



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CITY OF HEATH



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1 | Executive Summary

This 2018 Heath Comprehensive Plan is an update to the City's 2008 Plan. Adoption of this 2018 Comprehensive Plan on April 10, 2018 marks the end of a two-and-a-half year planning process that included extensive issue identification through community and stakeholder input as well as the formulation of recommendations and actions. This planning process was conducted within the framework of the 2008 Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Review Committee (RC) was very involved in the creation of the Plan.

Because an existing Plan framework was already in place, the planning process for Heath's 2018 Plan is different from traditional plans. The 2018 Review Committee first reviewed and revised the Plan's goals and objectives to reflect changes in Heath since the previous planning process. Using public input, the RC then helped the consultant team amend land use and livability strategies. Livability and land use assessments in the Plan focus heavily on maintaining Heath's rural character while maintaining a high quality of life for current and future residents.

Much like the 2008 Plan and plans before it, the question of a Town Center in Heath was a complex issue during the formulation of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. Community input from surveys and meetings strongly favors location of any Town Center within or adjacent to the existing Town Center Overlay.

This Plan provides instruction on implementing the objectives and actions outlined in the document and, when used in conjunction with other documents such as the Transportation Plan and Zoning Ordinance, will be a useful tool in growing Heath in accordance with the wishes of residents.



Photo courtesy of Bayley/Brooke Creative Communication

2 | Introduction

A city's comprehensive plan can be defined as a long-range planning tool that is intended to be used by City staff, decision-makers, and citizens to guide the growth and physical development of a community for 10 years, 20 years, or an even longer period of time. The State of Texas has established laws with regard to the way in which incorporated communities can ensure the health, safety and welfare of their citizens. State law gives communities the power to regulate the use of land, but only if such regulations are based on a plan. Specifically, the law states:

The governing body of a municipality may adopt a comprehensive plan for the long-range development of the municipality...A municipality may define the relationship between a comprehensive plan and development regulations and may provide standards for determining the consistency required between a plan and development regulations.

Chapter 213 of the Texas Local Government Code

In basic terms, the primary objectives of a comprehensive plan are to accomplish the following:

- Efficient delivery of public services,
- Coordination of public and private investment,
- Minimization of potential conflicts between land uses,
- Management of growth in an orderly manner,
- Cost-effective public investments, and
- A rational and reasonable basis for making decisions about the community.

There are two interrelated purposes of a comprehensive plan; one, it allows the citizens of a community to create a shared vision of what they want the community to become, and two, it establishes ways in which a community can effectively realize this vision. This 2018 Comprehensive Plan is, therefore, a vision of what Heath can become and is a long-range statement of the City's public policy.

Heath has a tradition of planning; the City's previous plan was completed in 2008, and City leaders and staff have effectively followed many of the guidelines and recommendations in the years since its adoption. By continuing this planning tradition with this latest version of the comprehensive plan, the City can continue to pattern its growth in a positive manner – through traditional planning elements, as well as through new and innovative planning-related policies. The product of this latest planning effort will be a 2018 Comprehensive Plan document that the City can use in the years to come.

This 2018 Comprehensive Plan, once adopted, becomes the official planning document of the City. However, this document does not represent the end of the process – planning is not a single event, it is continuous. The 2018 Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a dynamic, adaptable guide to help citizens and officials shape Heath's future on a continual, proactive basis. The City has recognized this in the past, and it is anticipated that planning in Heath will continue long after this 2018 Comprehensive Plan is adopted.

3 | Visioning

What does the future hold for Heath? What should the City be like in 2030 and beyond? The purpose of this section is to answer these questions and identify the community's shared vision for Heath's future. This vision will define how Heath should grow, look, and function as it becomes an increasingly mature and livable City.

Numerous meetings and exercises were held with the community, Comprehensive Plan Review Committee, and City officials to establish this vision, which can be reviewed in greater detail in **7 | Appendix**. Community input is vital to this Plan as it forms the basis of many of the recommended actions.

This chapter creates a vision for this comprehensive planning effort, as well as for the City of Heath in general. This is also the chapter upon which many of the recommended actions and implementation efforts of Heath's 2018 Comprehensive Plan will be based. In order to create this shared vision, numerous meetings with the Review Committee (RC) were held. City leaders and the public were also asked to provide input via two Community Open Houses and online survey. This chapter includes the Plan's vision statement and goals and objectives, which provide a basis for the comprehensive planning process.

Vision Statement

The vision statement should succinctly and vividly describe the community as it ideally will exist in the future. This statement is intended to guide both the comprehensive planning process and the City's future.

Following input gathered from the community and City officials, in 2008, the Review Committee crafted the following statement:

A lakeside community of premiere neighborhoods with open green spaces, parks and trails, cultural amenities, an exemplary educational system, and distinctive economic development in order to provide the highest level of public services – a place to call home for a lifetime.

Upon review for this 2018 Comprehensive Plan the RC agreed to keep Heath's Vision Statement intact. As implementation of this plan occurs, the City of Heath will strive to become the place described by this vision statement.

Goals and Objectives

The portion of this chapter is a set of goals and objectives. **Goals** are general statements of guidance concerning an aspect of Heath's desired ultimate physical, social, and/or economic environment; these are statements that outline how various issues should be addressed in a broad sense. **Objectives** express specific statements of intent that will ultimately lead the City to achieve what is envisioned within the goal statements.

It should also be noted that many of the goals and objectives represent items that are not only intended to be addressed by the Comprehensive Plan, but also by the City on a long-term, on-going basis.

Neighborhood Livability Strategy

Goal 1. Unique Development

Encourage long-term stability and reinvestment by ensuring that new development is unique.

- Objective 1.1. Maintain a residential gross density of one dwelling unit per acre of developable land.
- Objective 1.2. Encourage a diversity of residential properties in terms of size, type, views and orientation of lots to amenities.
- Objective 1.3. Require non-residential development to be distinctive, quaint, pedestrian-oriented and have trail connections to adjacent properties.
- Objective 1.4. Establish a strategy that minimizes the local impact of non-residential uses while maximizing the economic benefit of such uses.
- Objective 1.5. Promote unobtrusive building height, mass, and scale with respect to non-residential development and the surrounding properties.

Goal 2. Community Image

Continue to enhance Heath's image as a community of excellence.

- Objective 2.1. Distinguish Heath as a City of unique attributes—access to the Lake, cultural amenities, an abundance of parks, open space, pedestrian orientation, small-scale retailing, quality housing, and educational opportunities.
- Objective 2.2. Explore options for land conservation efforts, through City initiatives and incentives for the development community.
- Objective 2.3. Create attractive public open spaces to serve as focal points and gathering areas inviting to both citizens and visitors.
- Objective 2.4. Continue to foster a positive relationship with the Rockwall Independent School District (RISD) by encouraging the development community to work with the RISD regarding school locations and related transportation challenges.

Goal 3. Livable Community

Review local development standards to ensure that livability and sustainability concepts are required.

- Objective 3.1. Develop standards for transitional elements to ensure positive relationships between residential and non-residential development.
- Objective 3.2. Review zoning and subdivision ordinances, as well as engineering standards, to ensure that the recommendations of this Plan are incorporated.
- Objective 3.3. Ensure that all neighborhoods have convenient access to parks, open space, and trails, which will maintain values and attract reinvestment.
- Objective 3.4. Ensure that non-residential development has characteristics that enhance and contribute to the livability of Heath.
- Objective 3.5. Develop a city-wide Master Parks Plan.
- Objective 3.6. Identify ways in which park and open space areas can be integrated with existing and future development.
- Objective 3.7. Require pedestrian access throughout newly developed areas.

Goal 4. Bike and Pedestrian Connectivity

Ensure that the community's recreational system meets the needs of the current and projected population, is reflective of the quality and unique character of Heath, and allows for bike and pedestrian transportation.

- Objective 4.1. Create strategies to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access as an alternative form of transportation in Heath.
- Objective 4.2. Provide convenient and attractive pedestrian and bicycle mobility throughout the City.
- Objective 4.3. Pursue funding for retroactive and proactive integration of pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Objective 4.4. Build upon the connectivity concepts in the City's adopted Master Parks Plan and concentrate on connecting neighborhoods to schools, retail, and recreation facilities.
- Objective 4.5. Ensure that Heath's park and trail network is coordinated with the current Rockwall County Open Space Master Plan, the plans of surrounding cities, as well as Kaufman County, and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG).

Land Use Strategy

Goal 5. Identity

Maintain the City's quality, openness, and hometown atmosphere.

- Objective 5.1. Create distinctive neighborhood areas that will contribute to the City's established reputation for quality development.
- Objective 5.2. Maintain the City's value and quality in the future by ensuring that existing neighborhoods are well-maintained, and enhanced, as needed.
- Objective 5.3. Encourage residential Planned Developments to preserve open space and reinforce the feeling of openness while maintaining a gross density of one dwelling unit per acre of developable land as set out in Objective 1.1.
- Objective 5.4. Require residential and non-residential development to maintain open view corridors, open perimeter features, and entryways.

Goal 6. Land Use Mix

Encourage a balance of land uses in order to serve the needs of citizens and to provide a more diversified local economic base.

- Objective 6.1. Identify specific land uses that are needed to serve the community; establish ways in which the City can proactively provide and attract these needs.
- Objective 6.2. Allow for local non-residential uses so that residents can have more of their service needs met within Heath.
- Objective 6.3. Ensure that Heath's land use policies adequately allow for uses that will support the tax base for the City to support existing and future residents.
- Objective 6.4. Establish ways to transition between residential and non-residential development as development occurs.
- Objective 6.5. Ensure that development standards for non-residential uses are the highest possible so that a positive visual perception of Heath continues to be projected to citizens and visitors.

Goal 7. Resource Protection

Require future development to respect the environment.

- Objective 7.1. Require development proposals to consider local environmental factors, such as tree retention, topography, drainage, creek protection, floodplain areas, and open space conservation.
- Objective 7.2. Require development to utilize sustainable design concepts to preserve natural resources.

- Objective 7.3. Adopt the iSWM¹ program in conjunction with NCTCOG.
- Objective 7.4. Preserve natural areas for public use whenever possible.
- Objective 7.5. Require development to demonstrate water conservation through use of drought tolerant plants and other acceptable methods.
- Objective 7.6. Adopt a native plant list and xeriscape guidelines for landscape development standards.

Goal 8. Lakefront

Facilitate the use of areas along Lake Ray Hubbard by both community and private interests.

- Objective 8.1. Maintain the recreational use of Lake Ray Hubbard at Terry Park by the citizens of Heath.
- Objective 8.2. Identify areas along the Lake that should be focused on ensuring community access, preserving views of the Lake, and maximizing long-term value for properties in the area.
- Objective 8.3. Identify areas that may be available for future community access and use.
- Objective 8.4. Ensure that new development and redevelopment along the Lake is of the highest quality.

Transportation Strategy

The Transportation goals and objectives should be co-referenced with the Transportation Plan and Park Master Plan. These are standalone but concurrent long-range planning documents. (A complete description of the Park Master Plan can be found on page 35.)

Goal 9. Maintenance

Ensure that the community's roadway and trail systems are safe, well maintained, adequate to meet the needs of the current and projected population, and reflective of the quality and unique character of Heath.

- Objective 9.1. Identify strategies that balance convenient and efficient auto access with safe, well-designed pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Objective 9.2. Identify roadway and street deficiencies and address those deficiencies in a prioritized manner. Develop a new systematic preventative maintenance program designed to extend the service life of existing roadways and streets. Roadways and streets should be graded and rated as to condition. A funding plan should be enacted as an execution strategy for required maintenance and improvements.
- Objective 9.3. Investigate ways in which public and private funding can be directed toward roadway and trail system improvements.

¹ iSWM (integrated Stormwater Management) is a cooperative initiative that assists cities and counties to achieve their goals of water quality protection, streambank protection, and flood mitigation, while also helping communities meet their construction and post-construction obligations under state stormwater permits.

- Objective 9.4. Enhance current and newly constructed roadways with a combination of light fixtures, landscaping, medians, signage, and pedestrian and bicycle amenities to make the City's roads visually unique and to help residents and visitors recognize that they are in Heath.

Goal 10. Planning

Address roadway and trail systems needs according to the type of development or redevelopment that is anticipated to occur in the future. These objectives should be pursued in conjunction with the Transportation Plan and Park Master Plan.

- Objective 10.1. Correlate the Transportation Strategy with the Land Use Strategy, specifically to ensure that the various land uses are accommodated by the transportation system.
- Objective 10.2. Review standards for roadway design based on anticipated function, traffic volume, and adjacent land use.
- Objective 10.3. Incorporate updated standards for roadways into the City's regulations.
- Objective 10.4. Plan for an interconnected and diverse street pattern to ease congestion, more evenly distribute traffic, and offer flexibility of routes.
- Objective 10.5. Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to reflect the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan.

Goal 11. Coordination

Work with adjacent cities and county and state governmental entities on efforts to maintain and/or expand the roadway and trail systems.

- Objective 11.1. Ensure that Heath's Transportation Strategy is coordinated with the plans of surrounding cities as well as Rockwall County, Kaufman County, and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG).
- Objective 11.2. Investigate how local, county, state, and federal funds could be combined to positively affect local and regional transportation needs.
- Objective 11.3. Work with Rockwall County and Kaufman County on floodplain preservation efforts so that such areas can be used to create pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the region.

Town Center Strategy

Goal 12. Town Center

Create a special and unique area of Heath that is recognized as the City's Center.

- Objective 12.1. Create strategies for the development of one Town Center that will attract Heath residents and encourage community interaction.
- Objective 12.2. Identify and articulate the desired character for the Town Center through a conceptual plan, design guidelines and character sketches that reflect Heath's image.

- Objective 12.3. Ensure that development of the Town Center will not allow a change to Objective 1.1. maintaining residential gross density of one dwelling unit per acre of developable land.
- Objective 12.4. Establish a list of targeted non-residential uses that would support the Town Center concept and be acceptable to and appreciated by the citizens of Heath.
- Objective 12.5. Ensure that public amenities are a major focus of the Town Center, including pedestrian access from the local trail system and adjacent development and a public gathering space to be used for community celebrations and activities.

4 | Land Use Strategy

The right of a municipality to coordinate growth is rooted in its need to protect the health, safety, and welfare of local citizens. An important part of establishing the guidelines for such responsibility is the Land Use Strategy, which establishes an overall framework for the preferred pattern of development within Heath. Specifically, the Land Use Strategy designates various areas within the City for particular land uses, based principally on current land uses and the community's vision for its future.

This Land Use Strategy is graphically depicted for use during the development plan review process with the Future Land Use Map (**Figure 1** on page 16), and the Land Use Strategy should ultimately be reflected through the City's policies and land development decisions. It is important to note that the Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map, which deals with specific development requirements on individual parcels. The zoning map and changes in zoning should, however, be based on the Future Land Use Map and the related policies within this Land Use Strategy. In general, this Land Use Strategy is intended to be a comprehensive blueprint of Heath's vision for its future land use pattern.

Heath has become known as one of the premier cities in the Metroplex in which to live. The City has experienced significant residential development in the last 10 to 15 years. However, a balance of land uses is needed, as are policies to ensure that Heath remains a highly livable and sought-after community. The opportunity to make Heath a unique and sustainable community is now, while a significant amount of land remains such that it can be developed in a more unique and innovative way than land previously developed. This Land Use Strategy has been written to achieve the following:

- Address the needs of the City as a whole,
- Address the concerns and issues raised by the Review Committee and the general public throughout this planning process, but particularly during the visioning process,
- Provide policy guidance in keeping with established goals and objectives (within **3 | Visioning**), and
- Ensure that Heath is a unique and sustainable community that ages well and gracefully.

Summary of Existing Land Uses and Local Development Patterns

An analysis of present land use patterns within Heath is presented in **7 | Appendix**. Land uses were documented through aerial imagery during which each parcel of land in the City and ETJ was coded as a certain land use type, such as Single-Family residential, Multi-Family, Retail, and Public/Semi-Public. The **Existing Land Use Map, Figure 18**, can be found on page 74 in **7 | Appendix**.

It is important to note that the total acreage within the City limits has increased through annexations since 2008 – an increase of nearly 1,870 acres. Changes in methodology and improved accuracy of data also have minor impacts on the reported acreages; for example, the small decrease in Multi-Family is due to more accurate data collection rather than an actual decrease in the land use.

As a result of this analysis, it was calculated that approximately 70 percent of the developed land within the City is consumed by residential land uses, primarily Single-Family residential. Rights-of-Way and Public/Semi-Public land uses also account for a large amount of the developed land, and together these three use categories account for approximately 90 percent of the City’s developed acreage.

Table 1. Comparison 2008 and 2018 Land Uses within the City Limits

Land Use Category	2008 Existing Land Use			2018 Existing Land Use		
	Acres	Percent of Developed	Percent of Total	Acres	Percent of Developed	Percent of Total
Single-Family	2,333.0	69.8%	37.9%	2,936.27	70.3%	36.6%
Two-Family (Duplex)	1.8	0.1%	0.0%	3.0	0.1%	0.0%
Multi-Family	4.0	0.1%	0.1%	2.8	0.1%	0.0%
Residential	2,338.8	70.0%	38.0%	2,942.0	70.5%	36.7%
Parks and Open Space	71.0	2.1%	1.2%	77.1	1.8%	1.0%
Private Recreation	221.0	6.6%	3.6%	285.3	6.8%	3.6%
Public/Semi-Public	251.0	7.5%	4.1%	218.8	5.2%	2.7%
Public/Semi-Public	543.0	16.3%	8.8%	581.2	13.9%	7.2%
Office	23.0	0.7%	0.4%	14.9	0.4%	0.2%
Retail	8.0	0.2%	0.1%	6.7	0.2%	0.1%
Commercial	34.6	1.0%	0.6%	11.1	0.3%	0.1%
Non-Residential	65.6	2.0%	1.1%	32.7	0.8%	0.4%
Rights-of-Way	394.0	11.8%	6.4%	618.2	14.8%	7.7%
Total Developed Land	3,341.4	100.0%	54.3%	4,174.0	100.0%	52.1%
Vacant	2,809.0	N/A	45.7%	3,845.0	N/A	47.9%
Total	6,150.4	N/A	100.0%	8,019.0	N/A	100.0%

Another significant fact is that approximately 48 percent of the total acreage within Heath is Vacant (or undeveloped) land. This percentage amounts to over 3,800 acres that have the potential to be developed in the future. The importance of the calculation of undeveloped land lies in the fact that it is this land, along with annexed areas, that will allow the City to grow in population in the coming years. It is also significant because, at almost 50 percent of the City, if it is developed in keeping with the policies outlined within this Comprehensive Plan – with increased connectivity, open space, use diversity, etc. – Heath will be a highly sustainable and livable community.

Another method of analyzing land use is by examining current land use densities – that is, establishing how much land is being consumed for each type of land use by the current population. The density of single-family residential land use is 37.5 acres per 100 persons, which indicates a relatively low density residential development pattern. Also important is the ratio of Retail uses to the population. An average ratio is 0.5 retail acres per 100 persons; less than 0.4 generally indicates that citizens are going elsewhere for goods and services, and greater than 0.6 usually indicates that citizens from elsewhere are coming into the community to buy goods and services. Heath's ratio is 0.09 acres per 100 persons, which is relatively low and means that people who live in the City are going to other areas, such as Rockwall or Dallas, to meet their retail needs. The need for a better balance of residential and non-residential uses is discussed further in later sections of this chapter.

In summary, important facts about Heath's existing land uses include the following:

- Approximately 90 percent of the developed land within the City is consumed by Single-Family land uses, Rights-of-Way, or Public/Semi-Public land uses.
- The percentage of developed land uses in Heath has declined since 2008 because the City annexed undeveloped land faster than it was developed.
- The percentages of non-residential land uses – Retail, Commercial, and Office – have remained extremely low, especially compared to the amount of residential development and number of people who live in Heath.
- Much of Heath is currently vacant, even with the increased acres of developed land since 2008. This allows for much more development within the City, development that could further contribute to the quality for which Heath is known.
- The acreage of Parks and Open Space land use has also increased over the years, which is a significant quality of life feature that is very positive for Heath.
- Heath's ratio of retail-acres-to-population is 0.09 acres per 100 persons. This is a low ratio and indicates that citizens are traveling outside of the City to buy goods and services.

Future Land Use and Population Growth

Future Land Use Types and Map

The **Future Land Use Map, Figure 1** (page 16), has been drafted as the result of numerous meetings with the public, the Review Committee (RC), and City staff. The Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map, and it does not directly affect the regulation of land within Heath or the ETJ. The Future Land Use Map provides a graphic depiction of Heath’s ideal land use pattern. It should be used by the City to guide decisions on proposed zoning and development standards in the future. It should be noted that while the Future Land Use Map itself is an integral part of the **Land Use Strategy**; the land use policies that support the Future Land Use Map are also important. These policies begin on page 20 of this chapter.

Table 2. Future Land Use Acreages

Future Land Use Type	Acres	Percent
Rural Estate	4,951.8	61.8%
Medium Density Residential	637.0	7.9%
High Density Residential	395.0	4.9%
Townhome	79.1	1.0%
Office	62.1	0.8%
Retail	34.9	0.4%
Mixed Use	147.8	1.8%
Parks and Open Space	137.0	1.7%
Private Recreation	602.1	7.5%
Public/Semi-Public	224.5	2.8%
Lake Edge	129.3	1.6%
Right-of-Way	618.2	7.7%
Total	8,019.0	100%

Future Land Use Types

The table below outlines descriptions of the various land use types on the Future Land Use Map. Also shown are related map colors and example images.

Table 3. Residential Land Uses











Land Use Type & Map Color	Description	Density	Corresponding Zoning District(s)	Example Image
Rural Estate	Large-lot, single-family residential development	Overall minimum of 1 acre lots	Agriculture, Proposed SF-3 (see Recommendation 4.5), SF-43	
Medium Density Residential	Medium-sized, single-family residential development	Minimum ½ acre lots	SF-22	
High Density Residential	Smaller-lot, single-family residential development	Minimum ¼ acre lots	SF-15	
Townhomes	Two-family residential development	Maximum of 8 units per acre	Townhouse (TH), Duplex (D), Medium-density (MF-8)	

Table 4. Non-Residential Land Uses

Land Use Type & Map Color	Description	Corresponding Zoning District(s)	Example Image	
Office		Small-scale offices (one- or two-story) such as doctors', lawyers', and realtors' offices	Local Retail	
Retail		Small shops, shopping centers, restaurants, cafes	Local Retail	
Mixed Use		See description on following page		
Parks and Open Space		Existing park and open space areas	Any zoning district allows this use	
Private Recreation		Local golf courses (e.g., Buffalo Creek as shown in image to the right)	Any zoning district allows this use; usually occurs through Planned Development (PD) zoning	
Public/Semi-Public		Civic uses, schools, churches, cemeteries	Any zoning district allows this use	
Lake Edge		Lake management area, generally owned by City of Dallas	No zoning	

Mixed Use

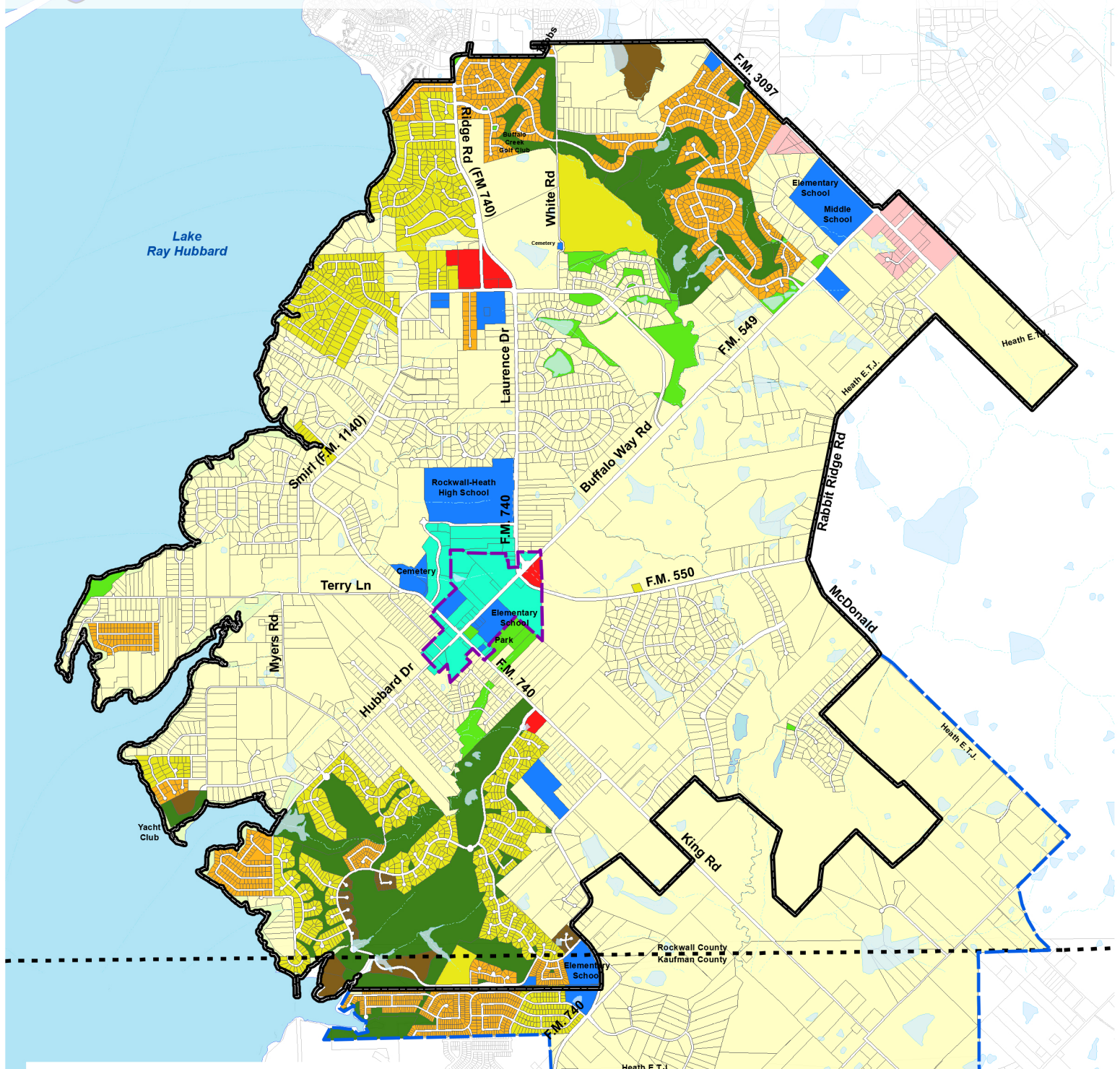
Mixed use is a general term used to describe areas where a mix of two or more land uses is appropriate; it does not necessarily equate to increased density or residential land uses. Heath's vision for the composition and location of mixed uses has changed over the years. Current preferences are mostly limited to small-scale, pedestrian-oriented commercial, office, and retail uses around the City Hall. Any inclusion of housing is limited to the existing single-family homes.

