

Southeast Denton Area Plan

FINAL REPORT

JULY 23, 2024





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The honest, heartfelt, and constant input and participation of the residents and stakeholders of Southeast Denton have made this plan a reality.

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"Southeast Denton shows the world what unity looks like!"

SOUTHEAST DENTON AREA PLAN

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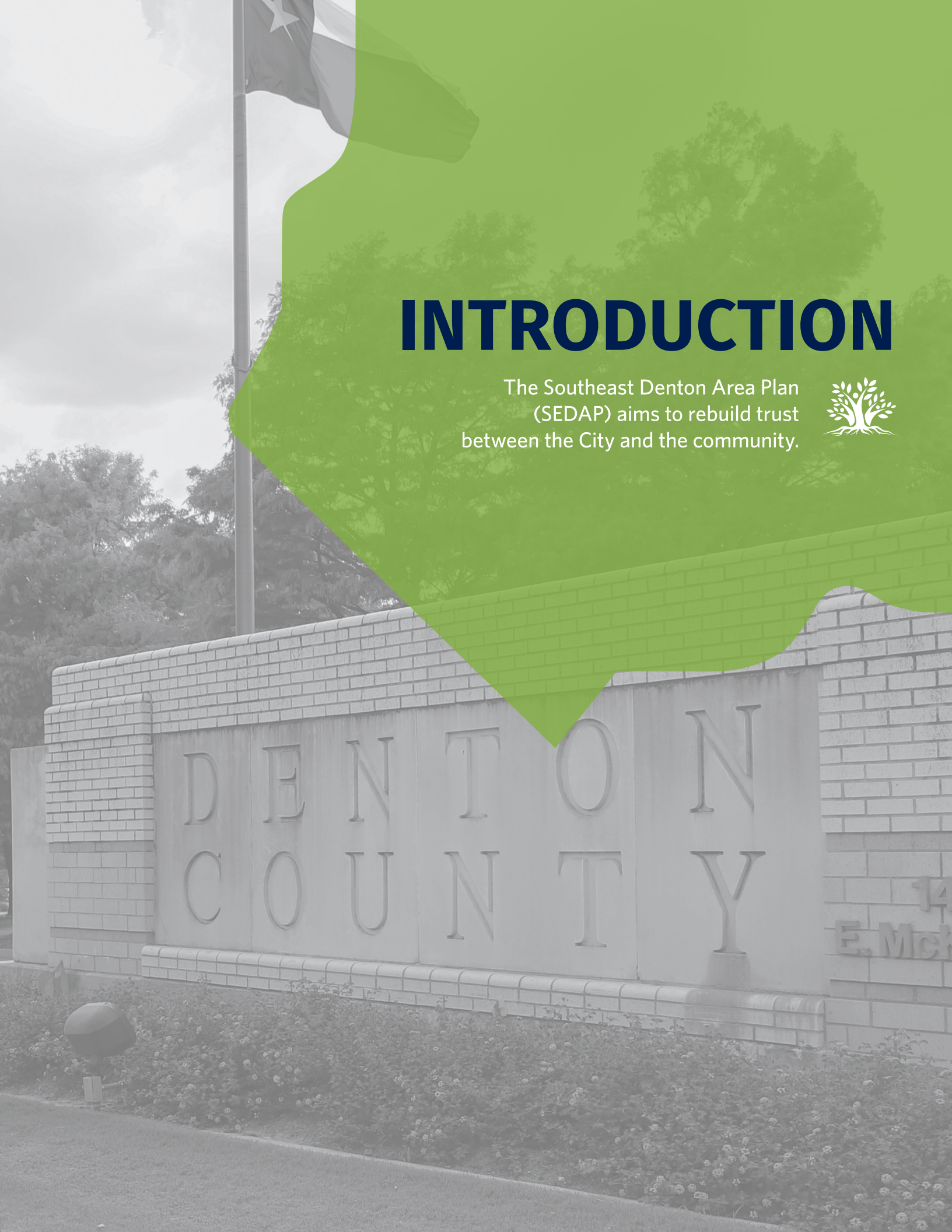
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INTRODUCTION

The Southeast Denton Area Plan (SEDAP) aims to rebuild trust between the City and the community.



PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Southeast Denton Area Plan (SEDAP) aims to rebuild trust between the City and the community, incorporate resident and stakeholder ideas and aspirations, and provide recommendations for strategies and implementable action steps to address resident concerns, encourage investment in the community while minimizing displacement, and provide guidance for future land use decisions.

THE STUDY AREA

The community worked together to establish the SEDAP study area boundary.

The area includes an approximately 600-acre core, generally bounded by McKinney Street to the north, Bell Avenue and Dallas Drive to the west, Teasley Lane and Shady Oaks Drive to the south, and Woodrow Lane to the east (Figure 1). Because the community expressed concerns about the potential impacts of redevelopment beyond the core boundaries, planning for this area also includes a transition area north of McKinney Street, east of Woodrow Lane, and south of Shady Oaks Drive/Teasley Lane to provide land use guidance between SEDAP and the adjoining neighborhoods.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process began by listening.

By listening to the Southeast Denton community to incorporate their solutions, dreams, and ideas, this plan attempts to strengthen the Southeast Denton area for existing and future residents and stakeholders as well as those interested in joining this cohesive, connected community in the future.

Through the planning process, this plan:

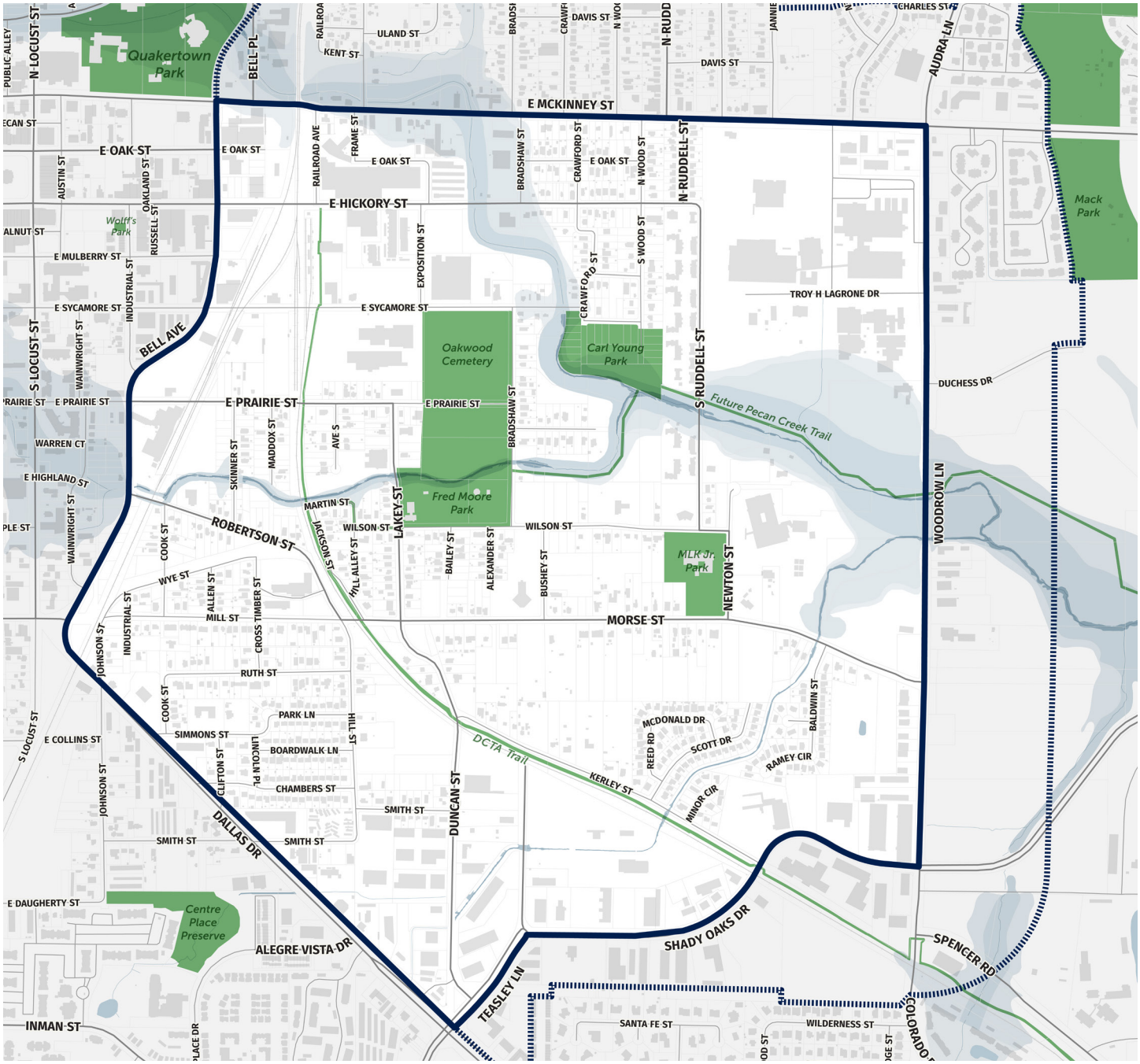
- Identified those areas that are important to residents and stakeholders for preserving the cultural character of the Southeast Denton neighborhoods.
- Addressed the development pressures being felt within and adjacent to the study area.
- Identified areas where change can occur for the advancement of the neighborhood and overall community.
- Suggested ideas for future improvements – transportation, housing, connectivity, parks & open space, and overall quality of life in the community.
- Recommended capital improvement projects and policy changes for future improvements.



Denton Main Street Association

FIGURE 1. PROPOSED STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

Source: HDR



The story of Southeast Denton

In the late 1800s, Black families and freed slaves moved to the Denton area and established several flourishing Black communities, including a neighborhood called Quakertown, which was bounded by Oakland Avenue, Withers Street, Bell Avenue, and McKinney Street, northeast of the Denton County Courthouse and just south of the then-segregated College of Industrial Arts (now Texas Woman's University). Quakertown thrived as a prosperous, middle class Black neighborhood into the early 1900s. However, in the first decades of the twentieth century, College and City leaders decided Quakertown's proximity to the College was concerning and hampered the future success of the College. In the early 1920s, under the pretense that the town desperately needed a civic center park and the misconception that a thriving Black community constituted "blight," the City used federal funds to force the community's displacement. By 1923, nearly seventy homes, dozens of businesses, and a community center had either been torn down or forcibly relocated to the southeastern part of the city now known as Southeast Denton.

The neighborhood once known as Quakertown became Civic Park, eventually renamed to Quakertown Park, and today hosts City Hall and other City facilities.

Although it has been almost a century, the trauma of the forced relocation has remained. Many of the long-term residents and their families have not forgotten what happened, and the destruction of their homes and property caused huge financial setbacks. Forty years after Quakertown, in 1966, displacement was threatened once again. The City proposed an urban renewal bond that, if approved, would have demolished 185 acres of homes,clearing the way to sell the property to a private developer. The bond was defeated by community members who organized opposition, but the long-term impacts of the City's actions formed a multi-generational distrust of local government that continues today.

While the City has made efforts to lessen the distrust by investing in park and street improvements in the Southeast area, a concerted and cohesive acknowledgment of the harm caused by the forced relocation of Quakertown families is long overdue. Furthermore, recent development proposals adjacent to and within Southeast Denton have raised concerns from the community about the past repeating itself. The residents of Southeast Denton are concerned about being forced out of their homes again, this time due to the development interests leading to gentrification and displacement. The mounting development interest is driven partially by growth in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and partially by Southeast Denton's proximity to downtown Denton, the University of North Texas, and Texas Woman's University.

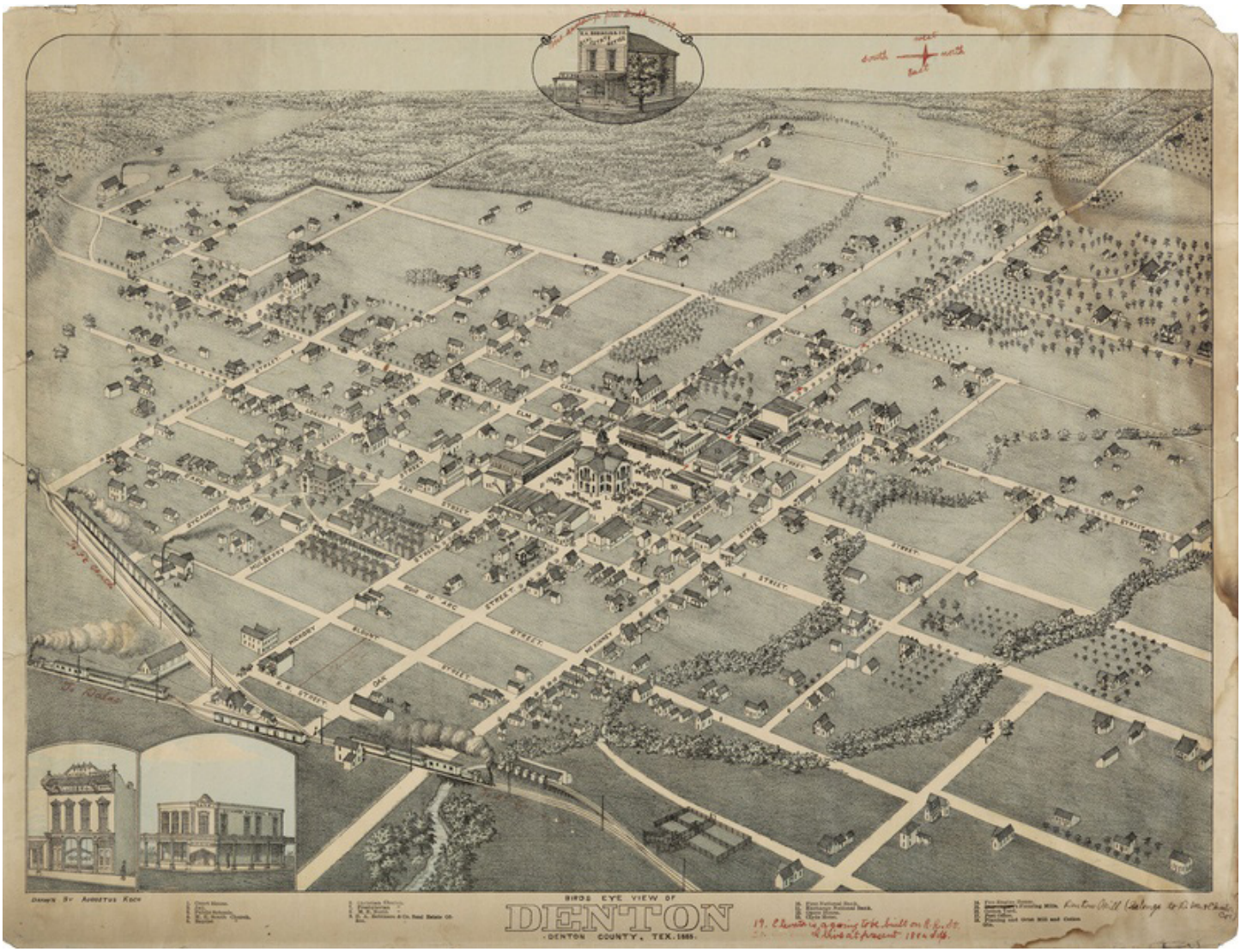
The Southeast Denton Area Plan is the first step in the effort to heal the past harm and to ensure a bright future supported by the residents.

This history sets the framework for analysis of the community and its built environment. The lived experience of the area's residents and their deep desire for revitalization without displacement permeates the plan's recommendations and implementation strategies.





Dallas Morning News



Orginal Hand Drawn Denton TX Aerial View Map. (1883)Source: TexasHistory.unt.edu

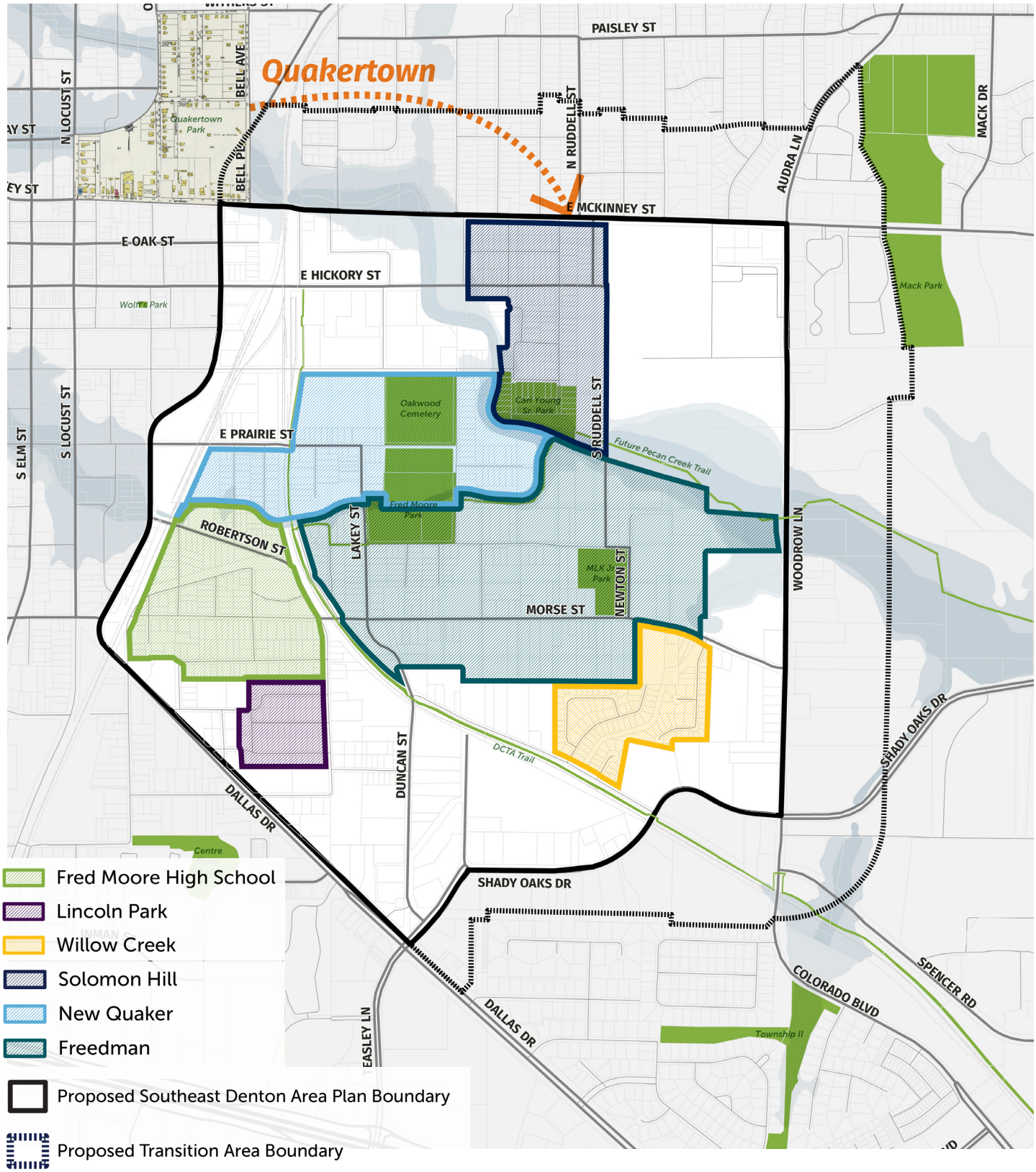
Previous Planning Efforts

Key relevant concepts and recommendations from past studies:

- **Accommodate all modes of travel** by improving bike paths, sidewalks, and crosswalks and by slowing vehicle speed.
- **Invest in and maintain cherished community assets** such as parks and recreation centers.
- **Empower neighborhoods** with funding for home repairs and assistance with creating community programs.
- **Support small, local businesses** with better access to capital and a business incubator space.
- **Create new and strengthen existing youth programs** to strengthen Denton's talent pipeline.
- **Establish a historic or conservation district** to preserve the character of an area.

FIGURE 2. ORIGINAL QUAKERTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD AND SOUTHEAST DENTON NEIGHBORHOOD MAP

Source: Historic Denton Inc



THIS PLAN BUILDS ON THESE PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS:

DENTON 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, ADOPTED MARCH 2022

2040 Comprehensive plan identifies several Focus Areas and calls for area plans for these Focus Areas. The 2040 Plan identifies the Southeast Denton area as a Center Focus Area and recommends several design principles, including: orient buildings along streets; accommodate all modes of travel; establish transitions between large-scale and small-scale development; complement the scale and architectural features of surrounding development; reduce parking standards.

CITY OF DENTON PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN, ADOPTED MARCH 2022

The study area is home to Fred Moore Park, Carl Young Sr. Park, Oakwood Cemetery, MLK Jr. Recreation Center, American Legion Senior Center, the DCTA Rail Trail, and the future Pecan Creek Trail. The Parks Plan identified several gaps and recommended improvements in the City's parks system, laying the foundation for meeting the residents' desires for equitable investment in public spaces and amenities, in line with quality seen in other areas of the city.

MOBILITY PLAN, ADOPTED 2022

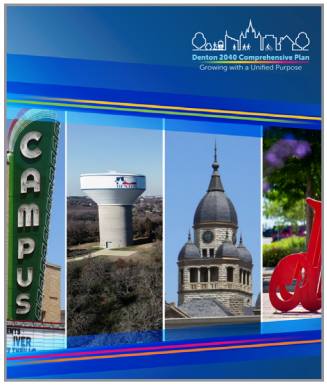
The Mobility Plan identifies roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. Plan goals include prioritizing safe multi-modal travel, creating an effective travel network that supports adjacent land use, facilitating active transportation, and leveraging innovation. The plan outlines multiple projects designed to improve connectivity in Southeast Denton.

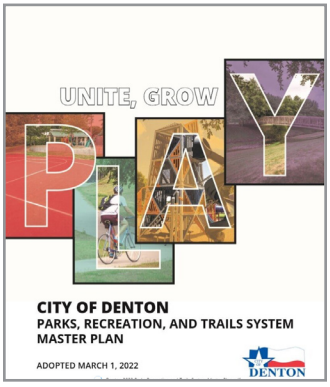
AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGIC TOOLKIT, PUBLISHED DECEMBER 2021

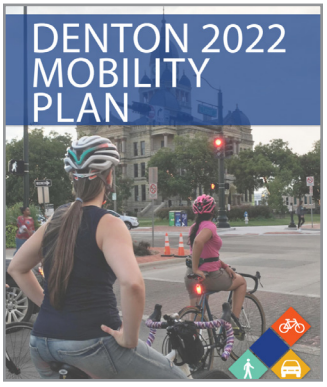
This toolkit and housing needs assessment identified several housing needs in the city, including rental and owner-occupied affordable housing for low income households, housing support for seniors, permanent supportive housing, and housing options for low income families in areas of opportunity.

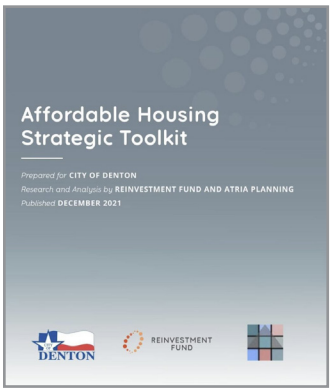
The toolkit recommends several strategies, including infill development, targeted zoning relief, an increase in construction-related workers, preservation of existing housing, and improved access to education.

These identified needs and tools parallel residents' desires for a wider variety of housing and support for maintaining their homes.



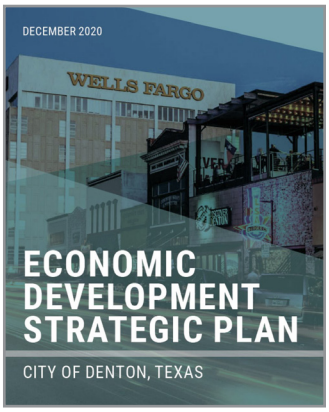


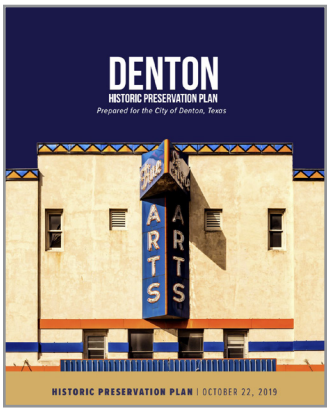


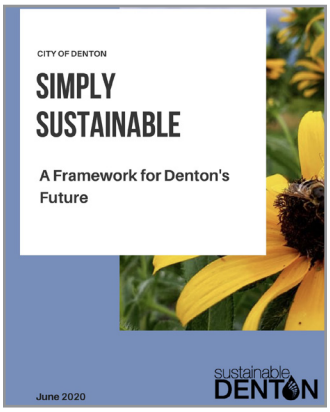


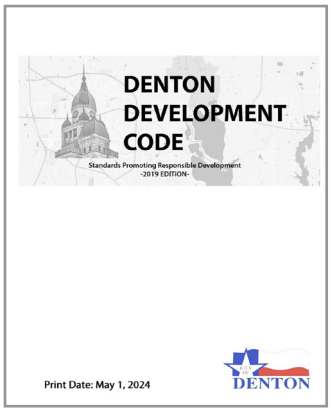
Together, these plans lay the foundation for the future of Southeast Denton. Results from the listening sessions and visioning workshop show a community that has long felt ignored and sidelined, but with careful, inclusive planning, current and future residents and stakeholders in Southeast Denton will benefit from City and private investment.

