



LAKE | FLATO



Panther Island Preliminary Findings

Existing Conditions & Strategic Implications

August 2023

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An aerial photograph of a city landscape. In the foreground, a wide river flows from the bottom left towards the center. To the right of the river, a large, rectangular stadium is under construction, with its concrete structure visible. The surrounding area includes green grass, some trees, and various buildings. In the background, a city skyline with several tall skyscrapers is visible under a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

| 01

Introduction

THE PANTHER ISLAND OPPORTUNITY

Panther Island is a once-in-a-generation city-building opportunity for Fort Worth to amplify the energy of its urban core and surrounding neighborhoods.

A CRITICAL LINK

The area of Panther Island today consists of over 500 acres of public and private land in the city's core, offering abundant untapped opportunities to create meaningful **physical and community connections** between some of Fort Worth's most vibrant neighborhoods.

A CATALYST FOR INVESTMENT

\$1.1B in public investment for the Central City Flood Control Project for flood protection and environmental remediation will support the creation of more than 5 miles of resilient shoreline and help unlock over 200 acres of land for development, public space, and amenities.

NEW GROUND FOR A GROWING CITY

Fort Worth is growing rapidly, with population surging 24% between 2010 and 2020, and is now the fastest growing large city in the U.S. Panther Island is crucial to the region's economic development. The scale and location can help capture and fuel long-term residential and employment growth.

THE PANTHER ISLAND OPPORTUNITY

The Central City Flood Control Project will protect vital Fort Worth neighborhoods and position Panther Island as a core economic development opportunity.



Data Source: ESRI Business Analyst



PROJECT HISTORY

The Flood Control and Panther Island projects have a long history. Federal funding and completion of new bridges in recent years have accelerated progress.

CENTRAL CITY FLOOD PROJECT TIMELINE



1949

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) began building a flood protection system

1971

Developed the Halprin Plan to provide low-level dams and improve public areas

2002

The Trinity River Master Plan Completed

2008

TRWD and the City added Gateway Park to the project

2021

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) opened all three Panther Island Signature V-Pier Bridges

2022

The Central City Flood Project received \$403M from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

PANTHER ISLAND PROJECT TIMELINE



2004

Trinity Uptown Plan for Panther Island adopted by City Council

Source: TRWD

2006

Trinity River Vision Authority (TRVA) created to coordinate and manage efforts between the project stakeholders

2006, 2010, 2016

Panther Island Form Based Zoning District published

2018

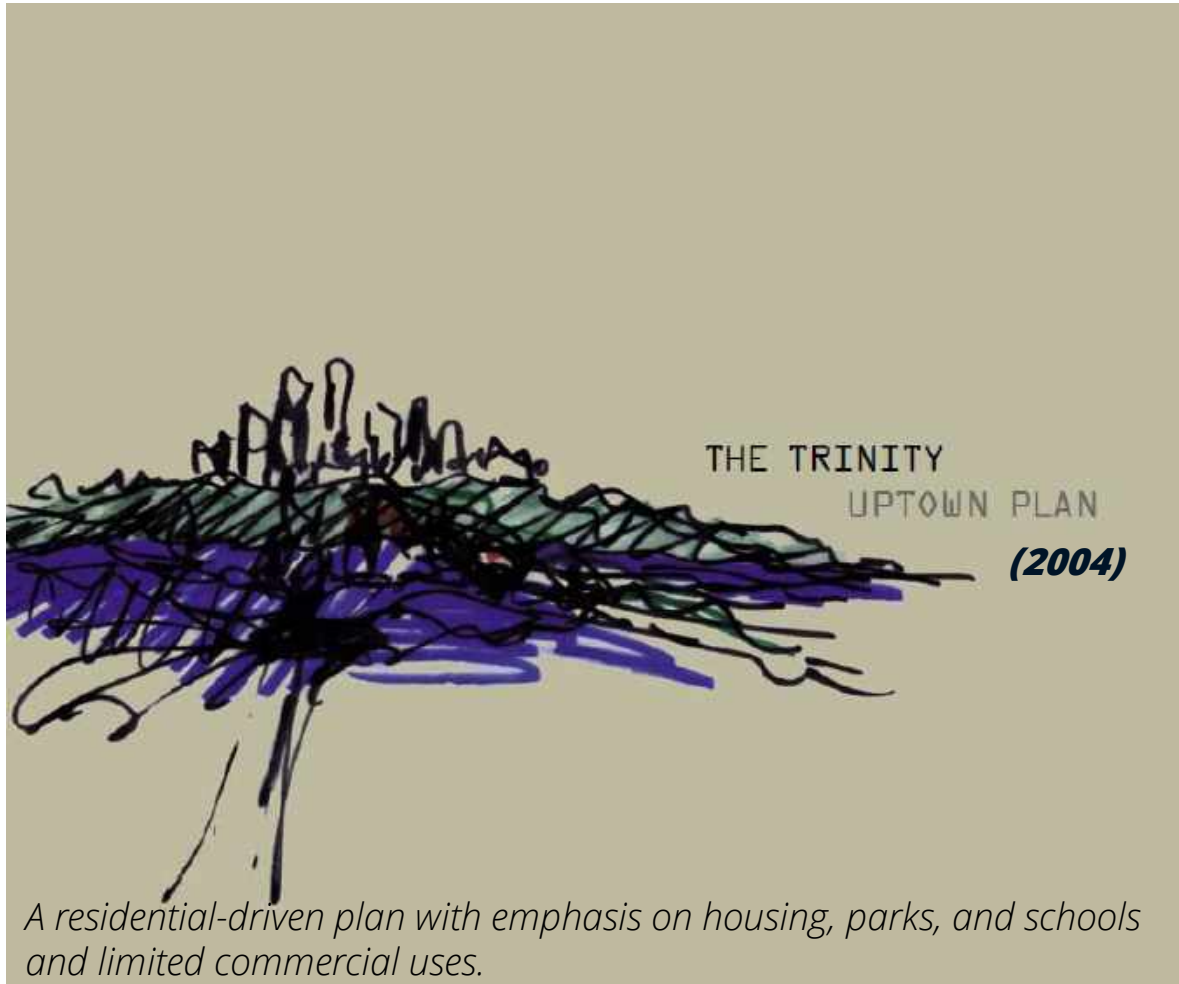
Confluence plan by Streams & Valleys with recommendations to enhance the Trinity River and its tributaries

2018

The first major residential development on Panther Island (Encore) is completed alongside the installation of the first canal section

HISTORY & OPPORTUNITY

Since the Trinity Uptown Plan was adopted by the City in 2004, the development and community landscape has changed, and Fort Worth's population and economy has boomed.



Fort Worth could be home to 1 million people by 2028. How will growth change the city?

Welcome to Cowtown: Fort Worth adds more residents than any other city in US, Census data shows

Move Over, Austin: Fort Worth Is the New Texas Boomtown



+155%
Population



+13M SF
New development



+181%
Employment

since 2004

HISTORY & OPPORTUNITY

An unprecedented partnership of public and nonprofit entities have engaged a multidisciplinary consulting team to update the vision and strategy for Panther Island.

PUBLIC SECTOR & CIVIC PARTNERSHIP



CONSULTANT TEAM



*Project Management
Real Estate Analysis & Strategy
Funding & Governance Strategy*



Planning and Urban Design



Community Engagement



Civil Engineering

VISION & STRATEGY UPDATE

Over the course of 2023, the consultant team will distill a renewed community-led vision and strategy for Panther Island, which will equip public sector leadership with the tools to advance planning and development based on current community, economic, and market conditions.

UPDATED STRATEGIC VISION

- District identity
- Design and planning recommendations:
 - Open space and public realm approach
 - Land use and density framework
 - Mobility, transportation, and parking considerations

REAL ESTATE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- Economic development positioning
- Public land redevelopment strategy
- Development phasing and catalyst sites
- Case studies

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

- Infrastructure funding and financing considerations
- Governance and public-private partnership recommendations
- Action plan, roles, and responsibilities for implementation

PROGRESS UPDATE – PLAN REVIEW

The team reviewed documents and past plans to understand the history of the project and its economic, land use, design, and social contexts.

