

Flower Mound may mix it up

Proposed changes in master plan seen as major shift for town

12:00 AM CST on Saturday, December 2, 2006

By JAY PARSONS / The Dallas Morning News

Southlake's Town Center has spurred many imitators, and now the town of Flower Mound may jump into the mixed-use development craze.

Proposed changes to the town's master plan would pave the way for two mixed-use communities – including office, retail and residential space – on the southeast and northwest corners of town.

Flower Mound relies on its master plan more than most cities, and mixed use would be a major shift for a town that has long distanced itself from high-density developments. Allowing mixed-use is the biggest of proposed changes to the 2001 master plan.

"The caveat to that is the committee recommended that it be done very, very well and very high quality," like Southlake's model, said Dennis McKaige, one of the nine members on the steering committee that reviewed the master plan and proposed the changes.

The Town Council will take public comments on the proposed changes at its Monday meeting. Town leaders said the changes are minor, but they expect some opposition.

"I don't think there's a big sea change," said Doug Powell, the town's executive director for development and planning. "We're tweaking it a little bit."

A vote will probably follow the public hearing. Any changes to the master plan require approval by five of six council members.

The changes wouldn't lead to immediate construction, but they would encourage developers to propose mixed-use projects at the Lakeside Business District off FM2499 in southeast Flower Mound and the undeveloped Denton Creek area near Interstate 35W.

Lakeside, in the early stages of development, is home to office buildings and distribution warehouses. The committee's proposal narrowly defines acceptable mixed use in

Lakeside, calling for a village concept with no conventional apartments, big box stores or buildings taller than four stories.

Another of the committee's goals is to beautify the town's main entrances with large decorative signage, stonework and flowers.

"We're very inconsistent with our entrances," Mr. McKaige said. "Let's make all our entrances exemplary and uniform-looking so you know you're coming into a special place."

Most of the other proposals would ease some restrictions on development throughout Flower Mound. Town leaders have tried in recent years to shed its anti-developer image.

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