This plan seeks to acknowledge past harms, apologize for those harms, and atone through recommendations and implementation steps that meet the needs and desires of the current and future residents of Southeast Denton.









ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN, ADOPTED DECEMBER 2020

The Economic Development Strategic Plan focuses on goals and strategies to make the City's economic development efforts more intentional and effective. Several strategies from the Economic Development Strategic Plan apply in Southeast Denton, such as the Creative Denton strategies that call for strengthening entrepreneurship, increasing access to capital, and strengthening youth programs to strengthen the city's talent pipeline. The plan also calls for Denton to strengthen community inclusion by supporting affordable housing, broadening federal grant programs, and increasing multi-tenant housing.

CITY OF DENTON SIMPLY SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR DENTON'S FUTURE, ADOPTED JUNE 2020

Simply Sustainable establishes a framework for improving quality of life, protecting the environment, and creating economic opportunities. Sustainability initiatives of this plan and strategies such as constructing the Pecan Creek Trail system, improving active transportation options, improving the urban tree canopy, etc. will continue to improve the sustainability of the SEDAP study area.

DENTON HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN, ADOPTED 2019

The Historic Preservation Plan identifies and outlines the vision, goals, and strategies for enhancing and strengthening Denton's historic preservation program, recognizing that effective long-range planning can help identify, protect, and manage significant historic resources and key elements of a community's built environment. The plan's goals call for the City to document, inventory, and preserve Denton's historic resources, including designating future historic and conservation districts. The plan also calls for creating new tools, incentives, and other programs that maintain the livability of Denton's historic neighborhoods.

The Historic Preservation Plan lays out tools that can be used to preserve the important history of Southeast Denton, restore the homes remaining from the 1920s, and support residents' desire to remain in and preserve their neighborhoods.

DENTON DEVELOPMENT CODE, ADOPTED 2019 (ONGOING UPDATES)

The Denton Development Code (DDC) regulates the subdivision of land and provides standards and guidance for properties based on zoning district, land use, and permitted activities. It is one of many tools used to implement the City's long-range planning efforts.

Zoning tools available in the DDC support the community's desire for a variety of housing types and additional investment in the area without displacement.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

An evaluation of demographics, land use, housing, retail, gathering places, parks, mobility, and a variety of other socioeconomic and physical characteristics of the area to understand the gaps in service and the needs of current and future residents.

People

The Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan area (DFW) grew rapidly over the past decade, adding more than 1.2 million people (20% of its population) from 2011 to 2021 (2021 ACS). During this time, Denton County and the City of Denton experienced higher rates of growth. Denton County's population grew by 36%, while the population of the City of Denton grew by 25%, from 111,960 to 139,704 people.

Despite overall growth in Denton and the DFW region, the population of Southeast Denton declined by 3% from 3,367 in 2011 to 3,251 in 2021. However, the broader regional growth is now feeding development interest in Southeast Denton. Given the number of older homes and vacant parcels in the area, Southeast Denton's population is likely to grow in the future as prospective homebuyers search for lower-cost housing, and developers see opportunity in underutilized lots. Development opportunities are leading to concerns that Southeast Denton residents will be pushed out of their homes due to increasing property taxes, rising rents, and pressure to sell their homes.

Southeast Denton is a young area with a diverse population. Only 23% of residents are 57 years or older in age, while 64% of the residents are 26 years or younger in age.



FIGURE 3. POPULATION GROWTH FROM 2010-2021
Source: 2021 American Community Survey

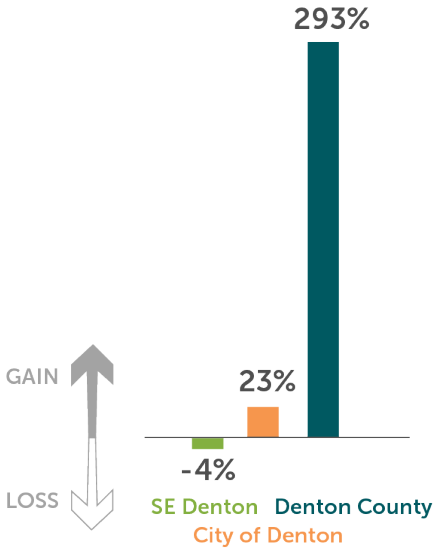


FIGURE 4. SOUTHEAST DENTON AGE DISTRIBUTION
Source: 2021 American Community Survey

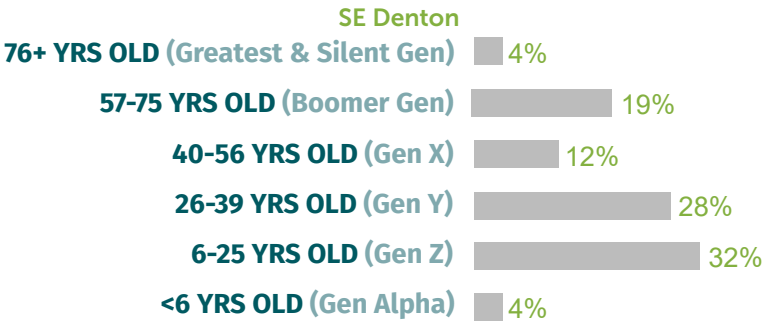
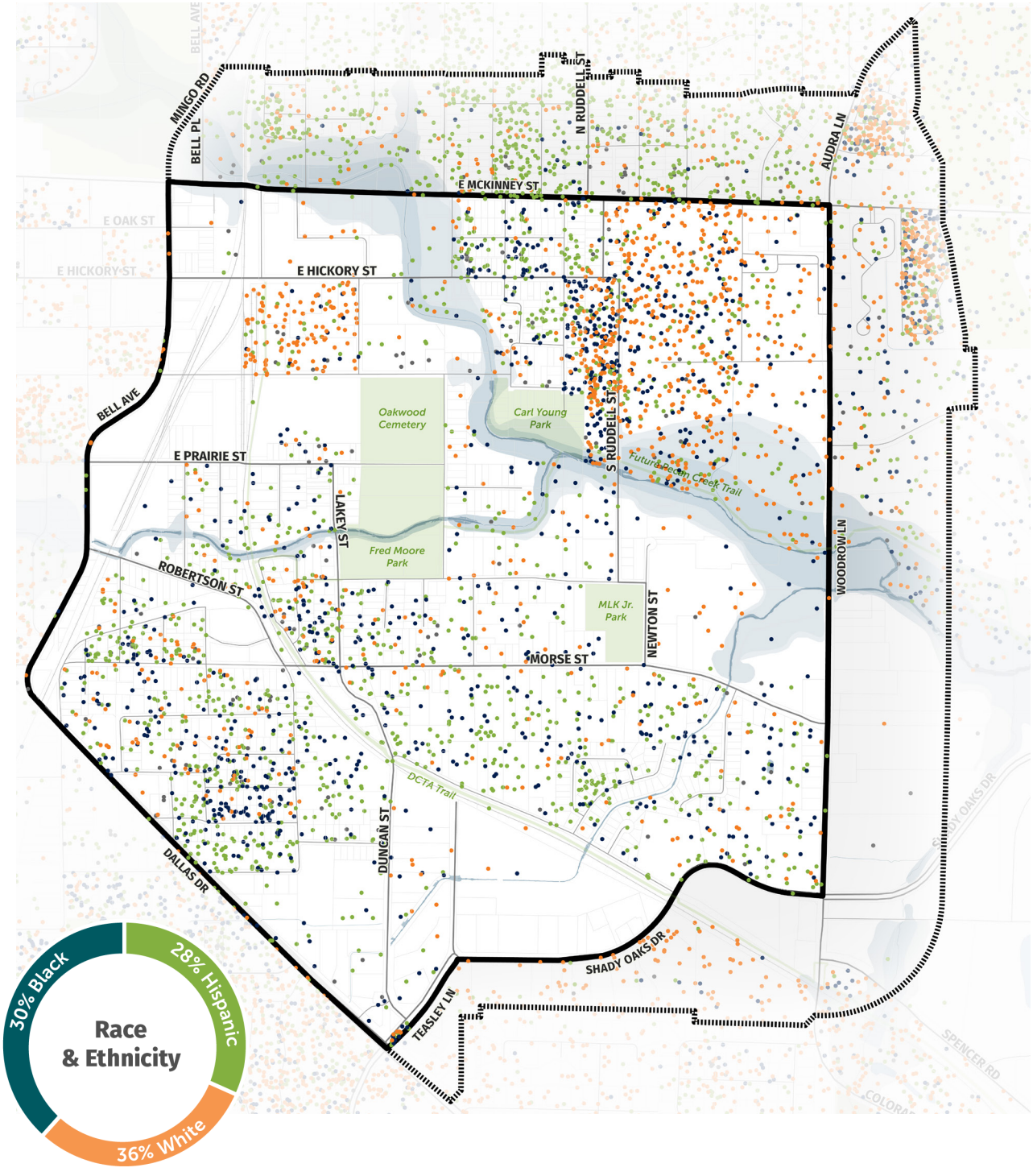


FIGURE 5. RACE DOT DENSITY

Source: ESRI GIS

Additionally, Southeast Denton is fairly evenly split between Hispanic (28%), Black (30%), and White (36%) populations.

Racial and ethnic groups are well-mixed, providing contrast to the segregation seen in many nearby areas. For reference, the City of Denton's overall population is predominantly White (58%), with 23% Hispanic and 11% Black residents (2021 ACS).



Economy

Southeast Denton employment is misaligned with the workforce living in the community. Southeast Denton is home to approximately 1,435 workers, yet only 16 (1%) of them are employed in the community. The remaining workers commute out of the area to where employment in their industry is available. However, this trend is not for a lack of jobs in Southeast Denton. Approximately 1,950 workers are employed within Southeast Denton but live outside of the community.

Nearly one-third (31%) of jobs in Southeast Denton are related to transportation, warehousing, utilities, and construction alone; in contrast, less than 15% of the area's residents work in these capacities. Conversely, 26% of Southeast Denton residents are employed in Education, Healthcare, or Social Services, whereas less than 4% of local jobs are in these industries. This mismatch indicates that a large number of education, healthcare, and social services professionals live in Southeast Denton but commute out of the area to work in nearby locations, possibly due to the lower cost of housing in the community relative to surrounding areas. The community also generally lacks employment opportunities in education, healthcare, and social services, as well as retail, finance, and real estate. This employment data aligns with the lack of professional office buildings, retail establishments and healthcare clinics within Southeast Denton.

FIGURE 6. SOUTHEAST DENTON WORKER FLOW
Source: ESRI GIS




Denton County

FIGURE 7. JOBS HELD BY SOUTHEAST DENTON RESIDENTS

Source: ESRI

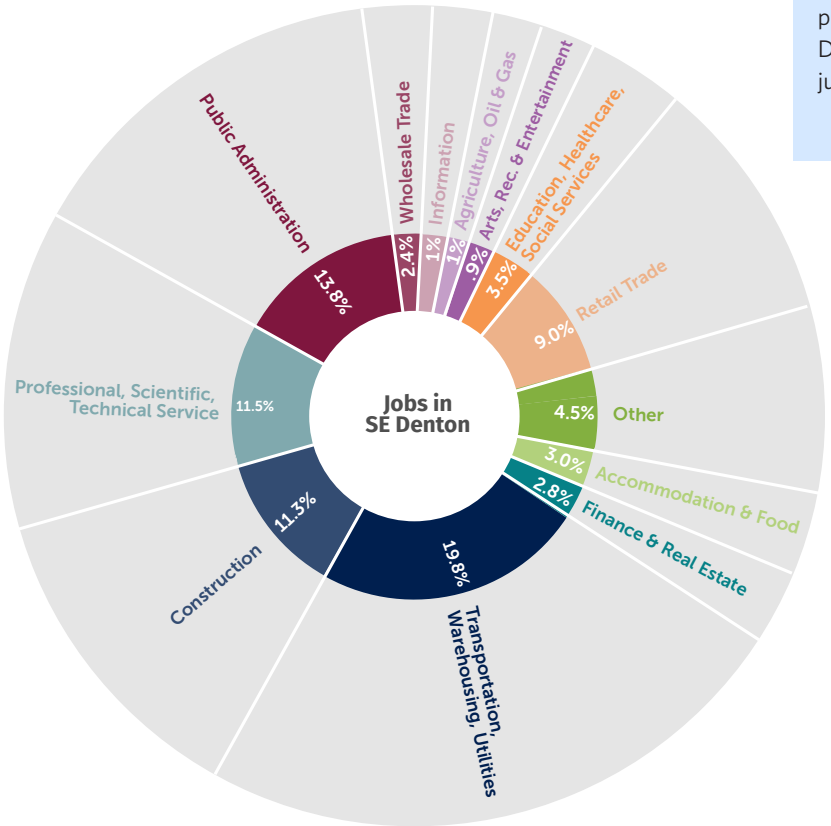


JOBS IN SOUTHEAST DENTON

These workers flow into the community to fill jobs in public administration, transportation, warehousing, utilities, construction, and professional, scientific, and technical services. Many of the jobs in these fields are hosted in the warehouse and light industrial buildings that predominate the boundaries of Southeast Denton, as well as the Denton County justice system campus.

FIGURE 8. JOBS IN SOUTHEAST DENTON

Source: ESRI



Place

LAND USE

Southeast Denton's perimeter consists of a solid barrier of industrial uses and busy arterial streets that, combined with a lack of sidewalks and bike facilities, make it difficult or impossible for residents to safely walk or bike beyond the edges of the community. As a result, residents are disconnected from essential community services. Southeast Denton lacks a grocery store and contains only a handful of places to obtain food of any kind. The community has very few retail stores and restaurants, and the retailers that do exist are predominantly pawn shops, thrift stores, and similar outlets. Residents are unable to safely walk or bike to the local mall or to the shops and restaurants to the west in downtown Denton and to the north across McKinney Street.

In Southeast Denton, homes and businesses are generally separated from one another, with residences located interior to the area and businesses confined almost exclusively to the outer edges, clustered along arterial roadways where access by car is more readily available. Over the past decades, many industrial facilities have come to be located within Southeast Denton, such as storage centers, automotive uses, and industrial suppliers. The County has some of its more land-intensive uses in this community, including the courts building, jail, sheriff's office, and juvenile detention center.

Southeast Denton hosts three parks: Fred Moore Park, MLK Jr. Recreation Center Park, and Carl Gene Young, Sr. Park. These facilities offer recreation opportunities, however, lack of programming lack safe sidewalk and trail connections to each other, compromising access and safety for nearby residents are some barriers to park usage. Southeast Denton is home to several churches. These churches, along with their leadership and volunteers, form the backbone of social connection in the community.



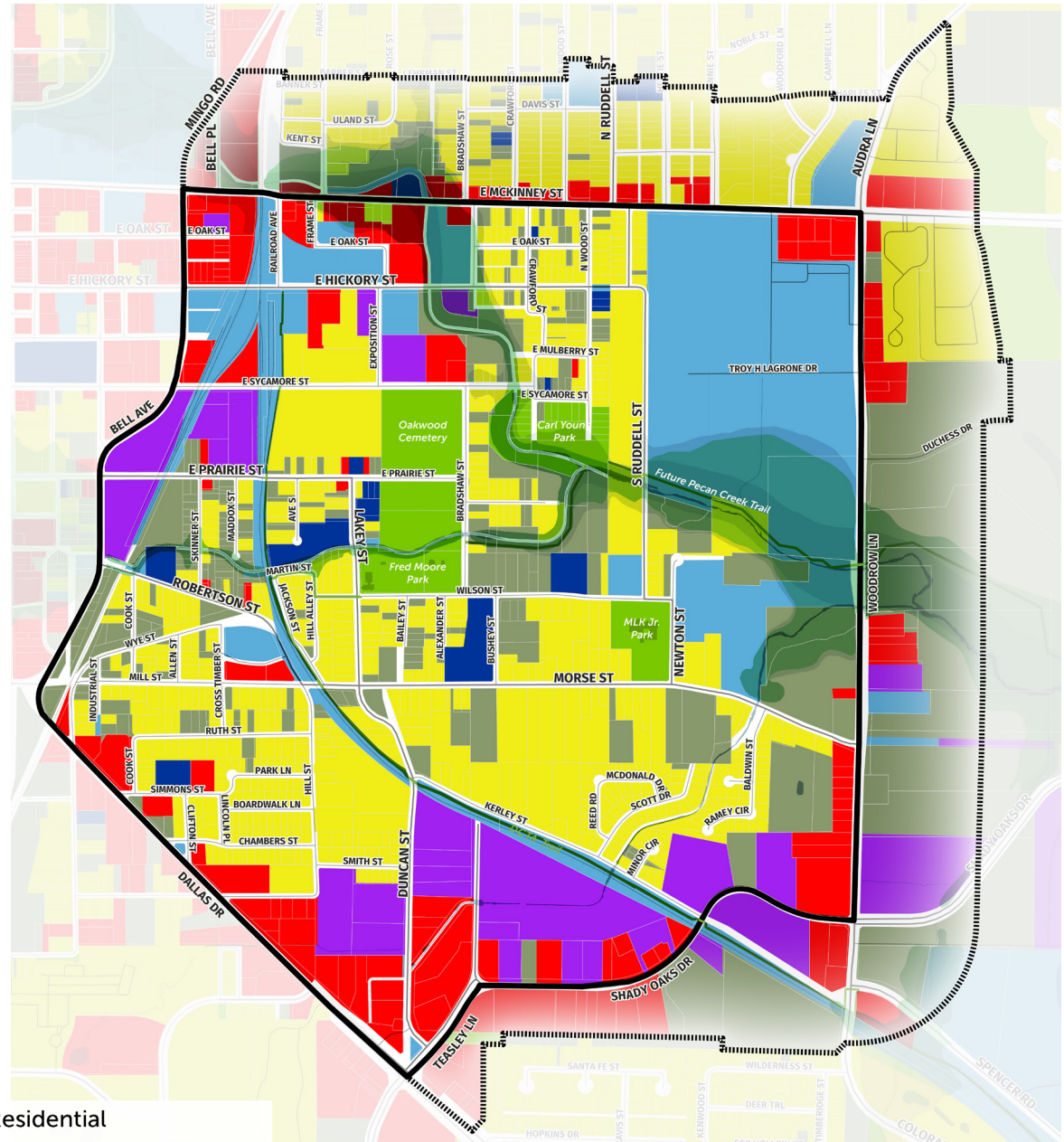
KERA News



Bike Denton

FIGURE 9. CURRENT LAND USE MAP

Source: City of Denton, TX



- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Government/Institutional
- Religious
- Parks and Open Space
- Undeveloped
- Floodplain

- Proposed Southeast Denton Area Plan Boundary
- Proposed Transition Area Boundary

Among the various land uses in Southeast Denton, the single largest land use by area is housing. Nearly one-third of land (27% or 183 acres) contains residential uses. The community's residential development pattern originated in the 1920s with the platting of the Solomon Hill neighborhood, located south of McKinney Street and east of Pecan Creek. This residential development expanded toward the south and west, and Solomon Hill was soon joined by the New Quaker neighborhood, the Frederick Douglass School neighborhood, and the Freedman neighborhood. The Willow Creek and Lincoln Park neighborhoods were built in the 1960s to 1980s. While most of the homes are single-family homes, some duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes are interspersed throughout the area. Additionally, a few large-lot homesteads (one to three acres) can be found near Morse Street and Kerley Street.

Two large multifamily developments are currently located within Southeast Denton. Additional multifamily developments are currently under construction on the south side of East Sycamore Street on a former industrial site and east of Woodrow Street (across from the County Juvenile Detention Center). Although many in the community are not supportive of additional higher-density housing in Southeast Denton, residents understand that mixed-use zoning is already allowed and the northwestern portion of Southeast Denton will likely develop with multifamily housing in the future. Due to the anticipated impacts with current and future developments, this plan provides strategies on land use, development scale, and urban design to guide future development.

After residential uses, government and institutional uses occupy the largest amount of land area. These uses include the Denton Public Safety Training Center, Denton Independent School District buildings, facilities for the Denton County Transportation Authority, and facilities related to the Denton County justice system, including the courts building, jail, sheriff's office, and juvenile detention center. In the event that these facilities were to expand, it is imperative that this plan include strategies to minimize impacts and result in compatible land uses.

The more intense commercial and industrial uses, combined with a large swath of floodplain extending diagonally across the study area, the railroad tracks to the west, and a lack of sidewalks and bike facilities serve as solid barriers to mobility. As these properties continue to age, they may become obsolete. Therefore, the plan outlines guidance for the redevelopment of these sites, in some cases recommending forms and uses that are more compatible with existing homes.

Within Southeast Denton, 93 acres are vacant. Of these, 70 acres are privately owned and 23 acres are publicly owned. Ten acres of privately owned land and 14 acres of publicly owned land are not developable because they are park space, cemetery, or flood plain. This leaves 60 acres of private land and nine acres of public land that are potentially developable.

Developable land may provide an opportunity to increase utilization of existing property without directly displacing residents. Public developable land offers opportunities for additional parks, recreation, and community facilities.