Town Center Overlay

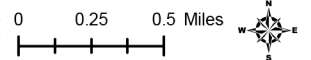
Overlay districts are a layer of zoning regulation that incorporate the underlying zoning of an area while adding additional regulations specifically for that area. The purpose of this technique is to promote or preserve a desired theme for the area. The Town Center Overlay was established in 2003 in the area surrounding City Hall. At the time, the area was almost entirely vacant and the goal of the overlay was to facilitate the land uses and public realm necessary to create an identifiable Town Center as determined by the preferences of residents at the time. The current regulatory elements of the Town Center Overlay include: permitted land uses; block and lot layouts; street standards; building location, scale, design, and materials; site design; and sign standards. It is recommended that the standards of the Town Center Overlay be revisited and possibly amended as needed to reflect current preferences.



















It should be noted that amendments to the Overlay cannot be done through the Comprehensive Plan as such changes require an amendment of the zoning code. The Future Land Use Map identifies the land use for this overlay as mixed use (defined above) with the exception of existing parks and public uses, as well as a parcel of retail to the east of Buffalo Way Road (FM 549). This means that only development that meets the permitted uses as outlined in the Overlay Ordinance would be allowed to develop in this area.

Figure 1. Future Land Use Map



Note:
A Comprehensive Plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.



- | | | |
|--|--|---|
|  Rural Estates |  Retail |  City Limits |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Parks and Open Space |  ETJ |
|  High Density Residential |  Private Recreation |  County |
|  Townhomes |  Public/Semi-Public |  Lake Ray Hubbard |
|  Mixed Use |  Lake Edge |  Small Lakes and Ponds |
|  Office |  Town Center Overlay (for reference only) |  Streams |

Population Growth and Capacity

Heath’s population growth is documented in detail in the Appendix. It is important to consider this growth in the context of planning for future land uses for several reasons. The principal reason is that the Land Use Strategy provides a recommended pattern of land uses that inherently affects where population growth is likely to occur. Also, service provision and roadway infrastructure must be considered in conjunction with where population increases are anticipated to occur. Another reason is that the City will, at some point, reach its ultimate capacity for population growth given the fact that only minimal geographic expansion is possible – the City is surrounded by Lake Ray Hubbard, Rockwall, McLendon Chisholm, and other developed areas. For these reasons, this section of the Land Use Strategy is provided to outline the City’s anticipated population growth in the next 20 years, as well as its ultimate population capacity and when that capacity might be reached.

Projections

The 2017 population of 7,820 is based on NCTCOG population estimates. **Table 5** shows population projections through 2050. **Table 9** on page 55 identifies the compound annual growth rates (CAGR) of Heath’s population since 1970. The compound annual growth rate between 2000 and 2010 was 5.3%, while the rate between 2010 and 2015 slowed to only 1.4%. This information indicates that Scenario B 4.5% may be the most reliable growth rate for planning purposes. The 4.5% CAGR projects a population growth to approximately 11,600 in 2025, and a build-out of the current City and ETJ limits by 2039. This is a relatively rapid growth scenario, but it is better to utilize a higher population growth rate when planning for adequate infrastructure and roadway capacity. Planning for a higher rate of growth will enable Heath to be well-prepared if this population projection becomes reality, which is better than planning for a lesser rate of growth and being unprepared to accommodate additional population when development proposals are submitted. Heath’s population capacity, discussed in the following section, is projected to occur in various years depending on the rate of growth, as shown in **Table 5**.

Table 5. Population Growth Scenarios

Year	Scenario A 3.0%	Scenario B 4.5%	Scenario C 7.0%
2017	7,820	7,820	7,820
2020	8,801	9,325	10,250
2025	10,203	11,621	14,377
2030	11,828	14,482	20,164
2035	13,712	18,047	28,281
2040	15,896	22,490	39,666
2045	18,428	28,027	55,633
2050	21,363	34,927	78,029
Projected Year to Reach Population Capacity			
	2050	2039	2031

Capacity

Heath has a large amount of vacant land area (nearly 50 percent), much of which is designated on the Future Land Use Map (**Figure 1**, page 16) for residential land use. The City also has some ETJ area within which the City can grow geographically. Both the vacant area within the City limits and the ETJ provide developable land for population growth (as shown in **Figure 2** on page 19). In order to guide the City in planning for how many people will ultimately have to be supported, an assessment of Heath’s ultimate population is provided. **Table 6** shows the calculation of ultimate population capacity of Heath and its ETJ. Several assumptions are considered in the calculation of ultimate population capacity, including the application of various densities, occupancy rates, amount of land used for right-of-way, and average household size. In addition to these assumptions, there are known factors that also impact ultimate population, specifically the number of existing dwelling units and platted lots. Given these factors and assumptions, it can be concluded that Heath’s ultimate population capacity within the existing City limits and ETJ is approximately 21,009 people. This is the number of people that the City should plan on needing to serve with water, wastewater, roadway facilities, and quality-of-life services.

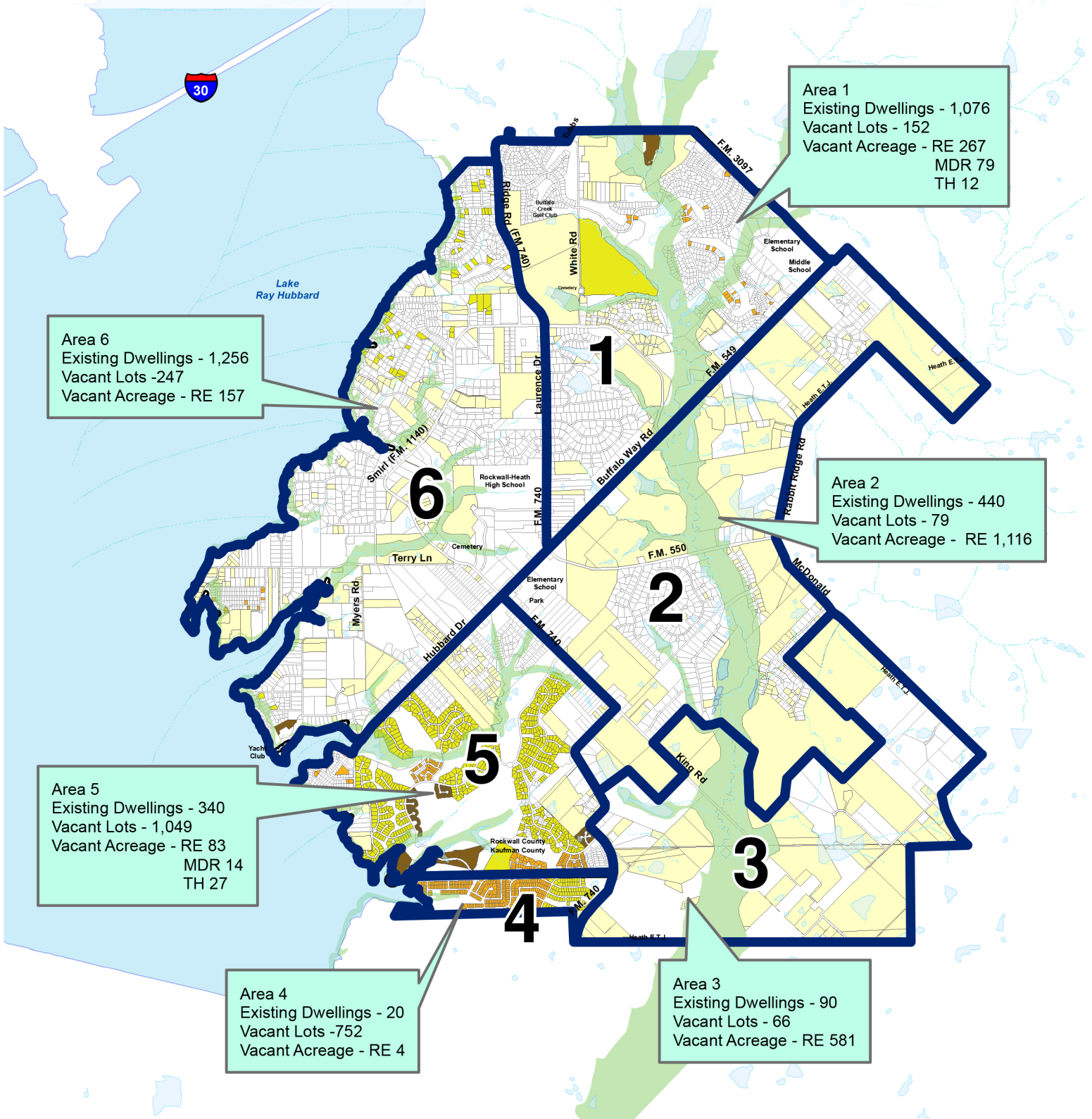
Table 6. Ultimate Population Capacity

Assessment Area	Existing Dwellings	Platted Lots	Unplatted Residential Acreage			
			RE	MDR	HDR	TH
Area 1	1,076	152	267	79	0	12
Area 2	440	79	1,116	0	0	0
Area 3	90	66	581	0	0	0
Area 4	20	752	4	0	0	0
Area 5	340	1,049	83	14	0	27
Area 6	1,256	247	157	0	0	0
Gross Total Acres			2,208	93	0	39
ROW Adjustment			10%	15%	20%	30%
Net Total Acres			1,987	79	0	27
Unplatted Acres to Dwellings			0.7 DUA	2 DUA	4 DUA	8 DUA
			1,391	158	0	218
Ultimate Dwellings	3,222	2,345	1,391	158	0	218
	7,335					
Occupancy Rate*						92.4%
Household Size*						3.1
Ultimate Population						21,009

**2011-2015 ACS Estimate*

Assessment Area	Existing Dwellings	Platted Lots	Number of Lots from Unplatted Acreage	Ultimate Dwellings	Area Ultimate Population
Area 1	1,076	152	370	1,598	4,576
Area 2	440	79	703	1,222	3,501
Area 3	90	66	366	522	1,495
Area 4	20	752	3	775	2,219
Area 5	340	1,049	227	1,616	4,630
Area 6	1,256	247	99	1,602	4,589
Ultimate Population					21,009

Figure 2. Vacant Future Residential



-  Neighborhood Areas
-  Rural Estates (RE)
-  Medium Density Residential (MDR)
-  High Density Residential (HDR)
-  Townhomes (TH)

0 0.25 0.5 Miles



Land Use Strategy | Recommendations

The following section outlines recommendations related to the following topics:

- Non-Residential Land Uses
- Residential Uses
- Lakefront Access/Redevelopment
- Procedural Land Use Policies

Non-Residential Land Uses

Retail

In discussing retail land uses, economic sustainability is key. Heath is not in need of extensive retail, primarily because the needs of its citizenry for goods and services are being met by the retail available in nearby Rockwall, and to a lesser degree by the retail available to the south along Highway 80. However, if desired, some citizens' needs could be met locally, with a minimal amount of retail land use as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Also, it is important to ensure that any retail uses developed in Heath are designed to a very high quality – the better designed and more high quality a retail area is, the more sustainable it will be over time. In terms of design, it will be important to make the retail development pedestrian-friendly.

Key concepts related to the design of retail developments in Heath include the following.

- Unique retail areas are more sustainable over time because they are not easily replaceable. The concept of uniqueness is not necessarily in the type of retail itself, but in the feeling that a unique retailing experience evokes. Numerous ways in which retail in Heath can be designed to be unique are within this **Land Use Strategy**, as well as **5 | Livability Strategy**.
- Neighborhood-accessible retail areas are sustained by Heath residents, who often feel a sense of ownership to such areas. Highland Park Village is a good example of a retail area that was designed to be accessible to adjacent residents, and that has stood the test of time. Heath's retail development will also be able to stand the test of time if it is designed to be accessible.
- Scale and context are important to Heath. Retail in closer proximity to residential areas will reflect the form and character of the neighborhood.

Recommendation 4.1: Develop retail design characteristics that will provide sustainability – lasting value over time.

- Develop retail design standards to provide a menu of sustainable design characteristics, such as the following:
 - Pedestrian and roadway connections through the retail site and to adjacent properties;
 - Pedestrian-oriented elements, such as shade, benches, gathering areas, and signage;
 - Provision of sidewalks and a certain amount of parallel or head-in parking in front of buildings, ensuring that there is a close relationship between the on-street parking, the sidewalk, and the building;
 - Off-street parking provided behind the buildings (as opposed to large parking lots located adjacent to the street);
 - Separation of parking when located in front of a building (to minimize wide expanses of concrete);
 - Increased green space and landscaping;
 - Minimized spacing between buildings; and
 - Require retail development to be pedestrian-oriented and close to the street with reduced setbacks or an established build-to line.
- Create civic focal elements such as public gathering areas that are part of any new retail development.
- Create and utilize an Architectural Review Board to review proposed plans and provide architectural design recommendations to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.



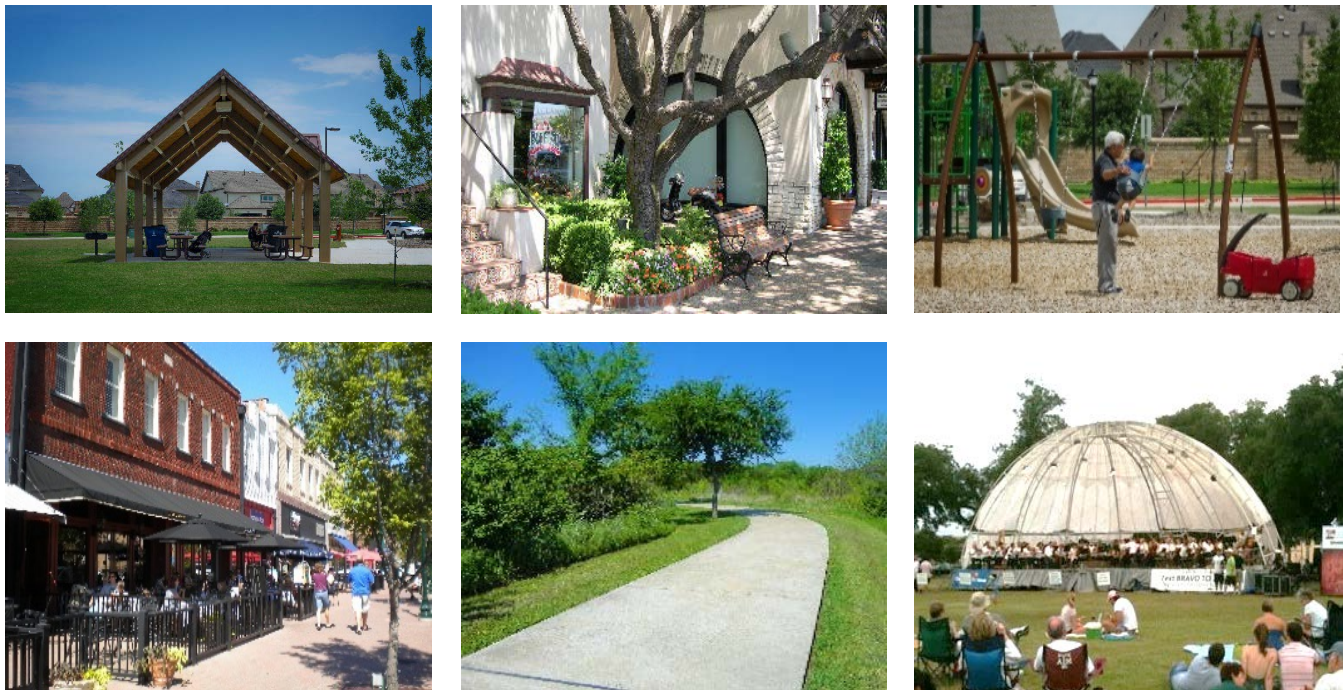
Town Center Amenities

The consensus in Heath is that the area of the existing Town Center Overlay is and should remain the Town Center. The Review Committee worked with the community to identify what amenities would be desirable in a Town Center. Public input and the online survey results show that restaurants and shopping are the most desired amenities for a Town Center. The following land uses within a Town Center scored the highest (in order):

- Restaurants,
- Shopping,
- Parks,
- Recreation amenities, and
- An amphitheater.

Although not a land use or activity, water features also scored highly as a desired Town Center amenity.

Figure 3. Town Center Concept Amenities



Recommendation 4.2: Conduct a diagnostic assessment of the existing Town Center Overlay and update it to reflect the current preferences and vision of the community.

- Work with land owners and the community to determine if an overlay district is still the best way to administer the area around City Hall.
- Review and update the existing regulatory elements of the overlay district: permitted land uses; block and lot layouts; street standards; building location, scale, design, and materials; site design; and sign standards.

Residential Uses

Residential Diversity and Uniqueness

Quality housing is not a challenge in Heath as it is in many cities – the majority of the local homes are highly valued and well-designed. Residential development primarily consists of single-family homes on large- or medium-sized lots (refer to **Figure 18** on page 74). The need for some type of senior housing has been mentioned numerous times during this comprehensive planning process.

One of the primary reasons people stay within a community is that they consider their property and neighborhood unique.

Recommendation 4.3: Require each development to provide properties that have a certain number of unique amenities.

- Establish a listing of acceptable amenities, such as views of the Lake, proximity/access to parks, proximity/access to trails, proximity/access to schools, and establish criteria for each.
- Require each individual property to have at least two amenities. This will create neighborhoods that attract reinvestment because of each property's uniqueness, which is not the case in large homogenous subdivisions.
- Continue to implement the City's established residential anti-monotony standards, which help to add value to neighborhoods by requiring variation in house design elements, materials used, and color, according to certain distances between homes (refer to the Heath City Code, Article 14-7, Appearance Code).

Recommendation 4.4: Require uniqueness in the layout of each development.

- Identify and preserve existing neighborhood landmarks, such as historic or distinctive buildings and prominent natural features, to foster neighborhood pride, distinctiveness, and sense of ownership.
- Preserve open space and make it an integral part of the neighborhood, such as a common green or greenbelts throughout the neighborhood.

Residential Density

As the City continues to grow, there will be a concern that the environment of Heath will suffer as development proceeds and more open land area is lost. In response to these concerns, the City should encourage neighborhoods to be spacious with large lots and generous setbacks to provide the feeling of openness while also incorporating the preservation of open space, particularly for environmentally significant areas, such as floodplains, slopes, and sensitive habitat.

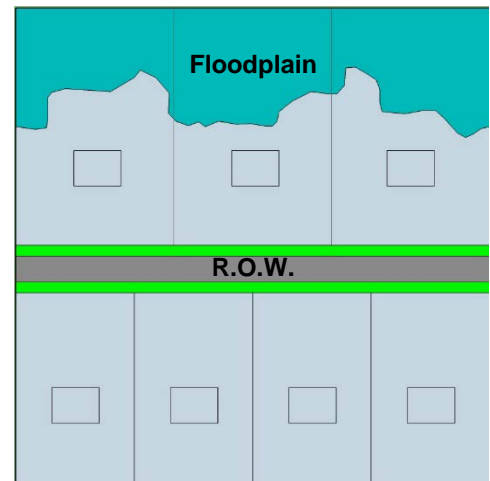
Heath is known for its large-lot development, and City leaders, the community, and land owners would like this to be maintained. The following recommended policy supports the continuation of a low-density development pattern. This policy provides that residential development must be developed on lots that contain a minimum of one acre of developable area. Developable area excludes land that is in the regulatory floodplain; rivers, lakes, and streams; and rights-of-way (ROW). This policy serves important City interests: maintaining the health and safety of its residents, promoting the orderly growth and development of the City, and preserving Heath’s unique rural community character. “The concept of the public welfare is broad and inclusive. The values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, aesthetic as well as monetary. It is within the power of the legislature to determine that the community should be beautiful as well as healthy, spacious as well as clean, well-balanced as well as carefully patrolled.” *Village of Belle Terre v. Boraas*, 416 U.S. 1, 6 (1974), quoting *Berman v. Parker*, 348 U.S. 26 (1954).

Excluding floodplain and water bodies from developable residential area protects life, health, and property of City residents; minimizes costs for flood control projects; reduces tax dollars spent on relief and repair for flood damage; prevents and controls water pollution and protects wildlife habitat; prevents increased flood levels caused by floodplain developments; and maintains both the scenic natural beauty and the economic value of Heath’s water resources.

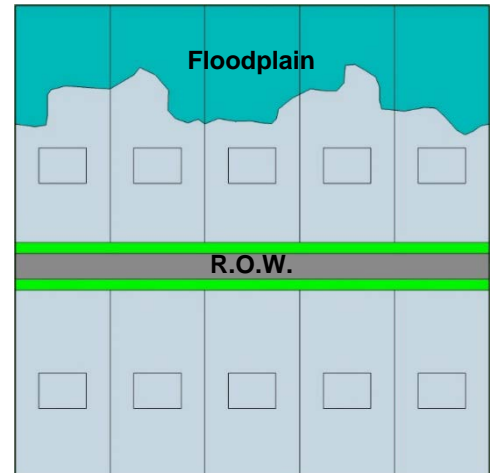
Excluding right-of-way from developable residential area promotes orderly growth, development, and subdivision of land in the City by providing for the coordination of streets and highways with existing or planned streets and highways and with other public facilities; by dedicating or reserving rights-of-way or easements for streets and utility purposes; and by distributing traffic in a manner that avoids congestion and overcrowding and promotes the public health, safety, and welfare.

Both of these exclusions serve another important governmental purpose identified as essential in Heath: preservation of Heath’s unique rural community character. This policy serves that purpose by ensuring that Heath’s one-acre lot residential zoning requirements are not diluted or diminished by residential construction on one-acre lots that contain undevelopable acreage and result in dense development uncharacteristic of Heath’s established community character. Heath, its City leaders, stakeholders, and citizens have repeatedly voiced their preference for maintaining and enhancing Heath’s low-density, unique, rural residential character. This policy responds to that preference and serves the governmental interest of maintaining community character, conserving the value of improvements and property in the City, and encouraging the most appropriate use of land through the community in accordance with the citizens’ preference.

Correct Method of Calculating Developable Acreage



Incorrect Method of Calculating Developable Acreage



Recommendation 4.5: Continue the previously established policy of a residential gross density of one dwelling unit per acre of developable land.

- Create a Rural Estate zoning district to allow specifically for “ranchettes” of at least three acres in area. This classification should include zone-specific design standards.
- Require standards for Planned Developments, such as the use of HOAs for maintenance and identify factors to consider such as the placement of open space toward the front of developments and the maximization of usable open space.
- Review the PD ordinance with respect to density calculations to ensure that objectives are met, specifically Objective 1.1.

Existing Neighborhoods

Oftentimes, planning documents such as this Comprehensive Plan tend to focus on new development, and policies addressing existing developed areas are not considered to be important. However, citizens and stakeholders in this comprehensive planning process have stated that it is important for the existing neighborhoods in Heath to remain attractive, viable places in which people will continue to want to live. The sustainability of previously developed neighborhoods is as important to the future of the City as the need to design new sustainable neighborhoods.

Recommendation 4.6: Ensure the continued sustainability of existing neighborhoods.

- Prioritize existing areas that may need assistance for maintenance and/or improvement.
- Identify capital improvements that can be made within existing areas, such as parks, street trees, sidewalks, medians, and landscaping.
- Allocate monetary resources on an annual, prioritized basis toward the betterment of existing neighborhoods.

Lakefront Access/Redevelopment

As the western boundary of the City of Heath, Lake Ray Hubbard plays an integral part in the City's identity and planning process. The Lake currently provides recreational and scenic amenities that enhance Heath's desirability as a hometown. A significant issue identified during the visioning process for this Comprehensive Plan was the desire, of both community leaders and citizens, to have access to Lake Ray Hubbard.

The City of Dallas, which owns the Lake and shoreline, and the City of Heath are parties to an Interlocal Lease and Agreement providing for use of the take area, leased to Heath and potentially available for sublease to adjacent property owners. The City of Heath has adopted Zoning Guides for development within the leased areas. Residential development along the shoreline of the Lake provides certain limitations to access points for public use.

Recommendation 4.7: Proactively pursue opportunities along the shoreline of Lake Ray Hubbard to create, improve and protect access to the Lake for the citizens of Heath.

Note: This policy does not include the use of eminent domain for this purpose.

- Facilitate the implementation of the Take Area Zoning Guides and evaluate the guides periodically for possible improvements to regulations or processes.
- Through cooperation with property owners and developers, protect undeveloped take area and optimize potential use for the enjoyment of Heath residents.

Procedural Land Use Policies

The Future Land Use Map is one of the most significant pieces of this Comprehensive Plan document. Effective use of the Map will result in Heath attaining its desired land use pattern. The following discussions address the most valuable ways in which the Map can be used to make positive decisions in keeping with the ideals of this Plan.

Rezoning Decisions

When a development proposal is submitted, and the tract of land is zoned for a type of land use that is consistent with the proposed development, the City only has the ability to ensure that the development is consistent with its subdivision standards. That is, the development must make provisions for water and wastewater supply, for adequate rights-of-way, for proper ingress and egress, etc. However, when a development proposal is submitted and involves a rezoning, Heath has more discretion in whether to approve the rezoning. Therefore, the City has more of an ability to apply Land Use Strategy concepts to the development proposal prior to approving the proposal.

Also, the impacts of “downzoning” later after granting a requested zoning must be considered. Several bills introduced during previous State legislative sessions proposed that Texas cities be required to compensate landowners if a city initiates a “downzoning” of their property. Downzoning refers to a decrease of the intensity of a zoning district. For instance, a downzoning occurs if a city initiates a zoning change from a retail zoning district to a single-family zoning district. Although there are relatively few instances of the City of Heath proactively initiating rezonings, as opposed to landowner-initiated rezonings, this could be a concern for Heath if this type of law is eventually adopted by the State legislature.

Recommendation 4.8: Use the Land Use Strategy text and map as a guide to determine whether the requested rezoning is appropriate and consistent with the City’s ideals of quality and sustainability.

- Consider the following questions related to concepts within this Comprehensive Plan prior to approving rezoning requests.
 - Does the development provide something unique for Heath?
 - Is the development within walking distance to public uses, parks, and open spaces?
 - Does the development provide off-street pedestrian and bicycle connections to existing and future development?
 - How does the development proposal impact the City fiscally – tax revenue, infrastructure, public services, and other public considerations (such as parks, schools, etc.)?
 - How does the development respect environmentally significant areas like floodplains – are these areas used as an amenity?
- Ensure that the proposed development is of a type and quality that will be acceptable for the long-term, especially if immediate development of the property is not intended to occur upon the granting of the proposed rezoning.

