

Irving, Texas

SEPTEMBER 2019

Communities across the country have opted to introduce pedestrian-oriented zoning provisions into their zoning and land use regulations to foster increased community walkability. This study identifies best practices and lessons learned in adopting and implementing New Urbanist and pedestrian-oriented zoning. Information for each community was gleaned through key informant interviews with planning officials and documentary/Internet research. Fifteen communities across the United States were selected as case studies for this project from a larger, nationwide study of pedestrian-oriented zoning; profiles were developed for 13 out of the 15 communities and are presented herein.

Current Pedestrian-Oriented Planning and Zoning Provisions

In 2013 the City of Irving adopted the [Las Colinas Urban Center Master Plan](#) which has guided the development of a walkable, mixed-use district. The Urban Center provides pedestrians and cyclists access to the [Campion Trail](#), a 22-mile master-planned greenbelt which runs the length of the city. The trail connects to local parks and the regional trail network, providing linkages to other cities connected to the system. In addition to trail access, the Urban Center contains a [Dallas Rapid Transit](#) light rail stop and the [Las Colinas Area Personal Transit](#) system, which offer residents additional multi-modal transportation options.

The Urban Center also contains some of the city's [Transit-Oriented Development Districts](#), a zoning designation that may be applied to any property that is in one-half mile of an existing or proposed light rail or commuter rail transit line. Development projects within these zoning districts must be higher density, compact, and provide a mix of uses such as residential, retail, and entertainment. There are several zoning provisions in the Transit-Oriented Development districts that seek to foster a vibrant and pedestrian-focused environment. Developments in these districts are encouraged to include bike lanes, connected networks of sidewalks, and access to open space.

In 2016, Irving adopted plans for the [Heritage Crossing District](#), a walkable urban village where residents can live, shop, and work in close proximity to the city's commuter rail stop, the [Trinity Railway Express](#). The Heritage Crossing District contains three character zones: Transit-Mixed Use which primarily serves the area next to the commuter rail line with medium-scale, mixed-use developments; Corridor-Mixed



PHOTO PROVIDED BY: GREEN LANE PROJECT IMAGE LIBRARY

Use which supports multi-modal traffic and is the primary location for commercial activity in the district; and Neighborhood-Mixed Use which encompasses smaller-scale residential and retail uses.

The Catalyst for Adopting Zoning Changes

The City of Irving sought to spark development and redevelopment in formerly vacant properties and develop in a way that fostered vibrant, walkable neighborhoods. In addition, the city desired to expand their existing transit system and connectivity.

Perceived Impacts Since Implementing Zoning Changes

Increased Mixed-Use Development

The City of Irving has seen an uptick in the development of multi-family, mixed-use projects in the pedestrian-oriented zoning districts.

Increased Rail and Train Connectivity

Since implementing zoning districts that prioritize transit and multimodal transportation, the city has observed improvements to local and regional trail connectivity, as well as increased development relating to light rail and commuter rail transportation.

Increased Pedestrian Activity

Within the pedestrian-oriented districts, there has been a marked increase in pedestrian activity such as public events, concerts, and restaurants development.

IRVING DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE	
Total Population	235,648
Median Household Income	\$58,196
Median Age	31.9
% Households with related children <18	39%
% White (non-Hispanic)	53.4%
% Black (non-Hispanic)	13.3%
% Hispanic	42.1%
Average Temperature December/July	48/82°F
Source: Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2013-2017); The Weather Channel, 2019	



PHOTO PROVIDED BY: GREEN LANE PROJECT IMAGE LIBRARY

Resources for Further Information

City of Irving, Parks and Recreation, Campion Trail

<https://www.cityofirving.org/1127/Trails>

City of Irving, Las Colinas Urban Center Master Plan 2013

https://lascolinas.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2013-03-22_Sasaki_Urban_Center_Report.pdf

City of Irving, Land Development Code, Transit Oriented Development Districts

https://library.municode.com/tx/irving/codes/land_development_code?nodeId=PTIIZOORNO1144_S52-32GTRORDEDI

City of Irving, Land Development Code, Heritage Crossing District

https://library.municode.com/tx/irving/codes/land_development_code?nodeId=PTIIZOORNO1144_S52-32FHCHECRDI

SUGGESTED CITATION

A Reimann and JF Chiqui. Pedestrian-oriented Zoning in Action: A Community Snapshot-Irving, Texas. Chicago, IL: Illinois Prevention Research Center, 2019. Available: <https://go.uic.edu/zoning-for-walkability-profile-irving>.

Lessons Learned & Recommendations

Planning officials in the City of Irving identified key lessons learned in the process of adopting and implementing pedestrian-oriented zoning provisions, as well as overarching recommendations for other communities who may wish to explore similar zoning provisions.

WALKABILITY CAN SERVE AS A CO-BENEFIT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

The main catalyst for the City of Irving to adopt pedestrian-oriented zoning provisions was to stimulate development in underutilized sections of the community in a way that would reinvigorate the economy. While economic development was a significant driver of the zoning changes, city leaders noted that walkability and pedestrian connectivity has served as a tremendous secondary benefit of the city's investments.

IMPLEMENTATION TAKES TIME

Many pedestrian-oriented development projects require a timeframe of twenty to thirty years. This requires patience from all stakeholders including developers, local government, and residents.

NEED FOR COMMUNITY BUY-IN

One key element of Irving's adoption and implementation of pedestrian-oriented zoning was the continued support of city leaders and community members. At two separate times, the city held a vote regarding the development of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit rail line, an expensive and time-consuming project. Both times, the community voted to remain invested in long-term rail connectivity.