Vision North Texas
Policy Direction White Paper

Executive Summary

This White Paper recommends that Vision North Texas develop a policy document which includes both a “Regional Vision Statement” that describes the region’s preferred future and an “Action Package” that provides the tools to create that future. The contents of the policy document are described below, with examples from other regions and comparisons to existing North Texas plans and policies.

Creation of this policy document would be the primary focus of Vision North Texas Phase 3. Activities for the other three current initiatives (Education and Outreach, Public Involvement and Research) will also continue. These activities will contribute to the creation of the policy document.

Phase 3 would begin in fall 2007 and be complete by the end of 2009. The detailed process for creating the policy document will be prepared this summer so the Advisory Committee can consider it at the September 2007 meeting.

Background

Since its inception, Vision North Texas has clearly identified the objectives it seeks to achieve and the outcomes it does not intend to produce. Its objectives are:

1. Increase public awareness of the growth that’s projected for our region;
2. Educate participants about the implications of regional growth;
3. Understand the options we have for accommodating that growth; and
4. Create a forum for discussion about public and private sector actions that will help our region be sustainable and successful as it continues to grow.

Vision North Texas is NOT intended to be the following:

1. NOT a requirement;
2. NOT an effort to create a new level of regional government;
3. NOT a change toward regional decision-making; or
4. NOT an overall land use or zoning plan for the Metroplex.
The Vision North Texas Phase 2 Work Plan was adopted in early 2006 based on the responses to Phase 1’s regional visioning workshop and the analysis of scenarios developed at the workshop. The Phase 2 Work Plan includes four initiatives, with Initiative 4 described below.

**Initiative 4: Policy Direction**

**Description:** Decide whether to create a preferred regional scenario and, if so, what level of detail it should have and what role it should play.

**Objectives:** Agree on a policy recommendation adopted by resolutions of the ULI North Texas District Council’s Executive Board and the Development Excellence Steering Committee¹ and present this recommendation to the Regional Transportation Council and/or NCTCOG’s Executive Board.

Fort Worth Mayor Mike Moncrief suggested a variation on this idea at the Leadership Summit, when he proposed that “the time has come to work together on regional land use issues. We need a ‘regional gamebook’ to grow successfully”.

The Phase 2 timeline anticipates action on these policy recommendations in September 2007.

**Stakeholder Input**

Participants at Vision North Texas workshops have shown strong interest and support for the creation of a preferred vision of the region’s future. Highlights of keypad polling results from three sessions indicate this support.

- At the regional visioning workshop in April 2005, participants were asked whether North Texas should “set regional investment priorities based on a preferred growth scenario”. **83%** of the participants in the keypad polling indicated that this activity was either “essential for the region to undertake during the next year” or “important for the region to undertake as resources become available”.

- Participants in the September 2006 Leadership Summit were asked “how important is action on the regional urban form (or development pattern) to the future of the North Texas region? **94%** of the keypad polling participants indicated that it was either “essential to take action in the next year” or “important to take action as resources become available”.

- At the Southeastern Subregional Workshop in January 2007, participants were asked “should we set regional investment priorities based on a preferred growth scenario?” **96%** of the participants in the keypad polling indicated “yes, this is essential” or that it is “desirable if we have enough resources”.

¹ This decision will now be made by the Vision North Texas Advisory Committee.
Advisory Committee Input

The VNT Advisory Committee’s discussion in April 2007 proposed two broad roles this “policy document” could play:

1. A Regional Vision Statement. In this role, the policy document would describe the region of the future that current residents and leaders would like to achieve.

2. An Action Package. In this role, the policy document would detail the tools and techniques that could be used by many different decision-makers (public and private) to help achieve the regional vision.

These two roles – and choices related to them – are explained below. The name for the policy document should reflect its content and roles, so a specific name is not recommended here. Previous suggestions include “framework”, “gamebook”, “game plan”, “playbook” and “scenario”.