Effective Use of the Future Land Use Map

It is important to recognize that development proposals contrary to land uses recommended on the Future Land Use Map could be an improvement over the uses shown within a particular area. This may be due to changing market conditions, development patterns, and/or economic trends that occur at some point in the future after the Comprehensive Plan is adopted. If such changes occur, and especially if there is a significant benefit to the City, then these proposals should be considered, and the Future Land Use Map should be amended accordingly. However, State law specifies that zoning must be based on a plan, and the courts have ruled likewise. Therefore, the following policy is recommended.

Recommendation 4.9: Amend the Future Land Use Map prior to rezoning land that would result in any inconsistency between the Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Map.

- Place consideration of the amendment to the Future Land Use Map on the City Council agenda prior to or immediately following the agenda item to consider the related rezoning.
- Engage in regular review of the Future Land Use Map to further ensure that the City's zoning regulations are as consistent as possible with the Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map should reflect all zoning amendments made subsequent to the initial adoption of the Future Land Use Map.
- Make any zoning changes in conjunction with the Future Land Use Map, or amend the Future Land Use Map to match zoning changes.
- Create a zoning district for office land uses in conjunction with the Future Land Use Map.
- As noted in Recommendation 4.5, create a zoning district for residential lots at least three acres in area.

Ultimate Population Capacity

Previously within this chapter, the ultimate capacity of the City and ETJ were calculated. This calculation is not likely to be the exact amount of the population when and if Heath builds out because of the fact that it is based on 1) current City limit and ETJ lines that will probably be altered in the future, and 2) current assumptions about residential density that may or may not occur. However, this calculation is the most accurate that can be established for the City because it is based on a planning process that has determined what the City's ideal land use pattern and related densities should be, resulting in the Future Land Use Map. Given this discussion, the following policy is recommended.

Recommendation 4.10: Utilize the ultimate population capacity calculation as a tool for planning public services to provide for the population that is anticipated to be served in the future.

- Proactively monitor the capacity of the water and wastewater systems and increase service availability for developable areas. Water is an increasingly scarce resource, and cities with capacity in the future will be better positioned to accommodate growth and quality development.
- Increase the public's awareness of the need for water conservation, especially during high-usage summer months.
- Allow new development to contribute to water conservation by allowing drought-tolerant plant species and organic mulch to meet landscaping requirements.
- Utilize the Land Use Plan to calculate projected traffic counts on roadways based on recommended land uses. This will allow the City to design roadways for their ultimate capacity, and to not overbuild roadways.
- Maintain and expand police and fire services to meet the needs of Heath's future population, and improve upon such services as funding allows.

5 | Livability Strategy

Livable Communities

What does the term livability mean with regard to city planning? There are many intangibles that make a city livable, such as a sense of community, a strong sense of place in particular areas, city pride, and the friendliness of neighbors. But there are also tangible aspects which can nurture livability. Therefore, the aspects of livability that this chapter will concentrate on involve:

- Creation of walkable communities;
- Creation of neighborhood identity, and areas with a strong “sense of place”;
- Concentration on the design of the pedestrian realm;
- Aesthetic quality of the neighborhoods and community;
- Proximity to open space and recreational opportunities;
- Proximity and availability of other community services such as high quality schools;
- Ease of access to and quality of retail and restaurants;
- Traffic flow and availability of alternative means of travel;
- Availability of the desired type, style, and cost of housing;
- Proximity to employment opportunities;
- Sustainability in buildings and development pattern; and
- Accessibility to natural areas.

Figure 4. Importance of Creating Livability and Long-Term Value



An important aspect of livability is the concept of sustainability, which involves creating an environment that people and businesses want to both invest and re-invest in. It includes such things as the:

- Achievement of a high level of livability, as outlined above;
- Ability to adapt to inevitable changes in population characteristics and economic condition, such as employment opportunities, as the community continues to mature and to age gracefully;
- Creation of a building, cultural, and open space infrastructure that contributes to the desirability of a community over time, and that improves with age. Examples include parks and open space, cultural facilities, and non-residential buildings that do not have to be torn down and rebuilt when tenants move to another location; or which “wear out” in 20 years.
- Provision of trail connections.
- Design of infrastructure that is environmentally sensitive and that minimizes long-term maintenance costs.

Livability Strategy | Recommendations

The following section outlines recommendations related to the following topics:

- Parks and Open Space
- Trails and Sidewalks
- Pedestrian Realm Design
- Environmental Sensitivity

Parks and Open Space

The amount and quality of parks and open space within a community are often cited as important elements of local quality of life. Heath has recognized this fact through an adopted Park Plan and a park dedication ordinance. This portion of the Livability Strategy, therefore, focuses on fine-tuning the way in which parks and open spaces are designed and integrated with development throughout the City in order to further enhance Heath’s livability.

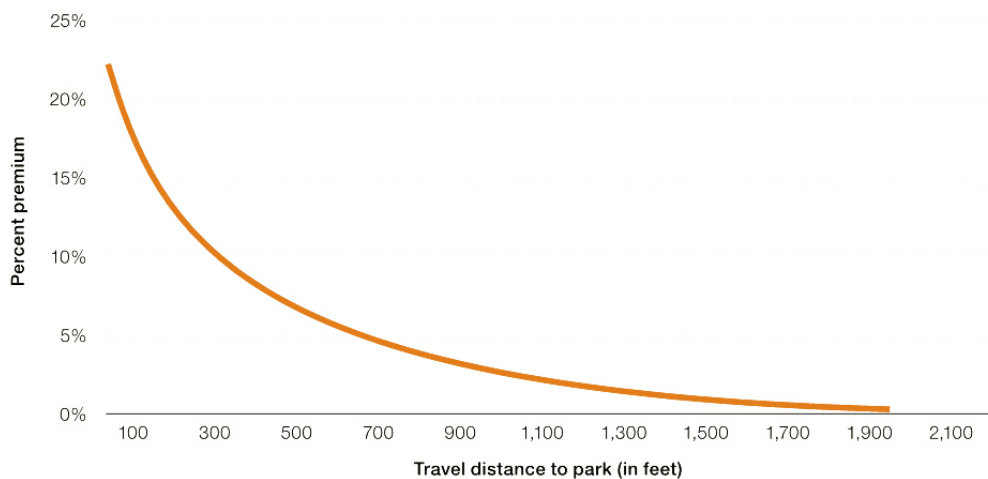
Value Considerations

There are researched and proven methods to add value to sites and homes that are adjacent to parks and open spaces. These methods generally relate to the level of visibility and accessibility to such areas. As shown in **Figure 5**, the following are key facts related to adding value to properties adjacent to parks and open spaces:

- Properties within 100 feet of public open space have a 23-percent premium property value.
- There is measurable value added to properties for up to a quarter-mile.
- Properties that have access to a park or open space within a three-minute walk accounts for 85 percent of the total value-added premium.

Given these facts, the way in which a neighborhood is laid out can greatly affect property values. The following actions are therefore recommended to add value, greater livability, and greater sustainability to local home sites.

Figure 5. Impact of Neighborhood Parks on Adjacent Neighborhoods in DFW



Source: Active Living Research, 2010

Recommendation 5.1: Ensure that the subdivision and development process includes consideration of the way in which residential lots relate to parks and open space; adjacency and accessibility to parks and open space should be optimized.

- Require all parks and open space to be bounded by lots where units face the open space, or be bounded by streets with lots fronting onto the streets and adjacent open space. These configurations provide “oversight” and access to such parks and open space, thereby encouraging a sense of community and “ownership, as well as contribute to safety.”
- As noted above, require that homes adjacent to any park or open space directly face the park (whether or not there may be an intervening street), in order to ensure that the maximum value accrues to the homes.
- Require that the majority of lots developed within a neighborhood be within 800 feet of a dedicated trail, park, or open space.
- Encourage smaller lots to be located in the closest proximity to the parks and open spaces in any neighborhood where a mix of lot sizes is provided. This will maximize the value of those lots, and the parks and open spaces will off-set smaller lot sizes and provide the feeling of open space that is desired in Heath.

Natural Drainage Courses

In every community, there are areas that are unable to be developed because of environmental constraints. Possibly the most common example is a floodplain area. The fact that areas are not developable may be viewed as negative to a developer, but preservation of these areas for community enjoyment and use as parks, open spaces, and trails will greatly enhance the livability of the entire city and support strong property values over the long term.

Recommendation 5.2: Ensure that all floodplains are preserved and form the core of the community public open space and trail system.

- When feasible, connect floodplain areas via trails to open space or park areas within adjacent developments. This will ensure that floodplain areas, as they are connected to other floodplain areas or local parks, become areas that significantly contribute to the open space of the City.
- Ensure that the City’s Subdivision Regulations include provisions for floodplains and related open space that support plans for a county-wide system. A regional system of open space that utilizes floodplain areas and trails would provide great benefit for Heath and all other cities involved.



Recommendation 5.3: Recommend lots to be platted a certain distance from the edge of local creeks, and not to the centerline of the creeks.

- Establish a reasonable distance from creek edges to platted lots. Ideally, a roadway should be created as a buffer between creeks and homes. This will allow for trails to be created next to creeks, and will help preserve banks and slopes from erosion.

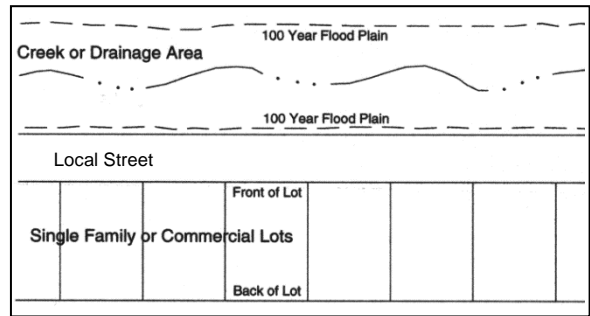


Diagram Shows Homes Facing a Creek with a Roadway Between the Homes and Creek

Trails and Sidewalks

Trails Planning

To a large extent, land development is centered around the automobile. This is due to the fact that the primary mode of transportation is the automobile, and development is designed to accommodate automobiles, often to the exclusion of any other travel mode. However, alternative forms of transportation are becoming increasingly important, with society becoming more aware of healthy lifestyles that involve walking, running and biking, and the environmental impact of using fossil fuels is also influencing this trend.

In addition, an alternative form of transportation would benefit a large portion of the population who cannot drive because of age or disability. In Heath, trails offer the most viable option as an alternative transportation mode. At the time of this Plan update, the City is commissioning a Park Master Plan that will, among other actions, outline ways to establish trails throughout the community based on various factors. Upon completion of both the Comprehensive Plan and Park Master Plan, it is recommended that City staff perform an assessment to ensure that both documents are appropriately referenced and linked. The Park Master Plan is considered an extension of this Comprehensive Plan update and shall be referred to accordingly when making land use, development, planning, and funding decisions.

Pedestrian & Bicycle Integration

The only way to reduce the dependence on the automobile is to provide a viable and realistic transportation alternative, specifically through pedestrian/bicycle connections. Integration of these two concepts within the City – now, when the City has much room for population growth and land development – will make Heath a more sustainable and livable community in the long-term. Integration of pedestrian and bicycle access should be pursued in accordance with the following recommendations.

Welcoming and Safe Streets

The City of Heath Transportation Plan is a standalone document that, among other factors, takes into account the recommended goals and land use planning information contained in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The Transportation Plan is updated periodically to verify it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan as well as development trends that have occurred since the last update.

A welcoming street means a street that is designed to project the image of a quality community. Streets are one of the greatest assets a city has to establish character and maintain and/or increase property values. A welcoming street also means a safe street. Ex-urban areas have proven to be less safe to travel within than dense, urban areas. This is likely due to the more open feeling that is experienced by drivers when they travel long, straight roads with wide lanes and that lack “friction” created by trees and parked cars, which results in a higher incidence of fatalities.

Recommendation 5.4: Consider how streets will affect Heath’s image as well as adjacent property values as streets are newly constructed, maintained, or widened.

- Amend subdivision ordinance to require new subdivisions to comply with all requirements of revised Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan, Park Master Plan, and that new subdivisions shall require driveway access to an adjacent local street for each new lot.
- Create views for people traveling along roadways by designing gently curved roadways. This will provide indirect views of various attributes of Heath, such as local homes, open spaces, creeks, trails, ponds and the lake.

- Design new neighborhoods with homes laid out so that walls along streets are unnecessary. Homes should face or side onto streets, and should either be on large lots, or utilize eyebrows, slip-streets, or courts to enhance value for the lots and to create a sense of community for the entire City.
- Require certain streetscape elements to be established along all new streets. Such elements should include trees, lighting, and medians (wherever necessary).
- Pursue the development of streetscape plans for existing roadways in Heath. Such plans should include prioritization of roadways, as well as specific consideration for how trees, pedestrian amenities, lighting, etc. can be integrated retroactively with regard to utilities and easements.
- Establish gateways at key entry locations in Heath, consistent with the Entry Corridor Concepts document, which was adopted by the City in June 2003.
- Work with the Texas Department of Transportation to achieve these recommended actions in relation to streets that are not under the direct management or control of the City.

Recommendation 5.5: Consider aspects related to the design of developments that help increase pedestrian and bicycle usage.

- Require developments to be designed with continuous sidewalks or trails (that meet those from adjacent developments), short blocks, and a safe pedestrian/bicycle environment with clearly identified crosswalks.
- Require retail developments near trail routes to provide bike racks.
- Eliminate the use of screening walls as buffers between developments. Other buffering techniques, such as the use of landscaping and/or berms, can be highly effective and do not create obstacles to walking or biking between developments.
- Whenever possible, ensure trails and sidewalks are set back from busy streets for pedestrian safety.

Recommendation 5.6: Partner with Rockwall County and Kaufman County to further the county-wide trail systems.

- Appoint a contact person to represent Heath in the decision-making process as the counties (specifically Rockwall at this time) work on their respective plans.
- Investigate mutually beneficial funding opportunities for local trails, especially off-street trails and/or trails to be retrofitted into existing developed areas.

Pedestrian Realm Design

The forefathers of this country understood the importance of civic design, and the impact that good design could have on the way in which a city is viewed in terms of identity, quality and livability. The importance of pedestrian realm design has not lessened, and the fact remains that Heath has the ability to affect its perception through the design of the public domain – specifically public buildings, streets, and public spaces.

Landmarks and Prominent Public Buildings

In the past, designing public buildings so that they projected a positive image of the locality was done as a matter of practice. A good example is the old, ornate county courthouses in Texas that were once the embodiment of county government. Although these old courthouses that still stand are now celebrated historic landmarks, in more recent times public buildings have become increasingly utilitarian. This Livability Strategy recommends a return to utilizing civic buildings as a key component in creating a community “identity” and “sense of place”.

Recommendation 5.7: Ensure that new public buildings are designed to project a positive image of Heath.

- Ensure that when a new City Hall facility is built, it is designed to be architecturally distinctive. It should become symbolic of the City itself – a landmark that people across the Metroplex will associate with Heath.

Recommendation 5.8: Ensure that new public buildings are located prominently and strategically to project a positive image of Heath.

- When considering locations for a future City Hall, focus on opportunities in close proximity to the existing City Hall and Town Center Overlay.

Gathering Places

The most livable towns and cities generally have at least one location that citizens can identify as a gathering place. Examples include Southlake Town Center, Firewheel Town Center in Garland, and Sundance Square in Fort Worth. Another type of gathering space that is not as obvious, but is often just as effective as intentionally created spaces are known as “third places.” These are places that are not the “home” or the “office”, but a place where people gather and discuss issues and ideas. They also serve as social meeting places for neighborhoods and communities. Examples include coffee shops, bookstores, cafes, and restaurants.

Recommendation 5.9: Encourage “third places” to occur as new development takes place.

- Ensure that new commercial developments create a lasting infrastructure of buildings that are laid out in pedestrian-oriented development patterns, are largely contiguous and include broad landscaped sidewalks, plazas, or parks.
- Small retail venues can serve as a gathering place for residents, especially if the retail can easily be accessed by trails and sidewalks.
- Encourage inclusion and identification of gathering places in new commercial development.

Environmental Sensitivity

In recent decades, awareness of the importance of preserving the environment has grown. The impact of development on the environment can be positive or negative – development can enhance environmental features for the better, or it can essentially “pave over paradise.” The goal is to ensure that development is sensitive to environmental issues and takes advantage of its amenities.

Design with Nature

The concept of designing with nature was presented in the 1970s. The idea was, and still prevails today, to consider all aspects of the environment in designing the human habitat. The following actions describe how this can effectively be achieved in Heath.

Recommendation 5.10: Identify ways in which development can occur while minimizing negative effects on water quality and use.

- Preserve open space and drainage-ways throughout developments to encourage ground absorption of water and the natural filtering and cleaning effect of soil and plant material to improve ground and stream water quality.
- Utilize native and/or drought-tolerant species with organic mulch for landscaping to minimize fertilizers and excessive water use.

Recommendation 5.11: Identify ways in which the City can proactively reduce the “heat island effect.”

- Require parking lots to have trees that shade paved areas; this can reduce the surface temperature by 40 degrees and the ambient temperature by 7 to 11 degrees.
- Integrate street trees along new roads and along existing roads as they are improved.
- Preserve open space through the maintenance of natural floodplains, creation of parks, and conservation of environmentally sensitive areas. These types of areas and development patterns will greatly reduce the ambient temperature in the City and further reduce road maintenance and energy costs.

Recommendation 5.12: Identify ways in which the City can proactively address air, light, and noise pollution.

- Encourage interconnectedness of streets between neighborhoods, parks, retail, recreation, and other types of development to minimize automobile trip length and congestion.
- Encourage interconnected trails between and through developments, thereby providing an alternative pedestrian and bicycle circulation system.
- Promote “Dark Skies” by investigating and considering additional standards or a standalone Dark Sky ordinance or regulations.

Energy Efficient Building Designs

The term “energy efficient building design” describes a way in which buildings and sites can be constructed and utilized to be more environmentally friendly on various levels, including energy conservation, water usage, and building materials. A variety of energy efficient building and infrastructure programs are in existence today. Energy efficient building standards have been adopted by many municipalities, school districts, and commercial developers to enhance sustainability of their buildings. Many of these programs address such issues as:

- Choosing an environmentally sound location for the placement of buildings;
- Reducing the need to drive;
- Promoting healthy and active communities;
- Using less land to create more benefits;
- Protecting and improving water quality; and
- Conserving energy, water, and other natural resources.

Given the fact that Heath has 49 percent of its land left to develop, there is much that could be built in the future to be more sustainable.

Recommendation 5.13: Identify ways in which development within Heath can be more environmentally sensitive and sustainable.

- Promote standards to address efficient building designs, alternative energy, and water conservation techniques.

6 | Implementation Strategy

Introduction

Planning is essential to set the stage for quality growth and development in any community. Implementation is essential to carry out the vision for planning. The techniques for implementation outlined within this Implementation Strategy prescribe actions that should be taken by the City of Heath to achieve the goals, objectives, and policies recommended within this 2018 Comprehensive Plan.

It is important that implementation measures are outlined so that they can begin immediately after this Plan is approved by the Heath City Council. This chapter completes Heath's 2018 Comprehensive Plan by providing implementation actions that cohesively address the goals, objectives, and policies recommended herein, and that are designed for immediate action.

This chapter is written so that general implementation measures are discussed first, with more specificity provided as the chapter progresses. It is also written so that City staff, leaders, and citizens can easily ascertain what it is that the City has to do to achieve the vision for Heath (refer to **3 | Visioning**) created as the foundation of this Plan. This Implementation Strategy should be used as a checklist of actions for the City to undertake in the immediate, as well as long-term, future to take the ideal of what Heath can be from vision to reality.

General Use of the Comprehensive Plan

There are certain ways in which Heath's Comprehensive Plan can be used to most effectively impact the future development of the City. Using the Plan on a daily basis and keeping it up-to-date are two of the most important. The following sections discuss the need to use the Plan and to ensure its continued validity.

A Guide for Daily Decision-Making

The physical layout of the City is a product of previous efforts put forth by many diverse individuals and groups. In the future, each new development that takes place — whether it is a subdivision that is platted, a home that is built, or a new school, church or shopping center that is constructed — represents an addition to Heath's physical form. The integration of all such efforts and the resulting built environment creates the City as it is seen and experienced by its citizens and visitors. **For planning to be effective, it must guide each and every individual development decision. The City should consider the Comprehensive Plan in its decision-making processes, such as decisions regarding infrastructure improvements, zoning ordinance amendments, and projects and programs to implement.** Also, the development community should incorporate the broad concepts and policies of the Plan so that their efforts become part of a meaningful whole in planning the City.



A Flexible Guide

Plan Amendments

This Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a dynamic planning document for Heath — one that responds to changing needs and conditions. The full benefits of the Plan for the City can only be realized by maintaining it as a vital, up-to-date document. As changes occur and new issues within the City become apparent, the Plan should be revised. By such action, the Plan will remain current and effective in helping to guide City decisions.

Plan amendments should be made after thorough analysis of immediate needs, as well as consideration for long-term effects of proposed amendments. The City Council and other City officials should consider each proposed amendment carefully to determine whether or not it is consistent with the Plan's goals, objectives, and policies, and whether it will be beneficial for the long-term health and vitality of the City.

Annual Status Report

Each year, City staff should request an item on the Planning and Zoning Commission's agenda to review the Comprehensive Plan and associated plans (e.g., Park Master Plan, Thoroughfare Plan, and Capital Improvement Plan) to evaluate priorities, identify completed actions, and target upcoming efforts. A status report on the findings of the Planning and Zoning Commission should then be prepared by City staff and presented to the City Council before June 1 of each year to allow sufficient time for review prior to preparation of the City's annual budget. Those items that appear to need specific attention should be examined in more detail, and changes and/or additions should be made accordingly. By such periodic, consistent reevaluations, the Plan will remain functional, and will continue to give civic leaders effective guidance in decision-making. Periodic status report reviews of the Plan should include consideration of the following:

- The City's progress in implementing the Plan;
- Changes in conditions that form the basis of the Plan;
- Adjustments needed related to capital expenditures;
- Changes to the City's regulations or programs;
- Adjustments of Comprehensive Plan priorities; and
- Changes in State laws.

Five-Year Review & Update

In addition to periodic annual review, the Comprehensive Plan should undergo a thorough review and update every five years. The review and updating process should begin with the establishment of a citizen committee similar to the Review Committee (RC) that was appointed to assist in the preparation of this Plan. It would also be beneficial to have several RC members serve on such a citizen committee; this would provide a cohesive link between this 2018 Comprehensive Plan and these five-year updates. Specific input on major changes should be sought from various groups, including property owners, neighborhood groups, civic leaders, developers, business owners, and other citizens and individuals who express an interest in the long-term growth and development of the City.

Implementation Mechanisms

All policy recommendations made in the previous chapters of this Comprehensive Plan have been outlined in tables in the following section (Implementation Priorities). One of the columns within these tables is labeled Mechanism, which is intended to show the primary way(s) in which the Plan recommendation can be most effectively and expeditiously achieved. This section describes these various mechanisms, which fall into the three basic categories of Regulatory Ordinances, Financing Methods, and City Procedures.

Regulatory Ordinances

Zoning Ordinance

Zoning is perhaps the single most effective tool that Heath can use to implement this Comprehensive Plan. Zoning regulations are applicable within the City limits and can affect land use integration (mixes of uses and lot sizes), non-residential building design, and required amenities for various types of development. In addition, the right type and number of zoning districts can provide a clear menu of choices for the development community to use within Heath.

Heath's current Zoning Ordinance needs to be reviewed by staff to ensure that policy recommendations are integrated to the fullest extent possible. Making these changes will also allow the development community to be aware of the City's expectations for quality development as they create and process their development proposals. Specific changes that need to be addressed are noted in **Table 7** and **Table 8**; two immediate priorities for amendments should be 1) the review of retail design standards, and 2) required amenities for residential lots.

Subdivision Ordinance

Subdivision regulations direct the division of land into individual lots or parcels prior to development. Such regulations are not only applicable within the City limits, but also within the ETJ. The primary topics within this Comprehensive Plan that can be addressed within the Subdivision Regulations include pedestrian and trail integration, roadway provisions, and development regulations as they relate to the environment. Specific changes that need to be addressed are noted in **Table 7** and **Table 8**; an immediate priority for amendment should be integrating park and open space concepts as they relate to residential lots (and property values).

Financing Mechanisms

Capital Improvements

It is in the City's long-term financial interest to invest in physical elements that will help enhance Heath's livability and increase its sustainability over time. There are many recommendations within this Comprehensive Plan that will require the City to make such investments. The capital improvement mechanism, when listed in **Table 7** and **Table 8**, relates to recommendations that will generally require a one-time or initial investment to be achieved.

Annual Budget

Allocating monies each year toward the creation and maintenance of various elements of the City – from roadway and utility infrastructure to quality-of-life enhancements such as trails and streetscaping – is one of the most effective ways to positively impact the sustainability of Heath over time. The annual budget mechanism, when listed in **Table 7** and **Table 8**, relates to recommendations that will generally require the City to commit to annual investment to achieve. One of the goals of this Comprehensive Plan has been to make recommendations that will help Heath have a budget that is more balanced in terms of land use (residential and non-residential). This will allow the City to allocate funds on an annual basis toward Comprehensive Plan priorities.

City Procedures

City Leadership and Staff Actions

The leadership of Heath is the key to taking this Comprehensive Plan and related policy recommendations from paper to reality. It is important that the City's leadership discuss with citizens what the Comprehensive Plan recommends and why. If this occurs, citizens will be more likely to be in favor of changes made as a result of the Comprehensive Plan. Also, it is imperative that City leaders - such as the Park Board, Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council, and other boards and commissions - support and vote for measures to implement Plan recommendations.

City staff is also very critical to the process of implementing Plan recommendations. Staff is often the first point of contact for citizens; this is an opportunity for staff to explain to the public what the Comprehensive Plan contains. Also, staff can be proactive in putting forward (before the proper boards and commissions) recommended zoning and subdivision text changes, as well as other Comprehensive Plan policy-related recommendations that may be implemented through resolution or ordinance.

However, the recommendations in **Table 7** and **Table 8** that are listed with City Leadership & Staff Actions as the mechanism for implementation are those that generally cannot be implemented through a vote, ordinance, or resolution. These recommendations are those that will require City leaders and staff to proactively work with and inform citizens and stakeholders. Others are outlined in the tables.

