

**ROCKWALL GROWTH
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

ROCKWALL, TEXAS

SEPTEMBER 1977

ROCKWALL GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prepared By

The Rockwall Citizens Planning Committee

With Technical Assistance From

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Dallas, Texas**

and

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<u>A CONCENSUS FRAMEWORK OF GROWTH AND RECOMMENDED POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT</u>	
A. THE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR ROCKWALL	1
B. DEVELOPMENT POLICIES FOR ROCKWALL	1
1. Housing	3
2. Transportation	9
3. Commercial and Industrial Areas	16
4. Schools, Parks, Open Space and Community Facilities	20
5. Water and Sewer Facilities	25

A Concensus Framework Of Growth And Recommended Policies For Rockwall

This report is a reprint of Part Four of the original Rockwall Growth Management Plan. Due to the rising interest of the people of Rockwall in obtaining a copy of the plan, Part Four, which describes the future development policies for Rockwall has been reprinted for public distribution. Parts One, Two, Three and Five are not reprinted because they contain background information and study methodology which may not be of interest to the general public. Anyone wishing to read the original Rockwall Growth Management Plan should contact the City Hall where a copy of the original report is on file for public reading.

A CONSENSUS FRAMEWORK OF GROWTH AND RECOMMENDED POLICES FOR ROCKWALL

Part Three of the original plan* has revealed that the five alternatives proposed for Rockwall had a large number of common proposals with regard to the future development of the city. These alternatives had also certain amount of uniqueness associated with each of them although these unique elements are related with specific project level actions which fit nicely within the overall scheme of each alternative. When these common proposals were sorted out and presented in a separate map, and when each of the unique proposals, after some adjustment and refinement, were incorporated in the same map, they result in a single, common framework of growth for Rockwall. It is called a consensus framework because it is reflective of the development proposals by each team and because this framework was agreed to by all members of the Rockwall Planning Committee. This consensus framework is shown in Plate 1 following this page.

A. THE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE CITY OF ROCKWALL

The development framework shown in Plate 1 is like a constitution, which sets forth the City's physical development in a broad, general direction. More specific policies and programs would then define the general outline of the constitution as operational guidelines for guiding urban growth on a day to day basis. The City Council is the ultimate body that will give interpretation of this broad framework. However, in order to aid the Council to avoid arbitrary interpretation, a series of policies and programs that would be needed to achieve this overall framework, is outlined in the next section of this report.

While the development policies and programs may be revised in five to seven years to reflect changing issues, the long range growth framework, like a constitution, need not be changed so often, and should be responsive to development decisions for the next 15 to 20 years and possibly longer.

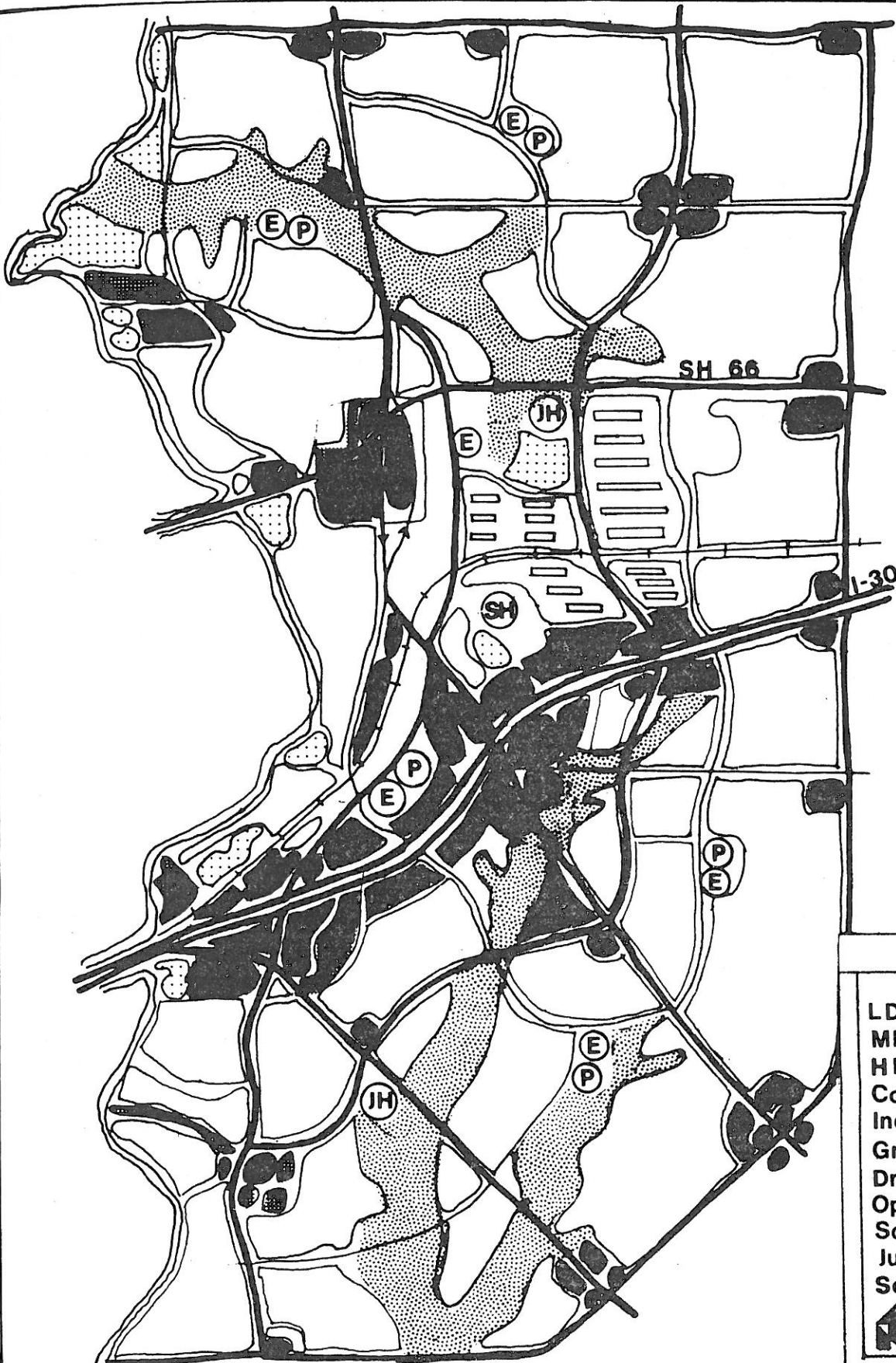
B. DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS FOR ROCKWALL

The framework of growth as shown in Plate 1 is designed to serve as a guide for development decisions in the coming years. To realize the plan, the concepts and objectives must be translated into specific policies, programs, and regulations which are a part of the overall growth management and planning system of Rockwall. Furthermore, the city government, as well as others involved in the development of Rockwall, must carry out their work in the spirit of the plan.

*On file in City Hall and is available for public reading.

Plate 1

Development Framework For Rockwall - Concensus Plan



LEGEND

LD Housing	
MD Housing	
HD Housing	
Commercial	
Industrial	
Greenbelt -	
Drainage Ways	
Open Spaces	
School / Park	
Junior High	
Senior High	
	1" = 4330'

The development framework is not complete within itself without numerous supporting actions that will be required to translate the policies into actual day to day development decisions. The city will manage growth through numerous regulations; through policies, both written and unwritten; and through the provision of public facilities and improvements. The existing implementation tools must be integrated and revised if necessary and new tools must be added as appropriate to achieve development objectives.

