

ORDINANCE NO. 4097

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MESQUITE, TEXAS, AMENDING THE MESQUITE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BY DELETING THE MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATION IN PART III AND ADDING A NEW URBAN MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATION IN PART III, ESTABLISHING POLICIES FOR THE DESIGN AND LOCATION OF URBAN MULTIFAMILY DEVELOPMENT IN HIGH INTENSITY DEVELOPMENT AREAS, AND MODIFYING THE REGIONAL RETAIL AND BUSINESS CORRIDOR MAPS TO DESIGNATE CERTAIN AREAS AS APPROPRIATE FOR URBAN MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, the demand for multifamily housing is expected to increase in the City of Mesquite fueled by households that are not financially able to afford a home and by demographic groups that prefer to reside in denser living environments in close proximity to employment centers, transit and walkable retail districts; and

WHEREAS, multifamily housing with distinctive urban characteristics is an appropriate use for infill development on vacant and underdeveloped parcels in and around the City's commercial corridors and at the edges of existing single-family residential neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the long-term market viability of urban multifamily housing and its compatibility with other areas depends upon whether it is designed internally to give residents their own sense of place, how well it blends into and complements the surrounding neighborhood, the extent of support it provides for walk-to retail within its pedestrian shed, and the strength of the connections it makes to those areas; and

WHEREAS, following publication and public hearings as required by law, the Planning and Zoning Commission has examined the need to improve policies governing the design and location of multifamily development in high intensity areas so that such development helps build sustainable communities and is recommending that the City Council modify development policies for those areas accordingly; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Local Government Code, Section 211.004, provides that local zoning regulations must be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive plan, and it is deemed prudent to amend the Mesquite Comprehensive Plan concurrently with the application of new standards for the design and location of urban multifamily residential development to strongly support and validate the full intent of such standards.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MESQUITE, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. That the *Mesquite Comprehensive Plan*, last updated on March 2, 2009, be and the same is hereby amended by deleting in its entirety the Multifamily Residential

designation in Part III and adding a new Urban Multifamily Residential designation to Part III, attached hereto as Exhibit "A," pertaining to policies on the design and location of multifamily residential development when appropriate within the City's high intensity development areas.

SECTION 2. And further, that the *Mesquite Comprehensive Plan* is hereby amended by adopting revisions to the "Regional Retail and Entertainment Corridor," the "Central Mesquite" and the "Business Corridors" maps in Part III, attached hereto collectively as Exhibit "B," for the purpose of designating certain areas as appropriate for the development of multifamily residential with the heightened urban design standards and requirements of the Mesquite Zoning Ordinance.

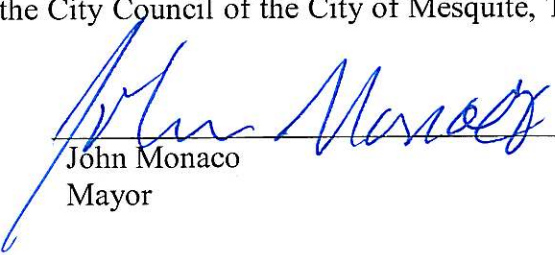
SECTION 3. And further, that the Director of Community Development shall research whether the policies of the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to the Medium Density Neighborhood designation within the City's low density community areas in Part IV should be modified to improve design standards for multifamily development in such areas and report his recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission for additional action.

SECTION 4. That all ordinances, or portions thereof, of the City of Mesquite in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance, to the extent of such conflict are hereby repealed. To the extent that such ordinances or portions thereof not in conflict herewith, the same shall remain in full force and effect.


SECTION 5. That should any word, sentence, clause, paragraph or provision of this ordinance be held to be invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions of this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 6. That the present ordinances of the City of Mesquite are inadequate to provide for the proper protection of the public interest, comfort and general welfare of the City of Mesquite, creates an urgency and emergency for the preservation of the public health, safety and welfare, and requires that this ordinance shall take effect immediately from and after its passage and publication of said ordinance, as the law in such cases provides.