Development Review

The usual processes for reviewing and processing zoning amendments, development plans, and subdivision plats provide significant opportunities for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. In contrast with many of the aforementioned ways to achieve Plan recommendations, development review is a reactive way to effectively implement the Plan. Each zoning, development and subdivision decision should be evaluated and weighed against applicable recommendations contained within the Plan. If decisions are made that are inconsistent with Plan recommendations, then they should include actions to modify or amend the Plan accordingly in order to ensure consistency and fairness in future decision-making. Recommendations in **Table 7** and **Table 8** that are listed with Development Review as the mechanism for implementation are those that City staff and leaders will have to apply to new developments on an on-going basis.

Engineering Studies

Some recommended policies have been made that will, in the short- or long-term, require more in-depth analysis. These are shown with the implementation mechanism Engineering Studies within **Table 7** and **Table 8**. Generally, these recommended policies involve environmental studies or an analysis of public services (water, wastewater, drainage) that may be needed as Heath continues to develop and grow in population.

Implementation Priorities

Implementation is probably one of the most important, yet most difficult, aspects of the comprehensive planning process. Without viable, realistic mechanisms for implementation, the policy recommendations contained within this Comprehensive Plan will be difficult to realize. The City should work toward policy implementation on an incremental, annual basis. Each of the policies listed in each table are correlated to the Comprehensive Plan chapter, goal and objectives (**3 | Visioning**), and mechanism (discussed in previous sections of this Chapter).

Recommendations Matrix

Table 7. Land Use Recommendations

Recommendation (page)	Goal and Objective(s)	Mechanism
Land Use Strategy		
<p>Recommendation 4.1: Develop retail design characteristics that will provide sustainability – lasting value over time. (21)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop retail design standards to provide a menu of sustainable design characteristics, such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pedestrian and roadway connections through the retail site and to adjacent properties; ○ Pedestrian-oriented elements, such as shade, benches, gathering areas, and signage; ○ Provision of sidewalks and a certain amount of parallel or head-in parking in front of buildings, ensuring that there is a close relationship between the on-street parking, the sidewalk, and the building; ○ Off-street parking provided behind the buildings (as opposed to large parking lots located adjacent to the street); ○ Separation of parking when located in front of a building (to minimize wide expanses of concrete); ○ Increased green space and landscaping; ○ Minimized spacing between buildings; and ○ Require retail development to be pedestrian-oriented and close to the street with reduced setbacks or an established build-to line. • Create civic focal elements such as public gathering areas that are part of any new retail development. • Create and utilize an Architectural Review Board to review proposed plans and provide architectural design recommendations to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. 	<p>Goal 3; Obj 3.1, 3.4 Goal 6; Obj 6.4, 6.5 Goal 7; Obj 7.2</p>	<p>Zoning Ordinance; City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>

<p>Recommendation 4.2: Conduct a diagnostic assessment of the existing Town Center Overlay and update it to reflect the current preferences and vision of the community. (22)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with land owners and the community to determine if an overlay district is still the best way to administer the area around City Hall. • Review and update the existing regulatory elements of the overlay district: permitted land uses; block and lot layouts; street standards; building location, scale, design, and materials; site design; and sign standards. 	<p>Goal 12; Obj 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5</p>	<p>Development Review; City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>
<p>Recommendation 4.3: Require each development to provide properties that have a certain number of unique amenities. (23)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a listing of acceptable amenities, such as views of the Lake, proximity/access to parks, proximity/access to trails, proximity/access to schools, and establish criteria for each. • Require each individual property to have at least two amenities. This will create neighborhoods that attract reinvestment because of each property's uniqueness, which is not the case in large homogenous subdivisions. • Continue to implement the City's established residential anti-monotony standards, which help to add value to neighborhoods by requiring variation in house design elements, materials used, and color, according to certain distances between homes (refer to the Heath City Code, Article 14-7, Appearance Code). 	<p>Goal 2; Obj 2.1</p>	<p>Zoning Ordinance</p>
<p>Recommendation 4.4: Require uniqueness in the layout of each development. (23)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and preserve existing neighborhood landmarks, such as historic or distinctive buildings and prominent natural features, to foster neighborhood pride, distinctiveness, and sense of ownership. • Preserve open space and make it an integral part of the neighborhood, such as a common green or greenbelts throughout the neighborhood. 	<p>Goal 1; Obj 1.4 Goal 2; Obj 2.1 Goal 9; Obj 9.4</p>	<p>Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances</p>

<p>Recommendation 4.5: Continue the previously established policy of a residential gross density of one dwelling unit per acre of developable land. (25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Rural Estate zoning district to allow specifically for “ranchettes” of at least three acres in area. This classification should include zone-specific design standards. • Require standards for Planned Developments, such as the use of HOAs for maintenance and identify factors to consider such as the placement of open space toward the front of developments and the maximization of usable open space. • Review the PD ordinance with respect to density calculations to ensure that objectives are met, specifically Objective 1.1. 	<p>Goal 1; Obj 1.1</p>	<p>City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>
<p>Recommendation 4.6: Ensure the continued sustainability of existing neighborhoods. (26)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize existing areas that may need assistance for maintenance and/or improvement. • Identify capital improvements that can be made within existing areas, such as parks, street trees, sidewalks, medians, and landscaping. • Allocate monetary resources on an annual, prioritized basis toward the betterment of existing neighborhoods. 	<p>Goal 1; Obj 1.3, 3.3 Goal 3; Obj 3.1, Goal 5; Obj 5.1, 5.2</p>	<p>Capital Improvements</p>
<p>Recommendation 4.7: Proactively pursue opportunities along the shoreline of Lake Ray Hubbard to create, improve and protect access to the Lake for the citizens of Heath. (26)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the implementation of the Take Area Zoning Guides and evaluate the guides periodically for possible improvements to regulations or processes. • Through cooperation with property owners and developers, protect undeveloped take area and optimize potential use for the enjoyment of Heath residents. 	<p>Goal 7; Obj 7.4 Goal 8; Obj 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4</p>	<p>City Leadership & Staff Actions; Capital Improvements</p>

<p>Recommendation 4.8: Use the Land Use Strategy text and map as a guide to determine whether the requested rezoning is appropriate and consistent with the City’s ideals of quality and sustainability. (27)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the following questions related to concepts within this Comprehensive Plan prior to approving rezoning requests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Does the development provide something unique for Heath? ○ Is the development within walking distance to public uses, parks, and open spaces? ○ Does the development provide off-street pedestrian and bicycle connections to existing and future development? ○ How does the development proposal impact the City fiscally – tax revenue, infrastructure, public services, and other public considerations (such as parks, schools, etc.)? ○ How does the development respect environmentally significant areas like floodplains – are these areas used as an amenity? • Ensure that the proposed development is of a type and quality that will be acceptable for the long-term, especially if immediate development of the property is not intended to occur upon the granting of the proposed rezoning. 	<p>Goal 3; Obj 3.2</p>	<p>Development Review; City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>
<p>Recommendation 4.9: Amend the Future Land Use Map prior to rezoning land that would result in any inconsistency between the Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Map. (28)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place consideration of the amendment to the Future Land Use Map on the City Council agenda prior to or immediately following the agenda item to consider the related rezoning. • Engage in regular review of the Future Land Use Map to further ensure that the City’s zoning regulations are as consistent as possible with the Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map should reflect all zoning amendments made subsequent to the initial adoption of the Future Land Use Map. • Make any zoning changes in conjunction with the Future Land Use Map, or amend the Future Land Use Map to match zoning changes. • Create a zoning district for office land uses in conjunction with the Future Land Use Map. • As noted in Recommendation 4.5, create a zoning district for residential lots at least three acres in area. 	<p>Goal 3; Obj 3.2</p>	<p>Development Review; City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>

<p>Recommendation 4.10: Utilize the ultimate population capacity calculation as a tool for planning public services to provide for the population that is anticipated to be served in the future. (29)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively monitor the capacity of the water and wastewater systems and increase service availability for developable areas. Water is an increasingly scarce resource, and cities with capacity in the future will be better positioned to accommodate growth and quality development. • Increase the public's awareness of the need for water conservation, especially during high-usage summer months. • Allow new development to contribute to water conservation by allowing drought-tolerant plant species and organic mulch to meet landscaping requirements. • Utilize the Land Use Plan to calculate projected traffic counts on roadways based on recommended land uses. This will allow the City to design roadways for their ultimate capacity, and to not overbuild roadways. • Maintain and expand police and fire services to meet the needs of Heath's future population, and improve upon such services as funding allows. 	<p>Goal 9; Obj 9.1, 9.2, 9.3</p>	<p>Engineering Studies; Capital Improvements</p>
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Table 8. Livability Recommendations

Recommendation (page)	Goal and Objective(s)	Mechanism
Livability Strategy		
<p>Recommendation 5.1: Ensure that the subdivision and development process includes consideration of the way in which residential lots relate to parks and open space; adjacency and accessibility to parks and open space should be optimized. (33)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require all parks and open space to be bounded by lots where units face the open space, or be bounded by streets with lots fronting onto the streets and adjacent open space. These configurations provide “oversight” and access to such parks and open space, thereby encouraging a sense of community and “ownership, as well as contribute to safety.” • As noted above, require that homes adjacent to any park or open space directly face the park (whether or not there may be an intervening street), in order to ensure that the maximum value accrues to the homes. • Require that the majority of lots developed within a neighborhood be within 800 feet of a dedicated trail, park, or open space. • Encourage smaller lots to be located in the closest proximity to the parks and open spaces in any neighborhood where a mix of lot sizes is provided. This will maximize the value of those lots, and the parks and open spaces will off-set smaller lot sizes and provide the feeling of open space that is desired in Heath. 	<p>Goal 3; Obj 3.3, 3.5, 3.6</p>	<p>Subdivision Ordinance</p>
<p>Recommendation 5.2: Ensure that all floodplains are preserved and form the core of the community public open space and trail system. (33)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When feasible, connect floodplain areas via trails to open space or park areas within adjacent developments. This will ensure that floodplain areas, as they are connected to other floodplain areas or local parks, become areas that significantly contribute to the open space of the City. • Ensure that the City’s Subdivision Regulations include provisions for floodplains and related open space that support plans for a county-wide system. A regional system of open space that utilizes floodplain areas and trails would provide great benefit for Heath and all other cities involved. 	<p>Goal 7; Obj 7.1 Goal 11; Obj 11.3</p>	<p>Subdivision Ordinance</p>

<p>Recommendation 5.3: Recommend lots to be platted a certain distance from the edge of local creeks, and not to the centerline of the creeks. (34)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a reasonable distance from creek edges to platted lots. Ideally, a roadway should be created as a buffer between creeks and homes. This will allow for trails to be created next to creeks, and will help preserve banks and slopes from erosion. 	<p>Goal 7; Obj 7.1, 7.4</p>	<p>Subdivision Ordinance</p>
<p>Recommendation 5.4: Consider how streets will affect Heath’s image as well as adjacent property values as streets are newly constructed, maintained, or widened. (36)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend subdivision ordinance to require new subdivisions to comply with all requirements of revised Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan, Park Master Plan, and that new subdivisions shall require driveway access to an adjacent local street for each new lot. Create views for people traveling along roadways by designing gently curved roadways. This will provide indirect views of various attributes of Heath, such as local homes, open spaces, creeks, trails, ponds and the lake. Design new neighborhoods with homes laid out so that walls along streets are unnecessary. Homes should face or side onto streets, and should either be on large lots, or utilize eyebrows, slip-streets, or courts to enhance value for the lots and to create a sense of community for the entire City. Require certain streetscape elements to be established along all new streets. Such elements should include trees, lighting, and medians (wherever necessary). Pursue the development of streetscape plans for existing roadways in Heath. Such plans should include prioritization of roadways, as well as specific consideration for how trees, pedestrian amenities, lighting, etc. can be integrated retroactively with regard to utilities and easements. Establish gateways at key entry locations in Heath, consistent with the Entry Corridor Concepts document, which was adopted by the City in June 2003. Work with the Texas Department of Transportation to achieve these recommended actions in relation to streets that are not under the direct management or control of the City. 	<p>Goal 9; Obj 9.4</p>	<p>Development Review; City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>

<p>Recommendation 5.5: Consider aspects related to the design of developments that help increase pedestrian and bicycle usage. (36)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require developments to be designed with continuous sidewalks or trails (that meet those from adjacent developments), short blocks, and a safe pedestrian/bicycle environment with clearly identified crosswalks. • Require retail developments near trail routes to provide bike racks. • Eliminate the use of screening walls as buffers between developments. Other buffering techniques, such as the use of landscaping and/or berms, can be highly effective and do not create obstacles to walking or biking between developments. • Whenever possible, ensure trails and sidewalks are set back from busy streets for pedestrian safety. 	<p>Goal 1; Obj 1.3; 1.4 Goal 3; Obj 3.7 Goal 4; Obj 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 Goal 9; Obj 9.4</p>	<p>Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances</p>
<p>Recommendation 5.6: Partner with Rockwall County and Kaufman County to further the county-wide trail systems. (36)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a contact person to represent Heath in the decision-making process as the counties (specifically Rockwall at this time) work on their respective plans. • Investigate mutually beneficial funding opportunities for local trails, especially off-street trails and/or trails to be retrofitted into existing developed areas. 	<p>Goal 4; Obj 4.5 Goal 11; Obj 11.1, 11.2, 11.3</p>	<p>City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>
<p>Recommendation 5.7: Ensure that new public buildings are designed to project a positive image of Heath. (37)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that when a new City Hall facility is built, it is a designed to be architecturally distinctive. It should become symbolic of the City itself – a landmark that people across the Metroplex will associate with Heath. 	<p>Goal 2; Obj 2.1 Goal 12; Obj 12.3</p>	<p>City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>
<p>Recommendation 5.8: Ensure that new public buildings are located prominently and strategically to project a positive image of Heath. (37)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When considering locations for a future City Hall, focus on opportunities in close proximity to the existing City Hall and Town Center Overlay. 	<p>Goal 2; Obj 2.1 Goal 12; Obj 12.3</p>	<p>City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>

<p>Recommendation 5.9: Encourage “third places” to occur as new development takes place. (37)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that new commercial developments create a lasting infrastructure of buildings that are laid out in pedestrian-oriented development patterns, are largely contiguous and include broad landscaped sidewalks, plazas, or parks. • Small retail venues can serve as a gathering place for residents, especially if the retail can easily be accessed by trails and sidewalks. • Encourage inclusion and identification of gathering places in new commercial development. 	<p>Goal 2; Obj 2.3 Goal 12; Obj 12.6</p>	<p>Development Review; City Leadership & Staff Actions</p>
<p>Recommendation 5.10: Identify ways in which development can occur while minimizing negative effects on water quality and use. (38)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve open space and drainage-ways throughout developments to encourage ground absorption of water and the natural filtering and cleaning effect of soil and plant material to improve ground and stream water quality. • Utilize native and/or drought-tolerant species with organic mulch for landscaping to minimize fertilizers and excessive water use. 	<p>Goal 7; Obj 7.1, 7.12, 7.3, 7.4,7.5, 7.6</p>	<p>Engineering Studies; Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances</p>
<p>Recommendation 5.11: Identify ways in which the City can proactively reduce the “heat island effect.” (38)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require parking lots to have trees that shade paved areas; this can reduce the surface temperature by 40 degrees and the ambient temperature by 7 to 11 degrees. • Integrate street trees along new roads and along existing roads as they are improved. • Preserve open space through the maintenance of natural floodplains, creation of parks, and conservation of environmentally sensitive areas. These types of areas and development patterns will greatly reduce the ambient temperature in the City and further reduce road maintenance and energy costs. 	<p>Goal 7; Obj 7.1, 7.2</p>	<p>Engineering Studies; Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances</p>

<p>Recommendation 5.12: Identify ways in which the City can proactively address air, light, and noise pollution. (38)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage interconnectedness of streets between neighborhoods, parks, retail, recreation and other types of development to minimize automobile trip length and congestion. • Encourage interconnected trails between and through developments, thereby providing an alternative pedestrian and bicycle circulation system. • Promote “Dark Skies” by investigating and considering additional standards or a standalone Dark Sky ordinance or regulations. 	<p>Goal 7; Obj 7.1, 7.2</p>	<p>Engineering Studies; Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances</p>
<p>Recommendation 5.13: Identify ways in which development within Heath can be more environmentally sensitive and sustainable. (39)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote standards to address efficient building designs, alternative energy, and water conservation techniques. 	<p>Goal 7; Obj 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4,7.5, 7.6</p>	<p>Engineering Studies; Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances</p>

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7 | Appendix

Demographic Snapshot

There are many elements within a city that are important – a government body, roadways, parks, and neighborhoods are a few such elements. However, the most important aspect of a city is its citizenry. The people who live in Heath, how they live, and where they make a living are the key factors in what kind of city it is today, and what kind of city it will be in the future. This section provides an overview of various characteristics of the people who call Heath home.

City, County, and Regional Population Growth

City Population Growth

Heath has experienced marked population growth since 1990, as **Table 9** shows. Between 1970 and 1980, Heath experienced the greatest percentage change in population. However, the greatest numerical increase occurred between the years 2000 and 2010, where the population grew by 2,772 people.

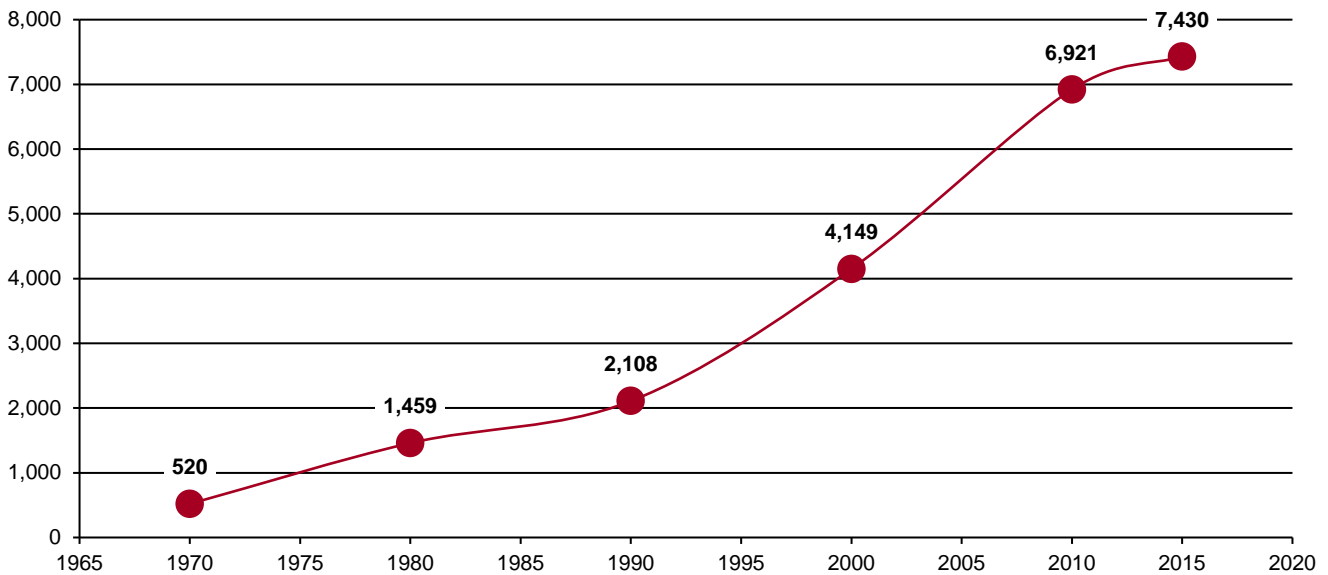
Between the years of 2010 to 2015, the City of Heath experienced its slowest growth, increasing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of only 1.4%. It should be noted that the 2015 population of 7,430 is an estimate generated by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). **Figure 6** represents the information found in **Table 9**.

Table 9. Population History

Year	Population	# Change	CAGR
1970	520	-	-
1980	1,459	939	10.9%
1990	2,108	649	3.8%
2000	4,149	2,041	7.0%
2010	6,921	2,772	5.3%
2015*	7,430	509	1.4%

Source: U.S. Census; *NCTCOG estimate

Figure 6. Population History



County Population Growth

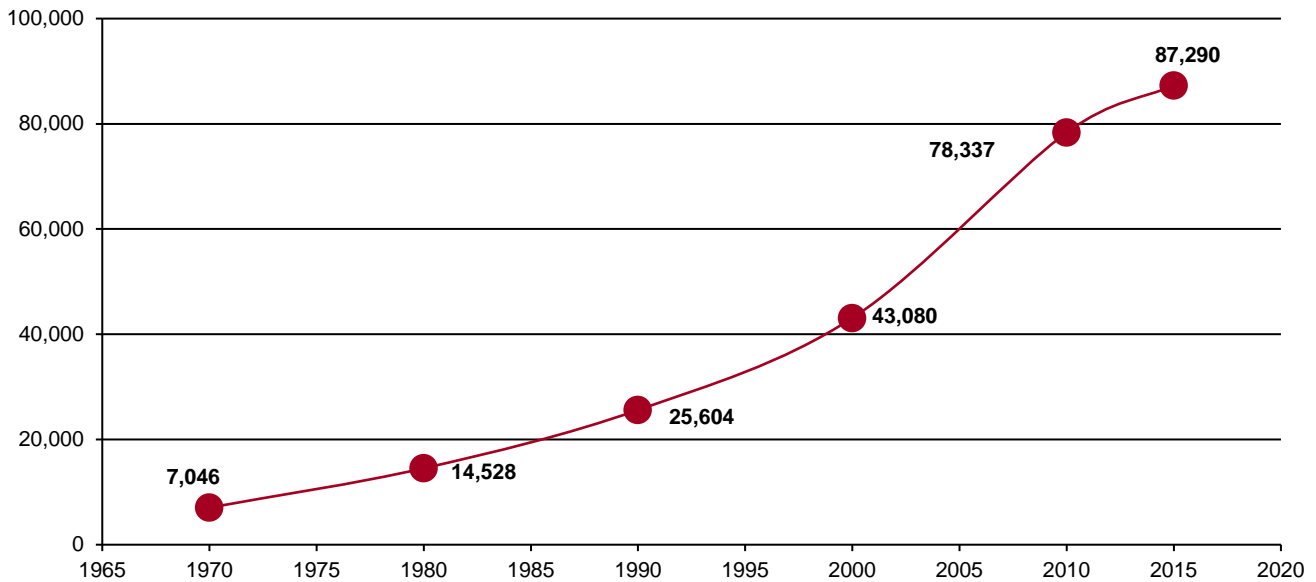
In past years, Rockwall County has been one of the fastest growing counties in Texas, as well as the nation. **Table 10** shows the population change within the County since 1970. The largest percentage increase occurred between the years 1970 and 1980, where the County grew by 106.2 percentage points. But as **Figure 7** shows, the largest numerical growth occurred between 2000 and 2010. As of the NCTCOG 2015 estimates, Rockwall County continues to grow and is estimated to currently be home to 87,290 people.

Table 10. Rockwall County Population Growth

Year	Population	# Change	% Change
1970	7,046	-	-
1980	14,528	7,482	106.2%
1990	25,604	11,076	76.2%
2000	43,080	17,476	68.3%
2010	78,337	35,257	81.8%
2015*	87,290	8,953	11.4%

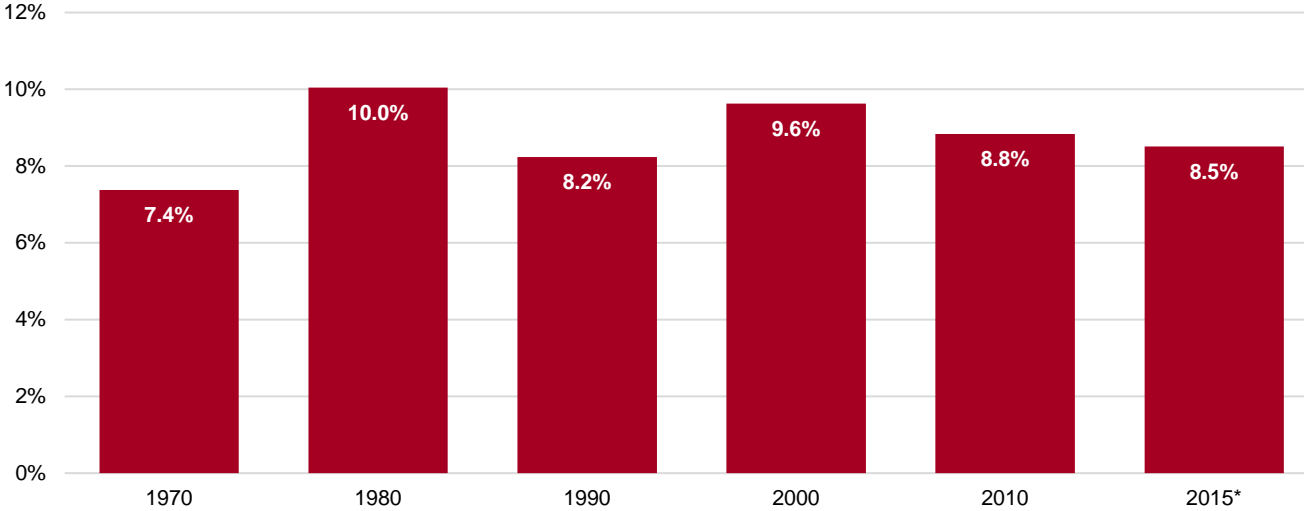
Source: U.S. Census; *NCTCOG estimate

Figure 7. Rockwall County Population Growth



Another interesting set of information is contained within **Figure 8**, which shows the population, in terms of percentages, of Rockwall County that reside within the confines of Heath. The figure allows for a comparison of the City and County, as well as an analysis of which entity is growing faster. The figure shows that the percentage of Rockwall County's population within Heath has decreased slightly since 1980 at a steady pace. It is estimated that in 2015, approximately 8.5% of the County's residents were living within Heath.

Figure 8. Percentage of Rockwall County in Heath



Source: U.S. Census; *NCTCOG estimate

Population Growth in Surrounding Cities

The cities that surround Heath have also experienced high growth rates, as shown in **Table 11**. Rowlett and Forney were the two cities that experienced the highest percentage growth, respectively, in the area. Between the years 1980 and 2015, Heath has experienced a 409.3% growth rate, which ranks it fourth among its surrounding cities in terms of growth. On the lower end of the growth spectrum are Sunnyvale and McLendon-Chisholm.

