tax
Municipal Management District (20 Years)	\$539,112	0.20 Total Property Tax Rate
<b>Subtotal Contributions to "Gap"</b>	<b>\$2,219,662</b>	
Supportable TIF (25 Years)	\$4,000,000	1.390585 Total Property Tax Rate
<b>Total Contributions to "Gap" With TIF</b>	<b>\$6,219,662</b>	

Source: Ricker Cunningham.

**Residential Case Study.** The residential case study explores the potential for existing single family lots in the Downtown Area to be redeveloped with a higher density residential product, such as townhomes or rowhouses. The average lot size of many of the existing residential lots in the Downtown Area is 60' by 150', and for the most part, these lots are individually owned. An attached ownership use would allow an owner of a single residential lot to redevelop it with two townhomes, or to combine multiple adjacent properties into a larger townhome project. The existing street and alley rights-of way in this scenario would be maintained, allowing the neighborhood density to transition over time. See the illustration and financial analysis presented here.



Figure 26

**Development Economic Analysis: Townhomes / Rowhouses**

Development Program		Assumption Factors	
	Units/Spaces	Square Feet	
Retail/Restaurant		0	
Office/Employment		0	
Residential (Rental)	0	0	1,000 \$F/Unit
Residential (For-Sale)	36	64,800	1,800 \$F/Unit
Gross Floor Area		64,800	
Project Land Area		108,900	2.5 Acres
Floor Area Ratio		60%	
Surface Parking	0	0	320 \$F/Space
Structured Parking	0	0	320 \$F/Space
<b>Estimated Project Value (Stabilized Yr)</b>			
Total Retail/Restaurant Rentable SF		0	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*		\$16.00	
Total Office/Employment Rentable SF		0	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*		\$16.00	
Total Residential Rentable SF		0	80% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF		\$12.00	\$1.00 Monthly Rent/SF
Total Parking Spaces (Structured)		0	
Rent/Space		\$300	\$25 Monthly Rent/Space
Gross Income		\$0	
Occupancy		95%	
Effective Gross Income		\$0	
Operating Costs		\$0	\$0.00 \$/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)
Net Operating Income		\$0	
Capitalization Rate		8.0%	
<b>Project Value -- Office/Retail/Rental Hsg</b>		<b>\$0</b>	
Total Housing Units		36	
Sales Price/Unit (Wtd Avg)		\$190,000	
Gross Revenue		\$6,840,000	
Less Marketing Costs		(\$478,800)	7% % of Sales
Net Sale Proceeds		\$6,361,200	
<b>Project Value -- For-Sale Housing</b>		<b>\$6,361,200</b>	
<b>Total Project Value</b>		<b>\$6,361,200</b>	
* Retail based on triple net lease; Office based on gross lease.			
<b>Development Cost Estimate</b>			
Property Purchase (Acquisition/Demolition)	\$816,750		\$7.50 \$/SF Land (25% Premium)
On-Site Improvements (Surface Parking)	\$0		\$2,500 \$/Space
On-Site Improvements (Structured Parking)	\$0		\$15,000 \$/Space
Site Development/Infrastructure	\$326,700		\$3.00 \$/SF
Building Construction (Hard Costs)	\$5,248,800		\$81 \$/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)
Construction Contingency	\$278,775		5% % of Construction Costs
Soft Costs (% of Hard Costs)	\$557,550		10% % of Hard Costs
Developer Profit	\$722,858		10% % of Total Costs
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>\$7,951,433</b>	<b>\$122.71 \$/SF</b>
<b>Development Economic Summary</b>			
Total Project Cost		\$7,951,433	
Total Project Value		\$6,361,200	
Project Margin/"Gap"		(\$1,590,233)	
% Project Margin/"Gap"		-20%	

Source: Ricker | Cunningham.

Potential Contributions to "Gap":		
Land Acquisition/Writedown	\$408,375	50% of Land Cost
Site Improvements Contribution	\$163,350	50% of Total Site Costs
Sales Tax Sharing (380 Loan -- 10 Yrs)	\$0	50% % of Local Sales Tax
Municipal Management District (20 Years)	\$229,003	0.20 Total Property Tax Rate
<b>Subtotal Contributions to "Gap"</b>	<b>\$800,728</b>	
Supportable TIF (25 Years)	\$1,700,000	1.390585 Total Property Tax Rate
<b>Total Contributions to "Gap" With TIF</b>	<b>\$2,500,728</b>	

Source: Ricker | Cunningham.

**PGBT Case Study.** The PGBT case study explores the potential to create a mixed-use development at the corner of PGBT and Industrial Street near the northeast edge of Downtown on what is now largely City-owned property. Two three-story buildings would provide flex space on the ground floor along Industrial Street and PGBT with residential uses on upper floors. Adjacent to the PGBT frontage road, a “browsing lane” would be introduced providing short-term parking and access to support the ground floor flex space. Structured parking would be located along the DART right-of-way and accessed from interior drives. The street edge along Industrial Street would be pedestrian-oriented with on-street parking and street furnishings similar to those found in other areas of Downtown. Amenities for each building would be located in interior courtyards created between the building edges and structured parking. See the illustration and financial analysis presented here.



Figure 27

**Development Economic Analysis: PGBT**

Development Program		Assumption Factors	
Retail/Restaurant	Units/Spaces	Square Feet	
Office/Employment		38,600	
Residential (Rental)	306	306,000	1,000 SF/Unit
Residential (For-Sale)	0	0	1,800 SF/Unit
Gross Floor Area		344,600	
Project Land Area		322,344	7.4 Acres
Floor Area Ratio		107%	
Surface Parking	0	0	320 SF/Space
Structured Parking	652	208,640	320 SF/Space
<b>Estimated Project Value (Stabilized Yr)</b>			
Total Retail/Restaurant Rentable SF		34,740	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*		\$16.00	
Total Office/Employment Rentable SF		0	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*		\$16.00	
Total Residential Rentable SF		244,800	80% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF		\$14.40	\$1.20 Monthly Rent/SF
Total Parking Spaces (Structured)		652	\$25 Monthly Rent/Space
Rent/Space		\$300	
Gross Income		\$4,276,560	
Occupancy		95%	
Effective Gross Income		\$4,062,732	
Operating Costs		\$1,240,560	\$3.60 S/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)
Net Operating Income		\$2,822,172	
Capitalization Rate		8.0%	
<b>Project Value -- Office/Retail/Rental Hsg</b>		<b>\$35,277,150</b>	
Total Housing Units		0	
Sales Price/Unit (Wtd Avg)		\$200,000	
Gross Revenue		\$0	
Less Marketing Costs		\$0	7% % of Sales
Net Sale Proceeds		\$0	
<b>Project Value -- For-Sale Housing</b>		<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Total Project Value</b>		<b>\$35,277,150</b>	
* Retail based on triple net lease; Office based on gross lease.			
<b>Development Cost Estimate</b>			
Property Purchase (Acquisition/Demolition)	\$2,417,580		\$7.50 S/SF Land (25% Premium)
On-Site Improvements (Surface Parking)	\$0		\$2,500 S/Space
On-Site Improvements (Structured Parking)	\$9,780,000		\$15,000 S/Space
Site Development/Infrastructure	\$967,032		\$3.00 S/SF
Building Construction (Hard Costs)	\$20,831,759		\$60 S/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)
Construction Contingency	\$1,578,940		5% % of Construction Costs
Soft Costs (% of Hard Costs)	\$3,157,879		10% % of Hard Costs
Developer Profit	\$3,873,319		10% % of Total Costs
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$42,606,509</b>		<b>\$123.64 S/SF</b>
<b>Development Economic Summary</b>			
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$42,606,509</b>		
<b>Total Project Value</b>	<b>\$35,277,150</b>		
<b>Project Margin/"Gap"</b>	<b>(\$7,329,359)</b>		
<b>% Project Margin/"Gap"</b>	<b>-17%</b>		

Source: Ricker | Cunningham.

Potential Contributions to "Gap":		
Land Acquisition/Writedown	\$1,208,790	50% of Land Cost
Site Improvements Contribution	\$5,373,516	50% of Total Site Costs
Sales Tax Sharing (380 Loan -- 10 Yrs)	\$500,000	50% % of Local Sales Tax
Municipal Management District (20 Years)	\$1,269,977	0.20 Total Property Tax Rate
<b>Subtotal Contributions to "Gap"</b>	<b>\$8,352,283</b>	
Supportable TIF (25 Years)	\$10,300,000	1.390585 Total Property Tax Rate
<b>Total Contributions to "Gap" With TIF</b>	<b>\$18,652,283</b>	

Source: Ricker | Cunningham.

**Prototypical Mixed-Use Case Study.** An additional case study program was analyzed for its financial feasibility. Similar to the residential case study, this concept is not site-specific, but rather “floating” in that it could appear in multiple locations in the Downtown Area. See the financial analysis here.

### Economic Feasibility

As presented, the economic analyses here considered the following development components:

#### Project Costs

- Land
- On-site development (including parking)
- Building construction (hard)
- Building construction (soft)
- Other development costs (e.g., financing)

#### Project Revenues

- Stabilized rental rates for office, retail and residential units
- Sale prices for residential units
- Absorption of units
- Prevailing capitalization and investment rates to determine project value and economic returns

Figure 28

### Development Economic Analysis: Prototypical Mixed-Use

Development Program		Assumption Factors
	Units/Spaces	Square Feet
Retail/Restaurant		10,000
Office/Employment		0
Residential (Rental)	20	20,000
Residential (For-Sale)	0	0
Gross Floor Area		30,000
Project Land Area		87,120
Floor Area Ratio		34%
Surface Parking	70	22,400
Structured Parking	0	0
<b>Estimated Project Value (Stabilized Yr)</b>		
Total Retail/Restaurant Rentable SF	9,000	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*	\$16.00	
Total Office/Employment Rentable SF	0	90% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF*	\$16.00	
Total Residential Rentable SF	16,000	80% Bldg. Efficiency Ratio
Rent/SF	\$12.00	\$1.00 Monthly Rent/SF
Total Parking Spaces (Structured)	0	
Rent/Space	\$300	\$25 Monthly Rent/Space
Gross Income	\$336,000	
Occupancy	95%	
Effective Gross Income	\$319,200	
Operating Costs	\$84,000	\$2.80 \$/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)
Net Operating Income	\$235,200	
Capitalization Rate	8.0%	
<b>Project Value -- Office/Retail/Rental Hsg</b>	<b>\$2,940,000</b>	
<b>Total Project Value</b>		<b>\$2,940,000</b>
<i>* Retail based on triple net lease; Office based on gross lease.</i>		
Development Cost Estimate		
Property Purchase (Acquisition/Demolition)	\$1,045,440	\$12.00 \$/SF Land (20% Premium)
On-Site Improvements (Surface Parking)	\$175,000	\$2,500 \$/Space
On-Site Improvements (Structured Parking)	\$0	\$15,000 \$/Space
Site Development/Infrastructure	\$261,360	\$3.00 \$/SF
Building Construction (Hard Costs)	\$1,869,990	\$62 \$/SF (Wtd. Avg. All Uses)
Construction Contingency	\$230,635	10% % of Construction Costs
Soft Costs (% of Hard Costs)	\$230,635	10% % of Hard Costs
Developer Profit	\$381,306	10% % of Total Costs
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$4,194,366</b>	<b>\$139.81 \$/SF</b>
Development Economic Summary		
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$4,194,366</b>	
<b>Total Project Value</b>	<b>\$2,940,000</b>	
<b>Project Margin/"Gap"</b>	<b>(\$1,254,366)</b>	
<b>% Project Margin/"Gap"</b>	<b>-30%</b>	

Source: Ricker+Cunningham.

Potential Contributions to "Gap":		
Land Acquisition/Writedown	\$1,045,440	100% of Land Cost
Site Improvements Contribution	\$218,180	50% of Total Site Costs
Supportable TIF (25 Years)	\$300,000	0.800000 Total Property Tax Rate
Sales Tax Sharing (380 Loan -- 10 Yrs)	\$100,000	50% % of Local Sales Tax
Public Improvement District (20 Years)	\$0	\$0.00 Assessment Per Bldg Sq Ft
Property Tax Abatement (10 Years)	\$0	0.000000 City Property Tax Rate
Development Fee Waivers	\$0	
Federal/State/Local Grants	\$0	
Streamlined Development Approval Process	\$0	
Tax Credit Equity (LHTC, Historic, New Market)	\$0	
<b>Total Contributions to "Gap"</b>	<b>\$1,663,620</b>	

Source: HOK Design and Ricker+Cunningham.

As shown, “closing the gap” for this catalyst and these case study projects will not be possible without multiple tools, used in combination with one another. In order to encourage or leverage private sector investment at the level shown in the analyses presented here, the City will need to proactively ready the environment for investment and grow its economic development tool box. A glossary of economic development tools is presented in the Appendix.

Table 8 summarizes the economic feasibility analyses presented above.

Table 8

**Development Economic Summary Analysis**

Project Indicator	Project Concepts			
	#1: Main Street Phase 1	#2: Main Street Phase 2	#3: Townhomes	#4: PGBT
<b>Private Sector Investment</b>				
<b>Development Sq Ft:</b>				
Project Land Area (Acres)	3.00	4.00	2.50	7.40
Retail/Restaurant	17,100	8,950	0	38,600
Office/Employment	20,700	0	0	0
Residential (Rental)	40,000	146,000	0	306,000
Residential (For-Sale)	0	0	64,800	0
<b>Total Private Development</b>	<b>77,800</b>	<b>154,950</b>	<b>64,800</b>	<b>344,600</b>
<b>Floor Area Ratio</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>107%</b>
<b>Total Project Value (@ Build-Out)</b>	<b>\$9,666,682</b>	<b>\$14,975,325</b>	<b>\$6,361,200</b>	<b>\$35,277,150</b>
<b>Total Project Costs (@ Build-Out)</b>	<b>\$12,809,069</b>	<b>\$15,412,737</b>	<b>\$7,951,433</b>	<b>\$42,606,509</b>
<b>Project Margin/(Gap)</b>	<b>(\$3,142,387)</b>	<b>(\$437,412)</b>	<b>(\$1,590,233)</b>	<b>(\$7,329,359)</b>
<b>Project Margin/(Gap) %</b>	<b>-25%</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>-20%</b>	<b>-17%</b>
Source: Ricker   Cunningham.				
<b>Potential Contributions to Gap</b>				
Land Acquisition/Writedown	\$555,390	\$1,045,440	\$408,375	\$1,208,790
Site Improvements Contribution	\$2,104,718	\$535,110	\$163,350	\$5,373,516
Sales Tax Sharing (380 Loan -- 10 Yrs)	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$500,000
Municipal Management District (20 Years)	\$348,001	\$539,112	\$229,003	\$1,269,977
<b>Subtotal Contributions to "Gap"</b>	<b>\$3,208,109</b>	<b>\$2,219,662</b>	<b>\$800,728</b>	<b>\$8,352,283</b>
Supportable TIF (25 Years)	\$2,700,000	\$4,000,000	\$1,700,000	\$10,300,000
<b>Total Contributions to "Gap" With TIF</b>	<b>\$5,908,109</b>	<b>\$6,219,662</b>	<b>\$2,500,728</b>	<b>\$18,652,283</b>
Source: Ricker   Cunningham.				

## Section 5: Implementation

Following defining the vision and desired results, comes the challenge of outlining an implementable strategy for promoting investment in the Study Area. As explained earlier in this document and during the planning process, success will depend on implementing a series of actions or strategies designed to capitalize on market opportunities and overcome barriers – effectively “readying the environment for investment.” The key to advancing the long-term vision expressed herein will be the continued monitoring of these strategies to ensure they are tailored to the unique circumstances of the Area, as well as potential catalyst and case study projects within it. Through this approach the City will: position the public sector as the early lead in this initiative; build community support whereas progress will be visible; enhance quality-of-life near-term as conditions are improved; allow multiple groups to have a role in the

### 9 Principles of Downtown Revitalization

- 1 Make a Great Plan
- 2 Many, Many Projects
- 3 Many, Many Stakeholders
- 4 Committed, Ongoing Leadership
- 5 An Effective Organization
- 6 Development Standards
- 7 Communication and Marketing Programs
- 8 Supportive Government
- 9 Ongoing Review

redevelopment effort; send a message that the Area is successful and making positive strides; and, create an increasingly attractive environment for investment.

## Strategy Fundamentals

A common complaint associated with publicly-led redevelopment initiatives is the speed with which investment decisions are made. A fundamental assumption in the recommendations associated with this strategy is that there will be a hierarchy of decision-making. The first layer will involve the private sector (applicant) interface with City Staff, where they will be provided all relevant policy and regulating documents associated with the Downtown Study Area. The second layer will be between Staff, the applicant, and relevant Boards and Commissions. Decision-making at this level will be informed by Staff recommendations and consistency with all City adopted documents. The third layer will be between Staff, the applicant and City Council. Decision-making at this level will be informed by Staff recommendations and those of the Boards and Commission, as well as a set of guiding principles specifically designed to reflect elements of the Downtown Plan and expressed goals. Each of these principles is listed below and is followed by a detailed description.

## Guiding Principles

- 1 Downtown is one sub-market that will be positioned to complement other sub-markets in the community.
- 2 Downtown investment will be market-responsive.
- 3 Transit infrastructure will be leveraged.
- 4 Downtown “infrastructure” will be protected and retained.
- 5 Downtown will be made greater than the sum of its parts.
- 6 Downtown’s “tool box” will have many tools that will be used for meritorious projects.
- 7 Public investment will leverage private investment.
- 8 Public policy will support Downtown development and redevelopment.
- 9 Solutions will be holistic.
- 10 Public-private partnerships are essential.
- 11 The vision will be protected.

**Downtown is one sub-market that will be positioned to complement other sub-markets in the community.** Downtown is one sub-market, with several districts, that compete with or

complement other sub-markets in Rowlett. The Downtown environment, while presenting tremendous opportunity for investment in a setting uniquely positioned to offer both heart and history, carries with it certain limitations, particularly for land-intensive non-destination-oriented land uses. Development costs are generally higher while project revenues are generally lower. Several market sectors, however, not only survive, but thrive in a downtown setting. The City and citizenry must recognize the obstacles associated with downtown development and redevelopment and encourage regulatory and financial solutions, such as public subsidies and creative financing mechanisms.

**Downtown will be market-responsive.** As noted, Downtown is a competitive sub-market within the Rowlett market. As such, the Downtown environment must be responsive to changing conditions, with implementation tools and mechanisms in place to both offset competitive disadvantages and capitalize on competitive assets. Implementation of this Plan will include continually monitoring market conditions and distributing this information to a broad audience including developers, business and property owners, lenders, City staff, elected and appointed officials and other members of the delivery system. <sup>1</sup>The “Delivery system” includes those individuals and organizations that affect the delivery of projects to the market.

**Transit infrastructure will be leveraged.** As explained earlier in the Plan, the Downtown Rowlett light rail station serves as the “end of line” station for DART’s Blue Line. Investment in the line exceeds \$360 million. While the cost to deliver transit infrastructure can be high, the return on investment to those communities that are fortunate enough to receive it can be significant. Based on an analysis of similar transit stations, rail transit can generate a seven to ten percent increase in house unit pricing near the station. Apartment rents can be as much as ten percent higher near rail stations and office and retail rents are often higher. However, the market can only recoup the value of transit investment if it causes the most valuable land and transportation facilities to be used by those that value it most.

**Downtown “infrastructure” will be protected and retained.** “Infrastructure” as it is referred to here include physical features (parks, urban open space, public improvements), service organizations (churches, schools, government offices), a mix of employers (retail, service, government – large and small users) and community attitudes toward Downtown. Assets that exist Downtown which provide the impetus for investment need to be protected (retained) and promoted. All too often, a community focuses its efforts on the attraction of new businesses and new developments, rather than concentrating on preserving (retaining), growing (expanding), and protecting its existing inventory. A balanced approach will be essential in the Downtown Study Area.

**Downtown will be greater than the sum of its parts.** The synergy created by the mix and density of land uses in a downtown or infill environment is unique relative to Greenfield development. Within these environments, businesses, residents and visitors are attracted to the high concentration of activity occurring throughout the day and evening. To foster this level of activity and synergy, niche strategies must be formulated to strengthen and link the various individual land uses and “infrastructure” elements. As new projects are introduced, careful consideration should be given to their ability to further strengthen these linkages and thereby contribute to Downtown’s synergy.

**Downtown’s “tool box” will have many tools that will be used for meritorious projects.** As Downtown competes in the local and regional marketplaces, its “tool box” must contain a variety of strategies and mechanisms to attract investment. These “tools” can be financial (grants, loan programs, etc.), physical (infrastructure investment), market (planning/feasibility assistance), and/or organizational in nature. They can be used independently or in various combinations. Given the obstacles associated with downtown development and redevelopment, it is imperative that a comprehensive, flexible and creative mix of tools is put in place.

**Public investment will leverage private investment.** Historically, the planning, financing, and implementation of projects in the Downtown market were the primary responsibility of public sector

entities. The City was understood to have the largest and longest term interest and responsibility for Downtown, making it the obvious lead in any revitalization or investment effort. It was also understood to be the logical conduit for local, regional, state and federal funding sources. However, while the public sector continues to play a significant role in most downtown efforts, a critical component to the success of any revitalization strategy today is participation by both the public and private sectors. Leveraging of resources is key, as no one entity, either public or private, has sufficient resources to sustain a long-term downtown improvement effort.

**Public policy will support Downtown development and redevelopment.** Experience has proven that main street or downtown development will best succeed if regional growth management programs reward efficient development patterns. If growth is allowed to occur in a land extensive, inefficient way that effectively subsidizes lower densities, Downtown development will operate at a competitive disadvantage. Given the City's existing land use patterns, Downtown Rowlett is susceptible to continued dilution of its potential role to be the community's central business and shopping district.

**Solutions will be holistic.** As explained frequently throughout the planning process, no one project will recreate Downtown. Rather, it is a series of projects, occurring simultaneously over time, which

create excitement and capture the interest of potential investment partners. In addition, just as the barriers to investment are multi-faceted so too are the solutions. Some communities consider adoption of governing regulations as the sole strategy to encourage reinvestment (tools such as comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, planned unit development ordinances, design review/overlay regulations, and the like). While these regulations are necessary, they are only the beginning of the implementation process. Solutions need to be more comprehensive in scope and include considerably more than just design for a regulatory framework.

**Public-private partnerships are essential.** Local government needs to have strong involvement, a visible presence, be the entity that offers continuing leadership, and provide regulatory incentives and seed capital for early projects. Not only does government have the legal responsibility to address many of the implementation components, but it is also the logical conduit to local, regional, state and federal funding sources.

**The vision will be protected.** As expressed in Realize Rowlett 2020, "it will be essential that regulatory tools and processes are restructured, and that leadership recognize economic challenges inherent in the desired development types." Whereas Realize Rowlett 2020 is a policy document, it cannot ensure implementation of the expressed vision. Similarly, this Strategic

Downtown Plan is a policy document that cannot ensure implementation without corresponding regulations. The City's proposed Form Based Code and this Plan's corresponding Regulating Plan will provide those assurances.

### **Strategies for Change**

Part of the recommended positioning and investment strategy for Downtown is the design of a process that always keeps multiple initiatives moving forward simultaneously. The definition of strategic initiative is broad -- it includes: public, private, and public-private physical projects; social, educational and promotional programs; policy reform; etc. Investors, developers and lenders seek out environments with market opportunity and areas with prospects for success. Such people like to follow success. "Success breeds success."

The guiding principles suggest that the Study Area be managed as one cohesive sub-market, strengthening, connecting and promoting its collection of diverse assets and responding in innovative ways to opportunities for leveraging investment. To this end, the strategies presented below are intended to assist the City, advocacy organizations, and stakeholders with managing issues in the Study Area in a unified way by reducing barriers, administering incentives, and clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the agencies.