DOCUMENTS AND PLANS REVIEWED

- 2017 City of Fort Worth Economic Development Strategic Plan
- 2022 City of Fort Worth Economic Development Strategic Plan
- 2022 City of Fort Worth Comprehensive Plan
- 2022 Transportation Impact Fee Study
- 2023 City of Fort Worth Comprehensive Plan Update
- Adopted Master Thoroughfare Plan 2020
- Canal Design Standards and Guidelines
- Confluence : The Trinity River Strategic Master Plan
- Leonard Street Car Study
- Northside Economic Development Strategy
- Panther Island Proposed Text Amendments 5-6-22 by staff
- Panther Island Zoning Standards & Guidelines
- Project and Financing Plan Update City of Fort Worth Trinity River Vision TIF Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone #9
- Property Potential After Completion of Construction
- Riveron Trinity River Vision Central City Flood Control Project Programmatic Review Final Report
- The Trinity Uptown Plan
- Trinity Uptown Traffic Impact Study Draft



PROGRESS UPDATE – ENGAGEMENT

The consultant team began to engage stakeholders to shape the direction of the Updated Strategic Vision and the Real Estate and Economic Development Strategy, which will continue across future phases of the project.

PHASE I ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES:

- Create awareness of the planning process
- Educate participants on past plans and the current state of the project
- Gain insight into stakeholders' core aspirations and goals for the future of Panther Island
- Identify catalytic project opportunities, challenges, needs, and concerns



Note: Above shows select stakeholders engaged

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

This document summarizes early findings and the four core themes for the Panther Island vision and strategy emerging from engagement, document review, and early analysis.



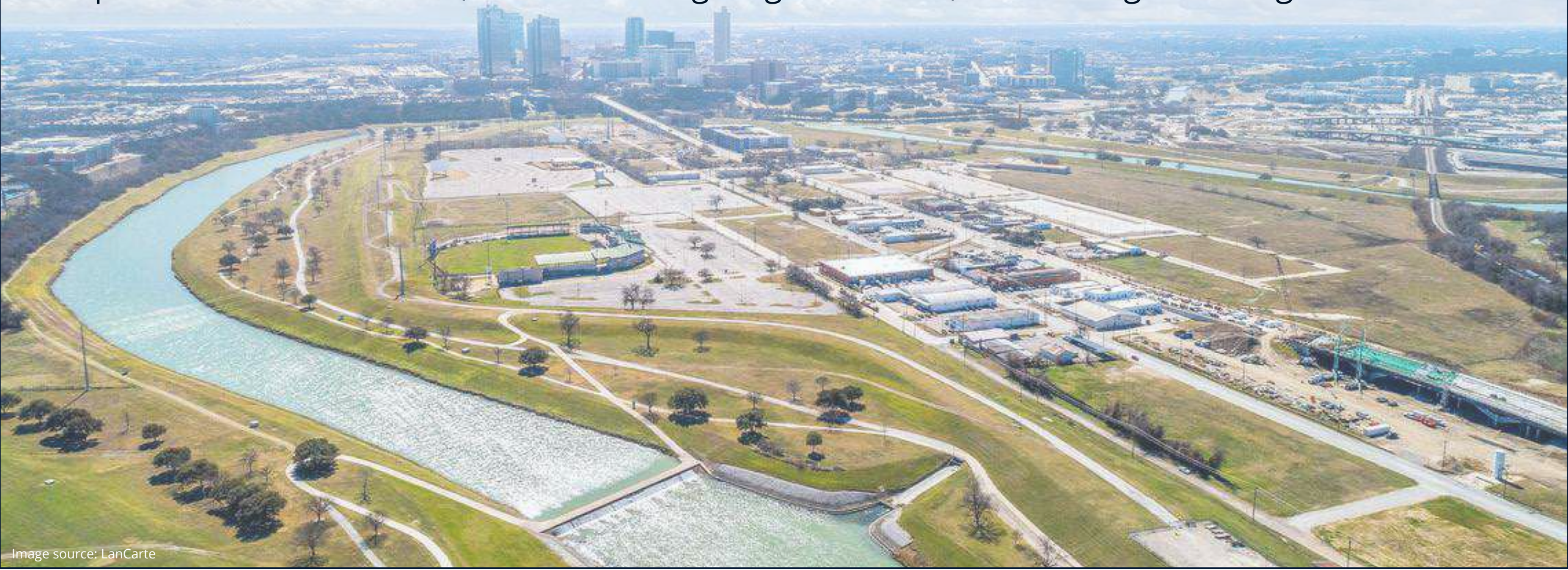
An aerial photograph of a city landscape. In the foreground, a wide river flows from the left towards the center. To the right of the river, a large stadium is under construction, with its seating bowl visible. The stadium is surrounded by parking lots and some smaller buildings. In the background, a city skyline with several tall skyscrapers is visible under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. A semi-transparent dark blue banner is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text '02' and 'Vision & Identity'.

02

Vision & Identity

INITIAL TAKEAWAYS | VISION & IDENTITY

Fort Worth is a city of strong neighborhoods that have distinct identities grounded in history, geography, community, and economy. Today, Panther Island's identity is intertwined with its industrial history and the long-coming realization of flood control plans. A renewed Strategic Vision can inject a new community with economic development-driven focus and identity that positions Panther Island, its surrounding neighborhoods, and the region at large for success.



VISION

The current momentum around Panther Island builds upon a reinvigorated vision for a transformed mixed-use district of regional importance.

Early plans for Panther Island prioritized residential density and select nodes of more intense commercial development. However, recent engagement reveals shared desire for:

Establishing a **mixed-use district** that serves as a strategic hub for attracting talent and companies to Fort Worth.

Creating a vibrant **entertainment hub** with diverse activities and ample opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Promoting **synergy between Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods**, while avoiding direct competition and minimizing redundancy of purpose and development typology.

Ensuring **seamless accessibility** to the neighboring areas by embracing both sides of the river and facilitating pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, and transit connections.

