

North Texas Alternative Futures

Agricultural Working Lands

A key indicator for
comparing alternative future scenarios

This powerpoint presents:

- What is this key indicator ?
- How do the alternative future scenarios compare ?



Agricultural Working Lands

- Texas is still an agricultural state, even as it leads the nation with new urban growth.
- This region's settlement patterns in the mid-1800's began with an agricultural economy, and much of the land has been farmed or ranched.
- There are millions of acres in and surrounding our region still being worked for agriculture.
- A very detailed ag working lands map produced by USDA has been used for this analysis.

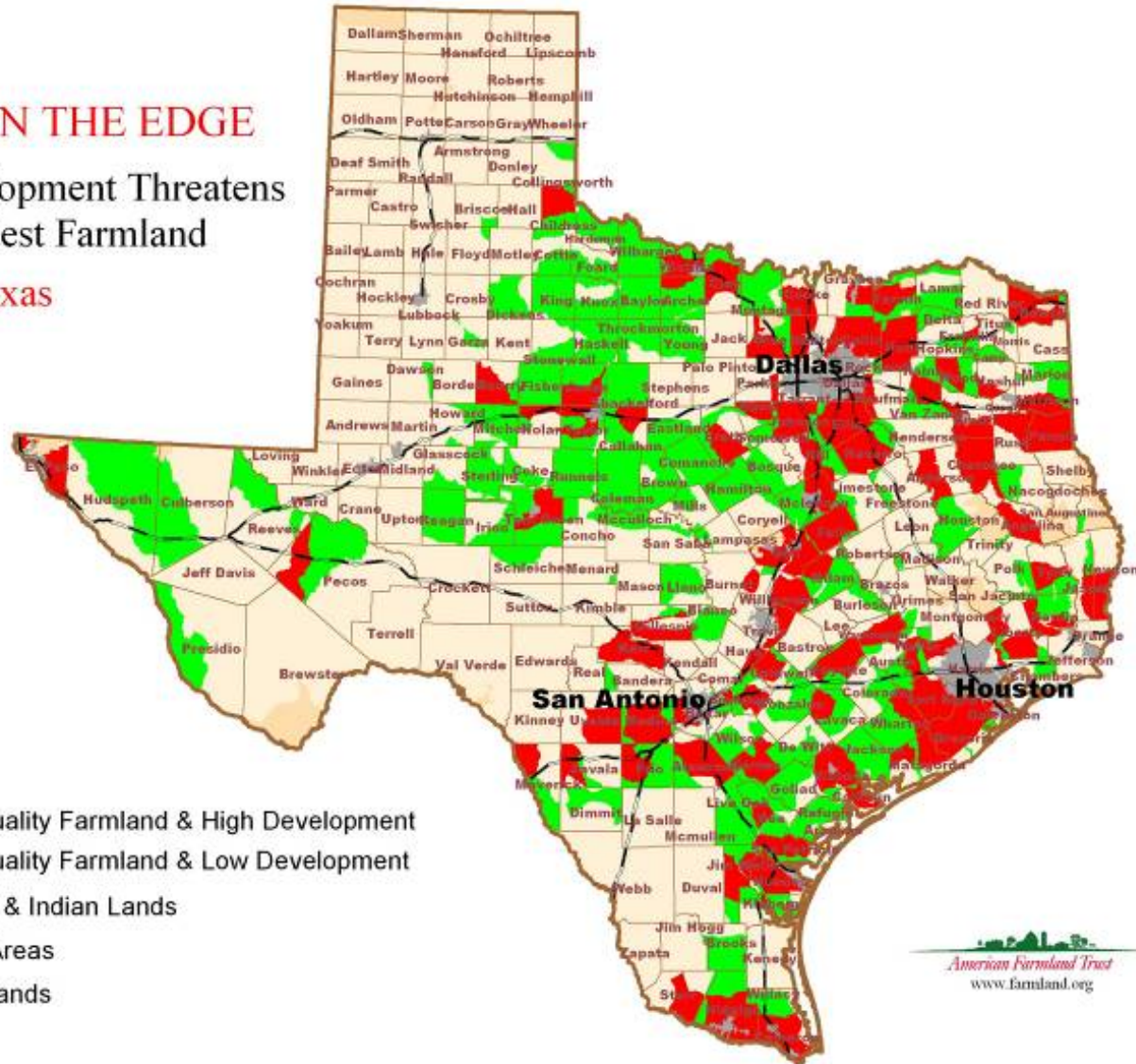


The Issue

FARMING ON THE EDGE

Sprawling Development Threatens
America's Best Farmland

Texas



0 40 Miles

09/25/02



Vision North Texas

Understanding Our Options for Growth

Agricultural Working Lands

The region would lose 900,00 acres of current agricultural working lands under Business As Usual

Scenarios Compared to Business As Usual



Connected Centers

+ Improves



Return on Investment

++ Improves Greatly



Diverse Distinct
Communities

+ Improves



Green Region

+ Improves



Vision North Texas

Understanding Our Options for Growth

Connected Centers

This scenario envisions many human-scale, moderate intensity mixed use centers located throughout the region, similar to projects near DART light rail stations.



+Improves Agricultural Working Lands compared to Business As Usual

- About half as much agricultural working lands would be lost as compared to Business As Usual
- Clustered development would provide opportunities to preserve nearby current ag working lands



Return on Investment

This scenario envisions that existing neighborhoods and business areas are maintained, and underutilized properties are revitalized, within the current urban service area through reinvestment in existing infrastructure.



++Improves Greatly Agricultural Working Lands compared to Business As Usual

- Under Return on Investment, there would be maximum redevelopment/ infill on lands that are already urbanized.
- There could be less development speculation on agricultural lands outside the current urban service area.
- Even under this scenario, several hundred thousand acres of close-in agricultural lands would likely convert to urban uses as infill is stressed.



Diverse Distinct Communities

This scenario supports revitalization and investment in the downtowns of large and small communities around the region. It creates places with a mix of housing and jobs, with infrastructure efficiently clustered rather than extending to large areas of low intensity development.



+Improves Agricultural Working Lands compared to Business As Usual

- About half as much agricultural working lands would be lost as compared to Business As Usual.
- There would be less demand for low-intensity residential development in the outer parts of the region.
- Opportunities could be pursued by communities to celebrate and preserve their agricultural heritage.



Green Region

This scenario begins with the preservation of important open spaces and environmental assets. It emphasizes the inclusion of natural areas in the development pattern of all parts of the region, supports green jobs, and reduces the region's carbon footprint.



+Improves Agricultural Working Lands compared to Business As Usual

- Not only could open spaces be protected, but large amounts of agricultural land could be converted to supplying crops for urban consumption.
- Even under this scenario, hundreds of thousands of acres of agricultural working lands would be lost.