Experience has shown that programs to maintain, promote and develop projects in the Study Area cannot succeed in a fragmented structure. Rather, it will be the combination of a variety of improvements and services, the synergies that these activities create, as well as a greater coordination among all Downtown interests that will bring the Area to a new level and enable it to compete effectively in the market and region.

Therefore, presented below are several priority strategies (initiatives) for advancing the *Downtown Plan*. Detailed information related to each of these and other supportive strategies is presented in the Downtown Action Plan Matrix which is a supplemental document to this Plan.

### **Citywide Strategies**

1. Research and institute neighborhood stabilization strategies for established neighborhoods located adjacent to strategic areas of investment including Downtown.
2. Update the City's Master Thoroughfare Plan.
3. Investigate various public holding company models for the transfer of property into the hands of private individuals interested in advancing the vision.
4. As resources are available, acquire, assemble and position strategic properties for private investment.

5. Develop either design standards or guidelines for community gateways.
6. Research the necessity for, and implement, a transportation plan for seniors and other individuals with unique mobility needs.
7. Prepare marketing materials for the community and priority investment areas including Downtown that communicate available opportunities to outside interests.
8. Host broker luncheons for the purpose of communicating the City's vision and available resources.
9. Define sustainability goals for the City and Downtown.

#### **Downtown Study Area Strategies**

1. Amend the non-conforming use provision in the existing City ordinances to encourage improvements (See Non-Conformity below).
2. Prepare and administer a communitywide survey requesting feedback about relocating City Hall and defining what uses will ensure Downtown continue as the City's "civic center."
3. Prepare a City-owned property portfolio analysis: quantify facility needs; develop acquisition, disposition, and funding strategies.
4. Complete a historic building inventory and designate accordingly; educate property owners about resources available to them with the designation.
5. Change the name of streets in and around the DART station (Industrial Street) to reflect the character of the Area as envisioned.
6. Research the feasibility of implementing a trolley (rubber tire, fixed) between Downtown and other targeted investment areas and community amenities.
7. Inform the Herfurth Park Master Plan (scheduled for completion in 2013) with regard to spaces that will complete the vision for Downtown.
8. Identify locations for future construction of structured parking and public spaces on both sides of the rail corridor and develop an acquisition strategy.
9. Complete and relocate infrastructure where needed to accommodate development and redevelopment which advances the vision (including sidewalks and trails).
10. Prepare a redevelopment strategy for U.S. Highway 66 (Lakeview Parkway).
11. Rebuild the streets and alleys in neighborhoods located adjacent to the core of the Downtown Study Area.
12. Complete street and trail connections between established neighborhoods and the Downtown Study Area.
13. Prepare a parking management plan to be implemented during a later phase of development (long-term).
14. Ensure that regulations allow for roadway closures in Downtown so that they can be a host environment for special events.
15. Meet with the school district to discuss potential mitigating strategies related to future uses located in proximity of schools.

16. Work with impacted property owners to acquire access rights with TxDOT and NTTA for future curb cuts (driveway connections) along the frontage road.

### Non-Conformity

Existing non-conformity regulations have had the consequence of preventing any existing property or building from expanding or being improved because of established rules. Under current regulations, both the building and land use must be made to conform to current zoning before any improvement is allowed. While these regulations may be appropriate for other areas in the City where there are individual non-conforming properties which pose a significant problem for their neighbors, they have been found to be ineffective and inappropriate Downtown. Specifically, this type of control is considered inappropriate for the orderly transition of uses in the Downtown Plan.

Within this Downtown Plan and supporting regulating documents, existing single family homes and industrial uses will not be considered incompatible with new uses and building types. Rather, they are considered to offer a transitional product that will allow Downtown to transform over time without destroying the economic strength of existing homes and businesses. Experience has shown that the presence of active light industrial properties in an evolving

high-density, transit-oriented district is considered to be much more effective than vacant properties at attracting new residents and businesses to an evolving pedestrian-oriented district such as that being proposed.

The Form Based Code, which will regulate the Downtown Area, contains new standards for non-conformity. Furthermore, there are different standards for structural and site non-conformity versus land use non-conformity. By separating them, existing land uses may continue and even expand without having to bring the entire building and site into compliance with new zoning regulations. This means that existing uses and development may be expanded and improved without having to meet standards for long-term development and that market forces will create the change desired over time.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, successful implementation of this Strategic Downtown Plan will be dependent on committed leadership from the public and private sectors. So as to ensure that the Plan will not be vulnerable to the failure of one project -- many projects will always be underway at any given time, and a wide variety of stakeholders will be involved. Success will also be dependent on removing barriers to investment; therefore, regulations will need to allow for

and encourage what the City and stakeholders desire and prohibit what is undesirable. Victories, even minor ones, will be continually broadcast through an on-going communications strategy, and all policy and regulatory documents will be aligned towards a common goal – to advance the vision expressed herein.

Downtown development is never easy, but always exciting. It is challenging, and as such requires higher levels of analysis, planning and assistance. Downtown, while the heart of the community, is but one subset of a larger market, and as such, has strengths which can be capitalized on and limitations which need to be overcome. These limitations, commonly referred to in this Plan as barriers, pose unique obstacles which require unique solutions. Downtown has a tremendous influence on the economic well-being of the entire region. Regions with stronger downtowns have stronger regional economies. Therefore, it is widely accepted that early projects in any revitalization effort should be assisted at least until market conditions reach levels where new construction can more than support itself.

The proposed approach to redevelopment of the Downtown Study Area encourages strategic investment in a compact environment containing an appropriate mix of land uses, with a greater emphasis to multiple forms of access, resulting in a unique sense of place. The Strategic Downtown Plan is intended to assist the City of Rowlett and other advocacy partners with a technical framework for

discussions regarding market opportunities, development programming alternatives, and partnership strategies. The vision and directives referenced here were developed with input from the Downtown Task Force, Downtown stakeholders, and guidance from the Consultant Team.

The master planning effort was designed to provide the City, property owners, and business owners with a clear vision of intended investment and criteria with which to evaluate specific development proposals located in the Study Area. The Strategic Downtown Plan is intended to provide recommendations for improvements and policy reform which can be implemented over the near- to long-term

Ultimately, the Strategic Downtown Plan is the roadmap to move the community's vision towards reality and to ensure that the redevelopment of Downtown is accomplished in a way that balances private investment objectives with community sustainability.

## Section 6: Protecting the Vision

As previously explained, existing zoning has not served to encourage the type of investment desired in Downtown. During completion of Realize Rowlett 2020, the update to the City's 1986 Comprehensive Plan, it was determined that four targeted investment areas had the potential to support a standard of development unique to other areas of the community. It was further explained that in order to ensure the standard was consistently applied, a new type of zoning would need to be used in these areas. That new zoning is called the City of Rowlett Form Based Code (FBC) and it is based on the goals and objectives adopted by City Council in Realize Rowlett 2020. In Downtown, the FBC, together with a Regulating Plan, will provide guidance and direction for the application of design standards and principles in approving final development plans and permits.

As explained earlier, it is intended that the Downtown Area expand its reach as the civic core, and also solidify itself as the cultural "heart" of the City. It will be the community's highest density area and new investment will leverage public investment in the DART Station, parks and urban open spaces. North of the railway corridor there is a mix of commercial and light industrial uses which provide valuable incubation and transitional uses. Long-term higher density residential development associated with transit and freeway access will replace existing uses. As a regional destination, Downtown will

host a variety of housing product types and support unique higher quality retail shops and restaurants.

### Zoning Code Amendment

The FBC developed for this Area was designed to provide a complete complement of neighborhood choices, positioning Downtown as an intergenerational neighborhood with a broad and stable tax base. To this end, the FBC advances the following objectives:

**Create Distinctive Destination Districts.** The City benefits from distinct districts and neighborhoods that provide citizens and visitors with diversity, variety and choice. Downtown will be one of those districts with a targeted focus on development and investment which serves to diversify and enhance Rowlett's economy and image in the region. Downtown will be perceived as an engaging and distinctive *place* in its own right; complementing, but not duplicating, the character and offerings in other areas of the community.

**Create a Symbolic Heart.** Downtown will be the symbolic heart of the City and a focus for cultural activities, markets and celebrations. It will be augmented with a diverse offering of residential, retail,

restaurant, office and civic activities that are linked by walkable streets and furnished with amenities that support and encourage activity in the public realm.

**Create a Variety of Housing Types.** A variety of housing types and sizes will be encouraged to compliment the large percentage of medium-sized single family lots located outside this Area. New residential types will include housing for smaller household sizes, thus attracting singles, young professionals, and empty nesters.

**Design Complete Streets.** Complete streets are those that comfortably accommodate multiple users—transit, cars, pedestrians and bicycles—and are designed to function as both “corridors for circulation” and “civic space”. The FBC ensures that neighborhoods and new development areas are well connected to amenities such as retail, restaurants, parks, recreation and schools by not just cars, but by pedestrian- and bike-ways that are safe and convenient to use.

**Design Engaging Streetscapes.** Streets are a City’s most valuable way to communicate community character and invite investment. All street corridors will be designed to include street trees, sidewalks which are set back from curbs by trees, and the presence of buildings. Large parking lots and fences in front of buildings will

be discouraged as they do not communicate a welcoming and friendly message.

**Build Upon Authenticity.** Downtown redevelopment will preserve and build upon those unique assets that differentiate Rowlett from other cities in the region including its older buildings that lend to a sense of history and character. During preparation of Realize Rowlett 2020, the community stated that they wanted to be a city “of the lake” not just “on the lake.” To this end, all targeted investment areas must connect to this invaluable and identifiable amenity. Use building and site layout standards for new development that will create easily accessible developments which will age well.

**Design for Visual Richness.** Great streets have “a thousand points of detail,” including diverse and detailed architectural facades, engaging signage, attractive furnishings, colorful plantings, sidewalk commerce, and public art. The City’s regulatory framework will be flexible enough to allow for the unfolding of a diverse and stimulus-rich environment over time.

**Design for the Next 100 Years.** New projects will reflect best practices for green urban design strategies and building techniques, “light imprint” site design, and cleaner transportation. Design for new buildings and the public realm will respond to the Region’s

climate extremes, especially in the provision of shade to enhance walkability during the summer months.

## Elements of the Regulating Plan

### Districts

The Downtown is comprised of two Form Based Districts (FB Districts) – New Neighborhood and Urban Village – as set out in the Regulating Plan presented as Figure 29 in the Appendix and described below. Figure 30 in the Appendix illustrates the supporting street sections to the Regulating Plan.

### **New Neighborhood**

**General Boundaries.** The New Neighborhood FB District is bounded by Christine Street to the north, the drainage corridor to the east, the cemetery to the south and Rowlett Road to the west.

**Building Types.** All New Neighborhood Building Types in the Form Based Code are allowed in this area. For redevelopment to the Townhome Building Type, the site must be large enough to

accommodate at least 4 units. This is a minimum of two 50-55 foot lots.

**Building Height.** The maximum building height will be 2 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> stories.

**Transitions.** It is intended that the Townhouse Building Type will occur along the south side of Christine Street (which is the boundary of the Urban Village FB District), in order to provide an appropriate transition to possibly lower density residential buildings to the south.

### **Urban Village**

**General Boundaries.** The Urban Village FB District is bounded by Lakeview Parkway to the north; President George Bush Turnpike to the east; Main Street, Llano Street and Christine Street to the south; Herfurth Park to the south and east; and Rowlett Road to the west.

**Building Types.** All Urban Village Building Types in the Form Based Code are allowed in this District.

**Building Height.** The maximum building height will be 7 stories. The minimum building height will be 2 stories. One-story buildings may

be allowed under certain conditions, but will require approval of a Minor Warrant.

**Land Uses.** Due to the fact that Lakeview Parkway and PGBT are auto-oriented, the following land uses will be allowed: financial institutions, coffee shops and restaurants with drive-thrus.

Provided that:

- a. All drive thru access (driveways) shall be from the browsing land / slip road along Lakeview Parkway.
- b. Drive thru lanes and / or canopies shall not have frontage along or be located along any internal, pedestrian-oriented streets.
- c. Drive thru areas shall be screened by a 4 foot high street screen.
- d. At least 50 percent of the building façade along the browsing lane / slip road must be located within the build-to-suit zone unless set back to create a public plaza, pocket part, or patio.

**Transitions.** North of Llano Street, there is a 100-foot wide Transition Zone in the Urban Village FB District where buildings cannot exceed 2 ½ stories in height (the height of the adjacent residential district) and will be setback at least 50-feet from the property line.

The transition between the Urban Village and New Neighborhood FB Districts will be accommodated along Christine Street, within the New Neighborhood FB District, through the development of Townhomes.

**Streets.** The street system is intended to facilitate circulation for pedestrians, bicycles, vehicles and emergency services. As redevelopment occurs north of the DART rail line, existing large blocks will be reconfigured into smaller blocks more suited for non-industrial uses. The designation of alleys provides guidance for service as blocks redevelop over the long-term.

**Flex Space.** Flex Space is required along Main Street, portions of Martin Drive, and facing Open Space. Any allowed use in the Urban Village FB District is permitted in the Flex Space.

**Open Space.** Downtown is planned to contain Open Space throughout to provide important foci for urban neighborhoods. All of these areas will be connected with shaded sidewalks and trails.

**Landmarks.** Several locations at entries into Downtown and on sites in line with terminated street vistas provide opportunities for landmark features on buildings such as increased height, changes of building form and changes of roof lines. These locations will help to

provide interest and identity within Downtown to the benefit of all property owners.

**Browsing Lane.** A Browsing Lane (interconnected 2-way drive with head-in angled parking on both sides) is identified for properties north of the DART rail line and adjacent to Rowlett Road, Lakeview Parkway and President George Bush Turnpike. This extends the existing dominant pattern of parking adjacent to the major roadways and facilitates circulation and access to businesses along such high traffic limited access roadways. The intent is that vehicles can easily enter these lanes from major roadways and drive slowly but continuously along those corridors to access businesses.

## **Realize Rowlett 2020 Amendment**

### **Background**

In January of 2012, the City of Rowlett embarked on phase 2 of Realize Rowlett 2020, a study intended to “protect the vision” established for several strategic opportunity areas identified in the Realize Rowlett 2020 Comprehensive Plan. Realize Rowlett 2020 identified Downtown (previously referred to as “Old Town”) as a neighborhood that will continue to represent the community’s history in the character of its buildings and public spaces.

Downtown is envisioned to be the lively heart of Rowlett that benefits from its location near the coming DART rail station and easy access to the President George Bush Turnpike. It will have a variety of vertically and horizontally integrated mixed-use development types.

In the spring of 2012, the vision was further refined. A twelve member task force of Downtown property owners and business owners was organized to help lead the process and give additional input. Public meetings were held with individual property owners, surrounding neighborhood residents and the general public to develop additional detail related to the vision for future development in this strategic opportunity area. Public meetings for Downtown were held separately from the other three strategic opportunity areas discussed in phase II as downtown is the heart of the community. Over 60 people attended the two public input meetings held for Downtown.

### **Vision**

#### Site Access / Mobility

Access to the site is provided by Lakeview Parkway, Rowlett Road, the President George Bush Turnpike and the coming DART rail line.

To provide access to business on the car oriented corridors of Lakeview Parkway, Rowlett Road and the President George Bush Turnpike access road a slip lane is proposed. Internally, the development will be more pedestrian focused with a strong emphasis on walkability and the DART rail station. It is envisioned that future local streets will be established to create pedestrian scale blocks for development.

#### Development Pattern / Density

As identified in Realize Rowlett 2020, density will increase in the downtown area and be supported by development around the rail station. This higher density will follow Martin Drive south, across the rail road tracks, to Main Street. This development will include residential, commercial, and mixed use to create a lively and diverse downtown. Existing manufacturing uses and structures will remain until such time as they choose to transition as they are compatible with new mixed-use development.

Density may also increase to a lesser extent in some of the residential areas south of Main Street in the form of townhouses. Building heights transition zones will occur near single family residential neighborhoods to ensure compatibility.

#### Public and Open Spaces

Open space downtown will provide opportunity for public gatherings and serve the resident and employment populations. Herfurth Park and Veteran's Park will continue serve as public open space south of the DART line. Additional open space is envisioned in the form of a pedestrian plaza just south of the DART rail line on main street and in several locations north of the DART rail line. These plazas or squares will be smaller in nature and suited the urban environment. Trails will also be provided along the DART rail line and at other strategic points to connect civic centers, Rowlett High School, and Coyle Middle School. Open space Downtown will be purposeful and contribute to the urban fabric and character of the area.

## Appendix

## Comprehensive Plan References

## OLD TOWN | AREA E-4



**DEVELOPABLE ACRES:** \*     **119**

### PRODUCT TYPES:

- Vintage Retail
- Entertainment Uses
- Neighborhood-Serving Commercial (retrofit)
- Class B Office
- Mixed-Use
- Public Spaces (hardscape)
- Higher Density Residential
- Transportation Support Infrastructure

### SUPPORTABLE PSYCHOGRAPHICS

- Suburban Sprawl
- New Beginnings

*\* Net floodplain and parcels less likely to redevelop in the near-term (five to 10 years).*

### VISION

Old Town will continue to represent the community’s history in the character of its buildings and public spaces. With enhanced access by rail, and given the area’s proximity to the City’s principal east-west corridor (Lakeview Parkway), development beyond Main Street will likely attract a variety of vertically and horizontally integrated mixed-use product types. South of the railroad tracks, Old Town will continue to be the community’s downtown with commercial destinations located along Main Street. The area north of the tracks will develop with predominately commercial and residential uses.

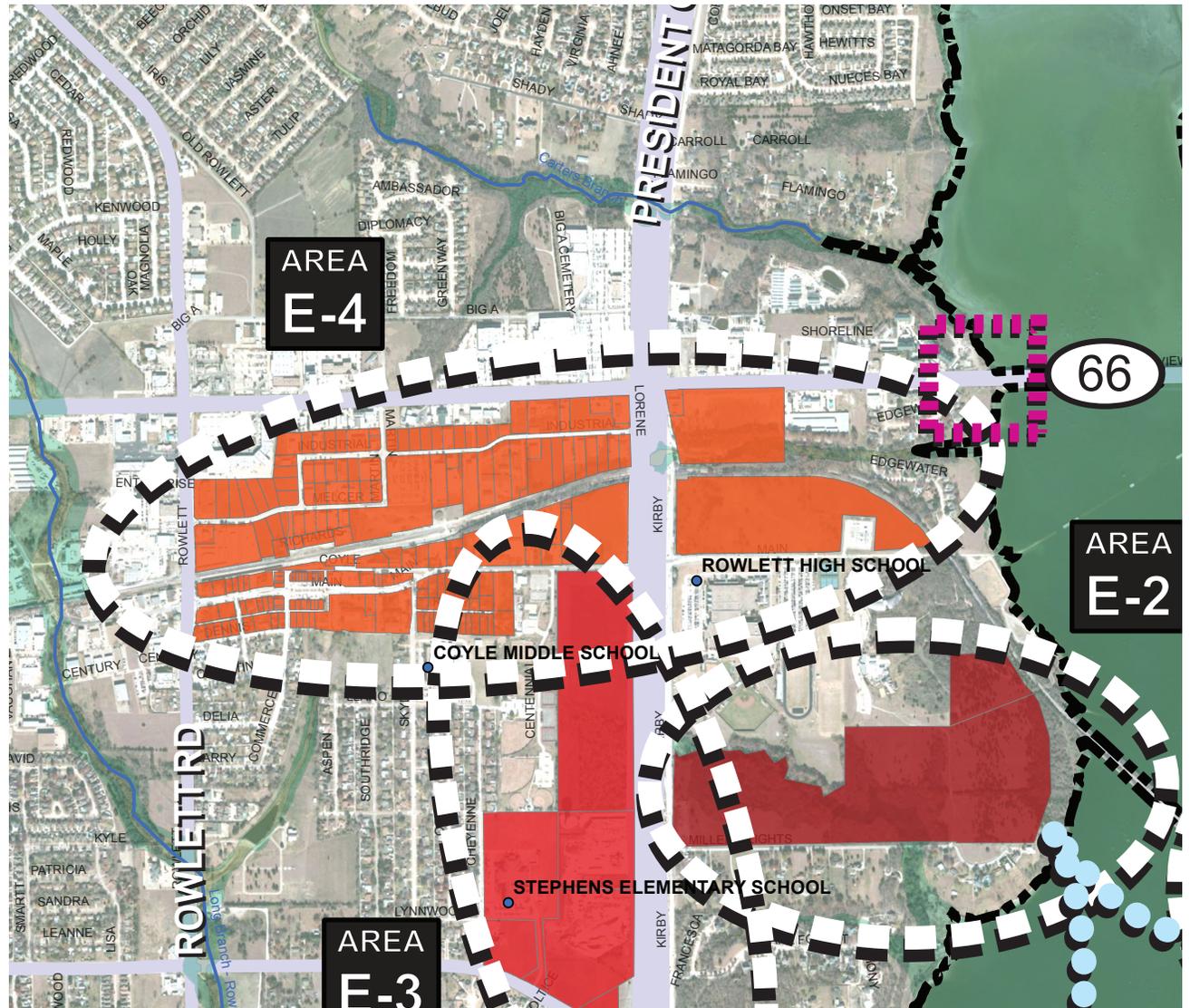
Lakeside Center and Old Town will be “linked” through their development programs, design standards, trolley / shuttle system, and public spaces. Collectively, they will appear as a unified district offering different living and working environments. Old Town will have the vintage quality that exists today, yet at a higher density – more appropriate for uses supported by transit infrastructure. Conversely, Lakeside Center will be more contemporary.

Essential elements that will have to be in place in order for this investment scenario to be realized include: acknowledgement that the railroad is a surmountable physical barrier when linking Lakeside Center and Old Town; design guidelines that ensure the existing architecture be continued throughout the area; master development plan that incorporates Lakeview Parkway into the development pattern (subarea plan); and community “ownership” of the vision and an understanding existing market realities.



## MARKET

- The addition of transit improvements may accelerate changes associated with revitalization of the community's historic core. Vintage retail offerings may expand (filling in the missing teeth along commercial corridors), but will not significantly add to the existing inventory.
- With transit comes density. Whereas the existing building form is low to moderate, there will be opportunities to increase floor area ratios, however not to a degree experienced in other transit locations of the Metroplex.
- Public amenities and transit infrastructure will provide the spine for private investment.