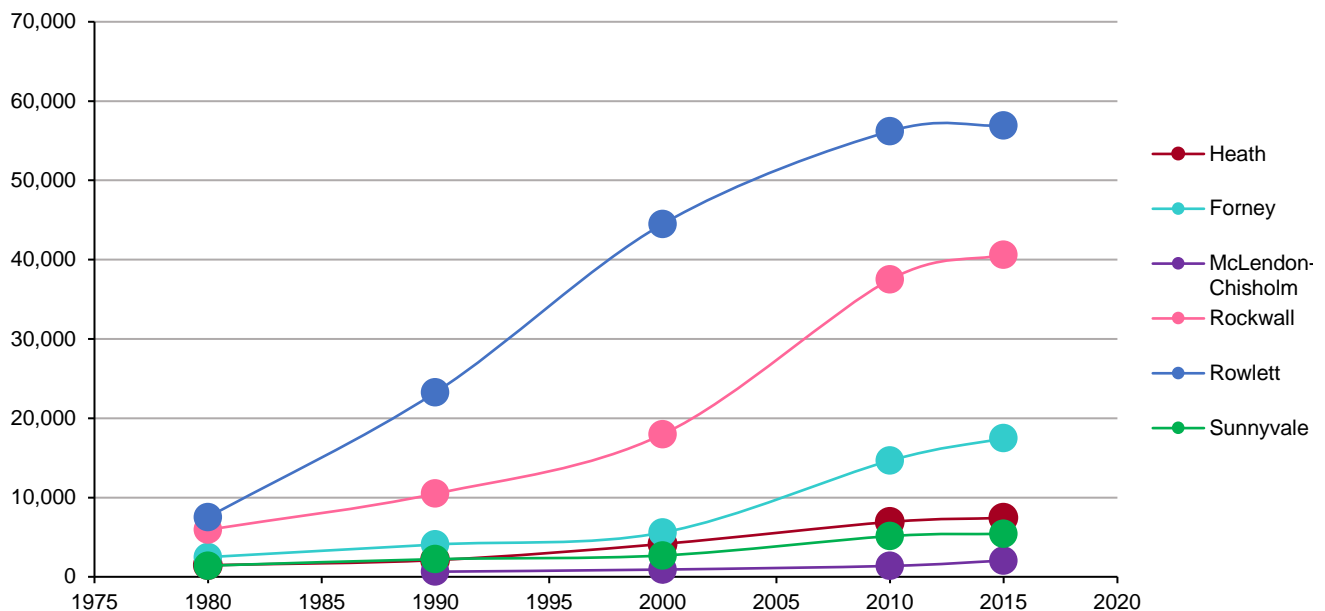
Table 11. Heath and Surrounding Cities Population Growth

Year	Heath	Forney	McLendon-Chisholm	Rockwall	Rowlett	Sunnyvale
1980	1,459	2,483	-	5,939	7,522	1,404
1990	2,108	4,070	646	10,486	23,260	2,228
2000	4,149	5,588	914	17,976	44,503	2,693
2010	6,921	14,661	1,373	37,490	56,199	5,130
2015*	7,430	17,480	2,050	40,620	56,910	5,420
Percent Growth	409.3%	604.0%	217.3%	584.0%	656.6%	286.0%
Average Annual Compounded Growth	4.76%	5.73%	4.73%	5.65%	5.95%	3.93%

Source: U.S. Census; *NCTCOG estimate

Figure 9 graphically shows the population growth of these various cities. It is interesting to note that since 1980, Heath and Sunnyvale have experienced similar patterns of growth, with Heath having a slightly larger population every year. McLendon-Chisholm has continuously showed the slowest rate of growth in comparison to all the cities surrounding Heath.

Figure 9. Population Comparison of Surrounding Area



Population Diversity

The significance of the previous discussion on local and regional population growth to this comprehensive planning process is relatively evident. Population growth in Heath and the surrounding area affects the City’s infrastructure planning, land use pattern, quality of life, etc. It may be less evident, however, as to why the diversity of the local population is important to the planning process. The principal reason is to ensure that the City is aware of its racial, ethnic and age composition so that its public decision-making process is representative, meaning that all groups are adequately included and represented in these processes. The following information on the composition of Heath’s population is provided for this purpose.

Local urban strategies incorporating the cultural dimension can contribute positively to promoting real equality of opportunity in the city and urban areas, to targeting specific initiatives in specific areas, and to promoting social cohesion and social inclusion of migrants and ethnic minorities.

Introduction: Recommendations on integrated perspectives on and approaches to cultural diversity and urban development. The Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs website.

Race and Ethnicity

Heath has historically been and continues to remain a relatively homogeneous City in terms of race and ethnicity. As seen in **Table 12**, while the City has nearly doubled in the number of citizens that were *Caucasian* between 2000 and 2013, the percent growth has only been of 3.3 percentage points. It is interesting to note that the number of *African-American* citizens remained the same within this 13-year difference but decreased by 0.3 percentage points due to the overall population increase. The largest decrease was within the *Other Race* category, which declined by 3.0 percentage points (90 people) during the 2000 to 2013 timeframe. During the same period, there was a significant increase in the population of people of *Hispanic Origin*, which increased by 2.9 percentage points (315 people).

Table 12. Racial and Ethnic Composition

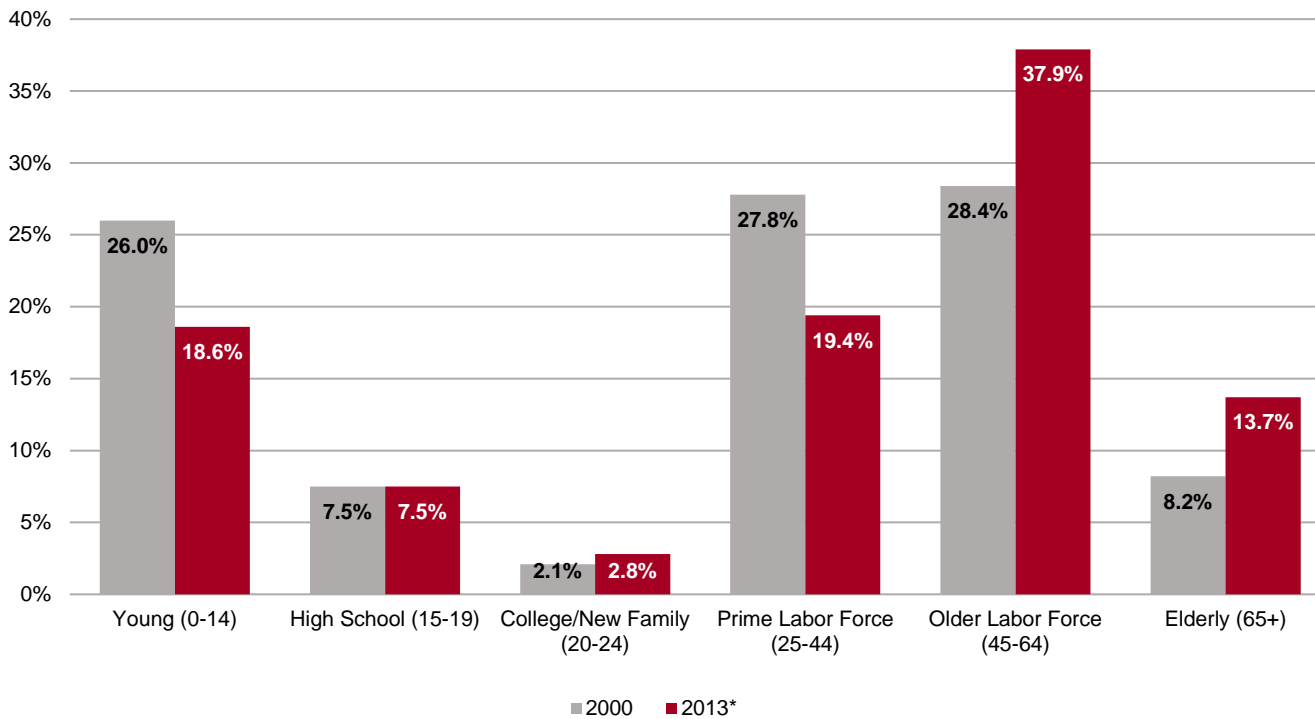
Race/Ethnicity	2000		2013*		Percentage Point Difference
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Caucasian	3,950	95.2%	7,287	98.5%	3.3%
African-American	34	0.8%	34	0.5%	-0.3%
Other Race	165	4.0%	75	1.0%	-3.0%
Total Population	4,149	100.0%	7,396	100.0%	-
Hispanic Origin	125	3.0%	440	5.9%	2.9%

Source: U.S. Census; *2009-2013 ACS estimate

Age Distribution

In terms of the age distribution between the 2000 Census and the 2013 American Community Survey, there have been significant increases and decreases in the age groups within the population of Heath. Shown in **Figure 11** are the percentage point differences, which indicate more clearly the fluctuations that each age group has experienced. In 2013, the largest segment of the population fell within the *Older Labor Force* category, which encompassed 37.9 percent of the citizenry. The greatest differences between 2000 and 2013 occurred within the *Young*, *Prime Labor Force*, *Older Labor Force*, and *Elderly* segments. The *Prime Labor Force* experienced the largest decrease within this time frame, which was a decrease of approximately 8.4 percentage points, while the *Young* group experienced a slightly smaller decrease of 7.4 percentage points. The *High School* category might have experienced some change within the 13-year period, but by 2013 matched the 2000 figure of 7.5 percent. Percentages fluctuated by only a few tenths of a percentage point in the *College/New Family* age group.

Figure 11. Age Distribution



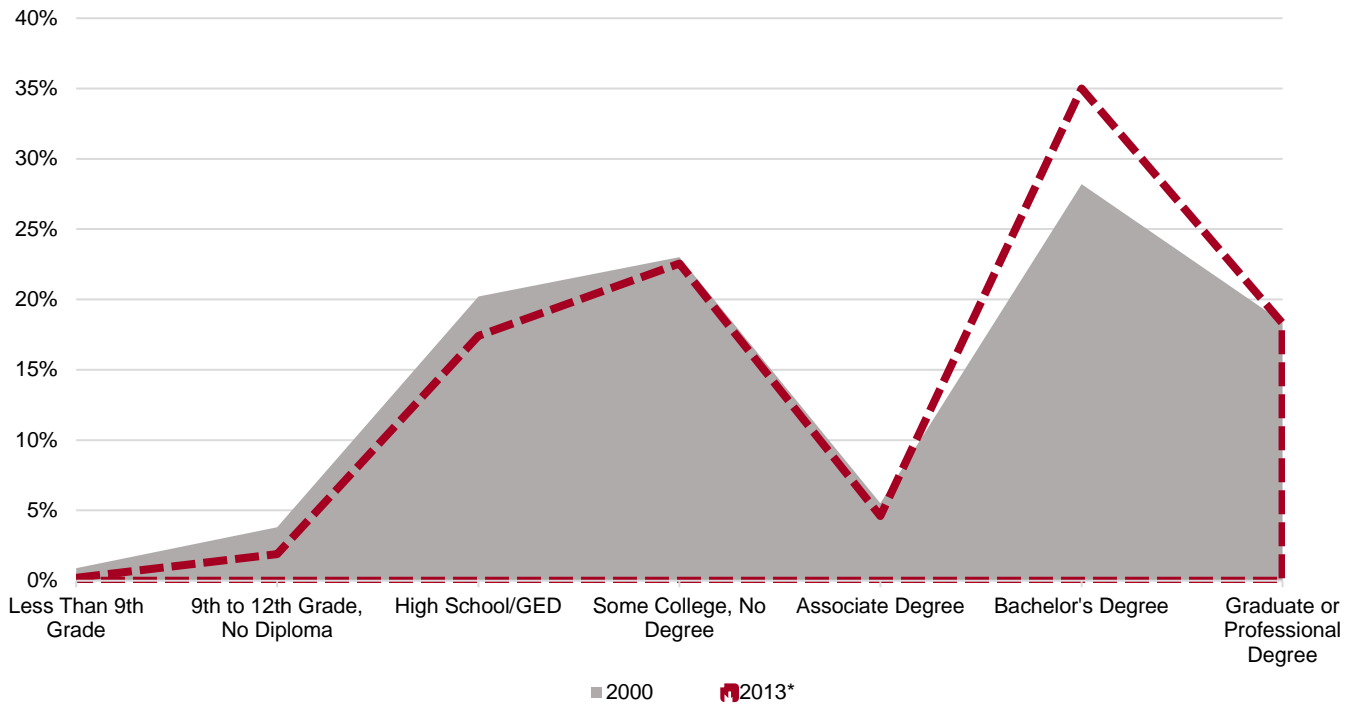
Source: U.S. Census; *2009-2013 ACS estimate

Educational Attainment

Trends relative to the education level of a population generally indicate the skill and abilities of the residents of the community. The information that is presented in the section can be useful in attracting business to the area, which in turn could increase economic development opportunities within Heath. The fact that the City of Heath had a high median household income (Figure 13) and median housing value (Figure 16) suggests a well-educated citizenry. Figure 12 shows that this was true during the time frame between 2000 and 2013. According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, almost 100 percent of the population 25 years of age or over is a high school graduate or higher. Of this population, approximately 53.4 percent have obtained a Bachelor’s degree or higher. A significantly small percentage of the population, 1.9 percent to be exact, has an educational attainment of 9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma, with even a smaller population (0.2%) having an attainment of Less Than 9th Grade.

The percentage point decreases in terms of educational attainment for the citizens of Heath have been minor for the most part. The category that experienced the largest increase, which is 6.8 percentage points, was Bachelor’s Degree. The percentage of Heath’s population that is a high school graduate or higher also increased, having a 95.3 percent population in 2000 and increasing to approximately 97.9 percent in 2013.

Figure 12. Educational Attainment

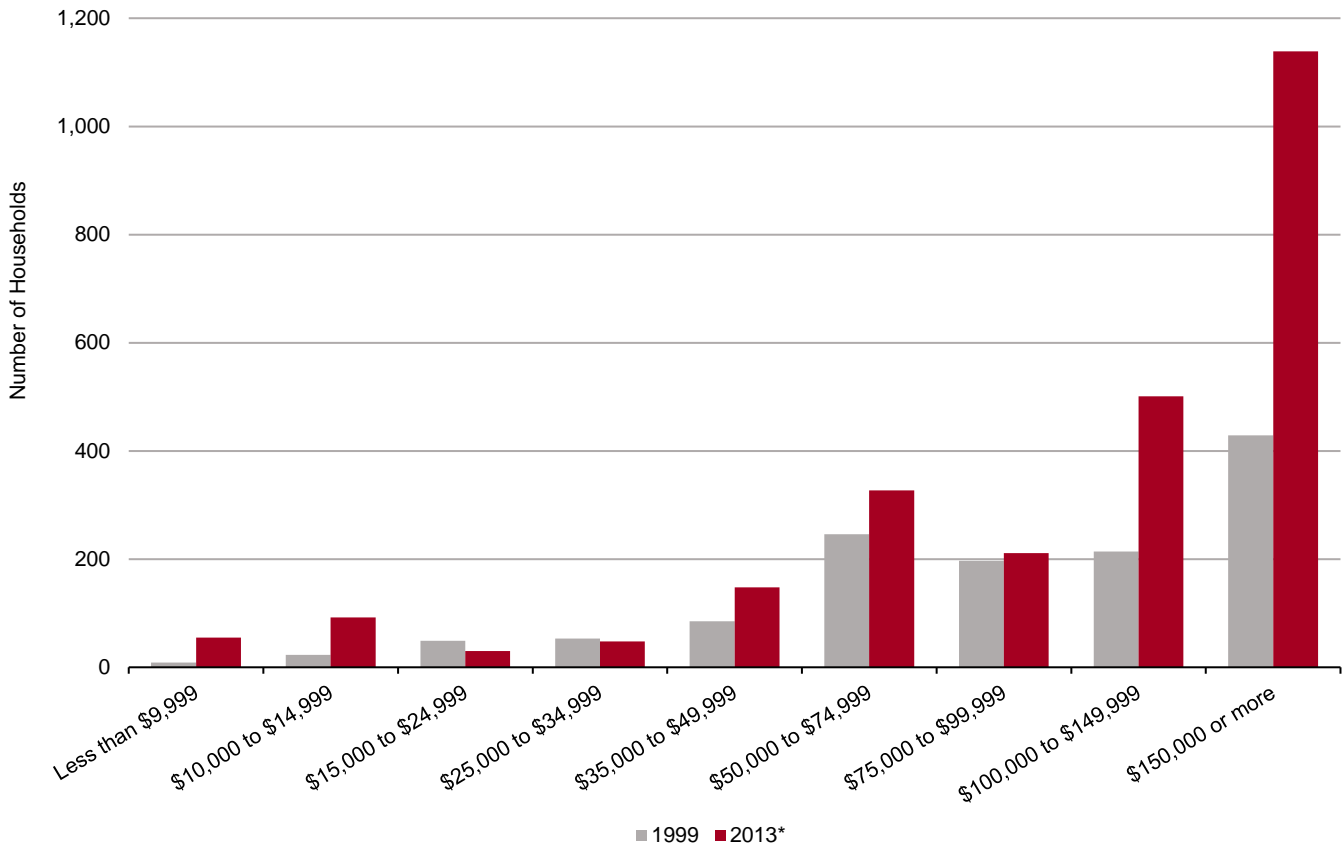


Source: U.S. Census; *2009-2013 ACS estimate

Local Income Levels

Income levels are interesting to note for two primary reasons. First, if there is significant fluctuation in household income levels from one Census year to another, it may indicate that employment opportunities (regionally or locally) are increasing or decreasing. Second, income is an indicator for the retail market – higher income levels generally mean more disposable income and more retail possibilities, which in turn mean a higher tax base for a community. **Figure 13** contains household income information for Heath for the years 1999 and 2013.

Figure 13. Median Household Income



Source: U.S. Census; *2009-2013 ACS estimate

The majority of the income categories experienced increases between 2009 and 2013, particularly the higher income levels. The two largest increases occurred within the \$100,000 to \$149,000 and \$150,000 or more categories. In 1999 there were 429 households that's had an income of \$150,000 or more, but by 2013 it is estimated that approximately 1,139 households had this income level. The median income level has also significantly risen between 1999 and 2013, by an increase of \$34,844. It should be noted that once the median income for 1999 is corrected for inflation (to 2013 dollars) it appears that the level has actually decreased. This phenomenon suggests that the difference between high- and low-income groups is increasing or that Heath's middle class shrank during this period.

Median Income at-a-Glance

1999 Median Income: \$98,975

2013 Median Income: \$133,819

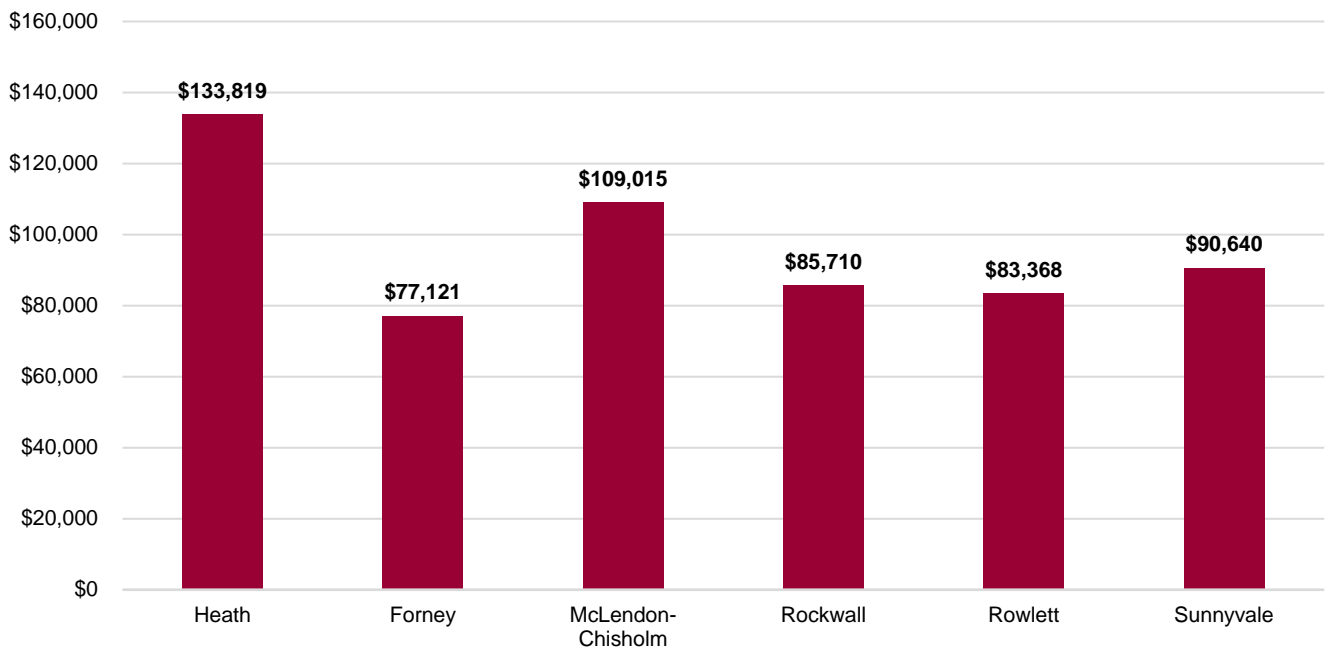
A difference of: +\$34,844

When adjusted for inflation, a difference of: -\$4,505

Inflation Calculator from the Bureau of Labor Statistics

It is also interesting to examine how the income levels of Heath compare with those of its surrounding cities. **Figure 14** graphically shows this information by comparing the median household incomes in each city according to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey. Heath had the highest median income of all of the cities, with McLendon-Chisholm following shortly behind. Rockwall, Rowlett, and Sunnyvale all had similar income levels that approximately fell within the \$85,000 to \$91,000 range. Forney had the lowest median household income of all of the cities shown in the comparison.

Figure 14. Median Household Income in Heath and Surrounding Cities



Source: 2009-2013 ACS estimate

Household Types

The phrase “household type” refers to how people who live within a household, if they do not live alone, are related. This section examines what types of households are found within Heath, and whether these types have changed significantly between the 2000 Census and the 2013 American Community Survey estimate. This information can be seen in **Table 13** below.

In 2013, Heath had a significant majority of family households over non-family households, roughly 90.4 percent of the households are family households. Of total households, 77.9 percent are married couples. Non-family households make up a small percentage of the households, accounting for only 9.6 percent. Of the overall 2,551 households, 8.3 percent have a householder living alone and 5.6 percent of these households are headed by a citizen over 65 years of age.

It is also interesting to note the changes that have occurred from 2000 to 2013, which have been significant. The greatest increase occurred in the percentage of households with individuals over 65 years of age, which had an increase of 8.6 percentage points. The number of family households with a female householder who had no husband present also experienced a significant increase of 4.9 percentage points. The number of households with individuals under 18 years of age had a significant decrease of 9.8 percentage points. While the average household size decreased from 3.01 persons per household in 2000 to 2.90 in 2013, the household size has since increased to 3.19 persons per household in 2016.

Table 13. Household Types

Household Type	2000		2013*		Percentage Point Difference
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Family Households	1,215	88.0%	2,307	90.4%	2.4%
Married Couple Family	1,130	81.9%	1,986	77.9%	-4.0%
Female Householder, No Husband Present	54	3.9%	225	8.8%	4.9%
Non-Family Households	165	12.0%	244	9.6%	-2.4%
Householder Living Alone	125	9.1%	212	8.3%	-0.8%
Householder 65 Years and Over	37	2.7%	143	5.6%	2.9%
Households with Individuals Under 18 Years	672	48.7%	992	38.9%	-9.8%
Households with Individuals Over 65 Years	230	16.7%	645	25.3%	8.6%
Total Households	1,380		2,551		
Average Household Size	3.01		2.90		

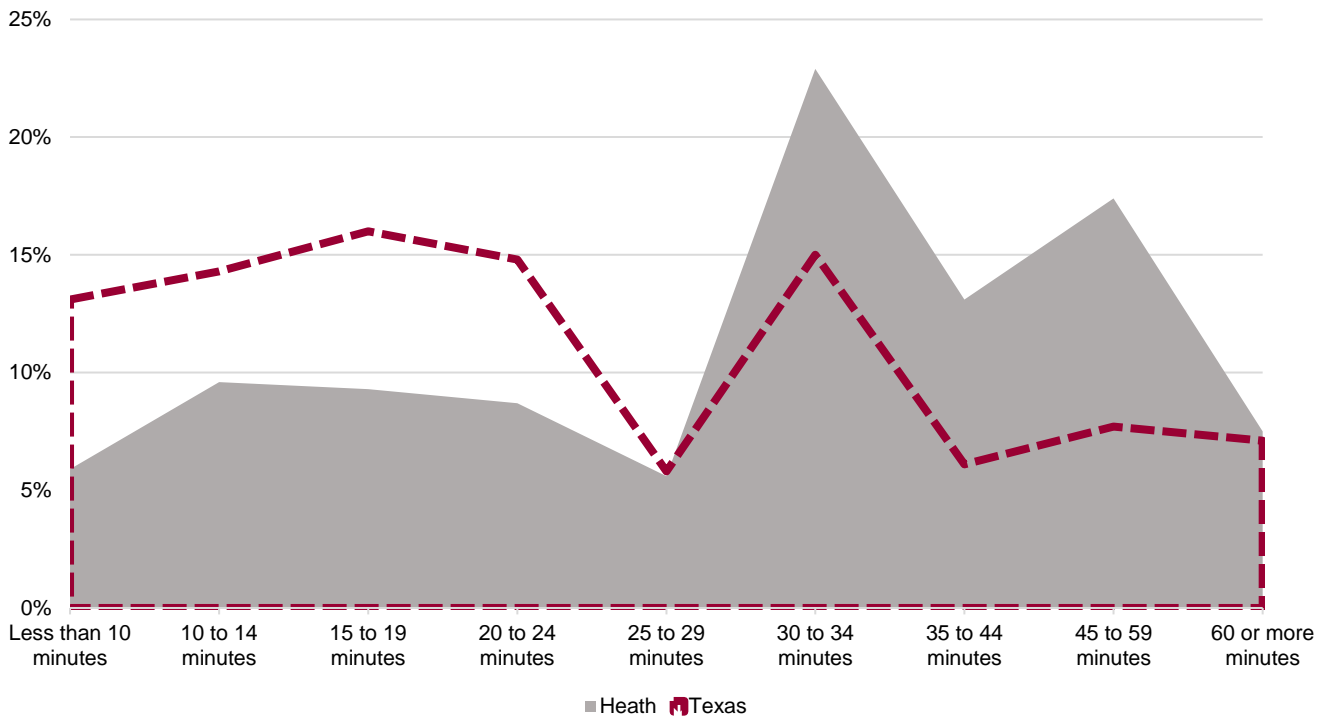
Source: U.S. Census; *2009-2013 ACS estimate

Commute Time

An important consideration related to where people want to live is the amount of time it takes to travel between work and home every day. As Heath and the surrounding area continue to grow in population, traffic and time on the roadways will likely increase, especially to and from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Many citizens have likely already begun to notice this increase given Heath’s population increases over the past few years. **Figure 15** graphically depicts a comparison related to commute time for employed citizens in Heath as well as Texas, according to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey.