Vision North Texas is a private-public partnership designed to increase awareness about the growth expected in North Texas and to involve people and organizations in initiatives that accommodate this growth successfully.
Part 1: A Regional Vision Statement

Purpose

A regional vision statement would:
1. Explain or describe the future of the North Texas region that stakeholders believe is most preferred or most desirable.
2. Integrate regional plans and policies covering diverse but inter-related issues.
3. Serve as the basis for comparison between the preferred future and the future that is most likely to result from stakeholders’ actual decisions.
4. Provide direction for investments (public and private, regional and local) that will make a preferred future more likely.

Vision Statement Contents

1. Vision and Goals Statements

Vision statements are succinct descriptions of the region as stakeholders want it to be in the future. Typically they are one or a few sentences in length. They are intended to inspire the reader. They do not provide a detailed explanation of the policies or steps that will be taken to achieve a vision. For example, the Vision Statement for the Envision Utah process is “Keeping Utah Beautiful, Prosperous and Neighborly for Future Generations”.

Goals provide a more specific description of the desired future situation than is found in the Vision Statement. Usually, a set of goals is created so each goal addresses a specific topic or issue area that is important at the regional level. Since goals describe the region’s condition at some point in the future, they explain the intended results of the decisions, actions and investments that will occur over time. They provide general policy direction but not specific details or information on implementation tools and techniques. The goals for Envision Central Texas are shown in the box to the right.

The purpose of vision and goal statements is to express a shared regional agreement about a desired future and to serve as the foundation for support and action by stakeholders and decision-makers.

North Texas does not currently have a vision or set of goals statements that describe the region’s desired future. This Vision North Texas ‘policy document’ would be the first such statement for our region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Envision Central Texas Goals</th>
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<tr>
<td>• An environment that is beloved and protected forever.</td>
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<td>• An effective transportation system that “got ahead of the curve”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• An economy that is dynamic and diverse, with job opportunities throughout the region.</td>
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<td>• A variety of housing choices affordable for everyone in the region.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Actions that demonstrate an understanding that social equity and racial harmony are important values that strengthen the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The protection and enhancement of our neighborhoods, towns, rural areas, historic sites and special sense of place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Regionwide understanding and the spirit that our fortunes are tied together.</td>
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</table>
2. **Regional Infrastructure Frameworks**

Regional investment in infrastructure – such as highways, water supply reservoirs or major parks – makes an important difference to a region’s livability and economic success. The capacity, location and other characteristics of this infrastructure shape the region’s development patterns and the infrastructure investments of local communities and property owners. As a result, the decisions related to infrastructure investment play a major role in a region’s ability to achieve its desired vision of the future.

Regional infrastructure frameworks map out the location, type and scale of the infrastructure that is significant at the regional level. They include existing and planned systems because they should show the infrastructure intended to meet the needs of the region’s future residents and businesses. Written statements accompany the maps or other graphics to explain notable design issues or other factors that are important to ensure that the investments provide maximum support for the desired vision and goals.

The term ‘framework’ means that this document is not a detailed plan. It establishes the primary elements of the system, whether these are facilities in key geographic locations or design principles that guide the construction of the facilities. Detailed plans must be developed to carry out the ideas expressed in a regional infrastructure framework. These detailed plans are the responsibility of the cities, special districts or regional entities that are charged with providing the specific services.

The North Texas region already has plans that guide investment in regional infrastructure. The Mobility 2030 Plan approved by the Regional Transportation Council in January 2007 is the latest in a series of plans that direct funding for major transportation facilities. The Region C Water Plan, adopted by the Texas Water Development Board as part of the 2007 State Water Plan, identifies the facilities needed to meet regional water needs for 50 years (2010 – 2060).

A Regional Infrastructure Framework would build on these existing plans and would set the stage for their update and revision over time. The research and discussions (about topics such as future growth levels, development locations and levels of service) that informed these plans would serve as the basis and starting point for the creation of this framework. It would differ from these plans in some notable ways:

- The Framework would be less detailed than these plans, since it would be intended as a statement of broad policy direction. In the future, updates of these system plans could be based on the broader direction established in the Framework.
- It would not address a single type of infrastructure, but would instead consider all major systems. So, for example, it would be a tool to ensure that the plans for water supply and transportation are coordinated.
- It would cover the entire 16-county region and might consider a longer time horizon than these detailed plans do.
- It would include other forms of regional infrastructure that are not now included in the existing plans. The region’s ‘green infrastructure’ – its natural assets, open spaces and
ecosystems – would be included. An ‘energy infrastructure’ for the region might be created within this framework. Other significant regional assets, such as educational institutions, cultural facilities or major sports venues, might be included.