FIGURE 10. SOUTHEAST DENTON LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

Source: Denton Central Appraisal District

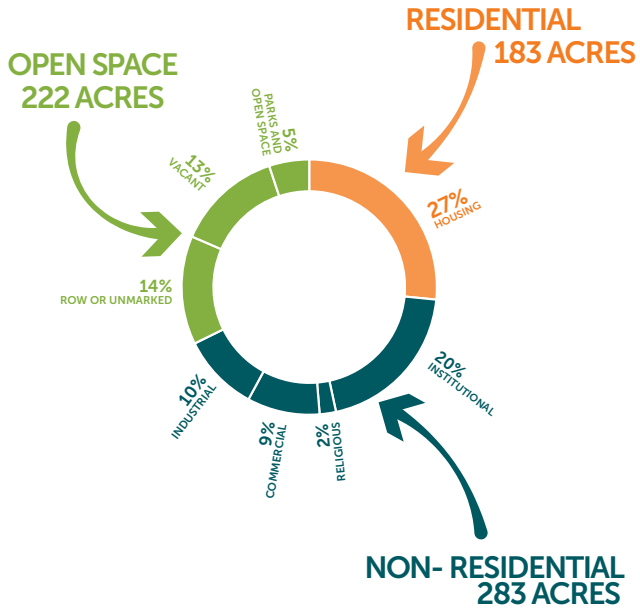


FIGURE 11. PROPERTY TYPES IN SOUTHEAST DENTON

Source: Denton Central Appraisal District



FIGURE 12. VACANT LAND IN SOUTHEAST DENTON

Source: Denton Central Appraisal District

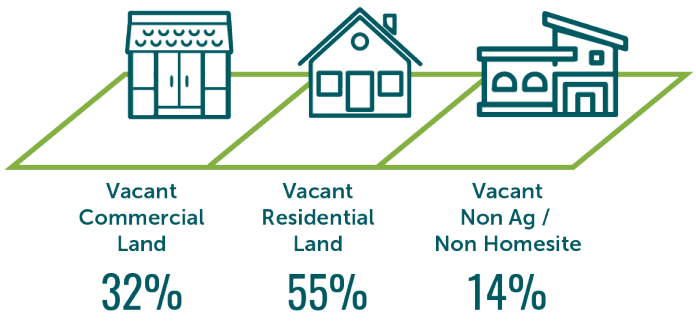


FIGURE 13. VACANT LAND IN SOUTHEAST DENTON
Source: Denton Central Appraisal District

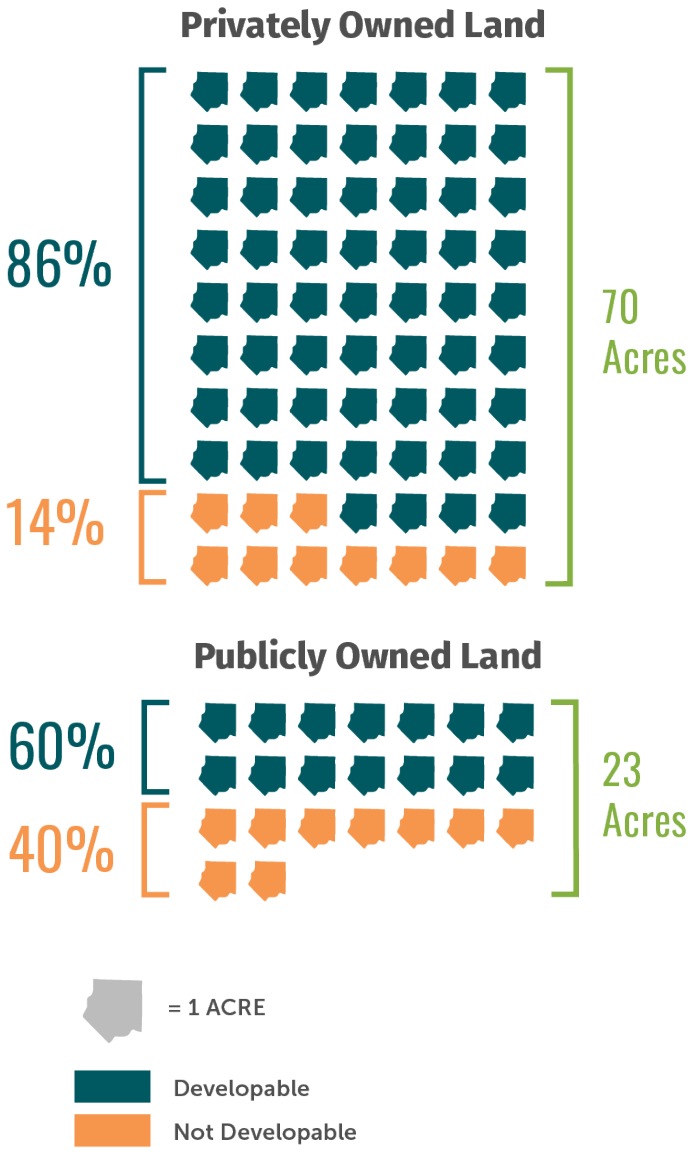
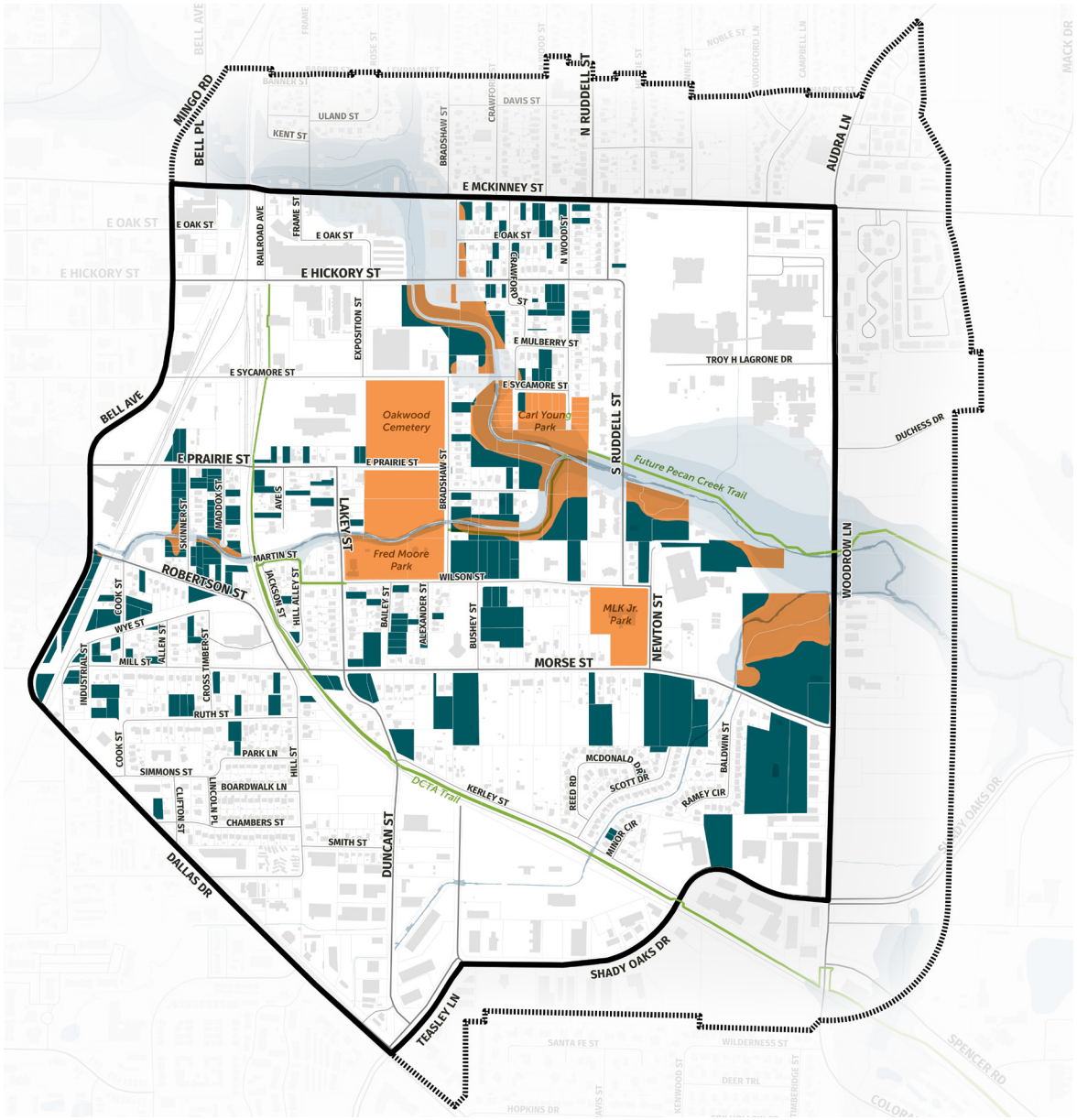




FIGURE 14. VACANT AND OPEN LAND

Source: Denton Central Appraisal District



Developable

Undevelopable

Proposed Southeast Denton Area Plan Boundary

Proposed Transition Area Boundary

ZONING

Denton's Development Code and Zoning Map were updated comprehensively in 2019. Zoning in Southeast Denton follows a pattern similar to the current land use.

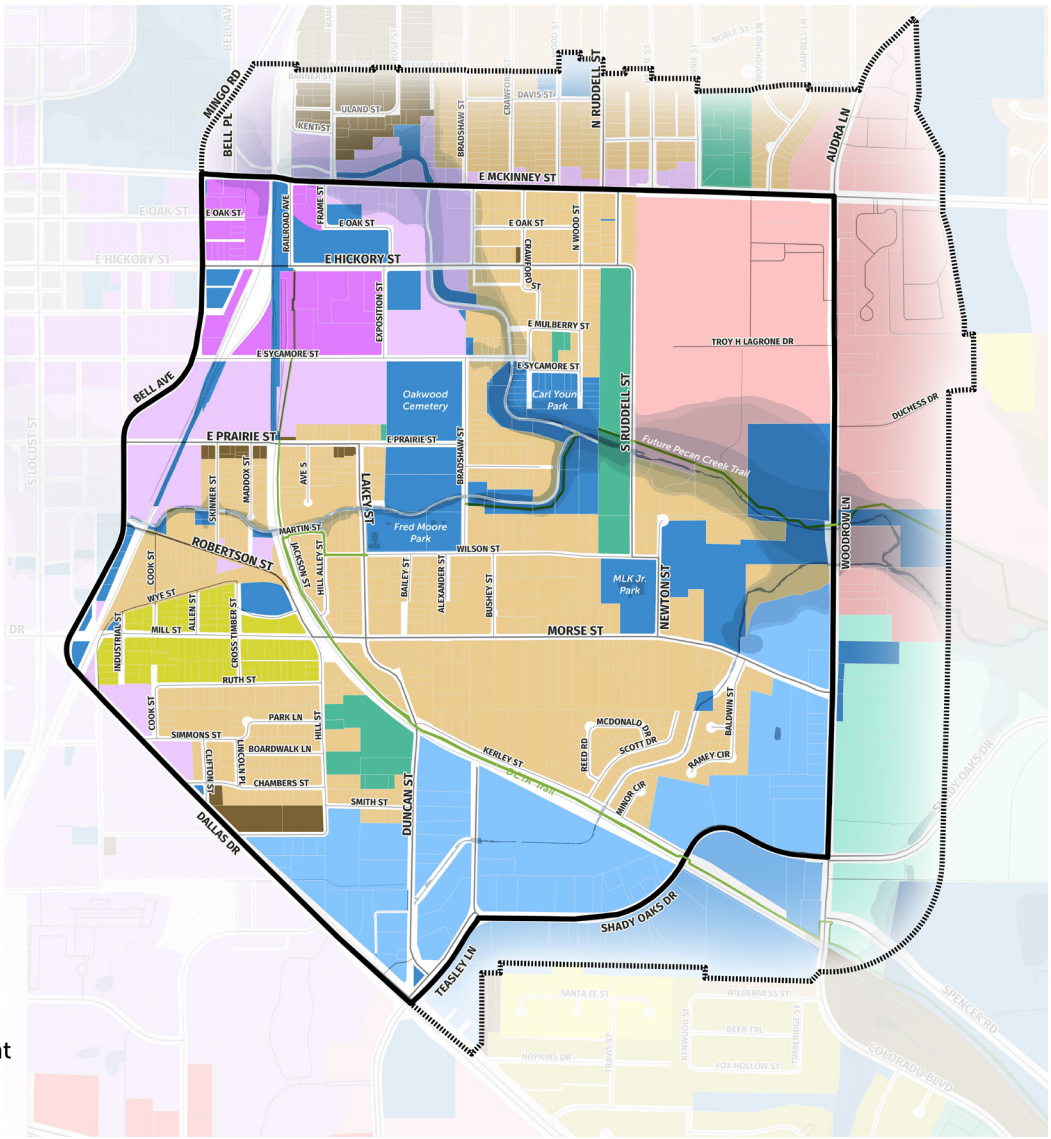
The center of the area is generally zoned R4-Residential, which allows for single-family detached homes by right as well as townhomes and duplexes with a Specific Use Permit. This district preserves existing neighborhood character while allowing some flexibility.

The Denton County Courts Building, Law Enforcement Center, and associated facilities are zoned SC-Suburban Corridor, which provides for moderate- to high-intensity commercial, office, and retail uses along high-traffic corridors.

The southeastern portion of the area is zoned LI-Light Industrial, which allows a wide variety of manufacturing, processing, storage, and warehouse, among others.

In the northwest portion of the area, near downtown but on the eastern side of the railroad tracks and rail trail, the zoning is MD-Mixed Use Downtown Core and MN-Mixed Use Neighborhood. MD has no restrictions on lot dimensions or setbacks and allows lot coverage up to 100% and maximum height of 100 feet. MN is less intense, with maximum height of 65 feet and 80% lot coverage. Both districts allow a wide range of housing, including multifamily, and other uses suited for a downtown area, such as bars, restaurants, craft alcohol production, and artisan manufacturing.

FIGURE 15. ZONING MAP
Source: City of Denton, TX



- SC - Suburban Corridor
- GO - General Office
- LI - Light Industrial
- PD - Planned Development
- MN - Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- R3 - Residential
- R4 - Residential
- R7 - Residential
- PF - Public Facilities
- MD - Mixed Use Downtown Core

Proposed Southeast Denton Area Plan Boundary

Proposed Transition Area Boundary

HOUSING

Southeast Denton contains six historic neighborhoods that were established and developed over the last century. Solomon Hill, New Quaker, Freedman Town, and Fred Moore School (previously Frederick Douglass School) were originally built in the 1920s-1930s. Lincoln Park was built in the 1960s, and Willow Creek was built in the late 1960s to 1980s. As shown in Figure 16, the story of housing construction in Southeast Denton is one of construction on individual lots, as opposed to volume-builder neighborhoods often seen today. Because of this development pattern, architectural styles vary from home to home and street to street, reflecting the design trends in a given decade.

Many of Denton's important historic structures are found in Southeast Denton. While not all are eligible as historic resources due to modifications, the community has shown an interest in protecting and maintaining its historic homes. Therefore, this plan will include strategies to conserve and preserve these assets and the heritage they represent.

The median value of Southeast Denton's 707 homes is approximately $207,600, lower than the citywide median home value of $257,500 (2021 ACS). Notably, Southeast Denton's higher-value and lower-value homes are interspersed; in other words, no part of the community inherently contains more expensive or less expensive homes. **Higher-value and lower-value homes are in many cases located on the same block or across the street from each other, creating a true mixed-income community — one of the few left in the DFW metroplex. As mixed-income communities have been demonstrated to possess many favorable benefits, this plan will explore ways to preserve the ability for lower- and higher-income households to live near one another.**

Southeast Denton exhibits greater affordability than Denton overall when comparing home values to incomes. Denton's median income of $65,168 translates to a median value-to-income ratio of 4.0. While the median income of Southeast Denton residents is lower at $59,328, Southeast Denton has a median value-to-income ratio of 3.5. This means that the median home value is 3.5 times that of the median residents' income, compared with 4.0 times for the city overall. This suggests that homes are relatively affordable in Southeast Denton compared with the broader area.

FIGURE 17. 2021 HOME VALUES
Source: Denton Central Appraisal District

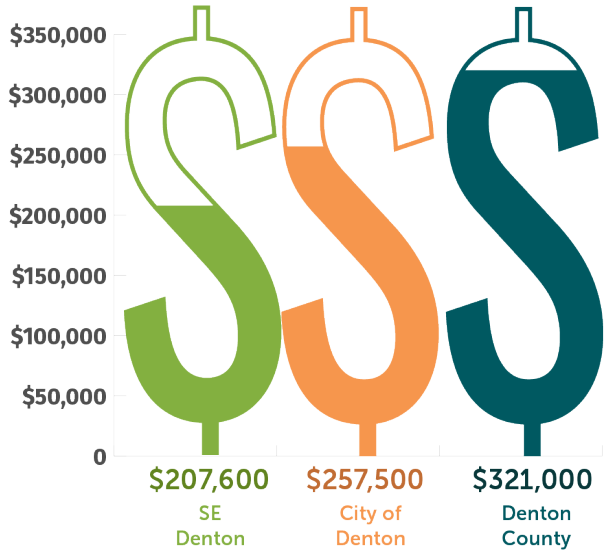


FIGURE 18. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
Source: 2021 American Community Survey



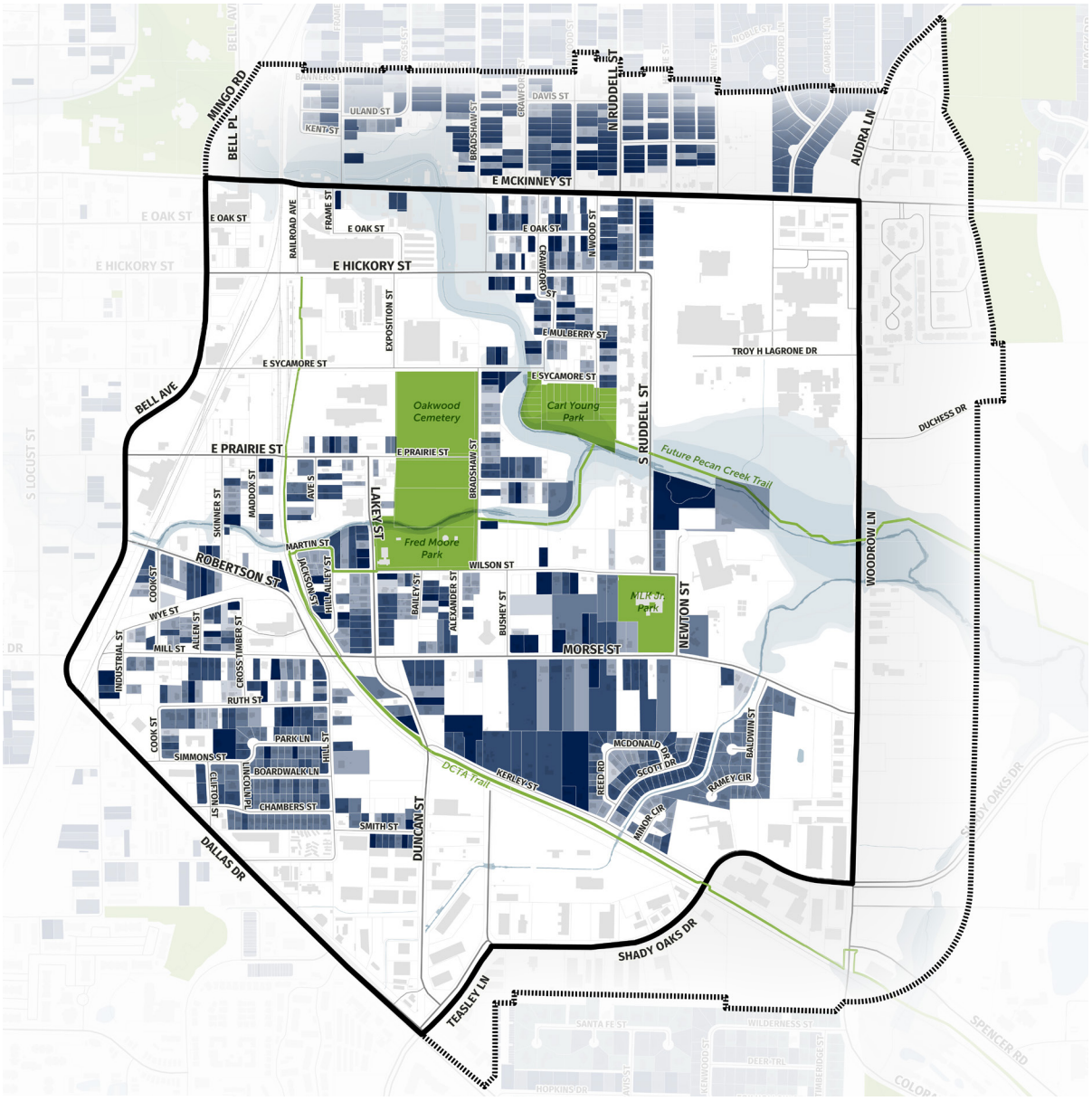


Homes in southeast Denton



FIGURE 16. RESIDENTIAL YEAR BUILT MAP

Source: Denton Central Appraisal District



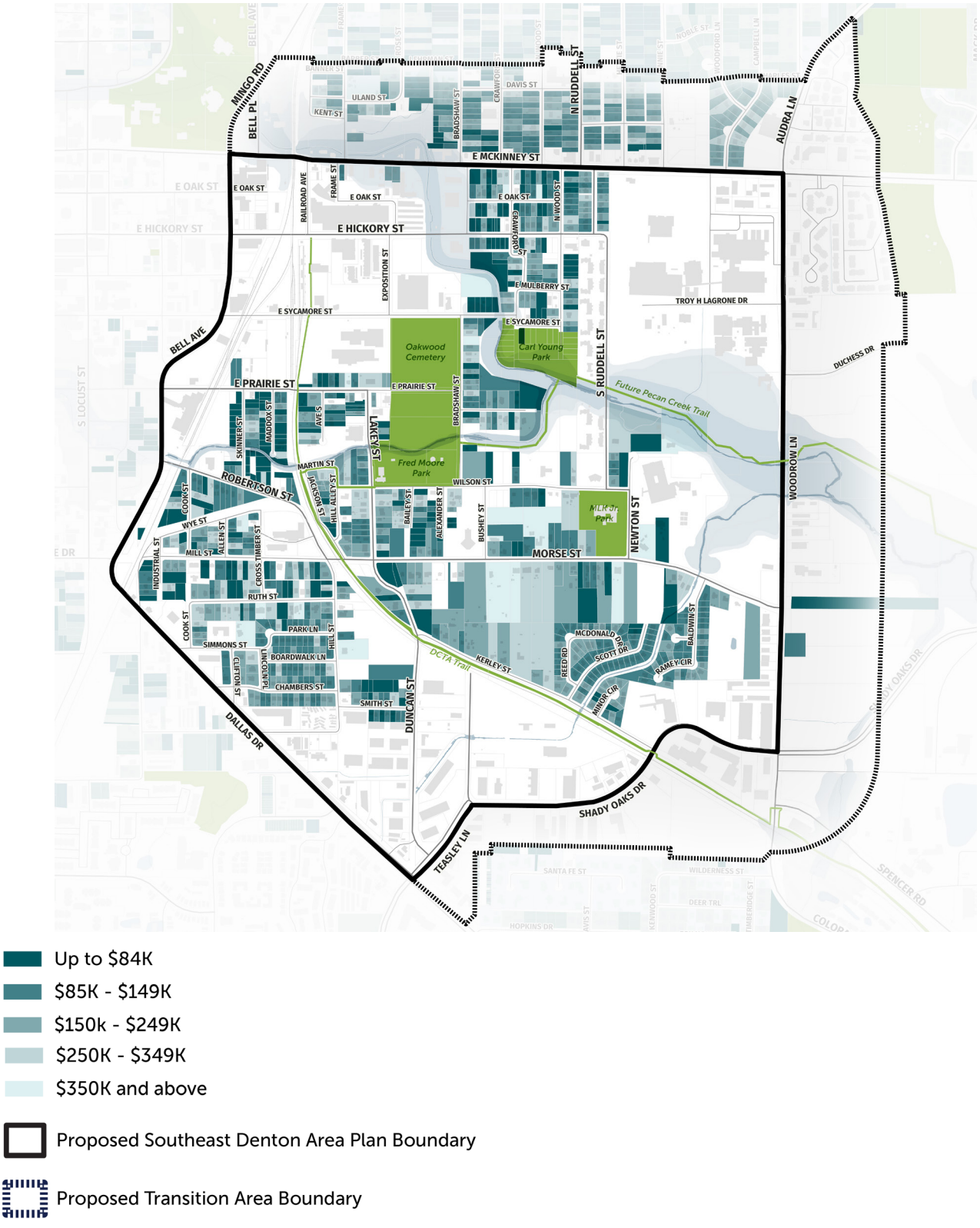
1900 - 1950
1951 - 1970
1971 - 1990
1991 - 2010
2011 - 2022

Proposed Southeast Denton Area Plan Boundary

Proposed Transition Area Boundary

FIGURE 19. RESIDENTIAL APPRAISED VALUE

Source: Denton Central Appraisal District



- Up to $84K
- $85K - $149K
- $150k - $249K
- $250K - $349K
- $350K and above
- Proposed Southeast Denton Area Plan Boundary
- Proposed Transition Area Boundary

Approximately two-thirds (62%) of Southeast Denton residents own their homes, and the rest rent. Average monthly payments on homes with mortgages are only slightly higher than average rents ($1,107 vs. $1,036, respectively). The similarity of monthly payments for homeowners and renters suggests that households may rent not because of monthly payment constraints, but rather due to inability to secure a down payment or to qualify for a mortgage or by choice.

While Southeast Denton is relatively more affordable than Denton overall, this does not imply that homes are affordable to residents. Notably, a Southeast Denton resident with a median income who purchases a median-value home would end up spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Households who spend more than 30% of their income on housing are considered cost burdened. Another metric shows that Southeast Denton has a greater percent than the surrounding region of residents who own their homes outright. While 42% of homes have no mortgage in Southeast Denton, that number is 34% in the City of Denton and only 27% in Denton County. Fewer homeowners burdened by a mortgage points to the relative affordability of Southeast Denton compared with nearby areas as well as the presence of long-term homeowners. While positive for existing residents, relative affordability can result in displacement pressure.