This part of the Rockwall Growth Study identifies the basic policies, programs and actions which will be necessary to realize an efficient and effective planning/management system in regard to the development of the city. These policies and programs are by no means exclusive. The City Council or other boards and commissions may find that they need additional programs or policies. New program or project responses may be required for new issues that would surface in the future, and many organizations both public and private will be required to participate directly or indirectly in guiding the growth of the city.

1. HOUSING

To address the housing issues and goals outlined in pages 24 and 25 of the original report and to implement the housing systems location shown in Plate 1, the following housing policies and programs will be needed for Rockwall.

a. General Policies

- .Maintain the overall dominance of low-density housing within the city of Rockwall and its planning jurisdictional area.
- .Provide a variety of housing types by accommodating medium and high density residential development.
- .Concentrate the more dense forms of housing in few locations rather than at small scattered sites throughout the city to minimize the intrusion on low-density neighborhoods.
- .Increase diversity of choice in the medium-density housing stock by encouraging a wider mix among conventional apartments, townhouses, clusters, etc.
- .Deal with housing deterioration in the older section of Rockwall and restore them to a sound, viable part of the city's housing stock.
- .Improve and conserve neighborhoods by removing or protecting from blighting influences which could spread deterioration.
- .Develop locally conceived, locally initiated programs to improve housing for those people currently living in Rockwall who are unable to provide decent housing on their own.
- .Participate in those federal programs on housing that are designated to correct existing deteriorating housing and avoid those programs that would proliferate low cost housing which would soon become blighted.

b. Specific Policies
and Programs

In order to achieve the general policies outlined in the preceding section, the following specific policies would require to be pursued by both the city government of Rockwall and the private developers in the supply and management of the city's housing system.

(i) The Locational Policies

Taken from the Development Framework (Plate 1), the housing types by density are indicated in Plate 2 following this page.

.High Density:

High-density residential development, generally apartments, is a high intensity use with associated high activity levels and traffic. This type of housing should be encouraged to provide a variety of living choices. However, their location should be limited to designated high-intensity areas in order to minimize the intrusion upon low-density residential areas. There are two locations in Rockwall where high density housing would be most appropriate. Each of these locations is characterized by a major commercial activity center. These locations are:

- .The I-30 at Highway 205, and
- .The I-30 at FM 740

.Medium Density:

Medium-density housing retains some of the characteristics of high-density housing when developed in large groupings. The higher activity levels could potentially be disruptive to lower-density neighborhoods. Similar to high-density apartments, these larger groupings should be located along the freeway and in conjunction with commercial areas served by major thoroughfares. There are 14 locations in Rockwall that are appropriate for medium density housing development.

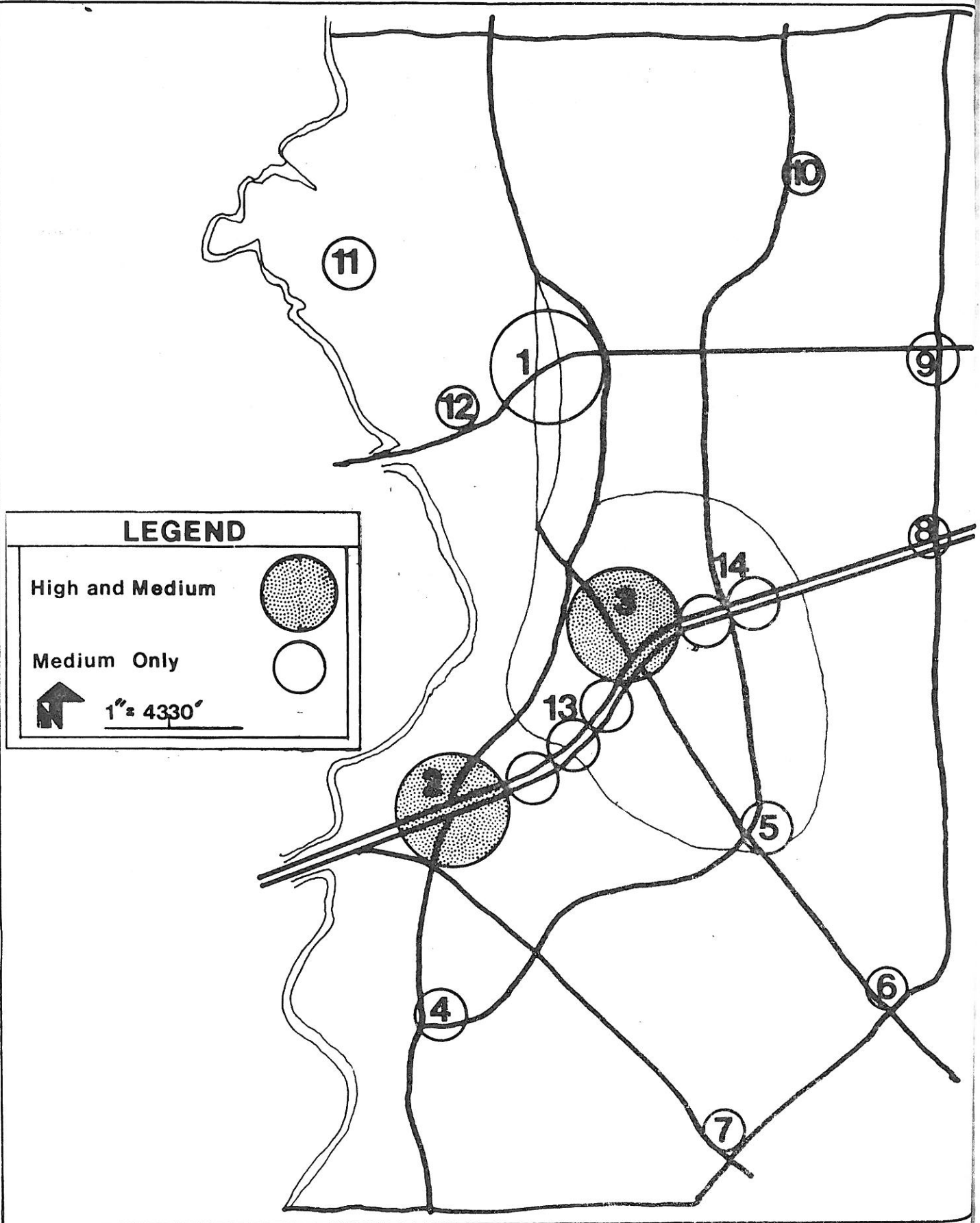
This type of housing is strongly recommended for the downtown area and its vicinity. However, special precaution will be needed to develop multi-family housing in and around downtown area. They should be designed to fit the historical preservation efforts of the downtown area, and they must not interfere with the stability of single family homes. Small complexes should be encouraged in these areas.

Although greater density housing is appropriate in and around the downtown area, large scale clearance on a public basis must be avoided. The objective is to encourage redevelopment on a private basis. As deteriorated housing is cleared, replacement through well-designed quadraplexes tailored to the need of the elderly and young married couples, should be encouraged.

.Low Density Housing:

Low-density housing should be permitted throughout the city, except in such areas that are designated as commercial activity centers, high and medium

Plate 2 Medium And High Density Housing Locations



density housing areas, floodplain areas, industrial reserve areas and in the area reserved for agricultural use. Low-density residential development should be encouraged on the neighborhood unit principle which utilizes major streets, creeks, or other natural and man-made features as boundaries. All uses which are not low-density housing are limited to locations on the neighborhood's perimeter. Higher intensity uses adjacent to low-density residential areas should be buffered to avoid visual or other disruption. These buffers can be created through street, open space and parks, or through creeks and drainageways.