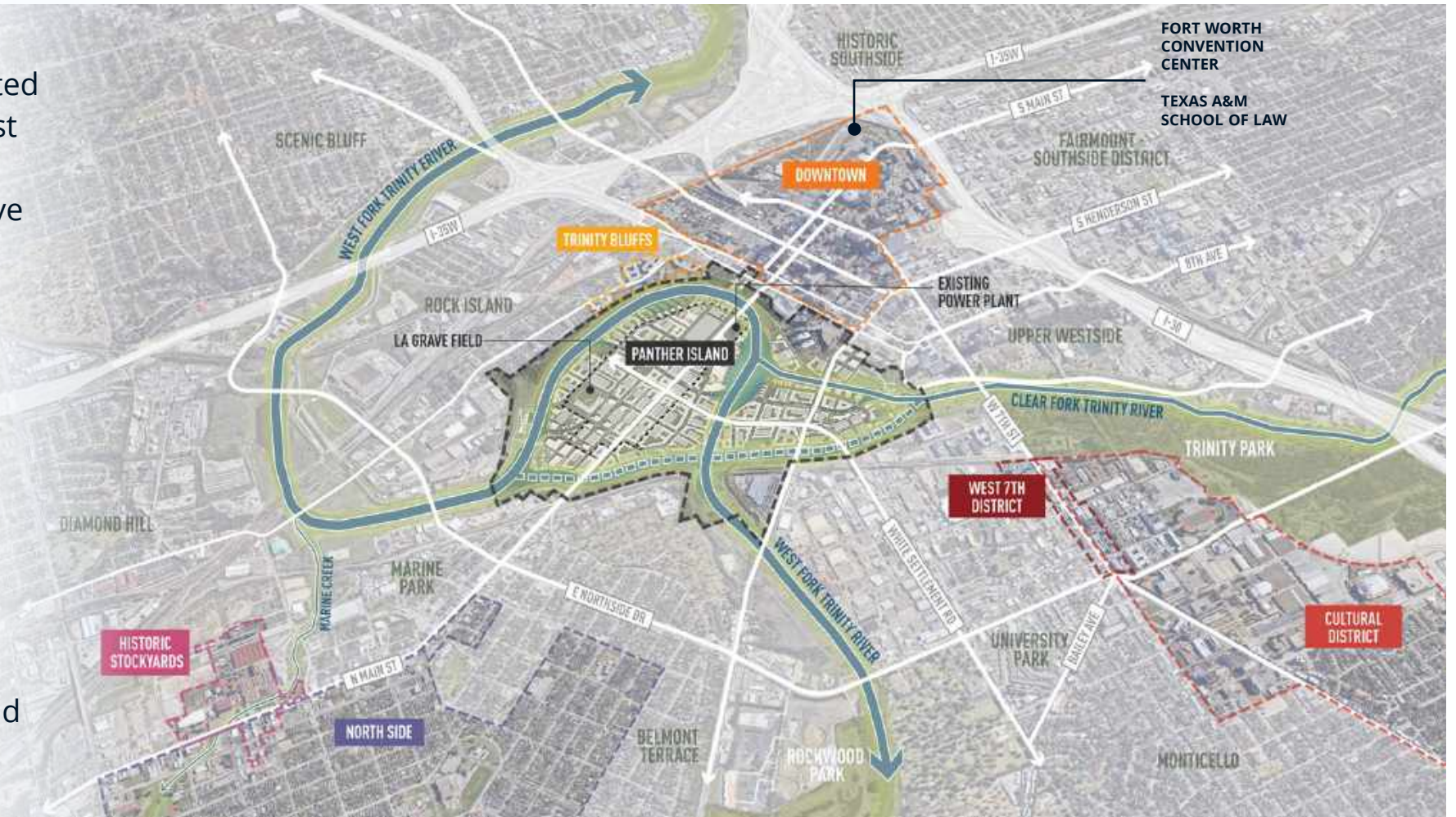


The 2004 Trinity Uptown Plan proposed the potential to develop over 10,000 households and an additional 3,000,000 SF of commercial, educational, office, and civic spaces. The plan also considered parks, schools, transportation improvements, environmental restoration, water quality management and other civic amenities. The Trinity Uptown Plan includes over 12 miles of public waterfront and associated trail systems.

IDENTITY

Panther Island needs an identity complementary and connected to the fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods and the entire city, but distinct and recognizable.

Panther Island is centrally located amid some of Fort Worth's most identifiable neighborhoods. These neighborhoods each have distinct identities grounded in their own history and culture. Downtown, the Stockyards, the Northside, and the Cultural District each bring something unique to the city and region. Panther Island should similarly achieve the same, while also elevating its surrounding neighborhoods' positioning to support prosperous neighborhoods, businesses, and tourism.



NOTABLE SITES

Once a prominent industrial area, Panther Island included meatpacking and oil and gas uses that provided employment to city and Northside residents. This history can be embraced in its renewed vision, while creating something new and distinct.



COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Fort Worth has experienced major growth over the last decade. Commercial development on Panther Island can help create and attract the sources of this continued growth.

+7.5M SF

Office development
(2013 – 2023)

113K

Projected Employment Growth
(2026)

As indicated in the map of building footprints, much of Panther Island today is unutilized.



The City's 2022 Economic Development Strategic Plan recommends Fort Worth establish its competitive edge by attracting new businesses and prioritizing investments in human capital to attract, retain, and nurture a diverse pool of creative talent. **The plan highlights Panther Island as a prime opportunity for office and mixed-use development, positioning it as a premier investment opportunity.**

To differentiate from other neighborhoods in Fort Worth, Panther Island can leverage its unique challenges and opportunities that include:

Abundant development potential in an area with significant vacancy.

Introduction of **unique development typologies**, such as office space appealing to users seeking an urban environment outside the Downtown core.

Potential to **incorporate a diverse range of uses**, including waterfront development, retail, food & beverage, office spaces, entertainment venues, and residential to attract talent and employers

Strategic central location among local districts, offering prime opportunities for development and growth. Access-focused transportation will allow easy and safe access to daily necessities and services.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

The development over time of a mix of uses can build on existing trends and address gaps in the Fort Worth market.

+23K Units

Multifamily developed (2013 – 2023)
108K total inventory as of 2023

There is an opportunity to leverage the demonstrated appeal for urban living. Fort Worth is the fastest growing city in Texas. Development of residential units, especially on vacant land between Downtown, the Stockyards, and the Cultural District, will maintain pace with population growth in the city's central neighborhoods.

8M Visitors

to the Stockyards in 2022,
up from 3M in 2019

Stockyards Heritage Development spent ~\$200M on the Mule Alley and Hotel Drover projects in the Stockyards, which inspired a massive uptick in both local and tourist visitations. Other Fort Worth entertainment venues, like Dickies Arena which opened in 2019, have only been additive to the visitation experienced around Fort Worth.

4.8%

Retail vacancy, lowest since 2018
2M SF of retail added since 2018

Building on the entertainment ecosystem that is being created around Fort Worth, retail has recovered well from declines during COVID. One of the City's goals from its strategic plan was to allow and encourage dense mixed-use development (including retail and restaurants) along key corridors radiating out from Downtown Fort Worth.

SPECIAL SITES

Now vacant and deteriorated, LaGrave Field and the Power Plant are unique sites. While each has physical and reuse challenges to assess, activating one or both could help establish an anchor and early identity for the Panther Island project.

TCC has explored the reuse of the **Power Plant**, including soliciting proposals in 2011. However, the viability of reuse of the structure is currently unknown and warrants further study. The site's location and visual identity next to the Main Street gateway to Panther Island could offer value in attracting activity to Panther Island and this important connecting corridor. Exploring how reuse could seed and catalyze the southern node of Panther Island is important for the vision update.

LaGrave Field has been vacant since 2014, and while some stakeholders desire a return of baseball, there is skepticism about the ability to attract a financially sustainable professional sports use for year-round activation. The site's location adjacent to the largest consolidated private land ownership on the island suggests that prompt resolution is warranted regarding the use of the site for development, public space, destination entertainment, or other uses.



Panther Island Power Plant



LaGrave Field

VISION & IDENTITY

Findings and takeaways from engagement and project history inform a set of principles on vision and identity that will guide the visioning and strategy development.

The vision for Panther Island must offer a vision and identity that is authentic to Fort Worth, compatible with and additive to surrounding neighborhoods, yet is new and unique to the region. Drawing upon Panther Island's industrial and commercial history can serve as a foundation to shape its future identity, which is bound to evolve into a far more diverse and multifaceted neighborhood. Over a multi-decade project, achieving and retaining buy-in from landowners, community members, partner agencies, and residents and businesses will require consistent communication and unwavering commitment to the fundamental approaches that make Panther Island different.

The economic development positioning of Panther Island warrants significant attention and can provide fuel to the long-term growth of Panther Island, attracting new types of local and national businesses and talent to the urban core. The project needs the infrastructure capacity, quality open space, compelling design principles, and identity that appeal to the talent and companies that Fort Worth seeks to attract. Attracting these employers and employees is not a simple undertaking; it requires coordinated and targeted activities and public sector commitments, combined with a strong vision and value proposition.

There are multiple ways for neighborhood identity to be expressed: through design guidelines, project branding, and precedent imagery, and clear principles that allow decision makers to know where to target investment and what to say 'yes' – and, importantly, 'no' – to as projects move forward. Panther Island needs to capture compelling branding, urban design, and architecture that announce it as a national destination warranting attention. These tools should also be able to provide confidence to other projects and districts in Fort Worth that Panther Island can be additive to the economic potential of Fort Worth. The strategic vision will provide recommendations and direction to inform these important long-term foundations of Panther Island's future.