DULY PASSED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Mesquite, Texas, on the 7th day of June, 2010.

  
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John Monaco  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sonja Land  
City Secretary

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
B. J. Smith  
City Attorney



## URBAN MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL

The Urban Multifamily Residential designation concentrates multifamily housing in the *Development Areas* where it most directly supports the integration of housing choice with other uses through improved urban design. While multifamily development is essential to building new compact communities in greenfield locations, well-designed multifamily development is just as appropriate for urban infill when it energizes older neighborhoods and adjacent commercial areas.

- *Appropriate for greenfield locations, urban infill, within future transit corridors, and the regional retail and entertainment and business corridors*
- *Integration into a neighborhood context with attention to activating the public realm*
- *Locations to support walk-to retail*

### *Historical Issues with Multifamily Residential Development*

Multi-family development in Mesquite has consisted of sprawling apartment complexes with security fences and walls, an over abundance of surface parking, multiple three-story buildings laid out in a low density “train wreck” pattern, and an over-dependence on vehicular circulation. Development standards intended to ensure high quality apartments have instead served to disconnect complexes from the surrounding neighborhood and prevented residents from interacting with the public realm.

### *The Future Context*

The location and applicability of multifamily housing should be based primarily on the opportunity to integrate the development into a neighborhood and the strength of its contribution to an active public realm. Future projects should provide an increasing multi-generational population with a variety of housing choices, allowing residents within the City to move to different housing types without sacrificing quality or being cutoff from the social benefits of a neighborhood. Location and design standards for multifamily developments should build on the following characteristics with the aim of creating well-connected whole communities.

### *Form-Based Design*

- Use form-based design principles for multifamily housing in greenfield and infill settings
- Integrate desired urban intensity, building disposition, thoroughfare design and connectivity, civic space design, pedestrian access, parking, vehicle access and services into multifamily standards

### *Mix of Uses*

- Integrate high-density residential with walk-to retail and office environments to provide market support and “neighborhood completeness”
- Provide a range of housing opportunities in type, size and affordability
- Where mixing of uses within a development is not feasible, strong connectivity to other nearby uses should be provided