## OLD TOWN | AREA E-4

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES



	GUIDING PRINCIPLE	E-4 OLD TOWN
1	Value existing neighborhoods	***
2	Grow the City's economy through diversification of job and business opportunities	****
3	Make Rowlett a community that is attractive to people at all stages of their lives	****
4	Invest in places of lasting value and distinctive character	****
5	Maximize the benefits of major public infrastructure investments (existing, planned)	****
6	Use Lake Ray Hubbard and Rowlett's natural assets to create a distinctive identity...	
7	Diversify mobility options within the City and connect activity areas	****
8	Create centers with a mix of activities at key locations in Rowlett	****
9	Balance growth through efficient development patterns	***
10	Support quality educational resources to meet the needs of Rowlett residents...	***
11	Position Rowlett for an appropriate scale of investment and reinvestment...	****
12	<b>Fund public investment that leverages desired private investment</b>	
13	<b>Ensure that <i>Realize Rowlett 2020</i> is a statement of the City's policy for future...</b>	
	<i>Bold principles relate to citywide concerns and are not specific to any individual geographic area</i>	
	<i>Key:</i>	
	<i>Strongest Support of Principle</i>	****
	<i>Moderate Support of Principle</i>	***
	<i>Some Support of Principle</i>	**
	<i>Incidental Support of Principle</i>	*

## IMPLICATIONS

Physical	Mix of civic, retail and residential uses in the historic core of Rowlett.
	Majority of sites are developed, although greenfield sites exist north of the DART rail line and Main Street.
Infrastructure	Infrastructure / utilities to support the vision generally exist in the area; although, several upgrades will be needed to advance a more dense building form.
Access	Access if being provided by the new DART rail station, Lakeview Parkway, Rowlett Road, PGBT and associated frontage roads.
	Exit and entrance ramps associated with PGBT are positioned to serve Old Town along Main Street.
	A rubber-tired or fixed trolley could connect the DART station in Old Town to other activity areas (subareas) in the City.
	Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure will be essential for connecting existing neighborhoods to the DART station.
Market	Much of the property in this area is owned by the City of Rowlett.
	Civic anchors will be located in Old Town and Lakeside Center and both areas will be accessible via multiple modes of transportation (vehicular and non-vehicular).
	Despite the fact that this is a built environment, a master plan overlay will be essential to unify the sub area, and to develop densities that will achieve the vision for the area.
Financial	Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or Municipal Management District (MMD) revenues should be used to assist with the cost of capital expenditures (public and private) including façade improvements.
	Public spaces (active and passive) may need to be acquired and set-aside to ensure this amenity for business and residents.
Regulatory	Current zoning for the area will accommodate several of the proposed uses, but may need further modification as a greater mix and density of uses are introduced.
Organizational	In anticipation of the introduction of transportation infrastructure into the area, the City should prepare to assist in achieving a development form that most effectively leverages this public investment.

## OLD TOWN | AREA E-4

### IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (ACTIONS)	TIMING
<i>The specific strategy (action) to be taken</i>	<i>Prior-ity, short, medium, long-term, future or on-going</i>
Building on the citywide outreach program, educate residents about the necessity for a particular scale and mix of uses in the area.	Priority
Develop a small area plan that identifies the character, intent and form of properties north of the DART rail line and in the core downtown redevelopment area. The plan should also highlight connections (soft and hard) between Old Town and Lakeside Center.	Priority
Prepare an urban design framework that identifies locations and design concepts for district gateways, nodes and streetscape.	Priority
Restrict the construction of service areas that face the DART station.	Priority
Work with private interests and City advisors to select the appropriate location for a lighted intersection on SH 66 (Lakeview Parkway) based on the vision for this area and inform TxDOT.	Priority
Acquire public spaces (active and passive) and set-aside in order to ensure these amenities for business and residents. Spaces should include plaza areas for festivals and other community gathering events.	Short-to Mid-Term
Conduct a feasibility study of introducing a rubber tired or fixed trolley between this area and the future DART station in Old Town (as well as other subareas including Signature Gateway and Business Beltway).	Mid-Term
Prepare a plan and schedule of expenses for pedestrian improvements allowable under the guidelines of the City's \$2.5 million COG grant.	Priority
Prepare a unified wayfinding program for this area and Old Town that further serves to connect the two.	Short - to Mid-Term
Prepare a phasing plan for the transition of City uses from Old Town to Lakeside Center and the redevelopment of these spaces in Old Town.	Priority
Meet with individual property owners / developers regarding the City's vision and timeframes for development, as well as to understand their intentions regarding development and redevelopment.	Priority
Be prepared to fine-tune estimates of return on investment associated with the concepts described here (particularly as it may be influenced by density and mix).	Priority
Use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or Municipal Management District (MMD) revenues to assist with the cost of capital expenditures (public and private) including façade improvements.	On-Going

## Classic Core (E4)

Products	Market-Supported *	Community-Desired	Recommended
<b>Rural Housing</b>			
single family detached at 2+ to the acre			
<b>Suburban Neighborhood</b>			
single family detached			
patio homes			
duplexes			
<b>Multi-Family Suburban Neighborhood</b>			
triplexes			
townhomes			
condominiums			
apartments			
<b>Strip Commercial Corridor</b>			
general commercial services	X		
restaurants	X		
big box commercial			
class c office	X		
<b>Suburban Regional Activity Center (multi- vs. mixed use)</b>			
attached residential (ownership and rental)	X		
hotels (limited services dominate)			
class b office (including medical office)	X		
restaurants	X		
neighborhood-serving commercial	X		
civic, cultural and other public spaces	X		X
<b>Business Park</b>			
class a office			
corporate campus			
educational institution			
medical centers (including medical office)			
technology centers			
<b>Industrial Park</b>			
manufacturing centers			
transportation hubs			
call centers			
light industrial	X		
<b>Urban Neighborhood (same products as mf suburban, but at higher densities)</b>			
townhomes			
condominiums			
apartments			
<b>Mixed-Use Urban Neighborhood</b>			
attached residential (ownership and rental)	X		X
neighborhood-serving commercial	X		X
restaurants	X		X
professional office (class b or c)	X		X

Products	Market-Supported *	Community-Desired	Recommended
<b>Entertainment District</b>			
attached residential (ownership and rental)			
restaurants	X		X
regional commercial			
entertainment venues	X		X
<b>Transit-Oriented Development</b>			
attached residential (ownership and rental)	X	X	X
regional commercial		X	
restaurants	X	X	X
professional office	X	X	X
transit station	X	X	X
<b>Town Center (same mix as mixed-use only co-located, not fully integrated)</b>			
attached residential (ownership and rental)			
neighborhood-serving commercial			
restaurants			
professional office (class c)			

\* Market-supported means a near-term opportunity (five to 10 years) that the private sector would consider delivering in this location in anticipation of capital improvements and with the assurance of committed public resources – financial, policy, regulatory and political.

## Case Studies

## Case Study - Mockingbird Station, Texas

- The site was difficult to configure, with development most easily accommodated between the station to the east, below-grade 700 feet of Central Expressway to the west, and heavily trafficked Mockingbird Lane to the south.
- The developer initially sold the development to financial partners for its freeway-adjacent rather than its adjacency to transit.
- Plans for the station were designed to be equally appealing and convenient to both transit users and motorists. With trains running every 10-20 minutes, there are two double bays of parking for 150 cars in the center of the project and the rest structured above or below ground.
- The project was entirely supervised and funded by one developer. The adaptive reuse of older warehouse buildings into an urban village, unlike anything previously seen in Dallas at the time, gave the project a unique “address” among competitive projects.
- The mix of uses include: residential, office, retail, and cultural (indie film theater).
- The site is inaccessible to pedestrians from the outside due to a high rise building and parking structure to the north, the rail line to the east, Mockingbird Lane to the south, and North Central Expressway to the west. A pedestrian bridge over the station facilitates the movement of off-site non-vehicular visitors to the project. Generally, the site is oriented to the station and internal plazas rather than the Expressway in order to facilitate a more pedestrian environment.
- The project’s first phase was privately funded. However, later phases included a public private partnership with the City of Dallas to turn Mockingbird Lane into a boulevard with raised medians, wide sidewalks, landscaping, and traffic calming designed to better connect the area to the surrounding community.



The Site Plan for Mockingbird Station. Source: Randy Shorridge and RTKL.



## Case Study - Downtown Plano, Texas

- In Dallas and other highly urbanized areas, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is driven largely by market demand for development that is highly compact and connected. In the suburbs, there is first competition for the public investment that comes with TOD, and second demand for the products that come with transit investment. Plano invested more than \$800,000 in public improvements around the transit village to educate its market about the benefits of transit and associated market opportunities.
- Apartments located immediately adjacent to station are marketed for their proximity to major highways in addition to their adjacency to the station. They are designed to be an extension of the Historic Downtown Plano neighborhood and as such are much more urban in character than other developments in the area. Among the initial renters, the majority were not native Texans.
- The Downtown Plano Station provides access to: the City's municipal center, courthouse, business district, a park, art center, theater, and regional retail, as well as townhomes and condos.
- Retail spaces associated with the TOD project continues to struggle, but to a lesser degree given the health of the overall downtown environment. Early mixed-use projects required the residential to subsidize the retail. Retail uses largely include: dry cleaners, personal services like hair and nail salons, copy centers, sandwich shops and restaurants.



## Case Study - Renton, Washington

- Renton, Washington's downtown TOD, Metropolitan Place, includes 4,000 square feet of ground-level retail space and 90 apartments above a two-story garage with 240 parking stalls. It is located across from the recently expanded Renton Transit Center and occupies the site of a former Chevrolet building.
- The parking and an affordable apartment development are privately owned and operated by Dally Homes. King County leases 150 of the parking stalls for park-and-ride use.
- Thirty of the 150 park-and-ride stalls are designated for shared use with residents during non-commuter hours; the rest are dedicated for park-and-ride users. Ninety stalls are provided for resident use only.
- Metropolitan Place is close to a new urban park, retail stores, theater, schools, and restaurants.
- Early development helped spawn other private investments near the station including: the Renaissance at Renton, a 110-unit luxury apartment complex, and various other apartment complexes.



## Case Study - Englewood City Center, Colorado

- In 1999, the former site of the Cinderella City Shopping Center (Denver's first regional mall) was redeveloped into CityCenter, Englewood, a TOD that features retail, entertainment, residential, office, civic and open space elements. Specifically, CityCenter maintains 300,000 square feet of office and civic space, 330,090 square feet of retail space, 50,000 square feet of restaurant space and over 200 residential rental units.
- The Alexan CityCenter was one of the first apartment communities in the metro area to be built directly adjacent to a light rail station. Primary competition for the Alexan CityCenter apartments are Lower Downtown Denver (Lodo) area apartments. Housing in the project attracts young adults who like easy access to Lodo for entertainment and Downtown Denver for work and two separate higher education campuses.
- While the initial apartment lease-ups were slow, the first round of retail lease-ups proved even more difficult. (Starbucks and some other credit tenants were not interested). This changed with the success of initial retail tenants and increased activity levels within the project and at the station.