A Regional Infrastructure Framework would give local decision-makers, such as cities and private property owners, better information about planned regional investments. It would create a regional foundation for their own comprehensive plans, capital improvement programs and developments.

3. Regional Urban Form or Development Pattern Scenarios

A scenario depicts a possible future based on a set of assumptions and policy choices. Scenarios that show a region’s urban form or development pattern include a graphic or conceptual map of the geographic distribution of urban activities.

The process of scenario analysis is used to evaluate the results of different policy choices or trends and to examine how well these results meet stated goals. Usually, a range of scenarios are defined and studied. The comparison of those results may lead to a preferred scenario that sets policy; in some cases, more than one scenario is used to set policies that respond to specific changes in external factors (such as the price of oil).

Regional scenarios are not land use maps and do not show parcel-level detail. They use broad categories to describe key features of the development mix or intensity and they depict these on a map that gives a general sense of the regional pattern. Thus, they provide general regional direction; the plans and regulations of local communities are still the basis for decisions on specific uses of individual properties.

Scenario analysis has been widely used in the public and private sectors for several decades. One example that shows the value of these graphics is the map produced as the result of the Reality Check Los Angeles workshop. The image on the following page clearly defines the challenge facing that region and then depicts four scenarios that might address it.

The first phase of Vision North Texas used scenario analysis to study various development options. It included a scenario based on the NCTCOG 2030 forecast and two scenarios (“rail” and “infill”) developed as part of NCTCOG’s transportation planning process. The 15 groups at the first Regional Visioning Workshop each created a scenario of potential future development, and a final “polycentric” scenario was created based on the work of those groups.

For this policy document, one or more scenarios could be used to describe desirable future patterns of urban form or development. Most regions establish a single preferred scenario or development framework; examples from Los Angeles, Northern Illinois and San Diego are included here.
The participants of the Reality Check visioning exercise reached some striking conclusions:

- **More Infill Development**: Most participants recognized the need for more infill development, putting 50% of the new growth (3 million people) in existing urban areas.

- **Higher Densities**: In order for the chips to “fit” nearly all participants concluded that at least half of the forecast single-family detached residential should be developed at a higher-density.

- **“Unthinkable” Locations**: The shortage of vacant, developable land forced participants to place growth in previously “unthinkable” locations, such as the El Toro Marine Base. Most participants projected doubling the population of Ventura County.

- **New Development Forms**: More than half of the participants decided that growth should be located in a ring of peripheral “new towns” such as Santa Clarita, Palmdale, Victorville, San Jacinto, and Temecula. Others envisioned dense urban infill “transit corridors”.

- **Enormous Infrastructure Investment**: While the exercise did not require the participants to articulate infrastructure solutions for the regional plans, the need for huge investment in transportation, water, and sewer systems was apparent to the participants.
The 2040 Regional Framework Plan provides a vision for meeting land-use challenges in the most efficient, coordinated and sustainable manner. The 2040 Regional Framework Map illustrates this vision for growth with a framework of Centers, Corridors and Green Areas.

Centers

Centers in 2040 are vital, compact developments that reflect a close relationship between economic and livability goals. They provide efficient access to residential, employment, retail and civic activities, while also connecting corridors and green areas. These environments are rich with historic, architectural and natural resources that improve the community’s quality of life and economic vitality:

- Growth is redirected from undeveloped areas at the urban fringes to vacant and underutilized land within the existing urban area.
- Transit-Oriented Development/Redevelopment (TOD/TOR) provides access to a variety of transportation options and mix of land uses.
- Employment centers are concentrated near affordable housing and multiple modes of transportation, providing quick access to government, service and other support functions.