FIGURE 20. PERCENTAGE OF 2021 HOME OWNERSHIP
Source: 2021 American Community Survey

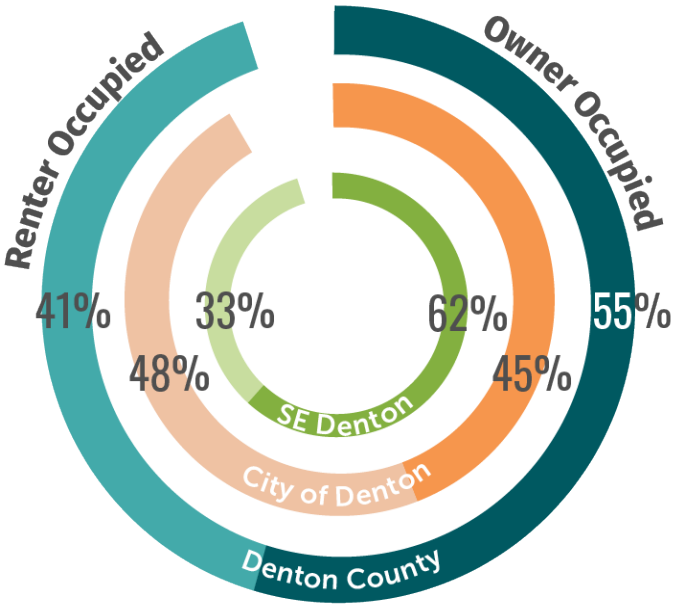
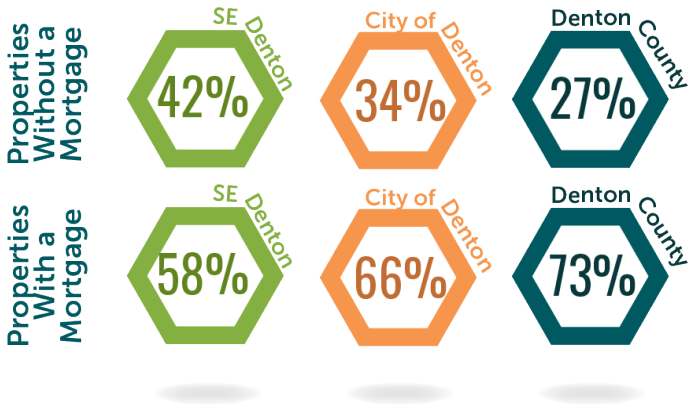
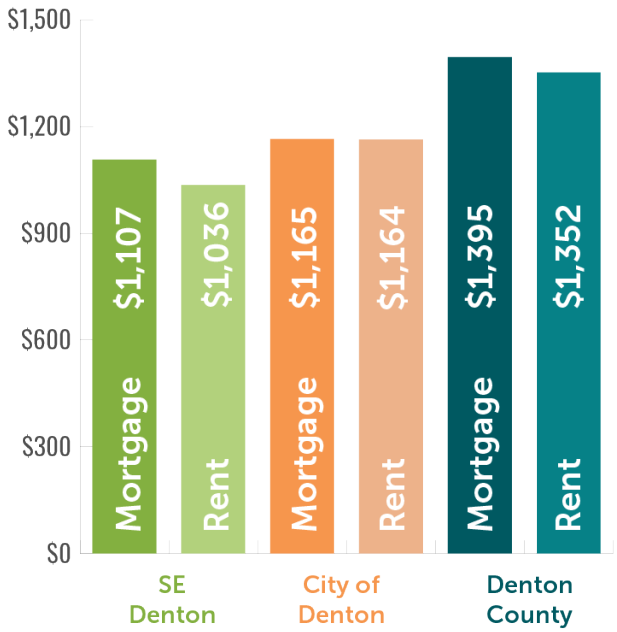


FIGURE 21. MORTGAGE PROPERTIES
Source: 2021 American Community Survey



In addition to rent and mortgage payments, housing costs include things like property taxes, insurance, and utilities. Rising property taxes as home values rise is a contributing factor to displacement.

FIGURE 22. MORTGAGE VALUE VS RENTING VALUE
Source: 2021 American Community Survey



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The City of Denton's Parks and Recreation Department owns and maintains two community centers and a variety of parks and open spaces to serve Southeast Denton. The largest park is the 10-acre Fred Moore Park, which offers amenities such as two pavilions, two playgrounds, basketball courts, benches and bleachers, drinking fountains, a softball field, and a gazebo stage. It is programmed with community-wide events several times a year and is also used for daily recreation and unplanned social gathering space by the residents. The park offers open sight lines for safety, shade, and a walking trail that will eventually connect to the regional Katy Trail and the future Pecan Creek Trail.

Although Fred Moore Park is a regional asset, it lacks an identifiable public entrance from surrounding streets. The trail is lit by tall cobra head lights rather than pedestrian-level lighting. The creek running through the park is a concrete-lined culvert rather than a natural creek. The picnic table is well-shaded, but the playground equipment would benefit from additional shade. Better lighting, more comfortable places to sit, additional shade, and better connections to the neighborhood would enhance the usability of the park.

Carl Gene Young, Sr. Park is slightly smaller than Fred Moore Park at 9.8 acres. This park includes a spray ground, a basketball court, benches, a playground, and a drinking fountain. Additional shade is needed to make the spray ground, metal benches, scattered play equipment, and picnic tables more usable, as the lack of shade is a potential burn hazard to patrons in the summer. Walkways do not connect to each other or to the amenities, nor do they connect to other trails. The picnic tables are not on concrete pads and the ground under them becomes muddy during rainy periods. The park could benefit from a more cohesive plan and a sun-shade study conducted jointly with the area's residents and potential park users. Improvements to the splashpad began in April 2023 and finished in May 2024

The MLK, Jr. Recreation Center Park provides play space for children and flexible open space. Features include shade structures, playgrounds, practice fields, maintained landscape, a picnic table and benches, and a mature, colorful variety of trees. The park lacks adequate sidewalk and pathway access and does not provide light for night usage.

On the eastern edge of Southeast Denton, west of Woodrow Lane, are several heavily treed areas. These areas are under various ownership, including the City of Denton, Denton Independent School District, and private ownership. While none of the parcels on either side of Pecan Creek is currently park space, some of the area is reserved for a future extension of the Pecan Creek Trail, and the trees contribute to the city's urban forest.

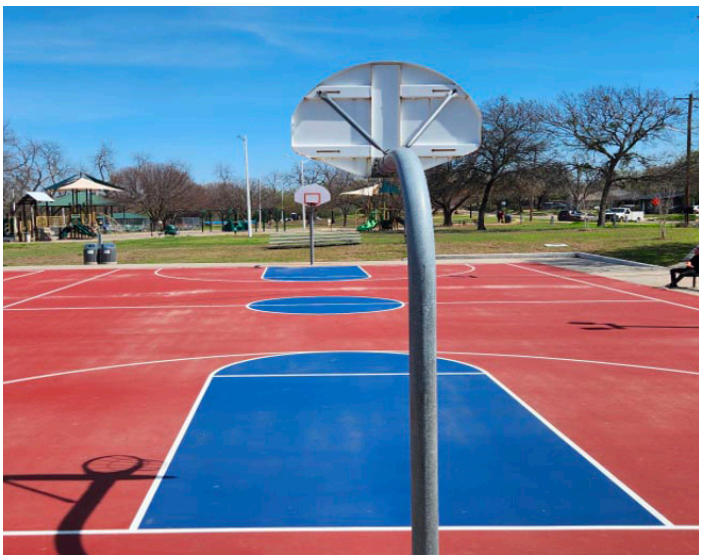
Oakwood Cemetery was established in 1857 in what is now the center of Southeast Denton and has been City-owned since 1931.1 It is a local heritage site that is the burial place of early settlers, Confederate veterans, indigent residents, and many more whose graves are unmarked and whose names are lost to time. Many of Quakertown's residents are buried in the cemetery.

In addition to these parks and green spaces, several trails cross Southeast Denton, including the DCTA Rail Trail along the MKT Railroad right-of-way and portions of the planned Pecan Creek Trail along Pecan Creek. The DCTA Rail Trail is a 19-mile regional asset, connecting the Downtown Denton Transit Center to the Hebron station in Lewisville.

The undeveloped land map (Figure 12) shows multiple large parcels of land near existing parks, trails, and floodplain. These parcels offer an opportunity for the City to expand park space in the Southeast Denton area.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation Center is located on the east side of the study area near Rivera Elementary. The center offers computer classes, after-school care, spring break and summer camps, and other classes throughout the year. The American Legion Hall Senior Center is centrally located in Southeast Denton at the southwest corner of Fred Moore Park. It serves as a gathering place for adults aged 50 and older to eat lunch, take part in activities, host events, and spend time. Both facilities offer modern meeting rooms for rent and are often reserved for community groups, parties, and clubs.





1 https://apps.dentoncounty.gov/website/HistoricalMarkers/PDFs/Oak-Wood-Cemetery.pdf

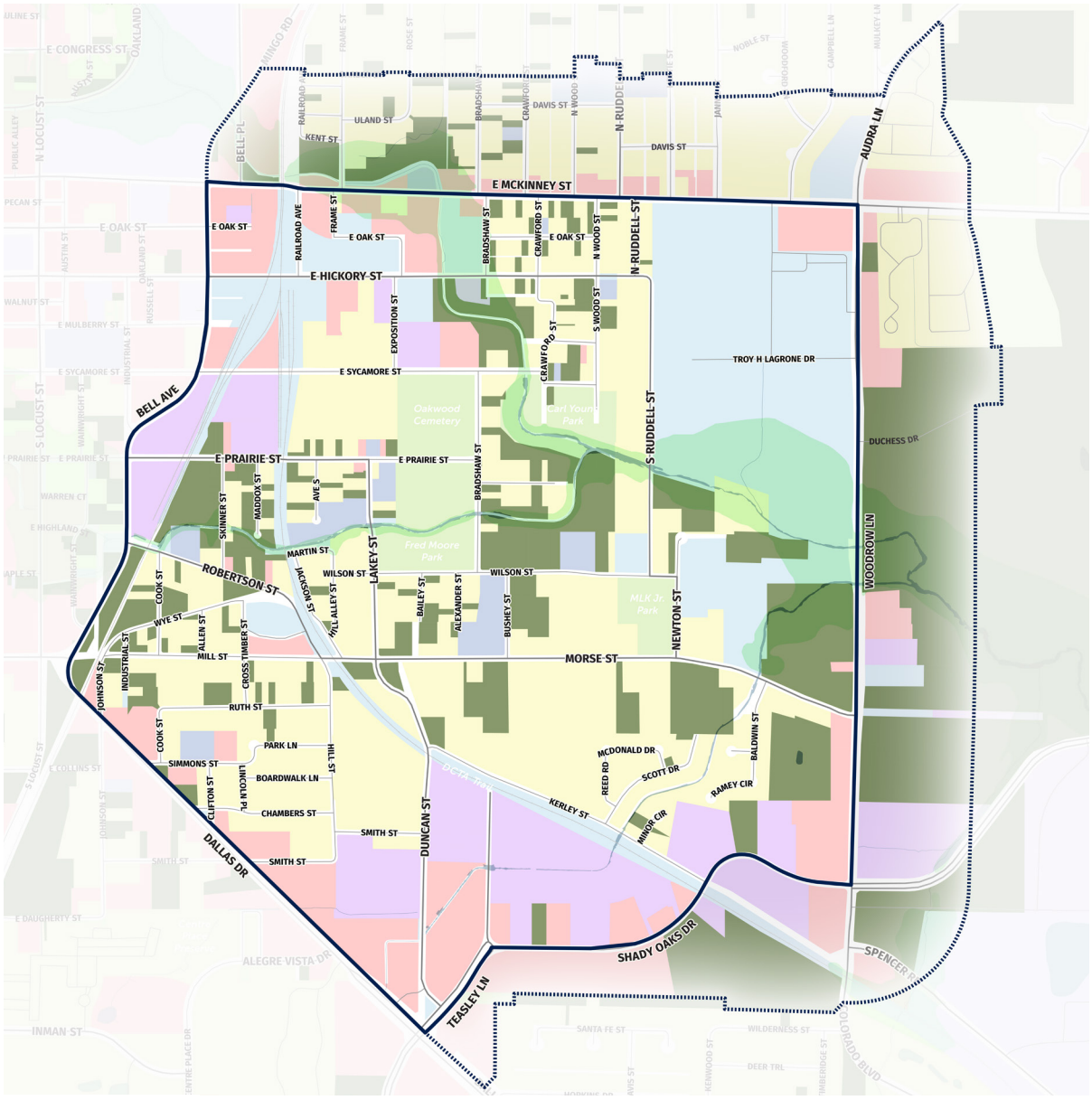
FIGURE 23. 2022 TRAILS MASTERPLAN

Source: City of Denton, TX



FIGURE 24. CURRENT UNDEVELOPED LAND USE

Source: Denton Central Appraisal District



TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY

A transportation and mobility network that supports a community should include the following:

- **Affordability:** This means less reliance on single-occupancy vehicles (SOV) and access to affordable alternatives, including transit, walking, car sharing, and new mobility services.
- **Choice:** Transportation alternatives, such as cyclist- and pedestrian-friendly networks that connect to employment and other destinations.
- **Safety:** Better lighting and more facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Air Pollution and Congestion Reduction:** Fewer emissions from cars on the road or in traffic.

STREET NETWORK

Primary arterials (six lanes and 135 feet minimum right of way) and secondary arterials (four lanes and 110 feet minimum right of way) encircle the Southeast Denton neighborhood. Crosswalks provide pedestrian safety at only a handful of intersections. Together, the width of streets and lack of crosswalks hamper pedestrian access to shops, restaurants, and jobs outside of Southeast Denton. See Figure 25.

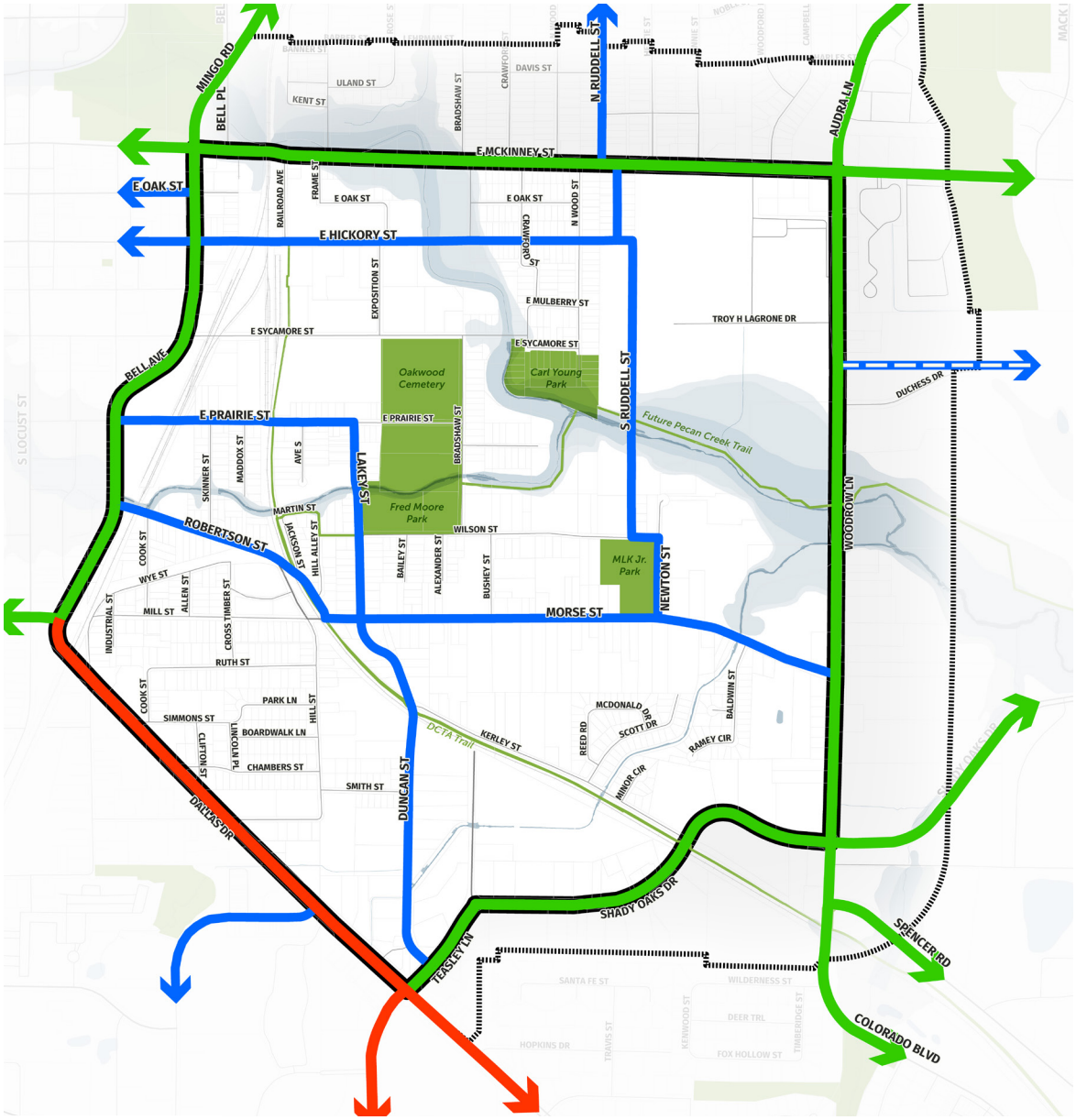
Internally, the streets are arranged in a broken grid pattern, with both north-south and east-west streets that end abruptly at three-way intersections. Morse Street and Kerley Street, two of the through streets, serve as a short cut for some drivers and a raceway for others.



Denton Record-Chronicle

FIGURE 25. THOROUGHFARE PLAN (2022)

Source: City of Denton, TX



- Existing Primary Arterial
- Existing Secondary Arterial
- Existing Collector
- Proposed Collector
- Proposed Southeast Denton Area Plan Boundary
- Proposed Transition Area Boundary

WALKING

Based on the City's sidewalk condition data and on-the-ground analysis, very few of the streets within Southeast Denton have sidewalks. Residential areas and local destinations such as schools and retail within Southeast Denton are connected only by a car-oriented street network. This means that residents who choose to walk must generally take unmarked, non-ADA accessible routes through their neighbors' yards or walk in the street. The few existing sidewalks are in varying (often poor) conditions, exposed to the sun, and are generally not ADA compliant.

Although crosswalks are present at some four-way stops, most of the intersections in Southeast Denton are three-way intersections or dog-leg intersections without crosswalks. This lack of crosswalks, coupled with high travel speeds and volumes along busy roads, creates an intimidating environment for pedestrians and cyclists who try to travel through or out of the Southeast Denton area.

Although many of the streets in the area are currently being reconstructed only a few of the new street sections include sidewalks. (Figure 26, sidewalk conditions)



Residential sidewalk and road construction

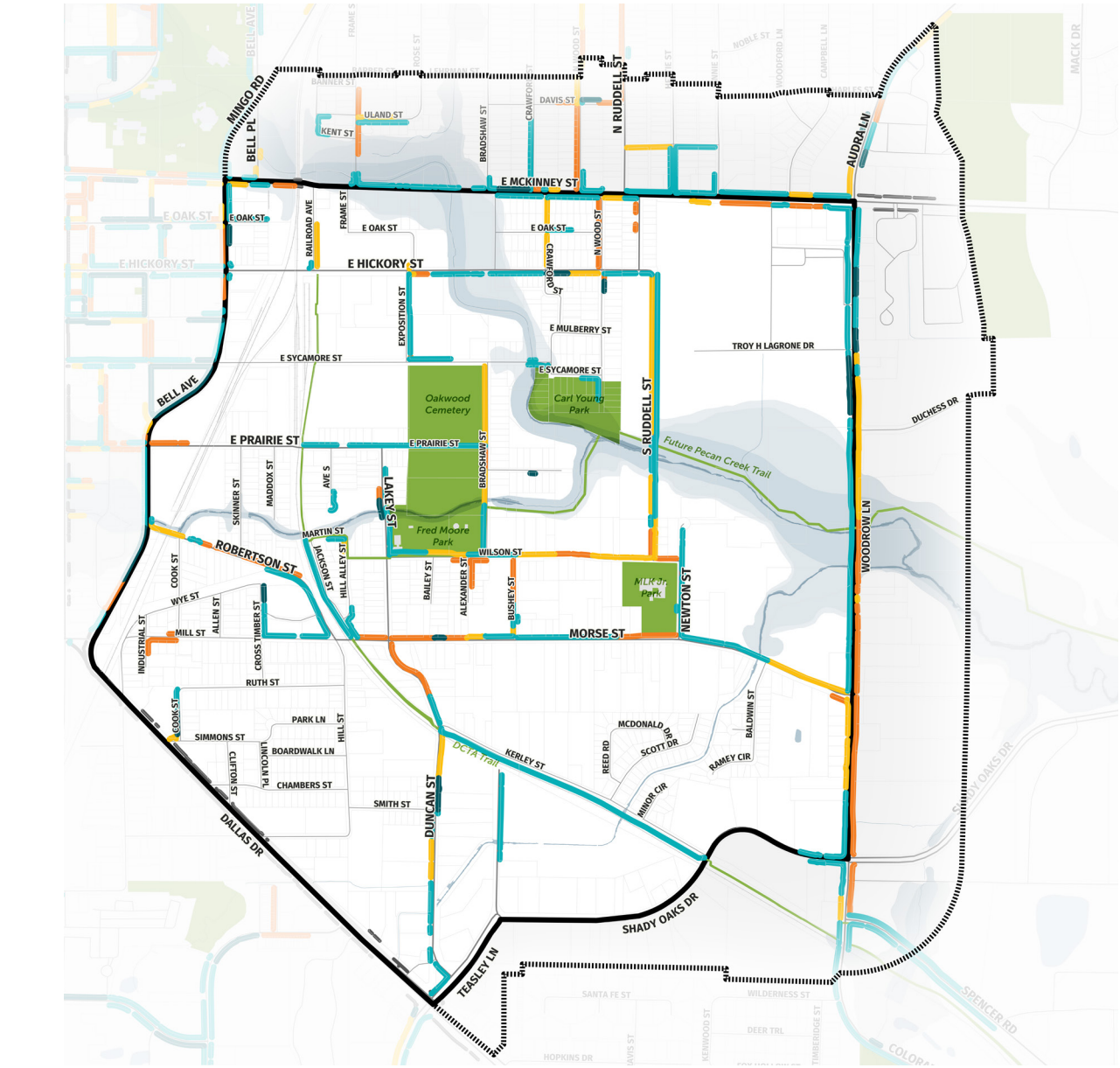


Sidewalk conditions



FIGURE 26. SIDEWALK CONDITION MAP

Source: City of Denton, TX



BICYCLE NETWORK

Bicycle infrastructure is extremely limited within Southeast Denton. The few bicycle paths that do exist are either side paths that double as sidewalks or they are streets with signage indicating that bikes are a shared use. Newly constructed trails, such as the DCTA trail which connects Denton to Lewisville offer the beginnings of much-needed bicycle connectivity. However, existing trails do not yet offer a broad network that connects neighborhoods to activity centers or the larger Denton community.

The City of Denton's 2022 Mobility Plan recommends additional separated bike lanes, shared-use side paths, and trails. However, the 2023-2024 street reconstruction project was budgeted and designed before the adoption of the current Mobility Plan. Therefore, the roadway improvement projects that were in progress at the time of creation of this plan do not include many of the planned pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure segments.

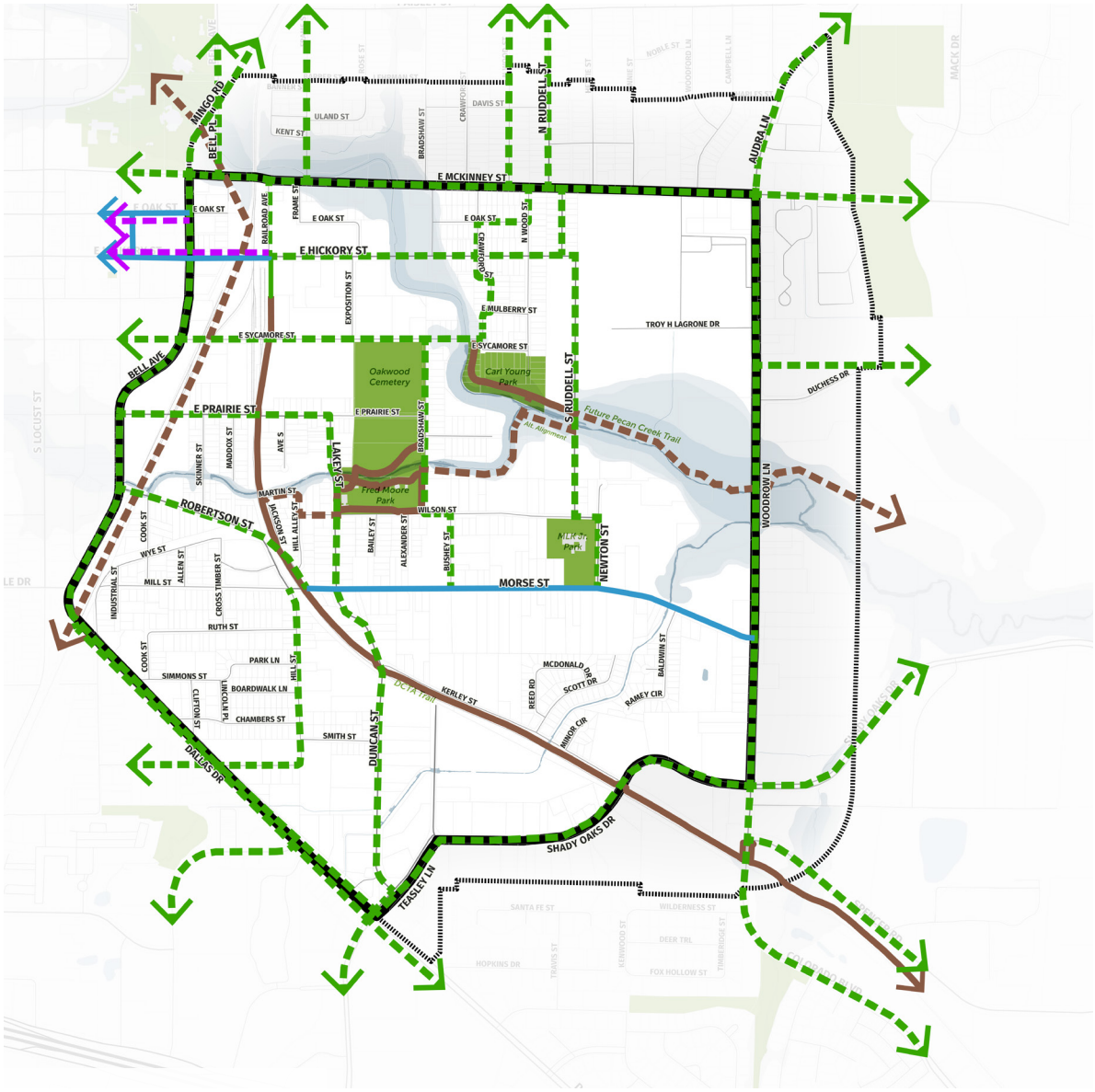
Future road improvements should include the planned pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the 2022 Mobility Plan.