## Plan Figures

Figure 2:  
**Parcel Ownership by Geography**  
 2012

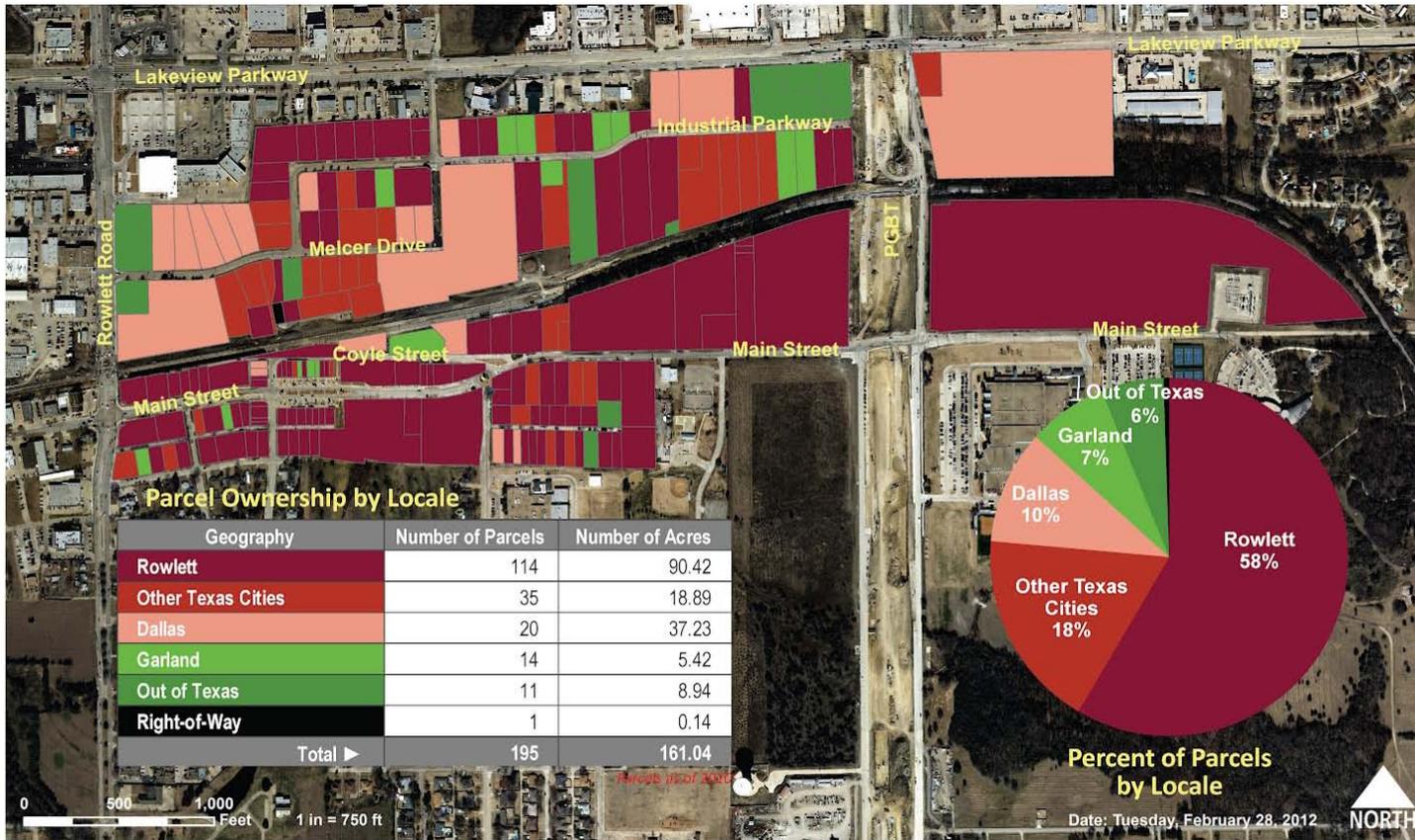


Figure 3:  
**Total Assessed Values by Parcel**  
 2012

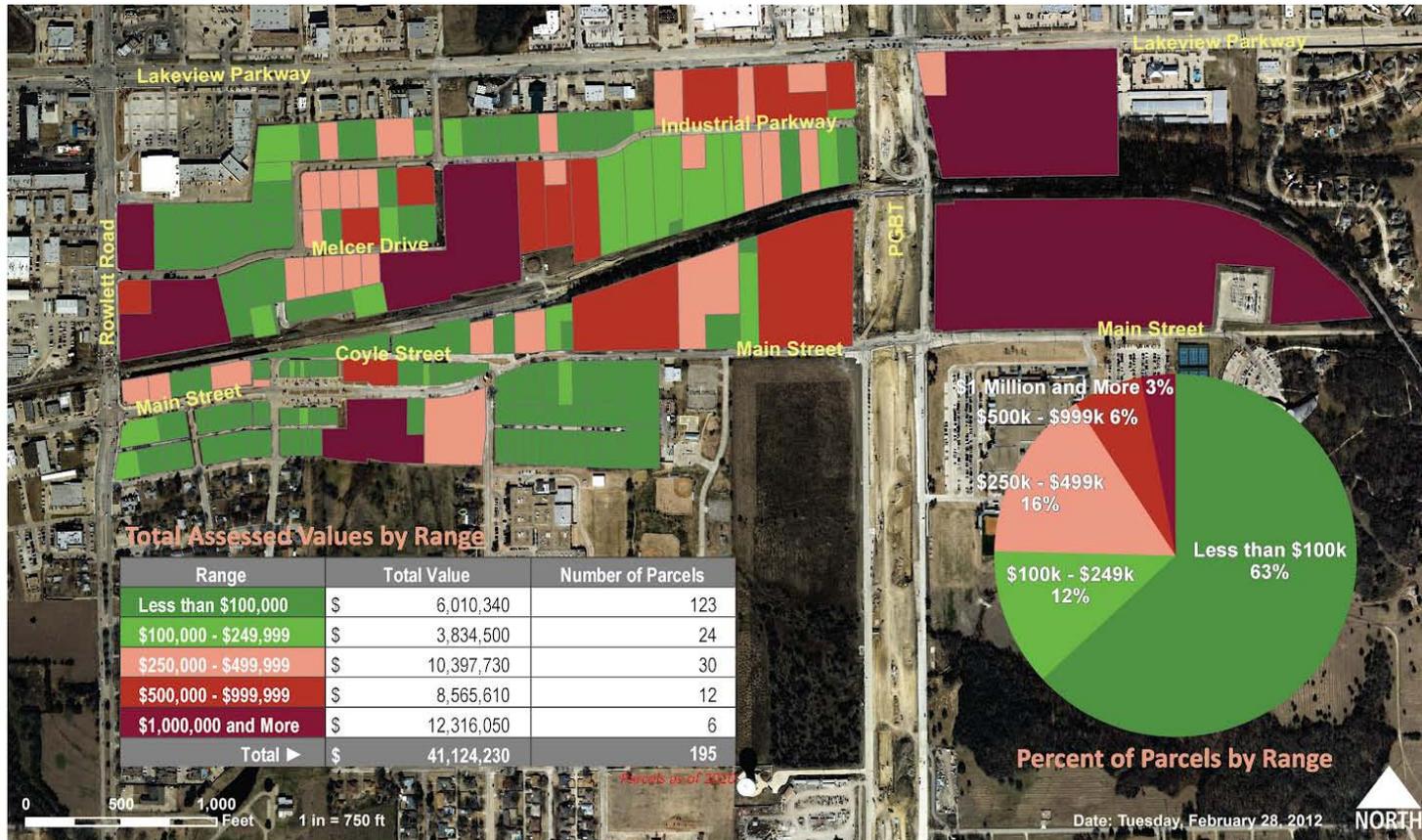


Figure 4:  
**Improved Values by Parcel**  
 2012

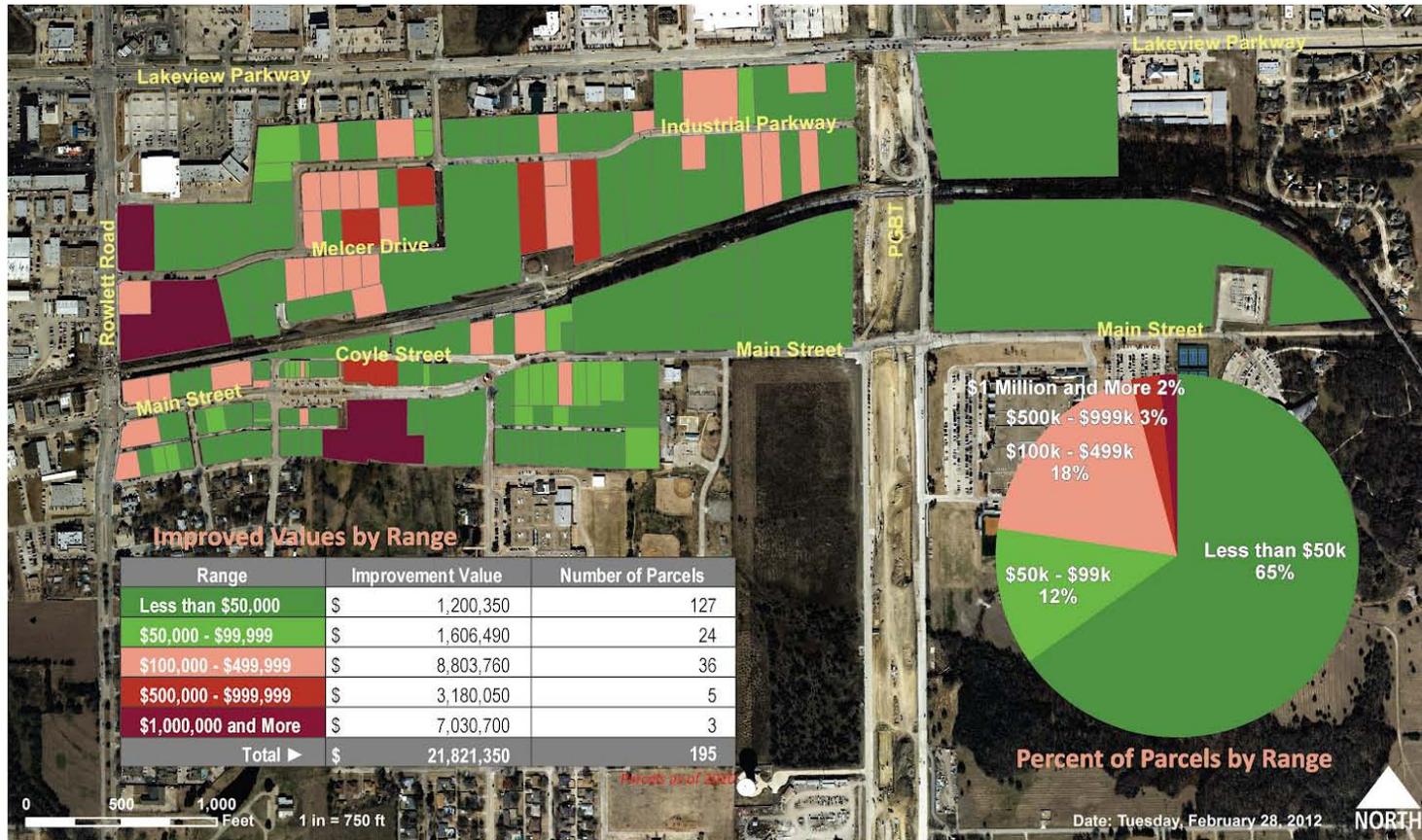


Figure 5:  
Parcel Utilization  
2012

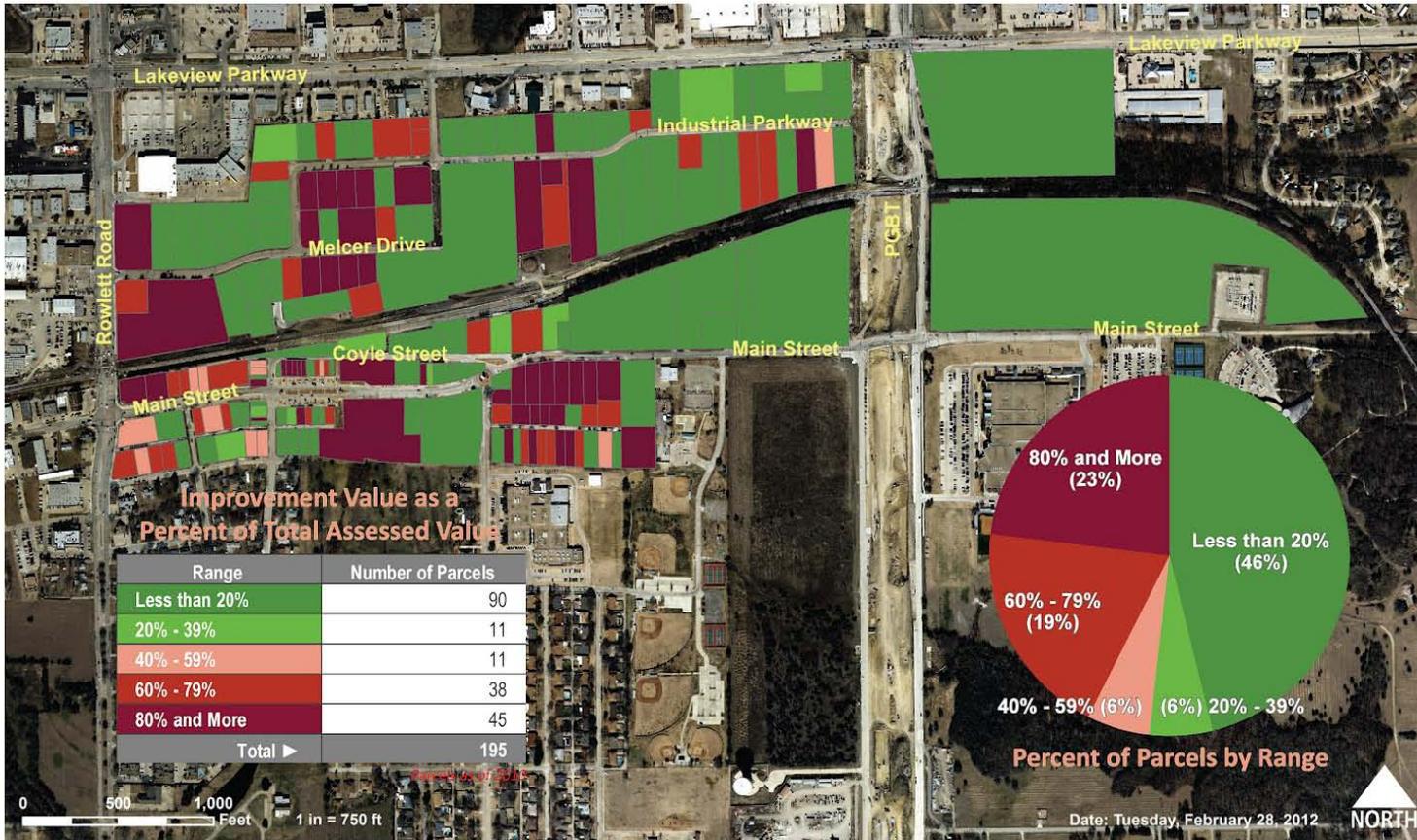


Figure 6:  
**Existing Roadways**  
 2012

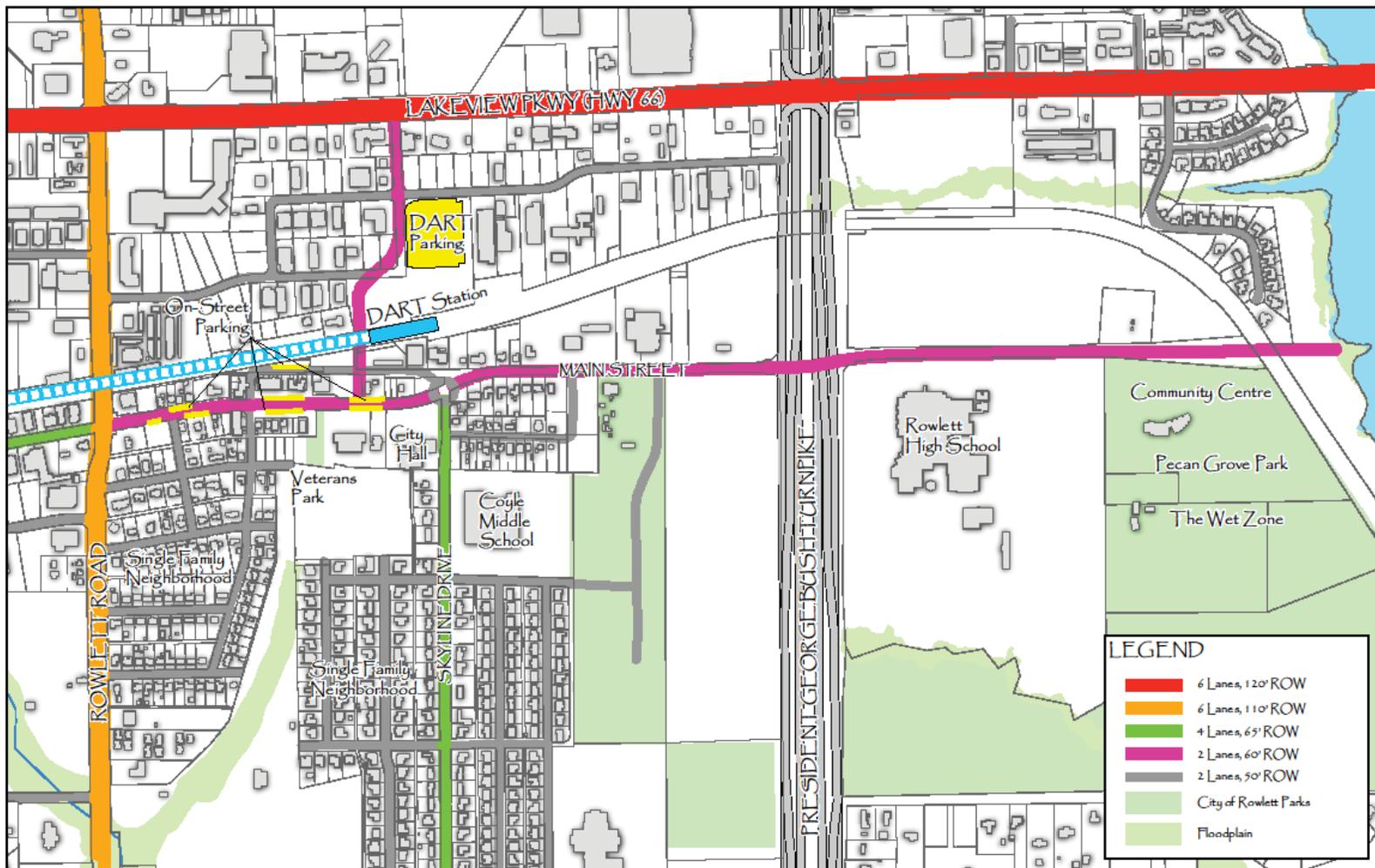


Figure 7:  
Existing Parking Areas  
2012



Figure 10:  
**Average Household Size**  
 2010

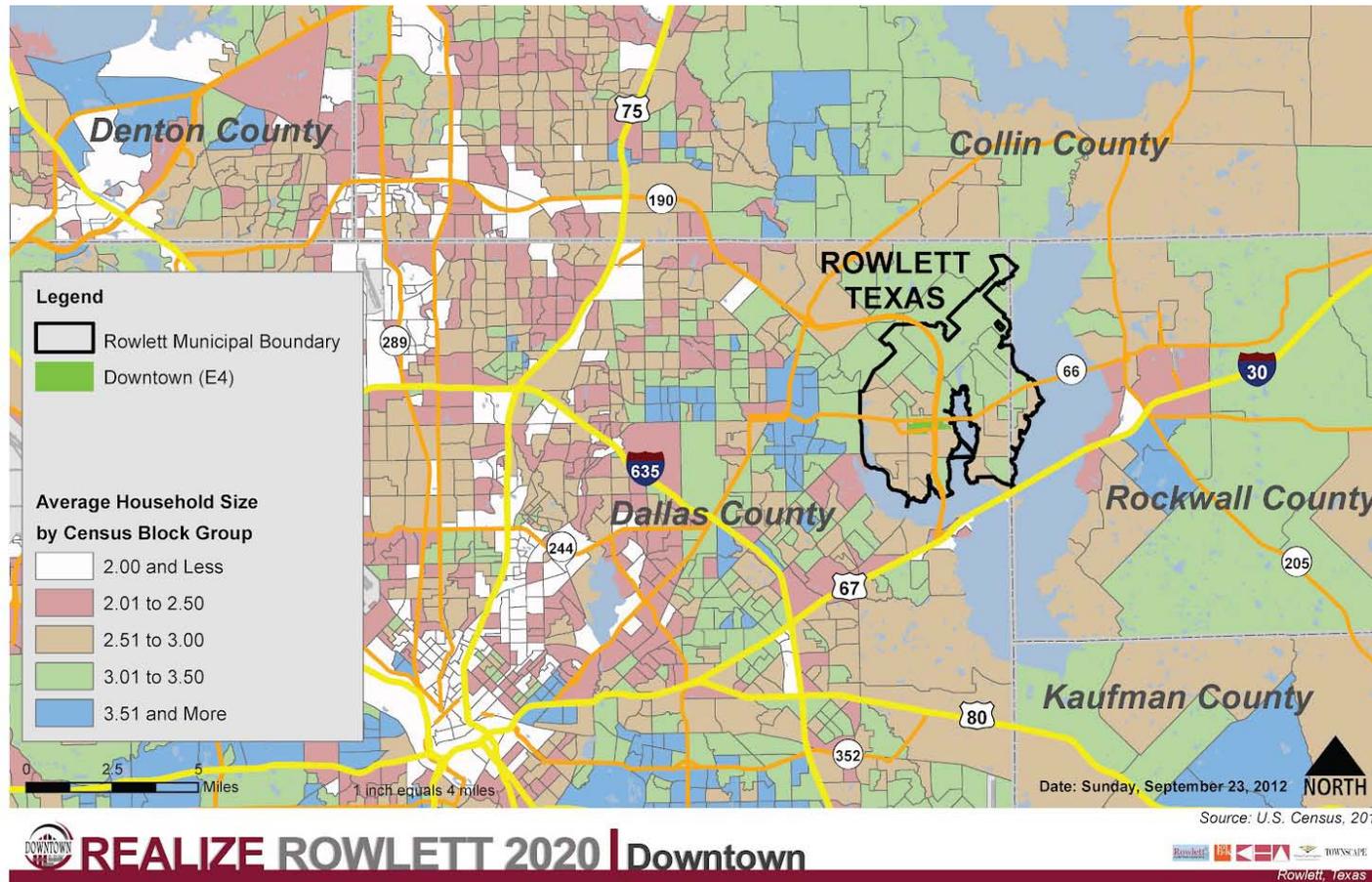


Figure 11:  
**Rental Housing Units (Percent)**  
 2010

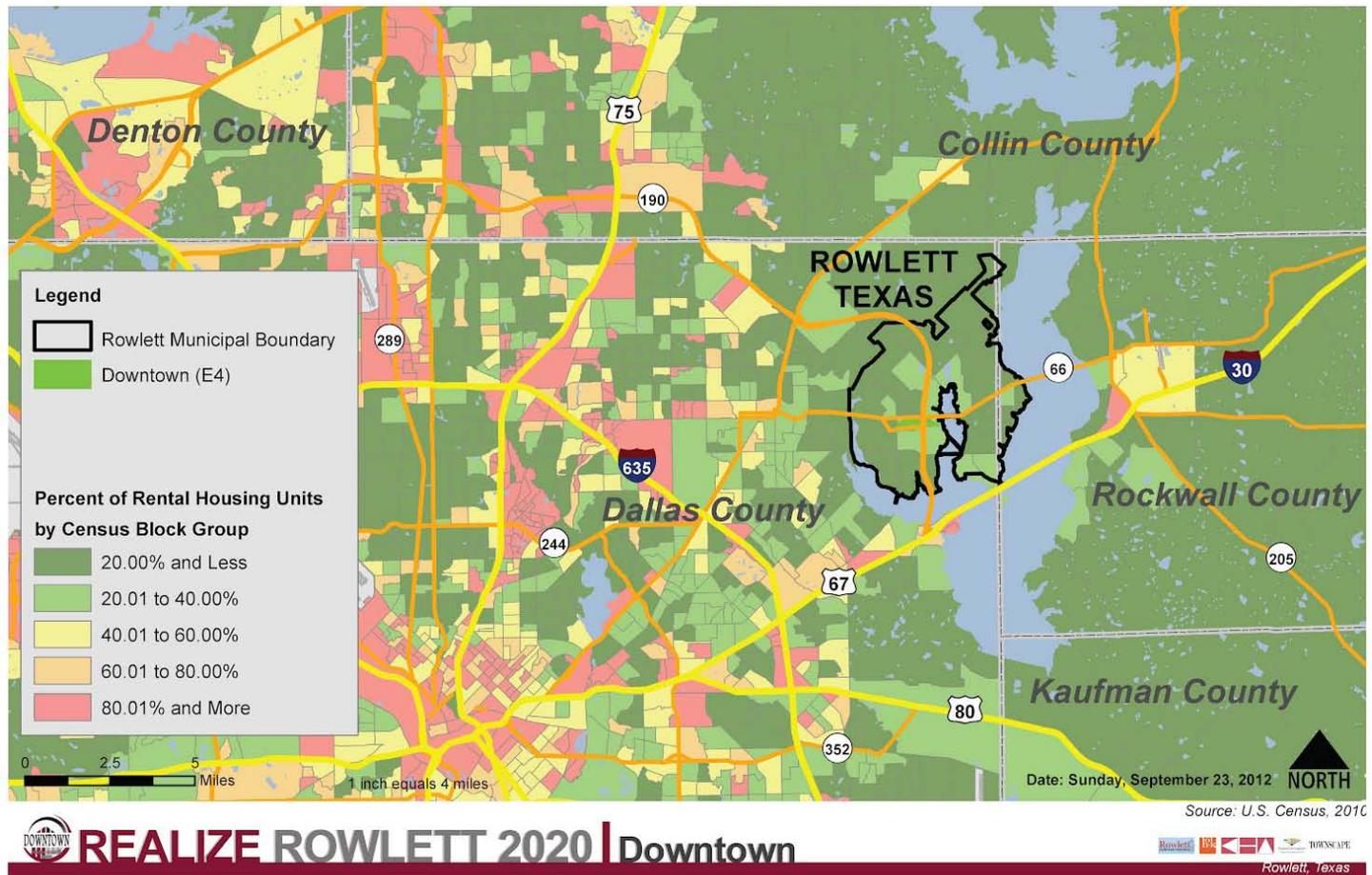


Figure 12:  
**Population Age 22 – 29 Years (Percent)**  
 2010

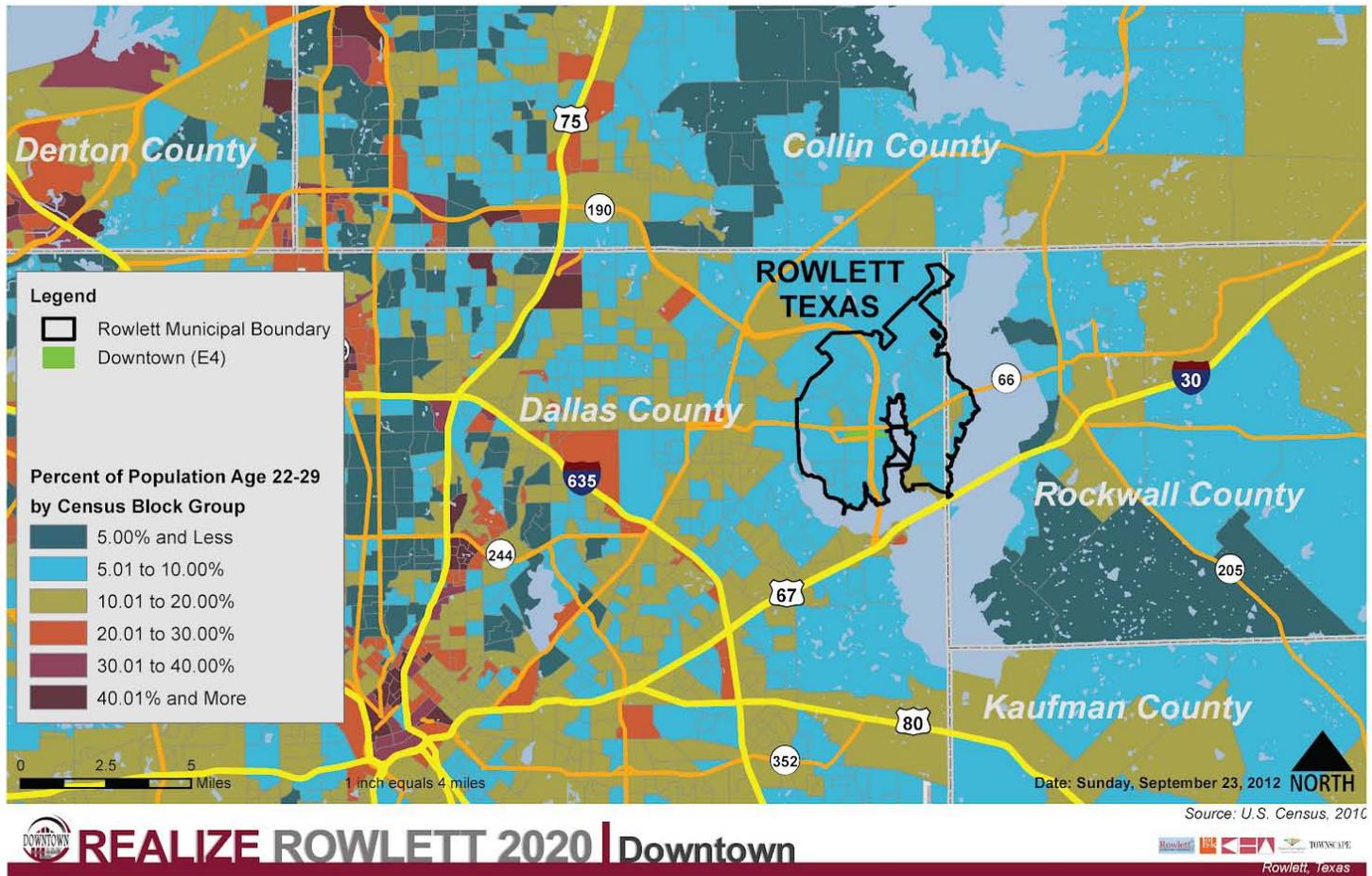


Figure 13:  
**Population Age 65 Plus Years (Percent)**  
 2010

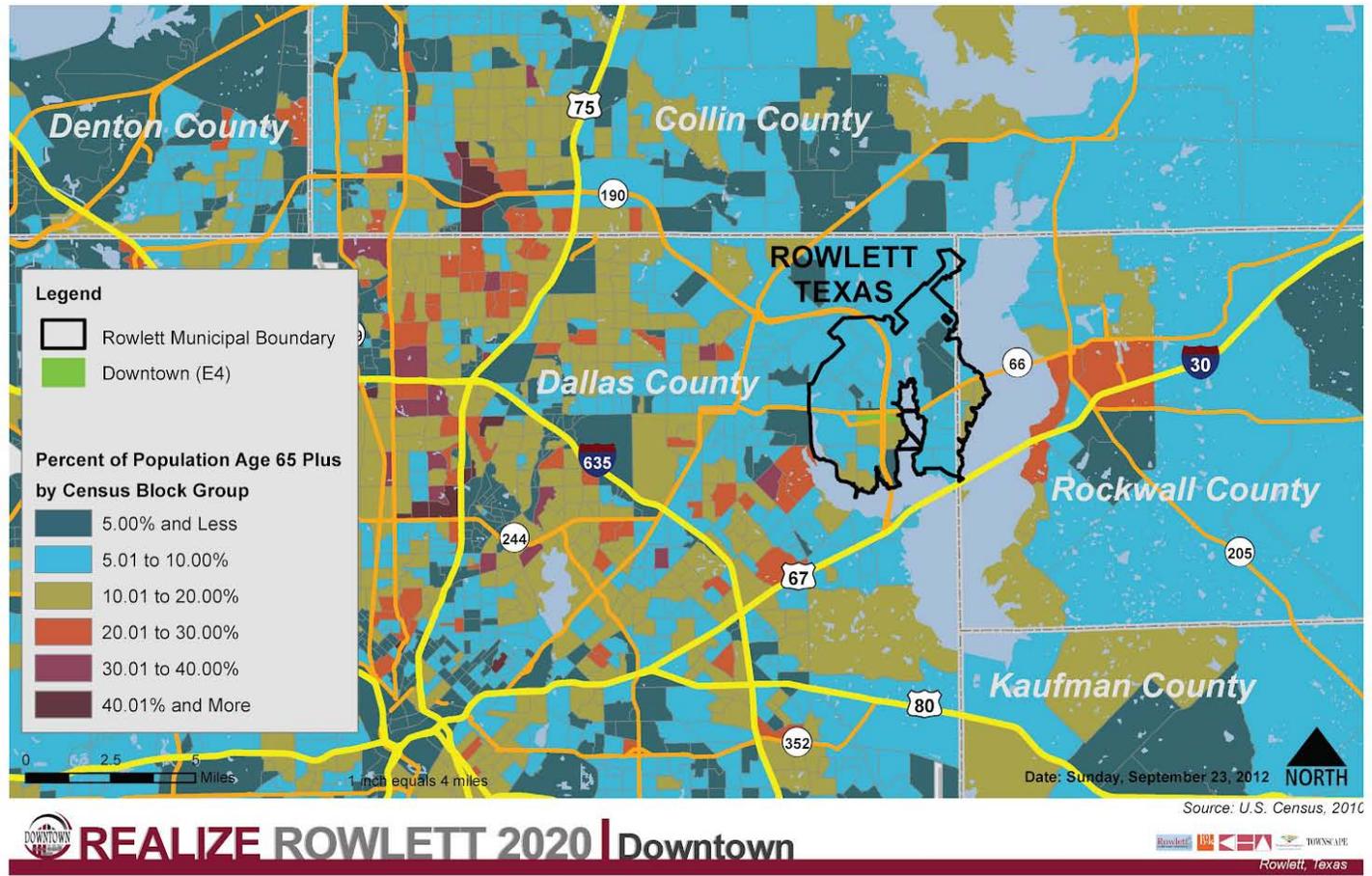
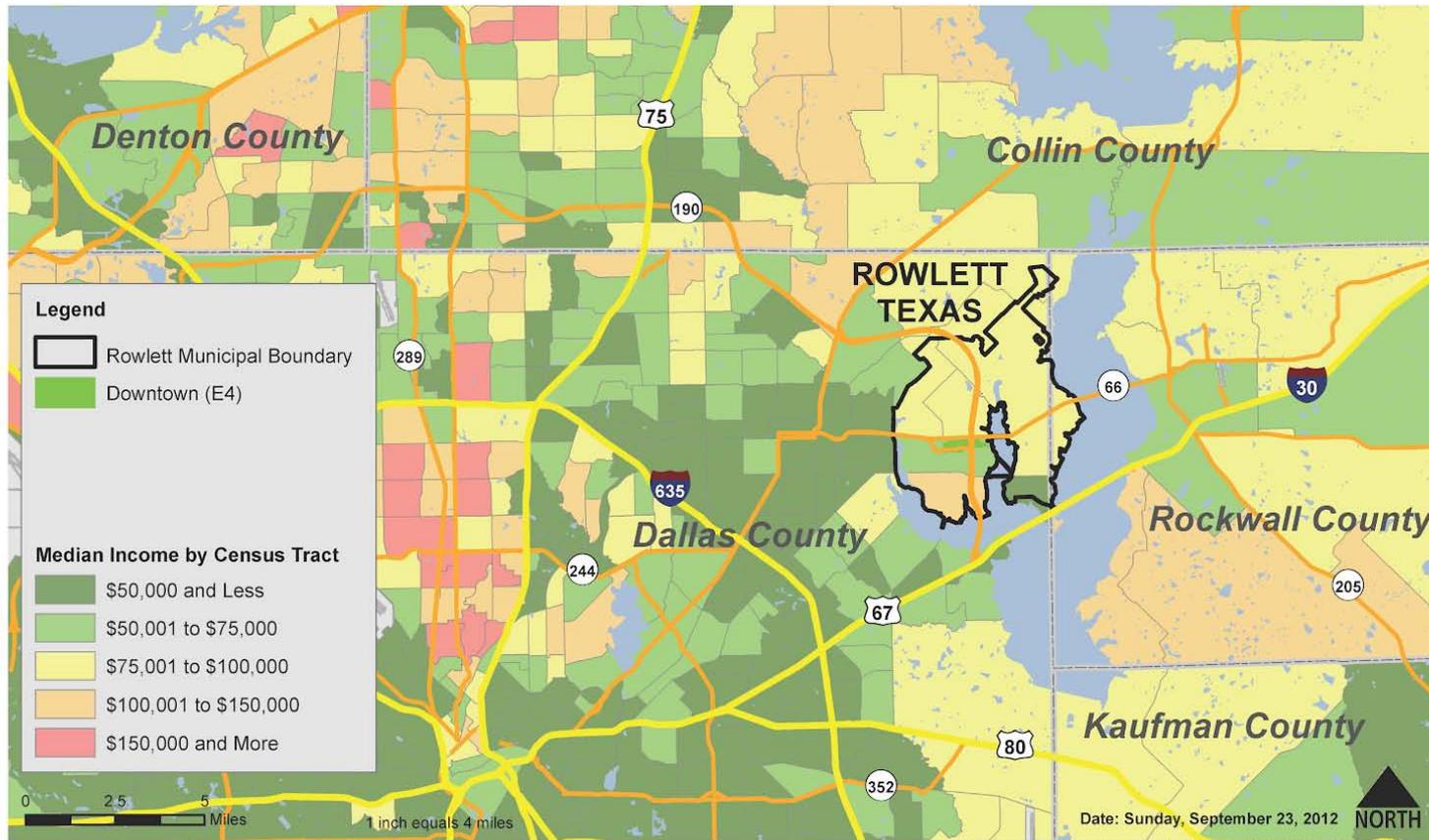