Corridors

Corridors in 2040 provide efficient, contiguous, multi-modal and environmentally sensitive transportation and activity connections between compact centers. They contain mixed land uses that best meet the needs of local communities and the region:

- Compatible land uses and development patterns along the region’s corridors foster efficient and healthy travel behaviors and a sustainable transportation system.
- Corridor intersections connect with various modes of transportation from trains and buses to bicycles and boats.
- Transportation and facility infrastructure is integrated into the natural and built environment in a manner that minimizes impacts to valued natural and cultural resources.

Green Areas

Green Areas in 2040 connect communities and protect natural habitats while contributing to the economy and overall livability of the region. They provide valuable assets for health, well-being and enjoyment; active corridors for recreation; and walking and biking connections between destinations and communities:

- The watershed – a land area that drains to a single body of water – is managed to protect the quantity and quality of water resources, and green areas are protected and managed to enhance biodiversity.
- Hiking, swimming, biking, picnicking and other outdoor recreation opportunities are abundant, accessible and close to home.
- Stakeholders and local governments are fully educated about the economic benefits of farming and the public cost of converting farmland to low-density residential development.
4. Guiding Principles

A final component of the Vision Statement is a set of guiding principles. These principles are written statements that provide more detailed direction about the policy direction North Texas expects to follow in order to achieve its vision. These principles serve two important purposes:

- They are the basis for education of the general public and encouragement of public & private action consistent with the Vision.
- They can be used to set priorities for regional investments & incentives, such as infrastructure funding or participation in demonstration programs.

The NCTCOG Executive Board adopted the current Principles of Development Excellence in 2001. These principles (found on the next two pages) would be the starting point for this Vision Statement’s guiding principles. Stakeholder review and discussion might lead to updates, additions or refinements. For example, several groups at the Vision North Texas Leadership Summit felt that a principle related to education should be added to this list.

Regional Vision Statement – Recap

The Regional Vision Statement is proposed to include the four items described above, which must be designed so they are consistent with one another:

- A broad statement of vision and goals;
- A regional infrastructure framework that integrates all major infrastructure systems;
- One or more scenarios that depict desired or preferred regional urban form and development; and
- A set of guiding principles.

Creating of such an overall or coordinated regional vision also gives North Texas a new way to address the region’s role in the nation and the impacts of global issues on North Texas. A new research project, America 2050, is the latest effort to document the growth of a small number of megaregions across the nation. The “Texas Triangle”, including Dallas-Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio and Houston, is one of these. Vision North Texas could use this research to frame decisions on issues in this part of the megaregion; the policy document that results would help this region use these national trends to its advantage.

Similarly, concerns about climate change have increased in the past few years. Companies, cities and individuals are considering the implications of this issue on their future. Action to reduce a household’s contribution to climate change include concepts such as reducing the household’s “carbon footprint” and seeking local food and other products as a way to reduce the energy costs related to global shipping. This Vision North Texas policy document could set a regional direction on these issues and provide assistance (through the Action Package) to individuals, businesses and communities seeking to make these changes.

This first part of the policy document – the Regional Vision Statement – provides a clear description of the North Texas region that Vision North Texas participants and regional stakeholders hope to realize in the future.
Mission Statement
The mission of the Development Excellence initiative is to promote quality growth in North Central Texas that

- enhances the built environment,
- reduces vehicle miles of travel,
- uses water & energy resources effectively and efficiently, and
- helps advance environmental stewardship

in order to ensure continued economic vitality and provide the highest attainable quality of life for all residents.

NCTCOG’s Executive Board adopted this mission statement and an accompanying set of 10 Principles of Development Excellence in 2001. These concepts guide cities, counties, school districts, other public agencies, and the private sector as they plan and create future development and redevelopment in the region:

Ten Principles of Development Excellence

1. **Development Options** – Provide a variety and balance of development options and land use types in communities throughout the region

2. **Efficient Growth** – Foster redevelopment and infill of areas with existing infrastructure and promote the orderly and efficient provision of new infrastructure

3. **Pedestrian Design** – Create more neighborhoods with pedestrian-oriented features, streetscapes, and public spaces

4. **Housing Choice** – Sustain and facilitate a range of housing opportunities and choices for residents of multiple age groups and economic levels

5. **Activity Centers** – Create mixed use and transit-oriented developments that serve as centers of neighborhood and community activity

