

Town Center Plans Unveiled

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Editor's Note: This is the first of a two part story.

Flower Mound Council members and Planning and Zoning Commissioners were awed by new development plans for 158 acres of land bounded by Long Prairie Road on the west, Cross Timbers on the south, and Morriss Road on the east.

Parker Square's developer Cole McDowell unveiled plans for a "down-town" Flower Mound that will be anchored in the center by a 3,200 feet-long river walk, a hospital, 40 acres of parks and an Italian-influenced open plaza.

"I am looking to build architecture to stand for 100 and 200 years," Cole McDowell said. "This project is being driven by creating a great place...fifty or a hundred years from now it still needs to feel like a great place."

Such urban development features as tree-lined sidewalks, outside dining areas, civic and cultural use areas, trails and smaller walkable areas, plus windowed restaurants, retail shopping areas and office buildings are prominent.

McDowell announced that a contract had just been received from a hospital. He also mentioned that there will be an upscale grocery store, as well as two hotels.

The additional main component of the development will be five different types of residential architecture mainly located along Morriss Road.

"The problem with Parker Square is that there's no 24-hour movement," said McDowell during the presentation. "Parker Square is a neighborhood center; not a town center."

McDowell explained that the residential mix would include condominiums, two- to three-story town houses or duplexes, unassisted senior living, and some multi-family along Morris Road. The 2,000 to 5,000 square foot condominiums will be in a 10-story building located at the center of the development overlooking the river walk and open area.

"The residential is a key component because it brings life," McDowell said. "I have lived here since 1997 and some of us want to stay here, but get tired of mowing a one acre lot and don't want to be strapped to that."

McDowell could not say with certainty how many residential units the development would include, but mentioned that it will be at least 1,800 units, which is the minimum amount to ensure sustainability of the development.

"The development proposed offers residential that is tied into a general use of living area where it gives a sense of community," Mayor Jody Smith said in a phone interview. "Now it is a destination for all of us to go."

"I am very positive on this development," Planning Commissioner Dennis McKaige said. "It is long overdue for Flower Mound. We will finally have a central down town area that will rival the most attractive areas in Dallas... It brings a lot of things that we needed in Flower Mound. The hospital is a big home run." Dividing the development is the 3,200 foot river walk running north-and-south that will cover between 15 to 18 acres. Two of the three existing ponds will be covered over, and the pond behind the Forum subdivision will be lengthened.

The development includes more than 40 acres of parks and public areas. McDowell said that some land behind the main central fire station and the town's post office has been set aside for possible municipal use or town amenities.

"I see this as a gathering place for Flower Mound, which is something we have never had," councilman Tim Trotter said. "...It is a fully self-contained center. Now we can definitely say we are a self-sufficient town."

Public Invitation

McDowell said he would like Flower Mound residents to help him name the proposed development. The lucky resident with the winning name will receive a \$200 certificate to Capriccio Ristorante in Parker Square for dinner, he said.

Ideas can be emailed to forums@parkersquare.com by Dec. 1.