Bike Denton

FIGURE 27. BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN (2022)

Source: City of Denton, TX



TRANSIT

Transit service in Denton is operated by the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA). The Downtown Denton Transit Center provides access to local and regional buses as well as the A Train, which connects south to Carrollton and to the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) light rail system. Due to recent system changes, DCTA provides bus service only along East Hickory Street and McKinney Street. The remainder of Southeast Denton is served by DCTA's on-demand service, GoZone.

CRASHES

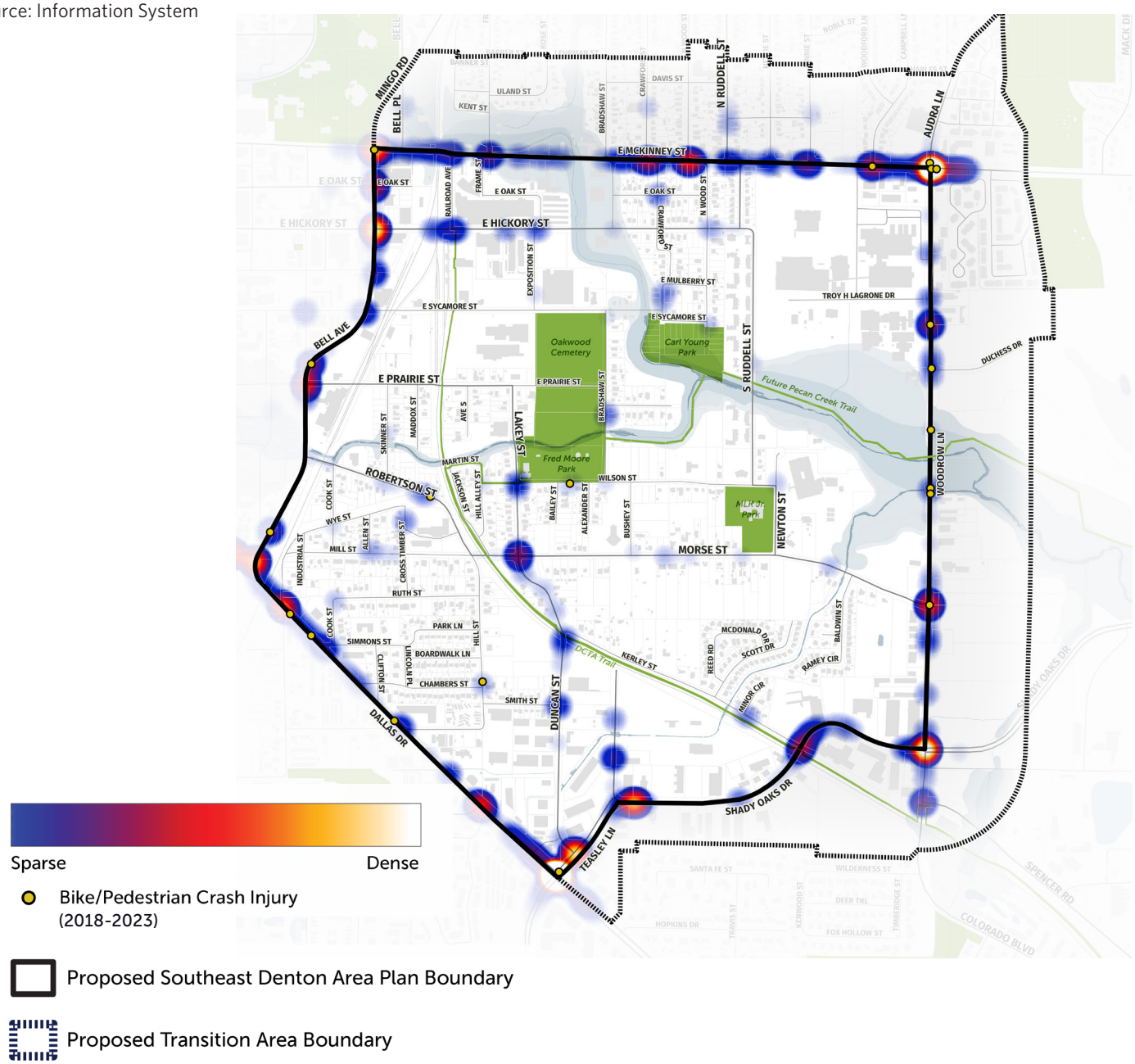
The Texas Department of Transportation collects and analyzes crash data submitted by law enforcement officers in its Crash Records Information System (CRIS). Figure 28 shows a heat map of crashes between 2018 and November of 2023 in Southeast Denton. In the past five years, there were 2,561 people involved in crashes in this area, 27 of whom were pedestrians or bicyclists.

People were most likely to be involved in crashes on the periphery roads, particularly at large intersections. Crashes on McKinney Street accounted for nearly 20% of the total number of people involved in crashes in Southeast Denton, indicating a need for additional pedestrian safety measures on McKinney Street.

In addition to the crashes on the periphery, the data also show East Hickory Street, Morse Street, Lakey Street, and Duncan Street to be hot spots for people involved in crashes.

FIGURE 28. CRASH INJURIES HEAT MAP

Source: Information System



COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Southeast Denton is home to several churches, including Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, St. Andrew Church of God in Christ, St. Emmanuel Baptist Church, Morse Street Baptist Church, Mt. Calvary Baptist Church and East Prairie Street Church of Christ, St. James AME, Mt. Pilgrim CME, and Simmons Street Church of Christ. Residents view these churches as important assets not just for worship, but also for their key role in promoting social connection within the community.

Rivera Elementary and Fred Moore High School are located within the study area. However, the attendance boundary for Rivera Elementary only includes the east side of Southeast Denton, extending outside the study area across Woodrow Lane to the east and south of the study area. Fred Moore High School was originally named the Frederick Douglass School and served the Black community of Denton starting in 1909. The current building was built in 1948 and two years later was named after Fred Moore, a former teacher and principal at Douglass School who remained connected to the community. Today, this schoold is a Choice School that serves the entire Denton Independent School District. It provides accelerated graduation and alternatives to traditional high school and attracts students from throughout the district.





St. James AME Church



American Legion Hall



MLK Jr. Recreation Center

FIGURE 29. COMMUNITY AMENITIES DISTRIBUTION

Source: HDR research



Churches

Proposed Southeast Denton Area Plan Boundary

Proposed Transition Area Boundary

RETAIL

Residents of Southeast Denton have limited retail and restaurant choices within the core of the community. The closest stores selling food are two convenience stores north of McKinney Street; the convenience stores do not offer any fresh foods and only carry very limited supplies of packaged foods. Kroger, Aldi, and Walmart are all a few miles away and necessitate a car for access. Pedestrian access to Denton's downtown restaurants is inadequate, particularly for the mobility impaired. Most of the commercial parcels on the land use map are service or business-oriented uses such as pawn shops, storage centers, automotive uses, and industrial supply stores, which do little to meet the community's day-to-day retail needs.

Clara's Kitchen, Veronica's Café, and other restaurants along McKinney Street and Dallas Drive serve as local gathering spots.



Veronica's Cafe



1302 Teasley Lane



625 Dallas Dr.



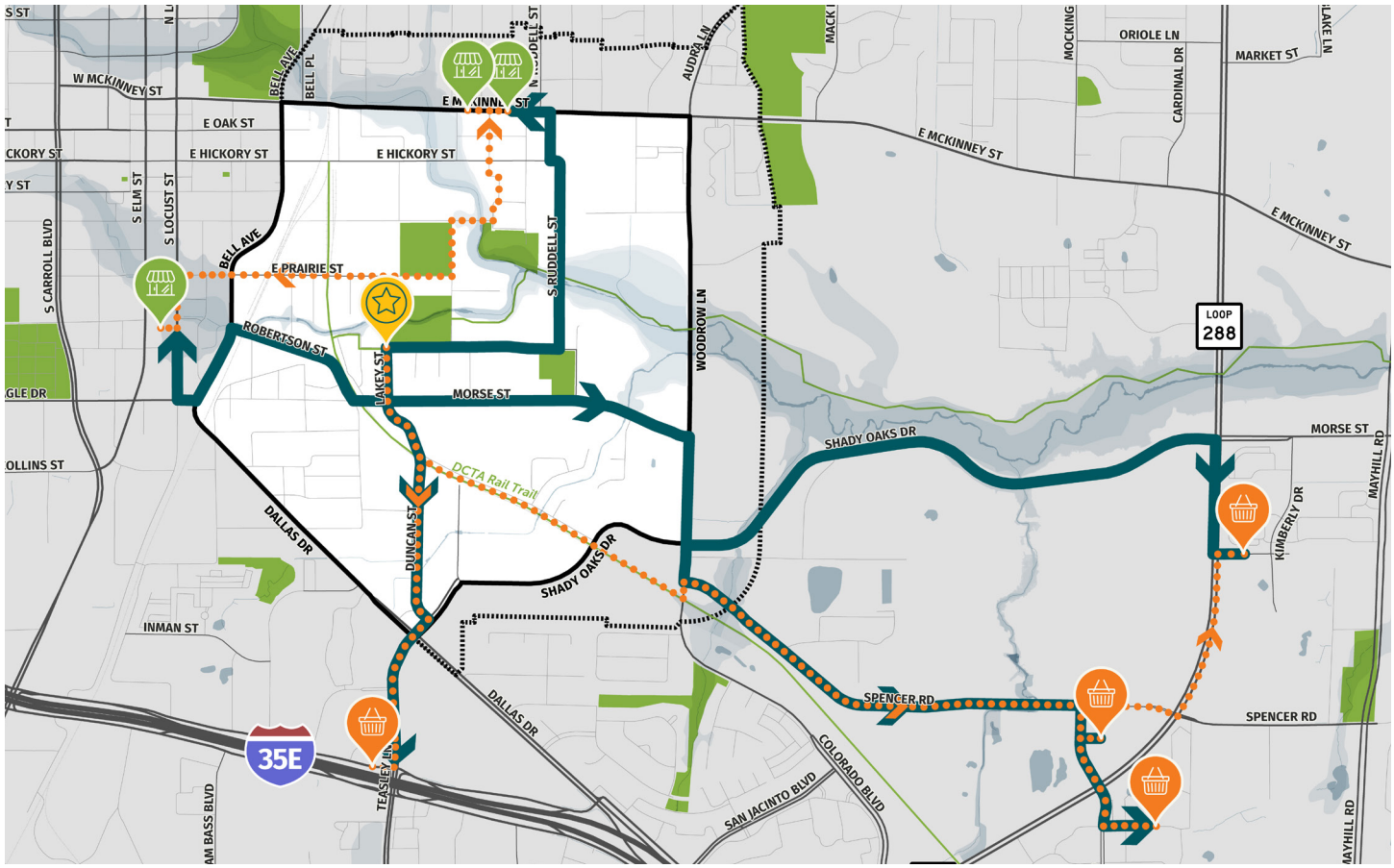
Clara's Kitchen



608 E. Hickory Street

FIGURE 30. ROUTES TO GROCERY AND CONVENIENCE STORES

Source: ESRI



Grocery Store

Convenience Store

American Legion Hall Senior Center

Driving Route

Walking Route



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

By listening to the Southeast Denton community to incorporate their solutions, dreams, and ideas, this plan attempts to strengthen the Southeast Denton area for existing and future residents and stakeholders as well as those interested in joining this cohesive, connected community in the future.



Listening to the Community

The planning process process started with acknowledging past harm – forced removal in the 1920s, a proposed Urban Renewal demolition plan in the 1960s—as well as current concerns with development activities. The process continued with data gathering, robust community engagement, and guidance from technical experts.



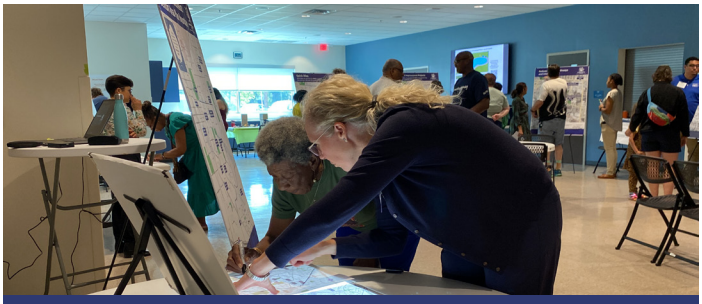
IMPLEMENTATION WORKSHOP

- **Listening Sessions:** The team held multiple meetings with residents and stakeholders to listen deeply to their stories, their dreams, and their desires for their neighborhood, as well as their fears and their anger about the past. Participants identified several key concerns, some of which have already been addressed as quick wins.
- **Stakeholder meetings:** The team met with several community stakeholders to better understand the history of the area and the issues important to residents now.
- **Steering Committee:** The Steering Committee met regularly to add insight and to provide feedback on the information gathered and analysis completed.



COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION

- **Intercept Surveys and Pop-Up Events:** To reach a more representative sample of stakeholders, the team hosted pop-up events and collected intercept survey responses at various locations and times to connect with community members. Some locations and events included the MLK Jr. Recreation Center, Veronica's Café, and both the 2023 and 2024 Juneteenth events in Denton.
- **Visioning Workshop:** Meeting held to share preliminary concepts with the public and to collect feedback. The project team asked community members to draw their ideal SEDAP boundary. Participants also provided ideas about capital improvement projects, quick wins, pedestrian and bike access, parks, housing, and economic development.



VISIONING WORKSHOP

- **Visual Preference Surveys and Boundary Establishment:** Using the information gathered at the Visioning Workshop, the team went out into the community, specifically to determine the preferred housing and commercial building styles and finalize the study area boundary. The data previously collected was aggregated into three possible boundary maps. Participants were asked to vote on the map which best represented their idea of Southeast Denton.
- **Implementation Workshop:** The team met with staff from various agencies and entities in the Denton area, such as the appraisal district, the County, and various City departments, to discuss the feasibility of various implementation ideas.



INTERCEPT SURVEYS

- **Online Engagement:** The team also gathered input from the public through an online survey and forum on "Discuss Denton" that allowed people to get involved and find out about in-person engagement and community surveys in their area.



STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

WHAT

The project team presented updates on findings, proposed recommendations, and potential actions at four steering committee meetings. During each presentation, steering committee members provided context and feedback.

WHY

To ensure that key stakeholders guided the planning process and that the plan remains relevant to the community.

Results

The 11 member steering committee representing local residents, pastors, and community advocates played a crucial part in the goals, objectives, recommendations, and actions included in this plan. Here is what they represented as key wants and desires of the community:

- The community is in favor of community benefit agreements.
- There should be a focus on attainability rather than affordability.
- Investigate how nearby areas could support Southeast Denton.
- Highlight the diversity of Southeast Denton.
- Most of the residents work outside of Southeast Denton.
- Develop infrastructure that meets residents' needs.
- Introduce missing middle housing in the community.
- Develop key street cross sections within the community.



LISTENING SESSIONS

WHAT

Community meetings that started with acknowledging the harm that existing plans and zoning ordinances have inflicted on communities, apologizing for that harm, and seeking to atone by listening to the concerns of the community.

WHY

To hear and incorporate concerns of the residents into the plan and ensure it represents the current and future needs of the community.

SIX in-person listening sessions
ONE virtual listening session
75 Attendees

Results

Here are the main themes of the discussions:

- Many unjust practices were inflicted upon Black residents, and families have not forgotten this history.
- Residents are frustrated by the lack of communication regarding the Southeast Denton road reconstruction project.
- Speeding on some local streets is a concern.
- Parks and community facilities are cherished amenities.
- Feelings were mixed about housing and affordability.
- Property tax increases triggered by new development drive gentrification fears.
- Residents feel the pressure that change is coming.
- Community consultation must improve for planning and rezoning.
- The City can improve its relationship with the community.
- Infrastructure must be improved, with a focus on safety.



VISIONING WORKSHOP

WHAT

Open house with multiple activities to ask participants what capital improvement projects they prefer, ideas for quick wins, pedestrian and bike improvements, park and trail ideas, areas of change and stability, what they love, and what they would like to remove.

WHY

To understand the general perception, collective needs, opinions, and desires from the community. Information gathered from workshops and surveys forms the basis of the plan's recommendations.

Results

Through multiple activities the community revealed:

What they love about SE Denton:
Green spaces, parks, churches, community scale.

What they want to remove from SE Denton:
Cement plant on Prairie Street, remove pressure to increase density, potholes and breaks in sidewalks, jails, constant and excessive roadwork.

What they want to keep in SE Denton:
Community's social connections, Black history of the area, mixed income, affordable housing - two story single family, duplexes, fouplexes, townhouses etc., parks and open spaces, neighborhood retail and restaurants.

What they want from SEDAP:
Ideas for quick wins:
Bike racks at businesses west of Bell Avenue, more benches and shade for people walking, more lighting on pathways, bike parking in the parks, additional trash cans in public areas, more street trees.

What is their dream for SE Denton:
No gentrification, community market, streetlights and shade, not to be commercialized, owner occupied housing, community events, improved infrastructure: Better pedestrian connections to downtown, more sidewalks, a safe way to cross McKinney Street, slower traffic on Morse Street.



INTERCEPT SURVEYS

WHAT

Multiple forms of community engagement at events, in front of recreation centers, and at local restaurants focused on meeting people where they are and hearing their input on the needs of the community.

WHY

To ensure the diverse members of the community that did not come to meetings had their voices and ideas incorporated into the Southeast Denton plan.

FOUR intercept surveys
109 people participated

Results

The community voiced their concerns for their community, and voted on various forms of housing and commercial buildings, the area boundary, street designs, and strategies in the plan. Here are the community's overarching concerns:

Cleanliness and Safety.

Lack of investment in infrastructure and amenities.

Mixed views about the increase of apartments in Southeast Denton.

Housing affordability and availability.

Maintaining Southeast Denton's wonderful sense of community.

FIGURE 31. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY TAKEAWAYS

The key themes that emerged from the various engagement activities are shown in the graphic below.

Improve communication between the City and the neighborhood



Keep the community updated and involved about street construction and zoning requests.

More accessible communication methods were requested.

Create standards for housing, ensure long-term affordability, and address concerns about displacement

Talk with the community about housing preservation measures to protect them from increased property taxes and displacement.



Remember the past so we don't repeat it

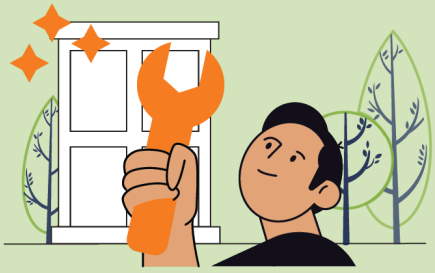
Include the community in planning decisions

Strengthen and support community assets

Invest to benefit existing residents and attract new residents

Maintain cherished community assets

Residents enjoy knowing each other and gathering together.



Protect and invest in the community centers such as American Legion Hall, Fred Moore Park, MLK Recreation Center and Katy Trail.

Improve Infrastructure

Southeast Denton feels neglected. It needs more sidewalks, bike lanes, better maintained streets,



improved lights, more trees and increased accessibility within the community and to other parts of the city/region.

Preserve Denton's history and remember the lessons of Quakertown

Community still feels generational trauma and loss of generational wealth. The City needs to remember the past and prevent actions that lead to displacement.



End the pattern of neglect and begin to heal the area

Harmful development patterns such as large arterial roads or industrial zoning sends the wrong message to residents. The City should respect the residential character of the area.



Vision for Southeast Denton

Our vision for Southeast Denton is a harmonious future that ensures a diverse, resilient and inclusive community for generations to come. We will be a vibrant community that the City cultivates trust with, and that cherishes and preserves our rich Black history and culture, discourages gentrification, ensures shared prosperity, and elevates the overall quality of life through strategic investments.



iSky Films

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations provide the broad picture of how to achieve the envisioned future of SEDAP. It lays out the desired outcomes and goals that emerged as the direct result of existing conditions analysis, and community and stakeholder engagements. Specific strategies and action steps are identified to achieve each of the goals. Future land use map and mobility networks are a major component of the SEDAP recommendations.



Desired Outcomes

Community outreach culminated in a plan that celebrates the cohesiveness of this community by focusing on the following desired outcomes:

1. Southeast Denton will receive its fair share of political, economic, and social investment from the city to repair past harms.
2. Southeast Denton is a multicultural and diverse community that continues to celebrate its Black cultural roots.
3. The Southeast Denton community has strong, connected neighborhoods whose residents desire a variety of housing types and pricing options to allow a diverse range of ages and incomes to call this area home.
4. Southeast Denton will have a safe, accessible, and connected network for all modes of travel (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, automobiles) to travel within and outside the neighborhood.
5. Southeast Denton residents will be able to enjoy public spaces and amenities (parks, programming, activities) that are equitable with the public spaces and amenities found elsewhere in Denton and the metroplex in quality, access, and availability.

Goals

The recommended strategies and actions are based on five goals derived from the feedback received from the community during an extensive public engagement process (see Community Engagement Chapter). The goals for the Southeast Denton study area plan are:

1. Build trust within the community and with the City as a whole
2. Honor the culture and heritage of Southeast Denton
3. Invest in economic prosperity
4. Strengthen neighborhoods and housing affordability
5. Elevate the quality of public amenities and infrastructure
6. Create a safe and connected, multi modal travel system



GOAL 1: BUILD TRUST WITH THE COMMUNITY AND WITH THE CITY AS A WHOLE.

The trauma of forcible relocation of Quakertown in 1923, negative impacts of land use decisions in and around the neighborhood, and lack of equitable public investment over the years compared to other parts of Denton have created a multi-generational distrust of local government in the Southeast Denton community. The recent development of new, higher density residential and mixed-use projects around the edges of the study area combined with a lack of communication and information flow between the city departments and the residents has fueled the fears of another forced displacement for the residents of Southeast Denton. The strategies in this section are focused on building community trust and partnership with the City to implement the vision articulated in this Plan.

STRATEGY 1.1: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN ANTI-DISPLACEMENT ACTION PLAN SPECIFIC TO THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA TO SUPPORT HOUSING STABILITY FOR BOTH RENTERS AND HOMEOWNERS.

Anti-displacement plans are used in neighborhoods experiencing rising rents and home prices by protecting existing residents and giving them more time and ability to choose if or where to move. Anti-displacement action plans offer tools and programs to anticipate and respond to displacement pressures from rising rents and home prices in Southeast Denton.

- **Action 1.1.1**: Budget funds to help support the tenant-based eviction prevention program with legal representation to forestall eviction.
- **Action 1.1.2**: Develop a series of pre- approved Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) designs for common lot sizes and existing ADU requirements to help homeowners speed development review and construction process.
- **Action 1.1.3**: Amend the Denton Development Code to remove minimum parking requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units.
- **Action 1.1.4**: Increase home repair and modification loans/grants to low-income homeowners in Southeast Denton to help homeowners address code violations, reduce energy costs, and create safe and age-friendly homes.
- **Action 1.1.5**: Collaborate with the Denton Central Appraisal District (Denton CAD) to ensure equitable appraisal methodologies provide market value based on the age and condition of individual homes and by raising the homestead, disabled person, and over age 65 exemption rates to the state limit for municipalities.

