

## **Economy Recap**

### **Plano Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan**

On April 7, 2014, the Planning & Zoning Commission completed a work session for the economy component of the Plano Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. The Commission was provided a summary document that contained descriptions of each topic of the economy along with three policy recommendations to consider. The policy options included the city's current policy, as well as alternative options to discuss and potential outcomes of each option were included for the Commission's consideration. The Commission recommended the following six policy statements on the economy.

#### **Economic Development**

Plano will diversify its economic base by seeking a variety of companies, both large and small, as well as from different business sectors with a sharpened focus to attract unique firms with knowledge workers.

#### **Jobs and Workforce Development**

Plano will serve as a liaison between the business community and education service providers. The city will facilitate discussions and assist with the development of solutions to ensure residents have the job skills necessary to compete in the market place.

#### **Diversifying Economic Base through Targeted Industries**

Plano will seek to diversify its economic base through targeting companies on the edge of emerging business trends which would attract knowledge workers associated with these industries. The city will enhance its current business sector strengths through recruiting companies similar to those found in the community which could also utilize the talents and experience of current residents.

#### **Business Retention and Development**

Plano will cultivate close relationships with business leaders of larger companies to stay in the city and consider expansion of operations. The city will work with local entrepreneurs to get new businesses established and assume responsibilities for small business development activities in the community.

#### **Solutions to Underperforming Retail Centers**

Plano will target specific retail sites around the city to serve as a catalyst in the redevelopment process. The city will create incentives to encourage developers and property owners to work together and make change happen at these locations. Plano will develop new criteria and standards for redevelopment of existing retail sites.

#### **Major Employment Areas**

Plano will evaluate commercial development along all of the expressway corridors. The city will reassess land reserved for corporate campuses, consider utilizing different models for the redevelopment of established areas and review new concepts for the development of vacant land found within the expressway corridors.

## **Exhibit**

### **Economy Summary Document**

#### **ECONOMY**

Plano has long served as an economic center for Collin County. The city is situated on the blackland prairies, perfect for agriculture, and at the crossroads of two railroad lines, the Cotton Belt and the Missouri, Kansas, Texas (KATY) railroad. These lines transported people and goods from Plano to the state and nation. In 1960, the agricultural emphasis of the economy began to fade away as Plano transitioned into a suburban city. By the mid-1980s, the city's economic interests were focused on service needs of the residents as many of the major employers were located in nearby cities such as Richardson and Dallas.

Plano's quality of life and city services became well known to the business community by 1985. By 2000, Plano had transitioned to an employment center in the North Dallas region through the relocation of corporate headquarters of several Fortune 500 companies to the Legacy area and Research Technology Crossroads. Today, the Dallas-Fort Worth region and Texas have a strong pro-business approach and attract many companies to the area from all over the world. Plano is a leader in the state and region as a major employment center with over 147,000 jobs in the city along with a host of corporate headquarter facilities.

In addition to the positive economic energy of the city and the Dallas-Fort Worth region, Plano has several topics to address within the economy section of the Plano Tomorrow plan:

- Economic Development
- Jobs and Workforce Development
- Diversifying economic base through targeted industries
- Business retention and development
- Solutions to underperforming retail centers
- Major employment areas

The Economy section of Plano Tomorrow will provide a brief description of each issue along with three policy options ranging from current activities to a more or less intensive approach towards economic development. Pros and cons for each policy statement will be presented to assist the Commission in the recommendation of which option to pursue in the revised Comprehensive Plan.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### **Current Comprehensive Plan Strategies:**

- Stay informed on the latest business practices and development trends, compare them to current conditions in Plano, and adjust marketing approaches and applicable ordinances as needed.
- Continue to explore additional funding sources for economic development including changes to state laws related to sales taxes.

Economic development is a very important activity for local governments. The purpose of this activity is to bring businesses to the community with employment opportunities and strengthen the tax base to provide services for the residents. In Plano, economic development focuses on the following activities:

- Attraction of corporations
- Creation of new businesses
- Retention and expansion of existing companies.