6. **Environmental Stewardship** – Protect sensitive environmental areas, preserve natural stream corridors, and create developments that minimize impact on natural features

7. **Quality Places** – Strengthen community identity through use of compatible, quality architectural and landscape designs and preservation of significant historic structures

8. **Transportation Efficiency** – Develop land uses, building sites, and transportation infrastructure that enhance the efficient movement of people, goods, and services

9. **Resource Efficiency** – Provide functional, adaptable, and sustainable building and site designs that use water, energy, and material resources effectively and efficiently

10. **Implementation** – Adopt comprehensive plans and ordinances that support Development Excellence and involve citizens and stakeholders in all aspects of the planning process
Part 2: An Action Package

Purpose

An action package would:
1. Include a system of incentives that enables stakeholders to make decisions that support regional goals.
2. Establish partnerships and collaborative action by private and public stakeholders.
3. Give stakeholders a way to consider regional goals and impacts as part of their own planning and investment decision-making processes.
4. Provide a set of tools that stakeholders can use to make decisions and investments that support a preferred future. (Tools could be maps and databases, design concepts or guidelines, model ordinances, financial programs, decision-making guides, research results or other items.)

Though the ‘action package’ would be a part of the policy document created in Vision North Texas Phase 3, some items would be provided in ways other than in a single document. Websites, reference documents, training programs and videos would all play a part in making these items available to North Texas stakeholders.

Action Package Contents

1. Tools & Technical Assistance

Few of the actions, decisions and financial investments that will shape the region’s future are made at the regional level. Most are made by cities, counties, special districts, developers, business executives, homeowners, leaders in community and civic organizations, and regional residents. If these diverse decision-makers are to make choices that support the regional vision, they must believe that these choices meet their own needs as well as those of the region. For this reason, tools and technical assistance are an important component of a regional policy document.

Education and information is the first focus for tools and technical assistance. Better information leads to individual choices that make sense in the long term and for the region. For example, many homeowners and property owners do not know how much economic benefit they gain from the trees on their properties and the ‘urban forest’ in the region. Providing this information supports choices that retain or plant trees, thus creating energy and environmental benefits for the region.

A second focus for tools and technical assistance is the provision of examples and models that decision-makers can tailor for their own use. If a community decides it wants to encourage more intense, mixed use development (such as the pattern encouraged by the Principles of Development Excellence), it may need to update its comprehensive plan, change its zoning ordinance or modify its capital improvements programming in the area. Property owners and developers may need examples that illustrate the design details that make such a project...
Vision North Texas is a private-public partnership designed to increase awareness about the growth expected in North Texas and to involve people and organizations in initiatives that accommodate this growth successfully.

The North Texas region already has a number of valuable resources in this area. The CLIDE awards program recognizes local projects that are leaders in development excellence. These award-winners serve as examples for other communities and property owners. The Library of Technical Tools created by the Center for Development Excellence offers many examples and models for use here; additional model ordinances will be developed through continuing work by NCTCOG’s Transportation Department. The Urban Land Institute’s North Texas District Council provides assistance through the work of its technical advisory teams. These and other existing initiatives would serve as the foundation upon which to build this aspect of the Action Package.

Other regions are using similar approaches to achieve their regional visions. Two examples – from the Northern Illinois Planning Commission and Envision Utah – show some of the possibilities for assembling and organizing these implementation techniques.

2. Regional Programs and Investments

The NCTCOG and other regional entities provide funding, operate regional facilities and systems, set policy and manage programs that affect many different aspects of the region. One part of the action package would be an updated set of regional initiatives that would all provide support to some aspect of the region’s vision for the future.

3. ‘Plays’ in the ‘playbook’

One concept for this policy document borrows the sports concept of a ‘playbook’ that contains a number of ‘plays’ that are used depending on the situation at any specific point during the game. In this approach, the policy document offers a set of strategies, along with information about the circumstances when a particular strategy is most appropriate or effective. Thus, the ‘playbook’ provides advice or recommendations local decision-makers can use when dealing with an issue that other communities have faced or are facing.