The ranchette area requires a minimum density of 5 acres per unit and should be encouraged to locate in agricultural use areas. The northeast and southeast edges of the Rockwall Planning area are good locations for ranchette housing. The exact boundaries of these areas should be determined through zoning district revisions that will be required to implement the housing system shown in Plates 1 and 2.

(ii) Housing Size:

A wider choice of housing sizes in the single-family housing stock is necessary to provide housing for a population representing all stages in the life cycle and all levels of financial capability. Because single family homes in Rockwall are presently dominated by homes of 1800 to 2500 square feet in size with relatively few homes under 2,000 square feet available, future construction should be proportioned to include some additional homes under 2,000 sq. ft. This would increase home ownership in the city and thereby contribute to the stability of neighborhoods.

While under the existing market condition, the majority of new construction in the city will probably fall in the 2000 square foot range, an active program may be required to attract homes less than 2000 sq.ft. A balance should be maintained between the various sized dwelling units. To encourage a varied life style, a diversity in housing size, design, style and price range will be needed for Rockwall. The zoning ordinance should be revised to encourage housing diversity in the city to meet housing need based on individual preference and desires for varied life-styles.

Areas desirable for large home development should be reserved as large lot/ large home areas to preserve a climate for executive home development by excluding uses which would detract from their potential. While the reservation of land through zoning will not necessarily bring about the development of large or small homes, it will assure the availability of suitable land. Areas for reservation should be delineated through the revision of zoning ordinance and zoning map.

(iii) Housing and Neighborhood
Improvement Programs

Deteriorating housing and neighborhoods which are blighted and showing signs of deterioration are an area of major concern. The areas of concern are most significant in the older section of Rockwall where all deteriorating houses in the city are located. Action should be taken now to correct existing blight and halt blight wherever it tends to appear in the future.

Local Programs

It is strongly recommended that Rockwall avoid reliance on federal programs for solving the city's housing problem. Efforts must be made to initiate local housing programs that will enhance the position of the city in securing federal grants for public facilities and other nonhousing activities. Private sector organizations should be encouraged to participate in the community's housing improvement programs. Examples of this type of participation are as follows:

- .Low-interest loans by banks and other financial institutions.
- .Development of cooperative housing in which a civic organization, i.e., Lions, Kiwanis, churches, etc., donate materials to be used by persons unable to afford such things as tools, repair manuals, etc.
- .Sponsoring of "community fix-up days" in which local organizations assist low-income families by having several individuals give one day a month to help rehabilitate a substandard unit.

These and similar type programs are often inexpensive in monetary terms but can contribute substantially to improving a community's housing stock without complete reliance on public sector assistance. Rockwall may not have difficulty in undertaking local programs in the immediate future because of the strong financial institutions and civic organizations in the city. The citywide Planning Committee if organized to play an active role in the implementation of these policy programs can be of major assistance in the area of housing rehabilitation and redevelopment.

It is recommended that a Housing Improvement Committee be established for Rockwall taking membership from the Citywide Planning Committee, Kiwanis Club, church and other organizations and individual citizens. The major responsibility of this committee would be to develop a comprehensive housing improvement program and develop a detailed strategy of how to carry out locally conceived, locally financed projects to address the dual problem of improving the deteriorating residential sections of Rockwall and to help provide decent housing to those low and moderate income families who are currently living in the city, particularly the elderly population.

While the citizens, civil groups and the city government make a strong effort to eradicate blight from Rockwall, it is also very important that efforts are made to conserve existing housing which is safe, sound and sanitary. The city should stimulate residential construction on vacant lots within the city, where streets, utilities and drainage are already available. The following program of action will be needed to conserve the stability and soundness of existing housing.

- .Adopt a housing code to set forth minimum standards for the maintenance and occupancy of existing dwelling units and to provide for the repair or demolition of substandard housing.

- .Establish and provide funds for a capital improvement program to pave, repair and maintain existing city streets with annual budgeted funds over a period of four to six years or through a general obligation bond program.
- .Revise, if necessary, building, plumbing and electrical codes to provide for safety in the construction and alteration of buildings.
- .Amend the existing zoning ordinance, based on the land use framework shown in Plate 8 of this report, to protect existing residential areas from commercial and retail business encroachment.

Federal Programs

To supplement local efforts, federal programs should be pursued to correct the existing housing problems of Rockwall. A summary list of the major programs which are potentially applicable to Rockwall, is as follows:

- .Section 202 Elderly Housing Assistance (HUD)
- .Section 312 Rehabilitation Loan Program (HUD)
- .Community Development Block Grant Program (HUD)
- .Farmers Home Administration Program (USDA)
- .Rural Housing (HUD and USDA)

These programs are available in the form of both direct grants and low-interest loans and are specifically designed to assist local governments in upgrading their housing conditions. Of particular significance among these programs to Rockwall, is the HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). The CDBG is specifically designed to improve conditions in the low income areas of a city. Although the communities with a higher concentration of low income people usually have a better chance of getting funds under this program, the comprehensive citizen participation program in Rockwall should offset its relative lack of low income people. The city should therefore attempt to receive CDBG funds to improve deteriorating housing and to resurface streets in the older sections of the town.

In view of a sizable amount of the city's housing stock in various stages of deterioration, the local efforts should be accelerated without delay. Of course, the total solution may not be accomplished in the immediate future and, therefore, efforts should be made to implement an incremental strategy based on community priorities. It is recommended that Rockwall undertake the following programs in the immediate future.

- .Establish a local nonprofit organization to provide housing assistance to the low and moderate income people. The nonprofit organization can not only utilize federal programs as a source of funds but can also obtain local capital as well as grants from private foundations.

.Seek funds from U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for improving deteriorating housing under the Community Development Block Grant Program.

.Investigate Farmer's Home Administration housing programs and seek funds for local programs where applicable.

.Establish a referral service through the City Administrator's office to assist individuals in obtaining direct loans and grants for home improvement through HUD and the Farmer's Home Administration.

2. TRANSPORTATION

The City of Rockwall enjoys an excellent location with respect to regional transportation but its internal circulation will require a great deal of improvement as the city continues to grow in the future. The downtown area is particularly deficient in access which must be improved if its competitive position as an activity center is to be improved. The natural environment of Rockwall presents an opportunity to develop pedestrian and bicycle trails. The I-30 and the MK&T railroad both provide opportunity for mass transit connection with the Dallas area.

a. General Policies

In order to achieve the goals and address the issues on the current and future transportation system the following policies will need to be implemented by the city.

.Provide a transportation system that will provide a choice in the mode of transportation, will address a potential energy crisis and that will meet the intercity and intra-city mobility need in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

.To improve the competitive position of the downtown area as a major activity center in Rockwall by providing an improved access to this area.

.Provide a continuing transportation improvement program for the city of Rockwall to improve its major thoroughfares and collector street system over the next 20 year period.

.Adopt a street resurfacing and pavement program for the older sections of the City of Rockwall.