The present strategy of economic development is to “create new primary jobs that pay more than the prevailing wage, increase the amount of income coming onto the community from outside its market area, and create greater capital investment in the community.” The action taken to achieving this goal is to attract a variety of businesses to mitigate the negative impacts of economic downturns.

### ***Options for Consideration***

1. Plano will provide incentives to attract corporate businesses which match the skill set of city residents and encourage retention as well as expansion of existing businesses.

**Pro** – Plano is attractive to corporations and has succeeded in bringing major companies to the city.

**Con** – Many large corporations today seem to be trimming employees and hiring younger workers to reduce compensation and increase profits. More proactive efforts are required to help retain businesses and expand operations.

2. Plano will change its focus from large corporations to new companies and small businesses. The city will work with entrepreneurs on the creation of new companies and provide assistance to help small business have success.

**Pro** – Most of the job growth in the United States is taking place in new companies and small businesses and it would be good for the city to focus economic development efforts in this direction.

**Con** – Too narrow of a focus for the city's economic development efforts. Attention must also be given to encourage existing companies to stay in the city and grow.

3. **Recommended Policy** – **Plano will diversify its economic base by seeking a variety of companies, both large and small, as well as from different business sectors with a sharpened focus to attract unique firms with knowledge workers.**

**Pro** – Plano should build on its past successes and be open for new opportunities. Seeking unique companies on the edge of new emerging business trends will help ensure long term success of Plano's economic base.

**Con** – It is difficult with the current size of the Economic Development Department to try to pursue multiple targets. Recruiting new companies, encouraging redevelopment, and retaining companies to stay in place will require more money from the city's budget for additional staff and economic incentives in face of limited opportunities for additional revenue sources.

## JOBS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### **Current Comprehensive Plan Strategies:**

- Meet regularly with colleges, universities, and the public school districts to discuss employment trends and the development of programs to improve and enhance job skills of local residents.
- Work with local businesses to determine their employment needs and when appropriate develop initiatives to address shortages.
- Regularly compare the capabilities of the local workforce with the changing requirements of local businesses; identify gaps; and work with local education agencies to provide training as needed.

Cities that attract attention from businesses usually have several factors in common; the community is located near transportation infrastructure, already has a presence of national and international businesses, and a highly skilled and educated work force. Plano is a major employment center in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. A large number of national and internationally known companies and major medical facilities have a presence in the city, offering a wide variety of job opportunities ranging from business executives, engineers, medical professionals, office workers, teachers to business owners, realtors, retail sales, and service workers. In general, Plano's workforce is highly skilled and well educated. Almost 53% of the adults in the city have a bachelor's degree and 54% are employed in managerial, professional, and technical occupations. The wide variety of jobs skills and high educational attainment of Plano residents is attractive to prospective companies considering the city as a place to locate.

There are many opportunities within and near Plano to train workers for new jobs, enhance skills, increase knowledge and sharpen expertise. Collin College offers continuing education courses for adults to develop new jobs skills for a changing economy. Southern Methodist University in Legacy offers graduate level business courses while the University of Texas at Dallas provides training in business, public administration, engineering, and computer science.

In order for Plano to continue to enjoy its current success, several issues should be examined. The city and local education service providers will need to be proactive in terms of seeking companies that match the skill sets of Plano residents and providing training for jobs, which do not exist in the current market. Plano is quickly becoming an international city with one in four residents born in another country. They come to Plano for the educational and employment opportunities found in the city and can be categorized into two groups: the first is highly educated with professional job

experience while the second group is lacking in educational attainment and the skills to seek high wage employment opportunities. The number of people age 25 years and older that do not have a high school diploma in Plano has almost doubled from over 5,000 in 1990 to 13,000 in 2012 and many are employed in service occupations. Another factor for both higher and lower skilled immigrants in Plano is lack of English proficiency. The number of Plano residents who cannot speak English very well has increased six times over the last 20 years from 5,300 people (4.2%) in 1990 to almost 31,000 (12.4%) in 2012. Attaining more education, job training, and gaining English proficiency would enhance the opportunities for these people to obtain better employment opportunities.

### ***Options for Consideration***

1. Plano will meet with education service providers to discuss general needs of all employers. Education service providers will present information on how they are meeting these needs as well as identifying trends, possible future careers, and marketable skills sought after in the market place.