The specific topics to be included would be determined during the process of creating the policy document. The private and public stakeholders who are involved will provide important input that will help focus on ‘plays’ for priority situations. Such priorities might include:

- Strategies for reinvestment in inner-tier neighborhoods;
- Decision guidance for small towns that are just beginning to face urban issues and pressures;
- Issues analysis for outer tier communities that are considering the advantages and disadvantages of significant geographic expansion;
- Assistance in evaluating the economic implications of support for existing businesses or recruitment of a major new industry; or
## Achieve a Balance Between Jobs and Housing

### NPC Role

- Support Illinois Housing Development Authority Employer-Assisted Housing program. *(P)*
- Assist communities in reviewing and revising local planning policies to encourage an appropriate local and sub-regional jobs/housing balance. *(P)*
- Undertake research around the regional jobs/housing mismatch and coordinate with the Urban Transportation Center of the University of Illinois at Chicago and other appropriate entities. *(P/TBF)*
- Advocate for the state to implement policies and programs to support jobs/housing balance improvements. *(P)*
- Research incentives to encourage residents to live near where they work; for example, public/employer partnerships to provide down payment assistance to employees. *(P/TBF)*
- Research state-financed revolving loan programs to assist local communities in providing appropriate housing types near centers and employment nodes. *(TBF)*
- Research grants available to communities that are working actively to improve their jobs/housing ratio. *(TBF)*

### Potential Local Roles

#### A Promote job and housing opportunities:

- Offer local government employees employer-assisted housing benefits

#### B Implement employer-assisted housing programs

- Help employees purchase a home near their job, using the Fannie Mae Employer Assisted Housing Program and Metropolitan Planning Council model
  - Adopt flexible community policies to facilitate a diversity of housing, including affordable housing, near centers and employment nodes
  - Offer tax relief or other incentives to businesses providing employer-assisted housing programs
  - Encourage businesses to hire from the local labor force