### *Pedestrian-Oriented*

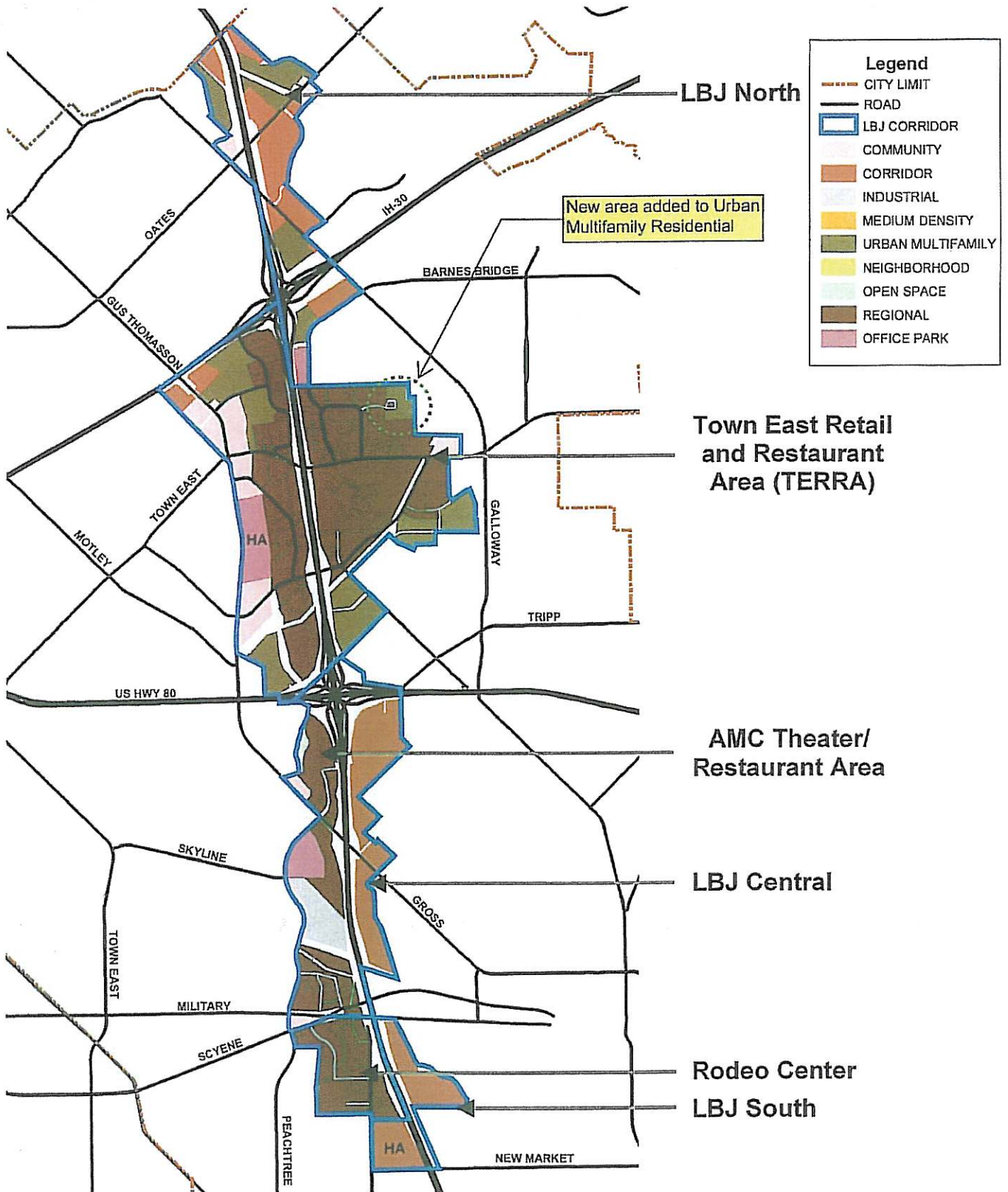
- Embrace “Complete Streets” principles to design internal and boundary safe streets for all users, streets that contribute to and define the neighborhood, and streets that fully support the activities generated by the adjacent land uses
- Multifamily development should include pedestrian-scaled design on the boundary that blurs the edges with, and is complementary to, the surrounding neighborhood

### *Public Realm*

- Activate both the internal and external public realm through extensive use of building enclosure, landscaping, sidewalks, street entrances and usable civic spaces
- Create spaces that serve a purpose to the residents of the area