An aerial photograph of a city landscape featuring a winding river, green parks, and a distant skyline with several tall buildings. A dark blue semi-transparent overlay covers the top half of the image, containing the text '03' and 'Urban Design'.

03

Urban Design

INITIAL TAKEAWAYS | URBAN DESIGN

Existing plans, regulations, and visions for Panther Island provide a foundation for new planning, but reflect out-of-date community, economic, and design conditions. Landowners, nearby community leaders, and other stakeholders encourage the revisiting of approaches to the public realm, design aesthetic, streetscape, mobility, parking, and access and connectivity. A renewed strategic vision will update approaches to density, urban form, open space, and land use to meet and reflect Fort Worth today and into the future, unlocking development potential and value.



URBAN DESIGN GOVERNANCE

Key efforts have shaped Panther Island's urban design vision to what it is today.



Trinity Uptown Plan (2004)

- Overall vision & illustrative plan
- Density
- Program distribution
- Open space network
- Character



Form-Based Code (2006, 2010, 2016)

- Framework plan
- Streets
- Waterways / Canals
- Open space network
- Land uses & density
- Block typologies
- Furnishings
- Signage



Canal Design Standards (2016)

- Canal framework
- Precedents
- Design features
- Edge treatments
- Ground material
- Seating
- Plant species



Infrastructure Planning (Ongoing)

- Water
- Wastewater
- Stormwater / Canals
- Oncor electricity

DENSITY AND BUILDING TYPOLOGY

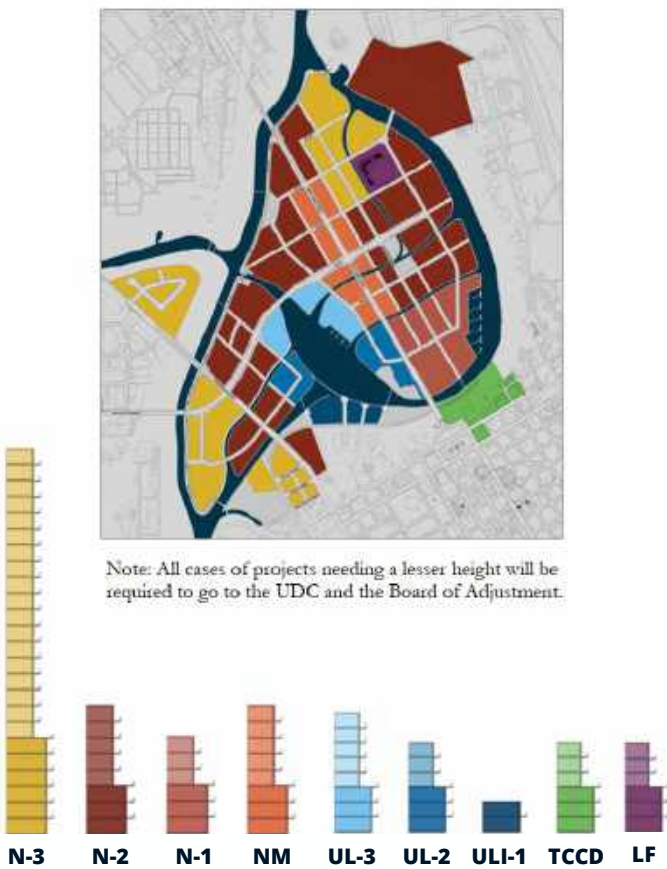
The density, urban form, and program distribution of the island should be grounded in future and flexible economic realities and community priorities.

Relative to original residential-driven plans, most stakeholders desire more of a mix of uses and experiences across Panther Island.

To align design regulations and codes with today’s market and stakeholder desires, there is an opportunity to revisit building height, density, and use aspirations across the district. This can allow for approaches to density that can respond to market conditions, while creating coherent and pedestrian-friendly design. Block typologies can be planned in pedestrian-friendly ways while also catering to new office space appealing to users seeking an urban environment outside the Downtown core.

Providing more of a mixed-use approach across the project with strategic phasing recommendations can provide a healthy balance of predictability and flexibility, attract new users and businesses, and create micro-district identities and zones that create identity over time.

Panther Island Sites and Buildings



Development Zone	Maximum Height	Minimum Height
Neighborhood Zone One (N-1)	72 feet	5 Floors
Neighborhood Zone Two (N-2)	96 feet	5 Floors
Neighborhood Zone Three (N-3)	288 feet	6 Floors
North Main (NM)	96 feet	5 Floors
Urban Lake Zone One (UL-1)	36 feet	2 Floors
Urban Lake Zone Two (UL-2)	72 feet	5 Floors
Urban Lake Zone Three (UL-3)	96 feet	5 Floors
Tarrant County College Zone (TCCD)	72 feet	5 Floors
LaGrave Field Zone (LF)	72 feet	5 Floors

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Panther Island is a one-of-a-kind opportunity with the potential for an authentic open space network and design.

Panther Island has the potential to offer a mix of public spaces, including destination open space that serves not only Panther Island itself, but also Downtown, surrounding neighborhoods, and the wider region, thereby offering a valuable amenity.

The story of water – and its combined role in flood control and as a leisure amenity – lends a distinctive opportunity to Panther Island. Enhancing open space across the district is crucial for updating the current plan's success, as it offers more opportunities for a distinct, publicly-accessible, connected, and green open space network.

Panther Island offers a unique opportunity to provide a balance of open space and development, including at the river's edge, to promote public access, programming, and engagement. Revisiting the location, size, amount, and network of open spaces interior to the district and their connection to the river will strengthen the public realm experience and provide linkages and nodes of activity throughout the project. A thoughtful approach considers impacts to funding mechanisms and affordability with many national and international models to learn from.

Highlighting the stormwater canals as a public realm amenity is key to an authentic open space strategy, addressing the physical realities of elevation required by the system.



Vancouver Waterfront Park, Canada

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

To ensure that the island is easily accessible as it is developed, the exploring of optimal modes of transportation and points of entry onto the island are key factors.

The number of vehicular access points in the district plays a role in the connectivity, traffic, and development capacity on Panther Island.

Panther Island is constrained by the limited existing and planned vehicular access points in and out of the district, which today include two roads N/S along Main Street and N/S along Henderson St. At completion, the Island will add one more E/W access at White Settlement Rd & Samuels Ave.

Stakeholders want to prioritize the pedestrian environment and create a walkable district, while sustaining access and connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods. The current plans for Panther Island maintain the existing road network within the levee system, adding a loop road to be located along the transmission power corridor.

Potential solutions to limited access include supplementing high-capacity transit that runs north-south and connects Historic Southside/Downtown to Northside/Stockyards. Trinity Metro is launching a streetcar feasibility study. Other solutions might include increasing the types of connections and bridges across the river for cars, transit, or pedestrians to increase access.

Current plans show most blocks with above-grade garages. To ensure that the district is not overwhelmed by parking garages and the lack of pedestrian movement that garages create, the team will examine preferred parking typologies in the district.



URBAN DESIGN

Findings and takeaways from engagement and reviews of existing plans inform a set of principles on urban design that will guide the visioning and strategy development.

A people-first approach to updating the vision and strategy will address stakeholder desires for a walkable, connected, mixed-use future for Panther Island. The vision update offers a unique opportunity to define a path towards creating a distinctive place that is authentic to Fort Worth and Panther Island's history, while also harmonizing programmatically and aesthetically with the surrounding districts. Promoting pedestrian connectivity and walkability through streets, open spaces, and trails will showcase the people-first approach to planning. A high-capacity transit system that runs through Panther Island to link surrounding neighborhoods would strengthen regional connectivity and walkability within the district.

