Memorandum

DATE September 18, 2009

TO Trinity River Committee Members:
  David Neumann (Chair)  Vonciel Jones Hill
  Steve Salazar (Vice-Chair)  Delia Jasso
  Mayor Pro Tem Dwaine Caraway  Linda Koop
  Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Pauline Medrano  Carolyn R. Davis

SUBJECT Urban Design in the Trinity River Corridor

On September 22, 2009, staff will brief the Trinity River Corridor Project Committee to provide an overview of a recent planning session with Larry Beasley, entitled “West Dallas: A Time to Dream.” The Committee will also be briefed on the creation of an Urban Design Studio at City Hall made possible by a generous private donation through the Trinity Trust Foundation. A copy of the presentation is attached for your information. Copies of support letters for the creation of the Dallas Urban Design Studio are also attached for your information.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Jill A. Jordán, P.E.
Assistant City Manager

THE TRINITY
DALLAS

Attachments

c: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
  Mary K. Suhm, City Manager
  Ryan S. Evans, First Assistant City Manager
  A. C. Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager
  Forest E. Turner, Assistant City Manager
  David K. Cook, Chief Financial Officer
  Deborah A. Watkins, City Secretary
  Thomas P. Perkins, Jr., City Attorney
  Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor
  Judge C. Victor Lander
  Helena Stevens-Thompson, Asst. to the City Manager
  Frank Librio, Director, Public Information Office

"Dallas, the City that works: diverse, vibrant, and progressive"
Urban Design in the Trinity River Corridor

Trinity River Corridor Project Committee
September 22, 2009
Purpose

- Provide an overview of the “West Dallas: A Time to Dream” planning session with Larry Beasley
- Identify next steps for the area of West Dallas that was studied
- Announce the creation of the Dallas Urban Design Studio, made possible by a generous private donation through the Trinity Trust Foundation
Part of a weekend of meetings with Larry Beasley focused on Urban Design in a 21st Century Dallas

The West Dallas event was intended to:

- Foster a community dialogue about the dreams and potential of West Dallas
- Generate possible development objectives
West Dallas: A Time to Dream

• Why West Dallas?
  • Construction of the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge
  • Large land holdings by a single investor
  • A number of completed or planned redevelopment initiatives
  • An existing community to preserve and enhance
West Dallas: A Time to Dream

- Dreaming Session
  - Invited a cross section of community stakeholders
- Took part in a day-long discussion
  - What if…?
  - But I worry about?
West Dallas: A Time to Dream

• Themes were developed from their discussions
  • Incremental Community
  • Unique Community
  • Living Community
  • Sustainable Community
  • Learning Community
  • Accessible Community
  • Destination Community
West Dallas: A Time to Dream

- Each theme was discussed in more detail to develop further ideas and objectives, i.e.
  - Near-term initiatives
    - Temporary place-making ideas
    - Creation of an artists’ community
  - Long-term
    - Reserve key sites for higher density development in the future
West Dallas: A Time to Dream

- The Saturday planning session was just the beginning
- Additional input from continued community meetings to ensure that all aspects are heard
  - Small group meetings
  - Bataan Community Center
- Analyze the array of ideas and layout a work plan for the investor to identify long range planning focus, short-term projects and incremental uses to activate the area
- Work with other smaller redevelopment efforts in the study area
Dallas Urban Design Studio

- A very generous private donation has been made through the Trinity Trust Foundation for the purposes of establishing an Urban Design Studio in partnership with the City of Dallas.
- “West Dallas: A Time to Dream” was a ‘beta’ test for the type of services an Urban Design Studio could provide.
- Function of the Urban Design Studio
  - Advise
  - Plan
  - Consult
- The intended result is an increased awareness of the importance of design in building a world-class 21st Century city.
Dallas Urban Design Studio

- Will be located at City Hall, blending the Dallas design community with the City
  - Urban Design Special Advisor
  - Studio Director
  - 3 new City staff positions funded by the donation
    - 2 design professionals
    - 1 coordinator
- Five-year grant
  - FY 2009-2010 funded entirely by the grant, with a condition of an increased City commitment each year
  - Full funding from the City in FY 2014-2015
Dallas Urban Design Studio

• September 23 Addendum Item
  • Allows the City Manager to enter into an agreement for the creation and operation of the Dallas Urban Design Studio
  • Allows the City to accept the grant, not to exceed $2 million
  • Appropriates the first year’s funding (not to exceed $550,000) for the establishment and operation of the Dallas Urban Design Studio

• Professional services contracts to be scheduled on a future Council agenda to acquire services for the Urban Design Special Advisor and Studio Director
Ms. Mary Suhm  
City Manager  
City of Dallas  
1500 Marilla Street, Room 4EN  
Dallas, TX 75201  

Re: Dallas Urban Design Center  

Dear Ms. Suhm,  

Thank you for including The Real Estate Council (TREC) in the community design charrette for west Dallas this August, facilitated so ably by Larry Beasley. The Trinity River initiative will contribute greatly to breathing new life and economic development in west Dallas.  

We believe that Dallas is very fortunate to have secured Mr. Beasley as advisor to the new Urban Design Center for Dallas. Congratulations on your collaboration between The Trinity Trust and the City of Dallas to advocate for and facilitate excellent urban design in Dallas.  

The Real Estate Council and TREC Foundation are committed to building a world class city through our philanthropic outreach in urban neighborhoods and through thoughtful and effective public policy. We support public/private partnerships as a vital resource to building a great community.  

Please accept this letter as support for the new Dallas Urban Design Center. We look forward to being your partner in this effort to develop a more sustainable City.  

Sincerely,  

Michelle Corson  
President  
The Real Estate Council  

cc: Gail Thomas, The Trinity Trust
September 14, 2009

City of Dallas
C/o Ms. Mary Suhm
City Manager
1500 Marilla Street, Room 4EN
Dallas, TX 75201

Re: Dallas Urban Design Center

Ms. Suhm,

As President of AIA Dallas, a registered architect, and President of t. howard + associates architects, I am pleased to write this letter in support of creating the Dallas Urban Design Center as part of the CITY OF DALLAS.

The idea of inventing a design center to advocate and assist in the design and development of our city has already proven to be a vital collaboration. The efforts to date have already brought together leaders from the development community, local architecture firms, community members and many departments throughout City Hall.

Please accept this letter as support for the new Dallas Urban Design Center and your partnership with the Trinity Trust to make it a reality. I am certain that the capacity and intention of this type of Center will only strengthen the vision of a more sustainable Dallas.

Sincerely,

Todd Howard, AIA, LEED AP
President