**Pro** – This is a positive way the city can build a relationship with education service providers and learn the latest trends in terms of employment needs of the market place.

**Con** – This option does not actively address jobs and workforce development with the business community.

2. **Recommended Policy** – Plano will serve as a liaison between the business community and education service providers. The city will facilitate discussions and assist with the development of solutions to ensure residents have the job skills necessary to compete in the market place.

**Pro** – The policy creates a format for discussion and an opportunity for the business community and education service providers to interact with each other. This is a more proactive step for the city to ensure highly skilled labor force has access to training to remain relevant and economically viable.

**Con** – This action would require city staff to take on additional responsibilities. The city may have to create a new position to serve in the liaison capacity thus stretching an already limited budget. The business and education community may perceive the city as being intrusive by getting involved with private business issues and education provision.

3. The City of Plano will trust the market place to provide opportunities for higher skilled/wage workers and will proactively work with local schools to develop a job training program to enable lower income residents to develop skills to improve their economic situation.

**Pro** – This action would focus resources and attention on a segment of Plano’s population needing the most help with building economic security.

**Con** – The city would need to use money from the budget to share resources with local schools to develop a job skills training program, hire staff, secure equipment, and facilities.

## DIVERSIFYING ECONOMIC BASE THROUGH TARGETED INDUSTRIES

### **Current Comprehensive Plan Strategies:**

- Identify growing and emerging industries and compare their needs to Plano's attributes and focus on recruitment accordingly.
- Actively recruit new businesses to Plano that could provide services to existing companies and utilize talents of present workforce.
- Conduct a study of the local economy to measure its diversity, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and develop approaches to enhance Plano's business composition.

Many cities and regions around the United States specialize in a particular industry. Dallas is known as the financial center for Texas and the Southwest while Austin and San Jose, California are places for technology innovation. Houston is the energy capitol of the nation and Boston serves as a biomedical research hub. These cities target and attract businesses involved with the industries clustered in their region and have a labor force with the skills required to staff these companies. However, such focused efforts may cause problems when a city becomes too dependent on one or two major industries for employment and tax revenues.

A diverse economy helps cities and regions to be resilient in terms of unemployment and loss of revenues due to a decreased tax base brought on by an economic downturn. Different industrial sectors have cyclical waves of success. This can be devastating to cities which rely on one or two companies that provide jobs for local residents and generate tax revenue for municipal services. Good examples include Ponca City, Oklahoma and Conoco/Phillips (an example from the reading materials) along with Detroit and the auto manufacturing industry. In addition, many businesses do not have loyalty to the communities in which they are situated. Companies are constantly thinking of ways to improve economic success, and if this can be found in another location, the business will relocate.

The City of Plano's Economic Development Department seeks to attain economic diversity through fulfillment of its three initiatives: business attraction, retention and expansion, along with redevelopment. The department's goal for economic diversity is to "cushion against economic shock."

This goal is achieved through targeting new companies that match the skill set of existing businesses and residents already in place. The city seeks businesses that can provide high wage jobs and enhance Plano's tax revenues that fund municipal services.

Corporate headquarters and technology companies presently serve as the primary targets for the city.

However, it may be time for Plano to revisit this strategy as less than 7% of the city's land is available to support the suburban corporate campus of past years and this concept is not as desirable to companies today. The technology industry is still very attractive; however, the challenge is keeping up with the latest innovations in terms of facility needs and skilled labor. Another issue is that technology businesses can be located anywhere and recent industry trends have focused on locating talented employees who do not require the high wages demanded by American workers; however, this practice is beginning to change. Another challenge for the technology industry is developing facilities in locations that younger knowledge workers would like to live. Many of these workers desire an interesting place with many options for entertainment and activities situated close to where they live and work.

There are several new business trends occurring in Plano along with emerging opportunities which could further diversify the business composition in the city. The medical service industry has grown over the last decade. There are four major hospitals located in the city; Medical Center of Plano, Texas Health Resources (Presbyterian Plano), Baylor Hospital and Children's Medical Center. In addition, many medical and dental offices have been opening in Plano as the city becomes a center for medical care in the North Dallas region.