- .Work in close cooperation with the NCTCOG and the City of Dallas and explore the possibility of utilizing either I-30 or MK&T for developing a mass transit corridor between Rockwall and the Dallas area.
- .Consider the possibility of providing an in-community mass transit system connecting downtown with Ridge Road/I-30 and I-30/205 and consider the possibility of providing a park and ride center either at I-30/205 or at I-30/740 for use by the people of Rockwall and by other communities such as Heath, Fate, Royse City as well.
- .Consider the possibility of developing a heliport either at I-30/205 or I-30/740 for commuting passengers to downtown Dallas, and possibly elsewhere in the Dallas metropolitan area.
- .Create a pedestrian network system utilizing the environmental corridors through floodplains/drainageways within the Rockwall Planning Area.

b. Specific Policies and Programs

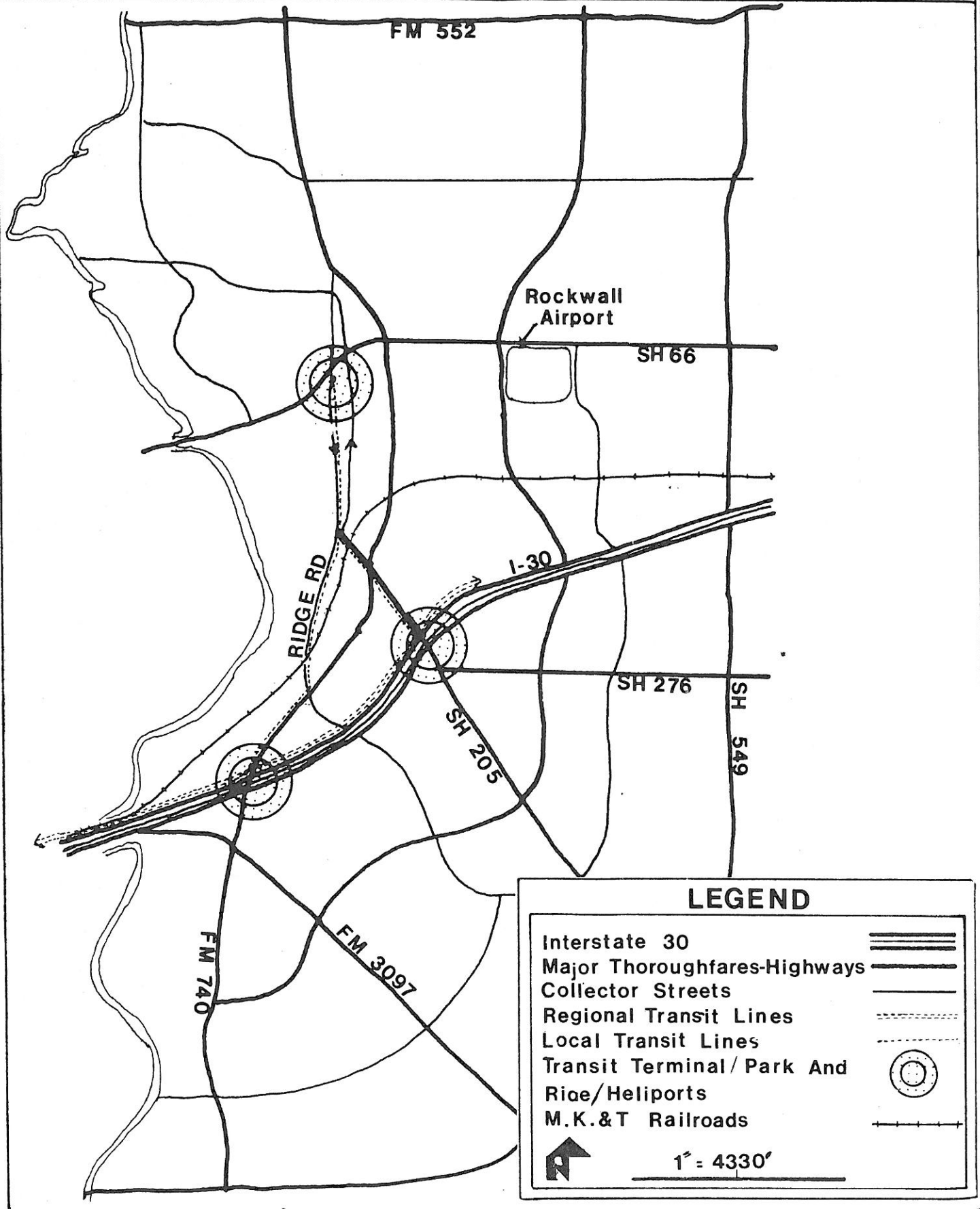
To implement the policies outlined in the preceding section, the following specific programs will need to be implemented by the City of Rockwall, Rockwall County and the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation. While the City of Rockwall would execute the large majority of the transportation programs, participation of the county and the state would be needed in the development of the overall transportation system.

(i) Interstate 30 Exit and Entry Ramps

The Interstate 30 is a lifeline to the city of Rockwall. Its full impact on the development of Rockwall is yet to be felt by the city. This interstate facility together with Lake Ray Hubbard is the major force that will assure continued growth of the Rockwall Planning Area. As the population and commuting traffic continues to grow and major activity centers grow at 740 and 205, the volume of traffic will significantly rise. To distribute this traffic among the city's major thoroughfares with maximum safety and efficiency, two improvements must be made on the Interstate 30 within the next several years.

- .Approach the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation to redesign the entry and exit ramps at Ridge Road/FM 740. With rising commuting traffic, the existing ramp would be unable to handle traffic without heavy congestion and backlog of traffic as the Rockwall traffic seeks to exit at Ridge Road/740. To alleviate this situation and to increase public safety, it would be necessary to create an exit ramp further west of the present exit ramp and directly tie the new ramp with FM 3097. This will facilitate rapid distribution of traffic between North and South Rockwall from the intersection of FM 740 and FM 3097. Likewise, the existing entry ramp would need to be redesigned to provide a quicker and safer entry to the westbound I-30.

Plate 3 Proposed Transportation Plan For Rockwall



LEGEND

Interstate 30	
Major Thoroughfares-Highways	
Collector Streets	
Regional Transit Lines	
Local Transit Lines	
Transit Terminal/ Park And Ride/Heliports	
M.K.&T Railroads	

1" = 4330'

.Approach the State Highway Department for creating a new freeway connection with the proposed north-south Boulevard from Chandler's Landing to FM 552. In addition, the SH 276 will create a problem in the future as the shopping center at 205/I-30 is developed. This problem should be resolved at the time a master plan for the shopping center is prepared.

(ii) Access to the
Downtown Area

To revive the role downtown once held in the development of Rockwall, a program of action would be needed, the major element of which would be to upgrade the access to and from the downtown area. To this end, the following actions must be taken in the foreseeable future.

.Reroute Highway 66 around the northwest edge of downtown Rockwall and provide a direct connection of this highway with Heath Street (See Plate 3 for a generalized alignment). Rerouting through traffic would relieve congestion in the downtown area and increase the capacity of Washington and Rusk Streets to handle traffic destined to the downtown area.

.Create a oneway pair utilizing Goliad Street (southbound) and Throckmorton-San Jacinto connection (northbound) to improve the north-south access to the downtown area. The capacity of this one way couplet to carry traffic would rise considerably if this proposal is implemented. No additional right-of-way will be needed to create this couplet, but a system of improved traffic lights will be needed for Rockwall in general, and downtown area in particular.

.Create a new major thoroughfare from I-30 (at 740) to the north of downtown to further improve access to the north of town. For the segment between I-30/Ridge Road and Highway 205, the alignment will initially follow the Ridge Road facility. It will then be connected with Clark Street which would be expanded to accomodate additional traffic. After crossing Highway 66, this proposed thoroughfare would join the FM 740 approximately 1/2 mile north of the downtown area. By diverting the north-south traffic along this thoroughfare, it would be possible to utilize the oneway couplet for handling local traffic to and from the downtown area. In addition, this proposal would create an opportunity to make Goliad Street a parkway facility. This, together with a beautified Ridge Road would provide a landscaped parkway all the way from downtown to Interstate 30 at Ridge Road.