It can be concluded that the overall population of Texas has shorter commute times than the citizens of Heath, with the majority having a commute whose length is less than half an hour. In Heath, the largest percentage of people (22.9 percent) had a commute of 30 to 34 minutes, but a large percentage (17.4 percent) had an even longer commute, taking 45 to 59 minutes to get to work. These combined accounted for a large percentage of the employed population of Heath, approximately 40.3 percent. This suggests that many people are traveling outside of Heath to jobs, more than likely within the DFW Metroplex. However, there is approximately 18.9 percent of the workforce that commutes between 10 and 19 minutes, suggesting that there are employment opportunities available within close proximity to Heath. The mean travel time to work for those employed in Heath is 30.4 minutes, which is approximately 5 minutes longer than the mean for Texas. Almost 16 percent of the employed population of Heath works at home, which is a significant increase from the 7 percent in 2000. It should be noted that the U.S. Census Bureau does *not* include persons working from home in its calculation of commute times.

Figure 15. Commute Time in Heath and Texas



Source: 2009-2013 ACS estimate

Local and Regional Housing Market

Quality of housing and the appreciation of housing values are important planning considerations. The condition of existing housing and the quality of residential neighborhoods affects the desirability of Heath as a place to live and the potential for future development of the City. As such, the community has a strong interest in its ability to provide high quality housing. Heath is currently what can be termed a highly *livable* community: the continued presence of quality housing is critical to ensure that the City maintains and enhances its livability in the years to come. The following sections outline various characteristics of Heath’s housing supply.

Housing Type: Local & Surrounding Cities

The housing types in Heath remained relatively stable between the years 2000 and 2013, as seen in **Table 14**. In 2013, the *Single-Family* housing type accounts for the largest percentage of housing units. A nominal number of *Duplex*, *Triplex*, and *Quadriplex* units were counted in 2000, and by 2013 there were none. Multi-Family units are less than one percent of the housing stock. Out of the 2,825 housing units that were present in Heath in 2013, 90.3 percent are occupied.

Table 14. Local Housing Types

General Type	Specific Description	2000		2010*		2013**	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<i>Single-Family</i>	1-Unit Detached	1,349	94.7%	2,519	97.2%	2,783	98.5%
	1-Unit Attached	39	2.7%	23	0.9%	23	0.8%
<i>Duplex</i>	2 Units	7	0.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<i>Triplex or Quadriplex</i>	3 or 4 Units	10	0.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<i>Multi-Family</i>	5 to 9 Units	14	1.0%	50	1.9%	19	0.7%
	10 or More Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<i>Manufactured Home</i>	Mobile Home	5	0.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total		1,424	100.0%	2,592	100.0%	2,825	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census; *2006-2010 ACS estimate; **2009-2013 ACS estimate

Table 15 shows information about surrounding cities and their respective housing type percentages. Rockwall appears to have the highest variety in housing than the other cities, while McLendon-Chisholm, Heath, and Sunnyvale have the least. Forney and Rowlett have similar percentages in terms of *Multi-Family* homes at around three percent.

Table 15. Housing Types in Heath and Surrounding Cities

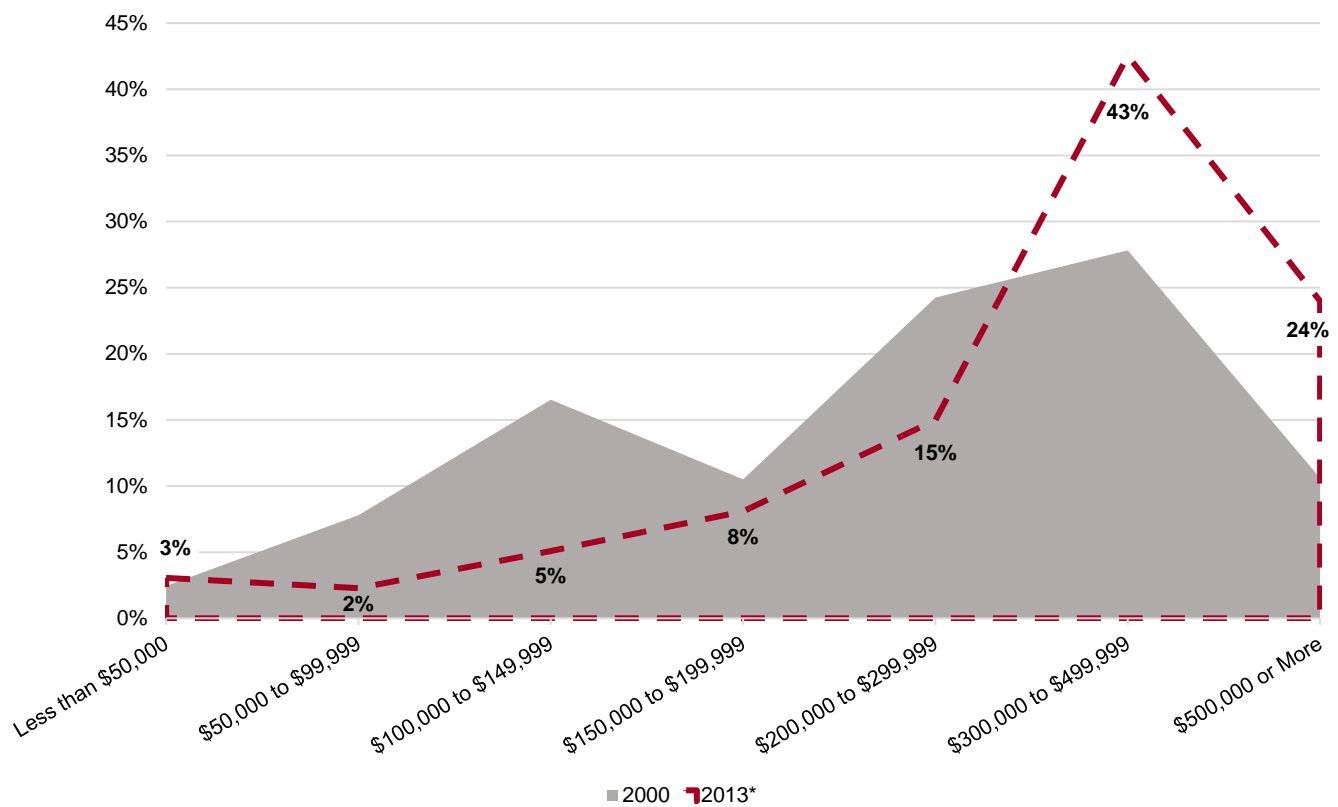
Housing Type	Heath	Forney	McLendon-Chisholm	Rockwall	Rowlett	Sunnyvale
Single-Family	99.3%	95.7%	99.1%	82.1%	95.4%	98.4%
Multi-Family	0.7%	3.3%	0.0%	14.0%	3.1%	1.6%
Manufactured Home	0.0%	1.0%	0.4%	3.9%	1.5%	0.0%

Source: 2009-2013 ACS estimate

Housing Value

As seen in **Figure 16**, the majority of the housing stock in Heath is valued between \$300,000 and \$499,999, approximately 42.5 percent of the owner-occupied units (2,497 units). About 5.3 percent are valued at less than \$100,000, while 24 percent exceed \$500,000. Between 2000 and 2013, housing stock changed significantly in the City of Heath. Approximately 16.5 percent of the housing stock was between \$100,000 and \$149,999 in 2000, which had decreased to 5.10 percent (127 units) in 2013. Several other price ranges experienced declines, but the homes on the higher end of the spectrum experienced significant increases. The percentage of homes between the \$300,000 to \$499,999 range experienced a significant increase of 14.7 percentage points, while the amount of homes valued at \$500,000 or more also increased by 13.3 percentage points.

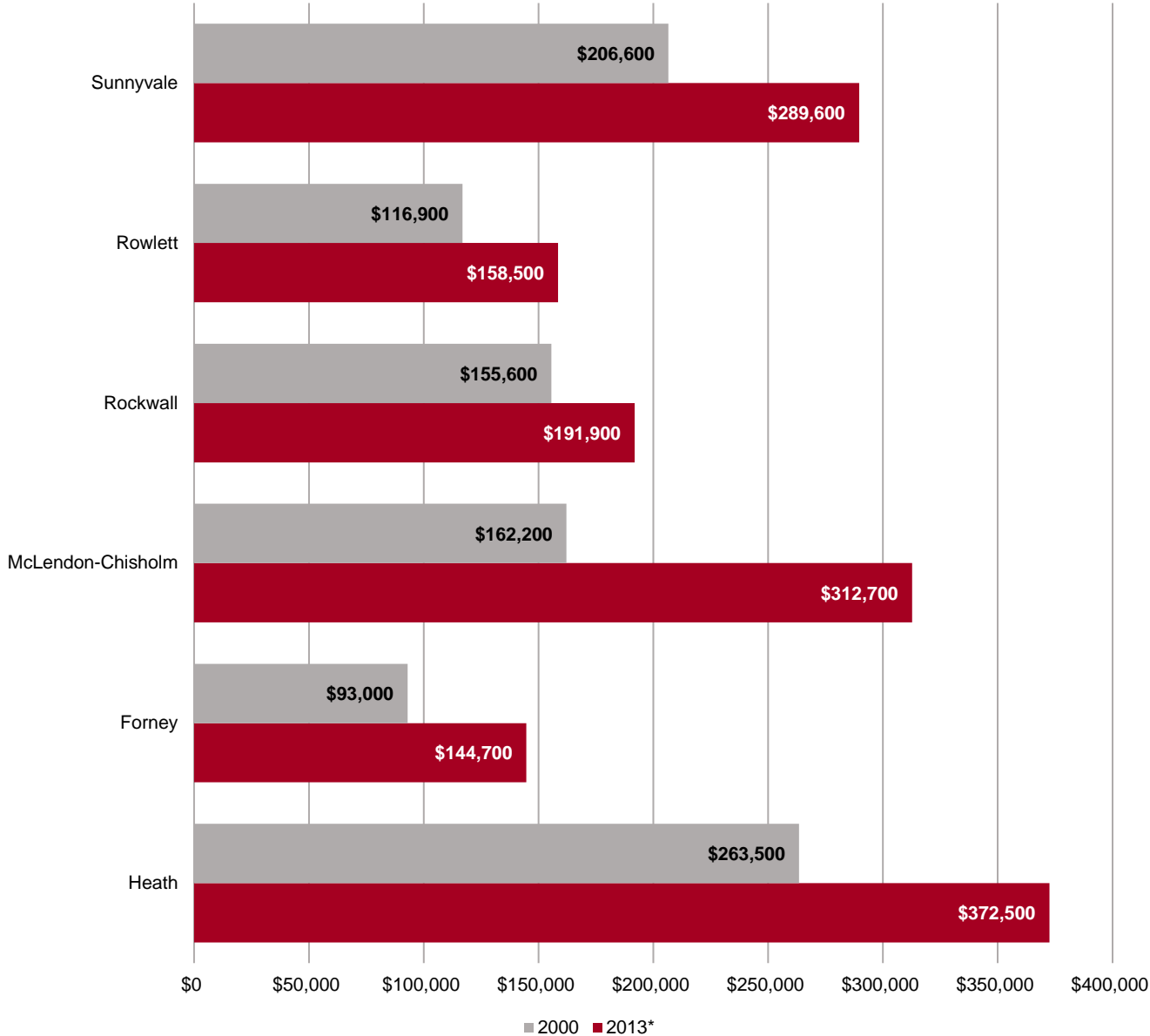
Figure 16. Home Values in Heath



Source: U.S. Census; *2009-2013 ACS estimate

The median housing value for Heath and its surrounding cities is shown in **Figure 17**. In 2013 Heath’s median housing value was the highest at \$372,500, which is over a \$100,000 difference from 2000. All of the cities experienced increases in housing value between 2000 and 2013 with the largest occurring in McLendon-Chisholm, where the housing values almost doubled. Sunnyvale also experienced an increase in median values of approximately \$83,000. The increases in values in Rowlett, Rockwall, and Forney were of a smaller scale, resulting in median home values in 2013 over \$140,000.

Figure 17. Median Housing Value in Heath and Surrounding Cities



Source: U.S. Census; *2009-2013 ACS estimate

Summary of Findings

This concludes the discussion of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of Heath's population and related aspects of the surrounding area. Key findings include:

- Heath has experienced a relatively high rate of population growth since 1990, with slower, steady growth before 1990. This is consistent with the population growth of Rockwall County. Heath's population growth has slowed slightly since 2008, though it continues to increase.
- Population growth in some surrounding cities has been faster, such as in Rowlett and Forney, while growth has been slower in others, such as in Sunnyvale and McLendon-Chisholm.
- The racial and ethnic composition in Heath has remained relatively stable since 2000. Caucasians continued to make up the majority, and in 2013 were 98.5 percent of the population.
- The greatest difference in age distribution occurred within the Older Labor Force segment, which increased by 9.5 percent. An increase in this category suggests a skilled labor force, since the people have been in the work force for quite some time. The Prime Labor Force, people 20 to 44 years of age, experienced the largest decrease between 2000 and 2013. The Young age group also experienced a decline, while the High School population remained stable.
- The local population is becoming increasingly educated, with over half of the population over 25 years of age having a Bachelor's degree or higher.
- Heath has a significantly higher median income level than the cities in the area. McLendon-Chisholm's median income level was the closest, but was more than \$20,000 below Heath's.
- Family Households represented, by far, the largest percentage of households in Heath in 2000 and 2013 at 88 and 90.4 percent, respectively. The number of households with an individual over 65 years of age continues to grow.
- People are willing to commute relatively far distances to work in order to live in Heath. Over a third commuted at least 30 minutes, and almost 15 percent commuted 45 minutes to an hour to work in 2013. There is approximately 40 percent of the workforce that commutes less than 25 minutes, suggesting that there are employment opportunities available at a close proximity to the City. Commute times may, therefore, be decreasing as the area around Heath becomes more balanced with both residential and non-residential uses. Telecommuting opportunities may also be helping to reduce commute times.
- The vast majority of the housing units in Heath, 98.5 percent, are single-family.
- Housing values in Heath are high, with the majority being priced at \$300,000 or more in 2013. Values increased between the 2000 Census and 2013 ACS estimate, and were higher in 2013 than in any of the surrounding cities.

Existing Land Use Characteristics

Land Use Types

The discussion within this section provides documentation of the way in which all parcels of land are currently used in Heath. This will allow for later land use recommendations to be tailored to the needs of Heath’s citizens – their needs for single-family homes, other housing types, retailing, public services, etc. The City’s strong history of planning is also helpful to this discussion, because land usage was documented as part of those efforts. This allows for comparative analysis of how land was used in the past, in addition to analysis of how it is being used today.

In order to analyze the land use trends within Heath, a parcel-by-parcel land use survey was conducted during the preparation of this Plan.

Table 16. Residential Land Uses




Land Use Type & Map Color	Description	Example Image
Single-Family	Any single dwelling unit that is detached from other dwelling units, is built on-site, and is designed to be occupied by only one family. Single-family homes are the most prevalent housing type and land use type in Heath.	
Two-Family (Duplex)	Any structure with two attached dwelling units that is designed to be occupied by two families (one in each unit). Duplex units are also commonly referred to as two-family units. This type of land use is very minimal in the City.	
Multi-Family	Any structure with numerous attached dwelling units that is designed to be occupied by several families (one in each unit). This term can be used to describe a single structure or series of structures in a complex. Multi-family homes are also commonly referred to as apartments. Like duplexes, this type of land use is also very minimal in the City.	

Table 17. Non-Residential Land Uses

Land Use Type & Map Color	Description	Example Image
Office	Any and all types of professional and administration offices, examples of which include doctors, lawyers, dentists, real estate, architects, accountants, and secretarial services.	
Retail	Business establishments that primarily sell commodities or goods to consumers. Examples of such establishments include restaurants, grocery stores, beauty salons, and shopping centers.	
Commercial	Business establishments that primarily provide a service to consumers.	
Parks and Open Space	Public or HOA-owned local parks, open space, and/or recreation areas (such as trails).	
Private Recreation	Private golf courses, private marinas, and similar private uses.	
Public/Semi-Public	Buildings and their related sites that the general public has access to, such as schools, churches, and public buildings.	
Utility	Land that is dedicated to use for electric stations, water towers, and other public utility facilities.	
Vacant	Land that either has no readily visible or apparent use, or land that is used for growing crops or grazing of animals.	

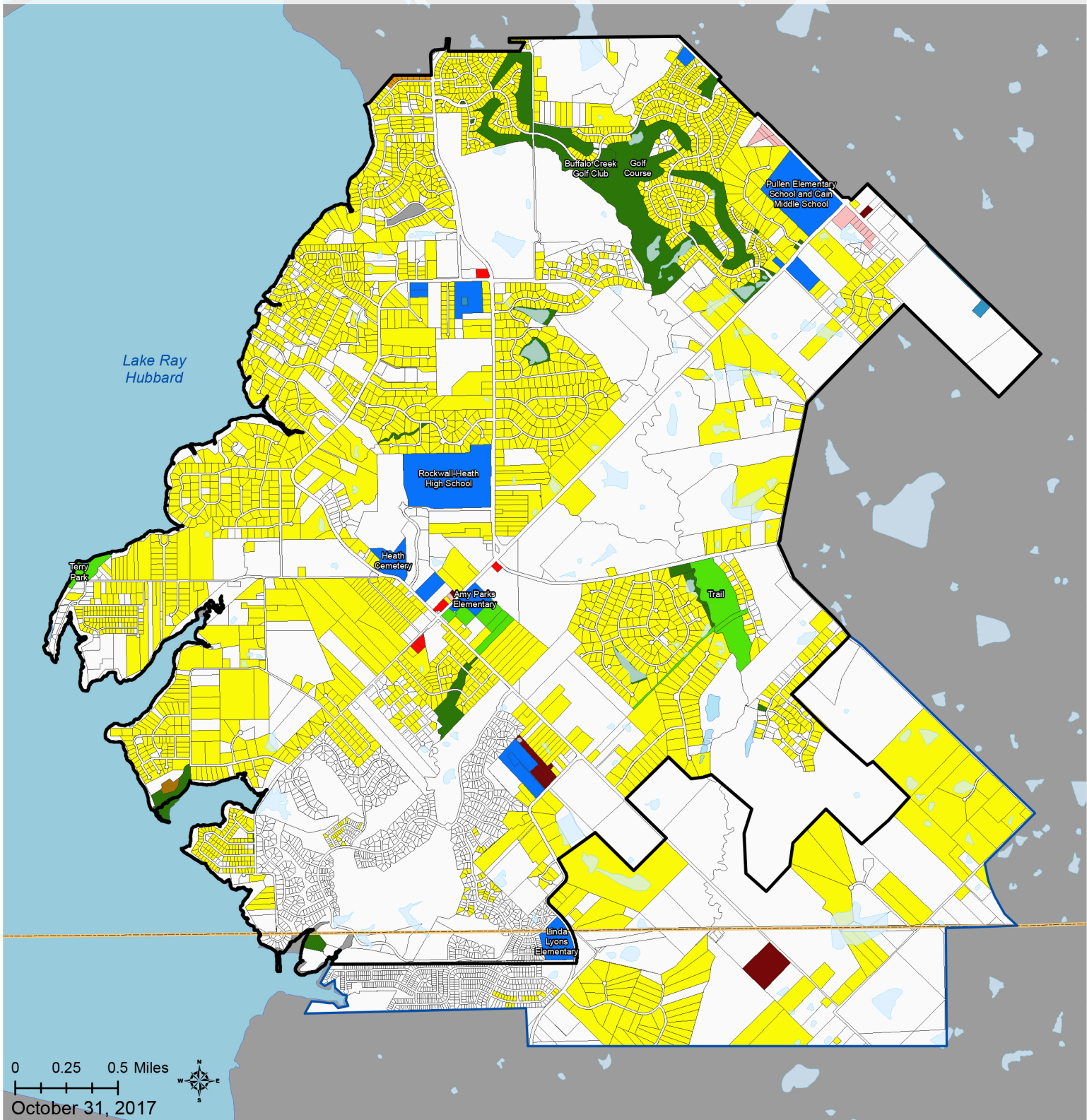
Land Use Composition

Table 18. Existing Land Use Comparison within the City Limits

Land Use Category	2008 Existing Land Use			2018 Existing Land Use		
	Acres	Percent of Developed	Percent of Total	Acres	Percent of Developed	Percent of Total
Single-Family	2,333.0	69.8%	37.9%	2,936.3	70.3%	36.6%
Two-Family (Duplex)	1.8	0.1%	0.0%	3.0	0.1%	0.0%
Multi-Family	4.0	0.1%	0.1%	2.8	0.1%	0.0%
Residential	2,338.8	70.0%	38.0%	2,942.0	70.5%	36.7%
Parks and Open Space	71.0	2.1%	1.2%	77.1	1.8%	1.0%
Private Recreation	221.0	6.6%	3.6%	285.3	6.8%	3.6%
Public/Semi-Public	251.0	7.5%	4.1%	218.8	5.2%	2.7%
Public/Semi-Public	543.0	16.3%	8.8%	581.2	13.9%	7.2%
Office	23.0	0.7%	0.4%	14.9	0.4%	0.2%
Retail	8.0	0.2%	0.1%	6.7	0.2%	0.1%
Commercial	34.6	1.0%	0.6%	11.1	0.3%	0.1%
Non-Residential	65.6	2.0%	1.1%	32.7	0.8%	0.4%
Rights-of-Way	394.0	11.8%	6.4%	618.2	14.8%	7.7%
Total Developed Land	3,341.4	100.0%	54.3%	4,174.0	100.0%	52.1%
Vacant	2,809.0	N/A	45.7%	3,845.0	N/A	47.9%
Total	6,150.4	N/A	100.0%	8,019.0	N/A	100.0%

Figure 18. Existing Land Use Map

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








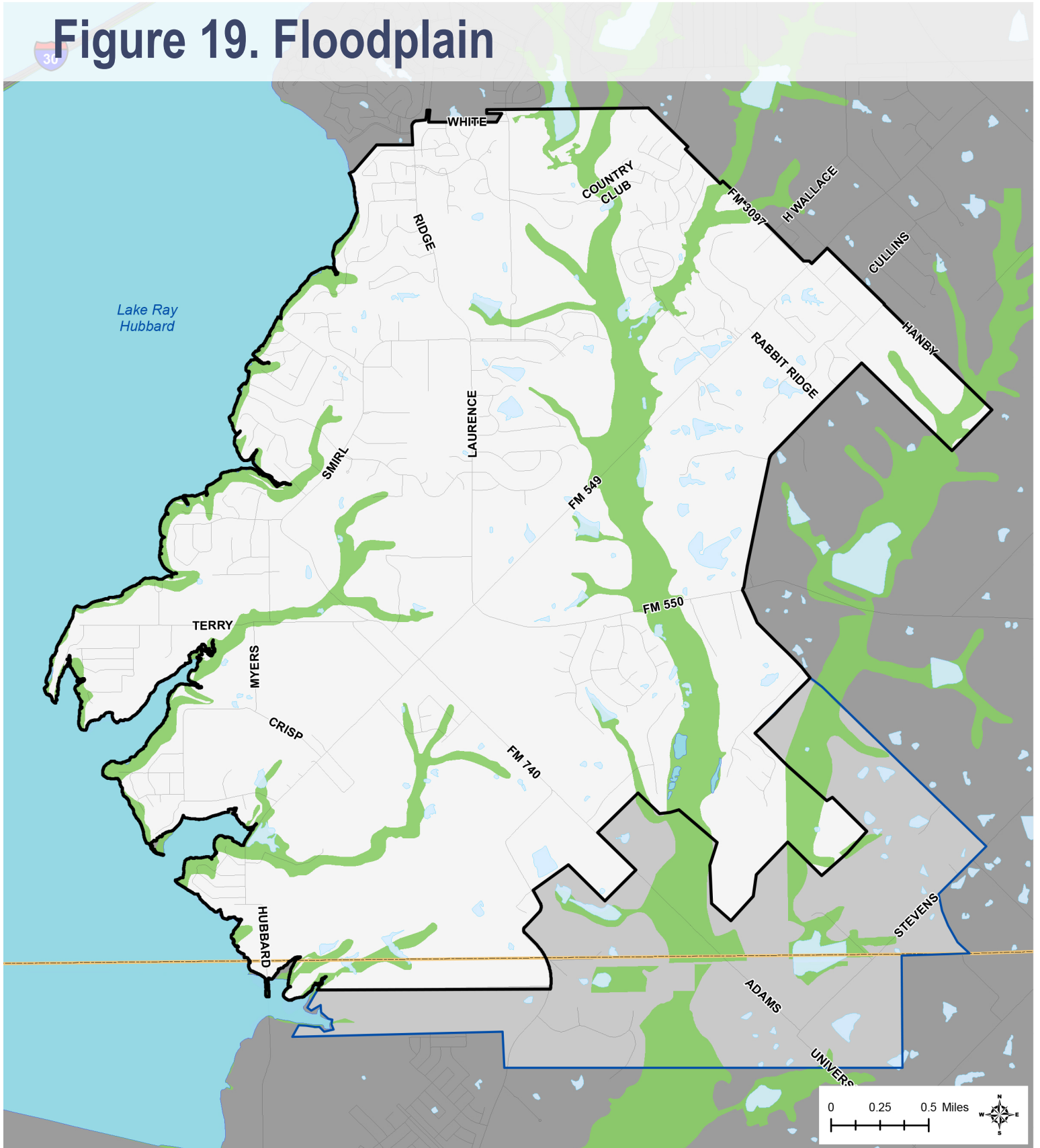
- | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|----------------------|---|-----------------------|
|  | Single-Family |  | Parks and Open Space |  | City Limits |
|  | Two-Family (Duplex) |  | Private Recreation |  | ETJ |
|  | Multi-Family |  | Public/Semi-Public |  | Lake Ray Hubbard |
|  | Office |  | Utility |  | Small Lakes and Ponds |
|  | Retail |  | Vacant | | |
|  | Commercial |  | ROW | | |