Providing more of a mixed-use approach across the district will only strengthen the long-term success of the district to cater to flexible economic driven demands and provide various micro-district identities and zones. Urban design and planning approaches and recommendations can play an important role in enhancing the attractiveness of Panther Island to future residents, workers, retailers, businesses, and other users, including offering new amenities and urban experiences.

Creating a mix of large- and smaller-scale signature and neighborhood open spaces across the district is crucial for the vision update's success, offering valuable amenities to users and to the region. Panther Island offers a unique opportunity to provide a balance of open space and development. Revisiting the location, size, amount, and network of open spaces will strengthen the public realm experience and provide linkages and nodes of activity throughout the project.

Planning and urban design approaches need to grapple with physical constraints. The relationship between development, stormwater canals, the river, the street network, utility networks, and transportation systems is complex, especially given the long-term phased buildout of Panther Island ahead. The team will continue to study how desired water levels for normal and flood conditions along the canals and rivers edge and the buildout of the canal system affect potential development typologies, and offer recommendations on parking, building typologies, island ingress/egress, and urban design that are both practical and visionary.

An aerial photograph of a city landscape. In the foreground, a wide river flows through a green park area with walking paths and trees. In the middle ground, a large stadium is under construction, with its seating bowl visible. The background shows a city skyline with several tall buildings under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

04

Strategic Implementation

INITIAL TAKEAWAYS | IMPLEMENTATION

The development of Panther Island is logistically and financially complex. The Central City Flood Control project will proceed through 2032, creating new waterfront development opportunities at completion. Unlocking development in the near- and long-term requires investment in utility, stormwater, and mobility infrastructure. Planning and development for Panther Island must consider the phasing of public and private investment, the conditions necessary for high-quality development, sequencing of all project elements, the delivery of necessary infrastructure for development, and the tools and approaches necessary to leverage public landholdings for community and economic benefit. Establishing strategies for governance, public-private partnership, and funding and financing will be essential to successful implementation.

MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE

The Central City Flood Control Project represents a major local, regional, and federal investment in infrastructure.

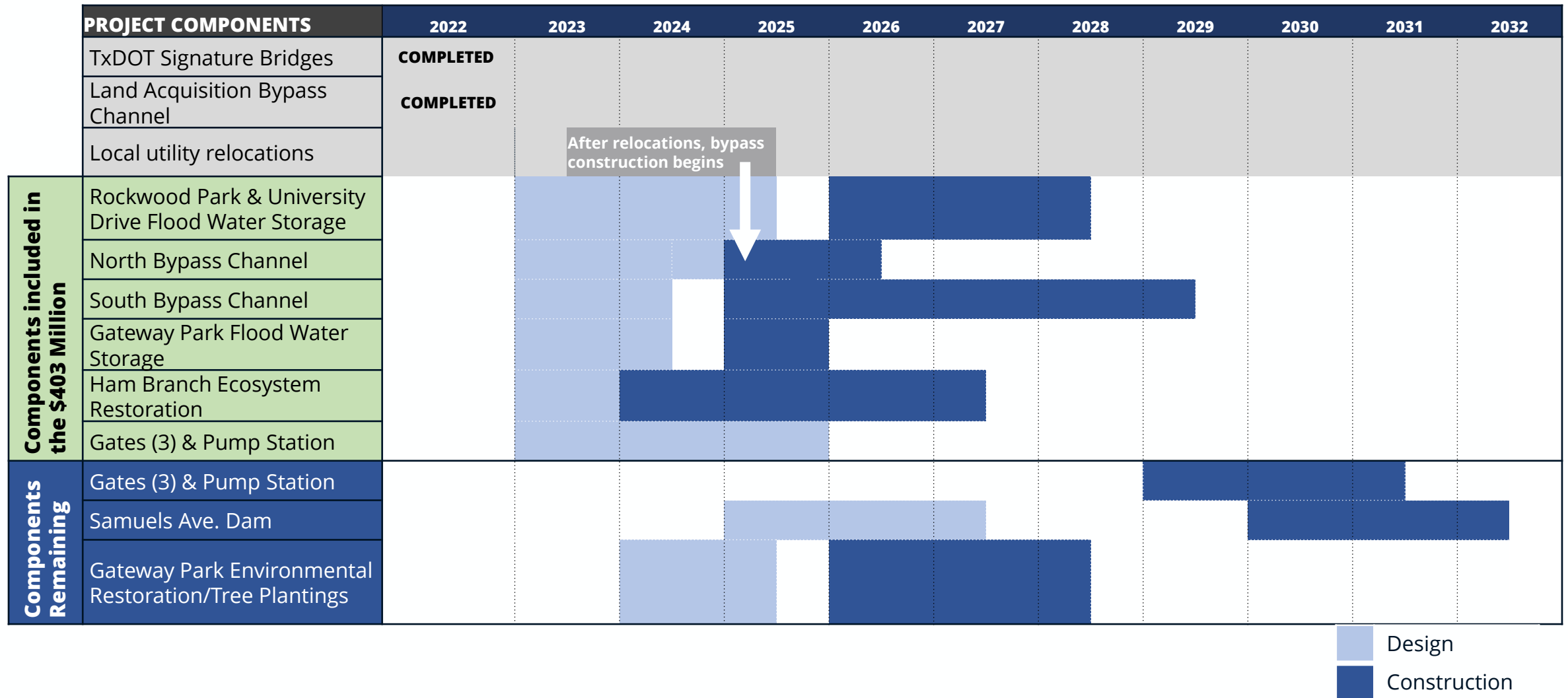
In 2022, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced the approval of \$403M for the Central City Flood Control Project. Together, the funded improvements will protect surrounding neighborhoods from flood risk and help transform Panther Island into an attractive and viable development location. Additional federal funds, local contributions, and incremental tax revenue are funding the \$1.17B transformation.

Projects
included in the
USACE
\$403M



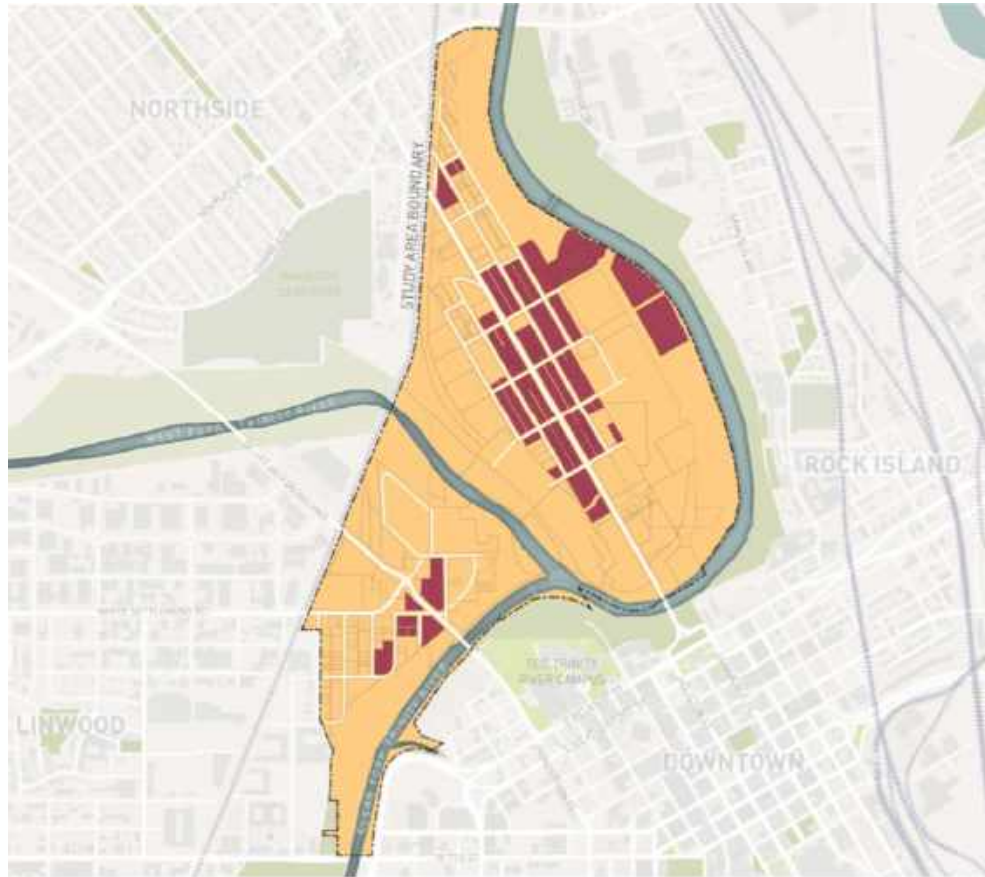
PHASING

The Central City Flood Control project has been under design and in construction for several years and is expected to continue through 2032.