High Intensity  
DEVELOPMENT AREAS

REGIONAL RETAIL AND ENTERTAINMENT CORRIDOR



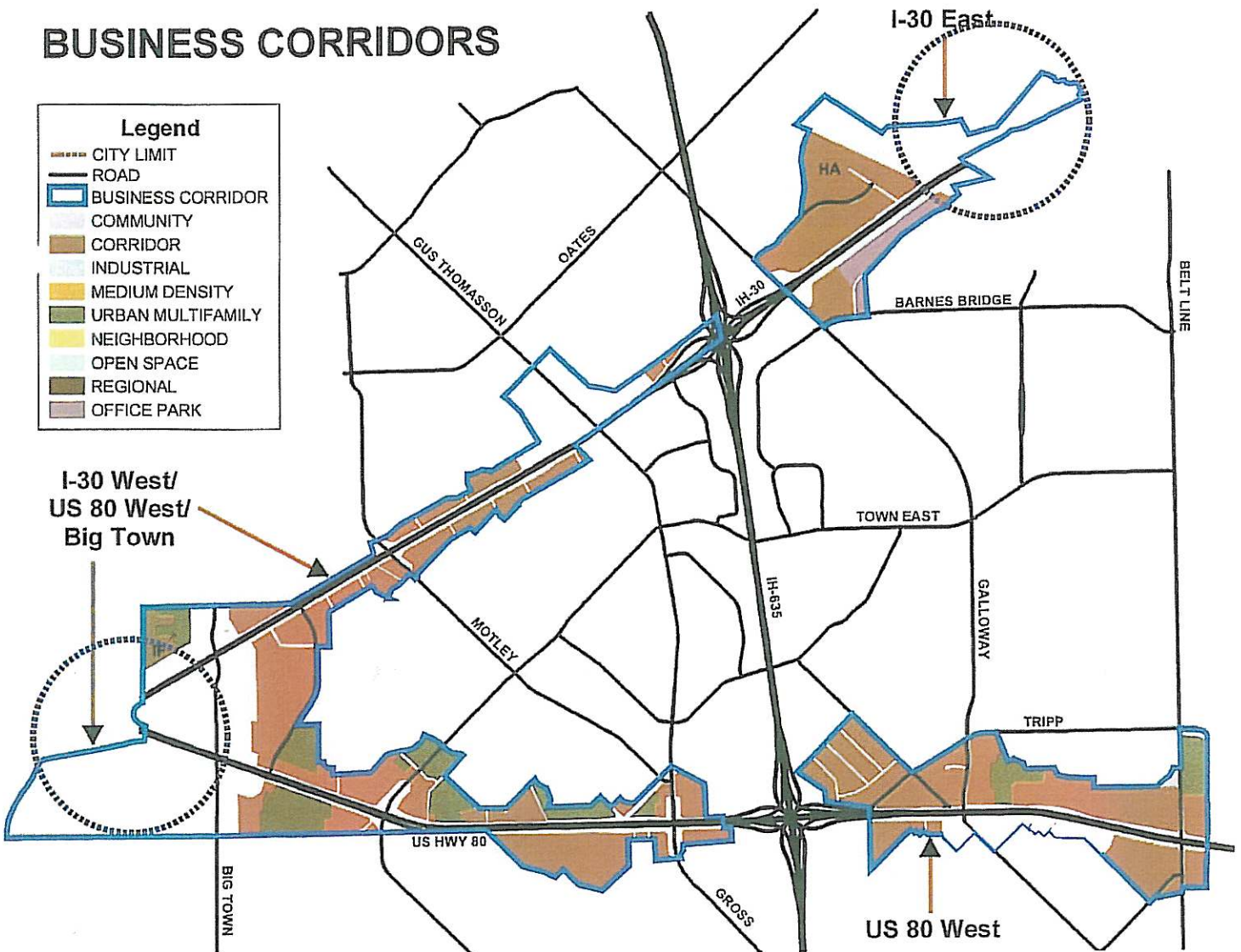


**High Intensity  
DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

**Morningside Drive (28 Acres)**

The vacant land between I-30 and Morningside Drive is across a collector street from single family homes. The tract is narrow and has some topographical and drainage issues which complicate development. This tract is designated Office Park with the intent of limiting the type of uses which are accommodated. Although current zoning is under a Planned Development district, the range of permitted uses is quite broad. An overall site plan was approved for development of the entire tract in the 1980's, and the major elements of this layout should be applied as development occurs. With this site plan approval, the number of drives along Morningside was limited, an internal two-way street was required along I-30 and a consistent screening wall design was required, all to minimize the impacts on the neighborhood. The site plan also proposed that the entire section between the Lowe's site and the Jack-in-the Box be limited to garden office uses which were deemed to be most compatible with the residences.

**BUSINESS CORRIDORS**



CENTRAL MESQUITE

**Legend**

- CITY LIMIT
- ROAD
- CENTRAL MESQUITE
- COMMUNITY
- CORRIDOR
- INDUSTRIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY
- URBAN MULTIFAMILY
- NEIGHBORHOOD
- OPEN SPACE
- REGIONAL
- OFFICE PARK