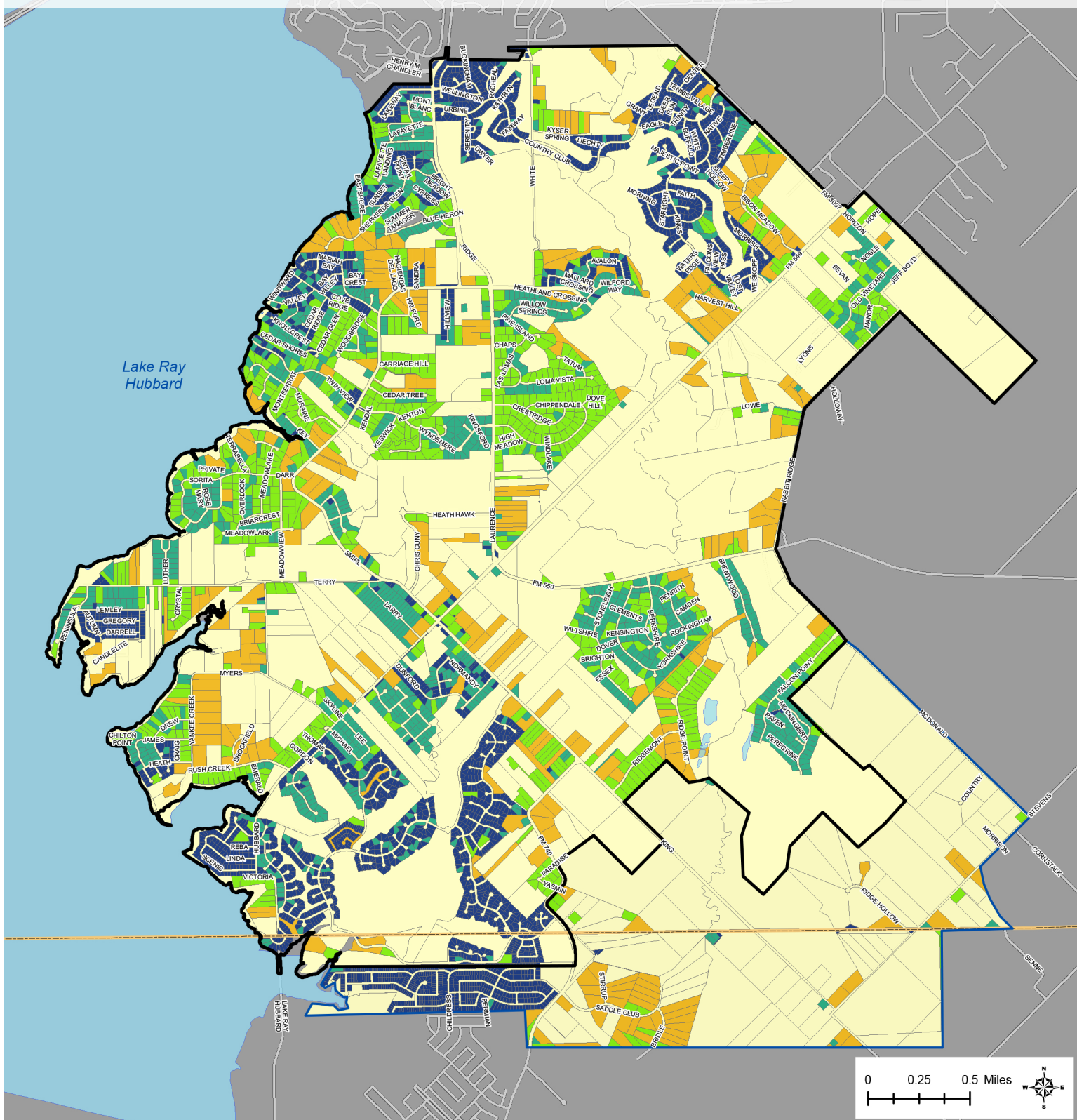


Figure 19. Floodplain



- FEMA Approximate 100 year floodplain
- City Limits
- ETJ
- County

Lake Ray Hubbard
Figure 20. Lot Sizes

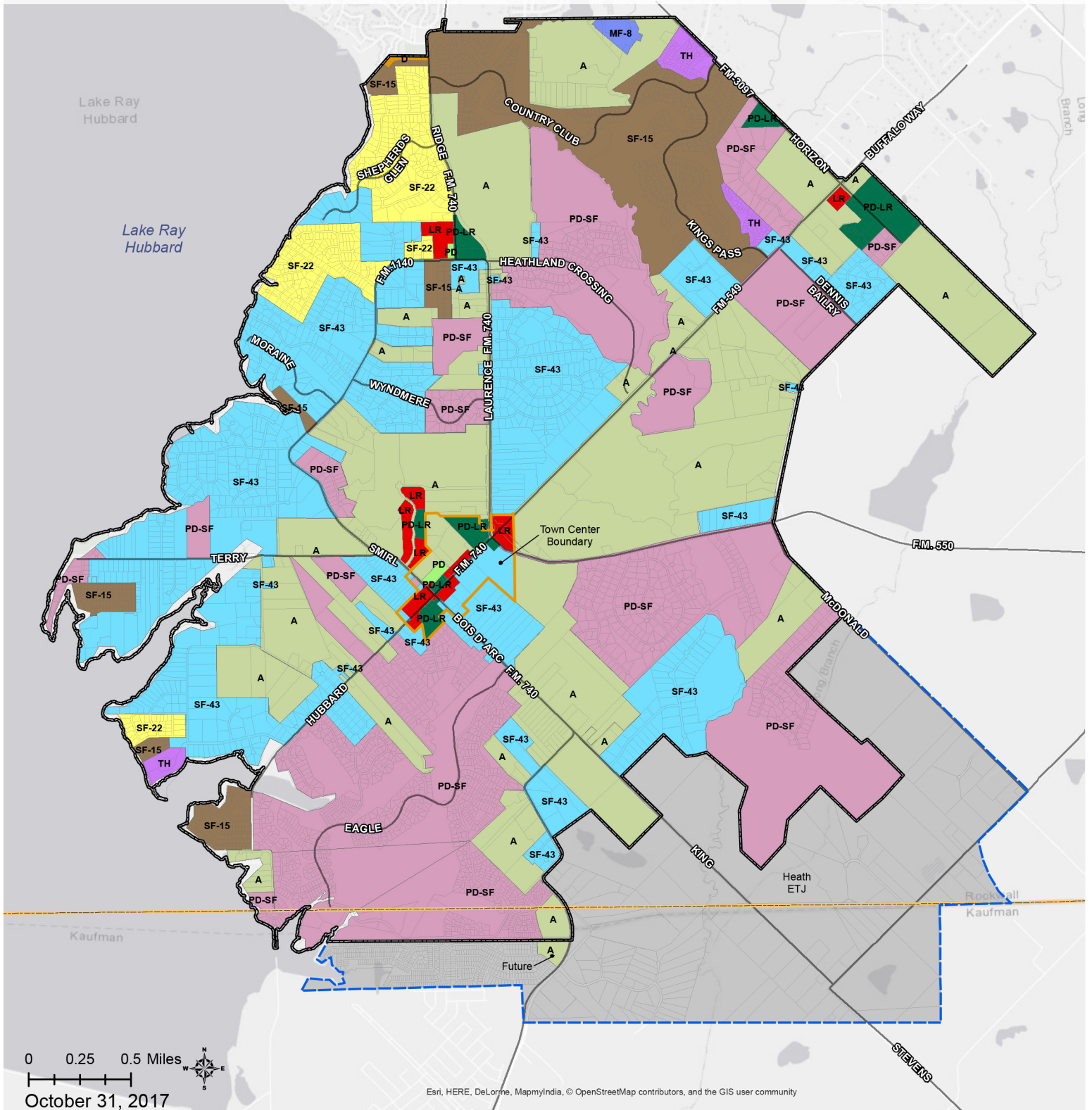


- Densities**
- 0.5 Acres or less
 - 0.5 - 1 Acre
 - 1 - 2 Acres
 - 2 - 5 Acres
 - 5 Acres or more

- City Limits
- ETJ
- County



Figure 21. Current Zoning



Zoning Districts

- Town Center Overlay
- A
- D Residential (Duplex)
- LR Local Retail
- MF-8 Medium Density Residential
- PD-LR Planned Development with Local Retail
- PD-SF Planned Development Single Family
- PD Planned Development
- SF-15 Residential (15,000 s.f.)
- SF-22 Residential 1/2 acre (22,000 s.f.)
- SF-43 Residential 1 acre (43,560 s.f.)
- TH Residential (Townhouse)



Local Development Patterns

In order to understand how Heath is growing and changing, the project team compared existing land uses in 2008 and 2018. Overall, Heath has grown in size and population. While some areas of the City have become more dense, this has been offset by annexing vacant or underdeveloped areas of the ETJ.

Development Over Time

Since 2008 the City has grown, annexing eastern areas of the ETJ between Rabbit Ridge Road and FM 550, southern areas of the ETJ along FM 740, and the northern portion along Hanby Road. Heath’s only remaining ETJ is to the south and southeast. This development pattern is not surprising given the large portion of the City that borders Lake Ray Hubbard to the west; there is also less vacant land in the western portion of the City. Despite substantial annexation since 2008, much of south and east Heath remains vacant, comprising a significant portion of the 49 percent of undeveloped land in the City.

Recent Development

Residential development increased by over 500 acres between 2008 and 2018. Almost all of this growth was comprised of single-family residential, both through annexation of existing development and construction of new neighborhoods. Fluctuations of duplex and multi-family development from 2008 to 2018 are the result of recalculating existing developments.

Public/semi-public land uses grew overall by over 45 total acres. Much of the percent change in distribution of these uses is a result of calculating parks and recreational amenities in previously unincorporated areas of the City. Overall these land uses increased by about eight percent.

Non-residential development remains low and has decreased in area due to more accurate mapping tools and the reclassification of existing land uses. For example, in 2008 there were categories for office, commercial, and retail/commercial. In the 2018 Plan, these uses are more clearly differentiated, resulting in fluctuations of calculated acreage. As of 2018, office and commercial uses have declined while retail uses have increased.

Residential	2008 Acres	2018 Acres	Percent Change
Single-Family	2,333.0	2,936.3	0.1%
Duplex	1.8	3.0	92.6%
Multi-Family	4.0	2.8	17.5%
Total	2,338.8	2,942.0	0.1%

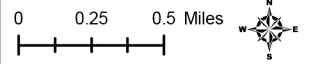
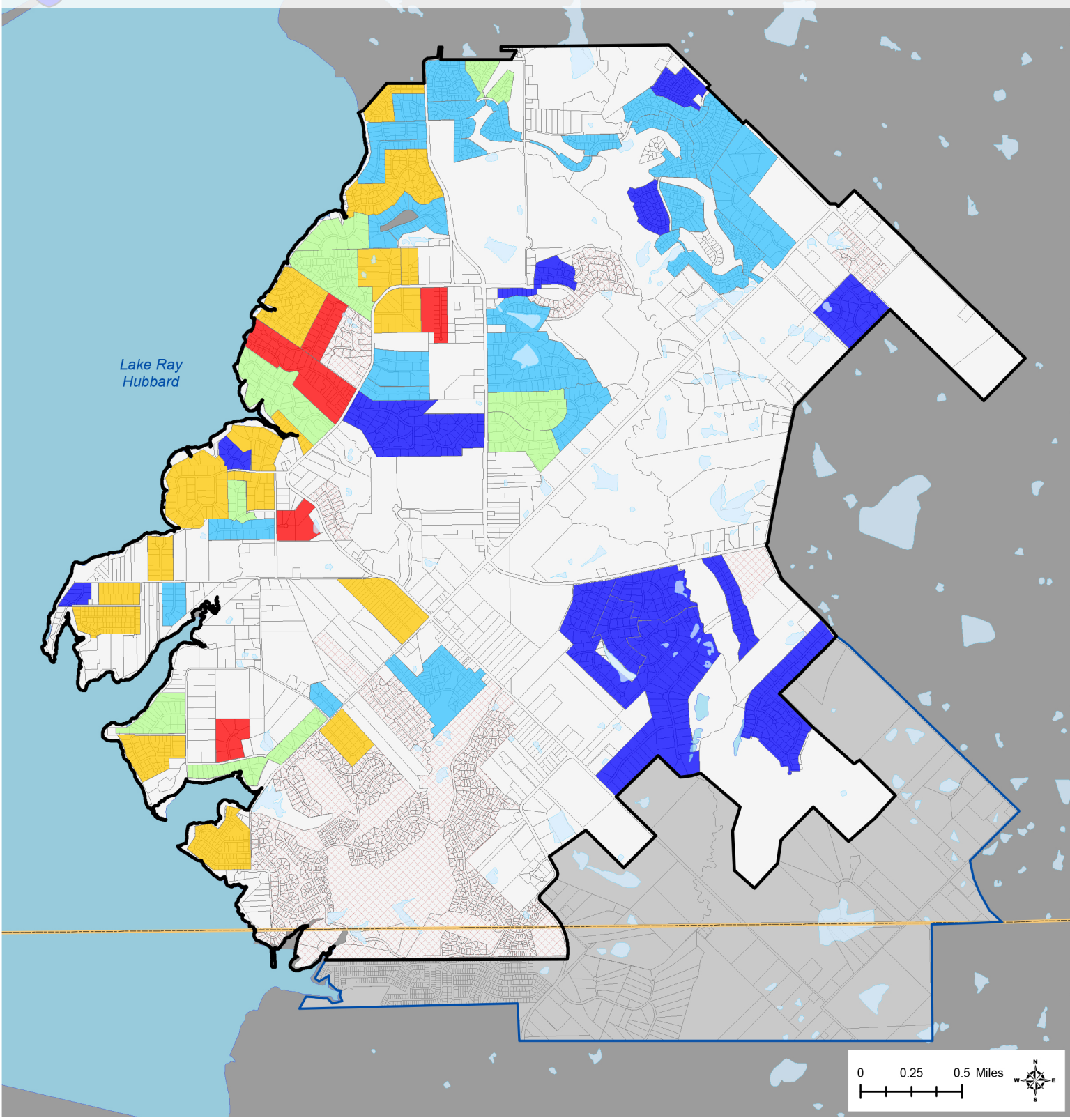
Public/Semi-Public	2008 Acres	2018 Acres	Percent Change
Parks & Open Space	71.0	77.1	8.6%
Private Recreation	221.0	285.3	29.1%
Public/Semi-Public	251.0	218.8	-12.8%
Total	543.0	581.2	7.0%

Non-Residential	2008 Acres	2018 Acres	Percent Change
Office	23.0	14.9	-35.2%
Retail	8.0	6.7	-16.3%
Commercial	34.6	11.1	-67.9%
Total	65.6	32.7	-50.2%







Figure 22. Development Patterns Over Time

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Lake Ray
Hubbard



Subdivision Date

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Before 1960 |  1991 - 2000 |
|  1961 - 1980 |  2001 to Current |
|  1981 - 1990 |  Under Development |

Summary of Visioning Exercises

Public input is an integral part of the comprehensive planning process as it helps to create a plan that represents the community’s desires. In order to collect as much public input as possible the planning team conducted two open houses, and multiple Review Committee meetings. In addition, the consultant planning team and Review Committee created an online survey that was made available to Heath residents.

Meetings

Meeting #1 | Review Committee and Planning and Zoning Commission Kick-Off

The consultant team held an introductory kickoff meeting with the Review Committee (RC) and Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission on October 15, 2015. The objectives of the meeting were to introduce the comprehensive planning process to the RC and P&Z, highlight previous planning efforts, outline roles in the process, assess project scope, present a socioeconomic snapshot of the community, and assess issues and themes. The RC and P&Z identified the following concepts as issues and themes facing the City:

Issues	Missing	Opportunities
<p>Growth and discussion whether growth and development would be beneficial to Heath</p> <p>Concern over natural resources, particularly water supply and the lake</p> <p>Availability of trails and connectivity within the City</p> <p>Preservation of the City's small town, rural atmosphere but concern that residential and agricultural land uses might be incompatible</p> <p>Availability of parks and open space</p>	<p>Discussion over whether lack of development, including retail and neighborhood services, is good or bad</p> <p>Recreation center</p> <p>Post office</p> <p>Life cycle housing, particularly for retirees and young families</p> <p>Parks, trails, and open space</p>	<p>Increased connectivity</p> <p>City-owned property</p> <p>City not at buildout</p> <p>Attractive market for development</p> <p>Rockwall ISD</p>

Meeting #2 | Community Open House

The first Community Open House for this Comprehensive Plan Update was held on November 12, 2015. The purpose of the Open House meeting was to gather feedback from the community as to what they believe the vision for Heath should be for the coming years. Approximately 80 residents attended the event that was held at City Hall.

Open House attendees were first given an introduction to the planning process, an overview of urban planning, comprehensive plans, past planning efforts, and the existing conditions of Heath. After the presentation, a breakout session was conducted to obtain feedback about Heath's future land use, trail connections, as well as the Town Center.

For the future land use discussion, residents formed groups and were given maps of Heath and stickers that represented the different types of land uses. The residents were asked to place the stickers on the map in the locations they thought the land uses were suitable. The groups produced fairly consistent results – residents favored the rural feel that Heath currently has and did not want development that would significantly alter the look and feel of the City. They felt that if more residential development were to occur, it should predominately be single-family homes on large lots. In order to maintain the rural feel of the community, the residents agreed that leaving a large amount of land as parks and open space or for agricultural purposes was appropriate, especially along the major corridors that lead into the City since they felt the rural appearance distinguishes Heath from surrounding communities.

The Town Center discussion sparked debate about whether there is a need for this type of development within the City; some felt that there is little or no need for such a development due to the close proximity to Rockwall. Other factors that influenced the debate were the lack of a set location for the Town Center and specific details of a Town Center's land uses.



City of Heath | 2018 Comprehensive Plan

The residents of Heath generally had a consistent vision in mind regarding the Town Center. It should be charming, quaint, pedestrian-oriented development that is of high quality. The architectural design of the structures that will compose the development was of high importance. There was a general agreement that there should be design guidelines requiring masonry and other façade elements to be consistent throughout the center to support an overall design theme. The residents would prefer mixed-use and patio homes to multi-family residences. These types of developments would provide appropriate housing options for young professionals, young families, and the seniors. The overall consensus was that the Center should ultimately reflect Heath's character.

The last discussion of the night was about connections throughout the City. The residents agreed that all major destinations in Heath should be connected by trails. The trails should flow throughout the entire City and not have dead ends, with a major loop in the center of Heath that runs along Laurence Drive, Smirl Drive, and FM 549. The residents agreed that trail extensions should be made into the floodplains since parks and open space are typically the only land uses that are appropriate within floodplains.

Meeting #3 | Review Committee

At the December 10, 2015 meeting with the Review Committee, the primary focus included recapping previous public input, condensing it into key themes, and using the emerging themes to formulate goals, objectives, and recommendations. The RC was presented proposed changes based on the input previously reviewed and described in the prior meeting summaries. The proposed outline emphasized livability and land use. The RC opted not to make a decision on goals and objectives until they could conduct a more thorough review of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan and reconvene the next meeting after they had time to evaluate the items in more detail.

Meeting #4 | Review Committee

The March 17, 2016 meeting with the Review Committee focused on reviewing the latest online survey results and reviewing the committee's revisions to the goals and objectives.

The Review Committee raised a number of topics for discussion including:

- What amenities residents are willing to pay taxes for,
- Possibility of placing a survey as mailer with water bill or placing copies at City Hall,
- How the survey information is used, and
- What should be in a potential Town Center.



Meeting #5 | Review Committee and Parks Board

The consultant team conducted a meeting on June 9, 2016 that focused specifically on parks, trails, and land use. The consultant team met with both the Review Committee and Parks Board. The first area of discussion focused on trails and the proposed update to the trails plan:

- Areas of floodplain are desirable for trail use
- Blend of on-street urban trails and off-street trails in vegetative areas
- Extend the trail south of City Hall to connect to the Heath Yacht Club using the City’s existing easements
- Citywide connectivity by trail is important
- A dog park is desirable
- Priority should be determined by characteristics rather than geography

The second topic of discussion related to future land use and a possible future Town Center:

- Some interest in allowing medical offices next to the high school
- Town Center zoning will need to be removed at whichever site does not become the Center
- Mixed use zoning is not desirable anywhere outside of the Town Center
- Some interest in amending the zoning ordinance to reflect the Future Land Use Map classifications

Meeting #6 | Review Committee

The consultant team held a meeting with the Review Committee on November 15, 2016. The ultimate purpose of the meeting was to gain consensus on the Plan to proceed with a public unveiling. There were several areas of discussion and clarification that were needed from the RC in order to achieve this, namely:

- Clarification and consensus regarding the interpretation of the Plan’s density policy of one dwelling unit per acre;
- Clarification and consensus regarding the interpretation of the Plan’s recommendations for cluster developments;
- Preferences for agricultural land use; and
- Clarification and consensus regarding the scope of discussion and recommendations for the Town Center.

After discussion, the RC elected to keep the definition of density as-is, recommend only allowing clustering with a PD and remove clustering as a land use, create an additional zoning classification for rural estate, and remove recommended locations and layouts of a future Town Center. The Review Committee also requested an additional internal meeting to review the Plan before presenting it to the public.

Meeting #7 | Review Committee

The consultant team held a meeting with the Review Committee on January 19, 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to address any remaining questions of the RC, reach consensus about the draft Plan for public reveal, and get direction from the RC about any information needed for prioritization of the recommendations and approval of the overall Plan. The consultant team and the Review Committee outlined several edits that needed to be made to the Plan prior to public reveal, and the RC approved a date and location for said meeting.

Meeting #8 | Community Open House and Draft Input

The consultant team held an open house on February 23, 2017 at Rockwall Heath High School. The purpose of the meeting was to unveil the draft Plan to the public and collect input regarding the draft. Roughly 225 residents attended the meeting. About 20 residents spoke at the meeting and 23 provided written comments. The draft was posted on the City's website the following day and, at the request of the public, the meeting kicked off a one-month public input period for the draft. During this time, roughly 160 emails and one phone call were received. There were generally four types of emails:

- Those providing general feedback about the overall Plan;
- Those addressing a specific concern;
- Form emails; and
- Those providing line-item comments, revisions, and questions.



The recurring themes of the input received are (in no order):

- Overall, those who submitted feedback are not in favor of any residential development over 1 dwelling unit per acre, regardless of whether the City is still within an overall density of one dwelling unit per acre.
- Overall, those who submitted feedback feel that the area surrounding City Hall is the Town Center and should remain the Town Center.
- Overall, those who submitted feedback are not in favor of additional retail or commercial development, including within the possible Town Center sites identified in the 2008 Plan.
- Residents of The Ridge subdivision are concerned about the placement of public trails in or near their community
- A minority of respondents are concerned that the Plan will not allow for housing stock that would accommodate seniors, whether through small lot homes or living communities.
- Overall, residents are concerned about the transparency and accountability of City leadership – both as it relates to the Plan and to the state of the City as a whole.

Meeting #10 | Review Committee

The consultant team held a meeting with the Review Committee on April 20, 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Review revisions to the Plan made since the open house
- Review the public input received at the open house and during the public input period,
- Discuss and reach consensus on outstanding topics (trails and land use), and
- Consider the next steps necessary to reach consensus on the draft.

A number of recommendations were made by the Review Committee. Specifically, the RC provided revisions to the Future Land Use Map and asked that the Trail Plan be removed from the document so that it could be further considered in the upcoming Park Master Plan. The Review Committee also expressed a desire to further review the

recommendations made in the Plan before proceeding. With only four members of the RC in attendance, no action was taken regarding formal endorsement of the Plan.

Meeting #11 | Review Committee

The Review Committee met on May 25, 2017 to review the revised draft and discuss the final revisions necessary prior to advancing the plan to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Meeting #12 | Review Committee

The Review Committee met again on June 26, 2017 to discuss the draft plan. At the conclusion of this meeting, the Review Committee provided a recommendation to forward the draft plan to the Planning and Zoning Commission for consideration.

Meeting #13 | Joint Workshop

The consultant team presented at a joint workshop with the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council on Thursday, September 14, 2017 at City Hall. The presentation included an overview of the process, purpose of a comprehensive plan, summary of key input, and an overview of the draft plan. Members of the community were invited to attend but comments were generally limited to members of the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council to ensure that the City officials had an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

Meeting #14 | Planning and Zoning Commission Public Hearing

FNI presented at a public hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission on Tuesday, October 3, 2017. The presentation content was similar to the joint workshop, but concluded by welcoming public comments on the draft document. Following the public comments, the Planning and Zoning Commission requested a work session to review comments on the draft in more detail.

Meeting #15 | Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session

At this work session on Tuesday, October 17, 2017, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed comments provided by the public and its Commissioners to work toward consensus on the draft. The Commission asked that the document be revised and reviewed for final recommendation consideration at an additional meeting.

Meeting #16 | Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

The Planning and Zoning Commission met on November 7, 2017 to review the revised draft. Following a review of the draft and discussion of key issues, the Commission recommended approval of the Comprehensive Plan subject to minor revisions related to the clustering of residential development.

Meeting #17 | City Council Public Hearing

On November 14, 2017, the City Council held a public hearing to encourage residents to provide input on the latest plan draft. FNI presented a brief overview of the draft plan document. Several citizens provided comments on the plan, primarily related to the inclusion of previous input and conflicting views regarding land use at FM 740 and Heathland Crossing (formerly known as the northern Town Center alternative site). Following the input, the Council determined that additional work sessions would be necessary to refine the plan document.

Meeting #18 | City Council Meeting

The City Council revisited the plan draft on November 28, 2017. At this meeting, the Councilmembers discussed proposed revisions to the draft, but determined that an additional work session would be needed to reach consensus on many of the items.

Meetings #19-25 | City Council Workshops

The consultant team met with the City Council for five “live-editing” workshops on December 7 and December 12, 2017, and January 9, February 9, February 13, February 27, and March 13, 2018. The purpose of these workshops was to review the Plan draft in detail and make revisions as directed by the Council.

Online Survey

An online survey was one method of public input used to formulate this 2018 Comprehensive Plan. The survey was open from November 6, 2015 through April 21, 2016, during which time 449 responses were received. The 449 responses represent roughly 8.6 percent of Heath's adult population². There were two versions of the survey that were made available to Heath residents. The original version asked the following questions:

1. What is your age group?
2. What was the most important factor for you when you decided to move to Heath?
3. What is your favorite characteristic of Heath?
4. What makes Heath unique and distinguishable from the surrounding communities?
5. What are the greatest issues facing Heath today?
6. In what direction should Heath move in the future?
7. "Heath Village" refers to an idea for a future town center for the community. What do you think should be included?
8. What additional types of recreation would you like to see in Heath?
9. "If I could change one thing about Heath, it would be..."
10. Lastly, are there any other comments, suggestions, or ideas you would like to share?

Survey Questions Updated

During the first Open House meeting and the early survey responses, many residents noted that the desired uses for a Town Center may vary based on the site location. Following the March 17, 2016 meeting, the Review Committee decided to update the online survey questions to reflect their questions regarding a potential Town Center. Over 73 percent of survey respondents took the updated survey.