STRATEGY 1.2: CREATE A SOUTHEAST DENTON COMMUNICATION STRATEGY SPECIFIC TO SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.

A communication strategy is a plan that outlines how the City will communicate with Southeast Denton residents. It includes a set of goals and objectives, key messages, communication channels, tactics, and metrics to measure the success of the communication efforts. Effective communication is vital for building trust, encouraging citizen compliance, and can help City staff build understanding and support between the City Hall and Southeast Denton residents.

- **Action 1.2.1:** Create a consistent city-wide communication strategy for all departments to follow.
- **Action 1.2.2**: Develop communications materials that include visual descriptions in addition to concise writeups and is distributed through validators, ambassadors, and influencers that have the trust of the community.

STRATEGY 1.3: DEVELOP A PROGRAM TO RECRUIT MORE PARTICIPANTS FOR THE DENTON 360 PROGRAM FROM SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.

Denton 360 is a citizen leadership academy designed to create better informed and engaged residents by introducing them to the innerworkings of local government empowering them to participate more actively in decision- making. Despite historic program success, Southeast Denton residents have rarely been involved in Denton 360. Recruiting more Southeast Denton residents in Denton 360 will improve residents' understanding of local government and City staff's knowledge of community issues and concerns. This collaboration can improve the lines of communication and relationship between Southeast Denton residents and the City Hall.

- **Action 1.3.1:** Identify barriers to Southeast Denton resident participation in Denton 360 and implement a redesigned program, specially targeted towards younger generations (under 40 years old).

GOAL 2: HONOR THE CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF SOUTHEAST DENTON.

In addition to the fear of displacement, the residents of Southeast Denton also fear that the social and physical changes in the area will soon lead to residents and visitors no longer being able to recognize the place and people that once called this area home. Southeast Denton is home to the descendants of families who settled here after being forcibly removed from nearby Quakertown. This community has planted deep roots in Southeast Denton despite the painful history and the decades of injustices that followed. These roots have made this community rich with culture and pride. The strategies in this section focus on honoring and preserving the historically significant memories and culture that has defined this area for over a century.

STRATEGY 2.1: USE HISTORIC PRESERVATION TOOLS AND PROGRAMS, ESPECIALLY CONSERVATION DISTRICTS TO RECOGNIZE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND THE FAMILIES WHO CREATED IT.

Individual historic landmarks and conservation districts are tools that preserve the exterior character or aesthetics of a structure. Historic landmark designation can protect vital historic assets in an area from threats such as encroaching development and disrepair. Historic assets can be protected at the national, state, or local level. A conservation district is a zoning tool to preserve the neighborhood's sense of place through architectural standards, development standards and special zoning provisions.

- **Action 2.1.1:** Conduct a historic resource survey of historic assets that are not yet locally designated, particularly the long-standing churches and original homes.
- **Action 2.1.2:** Hold workshops to educate residents on the benefits of historic landmark designation and conservation district designation as well as help property owners pursue historic landmark status on their property.
- **Action 2.1.3:** Apply for state and federal funding opportunities for churches, homes, and commercial properties, including Certified Local Government grants and African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund provided through the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

STRATEGY 2.2: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SOUTHEAST DENTON HISTORY AND CULTURAL ROOTS PRESERVATION PROGRAM TO RECOGNIZE THE CULTURE AND THE FAMILIES WHO CREATED IT.

A preservation program for Southeast Denton would ensure that whatever demographic changes occur in the future, the physical environment will preserve and maintain remembrance of the area's cultural roots. Harlem in New York is a good example of maintaining the Black roots and history of an area. Maintaining a connection to the past also provides a sense of unique identity, inclusion, and belonging to the entire community.

- **Action 2.2.1:** Review, amend, and implement the Original Denton Cultural District boundaries to reflect the Southeast Denton Study Area and the Downtown Area separately.
- **Action 2.2.2:** Create Southeast Denton Cultural District that acknowledges the community's cultural roots by preserving, restoring, and developing physical and culturally significant elements of the area.
- **Action 2.2.3:** Activate the new Southeast Denton Cultural District through various activities such as a Heritage Walk, a cultural map, special signage, crosswalks with mural designs at intersections in the District, an archival event with the community to gather and document oral histories and displaying these at the American Legion Hall and/or MLK Jr. Recreation Center.

GOAL 3: INVEST IN ECONOMIC PROSPERITY.

The main purpose of the strategies and actions in this section is to help create and keep the wealth in Southeast Denton and kickstart and advance larger investments or broader organizational/community goals. A mix of people-based and place- based economic development helps to maintain the close-knit community culture and character and ensures that Southeast Denton has a physical environment that fosters active businesses, access to jobs, and growth opportunities.

STRATEGY 3.1: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PEOPLE-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIFIC TO THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.

People-based strategies strengthen small businesses, provide needed social services, and concentrate on building capacity. These strategies acknowledge the realities of community members' lives, including a need for flexible daycare opportunities, workforce education, mentoring opportunities, support for young people, and crime reduction and safety.

- **Action 3.1.1:** Amend regulatory barriers for home-based businesses, for example, by removing the Specific Use Permit (SUP) requirement for small Family Home Day Cares in residential districts.
- **Action 3.1.2:** Provide financial assistance to reduce Stoke (Stoke provides workspace, office amenities and a supportive, resourceful community for startups, entrepreneurs, remote workers, freelancers, small businesses, and tech-enabled companies and provides programming and events to foster growth and collaboration) membership costs and market this and other opportunities such as maker spaces, pop-up markets, and events available to entrepreneurs and small businesses to Southeast Denton residents.

STRATEGY 3.2: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PEOPLE-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIFIC TO THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.

Place-based economic development activities focus on supporting the built environment of an area by enhancing buildings, infrastructure, and other physical improvements in the area to improve the lives of all of the people who live and work there. These strategies provide suitable spaces for small businesses to incubate, offer gathering spaces for people to exchange ideas, and activate new clusters of economic activity.

- **Action 3.2.1:** Create economic development incentive packages, including Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Chapter 380 grants, and property tax abatement, to support these activities and to draw small fresh-foos stores or full-service grocery store chains to Southeast Denton.
- **Action 3.2.2:** Re-imagine underutilized light industrial space in Southeast Denton, especially along the southern border of the study area by amending the future land use plan to expand the Community Mixed Use land use and adding a commercial zoning overlay.
- **Action 3.2.3:** Identify vacant commercial buildings or sites to repurpose the space to: establish a market using parking lots or park property to allow food trucks, craft vendors, small businesses, and kiosks to allow start-up businesses to foster a loyal client base before making larger investments; and/ or create off-site commercial kitchens in a re-imagined business incubator space to establish new restaurants, bakeries, or packaged food creators; and/or initiate a grocery co-op, community gardens, community kitchens, and/or fresh food pantries by working with non-profits in the area.
- **Action 3.2.4:** Amend the Downtown Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District (TIRZ #1) Financing Plan to include TIF funding for portions of Southeast Denton because the stability of Southeast Denton is vital to the success of the eastern portion of the Downtown TIF district. Such funding should include home repair and homebuyer assistance and additional pedestrian facilities to connect Southeast Denton to downtown, street trees, etc. (TIF funding may be used outside the TIF district for affordable housing and pedestrian linkages into the district).

STRATEGY 3.3: ESTABLISH A NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT ZONE (NEZ) TO SPUR COMMUNITY INVESTMENT, REDUCE TAXES, AND INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN SOUTHEAST DENTON.

In a NEZ area the City can encourage actions such as renovation and new construction of affordable housing, investing in a new business, or improving commercial space in exchange for development fee reimbursements, property tax abatements, and sales tax refunds. This helps to lower the financial burden on the property owner in the first few years after the investment.

- **Action 3.3.1:** Create a NEZ program statement, including the purpose of the program, the benefits of the zone, participation requirements, and compliance criteria.
- **Action 3.3.2:** Designate a NEZ boundary and follow steps Sec. 380.003 in Chapter 378 of the Texas Local Government code to establish a NEZ in Southeast Denton, including required public notice and hearings. Implement and market the NEZ by creating application materials, a procedure manual, and a guidebook for applicants and create outreach material to encourage participation in the program.

GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING AFFORDABILITY.

The main purpose of the strategies and actions in this section is to maintain the existing character of the neighborhoods, reduce speculation and help keep the rate of land value growth from rising too fast, and prevent encroachment of large-scale downtown-style developments in Southeast Denton, and help existing homeowners stay in their homes.

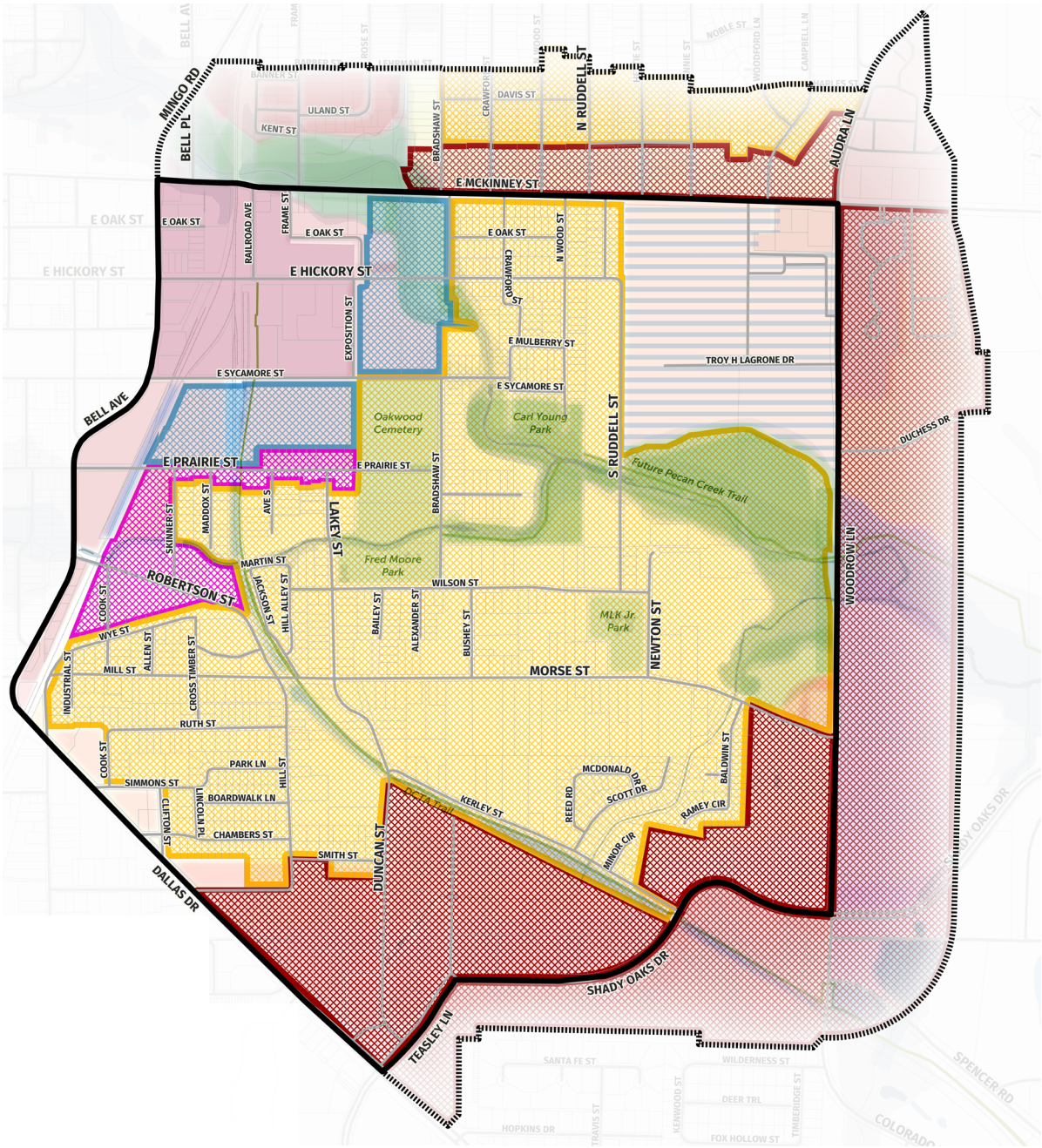
STRATEGY 4.1: ESTABLISH OVERLAY DISTRICTS TO PROTECT EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE AND CHARACTER.

Overlay districts work in conjunction with the underlying zoning district to provide additional regulations in a designated area. These districts can limit height, allow additional uses, require a higher design standard, adjust parking regulations, or anything else normally regulated through zoning. Southeast Denton residents' welcome new development in the area if it respects the scale and feel of the existing neighborhood, such as moderately sized single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes, small apartment buildings, and pocket neighborhoods clustered around a central courtyard or green space. limit the scale, design, and urban pattern of developments/ redevelopments in Southeast Denton.

- **Action 4.1.1:** Create a residential overlay district as shown in Figure 32 to maintain the scale and character of the neighborhoods while fostering community investment to create livable and inclusive neighborhoods for all who want to call Southeast Denton home. Overlay standards may include, but are not limited to, limiting height to two stories, allowing infill on small lots, requiring enhanced front elevations such as larger windows and covered porches.
- **Action 4.1.2:** Create a commercial overlay district as shown in Figure 32 that focuses on walkable neighborhood design and uses, including, but not limited to, limiting building height, removing barriers to redevelop smaller infill lots, reducing parking and requiring it to be located behind buildings, requiring enhanced front elevations such as larger windows and pedestrian-scaled entrances, and ensuring larger tracts include a well-defined, walkable transportation network.
- **Action 4.1.3:** Create a live-work overlay district as shown in Figure 32 that focuses on allowing small mom and pop retail such as bookstore, toy shop, coffee shop, music store, barber shop, hair salon/spa, small incubator space, resale clothing etc. in a portion of a single family home with a portion being used as a residence simultaneously. Require design standards from the residential overlay in Action 4.1.1 to be applied in this live-work overlay also.

FIGURE 32. PROPOSED OVERLAYS

Source: HDR



- Live / Work Overlay
- Residential Overlay
- Commercial Overlay
- Height Overlay
- Proposed Southeast Denton Area Plan Boundary
- Proposed Transition Area Boundary

FIGURE 33. EXAMPLES OF DESIRED SCALE AND CHARACTER
Sources: Adobe Sock and HDR



DUPLEX



SINGLE FAMILY HOME



DUPLEX (GARAGE APARTMENT)



TRIPLEX



COURTYARD HOMES



MULTIFAMILY APARTMENTS



SINGLE FAMILY HOME AND BUSINESS



SMALL RETAIL SHOP



STRIP MALL



MULTI-STORY WALKABLE RETAIL

Note: These images were scored as desirable by 70% or more respondents to the visual preference survey.

STRATEGY 4.2: ADJUST THE PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USES IN THE DENTON 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR SOUTHEAST DENTON TO MATCH THE FUTURE LAND USES SHOWN IN FIGURE 33 AND IMPLEMENT THESE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS THROUGH REZONING.

The purpose of small-area plans is to further refine the future land uses recommended in the citywide Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan to a specific area to align future development/redevelopment with each community's specific needs. The actions below will ensure that in addition to allowing all people that wish to live in Southeast Denton can afford to do so, future developments will be compatible with the existing areas that the community wishes to preserve.

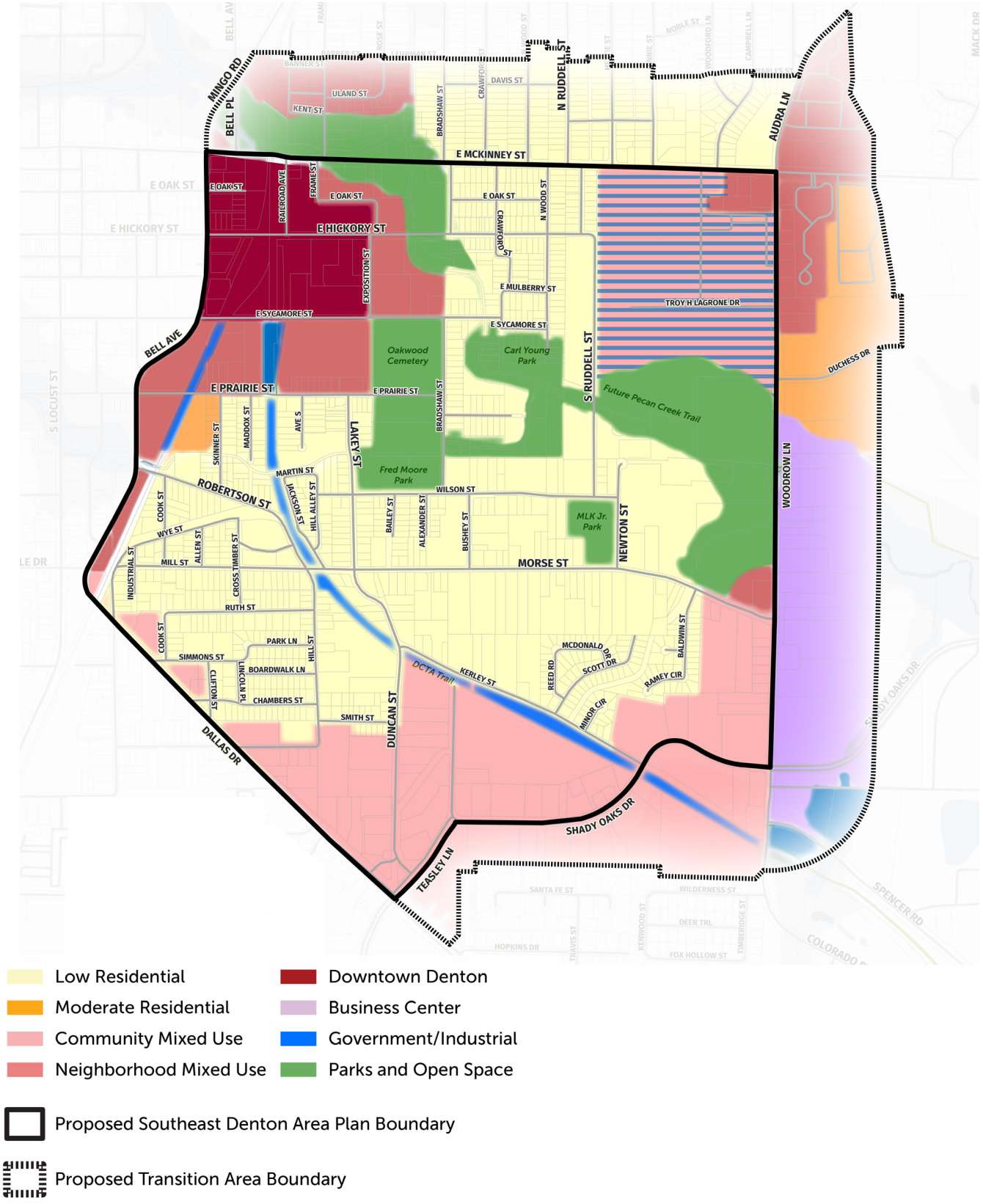
- **Action 4.2.1:** Rezone the existing Light Industrial zoned areas in the south portion and the existing Suburban Corridor zoned area in the northeast portion of the study area (See Figure 15) to be compatible with the community mixed use description in the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
- **Action 4.2.2:** Coordinate with Denton County on facility planning efforts to ensure land uses and design of the County property is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Action 4.2.3:** Rezone a portion of the existing Mixed Use Neighborhood zoning east of the railroad to Moderate Residential zoning to allow transition to low density residential areas, and add a height overlay to the Mixed Use Neighborhood zoning as shown in Figure 32 to allow compatible transition between the Downtown Core zoning height requirement and the new residential/commercial overlay district height limits.
- **Action 4.2.4**: Rezone the Light Industrial zoned area at the northwest corner of the Morse Street and Woodrow Lane to Neighborhood Mixed Use zoning.



FIGURE 34. PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Source: HDR

Note: A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.



STRATEGY 4.3: ESTABLISH A NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY AREA (NRSA) IN SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.

NRSAs help ensure revitalization efforts (such as increased home ownership, home repair programs, economic development efforts, and additional investment in the NRSA) work together to benefit the existing low- and moderate-income residents of the NRSA. The key benefit of establishing a NSRA is that it offers significant additional flexibility in the federal Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) otherwise stringent Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) regulations. They also allow cities to use CDBG grants to focus efforts in a geographically specific area. CDBG funds can be used for housing construction and rehabilitation, public facilities improvements, homeownership assistance, economic development assistance, and other similar uses.

- **Action 4.3.1:** Draft and submit an NRSA application to HUD and develop involvement from other organizations as part of the NRSA application leverage requirement.

STRATEGY 4.4: INCREASE ACCESS TO CAPITAL IN SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA BY CREATING A CONSORTIUM OF BANKS FOR MORTGAGE LENDING.

This is a market-based approach to improving lives in Southeast Denton and requires very little City financial investment. This would be a proactive effort to prevent predatory lenders and encourage investment in Southeast Denton study area that historically has not had equitable access to banks and finance. This strategy would signal that Denton has a culture of encouraging banks to increase access to the capital needed for Southeast Denton and its residents to thrive.

- **Action 4.4.1:** Establish a community investment committee that is responsible for working with bankers and lenders to establish equitable lending practices for housing and small businesses.

STRATEGY 4.5: COORDINATE WITH DENTON INTERDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (DISD) TO ENSURE THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA SCHOOLS SERVE AS NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS.

Neighborhood public schools have the potential to be the centers of their community, to be the driving force of a prosperous community, and serve as anchor institutions in their communities, by hosting various sporting events, theater performances, and community-directed events. The closer a student lives to their school, the more access the parents will have to the resources at that school. Families who currently don't have the time or resources to travel to their children's distant schools, will have the ability to participate in their education if they go to a school within the neighborhood. With increased access to the schools, parents will become more involved. Families will become interwoven through their strong neighborhood public schools. As the students begin to develop life-long relationships through their neighborhood schools, the parents will also develop strong relationships. The relationships developed in school will create stronger family ties within the neighborhood, ultimately leading to an environment of communal cohesion and trust.

- **Action 4.5.1:** Work with DISD to adjust the attendance zone boundary for Rivera Elementary School to include the entire Southeast Denton study area to ensure that Southeast Denton families have a neighborhood school allowing the residents to save time and strengthen community bonds.

GOAL 5: ELEVATE THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

Public amenities and infrastructure are a crucial factor in determining the quality of life for residents in a community. Neighborhood scale built environment can contribute to health, well-being, and happiness of the residents. Therefore, public amenities and infrastructure such as parks, open, natural, and green spaces, design of roadways and buildings that is based on improving participation and engagement, access, identity, safety, and inclusion enhances social interactions, leisure, health and safety in a neighborhood. This ultimately leads to subjective well-being and a higher quality of life for the entire community.

STRATEGY 5.1: UPGRADE THE EXISTING PARKS IN SOUTHEAST DENTON TO HIGHER-QUALITY PARKS.

Incremental (short-, mid-, and long-term) improvements to existing parks and facilities can improve aesthetics of an area and create a welcoming environment. Together, these increase opportunities for the community to gather outside, recreate, and engage in fitness activities, and they signal that a place is well-loved and cared for. Southeast Denton has two parks, two recreation/ community centers, publicly owned open space, and creeks running through the neighborhood. The MLK, Jr. Center and the American Legion Hall Senior Center are well-used local hubs of programming and activity. These existing amenities offer opportunities for beautifying Southeast Denton and adding to the recreational green space. Improvements that: add accessibility, increase safety/comfort, provide a variety of activities and experiences that appeal to a variety of users, and use park design and programming reflecting the culture and interests of community members will lead to a higher-quality parks system in Southeast Denton.

- **Action 5.1.1:** Implement key recommendations and action items in the 2022 Parks, Recreation, and Trails System Master Plan, improve existing parks, senior center, and recreation center in Southeast Denton, and improve access to regional facilities to serve some of the program needs in Southeast Denton.

STRATEGY 5.2: ENHANCE THE PHYSICAL QUALITY OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.

Southeast Denton's abundant green space, trees, and creeks provide an opportunity for the city to improve stormwater management and add to the City's park space at the same time. Developing stormwater management infrastructure in the area using design elements that serve as both utility and amenity such as rain gardens, bio swales, culvert removal, reintroduction of native vegetation and animals and nature reconnection and restoration will ensure that development reduces rather than exacerbating existing flooding and drainage issues in the area.

- **Action 5.2.1:** Create a stormwater management plan for the Southeast Denton area to address erosion, ponding, and stream bank issues by identifying streets, parks, and open spaces with severe erosion or ponding issues.
- **Action 5.2.2:** Update the relevant design manuals and ordinances to require projects to incorporate smaller-scale green stormwater and bio-infrastructure and identify techniques to restore the natural function of the Pecan Creek.
- **Action 5.2.3:** Purchase additional property near Pecan Creek to add to the City's inventory of park space and protect the trees to help mitigate the impacts of stormwater.
- **Action 5.2.4:** Facilitate environmental education programs to raise awareness about water quality by conducting an annual or biannual cleanup day for parks and creeks.