PHASING

The completion of the Flood Control Project will allow the removal of existing levees and the transformation of significant portions of Panther Island to development or public space.



Public Land Private Land

Of the ~500 acres of Panther Island today, some of the parcels, mostly along N Main St, are actively used by businesses, organizations, or apartments, while much of the remaining land is vacant and available for future investment. While the flood control project is ongoing, public and private landholders can begin to develop property on the interior of Panther Island.

Once the flood control project is complete, the existing levees, which today prevent waterfront development and visual and physical access to the Trinity River, can be removed. At that point, a portion of property at the edge of Panther Island can be transformed into real estate or public space.

This timing complexity requires thoughtful approaches to phasing investment and development, and both coordination and engagement with existing property owners.



CANAL INFRASTRUCTURE

A canal system on Panther Island will provide flood protection, stormwater management, and pedestrian connectivity and amenities.

The canal system planned for Panther Island will provide a cost-effective flood protection system, containing up to a 100-year flood event, and serve as the primary stormwater management system to accommodate new development. The development of the system, an initial phase of which was completed for the Encore apartments, must address implementation questions:

Funding: Funding for the canals is expected to come from a combination of TRWD property sales and tapping fees charged to development for access to water detention. With stormwater detention required for all new development, which can be satisfied by the planned canal network, aligning the availability of capital funds with phased construction is a strategic challenge. Roadways must be elevated to cross the canals, the funding source for which has not been identified.

Development Feasibility: In order to access the stormwater detention capacity of the canal system, developers would pay a proportional fee based on their runoff volume. Once fully built out, these costs will be shared among multiple projects and investments, while it may create a cost barrier for early movers whose investments play a crucial role in activating Panther Island.



Image sources: HR&A, Lake Flato

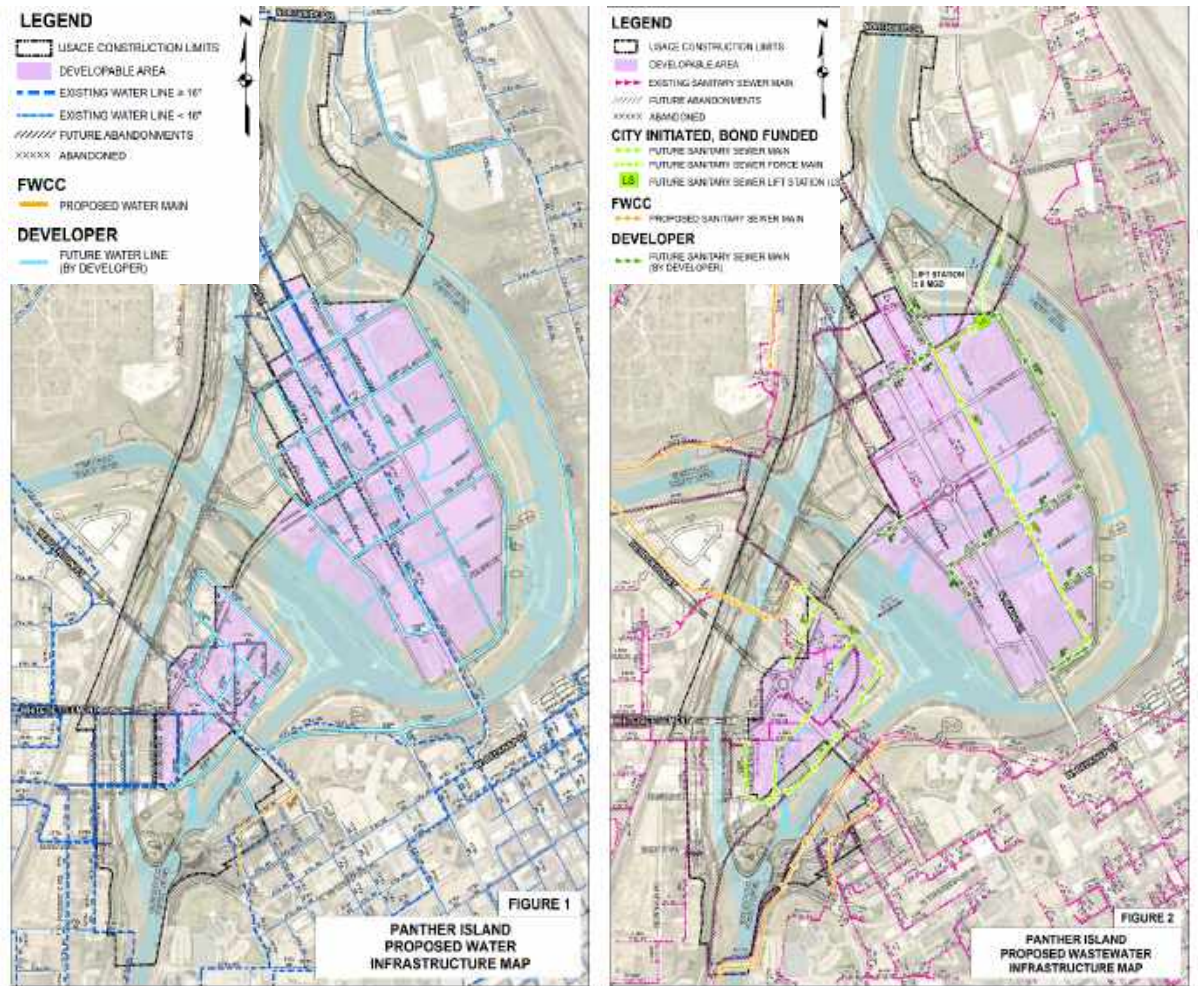
UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

New development will require an upgraded network of electrical, water, and wastewater utilities. A viable path to financing these improvements is essential to the island's buildout.

Utility plans for Panther Island by the Water District and the City call for extending and upgrading the capacity of core infrastructure.

A major infrastructure upgrade for water and wastewater is needed to fully build out Panther Island. Although the preliminary layout for water and wastewater has been determined, the funding sources for this implementation has not been finalized.

The power lines to the west of Main St. can either stay or be built below grade if there is a cost mechanism to pay for it. The recently updated Oncor transmission line network on the east side of Main St. needs to be incorporated into the future planned district.



PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP

The scale of public land ownership on Panther Island presents significant opportunity to generate revenue and influence development outcomes and delivery of public benefits.