Businesses that specialize in services to improve the environment as well as help existing companies to adopt greener operations is one of the fastest growing industry segments in the United States. Many homeowners and businesses are looking for ways to reduce energy and waste disposal costs as fuel prices continue to increase and landfills are becoming full. There is tremendous economic growth potential in companies providing alternative energy resources such as solar, wind, natural gas, alternative fuel stations, as well as composting and recycling waste materials. The City of Plano is ready for these companies to provide services to existing businesses through the Green Business Certification (GBC) program. This voluntary program helps businesses to find ways to reduce trash and harmful waste by providing guidelines for certification and tools to make operations greener through delivery of recycling bins and converting organic waste into composting materials.

Another emerging trend for Plano is the location of artisan restaurants. Several establishments, such as Katy Trail Ice House Outpost and Lockhart Smokehouse have opened business in Plano and the City Council recently voted to allow food trucks. People in the restaurant business in the Dallas-Fort Worth region are beginning to consider the city as a good place to open artisan restaurants, as there is a growing demand for establishments specializing in upscale and unusual food concepts. Much of

this is driven by the fact Plano ranks third in the United States behind Dallas and New York City with the number of people who eat their meals at restaurants.

More work is needed to diversify the economic base of Plano. This is a challenge as Plano is one of many cities in the Dallas-Fort Worth region and each area within the region is known for a specific business service niche.

### ***Options for Consideration***

1. Plano will attain economic diversity through targeting businesses that match residents' skill sets and are similar to industry sectors currently found in the city.

**Pro** – Plano has done well with this strategy as corporate businesses and technology companies have opened new facilities in recent years. This activity has created a variety of businesses and the mix of corporate, technology, and medical services has been successful for the city.

**Con** – Though Plano has had success seeking companies similar to what is in place, it is necessary to expand the target further to include different business sectors not in the city to increase the diversity of the economic base.

2. Plano will work towards creating an environment within the city that will attract new companies and knowledge based workers by targeting businesses that make the community unique and interesting. For example, Plano should capitalize on the perception of the community as a desired place for upscale dining and will recruit and work with artisan restaurants to open establishments within the city.

**Pro** – Plano could become a city known as a destination for unusual and unique entertainment opportunities not found in other suburban cities in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. This would be a way to set the city apart from neighboring communities.

**Con** – Unique and interesting entertainment businesses are dependent on the latest trends people desire at the moment and could leave the city as quickly as they came. The city should expand its target to consider other unique businesses with longer term concepts which could further diversify the city's economy.

3. **Recommended Policy** – Plano will seek to diversify its economic base through targeting companies on the edge of emerging business trends which would attract knowledge workers associated with these industries. Plano will enhance its current business sector strengths through recruiting

**companies similar to those found in the city which could also utilize the talents and experience of current residents.**

**Pro** – The policy would help Plano to be resilient in times of economic downturns by diversifying its economic base with new industries and fortifying present strengths by attracting companies similar to what is currently found in the community.

**Con** – This option may require the collaboration of multiple departments along with additional city staff and resources to implement and seeks additional funds from a budget with limited revenues. It is difficult in the current business environment and times of economic uncertainty to know which new ideas will succeed and be considered the “next big thing” and could be a futile effort if the company or industry segment fails.

## BUSINESS RETENTION AND DEVELOPMENT

### **Current Comprehensive Plan Strategies:**

- Maintain a close relationship with Plano's businesses. Identify challenges and opportunities that they are facing and explore options that will accommodate expansion and retention.
- Work with local businesses to determine their employment needs and when appropriate develop initiatives to address shortages.
- Develop a clearinghouse for information on local organizations that provide support of small businesses in Plano.
- Identify and evaluate local approaches to support the formation and development of new businesses that could become major contributors to the local economy. Determine what gaps exist in the current system of resources designed to help small businesses capitalize on innovation and market potential and consider ways to address those gaps at the local level.