STRATEGY 5.3: ENHANCE PROGRAMMING AND CITY-SPONSORED EVENTS IN EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION CENTERS IN SOUTHEAST DENTON.

Park programming is a way to increase the functionality of a park by making the space more effective and increasing usage by providing memorable experiences for everyone. In addition to improvements like interactive playgrounds, inclusive play structures, splash pads, outdoor fitness, etc. community events bring a community together for holidays or celebrations and create an avenue for a collaborative and inclusive interaction among the diverse populations and cultures. In addition to providing access to interim entertainment for the residents, hosting events and festivals in Southeast Denton would lead to capture of labor spend, increase in temporary labor hours, and increase in sales tax receipts. All these benefits can also help repair the perceptions in and around the study area both within Southeast Denton and the region.

- **Action 5.3.1:** Enhance existing gazebo/amphitheater and/or install a stage at Fred Moore Park and/or the MLK Jr. Recreation Center to show films from the Denton Black Film Festival and collaborate with the Storytelling, Blues, and Arts & Jazz Festivals to be hosted in Southeast Denton Parks as neighborhood events.
- **Action 5.3.2:** Improve collaboration between the Juneteenth Festival organizers and the Southeast Denton community to add oral history and storytelling at the Juneteenth events to ensure that keepers of local history have an opportunity to share that history before it is lost.
- **Action 5.3.3:** Offer small community grants to community leaders and organizers to host block parties and markets within the Southeast Denton community. These events could be around a season (i.e. Spring Fest or Fall Carnival) or they can be held around specific holidays and celebrations (i.e. MLK Day Festival, Cinco de Mayo, Hispanic Heritage Month, Earth Day Festival, Black History Month Kick Off, etc.)

GOAL 6: CREATE A SAFE AND CONNECTED, MULTI-MODAL TRAVEL SYSTEM

Transportation facilities provided within the street shape mobility and travel decisions, directly and indirectly impacting environmental quality, public health and safety, and quality of life. The type of travel system in an area can help create community wealth, foster inclusive growth, and maintain a character and culture, where people feel connected. The strategies for this goal focus on providing a more robust, connected roadway network in Southeast Denton that will differentiate between streets through adjacent land uses, and roads which are multimodal facilities that consider the context of the place and the function of the road, whether this be sidewalks, bicycle facilities, or transit integration.

STRATEGY 6.1: IMPROVE STREET NETWORK TO PRIORITIZE CONNECTIVITY AND MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIONS.

An improved street network would allow residents to choose from various modes of transportation, make navigation across Southeast Denton safer for people, especially children and people with disabilities, reduce carbon emissions by encouraging active modes of transportation (walking, biking, public transit), beautify the community, and help to spark economic growth by giving context to commercial developments next to the roadways.

- **Action 6.1.1:** Evaluate changing the existing street cross sections for Hickory Street, Morse Street, Duncan Street, Lakey Street, and Roberston Street. Also evaluate improvements along Bell Avenue, Woodrow Lane, and Sycamore Street at least through Southeast Denton area to more pedestrian and bike friendly multimodal corridors (See sample cross-sections in Figure 35).
- **Action 6.1.2:** Conduct public outreach, education, and coordination with residents as part of any roadway design and improvement program to ensure final street sections meet the needs of those who are most impacted.
- **Action 6.1.3:** Undertake a pilot program on Morse Street, and/or Lakey Street, and/or areas of Duncan Street as an intermediate solution and to test appropriate safety interventions with tactical urbanism approaches that use low-cost materials to experiment and gather input on potential street design changes such as reduced travel lanes, larger sidewalks, trees, medians, and bike lanes as shown in the recommended cross sections in Figure 35.
- **Action 6.1.4:** Fill in the sidewalk gaps along Morse Street, Roberston Street Prairie Street, Duncan Street, and Bell Avenue.
- **Action 6.1.5:** Require public streets that increase connectivity in the street network through Southeast Denton as a part of future development/redevelopment on 5 acres or more in size in the Southeast Denton study area.

STRATEGY 6.2: ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY AT INTERSECTIONS.

Currently, most of Southeast Denton's main roads have sufficient rights-of-way to re-purpose them in several different configurations to include on-street improvements such as traffic safety measures and pedestrian and bicycle facilities to enhance connectivity and safety on the roadways. This could include either on- or off-street separated bicycle paths, wider sidewalks, street plantings, upgrading existing street lighting, as well as adequate travel lanes.

Some ways of improving safety on roadways is to use traffic calming measures to reduce speeding that could include on-street parking lanes, vibrant crosswalks, speed tables at crossing points, vertical bollards between general purpose lane and on- street bike lane, planting street trees to create a visual perception of narrow streets, enforcing site triangles and so on.

- **Action 6.2.1:** Improve safety by installing ADA compliant pedestrian crossing signals, stop signs, and colorful crosswalk designs at the following intersections - Bell Avenue at Robertson Street, Prairie Street, and Sycamore Street, McKinney Street at Frame Street, Crawford Street and Woodrow Lane, and add a traffic signal at Woodrow Lane and Morse Street based on the recently conducted warrant study.
- **Action 6.2.2:** Improve safety for all users at the intersection of Smith Street and Duncan Streets. An example would be to enforce the sight triangle which would ensure clear visibility for turning vehicles at this intersection.



FIGURE 35. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Source: HDR

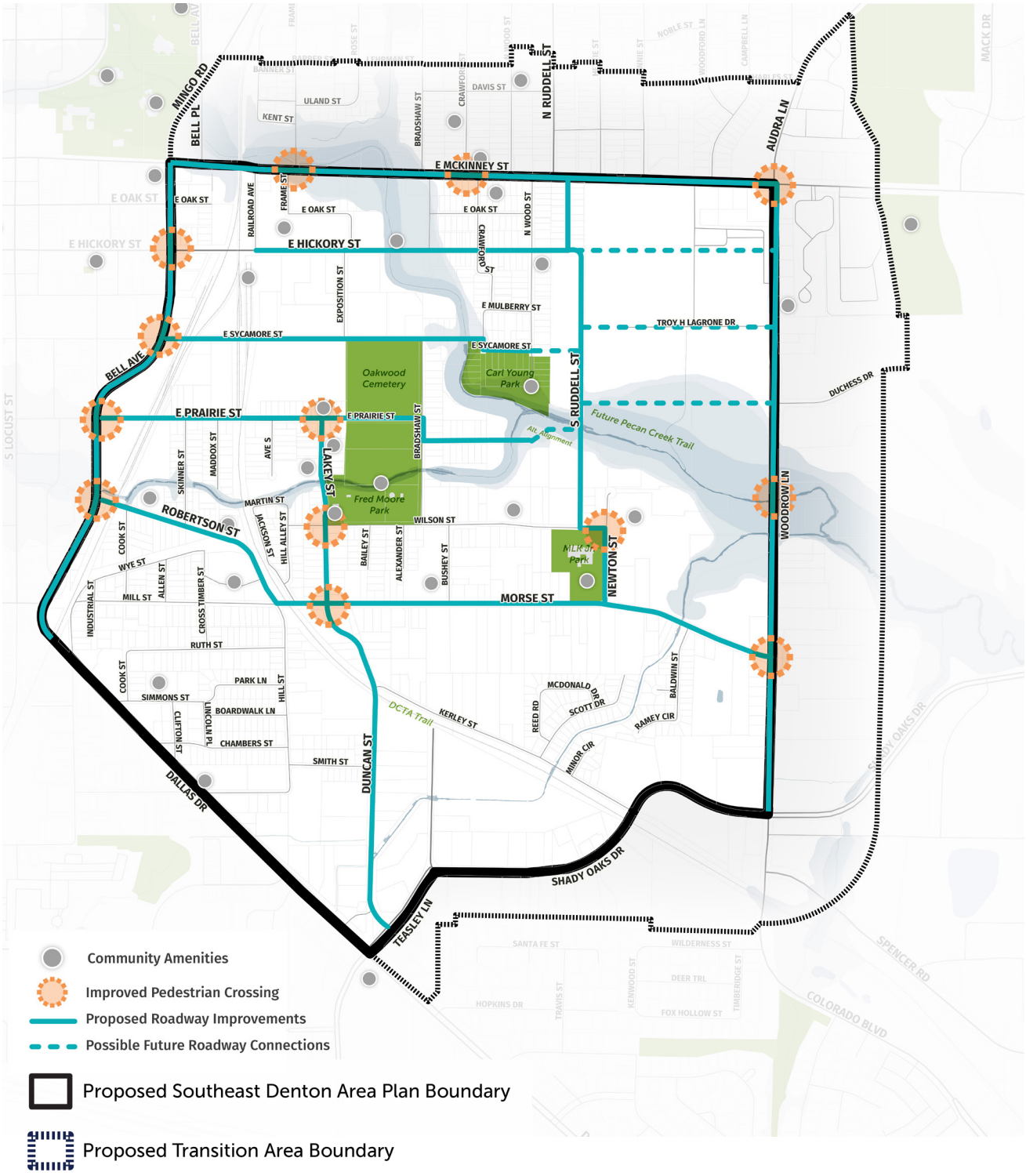
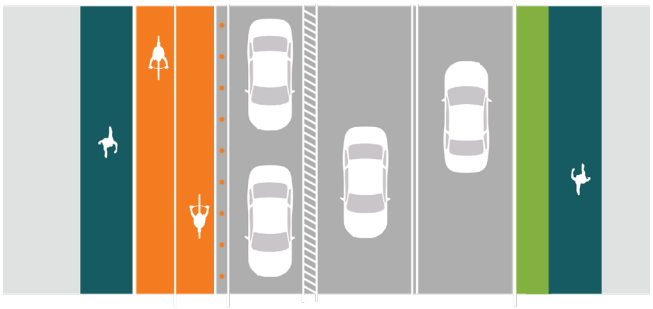
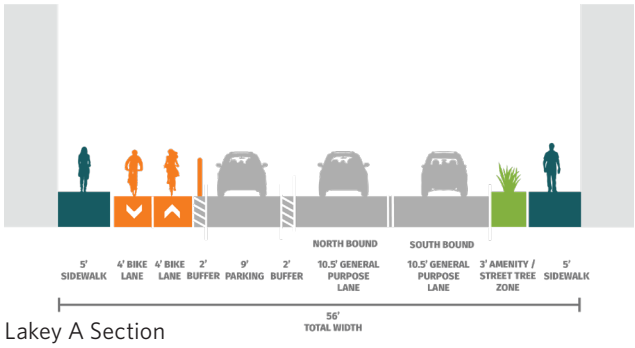


FIGURE 36. PROPOSED CROSS SECTIONS

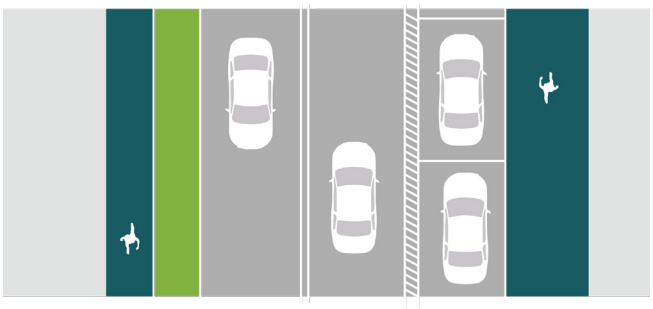
Source: HDR



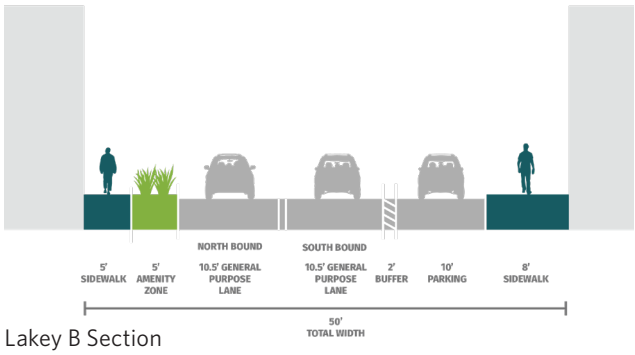
Lakey A Plan



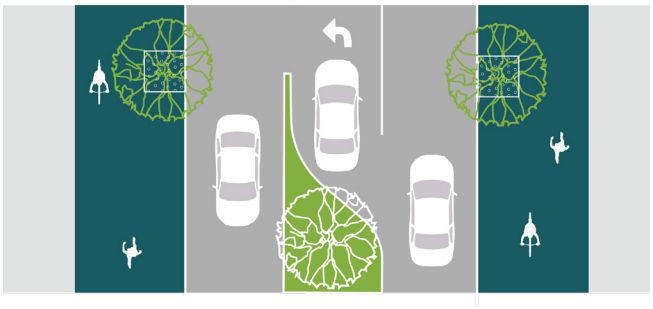
Lakey A Section



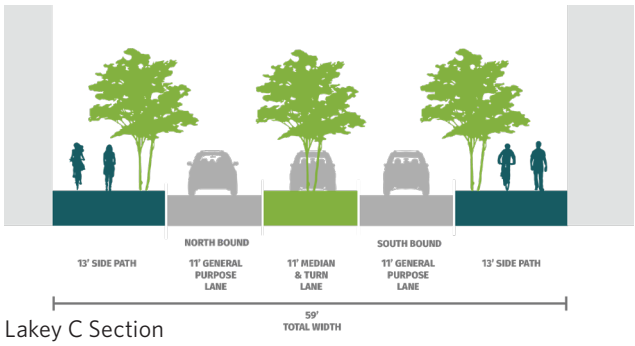
Lakey B Plan



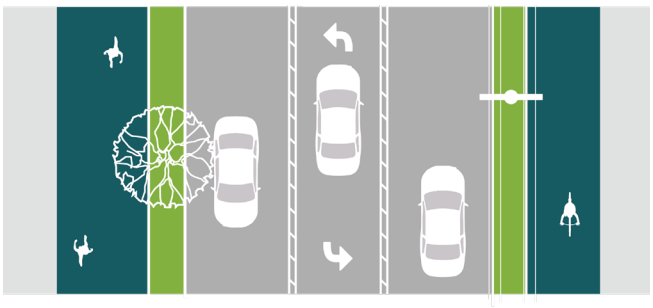
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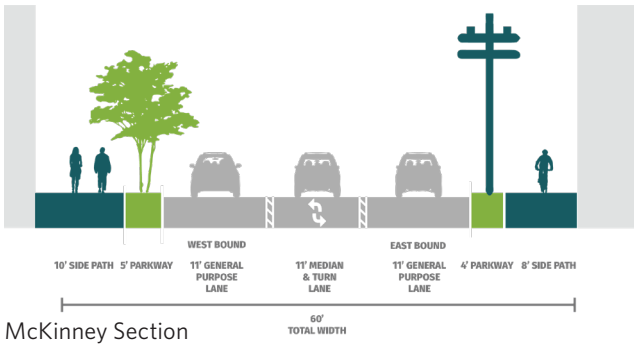
Lakey C Plan



Lakey C Section



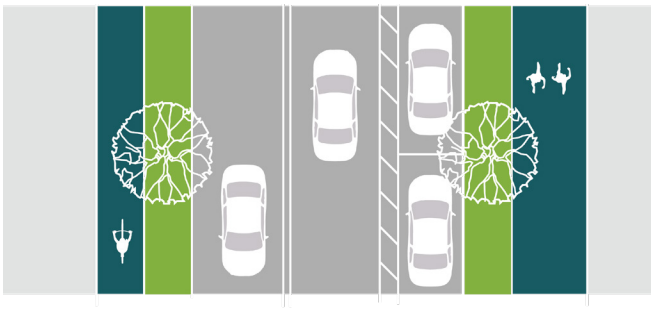
McKinney Plan



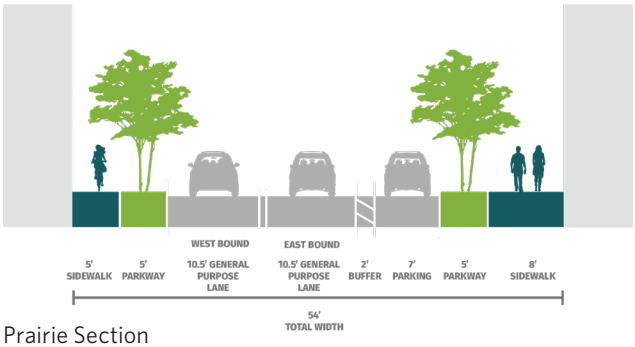
McKinney Section

FIGURE 37. PROPOSED CROSS SECTIONS

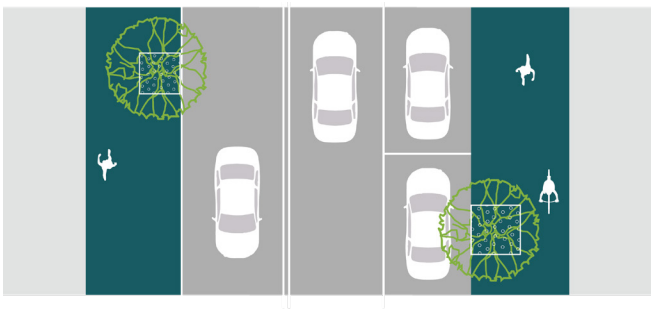
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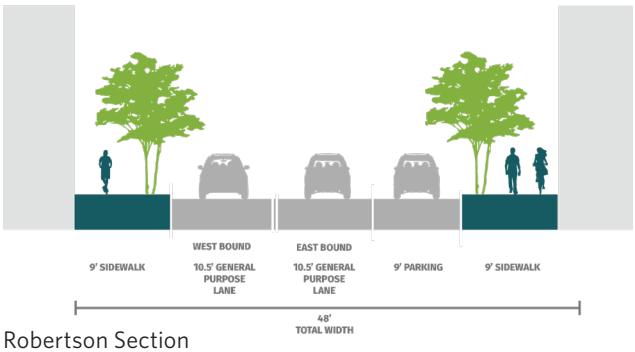
Prairie Plan



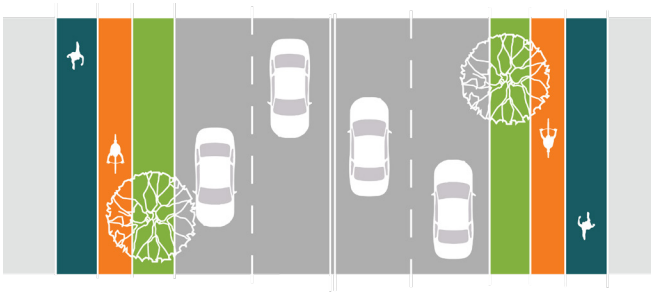
Prairie Section



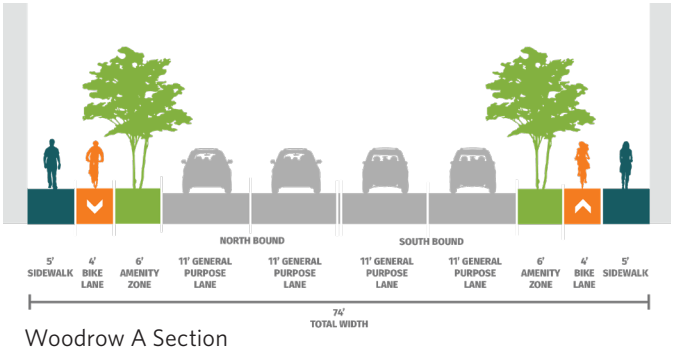
Robertson Plan



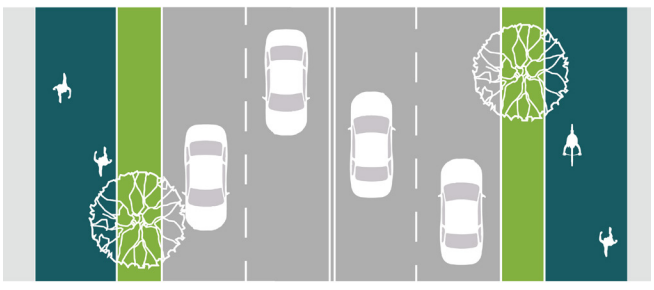
Robertson Section



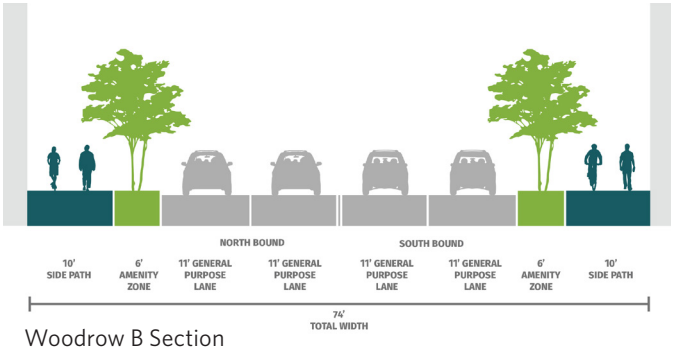
Woodrow A Plan



Woodrow A Section



Woodrow B Plan



Woodrow B Section

STRATEGY 6.3: DEVELOP A NETWORK OF TRAILS THROUGH THE EXISTING OPEN SPACES AND DRAINAGE EASEMENTS TO CONNECT RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND PUBLIC PLACES (PARKS, SCHOOLS, ETC.) TO FORM AN ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE SOUTHEAST DENTON.

Off-street trails are safe, convenient, enjoyable places where residents can walk, bike, and connect with neighbors. Off-street trails complement roadway infrastructure to offer a safe, well-connected system for pedestrians and bikes. The publicly owned lands around drainage areas and creeks, existing parks, and wide rights of way together provide an opportunity to develop off-street trails and linear parks and create a safer system for walking and biking in Southeast Denton.

These trails would connect people and places in the community, provide a social infrastructure to maintain the strong neighborhood bonds, encourage healthy lifestyle by providing residents with easy access to a linear park and walk/bike paths, protect the environment, increase the value of nearby properties, and increase social equity by providing an affordable mobility option.

- **Action 6.3.1:** Add a separate initiative in the future bond program to develop a well-connected system of off-street trails using existing easements, parks and open spaces, and land along creeks and natural drainage systems that provides regional trail system connectivity, prioritizes side path projects that connect to key destinations such as parks and schools, and enhances pedestrian connectivity within the Southeast Denton study area.
- **Action 6.3.2:** Add funding in the future bond program for construction of ADA compliant trail heads at key points along the trail network to provide parking, bike parking, drinking water fountains, etc.
- **Action 6.3.3:** Amend the Parks, Recreation, and Trails System Master Plan and the Pecan Creek Regional Trail Master Plan to extend the Future Pecan Creek Trail north past Carl Young Park to the south side of McKinney Street.