Figure 14:  
**Median Income**  
 2010



Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010 5 Year Estimates

Figure 15:  
**African American Population (Percent)**  
 2010

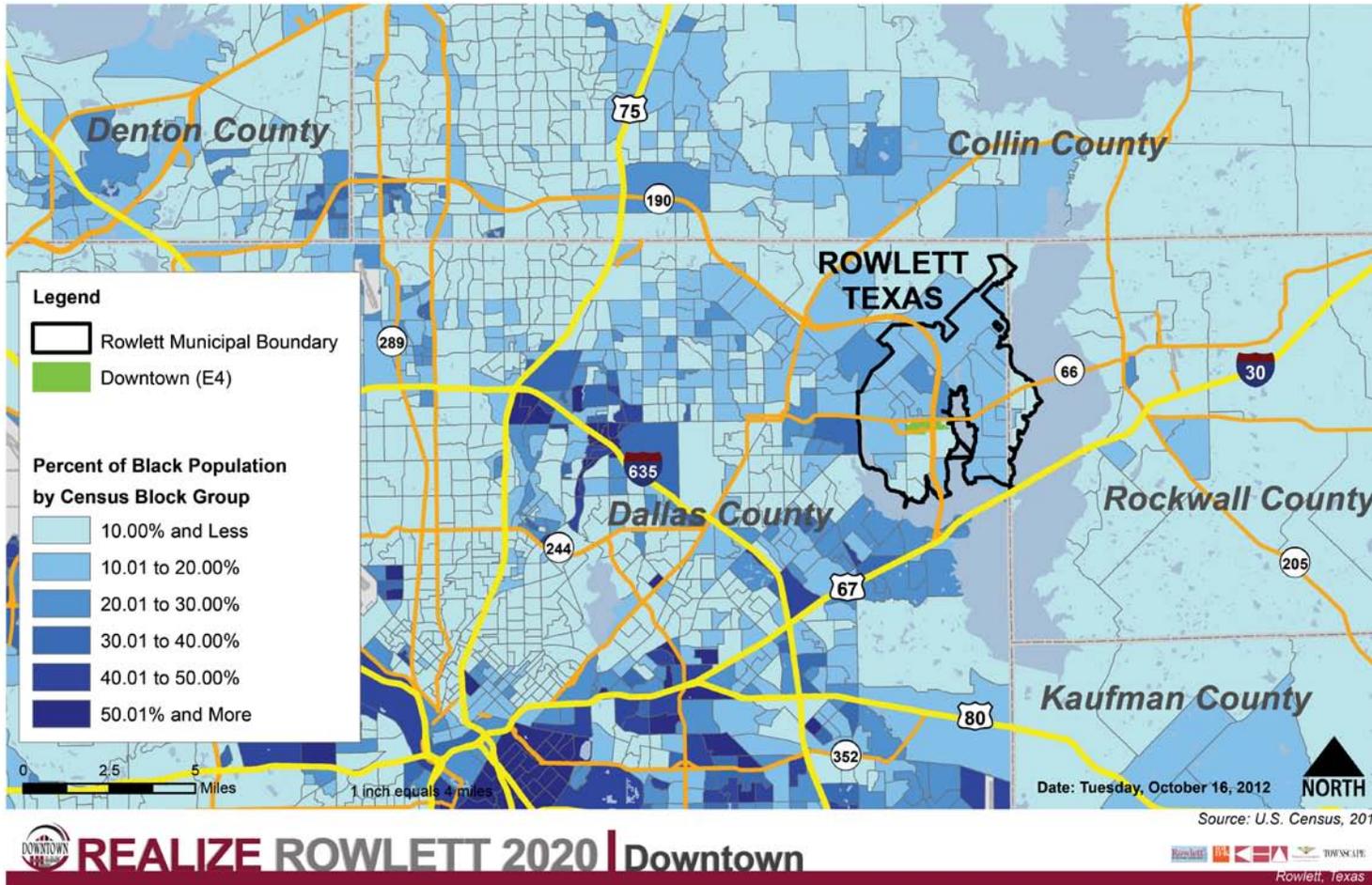


Figure 16:  
**Asian American Population (Percent)**  
 2010

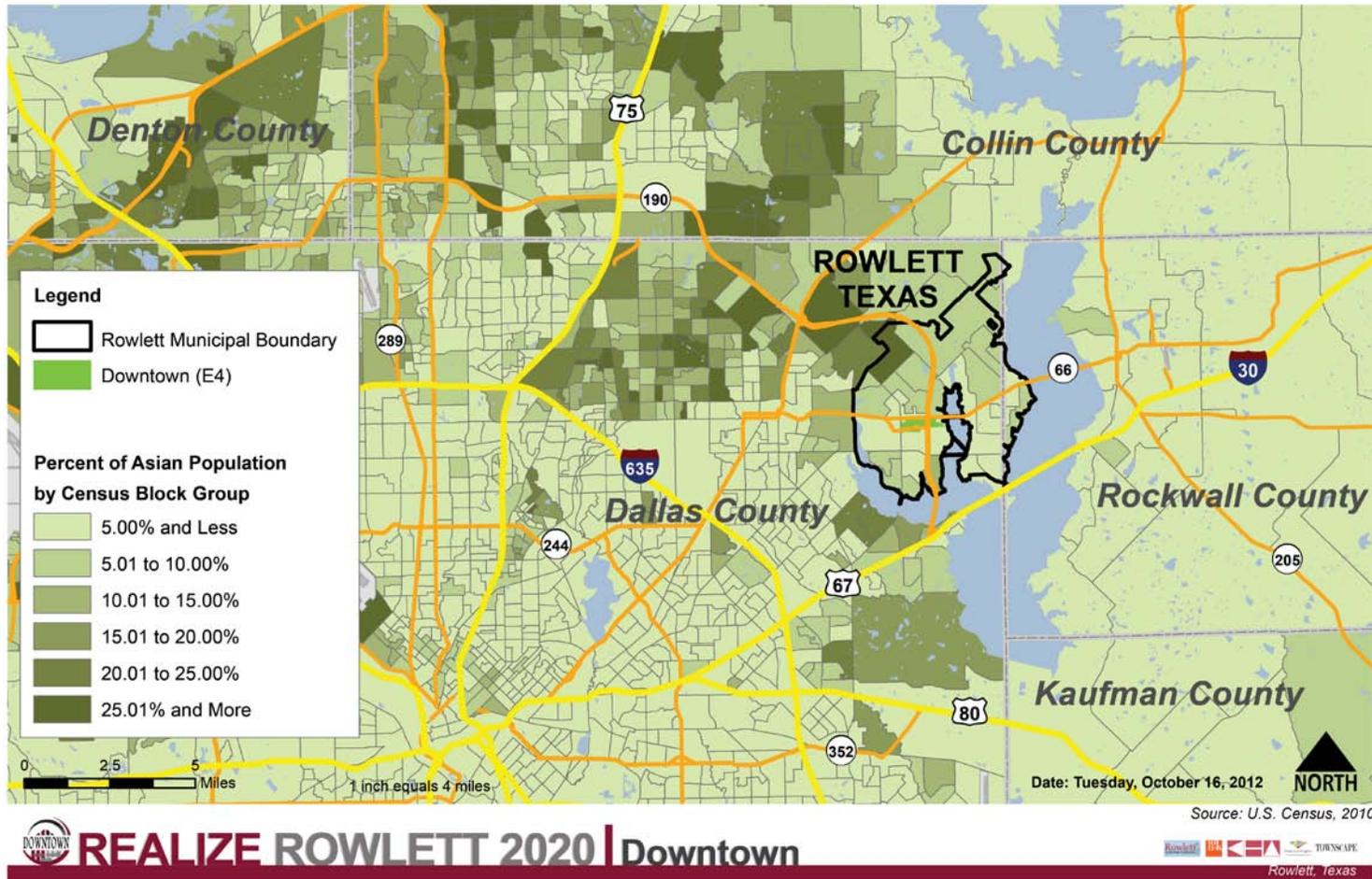
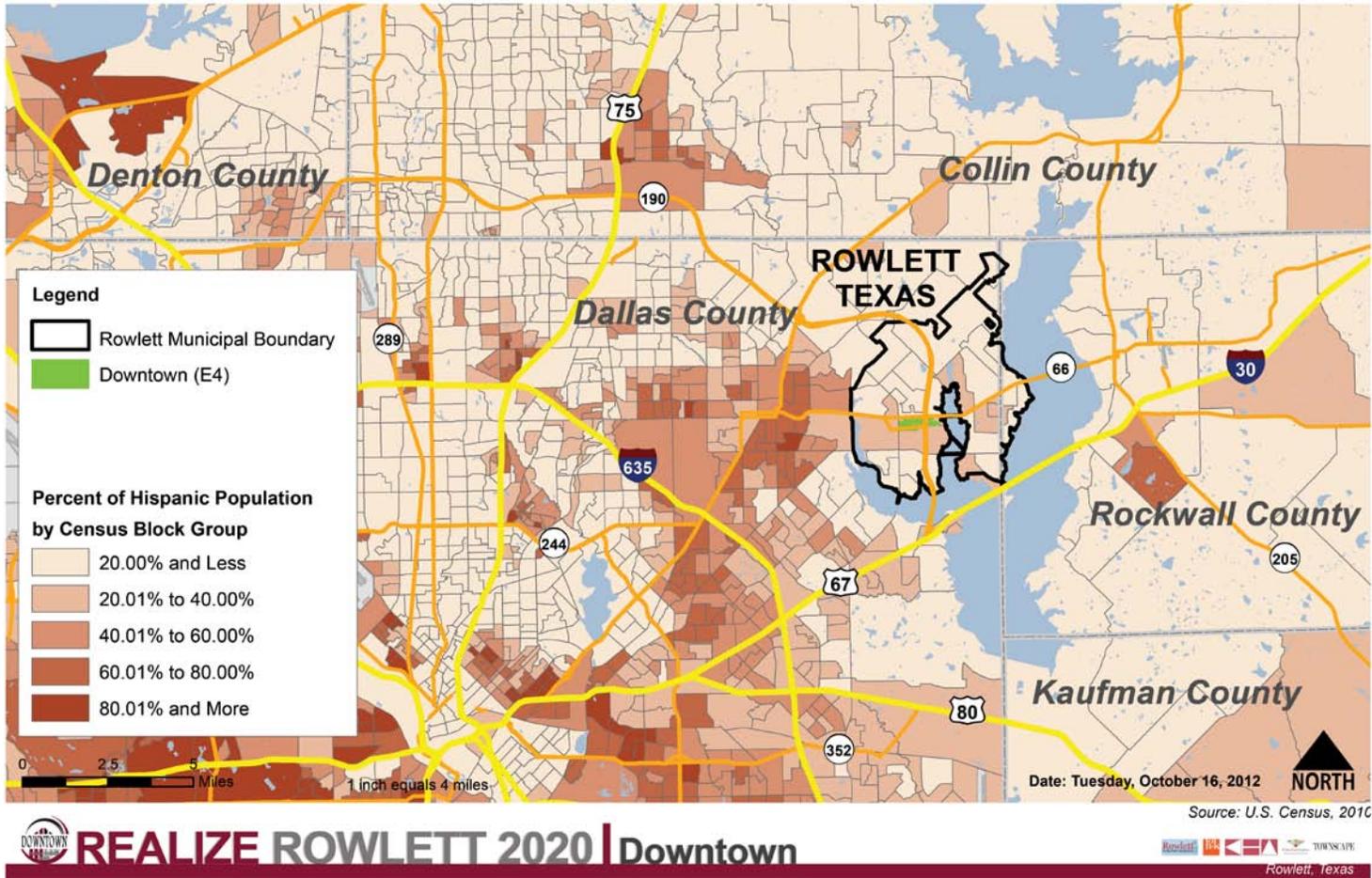


Figure 17:  
**Hispanic Population (Percent)**  
 2010



		Trade Area Households
<b>Blue-Chip Blues</b>	A comfortable lifestyle for ethnically-diverse, young, sprawling families with well-paying blue-collar jobs. Aging neighborhoods feature compact, modestly priced homes surrounded by retail catering to child-filled households.	8,832 (6.7%)
<b>American Dreams</b>	Living example of ethnically diverse nation: ½ are Hispanic, Asian, or African-American. Multilingual neighborhoods--one in ten speaks a language other than English--middle-aged immigrants & children live in upper-middle-class comfort.	7,821 (6.3%)
<b>Multi-Culti Mosaic</b>	Immigrant gateway community... urban home for mixed populace of younger Hispanic, Asian, and African-American singles & families. Nearly ¼ foreign born— a mecca for first-generation Americans striving to improve their lower-middle class status.	7,382 (5.9%)
<b>Home Sweet Home</b>	Widely scattered across the nation's suburbs, the residents of Home Sweet Home tend to be upper-middle-class married couples living in mid-sized homes with few children. The adults in the segment, mostly between the ages of 25 and 54, have gone to college and hold professional and white-collar jobs. With their upscale incomes and small families, these folks have fashioned comfortable lifestyles, filling their homes with toys, TV sets and pets.	6,615 (5.3%)
<b>Beltway Boomers</b>	The members of the postwar Baby Boom are all grown up. Today, these Americans are in their forties and fifties, and one segment of this huge cohort--college-educated, upper-middle-class and home-owning--is found in Beltway Boomers. Like many of their peers who married late, these Boomers are still raising children in comfortable suburban subdivisions, and they're pursuing kid-centered lifestyles.	6,262 (5.0%)
<b>Winner's Circle</b>	Among the wealthy suburban lifestyles, this is the youngest, a collection of mostly 15 to 44 year-old couples with large families in new-money subdivisions. Surrounding their homes are the signs of upscale living: recreational parks, golf courses and upscale malls. With a median income of \$100,000, Winner's Circle residents are big spenders who like to travel, ski go out to eat, shop at clothing boutiques and take in a show.	5,558 (4.5%)
<b>Close-In Couples</b>	A group of predominantly older, African-American couples living in older homes in the urban neighborhoods of mid-sized metros. High school educated and empty nesting, these 55-year-old-plus residents typically live in older city neighborhoods, enjoying secure and comfortable retirements.	4,304 (3.5%)

		Trade Area Households
<b>New Beginnings</b>	Filled with young, single adults, this segment is a magnet for adults in transition. Many of it's residents are twentysomething singles and couples just starting out on their career paths—or starting over after recent divorces or company transfers. Ethnically diverse—with nearly half its residents Hispanic, Asian or African-American—New Beginnings households tend to have the modest living standards typical of transient apartment dwellers.	3,914 (3.1%)
<b>Movers &amp; Shakers</b>	Home to America's up and coming business class: a wealthy suburban world of dual-income couples who are highly educated, typically between the ages of 35 and 54 and often with children. Given its high percentage of executives and white-collar professionals there's a decided business bent to this segment; Movers & Shakers rank number-one for owning a small business and having a home office.	3,905 (3.1%)
<b>Blue Blood Estates</b>	A family portrait of suburban wealth, a place of million-dollar homes and manicured lawns, high-end cars and exclusive private clubs. The nation's second-wealthiest lifestyle, it is characterized by married couples with children, college degrees, a significant percentage of Asian Americans and six-figure incomes earned by business executives, managers and professionals.	3,850 (3.1%)
<b>The Cosmopolitans</b>	Educated, midscale and multi-ethnic, these residents are urbane couples in America's fast-growing cities. Concentrated in a handful of metros--such as Las Vegas, Miami and Albuquerque--these households feature older home-owners, empty-nesters and college graduates. A vibrant social scene surrounds their older homes and apartments, and residents love the nightlife and enjoy leisure-intensive lifestyles.	3,702 (3.0%)
<b>Suburban Sprawl</b>	This is an unusual American lifestyle: a collection of midscale, middle-aged singles and couples living in the heart of suburbia. Typically members of the Baby Boom generation, they hold decent jobs, own older homes and condos, and pursue conservative versions of the American Dream. Among their favorite activities are jogging on treadmills, playing trivia games and renting videos.	3,460 (2.8%)
<b>Urban Achievers</b>	Concentrated in the nation's port cities, Urban Achievers is often the first stop for up-and-coming immigrants from Asia, South America and Europe. These young singles and couples are typically college-educated and ethnically diverse: about a third are foreign-born, and even more speak a language other than English.	3,216 (2.6%)

Figure 18:  
**Top Concentrations of Psychographic Groups**  
 Rowlett Trade Area  
 2012

Figure 20:  
**Residential Demand Analysis**  
 Rowlett Trade Area  
 2012 - 2022

					Households	2012	133,615		
						2017	143,941	Annual Growth Rate	1.5%
						2022	155,066		
					Household Growth (2012-22)		21,451	Adjust for 2nd homes, demolition, vacancy	3.0%
					Adjusted Unit Requirement		<b>22,094</b>	% Rental	30%
					<b>Trade Area Demand from New Households (10-yr)</b>				
Household Income Range (2010 dollars)	Approximate Rent Range	Supportable Home Price Range	Current Households in Income Bracket	New Households by Income Bracket	Total Units	Estimated % Rental	Total Rental Units	Total Ownership Units	
up to \$15K	up to \$375	up to \$75K	6%	9%	<b>1,988</b>	90%	1,790	199	
\$15-25K	\$375 - \$625	\$75 to \$100K	7%	8%	<b>1,768</b>	70%	1,237	530	
\$25-35K	\$625 - \$875	\$100 to \$150K	9%	10%	<b>2,209</b>	50%	1,105	1,105	
\$35-50K	\$875 - \$1,000	\$150 to \$200K	15%	13%	<b>2,872</b>	35%	1,005	1,867	
\$50-75K	\$1,000+	\$200 to \$250K	22%	18%	<b>3,977</b>	20%	795	3,182	
\$75-100K	\$1,000+	\$250 to \$350K	16%	13%	<b>2,872</b>	10%	287	2,585	
\$100-150K	\$1,000+	\$350 to \$500K	16%	16%	<b>3,585</b>	5%	179	3,406	
\$150K and up	\$1,000+	\$500K and up	8%	13%	<b>2,872</b>	5%	144	2,729	
<b>Totals</b>			<b>99%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22,094</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>6,542</b>	<b>15,602</b>	

Source: NCTCOG, Claritas, Inc.; U.S. Census, and Ricker+Cunningham.

Figure 21:  
**Residential Demand Analysis – Single Family Attached and Rental**  
 Rowlett Trade Area  
 2012 - 2022

Annual Household Income Range	Approximate Home Price Range	Trade Area For-		Single Family Attached Demand	Attainable Capture Rate	Attainable Rowlett Capture (units)
		Sale Demand (Incomes \$15K+)	Estimated % Single Family Attached			
\$15-25K	\$75 to \$100K	530	35%	186	15%	28
\$25-35K	\$100 to \$150K	1,105	35%	387	15%	58
\$35-50K	\$150 to \$200K	1,867	35%	653	15%	98
\$50-75K	\$200 to \$250K	3,182	35%	1,114	15%	167
\$75-100K	\$250 to \$350K	2,585	35%	905	15%	136
\$100-150K	\$350 to \$500K	3,406	35%	1,192	15%	179
\$150K and up	\$500K and up	2,729	35%	955	15%	143
<b>Totals</b>		<b>15,403</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>5,391</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>809</b>

Source: NCTCOG, Claritas, Inc.; U.S. Census; and Ricker+Cunningham.

Annual Household Income Range	Approximate Rent Range	Trade Area Rental Demand		Attainable Rowlett Capture (units)
		(Incomes \$15K+)	Attainable Capture Rate	
\$15-25K	\$375 - \$625	1,237	15%	186
\$25-35K	\$625 - \$875	1,105	15%	166
\$35-50K	\$875 - \$1,000	1,005	15%	151
\$50-75K	\$1,000+	795	15%	119
\$75-100K	\$1,000+	287	15%	43
\$100-150K	\$1,000+	179	15%	27
\$150K and up	\$1,000+	144	15%	22
<b>Totals</b>		<b>4,753</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>713</b>

Source: NCTCOG, Claritas, Inc.; U.S. Census; and Ricker+Cunningham.

Figure 22:  
**Retail Demand Analysis**  
 Rowlett Trade Area  
 2012 - 2022

Retail Category	Projected Trade				Estimated Retail Sales/s.f.	10-yr New Retail Demand (s.f.)	Attainable Rowlett Capture Rate	10-Year Attainable Rowlett Capture (s.f.)
	Estimated 2012 Retail Sales (Supply)	Estimated 2012 Household Retail Demand	Area Household Growth Rate	10-Year Projected Trade Area Demand				
Furniture and Home Furnishings	\$40,041,508	\$110,629,183	1.5%	\$128,389,684	\$175	101,489	40%	40,595
Electronics and Appliances	\$44,432,514	\$121,874,301	1.5%	\$141,440,102	\$200	97,829	40%	39,132
Building Materials, Garden Equipment	\$300,401,819	\$511,262,551	1.5%	\$593,341,063	\$275	298,467	40%	119,387
Food and Beverage	\$441,032,658	\$687,749,177	1.5%	\$798,160,997	\$375	294,432	40%	117,773
Health and Personal Care	\$174,114,279	\$301,404,437	1.5%	\$349,792,154	\$325	148,885	40%	59,554
Clothing and Accessories	\$144,075,223	\$262,682,857	1.5%	\$304,854,180	\$200	210,857	40%	84,343
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music	\$73,747,737	\$101,934,851	1.5%	\$118,299,556	\$225	72,732	40%	29,093
General Merchandise	\$437,616,476	\$719,546,794	1.5%	\$835,063,430	\$275	420,060	40%	168,024
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$51,379,091	\$131,460,223	1.5%	\$152,564,956	\$200	105,524	40%	42,209
Foodservice and Drinking Places	\$397,053,493	\$563,492,993	1.5%	\$653,956,622	\$350	258,468	40%	103,387
Excluded Categories (cinema, prof./med. office, banks, etc.) @ 10% of total	\$210,389,480	\$351,203,737	1.5%	\$407,586,274	\$175	322,186	40%	128,874
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,314,284,277</b>	<b>\$3,863,241,105</b>		<b>\$4,483,449,019</b>	<b>\$620,207,914</b>	<b>2,330,928</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>932,371</b>

Sources: NCTCOG, Claritas Inc., Urban Land Institute, and Ricker+Cunningham.