Another way for local jurisdictions to keep the economic base intact and retain employment opportunities for local residents is to manage the existing business community and encourage the growth of new companies. Cities should work with current businesses to ensure they are receiving the services and support necessary to continue and possibly expand operations. Local governments may provide programs to encourage the development of new companies and small businesses as this is where most of the future job growth will occur in the United States.

Business retention and expansion is one of three initiatives of the City of Plano's Economic Development Department. Staff builds relationships with existing business leaders in Plano to determine companies interested in expansion or considering relocation of operations. Staff facilitates interaction between these companies and city leaders to find ways to help the businesses grow and stay in the city. The Plano Chamber of Commerce also serves a liaison between the business community and city leaders to encourage the promotion and creation of business friendly policies within Plano.

New companies and small businesses in the city are supported with consultation, training and resources in the Collin Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Plano's Courtyard Campus of Collin College. The Collin SBDC is funded by grants from the U.S. Small Business Administration, State of Texas, and Collin College. The Plano Chamber of Commerce provides training programs and services for small businesses as well. This is not a current initiative of the city.

## ***Options for Consideration***

1. Plano will develop close relationships with business leaders of larger companies to stay in Plano and consider expansion of operations.

**Pro** – This action creates a bridge of communication between the city and the business community as well as sends a message to existing companies their success is important to the well-being of the community.

**Con** – Additional strategies are necessary to encourage existing companies to expand operation and stay in place.

2. Plano will work with local entrepreneurs to get new businesses established and assume responsibilities for small business development activities in the city.

**Pro** – It is important the city to focus economic development efforts on the segment of the nation's economy generating new job growth. This will provide additional employment opportunities for Plano residents and show the city is open to new ideas and business concepts.

**Con** – This service is already provided by Collin College and there is no need to duplicate efforts.

3. Plano will expand its economic development operations to include staff dedicated full time to actively work with existing businesses to overcome obstacles and address issues to keep the companies in the city and expand operations. Plano will serve as a resource center for new companies and small businesses to get started and experience success.

**Pro** – This option addresses business development and retention by serving current companies and actively helping new businesses get started.

**Con** – This would be a new initiative for economic development in Plano and may require more staff for this operation and additional funding from the city's budget in face of leveling revenues in future years.

4. **Recommended Option** – (Hybrid of Options 1, 2, and 3) Plano will cultivate close relationships with business leaders of larger companies to stay in the city and consider expansion of operations. The city will work with local entrepreneurs to get new businesses established and assume

**responsibilities for small business development activities in the community.**

## SOLUTIONS TO UNDERPERFORMING RETAIL CENTERS

### **Current Comprehensive Plan Strategies:**

- None

In order to gain a better understanding of different types of retail found in Plano, it is best to define the three classifications of retail business activities and site locations. Class A retail is defined as having high visibility among desirable retail brands, located in a high traffic area, larger floor areas, and businesses in this category are usually found in affluent communities. Class B and Class C retail may include well known or local brands situated in a less desirable location with a smaller floor area, or in a shopping center with a vacant anchor, and is more commonly found in lower income areas.

All classifications of retail activities and sales are very important to the Texas economy and for the funding of state and local government services. However, retail can be a difficult and ever changing business, particularly to neighborhoods found in central cities and inner ring suburbs that are not considered as desirable by developers and real estate investors.

There are many retail centers in the Dallas-Fort Worth region that have closed or substantially reduced operations and changed categories of desirability from Class A to Class C properties. A few examples include the Big Town Mall in Mesquite, the Valley View and Prestonwood Malls in Dallas, Richardson Square Mall in Richardson and the Six Flags Mall in Arlington. Major anchors and desirable tenants leave and are sometimes replaced with Class B or C retail businesses. A big box store in a suburban shopping center vacates a site and the surrounding retail may suffer if no major anchor use is found.

There are two other big issues for retail in the nation today. The first is that many people shop online vendors to purchase the goods they need and desire. This behavior reduces the need for brick and mortar retail buildings. The second issue is the sheer volume of retail businesses in the United States. This is a problem for Plano as well.