~125

acres developable
land owned by TRWD*

~21

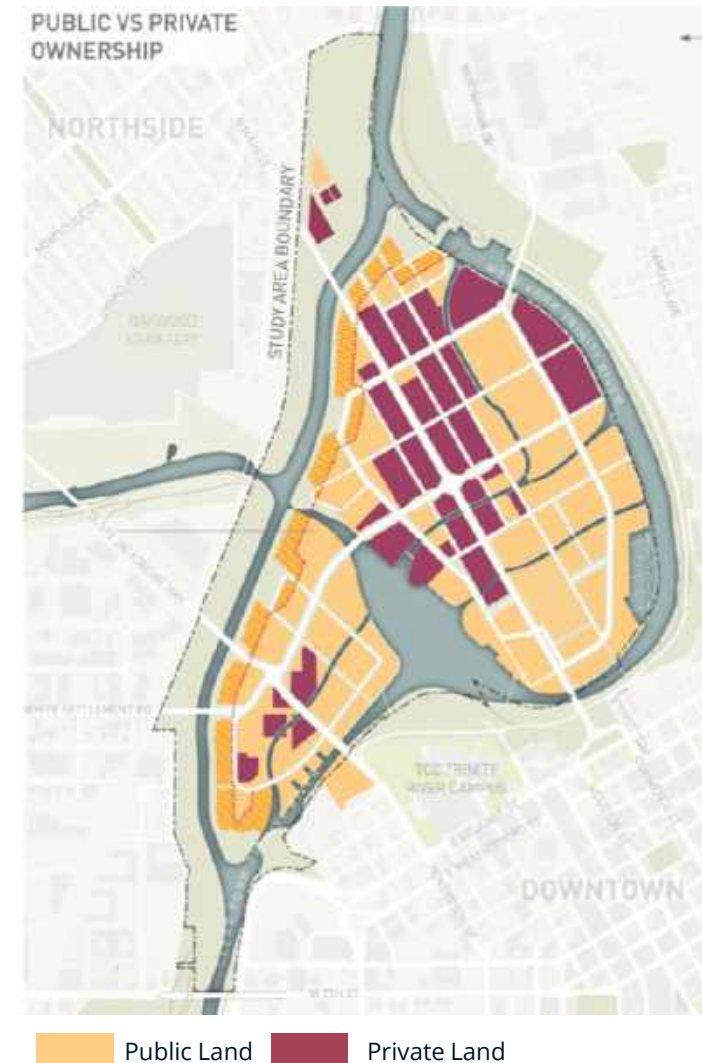
acres owned
by TCCD

The Tarrant Regional Water District is the largest landholder, with the majority of Panther Island in its portfolio. The Tarrant County College District controls the southern gateway to the project. While some publicly-owned land is not developable until the completion of flood control work or longer, significant portions can help catalyze early activity.

Public land control is a major tool in implementing a project vision, including:

- The ability to generate revenues for infrastructure or public amenities through the sale or lease of land.
- Flexibility in selecting location and program for signature open spaces.
- Power to select development partner(s) and bring restrictions and/or financial resources to bear to facilitate quality development.
- Control over the timing of sale or lease and, to some extent, development.
- In the case of Panther Island, the ability to think strategically and holistically about the opportunity presented by a newly created waterfront.

*Land available for development or other use after completion of the Central City Flood Control Project.
Image source: Lake Flato



FUNDING AND FINANCING

Implementation of the Panther Island project requires funding and financing for basic infrastructure, canals, public spaces, development, levee removal, transportation and transit, and parking, among other costs.

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS	FUNDING SOURCE IDENTIFIED	FUNDING RAISED OR DEPLOYED
<i>Central City Flood Control Project (inc. Utility Relocation)</i>	Y	In Progress
<i>Land Acquisition</i>	Y	Completed
<i>Real Estate Development</i>	TBD	In Progress
<i>Canal Construction</i>	N*	N
<i>New Utility Construction</i>	N**	N
<i>Public Space</i>	N	N
<i>Levee Removal</i>	N***	N

Any major development project requires a multi-faceted approach to funding and financing. Panther Island brings unique challenges given the major upfront cost (and committed resources) of the flood control project. But with so much potential future economic value, the project can capture and leverage value through various mechanisms:

- The sale or lease of public land can provide revenue towards infrastructure or other project costs. For example, TRWD may apply land proceeds towards the canal system buildout.
- Typically, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a key resource for infrastructure or development incentives. However, in Panther Island's case, all TIF proceeds are currently obligated to repay flood control project costs and debt, and the TIF district is set to sunset once those debts are paid in 2054 or earlier. The team will evaluate the potential to capture value in excess of current projections.
- Early movers – public or private - bear significant risk, often requiring support or incentives in excess of later-stage development.
- Some major costs, such as the removal of levees, do not currently have identified funding sources.

*TRWD land sales and developer fees may provide a source of capital and maintenance funding.

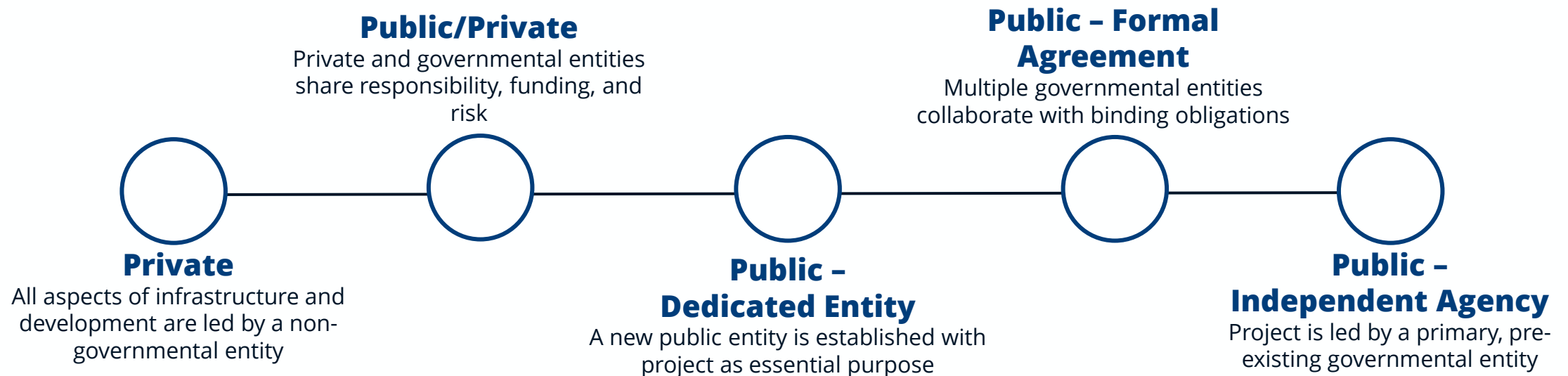
**Likely to be developer-funded, with City participation for oversizing or potential incentive.

***Likely to be developer-funded at time of new development following completion and certification of the flood control system.

GOVERNANCE

The implementation of large-scale, multi-phase infrastructure and development projects often require dedicated governance approaches. Implementation planning requires the exploration of appropriate models for consideration among the public sector partners.

While numerous public, private, and nonprofit partners are contributing to the planning and implementation of the Central City Flood Control Project and Panther Island development, **long term stewardship with commitments and capacities that span multiple political and market cycles is important.** A variety of public, private, and public-private governance approaches are available that can balance capacity, project ownership, review and entitlement authority, access to funding and financing, ongoing public engagement, and delivery of public benefits. The team will work with project partners to consider the appropriate structures and approaches for long-term governance of the Panther Island project.



STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

Initial reconnaissance and engagement inform a set of principles on implementation that will guide project visioning and strategy development.

Phasing of infrastructure (flood control, streets, roads, utilities), public amenities (open spaces, public transit), and development (buildings, parking) are uniquely challenging for Panther Island. Early infrastructure, public realm, and development investment can enliven Main St. and other interior spaces to bring activity, generate tax increment, and create value.

The real estate strategy will need to equip public landowners with an approach to disposition and development partnership. The strategy will need to balance the need for near-term revenue generation with the opportunity for patience to leverage the value that will be created through the final completion of the flood control project. A targeted strategy for the interior of the island is required to launch initial investment, while looking toward the longer-term redevelopment of waterfront parcels, a majority of which is under public control. In addition, the private market needs confidence in the public sector's willingness and ability to deliver high quality development and engage capable master development and/or vertical development partners.