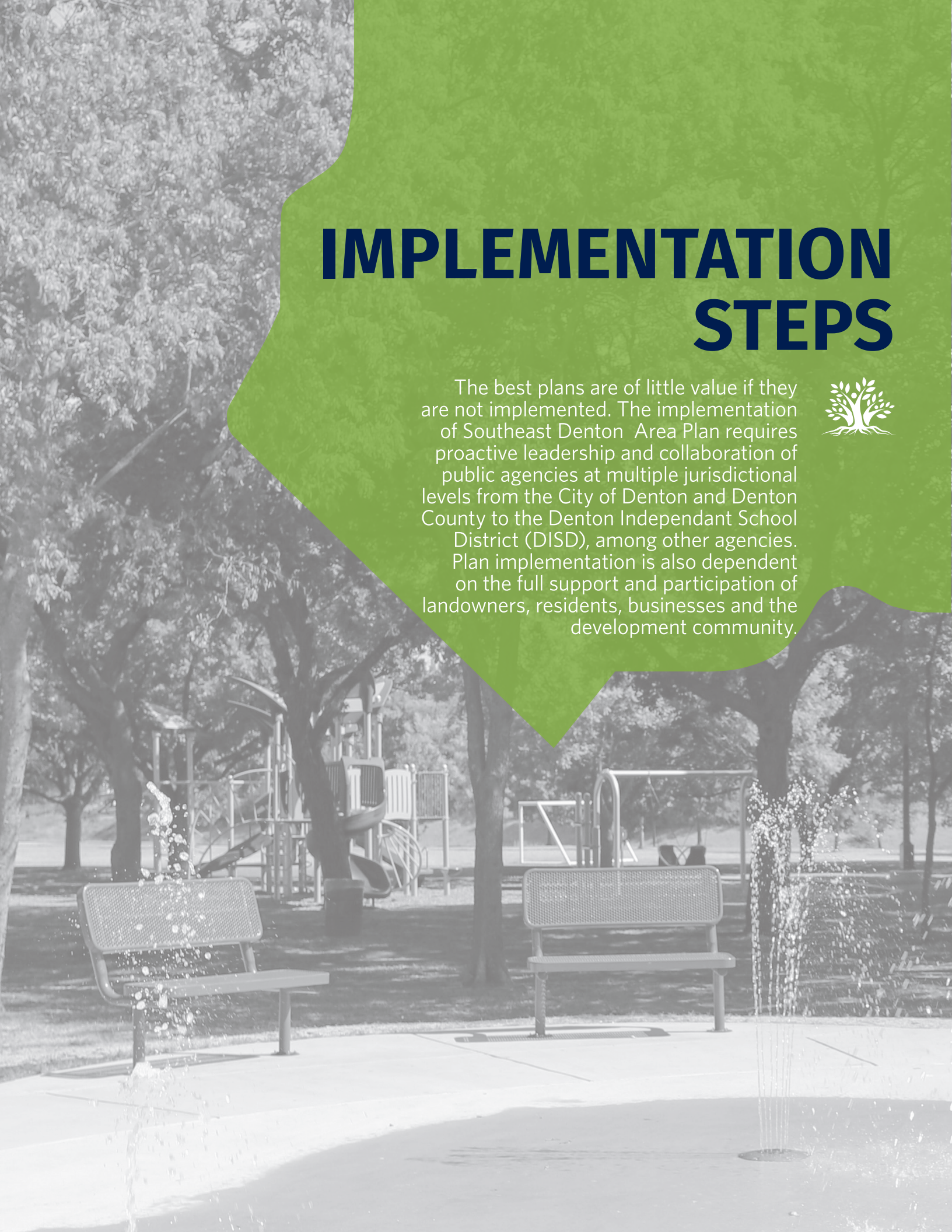
STRATEGY 6.4: STRENGTHEN THE CONNECTIONS TO DOWNTOWN AND SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL MODES OF TRANSPORTATION.

Downtown Denton draws citywide and regional crowds by offering a place for restaurants and entertainment, is located close to regional transportation through the rail system and is an economic hub for employers. Connecting the Southeast Denton to the downtown core would allow Southeast Denton residents easy access to the amenities and opportunities in Downtown Denton while bringing in the desired economic activity due to Southeast Denton study area's proximity to the downtown core.

- **Action 6.4.1:** Align intersections across Bell Avenue at Hickory Street, Sycamore Street, Prairie Street, and Robertson Street with the Downtown Area Plan cross section recommendations to ensure continuity and an easier pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for residents of Southeast Denton to downtown.
- **Action 6.4.2:** Work with the Denton County Transportation Agency to fill the gaps within the current bus system and recommend additional routes, especially connecting to and through Downtown Denton.
- **Action 6.4.3:** Create trail connections from downtown to the Pecan Creek Regional Trail & DCTA Katy Trail.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

The best plans are of little value if they are not implemented. The implementation of Southeast Denton Area Plan requires proactive leadership and collaboration of public agencies at multiple jurisdictional levels from the City of Denton and Denton County to the Denton Independant School District (DISD), among other agencies. Plan implementation is also dependent on the full support and participation of landowners, residents, businesses and the development community.



ACTION PLAN MATRIX

This chapter informs about the roles of various agencies responsible for adoption of regulations, administration of regulatory tools, community engagement, and financing policies that can guide and encourage private development alongside public investment. The following action matrix takes the strategies and actions established in the Recommendations chapter one step further by assigning time frames and responsible parties to each action. It will function as a tool to monitor progress of the recommended strategies.

AGENCY ACRONYMS

INTERNAL CITY DEPARTMENTS	ACRONYM
City Attorney's Office	CAO
City Manager's Office	CMO
Facilities Management	FM
Finance	F
Media Contacts / Marketing & Communications	MCMC
Community Services	CS
Environmental Services	ENV. SER.
Keep Denton Beautiful	KDB
Health and Food Safety	HFS
Parks and Recreation	PR
Development Services	DS
Economic Development	ED
Engineering Services	ENGI. SER.
Streets	ST
Transportation Services	TS
Real Estate	RE

AGENCY ACRONYMS

EXTERNAL PARTNERS	ACRONYM
Denton County Appraisal District	DCAD
Denton Independent School District	DISD
University of North Texas	UNT
Texas Women's University	TWU
North Central Texas College	NCTC
North Central Texas Council of Governments	NCTCOG
Trust for Public Land	TPL
Workforce Solutions of North Texas	WSNT
Denton County istorical Commision	DCHC
Texas Commission on the Arts	TCA

TIME FRAMES

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
Short-Term	One to Two Years
Mid-Term	Three to Five Years
Long-Term	Six to Ten Years

ACTION TYPE

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
Development Regulations	Zoning, codes, ordinance-related; site planning and development
Study / Plan	Studies, plans, evaluations, research into options, inventories, demonstration projects
Coordination / Outreach	Convening and coordinating; educating, promoting, marketing
Systems / Support	Adjustments to or expansion of current core systems; continuing support to systems currently in place; implementation of pre-existing plans/programs; improvements to infrastructure, community facilities
Program / Organization	Programmatic changes/additions; development of new tools, processes, and programs; creation of new institutions
Financial	Issues of funding and financing



ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIME FRAME	ACTION TYPE	CAPITAL FUNDS NEEDED (Y/N)
GOAL 1 - BUILD TRUST WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND WITH THE CITY AS A WHOLE					
STRATEGY 1.1: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN ANTI-DISPLACEMENT ACTION PLAN SPECIFIC TO THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA TO SUPPORT HOUSING STABILITY FOR BOTH RENTERS AND HOMEOWNERS.					
Action 1.1.1	Budget funds to help support the tenant-based eviction prevention program with legal representation to forestall eviction.	CS, CAO, F External Partners - UWD, LANWT	Mid-Term	Financial	N
Action 1.1.2	Develop a series of pre- approved Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) designs for common lot sizes and existing ADU requirements to help homeowners speed development review and construction process.	DS	Short-Term	Study/ Plan	N
Action 1.1.3	Increase home repair and modification loans/grants to low-income homeowners in Southeast Denton to help homeowners address code violations, reduce energy costs, and create safe and age-friendly homes.	CS, MCMC	Short-Term	Coordination/ Outreach	N
Action 1.1.4	Amend the Denton Development Code to remove minimum parking requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units.	DS	Short-Term	Development Regulations	N
Action 1.1.5	Collaborate with the Denton Central Appraisal District (Denton CAD) to ensure equitable appraisal methodologies provide market value based on the age and condition of individual homes and by raising the homestead, disabled person, and over age 65 exemption rates to the state limit for municipalities.	DS, CMO, DCAD	Mid-Term	Financial	N
STRATEGY 1.2: CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A CITY COMMUNICATION STRATEGY SPECIFIC TO SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.					
Action 1.2.1	Create a consistent city-wide communication strategy for all departments to follow that will be tailored for Southeast Denton.	MCMC, All Internal Agencies	Short-Term	Coordination/ Outreach	N
Action 1.2.2	Develop communications materials that include visual descriptions in addition to concise writeups and is distributed through validators, ambassadors, and influencers that have the trust of the community.	MCMC, All Internal Agencies	Short-Term	Coordination/ Outreach	N
STRATEGY 1.3: DEVELOP A PROGRAM TO RECRUIT MORE PARTICIPANTS FOR DENTON 360 PROGRAM FROM SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.					
Action 1.3.1	Identify barriers to Southeast Denton resident participation in Denton 360 and implement a redesigned program, specially targeted towards younger generations (Millennials and Gen Z).	CMO, All internal Departments	Short-Term	Program/ Organization	N

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIME FRAME	ACTION TYPE	CAPITAL FUNDS NEEDED (Y/N)
GOAL 2 - HONOR THE CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF SOUTHEAST DENTON					
STRATEGY 2.1: USE HISTORIC PRESERVATION TOOLS AND PROGRAMS, ESPECIALLY CONSERVATION DISTRICTS TO RECOGNIZE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND THE FAMILIES WHO CREATED IT.					
Action 2.1.1	Conduct a historic resource survey of historic assets that are not yet locally designated, particularly the long-standing churches and original homes.	DS	Short-Term	Study/ Plan	N
Action 2.1.2	Hold workshops to educate residents on the benefits of historic landmark designation and conservation district designations as well as help property owners pursue historic landmark status on their property.	DS, MCMC	Short-Term	Coordination/ Outreach	N
Action 2.1.3	Apply for state and federal funding opportunities for churches, homes, and commercial properties, including Certified Local Government grants and African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund provided through the National Trust for Historic Preservation.	DS	Ongoing	Coordination/ Outreach	N
STRATEGY 2.2: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SOUTHEAST DENTON HISTORY AND CULTURAL ROOTS PRESERVATION PROGRAM TO RECOGNIZE THE CULTURE AND THE FAMILIES WHO CREATED IT.					
Action 2.2.1	Review, amend, and implement the Original Denton Cultural District boundaries to reflect the Southeast Denton Study Area and the Downtown Area separately.	PR, ED External Partner - TCA	Mid-Term	Program/ Organization	N
Action 2.2.2	Create Southeast Denton Cultural District that acknowledges the community's cultural roots by preserving, restoring, and developing physical and culturally significant elements of the area.	PR, ED External Partner - DCHC	Short-Term	Program/ Organization	N
Action 2.2.3	Activate the new Southeast Denton Cultural District through various activities such as a Heritage Walk, a cultural map, special signage, crosswalks with mural designs at intersections in the District, an archival event with the community to gather and document oral histories and displaying these at the American Legion Hall and/or MLK Jr. Recreation Center.	PR, ED	Short-Term	Program/ Organization	N

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIME FRAME	ACTION TYPE	CAPITAL FUNDS NEEDED (Y/N)
GOAL 3 - INVEST IN ECONOMIC PROSPERITY					
STRATEGY 3.1: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PEOPLE-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIFIC TO THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.					
Action 3.1.1	Amend regulatory barriers for home-based businesses, for example, by removing the Specific Use Permit (SUP) requirement for small Family Home Day Cares in residential districts.	DS	Short-Term	Development Regulations	N
Action 3.1.2	Provide financial assistance to reduce membership costs for Stoke or similar coworking space that provides amenities and a supportive, resourceful community for startups, entrepreneurs, remote workers, freelancers, small businesses, and tech-enabled companies and provides programming and events to foster growth and collaboration and market this and other opportunities such as maker spaces, pop-up markets, and events available to entrepreneurs and small businesses to Southeast Denton residents.	ED, MCMC	Short-Term	Financial	N
STRATEGY 3.2: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PLACE-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIFIC TO THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.					
Action 3.2.1	Create economic development incentive packages, including Tax Increment Financing(TIF), Chapter 380 grants, and property tax abatement, to support these activities and to draw small, fresh-food stores or full-service grocery store chains to Southeast Denton.	ED	Mid-Term	Program/ Organization	Y
Action 3.2.2	Re-imagine underutilized light industrial space in Southeast Denton, especially along the southern border of the study area by amending the future land use plan to expand the Community Mixed Use land use and adding a commercial zoning overlay.	DS	Short-Term	Development Regulations	N
Action 3.2.3	Identify vacant commercial buildings or sites in Southeast Denton to repurpose the space to: establish a market using parking lots or park property to allow food trucks, craft vendors, small businesses, and kiosks to allow start-up businesses to foster a loyal client base before making larger investments; and/ or create off-site commercial kitchens in a re-imagined business incubator space to establish new restaurants, bakeries, or packaged food creators; and/or initiate a grocery co-op, community gardens, community kitchens, and/ or fresh food pantries by working with non-profits in the area.	ED, DS, MCMC External Partners - UNT, TWU, DISD	Short – Term to Mid-Term	Program/ Organization	N

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIME FRAME	ACTION TYPE	CAPITAL FUNDS NEEDED (Y/N)
Action 3.2.4	Amend the Downtown Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District (TIRZ #1) Financing Plan to include TIF funding for portions of Southeast Denton because the stability of Southeast Denton is vital to the success of the eastern portion of the Downtown TIF district. Such funding should include home repair and homebuyer assistance and additional pedestrian facilities to connect Southeast Denton to downtown, street trees, etc. (TIF funding may be used outside the TIF district for affordable housing and pedestrian linkages into the district).	ED	Short-Term	Program/ Organization	N
STRATEGY 3.3: ESTABLISH A NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT ZONE (NEZ) TO SPUR COMMUNITY INVESTMENT, REDUCE TAXES, AND INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN SOUTHEAST DENTON.					
Action 3.3.1	Create a NEZ program statement, including the purpose of the program, the benefits of the zone, participation requirements, and compliance criteria.	CS, CAO, ED, DS	Short-Term	Program/ Organization	N
Action 3.3.2	Designate a NEZ boundary and follow steps in Sec. 380.003 in Chapter 378 of the Texas Local Government code to establish a NEZ in Southeast Denton, including required public notice and hearings. Implement and market the NEZ by creating application materials, a procedure manual, and a guidebook for applicants and create outreach material to encourage participation in the program.	CS, CAO, ED, DS, MCMC	Mid-Term	Program/ Organization	N
GOAL 4 - STRENGTHEN NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING AFFORDABILITY					
STRATEGY 4.1: ESTABLISH OVERLAY DISTRICTS TO PROTECT EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE AND CHARACTER					
Action 4.1.1	Create a residential overlay district as shown in Figure 32 to maintain the scale and character of the neighborhoods while fostering community investment to create livable and inclusive neighborhoods for all who want to call Southeast Denton home. Overlay standards may include, but are not limited to, limiting height to two stories, allowing infill on small lots, requiring enhanced front elevations such as larger windows and covered porches.	DS	Short-Term	Development Regulations	N

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIME FRAME	ACTION TYPE	CAPITAL FUNDS NEEDED (Y/N)
Action 4.1.2	Create a commercial overlay district as shown in Figure 32 that focuses on walkable neighborhood design and uses, including, but not limited to, limiting building height, removing barriers to redevelop smaller infill lots, reducing parking and requiring it to be located behind buildings, requiring enhanced front elevations such as larger windows and pedestrian-scaled entrances, and ensuring larger tracts include a well-defined, walkable transportation network.	DS	Short-Term	Development Regulations	N
Action 4.1.3	Create a live-work overlay district as shown in Figure 32 that focuses on allowing small mom and pop retail such as bookstore, toy shop, coffee shop, music store, barber shop, hair salon/spa, small incubator space, resale clothing etc. in a portion of a single family home with a portion being used as a residence simultaneously. Require design standards from the residential overlay in Action 4.1.1 to be applied in this live-work overlay also.	DS	Short-Term	Development Regulations	N
STRATEGY 4.2: ADJUST THE PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USES IN THE DENTON 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR SOUTHEAST DENTON TO MATCH THE FUTURE LAND USES SHOWN IN FIGURE 33 AND IMPLEMENT THESE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS THROUGH REZONING.					
Action 4.2.1	Rezone the existing Light Industrial zoned areas in the south portion and maintain the existing Suburban Corridor zoned area in the northeast portion of the study area (See Figure 15) to be compatible with the community mixed use description in the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan.	DS	Long -Term	Development Regulations	N
Action 4.2.2	Coordinate with Denton County on facility planning efforts to ensure land uses and design of the County property is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.	DS	Ongoing	Development Regulations	N
Action 4.2.3	Rezone a portion of the existing Mixed Use Neighborhood zoning east of the railroad to Moderate Residential zoning to allow transition to low density residential areas, and add a height overlay to the Mixed Use Neighborhood zoning as shown in Figure 32 to allow compatible transition between the Downtown Core zoning height requirement and the new residential/commercial overlay district height limits.	DS	Short-Term	Development Regulations	N
Action 4.2.4	Rezone the Light Industrial zoned area at the northwest corner of the Morse Street and Woodrow Lane to Neighborhood Mixed Use zoning.	DS	Long-Term	Development Regulations	N

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIME FRAME	ACTION TYPE	CAPITAL FUNDS NEEDED (Y/N)
STRATEGY 4.3: ESTABLISH A NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY AREA (NRSA) IN SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.					
Action 4.3.1	Draft and submit an NRSA application to HUD and develop involvement from other organizations as part of the NRSA application leverage requirement.	CS External Partners – Non-profit organizations	Long-Term	Program/ Organization	N
STRATEGY 4.4: INCREASE ACCESS TO CAPITAL IN SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA BY CREATING A CONSORTIUM OF BANKS FOR MORTGAGE LENDING.					
Action 4.4.1	Establish a community investment committee that is responsible for working with bankers and lenders to establish equitable lending practices for housing and small businesses.	CS, ED, DS, CMO	Mid-Term	Coordination/ Outreach	N
STRATEGY 4.5: COORDINATE WITH DENTON INTERDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (DISD) TO ENSURE THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA SCHOOLS SERVE AS NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS.					
Action 4.5.1	Work with DISD to adjust the attendance zone boundary for Rivera Elementary School to include the entire Southeast Denton study area to ensure that Southeast Denton families have a neighborhood school allowing the residents to save time and strengthen community bonds.	DS, CMO, CS External Partners - DISD	Mid-Term	Coordination/ Outreach	N
GOAL 5 - ELEVATE THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE					
STRATEGY 5.1: UPGRADE THE EXISTING PARKS IN SOUTHEAST DENTON TO HIGHER-QUALITY PARKS.					
Action 5.1.1	Implement key recommendations and action items in the 2022 Parks, Recreation, and Trails System Master Plan, improve existing parks, senior center, and recreation center in Southeast Denton, and improve access to regional facilities to serve some of the program needs in Southeast Denton.	PR	Mid-Term to Long-Term	Systems/ Support	Y
STRATEGY 5.2: ENHANCE THE PHYSICAL QUALITY OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN THE SOUTHEAST DENTON STUDY AREA.					
Action 5.2.1	Create a stormwater management plan for the Southeast Denton area to address erosion, ponding, and stream bank issues by identifying streets, parks, and open spaces with severe erosion or ponding issues,	ES, PR	Mid-Term	Study/ Plan	N
Action 5.2.2	Update the relevant design manuals and ordinances to require projects to incorporate smaller-scale green stormwater and bio-infrastructure and identify techniques to restore the natural function of the Pecan Creek.	ES, DS	Mid-term	Development Regulations	N
Action 5.2.3	Purchase additional property near Pecan Creek to add to the City's inventory of park space and protect the trees to help mitigate the impacts of stormwater.	PR, RE, ES	Mid-Term	Systems/ Support	Y

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIME FRAME	ACTION TYPE	CAPITAL FUNDS NEEDED (Y/N)
Action 5.2.4	Facilitate environmental education programs to raise awareness about water quality by conducting an annual or biannual cleanup day for parks and creeks.	PR, ES, MCMC	Mid-Term	Program/ Organization	N
STRATEGY 5.3: ENHANCE PROGRAMMING AND CITY-SPONSORED EVENTS IN EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION CENTERS IN SOUTHEAST DENTON.					
Action 5.3.1	Enhance existing gazebo/amphitheater and/ or install a stage at Fred Moore Park and/or the MLK Jr. Recreation Center to show films from the Denton Black Film Festival and collaborate with the Storytelling, Blues, and Arts & Jazz Festivals to be hosted in Southeast Denton Parks as neighborhood events.	PR	Short-Term to Mid-Term	Program/ Organization	N
Action 5.3.2	Improve collaboration between the Juneteenth Festival organizers and the Southeast Denton community to add oral history and storytelling at the Juneteenth events to ensure that keepers of local history have an opportunity to share that history before it is lost.	PR, MCMC	Short-Term	Program/ Organization	N
Action 5.3.3	Offer small community grants to community leaders and organizers to host block parties and markets within the Southeast Denton community. These events could be around a season (i.e. Spring Fest or Fall Carnival) or they can be held around specific holidays and celebrations (i.e. MLK Day Festival, Cinco de Mayo, Hispanic Heritage Month, Earth Day Festival, Black History Month Kick Off, etc.)	PR, ED	Short-Term	Financial	N
GOAL 6 - CREATE A SAFE AND CONNECTED, MULTI MODAL TRAVEL SYSTEM					
STRATEGY 6.1: IMPROVE STREET NETWORK TO PRIORITIZE CONNECTIVITY AND MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIONS.					
Action 6.1.1	Evaluate changing the existing street cross sections for Hickory Street, Morse Street, Duncan Street, Lakey Street, and Roberston Street. Also evaluate improvements along Bell Avenue, Woodrow Lane, and Sycamore Street at least through Southeast Denton area to more pedestrian and bike friendly multimodal corridors (See sample cross-sections in Figure 35).	TS	Mid-Term	Study/ Plan	N
Action 6.1.2	Conduct public outreach, education, and coordination with residents as part of any roadway design and improvement program to ensure final street sections meet the needs of those who are most impacted	TS, ST, MCMC	Short-Term	Coordination/ Outreach	N

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIME FRAME	ACTION TYPE	CAPITAL FUNDS NEEDED (Y/N)
Action 6.1.3	Undertake a pilot program on Morse Street, and/or Lakey Street, and/or areas of Duncan Street as an intermediate solution and to test appropriate safety interventions with tactical urbanism approaches that use low-cost materials to experiment and gather input on potential street design changes such as reduced travel lanes, larger sidewalks, trees, medians, and bike lanes as shown in the recommended cross sections in Figure 35.	TS, ST, DS, PR	Short-Term	Systems/ Support	N
Action 6.1.4	Fill in the sidewalk gaps along Morse Street, Roberston Street, Prairie Street, Duncan Street, and Bell Avenue.	ST, TS	Mid-Term	Systems/ Support	Y
Action 6.1.5	Require public streets that increase connectivity in the street network through Southeast Denton as a part of future development/redevelopment on 5 acres or more in size in the Southeast Denton study area.	DS, TS, ST	Mid-Term	Systems/ Support	Y
STRATEGY 6.2: ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY AT INTERSECTIONS.					
Action 6.2.1	Improve safety by installing ADA compliant pedestrian crossing signals, stop signs, and colorful crosswalk designs at the following intersections - Bell Avenue at Robertson Street, Prairie Street, and Sycamore Street, McKinney Street at Frame Street, Crawford Street and Woodrow Lane, and add a traffic signal at Woodrow Lane and Morse Street based on the recently conducted warrant study.	TS	Mid-Term	Systems/ Support	Y
Action 6.2.2	Improve safety for all users at the intersection of Smith Street and Duncan Streets. An example would be to enforce the sight triangle which would ensure clear visibility for turning vehicles at this intersection.	TS	Short-Term	Systems/ Support	N
STRATEGY 6.3: DEVELOP A NETWORK OF TRAILS THROUGH THE EXISTING OPEN SPACES AND DRAINAGE EASEMENTS TO CONNECT RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND PUBLIC PLACES (PARKS, SCHOOLS, ETC.) TO FORM AN ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE SOUTHEAST DENTON.					
Action 6.3.1	Add a separate initiative in the future bond program to develop a well-connected system of off-street trails using existing easements, parks and open spaces, and land along creeks and natural drainage systems that provides regional trail system connectivity, prioritizes side path projects that connect to key destinations such as parks and schools, and enhances pedestrian connectivity within the Southeast Denton study area.	PR, TS	Mid-Term	Systems/ Support	Y

ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	TIME FRAME	ACTION TYPE	CAPITAL FUNDS NEEDED (Y/N)
Action 6.3.2	Add funding in the future bond program for construction of ADA compliant trail heads at key points along the trail network to provide parking, bike parking, drinking water fountains, etc.	PR, TS	Mid-Term	Systems/ Support	Y
Action 6.3.3	Amend the Parks, Recreation, and Trails System Master Plan and the Pecan Creek Regional Trail Master Plan to extend the Future Pecan Creek Trail north past Carl Young Park to the south side of McKinney Street.	PR	Short-Term	Study/ Plan	N
STRATEGY 6.4: STRENGTHEN THE CONNECTIONS TO DOWNTOWN AND SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL MODES OF TRANSPORTATION.					
Action 6.4.1	Align intersections across Bell Avenue at Hickory Street, Sycamore Street, Prairie Street, and Robertson Street with the Downtown Area Plan cross section recommendations to ensure continuity and an easier pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for residents of Southeast Denton to downtown.	TS, DS	Mid-Term	Systems/ Support	Y
Action 6.4.2	Work with the Denton County Transportation Agency to fill the gaps within the current bus system and recommend additional routes, especially connecting to and through Downtown Denton.	DS, TS	Short-term	Coordination/ Outreach	N
Action 6.4.3	Create trail connections from downtown to the Pecan Creek Regional Trail & DCTA Katy Trail.	PR, TS	Mid-Term	Systems/ Support	Y