Question #7 was removed and the following questions were added:

1. If a future Town Center is located near the CVS at Ridge and Laurence ("north site"), what land uses are appropriate?
2. If a future Town Center is located near the Shell Station at the intersection of Laurence/FM 550/S. FM 549 ("south site"), what land uses are appropriate?

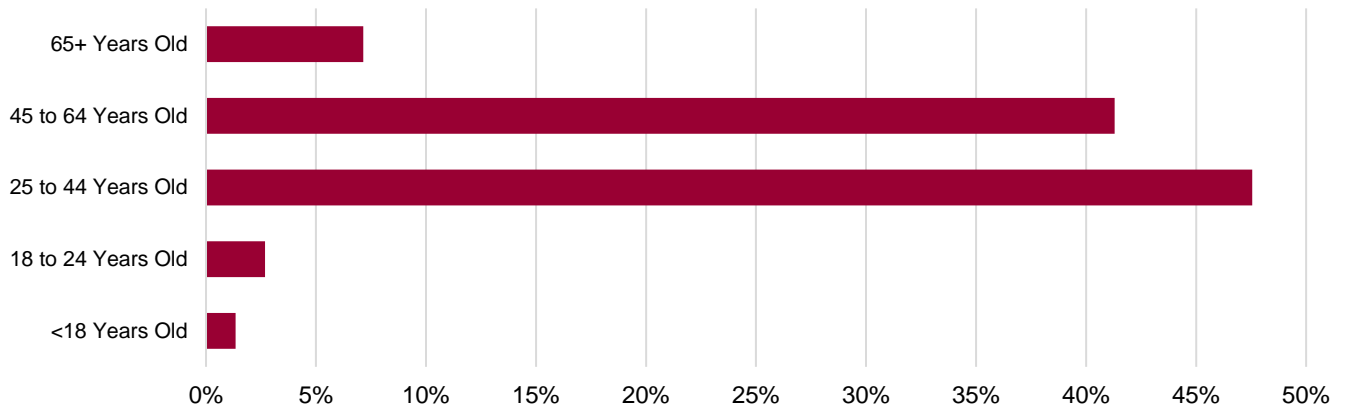
Quality education, types of housing, as well as the rural atmosphere are factors that make Heath unique, distinguishable, and ultimately have attracted residents. The City has developed into a great community, but there are still some issues the City currently faces such as: preserving the rural character, poor pedestrian/bike connectivity, insufficient infrastructure, and not enough shopping, dining, and entertainment options. Moving into the future, some believe the City of Heath should direct its focus towards family issues (e.g., parks, recreation, housing, entertainment), a majority also believe that Heath should return to its original concept of a rural atmosphere with homes on large lots. It was made evident through several comments that the residents of Heath do not want their community to become like other typical suburbs of the Metroplex. They believe that Heath should remain rural with large lot developments and open land.

² Based on 2015 NCTCOG population estimate of 7,430 and 2010 US Census estimate of 70 percent adult population

Survey Results

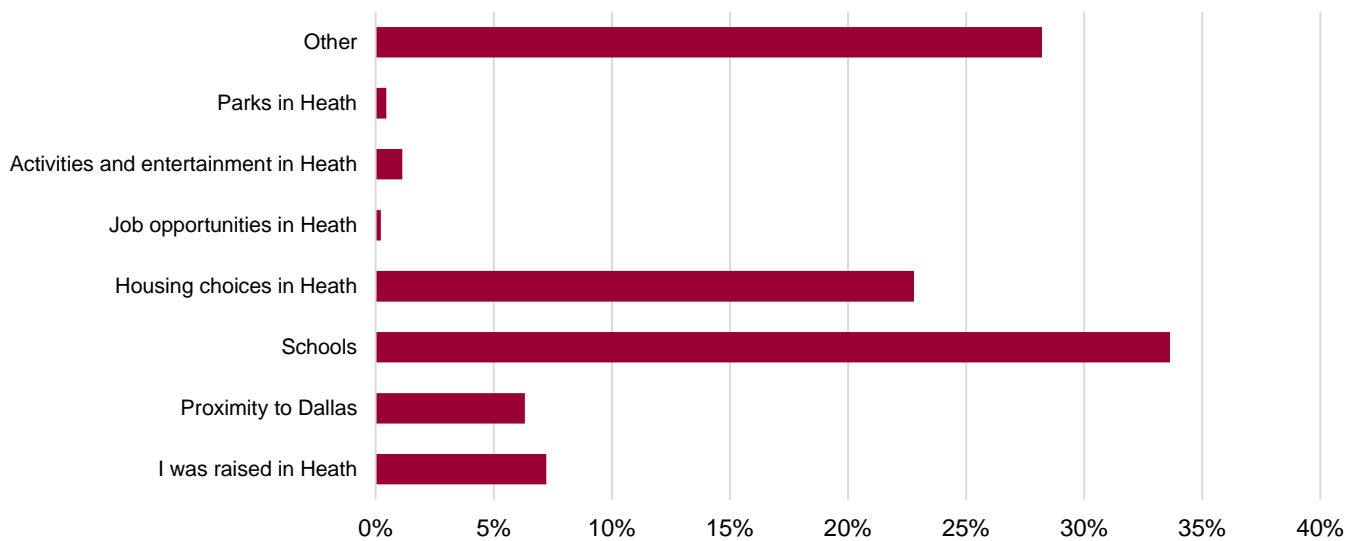
Question 1: What is your age group?

Nearly 89 percent of respondents indicated they are between 25 and 64 years old, with 48 percent between 25 and 44. This is important because these age brackets are often indicative of families with school age children.



Question 2: What was the most important factor for you when you decided to move to Heath?

Nearly 34 percent of respondents indicated that their most important consideration to move to Heath was schools. About 23 percent indicated housing choices as the most important factor, and 28 percent indicated another reason not included in the list of choices. Of these, recurring comments included open space/rural feel, Lake Ray Hubbard/Rush Creek Yacht Club, and large lots/high end housing choices.



Question 3: What is your favorite characteristic of Heath?

Of the 414 respondents, nearly all listed open space/rural atmosphere or small-town feeling/sense of community as their favorite characteristic.



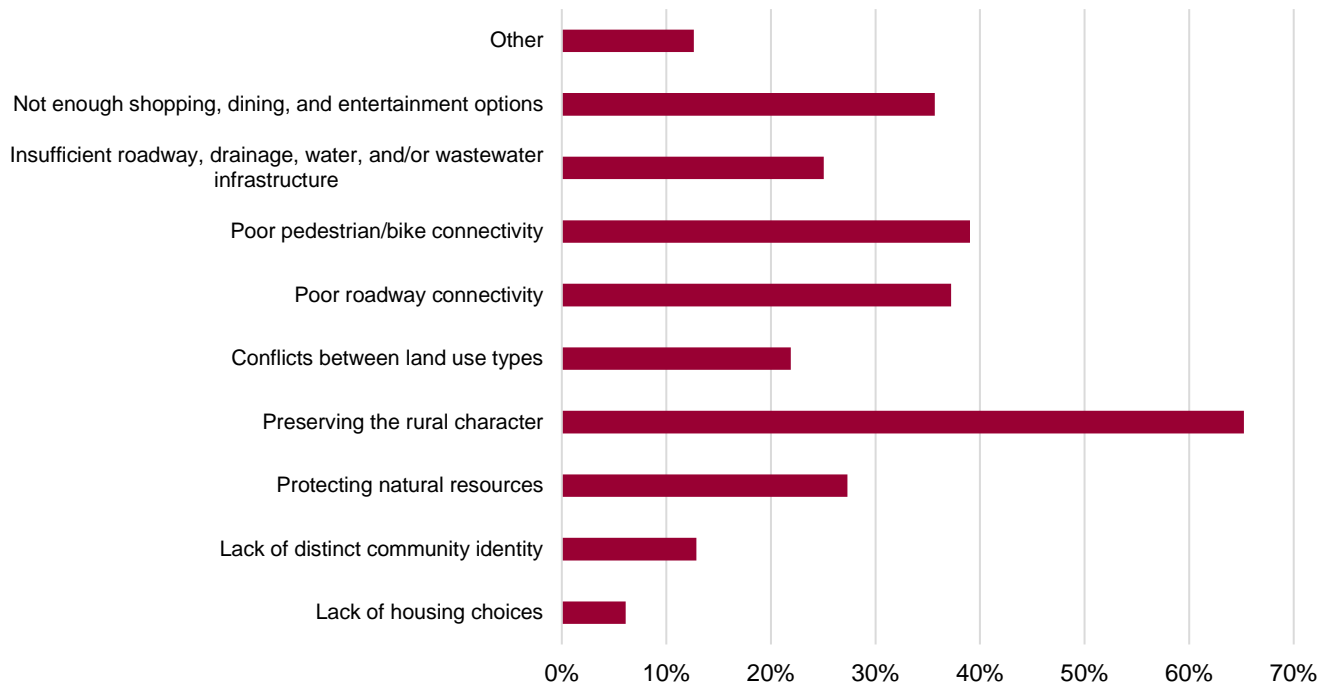
Question 4: What makes Heath unique and distinguishable from surrounding communities?

Of the 390 responses, recurring answers included large lots sizes and upscale houses, rural/small town feel, green and open space, and lack of density and commercial development.



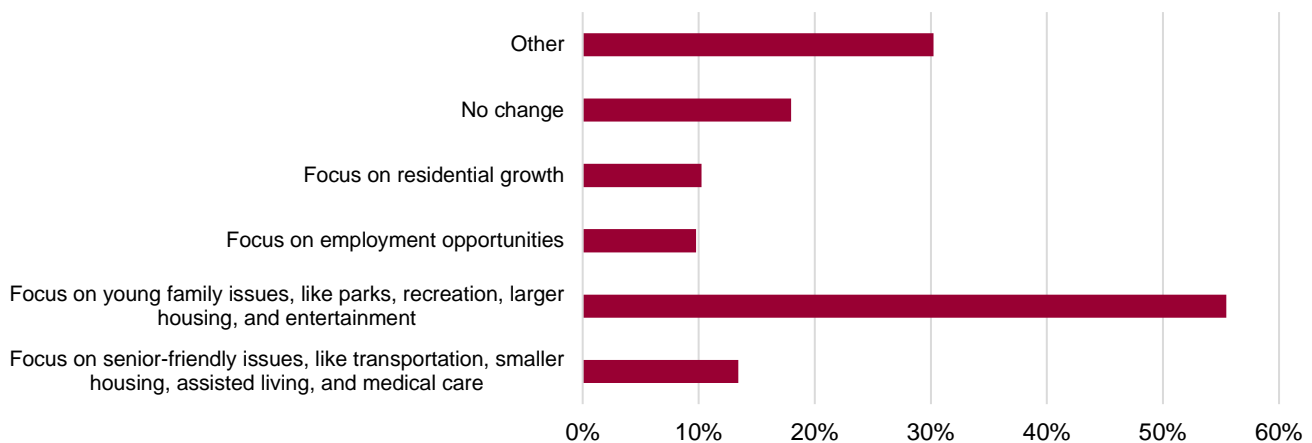
Question 5: What are the greatest issues facing Heath today?

The top three choices were 1) preserving the rural character, 2) poor pedestrian/bike connectivity, and 3) poor roadway connectivity. The top four to six choices were 4) not enough shopping, dining, and entertainment options, followed by 5) protecting natural resources, and 6) insufficient infrastructure. The remaining seven to nine choices were 7) conflicts between land use types, 8) lack of community identity, and 9) lack of housing choices.



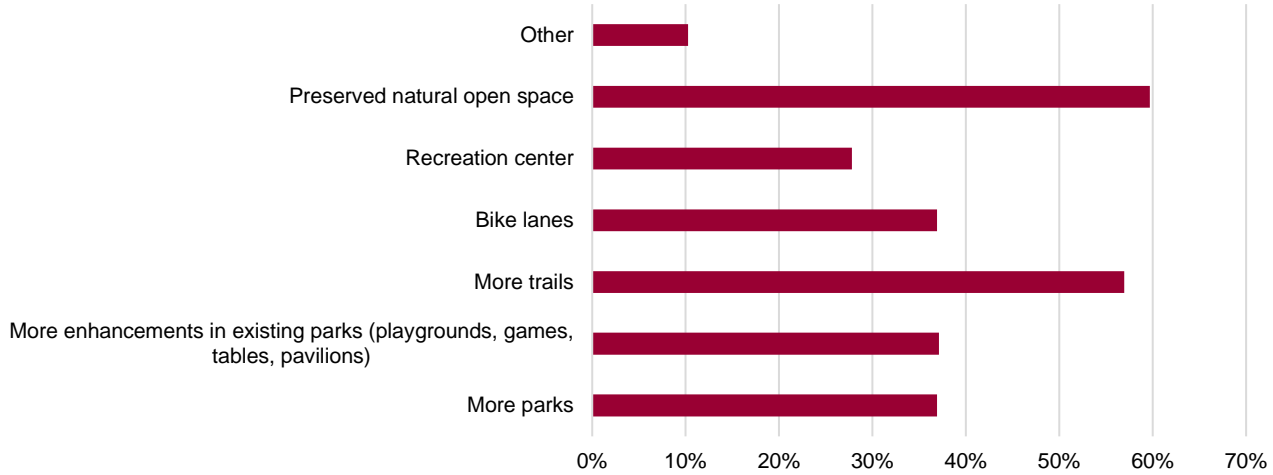
Question 6: In what direction should Heath move in the future?

All of the answer choices to this question collected significant responses; the lowest scoring category still garnered 10 percent of the votes. The top response was “focus on young family issues” at 55.5 percent. The next two were “no change” at 18 percent and “focus on senior issues” at 13 percent. “Other” received 30 percent of votes; votes in this category were for a diverse range of issues. Though some recurring themes included improved roads and infrastructure, maintaining gross residential density, and need for identity, other options conflicted with each other including the need for diverse housing types/prices, the need to grow competitively, and the need to address overcrowding in schools.



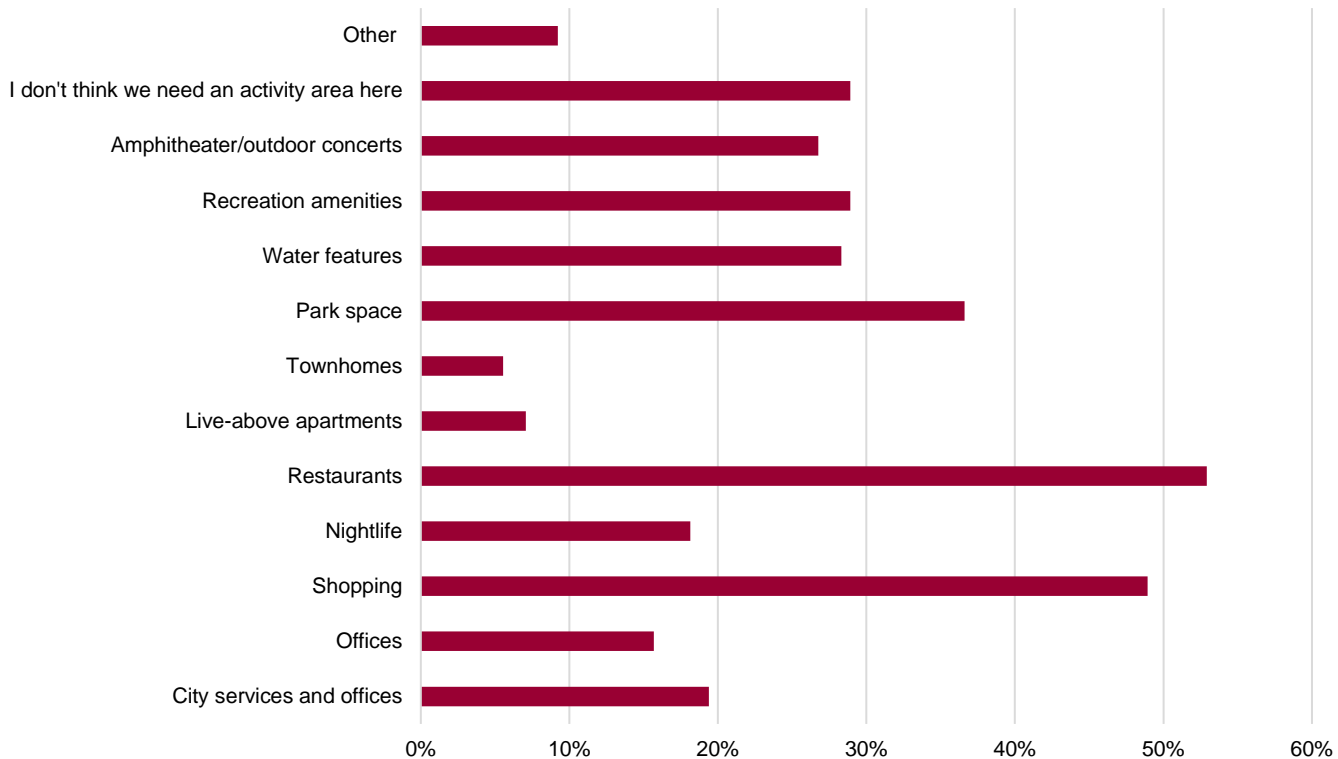
Question 7: What additional types of recreation would you like to see in Heath?

Of the 439 responses, over half selected both preserved natural open space (60 percent) and more trails (57 percent). Over a third selected existing park enhancements (37 percent), more parks (37 percent), and bike lanes (37 percent).



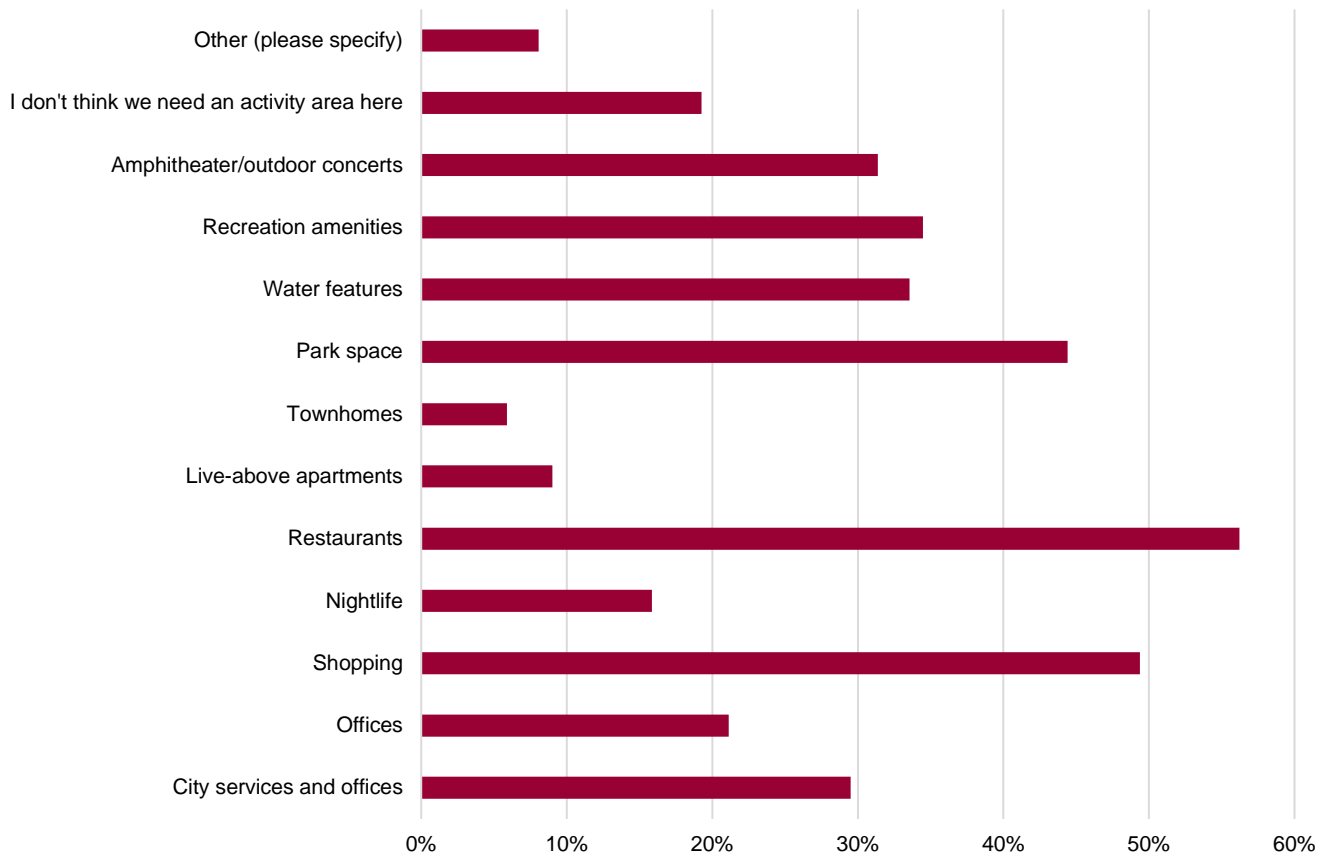
Question 8: If a future Town Center is located near the CVS at Ridge and Laurence, what land uses are appropriate?

Because this question was added later, it received somewhat less feedback. Of the 325 responses, only restaurants received over 50 percent of votes (53 percent). Shopping received 49 percent and park space received 37 percent. Recreation amenities, water features, and amphitheater all received over 25 percent of votes, as did “I don’t think we need an activity area here.”



Question 9: If a future Town Center is located near the Shell Station at the intersection of Laurence/FM 550/S. FM 549, what land uses are appropriate?

Because this question was added later, it received somewhat less feedback. Of the 322 responses, only restaurants received over half of the votes (56 percent). Shopping received 49 percent and park space received 44 percent. Recreation amenities, water features, and amphitheater all received over 25 percent of votes. Interestingly, less people (19 percent) identified this area as not needing an activity area. This location seemed to receive a more favorable rating by Heath residents, indicating it could be the more popular of the two locations for a future Town Center.



Question 10: if you could change one thing about Heath, it would be...

Answers to this question were far reaching and reflect some of the divide occurring within Heath today. Many responses called for keeping density low and limiting future development, while others called for limited commercial development such as a grocery store or town center. Many responses also cited the need for improved roadways, infrastructure, and connectivity.

Preserve Green Space and Parks

Roads and Traffic

Improved Politics

Utility Cost

Overcrowded Schools

Include Boutique Grocery, Shopping & Dining

Recent Trend of Over-Development

More Trails and Sidewalks

Comparison of 2008 and 2018 Input

Because the 2018 Comprehensive Plan is an update to the 2008 Plan, it is important to understand how Heath's needs and desires have changed in the ten years between plans. Assessing feedback gleaned through the online survey, Open Houses, and Review Committee meetings allowed the project team to assess how public needs and preferences have changed since the completion of the last Plan.

Similarities

The largest similarity between 2008 and 2018 is the pride Heath residents have for their City. While residents differ in their definition of "quality of life" all residents feel passionately about preserving and enhancing it in the future.

Differing Themes

In 2008, there were a number of issues raised through the input process that were not raised in the 2018 update or where a variety of perceptions were observed.

Retail and Town Center

The concept of a Town Center has been around in Heath since at least 2001 when it was discussed in the Comprehensive Plan. A Town Center Overlay was established in 2003 in the area surrounding City Hall. At the time, the area was almost entirely vacant and the goal of the overlay was to facilitate the land uses and public realm necessary to create an identifiable Town Center as determined by the preferences of residents at the time.

Two additional sites outside of the overlay were identified in 2008 as possible locations for a future Town Center. However, the City was divided regarding the need for retail or a Town Center. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan found only one, if any, Town Center would be appropriate for the City and that its location should ultimately be chosen by market forces. As a result, no specific Town Center site was recommended and very little non-residential development occurred between 2008 and 2018. The Plan did not establish timetables for Town Center development, leaving the underlying zoning of both possible sites as residential.

Extensive public input received for the 2018 Comprehensive Plan update revealed that community preferences regarding a Town Center have changed substantially from the 2003 Town Center Overlay and 2008 Comprehensive Plan. Chiefly among these changes is a growing consensus that the area of the existing Town Center Overlay is and should remain the Town Center.

Housing Diversity

In 2008, there was substantial interest in diversifying the housing varieties in Heath. This was reflected through several recommendations for higher density life cycle housing. In 2018, this interest seems to have decreased. The emerging theme in 2018 input is to emphasize low density over housing diversity.

Surveys

The 2008 Plan asked the following questions:

1. How long have you lived in Heath?
2. What makes Heath an attractive place to live?

3. What would you say is the most critical issue facing Heath today?
4. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the quality of life in Heath today.
5. How important or unimportant are the following to you in terms of Heath's quality of life?
6. Please rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the following items.
7. How strongly would you support or oppose the following development types within Heath?
8. Which statement most accurately describes your opinion toward local transportation planning issues?
9. Which statement most accurately describes your opinion toward local single-family residential lot sizes?
10. Which statement most accurately describes your opinion toward local residential development?
11. If you could select one other city to use as a model for Heath, what city would that be and why?

While the questions in 2008 and 2018 are not identical, the surveys nonetheless help show trends among survey participants. Overall Heath remains a community that strongly identifies with open space, a rural feel, and small-town character. The majority of the respondents did and continue to value large lot, high quality residential development with little or no commercial development. In addition, respondents did and continue to seek infrastructure, road, and connectivity improvements.

In the 2008 survey:

- 88 percent of respondents said the rural atmosphere made Heath an attractive place to live
- 68 percent said large-lot single-family homes made the City an attractive place to live
- 49 percent identified roads as the City's most critical issue
- 36 percent identified population growth as the City's most critical issue
- 47 percent of respondents identified large-lot single-family housing as the best form of housing for Heath; 57 percent said exclusively single-family homes were positive and should be maintained

There are some notable trends from the 2008 survey that were not reflected in the 2018 survey:

- 9 percent of respondents listed housing diversity and affordability as the most crucial issue facing the City
- 13 percent of respondents listed lakeside development as the most crucial issue
- 17 percent of respondents listed a town center as the most crucial issue
- 46 percent cited housing variety as important or very important
- Participants were evenly split on whether mixed-use development was good for the City
- 53 percent of respondents answered that they are generally dissatisfied with the retailing available locally

The surveys reveal that in ten years, the dialogue of Heath's direction remains largely the same with the exception of the items listed in the bullet points above. Despite what appears to be increasingly divergent opinions regarding growth control and availability of amenities in Heath, abundance of open space and the Heath's rural character has been a nearly unanimous influence to respondents. This means that preservation of greenspace needs to be a primary consideration for any plan going forward. There was also frequent mention of the need for infrastructure and roadway improvements, which could signal the need for future capital improvement planning before retail development is considered.