The City of Plano Shopping Center Review prepared by the Gibbs Planning Group states the city has over 16 million square feet of retail space resulting in 65 square feet per capita, three times the national average. Past policies encouraged the development of retail centers at the four corners of intersections with major thoroughfares. The concept was successful at first as neighboring cities were small and had very few retail

businesses. However, as these cities developed, retail businesses followed and customers in surrounding cities no longer needed to come to Plano to shop. Another issue for Plano is that major retailers want high visibility and prefer locations along expressways instead of thoroughfare intersections. The result has been many retail centers around the city with empty store fronts and/or vacant anchor sites. These underperforming centers give visitors a perception that Plano is no longer a desirable city and can be a deterrence to existing homes sales.

An even bigger retail issue for Plano is aging shopping malls. Collin Creek opened in 1981 and was quite successful for the first 20 years of its existence. From 2000 through 2010, five regional shopping centers in close proximity to the mall opened, thus drawing customers away from the Plano area to experience new retail development concepts in neighboring cities. The Shops at Willow Bend opened as a Class A retail center at Park Boulevard and the Dallas North Tollway in West Plano in 2001 before the technology sector downturn. After the downturn, many people visited other retail centers with more affordable merchandise. The Shops at Willow Bend has changed the retail mix to include more affordable stores and has seen an increase in visitors.

The City of Plano has tried to address the issue of struggling retail in recent years. Plano residents approved a proposition in the 2013 bond election that provides \$15 million to be used towards infrastructure improvements for commercial redevelopment. The city is in the process of developing a program to encourage land owners to reinvest into their properties, and develop a policy to direct the use of the bond funds. Another program completed several years ago was the Tri-City Retail study with the cities of Carrollton, Plano, and Richardson. One of the suggestions for Plano was to allow for residential development within existing retail areas. As a result, the City Council approved the inclusion of single-family residential development with Retail zoning districts by specific use permit. This strategy has seen some success by reducing undeveloped land zoned for retail uses and providing opportunities for additional residential development in the city.

The City of Chandler, Arizona, similar to Plano in population and age of development, recently adopted an Infill Incentive Plan. The plan covers an older area of Chandler targeted for redevelopment efforts (both residential and commercial) and offers incentives for property owners to sell or redevelop the land with other uses more in demand in the current market place. So far, one shopping center with exterior pad sites was replaced by a charter school which accommodates 1,100 students, once again bringing people to the area. Another site is under consideration to redevelop as an apartment complex. This could be a concept for Plano to consider in addressing the issue of underperforming retail centers in the city.

**Options for Consideration**

- 1. Plano will allow the market place to address the vacancy issues of underperforming retail centers and pursue residential development as an alternative to new retail construction on undeveloped land adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods.

**Pro** – This strategy has been somewhat successful in Plano. New businesses serving changing demographic niches in the city have occupied abandoned anchor sites and empty storefronts. Residential development on undeveloped land originally zoned for retail uses is still occurring in the city, helping to reduce retail floor area and providing new housing opportunities.

**Con** – Other cities are offering financial incentives for new development, which puts Plano at a disadvantage.

- 2. Plano will explore different options and devise strategies to engage retail center property owners and developers to consider alternative design concepts for underperforming retail centers.

**Pro** – The policy option directs the city to begin dialogue with the owners of underperforming centers and developers, which could lead to possible solutions to address the issue.

**Con** – It may be ineffective for the city to only discuss the issue with property owners and developers. More aggressive action may be necessary to make change happen.

- 3. **Recommended Policy** – Plano will target specific retail sites around Plano to serve as a catalyst in the redevelopment process. The city will create incentives to encourage developers and property owners to work together and make change happen at these locations. Plano will develop new criteria and standards for redevelopment of existing retail sites.

**Pro** – The city takes action by working with property owners and the development community to create positive changes at underperforming retail centers.

**Con** – These actions may be interpreted by the property owners as government interference with private enterprise.

## MAJOR EMPLOYMENT AREAS

### **Current Comprehensive Plan Strategies:**

- Identify and market undeveloped land along major transportation corridors and within major business parks for nonresidential development.