Figure 23:  
**Office and Industrial Demand Analysis**  
 Rowlett Trade Area  
 2012 - 2022

Industry Category	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated %	Estimated	Sq Ft per	Estimated 10-	Estimated	Estimated
	2012	Growth Rate	2022	New Office	in Office	Net New	Office	yr Office	Rowlett	Rowlett
	Employees	2012-2022	Employees	Employees	Space	Employees	Employee	Demand	Capture Rate	Office
										Capture (s.f.)
Natural Resources, Mining and Construction	7,960	2.0%	9,703	1,743	40%	697	180	125,511	25%	31,378
Manufacturing	12,277	2.0%	14,966	2,689	5%	134	180	24,198	25%	6,050
Wholesale Trade	7,555	2.0%	9,210	1,655	5%	83	180	14,891	25%	3,723
Retail Trade	14,166	2.0%	17,268	3,102	5%	155	180	27,921	25%	6,980
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	6,476	2.0%	7,894	1,418	10%	142	180	25,528	25%	6,382
Information	3,913	2.0%	4,769	857	80%	685	180	123,383	25%	30,846
Financial Activities	10,658	2.0%	12,992	2,334	90%	2,101	180	378,127	25%	94,532
Professional and Business Services	19,563	2.0%	23,847	4,284	80%	3,427	180	616,916	25%	154,229
Educational and Health Services	16,055	2.0%	19,571	3,516	20%	703	180	126,574	25%	31,644
Leisure and Hospitality	13,222	2.0%	16,117	2,895	10%	290	180	52,119	25%	13,030
Other Services	4,722	2.0%	5,756	1,034	30%	310	180	55,842	25%	13,960
Government	18,349	2.0%	22,367	4,018	30%	1,205	180	216,984	25%	54,246
<b>Totals</b>	<b>134,916</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>164,462</b>	<b>29,546</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>9,933</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>1,787,994</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>446,999</b>

Source: NCTCOG, U.S. Census, and Ricker+Cunningham.

Industry Category	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated %	Estimated	Sq Ft per	Estimated 10-	Estimated	Estimated
	2012	Growth Rate	2022	New	in Industrial	Net New	Industrial	yr Industrial	Rowlett	Rowlett
	Employees	2012-2022	Employees	Industrial	Space	Employees	Employee	Demand	Capture Rate	Industrial
				Employees						Capture (s.f.)
Natural Resources, Mining and Construction	7,960	2.0%	9,703	1,743	20%	349	400	139,456	20%	27,891
Manufacturing	12,277	2.0%	14,966	2,689	80%	2,151	400	860,374	20%	172,075
Wholesale Trade	7,555	2.0%	9,210	1,655	90%	1,489	400	595,643	20%	119,129
Retail Trade	14,166	2.0%	17,268	3,102	10%	310	400	124,092	20%	24,818
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	6,476	2.0%	7,894	1,418	20%	284	400	113,456	20%	22,691
Information	3,913	2.0%	4,769	857	20%	171	400	68,546	20%	13,709
Financial Activities	10,658	2.0%	12,992	2,334	5%	117	400	46,682	20%	9,336
Professional and Business Services	19,563	2.0%	23,847	4,284	10%	428	400	171,366	20%	34,273
Educational and Health Services	16,055	2.0%	19,571	3,516	10%	352	400	140,638	20%	28,128
Leisure and Hospitality	13,222	2.0%	16,117	2,895	5%	145	400	57,910	20%	11,582
Other Services	4,722	2.0%	5,756	1,034	10%	103	400	41,364	20%	8,273
Government	18,349	2.0%	22,367	4,018	20%	804	400	321,458	20%	64,292
<b>Totals</b>	<b>134,916</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>164,462</b>	<b>29,546</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>6,702</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>2,680,987</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>536,197</b>

Source: NCTCOG, U.S. Census, and Ricker+Cunningham.

Figure 24:  
**Opportunities and Constraints Diagram**  
2012

Figure 29:  
**Downtown Regulating Plan**  
 2012

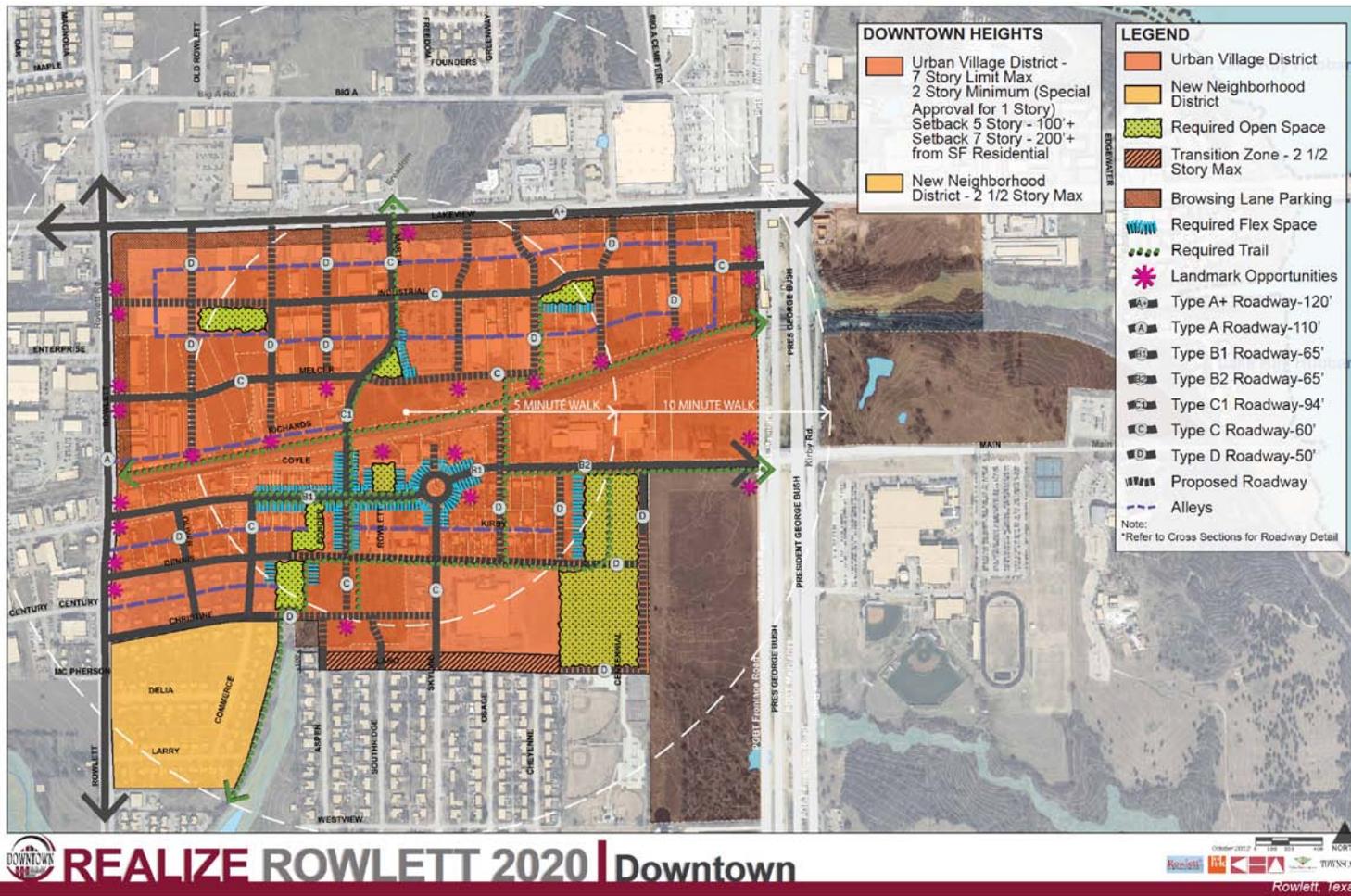
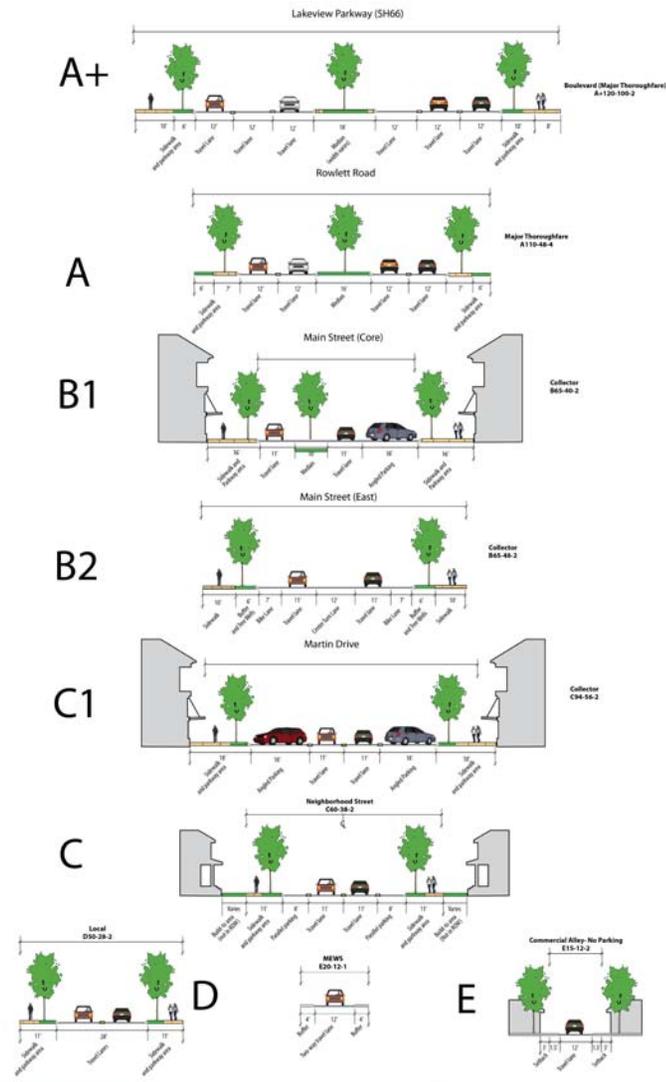


Figure 30:  
**Downtown Regulating Plan – Street Section**  
 2012



## Downtown Survey Results

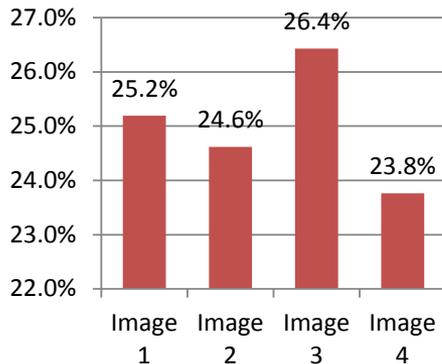
# Downtown

April 5, 2012

Rowlett Community Centre

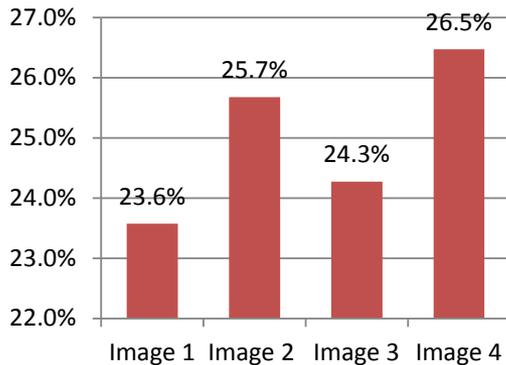
Please rank the Townhome images by pressing the corresponding buttons in order from your favorite image to least favorite image.

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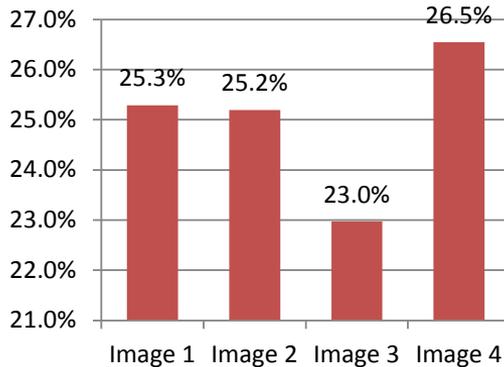
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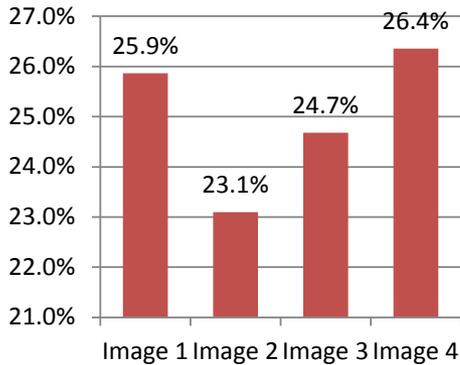
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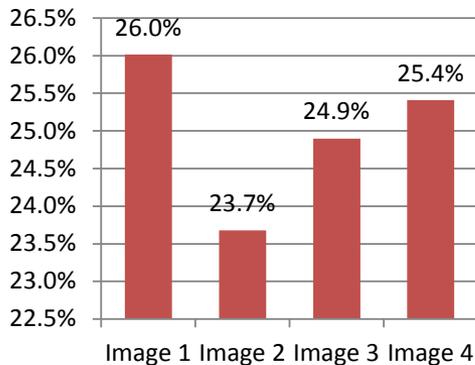
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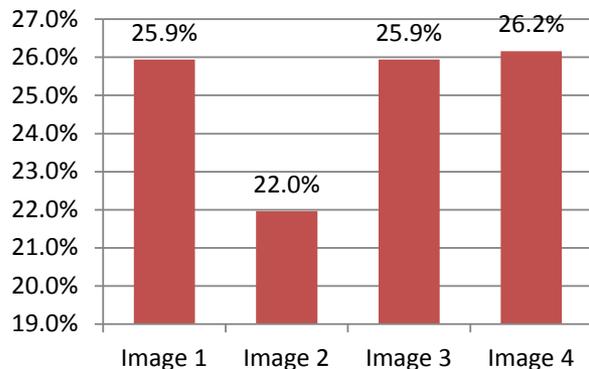
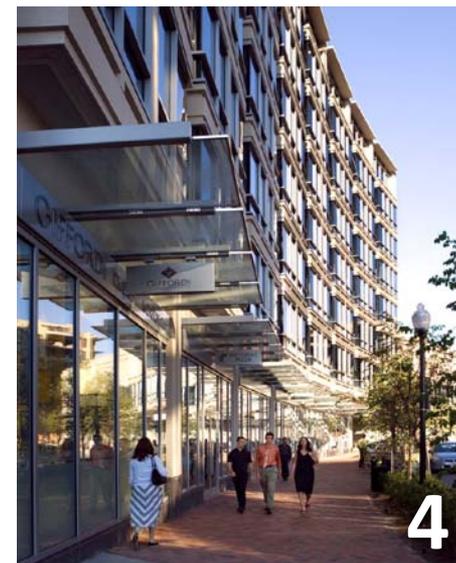
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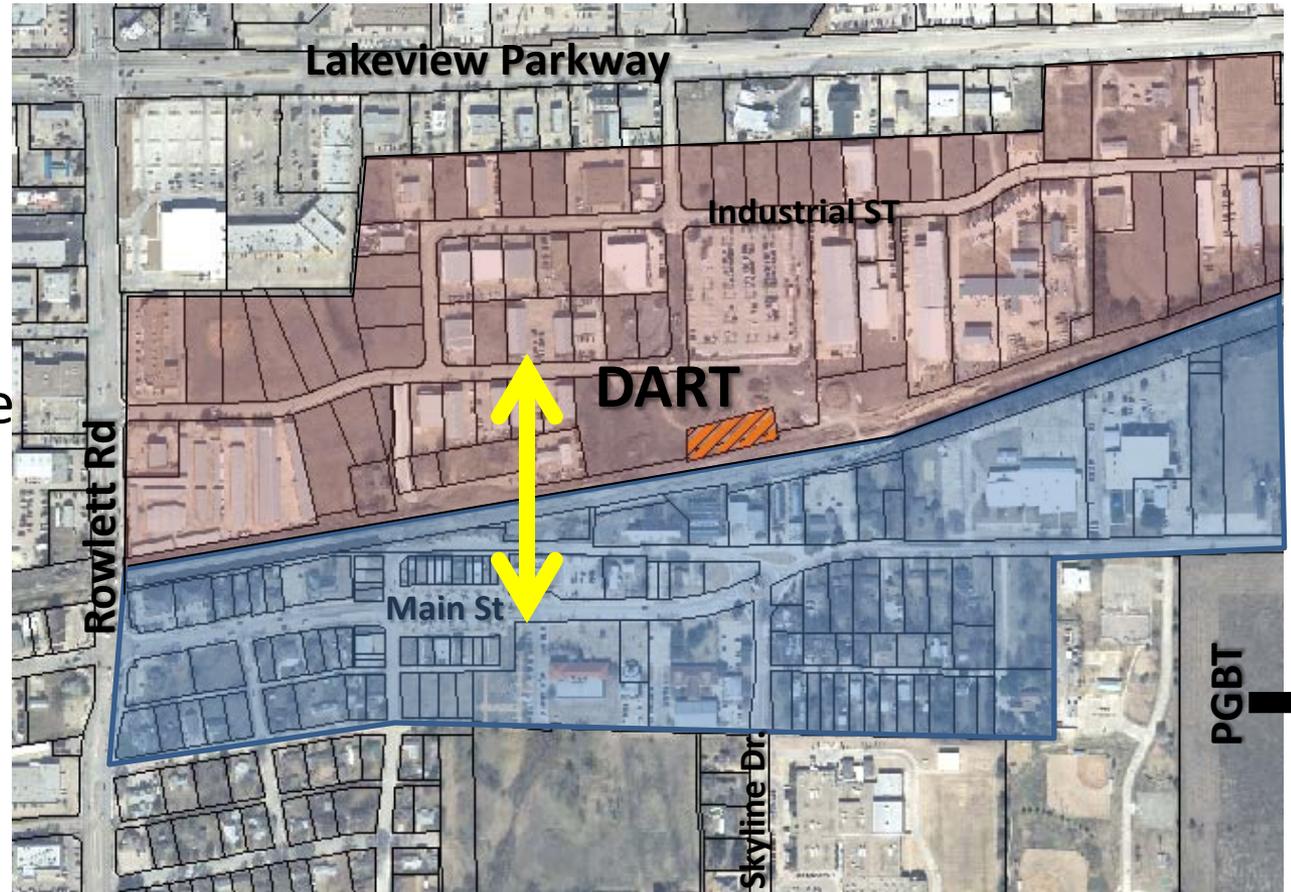
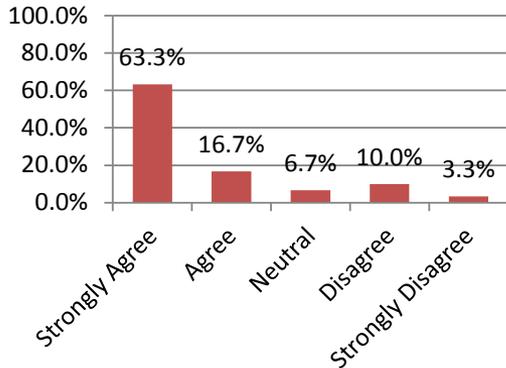
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4. Image 4



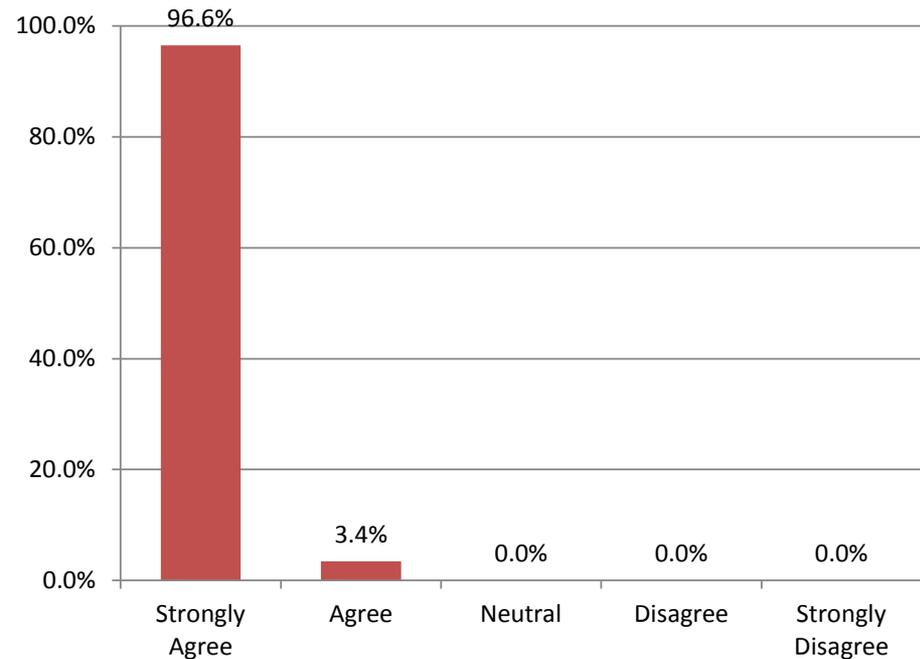
**With the addition of DART, the downtown area should be considered to include property on both sides of the station.**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



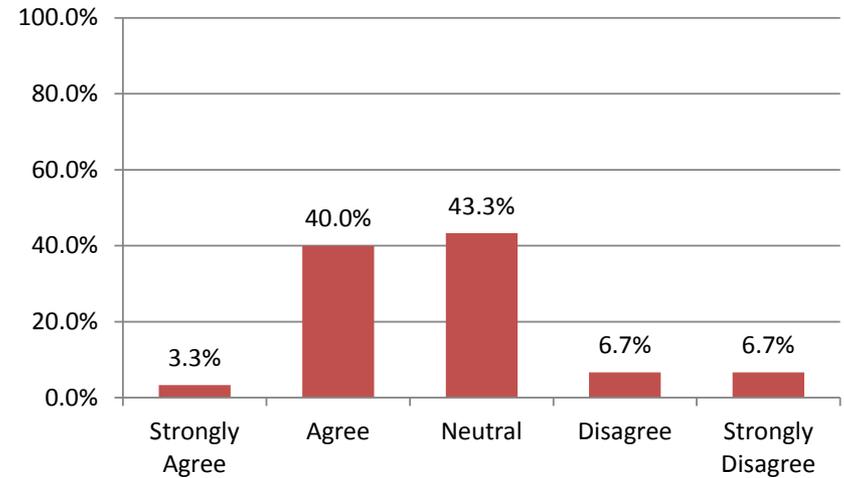
# Development and redevelopment that happens downtown needs to be of a high quality design.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