.Adopt and implement a program of resurfacing unpaved streets in the older section of Rockwall. Together, the improvement of access to downtown and a street pavement program would contribute to the revival of the older parts of the city. The resurfaced streets, complete with curbs and gutters, would provide an incentive to the property owners to rehabilitate housing on a private basis. The result would be a beneficial impact on the downtown area.

If adequate funds are not available from the public sector, a pavement assessment program may be considered under which the city and property owners would share the cost of street pavement on a 50/50 basis. In addition, federal programs may be available for this purpose. Partial funds may also be available from the County of Rockwall. Cooperative efforts among the private and public sectors would be needed to improve the image and vitality of the Rockwall inner-city area.

(iii) Major Thoroughfares
and Collector Streets

The proposed thoroughfares and collector streets network for Rockwall is shown in Plate 3. With the exception of the proposed North-South Boulevard, all major thoroughfares would utilize existing county roads, state highways and farm-to-market roads. Thus in the development of the city's thoroughfare system, a cooperative program between the state, county and the city would be needed. Each thoroughfare should have a right of way of 80' and must have 4 traffic carrying lanes. The collector streets which would collect traffic from local neighborhood streets and distribute to major thoroughfares and highways, must have a right of way of at least 40'. Two traffic carrying lanes should be adequate for each collector street. The following program of action would be needed to implement the city's thoroughfares system shown in Plate 3.

.Establish a Street Improvement Committee for Rockwall taking memberships from the Citywide Planning Committee, City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as from the County of Rockwall, State Highway Department and the Rockwall Chamber of Commerce. The function of this committee would be to develop a 5 year street improvement program based on needs and priorities to be established by the committee.

.Designate the following county roads, state highways and farm-to-market roads as the city's thoroughfare system for the future:

- .FM 740 (upto South of the railroad track, North of I-30).
- .SH 205
- .FM 740/Clark Street Connection
- .SH 552
- .SH 276
- .SH 549
- .SH 3097
- .SH 66 and
- .North-South Boulevard

.This thoroughfare network should be adopted through a resolution by the City Council as the official thoroughfare plan of the city. It would be the basis of future subdivision plat approval by the city.

.Revise the subdivision ordinance for the city and incorporate right of way and street construction requirements by the private developers so that public investment for thoroughfare construction can be minimized as much as possible.

.Consider the possibility of consolidating street maintenance functions of the state, county and city into the hands of one agency while funds for maintenance, including installation and replacement of signal lights, stop signs, etc. would be shared by each agency in proportion to its jurisdictional responsibility.

.Consider the possibility of developing a bond program so that funds would be available for advance acquisition of right of way to reduce costs for thoroughfare construction in the future.

(iv) Mass Transit and
Air Transportation

Most suburban communities usually place a lower or no priority on mass transit development. This is one area where Rockwall should consider discarding typical suburban thought and attitude. The majority of its population now commuting to Dallas, will be hit hard when the supply of fossil fuels becomes a real crisis. Rockwall must assure itself of a quick, closer link with Central Dallas without total reliance on the auto-based system. Possibilities should be explored to develop a program of action as follows:

.Make a formal contact with the City of Dallas and the NCTCOG and be familiar with the regional mass transit proposals, costs, and priorities and do everything possible to help develop an eastern corridor that would tie in the City of Rockwall with the Dallas Central Business District.

.Work closely with the North Central Texas Council of Governments in developing a regional contingency plan should there be an Arab oil embargo in the future so that the community of Rockwall can be assured of transportation to and from the Dallas area,

.Consider the possibility of developing a local bus system for Rockwall connecting the downtown area with I-30/Ridge Road and I-30/205 activity centers within the next 5 years. Develop a park and ride center either at I-30/205 or at I-30/Ridge Road, whichever is found most feasible and tie in this park and ride center with the regional transit system.

.Should a regional system become not feasible within the next several years, consider an alternate possibility of having the City of Rockwall develop a commuting transit system under which the city would provide commuting transportation to Dallas on a self supporting basis. A detailed feasibility study would be needed to determine whether such an action would succeed, for which funds would be available under the new energy conservation programs that are being considered by Congress. Under the national energy conservation policy, funds would be easy to obtain for developing a demonstration program for a year or two. Rockwall should attempt to be the first city

in Texas in securing and implementing a pilot program and demonstrate how energy conservation can be achieved even by small towns away from a metropolitan center.

.If some of the short term programs on mass transit discussed above are found unfeasible, consider the possibility of connecting downtown Rockwall with the Garland bus system, utilizing the park and ride center now operational in Garland. Some of the people from Rockwall would be able to receive a benefit of not driving their cars to the City of Dallas.

.Although unlikely in the immediate future, possibilities should not be overlooked to develop a heliport system in Rockwall to handle commuting traffic to the Dallas area. As detailed plans are prepared for the downtown area and the activity centers at I-30/Ridge Road and I-30/205, consideration should be given to locate heliports at these locations. Eventually a regional heliport system may be developed for the North Central Texas region and should that happen, the City of Rockwall should be ready to tie these locations with the regional heliports system.

With rapidly growing changes in technology, particularly in the field of transportation and communication, it is difficult to predict what would happen in the future and what will be most popularly accepted mode of transportation. The City of Rockwall should therefore be ready to adapt itself to all possibilities and contingencies. Keeping all options open and pursuing those that are most advantageous to the City at any particular point in time, will require a continuing transportation planning effort on the part of the city. The policies and programs outlined in this section are the first step rather than the last step for the future transportation system of the city.

(v) Pedestrian Trails
and Walkways

The greenbelt system shown in Plate 5 of this report would accommodate the pedestrian walkways and bicycle trails. Opportunities exist in Rockwall for as long as a 30-mile system for pedestrian trails. A series of pedestrian links could be developed from the main line connecting the private residential areas with commercial and industrial areas, schools and other points of interest. Thus, a large number of trips could be made by foot or by bicycle and reduce the use of energy. Zoning and subdivision ordinances should be amended to incorporate the requirements of pedestrian walkways, and build the system with the assistance of private sectors as much as possible. For additional programs and policies on pedestrian trails and walkways, see pages 21 through 23 of this report.

3. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS

In order to reach a size of 30,000 persons, the Rockwall planning area must be provided with outlets for a wide variety of retail and commercial goods and services. In addition, the City will need places for the production of goods which will find markets far outside the community. This section offers some guidelines and the kind of programs that will be needed to provide and develop areas for commercial and industrial development.