The public sector, private landowners, and developers should collaborate to make the economics of development feasible and regionally competitive. Early phase commercial development will set the tone for quality and alignment with the vision. These projects will also likely carry the highest risk and infrastructure cost burden. Across Panther Island, achieving public benefits such as a distinctive public realm, housing affordability, and public art will also carry costs. The allocation of cost and incentives for development, especially prior to the removal of the levees, will likely affect whether early phase projects move forward, especially given the current obligation of all TIF proceeds to repay the local share of flood control costs. Any provision of City resources to incentivize development should be executed with consideration for the long-term return on public investment, accounting for the full range of economic, fiscal, and community benefits the project will provide.

As the City completes its utility work and prepares for the period of Army Corps construction, the public partners should explore approaches to dedicated governance to oversee future planning, implementation, and operation of Panther Island. Long-term stewardship and access to innovative funding sources will provide confidence to the market and community. The updated vision and strategy will provide initial recommendations to inform direction.

An aerial photograph of a city landscape. In the foreground, a wide river flows from the left towards the center. To the right of the river is a large, open area that appears to be a stadium or sports field, with some structures and parking lots. In the background, a city skyline is visible under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. A semi-transparent dark blue rectangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text '05' and 'Connections to Community'.

05

Connections to Community

INITIAL TAKEAWAYS | COMMUNITY

With its scale and central location, Panther Island can benefit all of Fort Worth, with accessible public spaces, inclusive and welcoming development, cultural assets, accessible housing, quality jobs, and business opportunities. National precedents show that large-scale development can have unintended impacts on adjacent neighborhoods and therefore require proactive attention. Maximizing the positive community benefits of investment in Panther Island and mitigating potential negative impacts requires strong community-driven vision, policy, values-aligned partners, and a commitment over time to creating an inclusive and welcoming space, grounded in history and culture but offering new opportunities and benefits.

REPURPOSING INDUSTRY

Panther Island's convenient location near Downtown, the Stockyards, and the railroad has historically lent it to industrial uses and, more recently, culture and recreation.

Historically, much of the island was dedicated to heavy industrial uses that supported Fort Worth's oil and gas, meatpacking, and milling industries, among others. Looking to the future, this history has inspired a vision for utilizing adaptive reuse and embracing buildings with industrial character.

Today, businesses on Panther Island have begun to repurpose industrial space to create active attractions like Panther Island Brewing and Coyote Drive-In, though most of the island remains vacant.

Transform 1012 on the northern side of the island is transforming the former Ku Klux Klan auditorium and Ellis Pecan Factory into The Fred Rouse Center for Arts and Community Healing.

The site will be constrained by transportation as Panther Island is built out, which makes a streetcar and trail connectivity that much more important.



BUSINESSES

Panther Island is home to operating businesses, some there for generations, that are eager to understand plans for Panther Island and their role in its future.

Panther Island has a concentration of existing businesses that have been located there for decades. Over the last 15 years, TRWD has acquired land in preparation for the flood control implementation that is now being funded by the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Acquisition of land, relocations, and preliminary developments for the flood control project, like the development of the Henderson Street Bridge, White Settlement Bridge, and the Main Street Bridge, led to disruptions of some business operations in the area.

It will be important to consider how these legacy landowners can participate in and benefit from the value that will be created on Panther Island, especially given other impacts that will occur on the island from infrastructure and development. Landowners on Panther Island are waiting for a clear vision and indications of future uses around the area.



Businesses behind Henderson St. Bridge



Henderson St. Bridge

ADJACENCIES

The communities adjacent to Panther Island each have distinct identities, cultures, and roles in the recent growth of Fort Worth.

Cultural District

Population: 3,626

Pop. Growth (2010-2022): 252.4%

Median Household Income: \$100k

2.5 million annual visitors



Northside + Stockyards

Population: 3,691

Median Household Income: \$40k

Hotel Growth (2010-2022): 342%

8 million annual visitors



Downtown

Population: 6,974

Pop. Growth (2010-2022): 80.7%

Median Household Income: \$97k

37,971 employees at 1,452 businesses



COMMUNITY

The Northside is a strong, close-knit community that would like to see its culture represented in the Panther Island development and protected with strong anti-displacement measures.

Northside residents enjoy the stability and vibrancy of their neighborhood, including close relationships with neighbors, existing community resources, small businesses and culturally-oriented retail, and their central location.

Residents of Northside have established a strong homeownership rate of over 60%. Residents' primary concerns are displacement via property tax increase and safety and noise concerns due to short term rentals and the addition of more nearby entertainment uses.

Residents hope to see themselves represented in the Panther Island development via public art, small and microbusiness incubation for locals, and programming and activation that represents their culture.

There are concerns about increased traffic and residents hope to proactively address congestion with public transit options and railroad crossing solutions (particularly near the Bypass channel's boundary with the Northside), and increased connectivity to the trail system.



Grand Opening of the Northside Library, 1967.

CONNECTIONS TO COMMUNITY

Findings and takeaways from early reconnaissance and engagement inform a set of principles on community that will guide the visioning and strategy development.

While there is only a very small residential base on Panther Island today, neighboring community members value a commitment to cultural representation in future programming, retail, and public art. Affordable retail, food, and entertainment options will be the key to making Panther Island inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of Fort Worth residents and visitors.

The development of Panther Island needs to sensitively address the experiences of existing business owners on Panther Island. Public sector partners should regularly educate and inform business owners about upcoming construction and development and collaborate on methods for mitigating business challenges.

To make Panther Island a development that adds to the existing rich cultural fabric of Fort Worth, rather than erasing it, public and nonprofit partners should develop anti-displacement tools and prioritize housing affordability to prevent disruptive impacts on existing communities. Early recognition and proactive consideration of these dynamics and pressures during the initial stages of project implementation are vital to effectively prevent affordability challenges. Prioritizing the production of housing that caters to residents with diverse income levels is crucial for ensuring accessibility to a wide range of Fort Worth residents.

Connectivity and mobility between Panther Island and surrounding communities is a priority for numerous stakeholders, including communities near and far. Providing multiple points of pedestrian, vehicle, and public transit connection to surrounding neighborhoods will be key to integrating Panther Island into the existing urban fabric. Addressing major mobility and traffic flow challenges, such as the railroad crossing near the Transform 1012 site, can also help attract users to Panther Island and demonstrate public sector partners' commitment to a community-responsive project.

An aerial photograph of a city landscape. In the foreground, a wide river flows from the left towards the center. To the right of the river, a large, rectangular stadium is under construction, with its seating bowl visible. The stadium is surrounded by green grass and some trees. In the background, a city skyline is visible under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. A semi-transparent dark blue rectangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text '06' and 'Conclusion & Next Steps'.

06

Conclusion & Next Steps

SUMMARY

The four core themes identified in Phase 1 will guide us as we develop a Strategic Vision and the Real Estate and Economic Development Strategy for Panther Island.

Vision & Identity

Establish a distinct and compelling identity for Panther Island grounded in economic development opportunities, community ambitions, and complementarity to existing neighborhoods.

Urban Design

Recommend updated planning, design, and regulatory approaches that are authentic to Fort Worth, address the project's significant physical complexities, and offer a compelling vision to attract new activity and investment.

Strategic Implementation

Develop approaches to phasing, governance, funding and financing, partnership, and public land development that create predictability and confidence in near- and long-term investment.

Connections to Community

Create a place that is inclusive, welcoming, and reflective of the history and culture of Fort Worth's communities, especially those nearest the project. Equip partners to provide public benefit and mitigate threats of residential and cultural displacement.

NEXT STEPS

The work on the updated project vision and strategy will continue through the Fall, with opportunities for public and stakeholder input and engagement that will guide the recommendations and outcomes.





LAKE | FLATO



Panther Island Preliminary Findings

Existing Conditions & Strategic Implications

August 2023