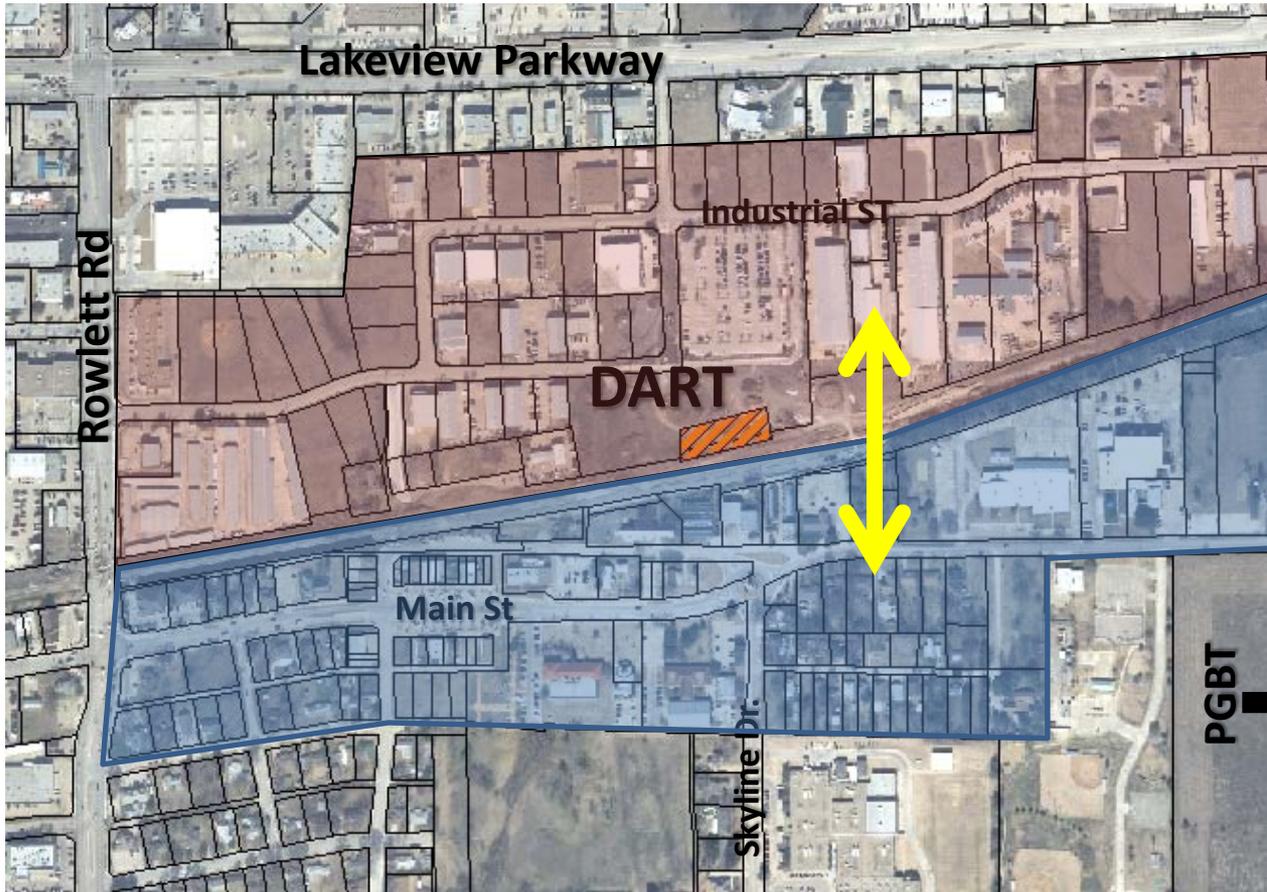


# The character of new development and redevelopment in downtown needs to match what is in place today.

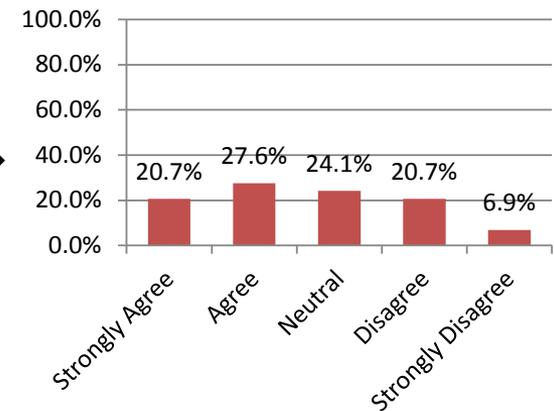
1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



# Building materials should be the same on both sides of the DART station.

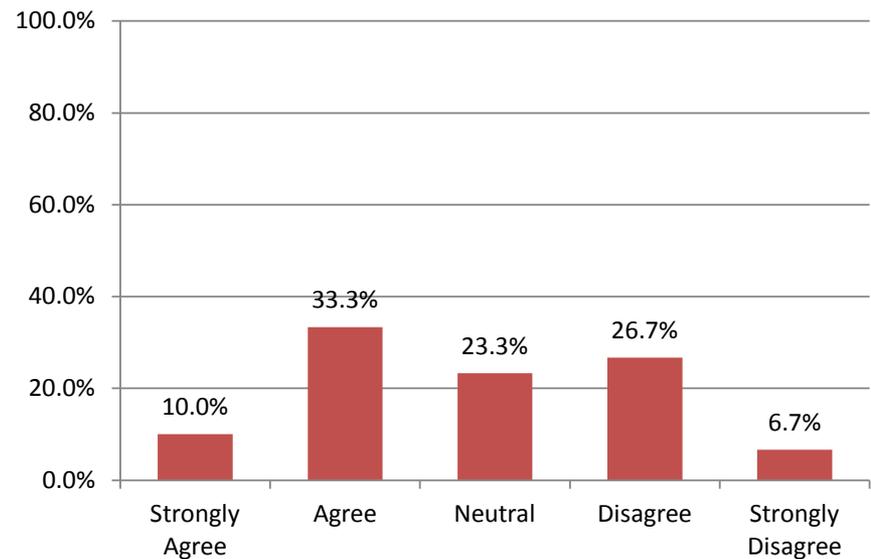


1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



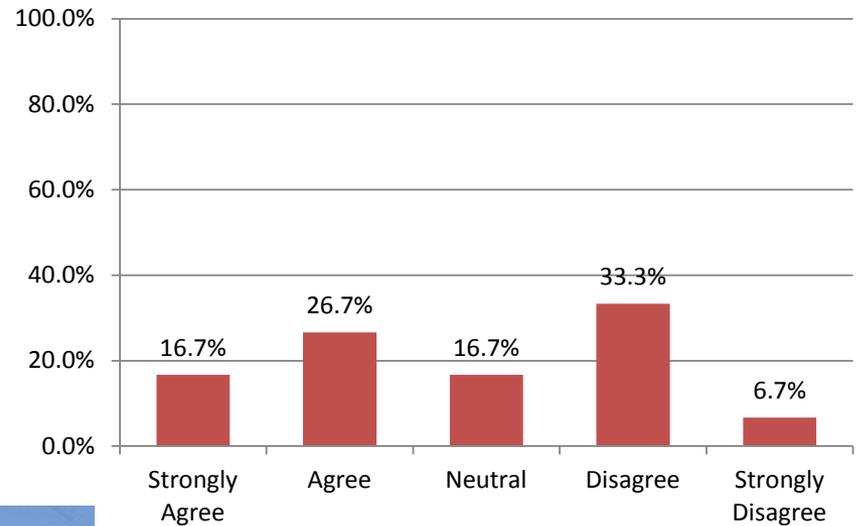
# Development in downtown should be distinctly different than what exists today.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



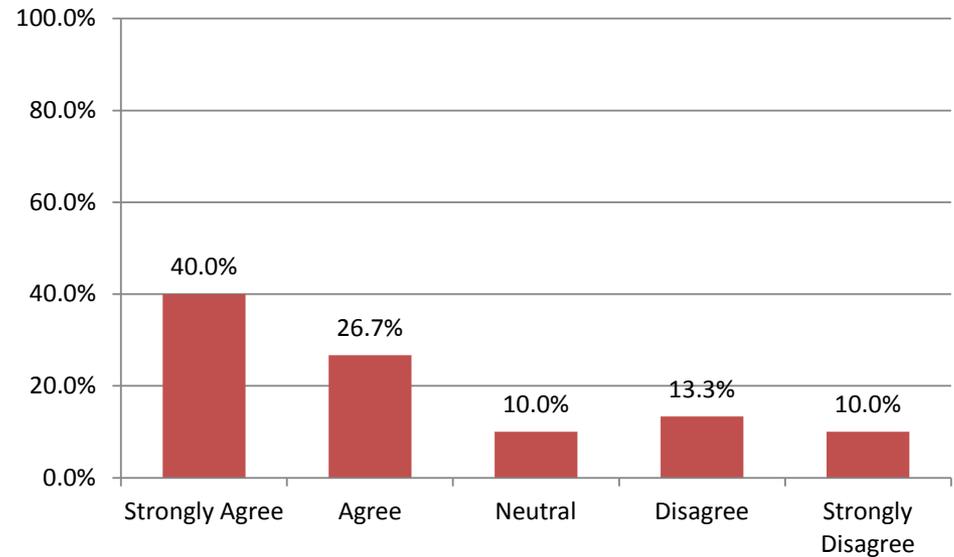
# All development in downtown needs to be in support of the DART infrastructure (transit-supportive development).

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



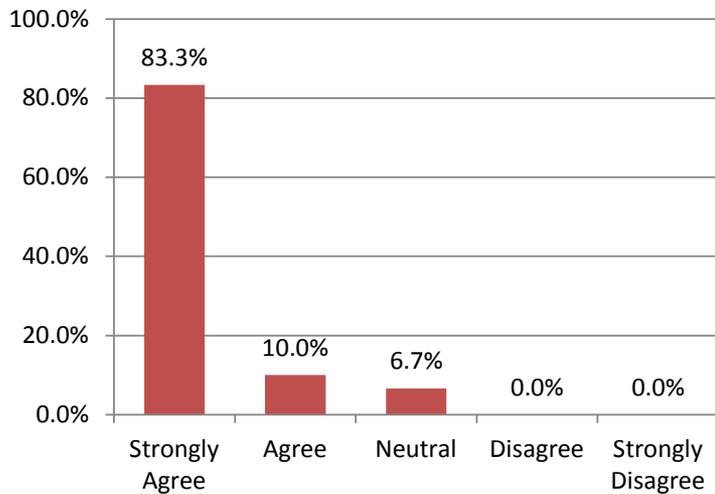
# Development should be of a higher density (more stories) than exists today.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



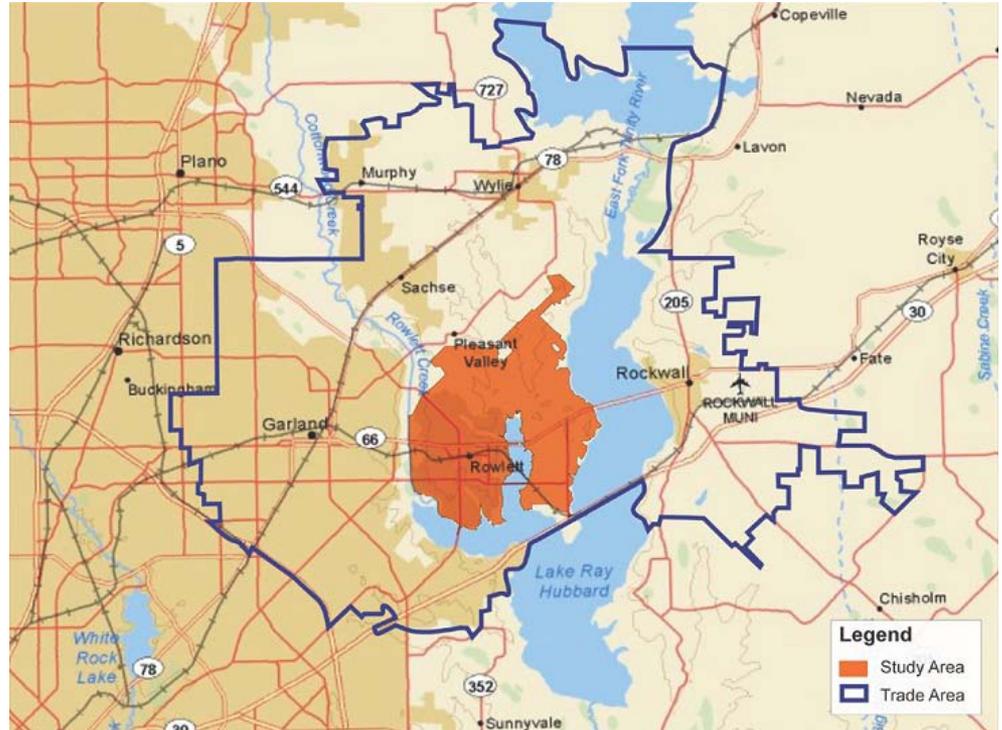
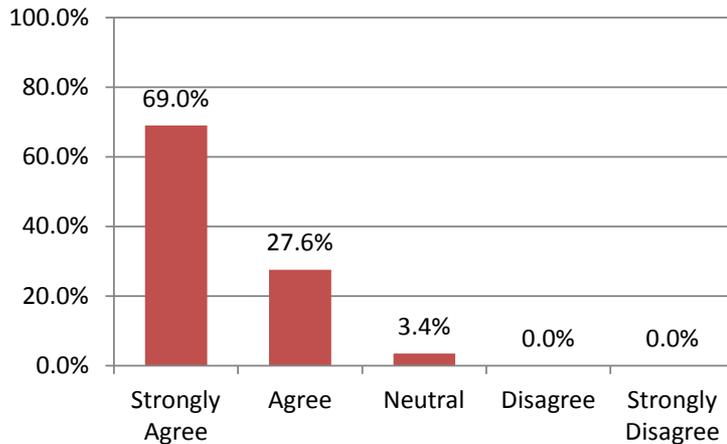
# Public spaces should be a part of the downtown.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



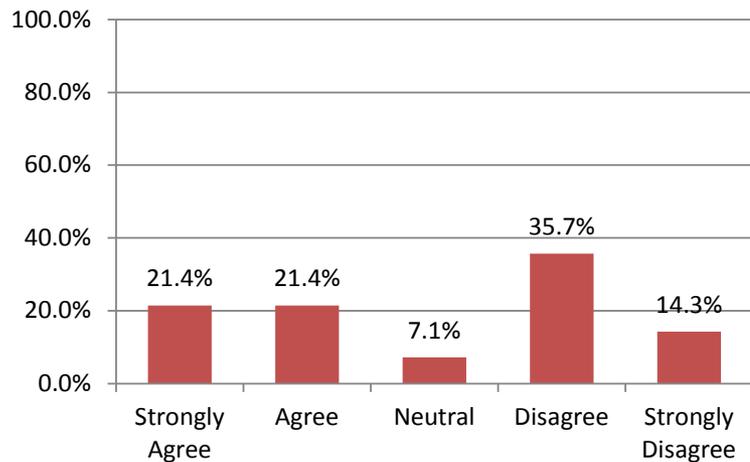
# Land uses downtown should serve the local market as well as the region.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



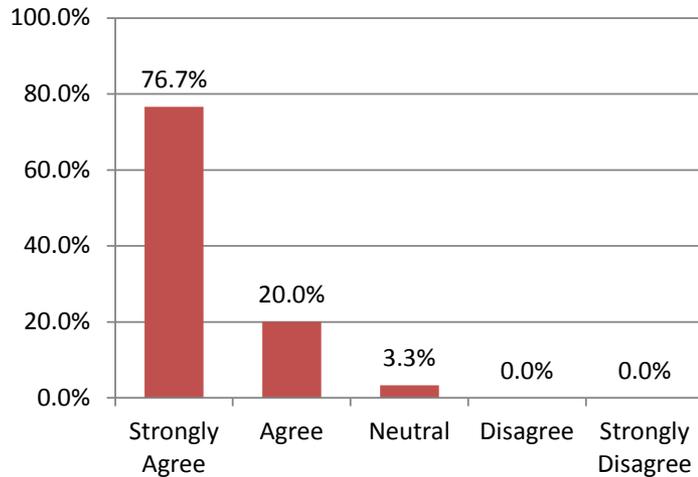
# Land uses downtown should be accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists first and then vehicles.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



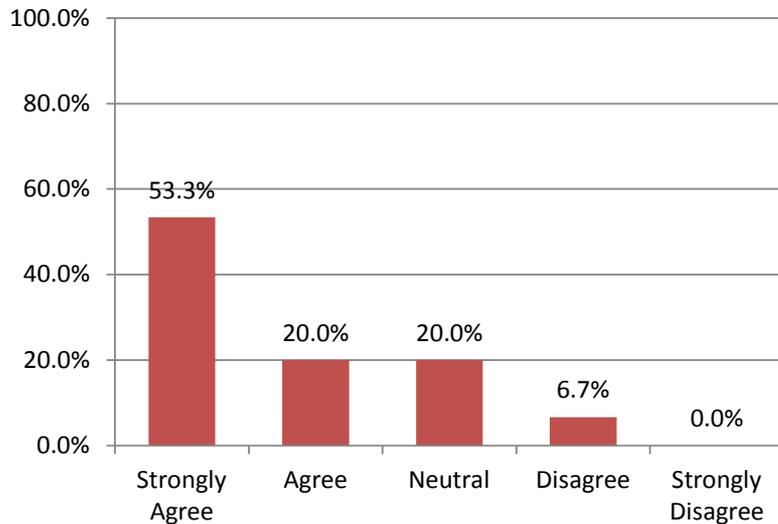
# Downtown should be a place for people of all ages.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



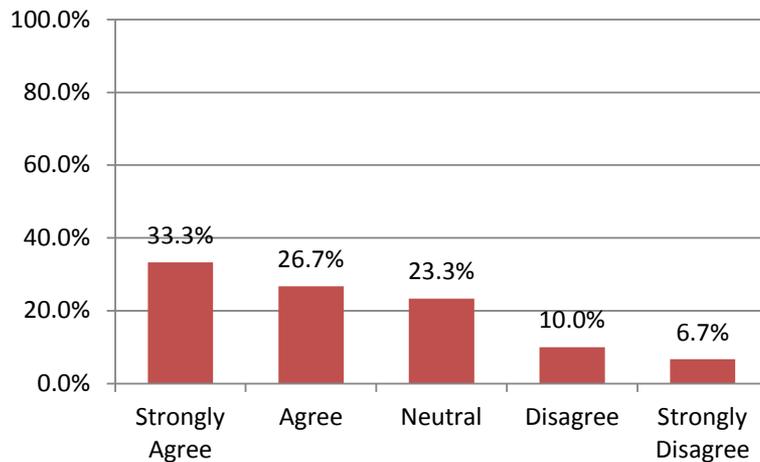
# Downtown should continue to be the civic core of the community.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



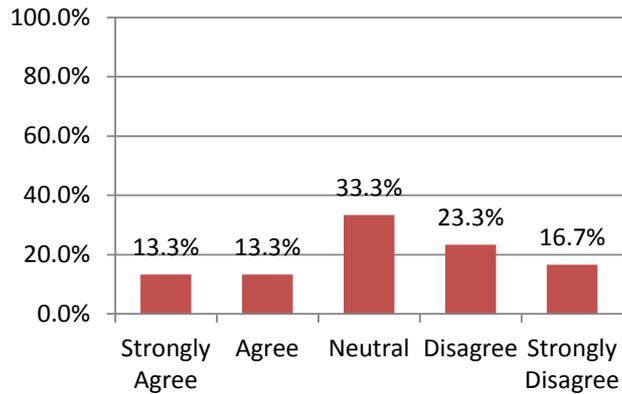
This area should be known as “downtown” rather than “old town” going forward.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



# This area should be known as “old town” rather than “downtown” going forward.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



## STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS

### LIVING DISTRICTS

LAKESIDE LIVING	C-1
FAMILY LIFE	C-2
HEALTHY LIVING	D-1
WOODSIDE LIVING	B-2
ACTIVE LIVING	E-5

### MIXED USE DISTRICTS

SIGNATURE GATEWAY	E-1
LAKESIDE CENTER	E-2
<b>OLD TOWN</b>	<b>E-4</b>
REGIONAL TRADE	E-3
BUSINESS BELTWAY	D-2
SOUTHSHORE	D-3

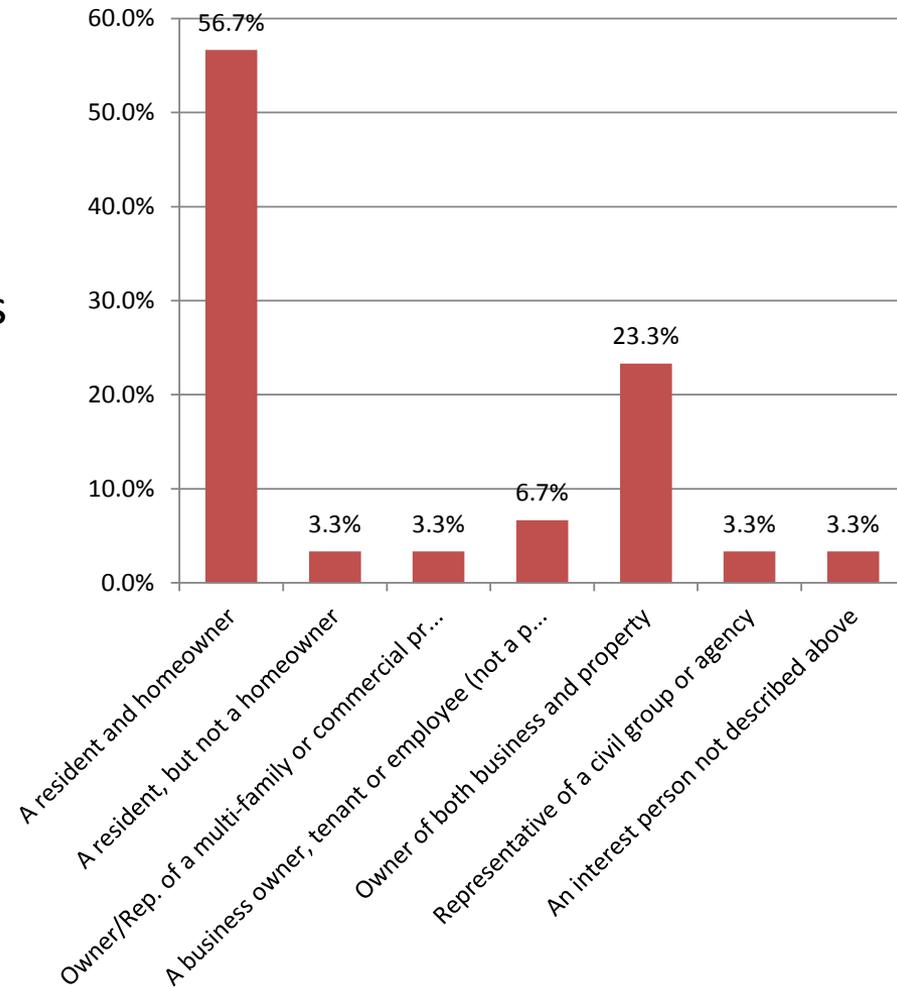
### NORTHSHORE DISTRICTS

NORTHSHORE	A
CENTER FOR COMMERCE + INDUSTRY	B-1



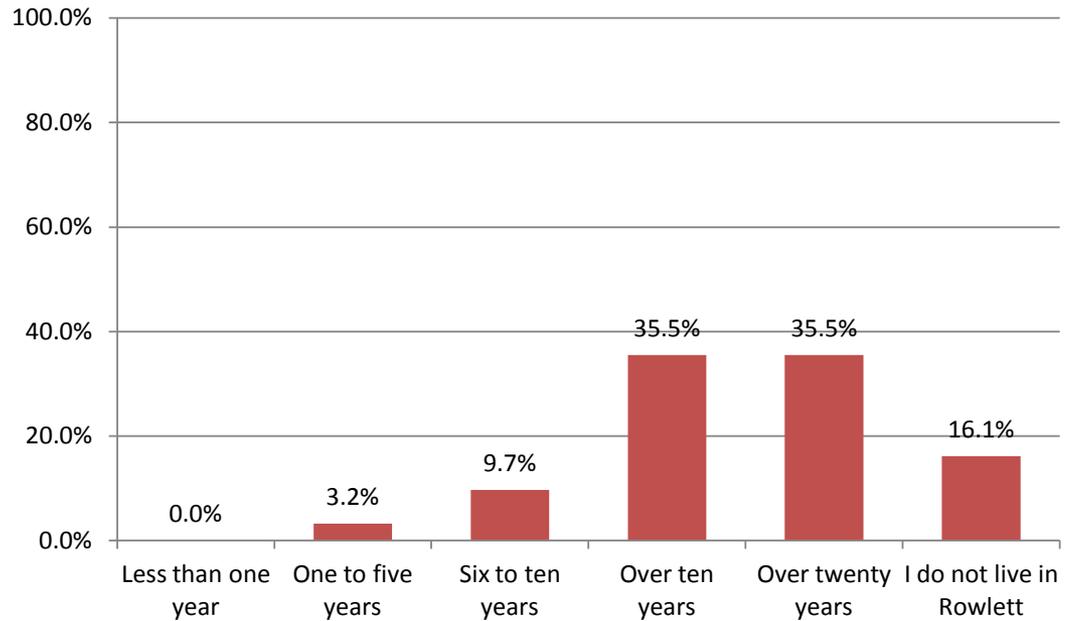
## I am most involved in Rowlett as a?