a. General Policies

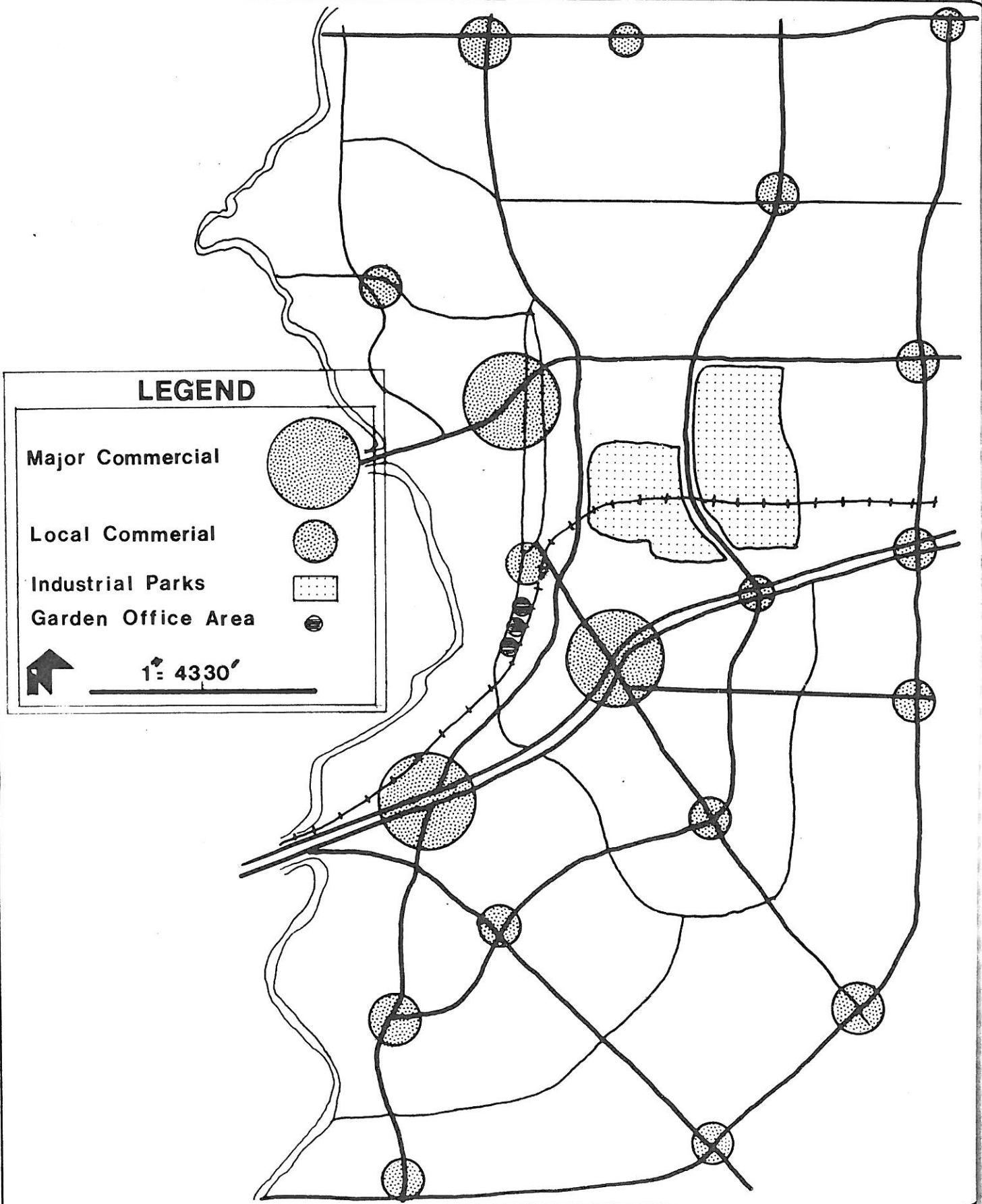
- .Expand the number of basic industrial and white collar commercial jobs in the city to achieve a partially sufficient economic base.
- .Implement the necessary programs to attract the types of commercial and industrial development that would fit the labor force characteristics of the Rockwall population.
- .Encourage the creation of a large industrial park adjacent to the existing Texas Aluminum Plant and orient it to the production of electronic and related industries, and reserve ample land with access from both railroad and freeway and restrict the development of non-employment uses in these areas.
- .Buffer the industrial area to minimize the disruption to adjacent neighborhoods which might otherwise occur either visually or due to increased activity, traffic or noise levels.
- .Encourage the development of a balanced system of various sized commercial areas to provide diversity and convenience in retail, commercial and related activities.
- .Strengthen the position of downtown Rockwall as a major commercial area in the city but orient its function in a manner that it would not face stiff competition from other commercial areas in the city.
- .Discourage the development of strip commercials as new thoroughfares are opened in the future.

b. Specific Policies and Programs

Two types of commercial centers are recommended for Rockwall--the major activity centers with a diverse ray of goods and services, and the neighborhood convenience centers oriented primarily to unifunctional retail goods and commercial services. These centers are shown in Plate 4 following this page. The size of each major activity center is 20 to 30 acres and those of neighborhood centers 5 to 10 acres each.

Plate 4

Proposed Industrial And Commercial Centers



(i) Major Commercial Areas

The major commercial areas include the downtown area, the I-30/Ridge Road and the I-30/205 locations.

Downtown Area

The functions of the downtown center should be as much distinct and different from those in other areas as possible, so that a competing strategy can be avoided in the future. The downtown location is handicapped by lack of access and due to the limitation of space needed for a modern shopping center with ample off-street parking. The activities which are most appropriate for downtown will include, but not limited to the following:

- .The County Government Operation
- .The City Government Operation
- .The Utility Companies and their operations
- .The Courthouse
- .Legal offices and title companies
- .Banks and financial institutions
- .Medium density housing
- .Limited retail/shopping activities
- .Theaters and Museums
- .Restoring, making craft, art and hobby centers

The retail function in the downtown area is not expected to expand in the future. The shopping by downtown workers and the people who would visit downtown for business as well as the people who live in nearby housing districts, are about the only retail purchasers downtown. The development policy should aim at developing those activities seeking locations close to the city and county government operations.

Efforts should not be made to make the downtown area a major retail area of Rockwall County. The improvement of access and beautification proposal that would restore the old buildings to a sound condition are needed for the downtown area. A pedestrian oriented environment and a plaza with street furniture would help downtown in retaining its present retail stores which may otherwise move to the outlying shopping areas. The downtown area is the original site of the town. It has many historic aspects that should be restored and preserved for the generations to come.

.Interstate 30/Ridge Road and
Interstate 30/205

These two activity areas will be the core of retail shopping in the city of Rockwall and its trade area. Occupying a land area of 20 to 30 acres, each would provide retail outlets for the entire Rockwall County. The Ridge Road center would serve the south and southeast of Rockwall County including the City of Heath, and the 205 location would serve east and northeast of Rockwall County and the communities therein. Each would have a moderate sized department store, providing comparison shopping goods. The following

activities should be encouraged to locate within these centers:

- .Comparison shopping activities/apparel stores
- .Commercial Services
- .Office Buildings
- .Hotels and Motels
- .Restaurants, Theaters
- .Bowling alleys, Commercial recreations
- .High Density Housing
- .Medium Density Housing
- .Bank, Financial Institutions
- .Super markets, Dime stores, gift shops
- .Automotive shops, etc.

Because of the proximity to Rockwall High School, the 205 location would have an advantage of including some cultural activities. As Rockwall grows in population, perhaps a civic center/library complex can be added to this center on the north side of the freeway. The Ridge Road center because of its unique topography has the potential to become the skyline of Rockwall County. The design of this center should take into account the spectacular view of the Lake Ray Hubbard and the surrounding areas. No additional zoning changes should be allowed in these two areas without an overall plan for each site.

(ii) Local Commercial

In guiding local commercial development to provide convenience goods and services, the City of Rockwall must discourage strip commercial along the major thoroughfares. The Highway 205 from I-30 to 740 is already beginning to be developed as a strip commercial. Further proliferation of strip commercials for individual establishments should be abolished through zoning amendments. Parking requirements should be specified for a whole center, and not for individual establishments. The typical function of local centers would include the following:

- .Small to medium-sized food markets
- .Service Stations
- .Fast service food stores
- .Drug stores/Barber shops
- .Medium Density Housing
- .Any other activity which would serve a trade area of 1,000 to 3,000 persons.