#### C Improve quality of life with a stronger jobs/housing balance
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<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Why</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>How</th>
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<tr>
<td>Promote walkable development that encourages permanently reserved open lands through incentives.</td>
<td>• Slows land consumption, eases pressure on existing open lands • Provides more affordable housing options with more amenities • Provides open areas within communities that can be used for agriculture or outdoor recreation</td>
<td>Local governments, developers, Envision Utah</td>
<td>• Encourage local governments to provide incentives—such as density bonuses—for open space • Actively provide information to local governments and developers on the benefits of communities that incorporate open space</td>
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<td>Promote tax incentives for reuse of currently developed areas.</td>
<td>• Encourages efficient use of existing infrastructure • Helps preserve raw/undeveloped land • Encourages location of new development near existing services, thereby reducing traffic and travel times</td>
<td>Quality Growth Commission, Envision Utah, local governments</td>
<td>• Work with Quality Growth Commission to identify Quality Growth Areas, and propose incentives for development in those areas. • Help cities and towns understand options for encouraging reuse of developed areas</td>
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<td>Support the establishment of transfer of development rights programs to promote protection of open space and maintain quality of life.</td>
<td>• Allows owners of sensitive lands to transfer their development rights to less sensitive areas. • Helps to preserve sensitive lands while preserving private property rights</td>
<td>Local governments, The Nature Conservancy, Utah Open Lands</td>
<td>• Identify communities or areas where development rights could be traded • Establish a mechanism for assigning rights and trading them (various options)</td>
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<td>Support the protection of sensitive lands.</td>
<td>• Protects views and vistas for the larger community • Protects wetlands, watersheds, and wildlife habitat • Helps to protect lands that are particularly sensitive to the impacts of development • Development on steep slopes often causes erosion and instability, and ruins the aesthetic quality of hillsides and ridgelines • Development on steep slopes and sensitive lands often damages critical wildlife habitat and blocks access to recreation areas</td>
<td>Cities, counties, developers, The Nature Conservancy, Utah Open Lands, American Farmland Trust</td>
<td>• Work with local governments to revise zoning codes and develop overlay zones • Inform builders about the damage caused by development on steep slopes and sensitive lands • Work with land trusts to purchase particularly sensitive areas to protect them from development</td>
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<td>Promote use of conservation easements to preserve key/critical land for parks and recreation, open space, wildlife habitat, and agriculture</td>
<td>• Preserves key/critical land for parks and recreation, open space, watersheds, wildlife habitat, and agriculture</td>
<td>Cities, counties, developers, The Nature Conservancy, Utah Open Lands, American Farmland Trust</td>
<td>• Envision Utah work at the local and regional levels to develop plan for a regional network of trails and open spaces • The Nature Conservancy, Utah Open Lands, American Farmland Trust, inform land owners about conservation easements, identify obstacles • Local governments, developers, and Envision Utah work to create and adopt “rural residential cluster” zones to preserve rural or natural areas that have value as agricultural land, natural areas, or community separators.</td>
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<td>Encourage the dialogue and ongoing public discussion of how to identify significant public and/or private funds for critical lands preservation. Push to resolve the appropriate balance of public and private funds to be used.</td>
<td>• Land owners may have a reasonable expectation of economic return on a sensitive piece of land, so acquisition of the land may be the only way to preserve it from development while preserving property owners’ rights. • Major constraint to open space preservation is funding to acquire land or easements. Some lands must be purchased to preserve private property rights. There are successful programs that rely on private funds for land acquisition, while other programs have significant public funding sources (e.g., lottery in Colorado)</td>
<td>The Nature Conservancy, Utah Open Lands, American Farmland Trust, Quality Growth Commission, local governments</td>
<td>• Encourage public and private open space acquisition programs to protect designated sensitive and natural areas on a “willing seller” basis. • Encourage private land trusts to channel available private funds into critical lands preservation • County and community option sales tax program for critical lands • State funding • Tax incentives • Pool available funds and make available to local governments for critical lands acquisition</td>
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<td>Pursue public land trades to create more private developable land, preserve critical lands and watersheds, and protect sensitive lands from development.</td>
<td>• Greater Wasatch Area’s (GWA) land base is limited in part by large federal land holdings surrounding the urban area. Amount of usable land could be increased by trading sensitive private lands into federal hands, in exchange for federal lands that are more appropriate for development.</td>
<td>USDA Forest Service, US BLM/Department of Interior, Envision Utah, The Nature Conservancy, State of Utah, Utah State and Institutional Trust Lands Administration</td>
<td>• Work with cities, counties, and developers to identify sensitive lands currently in private hands • Work with Forest Service, the BLM, and SITLA to identify federal lands appropriate for development, and broker exchanges • Governor’s Office work with regional councils and county councils of government</td>
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• Strategies for comparing investments in significant new infrastructure and enhanced support for conservation and other approaches that reduce resource use.

AIA Fort Worth’s partnership with Vision North Texas is supported in part by a Blueprint 150 grant from national AIA. One result of this initiative will be a set of tools and decision assistance for leaders in small communities that are currently rural but are beginning to be affected by urban growth pressures. These products would be among the ‘plays’ in this Vision North Texas ‘playbook’.

**Action Package – Recap**

The Action Package is proposed to include tools, technical assistance and a ‘decision playbook’. These materials and programs will help private, public and non-profit decision-makers understand how their choices affect the region. They will help these individual decision-makers actually implement the regional vision because they provide the information needed for smarter choices.
Timetable for Discussion

2007
June 4: This topic is the major focus of discussion at the Advisory Committee (AC) meeting.
June 18: ULI North Texas District Council Executive Committee is briefed on the status of this discussion.
June 22: Management Committee (MC) meeting continues discussion; provides direction for staff.
June 28: NCTCOG Executive Board is briefed on the status of this discussion.

July: Staff completes proposal for the role and contents of “policy document”, begins discussion with MC about the process to create the “policy document”.

August: Staff & MC complete discussion of process. A proposal for the Advisory Committee’s consideration is completed.

September: Advisory Committee consideration and recommendation to the MC of a “policy document” and a process for its creation.
September: Management Committee finalizes recommendations.
September: Presentations to, and action by, NCTCOG Executive Board ULI North Texas District Council Executive Committee on the Management Committee’s recommendation.

Creation of this “policy document” will be a primary focus of Vision North Texas Phase 3. Key activities are:

2008 – 2009: Carry out process of research, involvement and debate.
December 2009: Target for adoption of “policy document”.
2010: Begin implementation through local and regional activities.