1. A resident and homeowner
2. A resident, but not a homeowner
3. Owner/Rep. of a multi-family or commercial property (not a business owner)
4. A business owner, tenant or employee (not a property owner)
5. Owner of both business and property
6. Representative of a civil group or agency
7. An interest person not described above

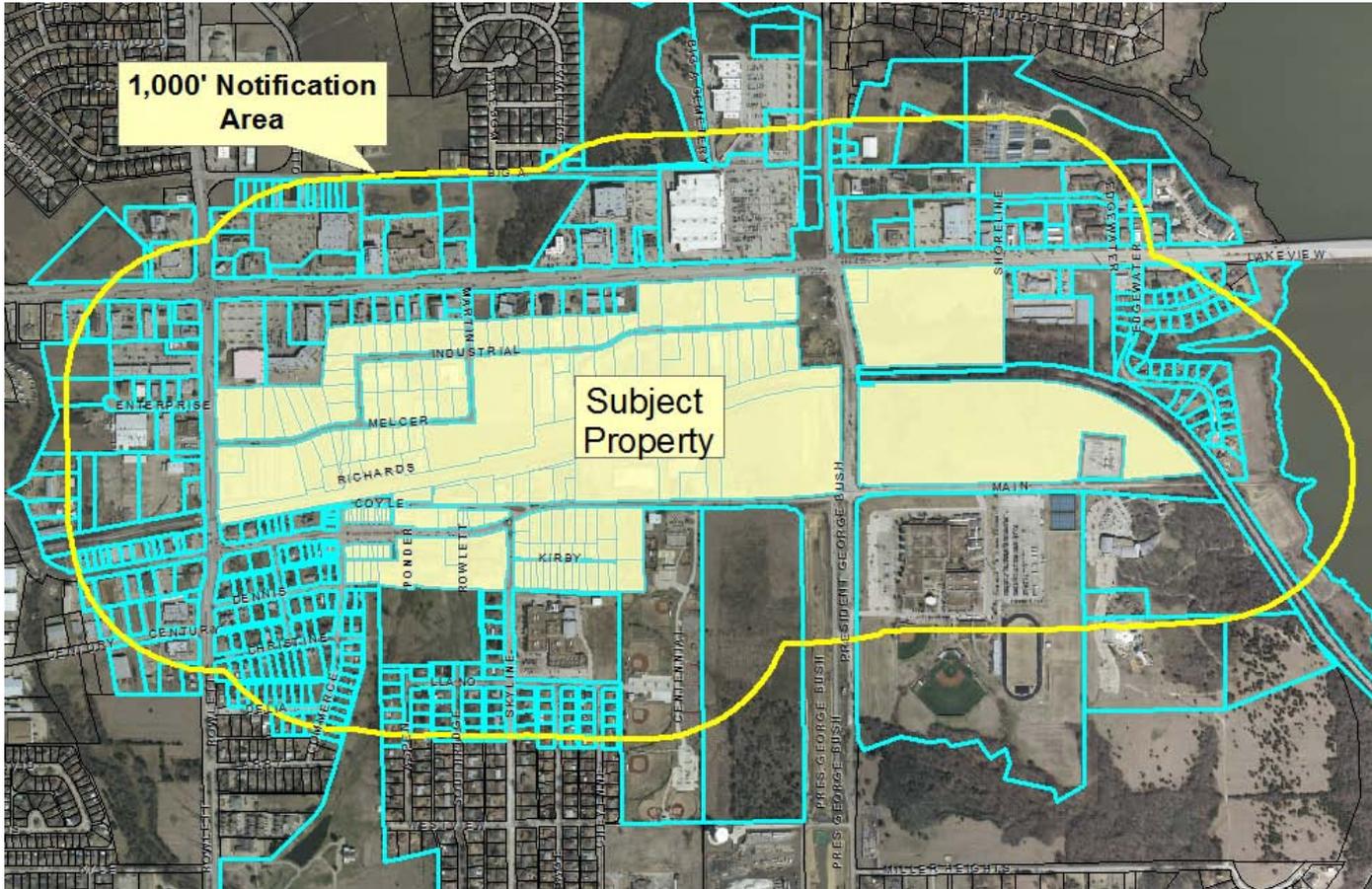


# I have lived in Rowlett for

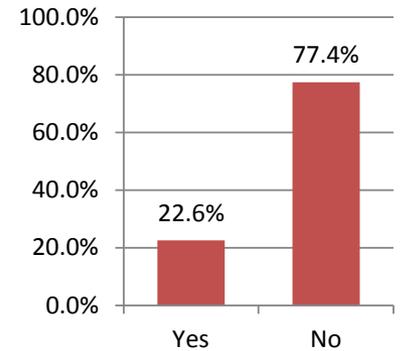
1. Less than one year
2. One to five years
3. Six to ten years
4. Over ten years
5. Over twenty years
6. I do not live in Rowlett



# Do you live within 1,000 feet of this focus area?



1. Yes
2. No



## **Economic Development Glossary of Tools**

## Economic Development Glossary of Tools

**Advocacy Entity:** Planning and management entities separate from governmental agencies responsible for designated areas. Entity may assume promotion of the area, manage and coordinate activities, and initiate actions to move area closer to its vision. Specific functions may include: acquire, assemble, hold and convey land to permit new forms of infill development; facilitate financing; coordinate and participate in real estate development and infrastructure construction; coordinate actions of public agencies responsible for government services; monitor traffic issues and manage parking efficiently; monitor security matters; coordinate the dissemination of market information; and, establish fees, rates and charges among property and business owners.

**Affordable Housing Demonstration Project:** Public-private effort whereby public sector contributes land, financing, or the like, and private sector (developer) contributes their expertise and money to joint development of an affordable housing project; program is designed to educate delivery system (property owners, developers, lenders, public officials, community at-large, etc.) on the “value” of developing product in the market and to prove up support.

**Brownfields:** Contaminated former industrial and commercial lands – comprising land that could be redeveloped.

**Business Recruitment /Retention:** Program, frequently administered by an economic development entity, which assists with the recruitment (attraction) or retention of business either into or within a designated area; program elements might include financial assistance, regulatory assistance, and/or marketing.

**Capital Access Fund (State):** Fund established to increase the availability of financing for businesses and nonprofit organizations that face barriers in accessing capital; guidelines are generally more permissive than conventional lending criteria. A reserve account may be established at a lending institution and fund acts as a credit enhancement, inducing financial institution to make a loan.

**Capital Improvement Plan (CIP):** Dollars earmarked for improvement and extension of infrastructure in municipalities.

**Community Development Assistance (CDA) (State):** Program authorizes up to certain percent state tax credits to eligible contributors investing in approved community projects; in certain instances applicants must meet economic distress criteria; non-profit developers subject to limitations on per project tax credits.

**Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) (Federal):** Federal grants, administered through local or regional offices, designed to lower the overall cost of a project; projects must demonstrate the ability to improve the economic conditions of an area.

**Community Development Corporation (CDC):** Nonprofit organizations based in specific neighborhoods and subject to local governance. CDCs may rehabilitate and build affordable housing for neighborhood residents, foster local economic development, and provide an array of related social services.

**CDFIs - Community Development Financial Institutions:** Networks of federal banks, credit unions, and CDCs that target loans to redlined areas.

**Community Reinvestment Act (CRA):** Program under which federally-insured lending institutions are provided incentives to offer assistance with development financing for local projects (particularly those in economically-distressed areas); assistance usually offered at a favorable rate; institutions earmark a percent of their lending dollars for this program.

**Concentrated Public Facilities:** City investment in identified areas by locating both facilities and publicly sponsored developments and amenities in places where infill development is desired; result is a greater leverage of public dollars through strategic investment, and ability to assist developer with financial pre-leasing requirements.

**Cultural Arts Activities:** Activities and programs which encourage use of the arts in a designated area by a variety of participants.

**Cultural Tourism:** Marketing and promotion of cultural and historic community elements of interest to visitors to an area; a thriving industry for many areas of the east and south. Cultural tourism efforts generally originate at a grass-roots level, but quickly require the assistance and coordinate of municipal and state entities. In select instances, matching dollars are available for marketing from state resources.

**Density Bonuses:** Incentive offered to developers of projects that meet specified goals (i.e., affordable housing, public spaces, transit, etc).

**Design Guidelines:** Formal set of guidelines (with over-sight by a board comprised of area stakeholders, neighborhood representatives, and design professionals) for use by investors doing projects within priority areas. Guidelines address character and quality levels and frame discussions with staff.

**Design Standards:** Formal set of standards (either administered through an appointed design-review committee and/or municipal staff) for development which require certain character and quality levels for the built and natural environments.

**Developer RFPs:** Request-for-Proposals from potential developers of projects in designated areas. Selection of developer based on dollar amount of bid; quality of design; developer's track record; and preferences of neighborhood residents.

**Development Fee Waivers:** Monetary charges on development to recoup a portion of the capital and operating costs required to accommodate a project. Note: Fees for sewer/water hook-ups, building permits, processing fee, etc. can be waived or delayed until the developer sees a positive cash flow as a means to encourage desired projects.

**Development Standard Waivers:** Waivers or variances by cities for items including height limits, setbacks, density, lot coverage, rear access, etc.

**Economic Development Administration (EDA) (Federal):** Public entity which provides assistance in the form of planning grants and construction financing - for the development of projects in rural and urban locations which will result in the creation of jobs for the community.

**Educational Seminars:** Programs hosted by a variety of entities (i.e., lender, developer, municipal, etc.) which promote an open dialogue among individuals and organizations which represent the delivery system; can occur in a variety of forums; purpose is to provide participants with various perspectives and an understanding of initiatives intended to facilitate development process.

**Empowerment Zone (Neighborhood or Federal):** Designation which allows businesses that construct or rehabilitate commercial property in the area to deduct one-half of “qualifying revitalization expenditures up to \$10 million” -- located entirely or partially within a CDBG-eligible area; designed to: promote the creation or rehabilitation of affordable housing; increase economic development; or, increase the quality of social service, education or public safety provided to residents in the zone through a waiver of fees combined with other municipal incentives.

**Engage Elected Officials:** Variety of methods by which elected officials are engaged in planning and implementation efforts including improved communication between staff and elected officials. Note: This should be a common practice, not project-specific.

**Enterprise Zone:** State-designated area where businesses located within them that make capital investments, hire new employees, contribute to economic development plans, rehabilitate old buildings and/or do research and development are provided a tax credit. An approach to revitalizing distressed areas by offering tax incentives, regulatory relief and improved government services.

**Environmental Impact Reports (EIR)s:** Analysis used to assess environmental impacts and determine mitigation measures needed prior to advancing a redevelopment plan, specific plan, or community plan. As impacts are identified, the City may be asked to conduct additional environmental reviews or focus on identified areas.

**Façade Maintenance Program:** Any program – local, state or federal – including low interest loans and/or grants – which encourage investment in, and improvement to, building facades within a planning area; may also be designed as a matching funds program, within a district, for building façade maintenance.

**Foreign Trade Zone:** Government designated area also known as Free Trade Zone for the duty-free entry of non-prohibitive goods; merchandise may be stored, displayed, assembled, packaged, or used for manufacture within the zone and re-exported without duties being levied.

**Government Liaison:** Individual or committee charged with establishing and maintaining a dialogue between various branches of government (local, county, regional) regarding issues such as – intergovernmental agreements, regulatory reform, facilities planning, etc.

**Historic Preservation Easement:** Mechanism which permanently protects historic properties; a private legal interest conveyed by a property owner to a preservation organization or to a government entity. Once in place, it binds both the current owner and future owners to protect the historic character of the property subject to the easement. While some easements are for a period of years, in most instances easements are created as permanent restrictions.

**Historic Preservation Investment Tax Credits (Federal):** Tax credit for a percent of rehabilitation costs of income-producing properties which can be sold on the market.

**Historic Preservation Revolving Loan Fund:** Fund available to provide low interest loans to property owners at any income level in historic districts; usually available on a competitive basis to all property owners of any income level for exterior rehabilitation projects.

**HOME:** HOME Investment Partnership Program, whereby HUD allocates funds by formula among eligible state and local governments to strengthen public-private partnerships and expand the supply of decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing for very low-income families.

**Improvement District:** Both an organizing and financing technique for area revitalization; District provides stable stream of income for activities and projects considered special to area or in addition to general municipal services. Districts are vehicle for providing additional services for a fee and not a substitute for services funded through traditional tax revenues.

**Infill Development:** Development of new homes, commercial and/or retail buildings, and public facilities on unused or underused lands in existing communities.

**Infrastructure Cost Participation:** Cost of infrastructure (either on-site or off-site) shared by developer and/or property owner with an entity (public (city/county), private (developer co-op), or semi-private organization which will benefit from its availability; can be offered through a formal program or on a case-by-case basis.

**Land Assembly:** Land assembled by public, private or non-profit entity in an effort to position it for development of larger projects; assembly can happen through purchases of properties, vacating and/or rerouting streets, alleys, etc.

**Land Donation/Write-Down:** Property owner -- public (city/county), private (developer), or semi-private organization -- contributes land to a project either as a donation without an expected return, or at a reduced price. City-acquired property through fee simple transactions and foreclosures are an obvious source for land contributions.

**Land Swap:** An exchange of city-owned land of similar value in alternative locations for the purpose of developing specific infill sites in specified ways.

**Level-of-Service:** Level-of-service is a measure used to describe street standards necessary to address the role of the street; roads within communities are designed to meet specified goals regarding mobility, connectivity, and regional planning and land use development; by adjusting level-of-service you address the tension between through-trips and access to activities and services along the roadway (corridor).

**Leverage Infrastructure Funding to Support Private Money:** Public investment for infrastructure located strategically to leverage private investment within a predefined area.

**Limitations on Infrastructure Extensions:** Method used in regional growth management whereby efficient development patterns are rewarded.

**Linked Deposits:** Local development agencies and downtown development organizations use their bank deposits to leverage bank lending for activities supported in the area. City or development agency deposits its funds in one or several banks with provision that bank make loans in support of identified community objective. *Note: In select instances, cities have foregone interest on these deposits so that the bank can make loans at below market rates.*

**Liquor License Restrictions:** Limit on the number of liquor licenses issued in a designated area. Restrictions generally tied to businesses which generate over a certain percent of their revenue from liquor sales. The purpose of this action is not to eliminate restaurants, but concentrations of bars.

**Loan Pool (Lending Pools):** Several lending organizations contributing financing to a project or projects, thus sharing risk; an amount of capital pledged by several entities for lending to businesses based on some agreed upon goals or other criteria; pledges can be in the form of loans, letters of commitment and stock purchases; pool can be either organized formally or on a case-by-case basis.

**Low Income Housing Tax Credits (State):** Dollar for dollar reduction or credit against an investor's federal income tax liability on salary, wages, business, etc.; credit is treated like a cash payment or as a reduction against the amount of tax owed; sale of tax credits by the developer contributes to project equity, thereby reducing developer's out-of-pocket investment.

**Low Interest Loans/Subordination:** Loans for construction, acquisition, operation, etc. are offered to qualifying individuals or organizations at a preferred interest rate; subordination by a public (city/county), private (lender), or semi-private organization of a loan provides a guarantee to the lending organization that in the event of default debt service will be paid.

**Main Street Program:** Financial and advisory assistance for downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts by use of preservation and economic development strategies; affiliated with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

**Management District:** Both an organizing and financing technique for area revitalization; provides stable stream of income for activities and projects considered special to area or in addition to general municipal services; are vehicle for providing additional services for a fee and not to substitute for services funded through traditional tax revenues; similar to Improvement District, but emphasis on marketing, management and promotion.

**Micro Loan Program:** Small amounts of capital usually less than \$2,500 to very small businesses for a wide range of capital needs including façade improvements, working capital and personal needs; loan guarantees; downside: excessive credit analysis and underwriting costs.

**New Market Tax Credits:** Federal income tax credit equal to 39 percent over seven years designed to stimulate investment in low-income qualifying areas by providing financing assistance to qualified projects; project receives an equity contribution equal to 25 percent of the amount of tax credits sold; assuming the project has access to up to \$20 million of tax credits that can be sold to investors, then 25 percent of that amount, or \$5 million could be put directly into the project. *Note: A non-profit corporation, known as Community Development Entity acquires and sells the credits for eligible projects.*

**Municipal Management District:** (Chapter 375, Local Government Code) District also called downtown management districts, created within an existing commercial area to finance facilities, infrastructure and services beyond those already provided by individual property owners or the municipality; improvements may be paid for by self-imposed property taxes, special assessments and impact fees, or by other charges on district property owners; creation of the district does not relieve a city from providing basic services to the area; created to supplement, not supplant, the municipal services available to the area.

**Non-Profit Developer Support:** Variety of financial and regulatory tools and programs which streamline and reduce costs for “eligible projects” by “eligible developers.”

**Overlay Zone (i.e., historic, parking):** Designated area superimposed on one or more existing zoning districts; designed to protect or enhance an area’s special qualities; governmental review of all developments with the power to approve design according to standards contained in the ordinance or in a district plan or design guidelines; program elements include “bonuses” and “requirement adjustments.”

**Park-in-a-Park:** Creative method by which parking is secondary to design and landscaping, giving visual appearance of cars in park rather than trees in a parking lot.

**Parking District:** Designated area wherein parking design, development and management issues among multiple facilities are controlled by select entity beyond that provided for by standard municipal levels of service and control.

**Pedestrian Enhancements and Linkages:** Various public, private and non-profit initiatives to improve the pedestrian environment in a designated area, i.e., permanent and temporary streetscape elements, sidewalk widening, reduced speeds, etc.; resulting environment designed to accommodate needs of pedestrians, as well as through- and destination-traffic, by incorporating select infrastructure improvements, design elements, and traffic management mechanisms; methods to achieving this include: separating traffic through use of parallel streets, limiting access points, linking parking lots, coordinating traffic signals, adding alternative transportation lanes, widening sidewalks, providing crosswalks, providing street lights and furniture, preventing “deadening” uses without building front, and incorporating transit stops.

**Predevelopment Funding Grants:** Financing for project expenses incurred prior to construction, i.e., soft costs including consulting, design, engineering, and planning, and marketing, etc. Note: The Economic Development Administration (EDA) has funds for predevelopment and construction costs.

**Project Thresholds:** Project size thresholds, predetermined and designed to allow smaller projects to be rapidly permitted, saving extensive reviews for larger developments and environmentally sensitive sites.

**Public Subordination:** City/county provides a guarantee to the lending organization that, in the event of default, debt service will be paid.

**Redevelopment:** Restoration of existing buildings and properties blighted and/or which diminish the character and function of a neighborhood including adaptive use and historic preservation properties.

**Regulatory Reform:** Initiative by government entity to amend existing regulatory documents to be responsive to prevailing market and economic conditions; examples might include: new or amended zoning designations, planning approval process reform, updated comprehensive plan, etc.

**Revenue or General Obligation Bond:** If a project has a secure revenue stream, such as parking fees resulting from construction of a parking structure, bonds may be issued and amortized by the anticipated revenue which results from the improvement that was funded; bonds are not secured against the taxing authority of the City, and therefore do not require a public vote.

**Reverse Mortgage:** Low interest loan based on equity in home; particularly relevant for seniors; use of reverse mortgage dollars are generally restricted to property reinvestment projects.

**Revolving Loan Funds:** Flexible funding in the form of loans, guarantees and interest subsidies to firms which further local development goals; designed to alleviate high costs and short supply of capital for businesses, particularly small ones, or those located in distressed areas; components include: lower rates, longer terms; many capitalized by/with federal funds combined with private funds.

**Re-Zone Parcels:** Either city-owned and initiated, or petition-based, through an organized effort initiated by the “advocacy entity” to enlist the support of property owners within a designated area – request for a change in property zoning designation (to mixed-use); the objective is to provide landowners the incentive and economic strength to maintain and redevelop a high-quality environment and react more swiftly to market trends.

**Sales Tax Refund:** Refunds on net state sales and use taxes and franchise taxes for paying local school taxes up to \$10 million.

**Sales Tax Sharing:** Future sales from a development can be rebated to developer to pay for infrastructure - city/county agrees to split sales tax revenue with developer, then developer uses to pay for infrastructure.

**School Programs:** Programs (i.e., essays, art, civic participation) which encourage the involvement of students in a designated area.

**Self-Certification Program:** Contractors assume responsibility for inspecting and certifying the correct completion of their own work; quality is assured by random spot checks; contractors who cheat lose their licenses.

**Self-Supporting Municipal Improvement District (SSMID):** District providing stable stream of income for activities and projects considered special to area or in addition to general municipal services; vehicle for providing additional services for a fee and not to substitute for services funded through traditional tax revenues.

**Signature Project:** Public-private effort whereby public sector contributes land, financing, or the like, and private sector (developer) contributes their expertise and money to joint development of a significant project within a designated planning area; program is designed to encourage development of project which will serve as a catalyst for additional investment.

**Smart Growth:** Growth management program which combines incentives, disincentives, and traditional planning techniques to promote a pattern of growth that achieves economic, environmental, and quality-of-life objectives.

**Streamlined Development Approval:** Initiative by government entity to facilitate a timely approvals process for (re)development projects meeting certain criteria; referred to as a “green-tape” permitting program. Critical elements of program: 1) streamlined permit and entitlement process; 2) greater predictability; and, 3) fairness in fees and exactions. Components: 1) appointed case manager; 2) consolidated permit process; 3) waived or reduced fees; 4) reduced number of changes to previously approved plans; 5) stoppage to the issuance of conflicting requirements by different departments; 6) a single public hearing; 7) streamlined environmental review process.

**Tax Abatement or Rebate:** Taxing entity (usually the city) abates or rebates a portion of tax burden; this can happen in the form of an adjustment on an individual property basis, or in an abatement zone.

**Tax Exempt Bond Financing:** Method of financing long-term debt issued by government whereby bondholders need not include interest payments on taxable income.

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** A district obtains funds from increases in regular tax revenues that arise from new development in the district; incremental increase in tax revenues over designated base year revenues is diverted to a special fund; diversion of regular tax revenues rather than additional fees to generate revenue for district investments; can be used in conjunction with municipal bond issues whereby increment is pledged to repayment of the bond issue, or actual increase allocated to an administering agency directly to finance redevelopment activities.

**380 Loans:** Chapter 380 is a reference to chapter 380 of the Texas Local Government Code. This chapter of the Texas Local Government Code authorizes Texas municipalities, both home-rule and general law municipalities to provide assistance for economic development. Texas cities may provide monies, loans, city personnel, and city services for promotion and encouragement of economic development.

**Transfer of Development Rights (TDR):** Ability to transfer property entitlements from one property to another when one of the parcels is located in a designated development area.

**Transit-Supportive Land Use:** (Also referred to as Transit-Oriented Development or TOD) Land uses and land use forms supportive of alternative forms of transportation; typical elements include: high-density residential, employment uses, commercial developments and public spaces.

**Turnkey Facilities:** Buildings, frequently institutional, developed (and sometimes managed) by a private entity for another entity; benefits to developer include a developer fee, management fee, position in the project, etc.

**Urban Renewal:** Tool used for purpose of eliminating slum or blighted areas within municipality, and positioning areas for development or redevelopment; actions under urban renewal include demolition of structures, construction of infrastructure and public spaces, sale of property, and relocation of businesses and residents.

**Underground Utilities:** City works with local utility and cable companies to place all utility lines underground; maintenance, weather-related repairs, and service disruption costs are reduced; City also encourages low-rate programs to assist developers with burying utility infrastructure.

Source: Ricker | Cunningham.