(iii) Ridge Road Office Park

Ridge Road is probably one of the oldest roads in Rockwall. Its alignment from Interstate 30 to South Goliad is visually attractive. A view of the lake from its entire length provides a psychological relief. Residential areas to the west of the road and along the shorelines are an asset to the community. Much of the land east of Ridge Road is undeveloped. A strip of land flanked by Ridge Road and the railroad track

should be used for either residential development or for an office park in a garden setting. Any other activity located in this area would be incompatible with the character of the whole area. Should land costs prohibit low rise residential development, then the area should be used for a low rise office complex designed to fit the present character of the area.

A unique advantage of this location as an office building would be the proximity of labor force in the residential neighborhood to the west from where the workers would be able to walk to this complex. It is a rare opportunity in a suburban community today.

(iv) Industrial Parks

All industrial development in Rockwall should be concentrated around the airport area served by the MK&T Railroad. A major thoroughfare is proposed through this park providing a direct access to and from north and south of Rockwall. The industrial parks can be easily served by the Interstate 30. When fully developed, this industrial complex will provide 2,500 jobs in the most basic sector of the local economy.

The reservation of sufficient land through industrial zoning at a suitable location will not represent a sufficient condition for industrial growth. Aggressive action will be needed to create industrial jobs by capitalizing on location and existing assets, and by addressing the city's development image and introducing the city to outsiders. The city, the business community, the Chamber of Commerce and other agencies should decide on the introduction of new programs, i.e., Industrial Response Teams to encourage presentations and advertisements and a "Sell Rockwall" Program. But to run these promotional campaigns would cost money. It is recommended that the City of Rockwall authorize the Chamber of Commerce to attract one or two motels to Rockwall, the advalorem proceeds from which would go to the Chamber to help defray advertisement and promotional costs.

It is also recommended that the City of Rockwall consider providing tax incentives to certain types of industrial activities so that they would find Rockwall an attractive place in which to locate industrial plants. The loss of a portion of ad valorem taxes as a result of providing incentives would be compensated many folds by the increase of advalorem taxes resulted indirectly due to industrial locations. In order to introduce such a tax incentive system, enabling legislation must be passed by the state. Rockwall should work with other cities and the Texas Municipal League to influence the passage of the required enabling legislation.

4. SCHOOLS, PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The general policies and goals for the provision of parks and open space, schools and other community facilities are included in pages 25 and 26 of the original report, which is on file in Rockwall City Hall.

a. Parks and Open Space

The Rockwall planning area is drained by two major watercourses -- the Squabbles Creek and the Buffalo Creek. These drainageways, together with their numerous tributaries, inundate a considerable amount of land. These lands together with underdeveloped areas in Lakeshore, are the major sources of open space in the city. The floodplain areas should be designated as open space and environmental corridors, permitting only limited urban development in these areas. These drainage/environmental corridors are shown in Plate 5 of this map. The possible locations of various parks, schools and water-based recreation areas are also indicated in this map. .

(i) Environmental Corridors/Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails

The drainageways of Squabble and Buffalo Creeks lend themselves to the creation of a system of environmental corridors and a companion system of pedestrian and bicycle trails. It is recommended that as lands are urbanized near the floodplain area, the city develop a system of mechanisms by which it can assure itself of the development of a pedestrian trails system on a private basis as much as possible. One of the best mechanisms to create the system is through the subdivision regulations.

The developers will be required to design their development taking into consideration the requirement of pedestrian trails. The basic mechanism can also be applied to create neighborhood and community parks either through land dedication or through a fee system basis. It is recommended that the subdivision regulations be amended as soon as possible, incorporating the requirements of open space and parks as well as the pedestrian and bicycle trails.

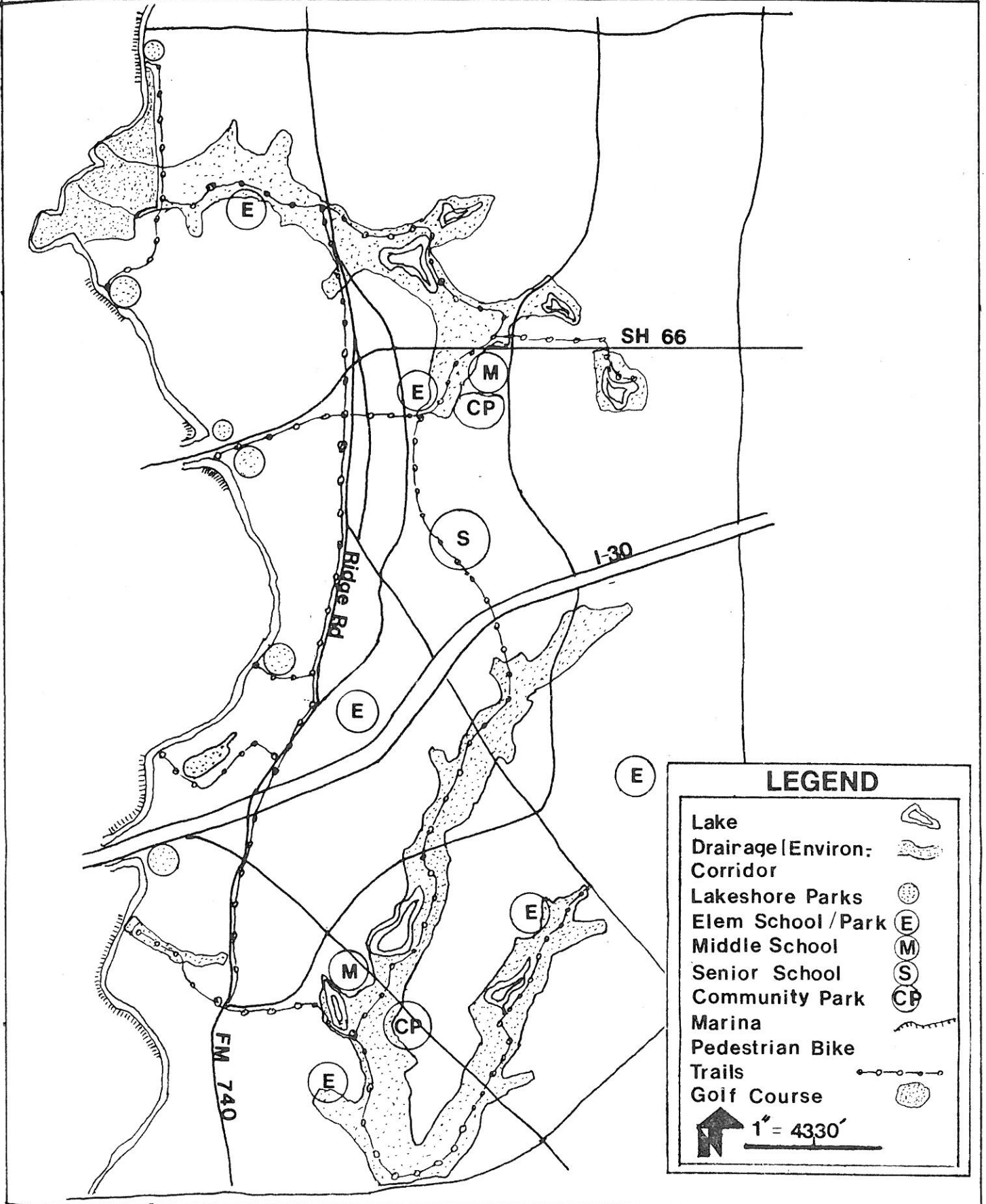
It is also recommended that a detailed park and open space plan be prepared within the open space framework shown in Plate 5. This detailed plan should identify the specific location of parks and schools and the alignment of the pedestrian trail and bicycle routes. Because the system will be implemented on an incremental basis as funds and resources become available, a detailed open space plan will be needed to establish priorities for different types of parks for various areas within the city.