One of Plano's many strengths is serving as an employment center for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region. As mentioned before, there are over 147,000 jobs in the city today. A good number of those jobs are concentrated in major employment areas of the city – Legacy Business Park (Legacy), Research Technology Crossroads (RT) and along the city's expressway corridors. The location of businesses within the Legacy and RT areas is more concentrated than along the expressway corridors and has been promoted for many years as the desirable locations for new business development in Plano. Both areas have experienced success with almost 70,000 workers between them. However, both areas have experienced challenges and are subject to the ever changing dynamics of business needs and desires.

Legacy was developed in the mid-1980s in a suburban corporate campus environment and has close to 54,000 workers today. The buildings are large, sprawling horizontal structures surrounded by acres of landscaping and large parking areas. The large amount of open space surrounding the corporate campuses combined with undeveloped land provides opportunities for future development.

A challenge for Legacy is that corporations are moving away from the suburban corporate campus format and desire a more urban setting where development is dense and vertical with very little open space. Offices situated within a live/work/entertainment environment are designed to attract a younger, educated population and older professionals who desire an urban lifestyle. The Legacy area has responded to this change with the development the mixed-use Legacy Town Center in the early 2000s.

The Research Technology Crossroads (RT) has struggled to develop as planned. This area was created in the late 1990s at the height of the technology sector boom. Within four years of development, the area remained mostly vacant as technology businesses were no longer investing in new building construction in the United States due to outsourcing inexpensive labor to developing nations. The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States was a turning point for the RT area as the technology focus in Plano shifted from business services to defense. As a result, new building investment returned to the area and created an employment center in southeast Plano with over 13,000 jobs. The current challenge for RT today is demand for rezoning of land to allow residential development east of Los Rios Boulevard and North Star Road.

The balance of Plano's employment can be found along the U.S. Highway 75 (75 corridor), President George Bush Turnpike, and Dallas North Tollway corridors. The 75 corridor has a few high rise office buildings and much retail. There is potential for redevelopment of this corridor due to convenient access for adjacent properties. Undeveloped land remains along the President George Bush Turnpike corridor at Coit Road and within the Sam Rayburn Tollway corridor. The Undeveloped Land Policies adopted by Council in 2012 recommend these areas should be reserved for future employment and economic development opportunities with consideration for mixed-use urban centers. There is enough land in these corridors to accommodate nonresidential development that could increase the number of workers in Plano to 200,000 in future years.

### ***Options for consideration***

1. Plano will reserve undeveloped land in the Legacy and Research Technology Crossroads areas for future economic development and employment opportunities only and promote the amenities of both locations to encourage establishment of new companies in the city.

**Pro** – This policy would save land for future commercial development in Plano, lead to more employment opportunities, strengthen the city's tax base and is consistent with the undeveloped land polices.

**Con** – The undeveloped land polices also allow for the consideration of residential development within an urban center format in major employment areas and expressway corridors. This option would discourage the potential opportunity to bring more varieties of residential development and additional people to Plano.

2. Plano will evaluate commercial development along the expressway corridors. The city will reassess land reserved for corporate campuses, consider utilizing different models to for the redevelopment of the U.S. Highway 75 corridor, and review new concepts for the development of the Sam Rayburn Tollway corridor.

**Recommended Policy** – (revised wording to apply to all areas of the city) **Plano will evaluate commercial development along all of the expressway corridors. The city will reassess land reserved for corporate campuses, consider utilizing different models for the redevelopment of established areas and review new concepts for the development of vacant land found within the expressway corridors.**

**Pro** – This is a new focus for economic development efforts in Plano and could lead to consideration of much needed redevelopment of the U.S. Highway 75 corridor and emerging trends for new commercial development along the Sam Rayburn Tollway corridor.

**Con** – The option could rival or detract from the efforts to promote Legacy and the Research Technology Crossroads as major employment centers in the city.

3. Plano will reexamine the role and viability of Legacy and the Research Technology Crossroads (RT) and change zoning regulations to accommodate future development needs demanded by the market at both locations.

**Pro** – These actions could improve the long term viability of both areas and ensure the long term future prosperity for Plano.

**Con** – Legacy works well and changing the overall design concept and purpose to meet the needs of an uncertain economic future could jeopardize economic viability of the area and the city. Undeveloped land may not be available for large campuses, if desired.