The City of Rockwall where a majority of land is yet to be developed, has a great opportunity to create a system of open space that can at once meet the recreation and drainage/flood control needs. The purpose of protecting the natural environment can also be served at the same time.

As shown in Plate 5, pedestrian walkways should not be limited along the drainage greenbelt corridors. Opportunities exist to create a network of pedestrian system, some of which can be developed in areas outside the main corridors. For example a series of lateral links can be extended from the main corridor to connect the lake shore developments, downtown Rockwall and

Plate 5

Proposed Parks, School And Open Spaces For Rockwall



other activity centers such as schools, shopping centers, etc. In addition, a pedestrian/bicycle trail can be built along Ridge Road all the way from Chandlers Landing to Squabbles Creek north of downtown Rockwall. Some of these links can be privately developed, maintained and used. Others will be maintained by the city and be open to use by the public.

Although pedestrian and bicycle trails are traditionally used for recreation purposes, their impacts on urban transportation system should not be ignored. By absorbing a portion of short term trips, the pedestrian/bicycle system can serve a valuable purpose of energy conservation. Under the added emphasis placed by the national government on energy conservation, a variety of programs are available or would be shortly available to local governments to conserve energy from the fossil sources. The City of Rockwall should take advantage of these grant programs and utilize federal resources to build and maintain at least a part of the proposed pedestrian system.

(ii) Community and
Neighborhood Parks/Schools

Two community parks are proposed for Rockwall. One is in the north Rockwall in conjunction with the existing elementary school and middle school, and the other is in the south Rockwall also in conjunction with a proposed middle and elementary school in the vicinity of Rainbow Lake and FM 3097. The size of these community parks would be 30 to 50 acres. The recreation functions to be located in these community parks will include but not be limited to the following:

- .Tennis Courts
- .Swimming Pools
- .Baseball Diamonds
- .Soccer Fields
- .Play Areas
- .Picnic Areas
- .Bicycle Trails
- .Miniture Golf
- .Golf Practice Facilities
- .Other Facilities as needed for the community population

There are ample lands available in the flood plains areas for golf courses, camping areas, etc. A detailed design plan should be prepared to reflect the exact type of facilities to be accommodated in the community parks. Most of the land needed for parks can come from the City's flood control and drainage regulations but the improvement and subsequent maintenance must be the responsibility of the local government. The City and School District are recommended to work together and share the costs of improvement and maintenance of parks and open space on a joint basis.

A similar cooperative agreement would apply to the development of neighborhood parks and elementary schools. A total of 6 elementary schools and neighborhood parks are proposed for the population of 30,000 persons within the Rockwall Planning area. The generalized location of these schools/parks are shown on Plate 5. Three of the elementary schools are located north of Interstate 30 and the other three are to the south of this freeway. Each location will require a land area of 5 to 10 acres

depending on the population served. The recreational facilities located in each neighborhood park will include but not be limited to the following:

- .Tennis Courts
- .Baseball Diamonds
- .Play Area
- .Soccer Fields
- .Picnic Tables

(iii) Lakeshore Parks
and Marinas

At present, there are no public parks in the lakeshore area. With most of the lakeshore land already developed or in various stages of planning, opportunity to create public access to the lake and provision of public beaches and associated recreational activities, is rapidly running out. Both Chandlers Landing and Lakeside Village have developed marinas that are available to the public. But additional marinas will be needed to serve the increasing population, particularly the local population of Rockwall.

The Growth Management Plan proposes 4 additional marinas including a public boat launching ramp at the south of Highway 66. Five lakeshore parks are proposed, including one private park. The private park will be developed in conjunction with the North Shores and Saddlebrook projects. The others will be publicly developed with public access to these parks. These facilities will be designed primarily to serve people of Rockwall, and access to regional population should be limited. A detailed plan will delineate the exact size, location and type of recreation facility. For a generalized location of these facilities, see Plate 5 of this report.

(iv) Special Projects--Ridge Road
and Downtown Beautification

Downtown Rockwall has witnessed many ups and downs over the years and the problem of deterioration and increasing obsolescence persists to date. Yet, it provides a link between the past and present of Rockwall. In many ways it has a character of its own, providing an identity to Rockwall as a community. The square in downtown with its wide streets presents an opportunity to create a pedestrian plaza with the added advantage of increasing the market for the retail functions of the downtown area. The comprehensive plan recommends a special program to recapture its historic value to the fullest extent feasible.

A beautification program for downtown should be undertaken without delay since the shopping center currently under construction at S.H. 205 and Ridge Road may adversely affect the downtown area by causing outmigration of downtown retail stores. The downtown improvement program must be integrated with Ridge Road beautification which would now be possible as a result of developing a one-way road pair and eliminating parking from Goliad Street.

The alignment of Ridge Road offers a spectacular view of Lake Hubbard. Its scenic potential as a parkway is virtually unlimited. A special project

to create a boulevard from I-30 to South Goliad and a parkway from North Goliad to Ridge Road with extensive landscaping and tree planting, will be very beneficial to the downtown area.

A program to improve downtown and Ridge Road must be an integrated one. Even before the comprehensive plan was initiated, some citizens in Rockwall organized a Ridge Road Committee to identify ways and means of improving its aesthetic and scenic value. The combined program of downtown-Ridge Road beautification should utilize the Ridge Road Committee and downtown merchants as the core of citizen support.

(v) Community Gardens/Miniparks

Ample opportunities exist in all parts of Rockwall to develop a system of community gardens and neighborhood miniparks for people of all ages and income brackets. The community gardening is an activity that can serve as a source of not only recreation and hobby, but it can also aid the family budget for many families and households. While the adults are engaged in gardening, the children can play in tot-lots adjacent to these gardens. Community gardening is a popular activity in many parts of the country. It can easily succeed in Rockwall. Lands can be utilized not only in the outlying areas, but also in the built-up areas where vacant lots are available.

It is recommended that the civic organizations in Rockwall, develop a community gardening program. The program can begin immediately, since it will require very little fund and can be done on a private basis.

5. WATER AND SEWER FACILITIES

Water and sewers are urgently needed community facilities in Rockwall today. At present, the City of Rockwall obtains its water supply from the North Texas Municipal Water District. There is plenty of water available to serve Rockwall's future growth through the next 20 years. But the city has a distribution problem which is characterized by an inadequate overhead storage facility and inadequate distribution lines in some parts of the city. The problem becomes serious during the summer when the water consumption is high. A lack of adequate capacity can cause a serious problem to fight fires, thus presenting a potential public safety problem.

The sewer lines are old and inadequate in the older sections of the town. The wastewater treatment plant is now overloaded and is producing an effluent quality which is violating the EPA's point-source discharge standard. Unless these water and sewer problems are corrected in the immediate future, the people of Rockwall will be confronted with a problem of major significance and they will be unable to permit any new growth in the city. This problem demands immediate attention and the development of a capital improvement program with special emphasis on water and sewer, is a vital task that can be delayed only at the risk of public health problems. It is strongly recommended that these problems be corrected as soon as possible.