

Regional Summit 2008 Discussion Topics



The stakeholders of North Texas have clearly indicated that they do not want the region to follow a 'business as usual' approach to its future. At each workshop, participants have expressed strong support for using a 'preferred regional scenario' as the basis for regional investments in infrastructure. This "Regional Choices" report provides the information and analysis to begin creating such a scenario.

Subregional update sessions are scheduled for November 2008. These sessions are intended to share the results of Vision North Texas workshops and research with participants. They will also seek further input on the set of possible scenarios for analysis and on the most important issues to study when comparing these scenarios. They will begin to identify the action tools that are most important to the region's decision-makers and investors. After these subregional update sessions, the Regional Summit in December 2008 will focus this discussion and will recommend scenarios and action tools that will be evaluated and detailed in early 2009.

The questions in this chapter will be explored with stakeholders and regional leaders at the subregional update sessions and the Regional Summit, as well as through online communications. All interested people and organizations are invited to contribute their ideas, concerns, suggestions and other comments.

Results of Research

- 1) What is most notable to you about:
 - a) The people of North Texas today?
 - b) The North Texas development pattern?
 - c) North Texas natural assets?
 - d) Water and energy consumption in North Texas?
 - e) Public facilities in North Texas (for transportation, education, health care, etc.)?
 - f) The character of North Texas communities?
 - g) The economic characteristics of North Texas?
- 2) What features of North Texas today:
 - a) Will have the biggest impact (positive or negative) on the region's future?
 - b) What features are most important to keep and build on?
 - c) What features should the region seek to change?
- 3) Do you have other research you can share with Vision North Texas?

Results of Subregional Workshops

- 4) How well do the groups' ideas reflect your views about the issues North Texas must address?
- 5) Which 'headlines' do you find most notable? Why?
- 6) What regional growth concepts created by the workshop groups do you think are most valuable to the region's future?

Priority Issues for North Texas

- 7) What opportunities should North Texas seize as it looks ahead to 2030 and 2050?
- 8) What challenges must North Texas address in preparing for 2030 and 2050?
- 9) What role should sustainability play in shaping the future of North Texas?
- 10) Which land conservation issue is most important to North Texas' future:
 - a) Storm water and flooding?
 - b) Green spaces in or near neighborhoods?
 - c) Recreation?
 - d) Water quality and quantity in rivers, lakes and streams?
 - e) Habitat and natural areas?
 - f) Scenic views and vistas?
 - g) Historic and cultural resources?
 - h) Agricultural lands?

- i) Connected trail systems?
- j) Some other issue?

- 11) Should the region set its regional investment priorities based on a preferred regional scenario?

Scenarios

- 12) How well does this set of possible scenarios represent a realistic range of possibilities for North Texas' future?
- 13) What aspects are most appealing to you about:
 - a) Business as Usual?
 - b) Connected Centers?
 - c) Return on Investment?
 - d) Diverse, Distinct Communities?
 - e) Green Region?
- 14) What aspects are least appealing to you about:
 - a) Business as Usual?
 - b) Connected Centers?
 - c) Return on Investment?
 - d) Diverse, Distinct Communities?
 - e) Green Region?
- 15) Should any of these scenarios be dropped from evaluation?
- 16) Is there another scenario that should be evaluated?

Performance Measures

- 17)** In deciding on a preferred scenario for the future of North Texas, how important is it to you that the scenario:
- a) Balances jobs and housing in local communities
 - b) Supports revitalization of existing downtowns and neighborhoods
 - c) Enables residents to walk or bike to jobs & shopping
 - d) Provides affordable housing
 - e) Locates new jobs & housing where public infrastructure is currently available
 - f) Is served economically by public infrastructure
 - g) Minimizes traffic congestion
 - h) Locates new homes & jobs near rail
 - i) Improves air quality
 - j) Reduces flooding potential
 - k) Protects water quality in streams & lakes
 - l) Conserves the region's water supply
 - m) Retains open space & agricultural land
 - n) Reduces the region's greenhouse gas emissions
 - o) Conserves energy

Action Items

A vision for the future does not affect change unless there are actions taken to make it a reality. As Vision North Texas studies the set of possible scenarios, it will also begin identifying the most important action items that should be part of the North Texas 2050 Action Package.

- 18)** Incentives (such as Sustainable Communities grants, buyback programs for energy-wasting appliances, density bonuses, tax abatements, tax increment financing districts, other financial incentives)
- a) How important are incentives as part of the action package?
 - b) Which incentives are most essential to a successful, sustainable region?
 - c) What performance measures should be used to monitor the results from the use of incentives?
 - d) What existing incentives could be realigned so they will support a new regional vision?
- 19)** "Best Practices" (specific examples of the application of these concepts to actual communities and projects)
- a) How important are 'best practices' as part of the action package?
 - b) Should North Texas create an online site for sharing information on best practices identified by their owners or supporters?
 - c) Should North Texas document and analyze examples of best practices to provide an objective comparison of project results?
 - d) Should North Texas provide additional recognition for those best practices that show clear and documented results?

- 20) Model action tools** (such as model ordinances for walkable communities or standard tools for calculating solar energy potential on a building roof)
- How important are model action tools as part of the action package?
 - Which topics or issues would benefit most from the sharing of models?
 - What good examples or models can you share?
- 21) Technical assistance** (training programs for business employees on green design, online directories for sustainable local products, volunteer training and coordination)
- How important is technical assistance as part of the action package?
 - Which topics or issues would benefit most from technical assistance?
 - What technical expertise can you share?
- 22) Indicators & milestones to measure progress**
- How important are indicators that measure progress toward a 2050 vision?
 - What performance measures are the most important indicators for North Texas?
 - Should there be an annual 'state of the region' report to communicate about progress?
- Should there be a periodic major review of progress every 5 years or so?
- 23) Consideration of new/modified institutions or structures** (such as a regional revenue-sharing system, creation of a non-profit to underwrite sustainable features in affordable homes, or a regional carbon credit bank)
- How important is a change in institutions/structures to achieve a new regional vision?
 - What changes in existing institutions/structures should be considered as part of action package?
 - Which topics or issues would benefit most from a change in these institutions/structures?
- 24) Are there other items that should be included in the action package?**

Other Issues

- 25) Are you willing to stay involved in creating North Texas 2050?**
- 26) Are you willing to help implement a North Texas 2050 vision for the region?**
- 27) Do you have other comments or suggestions for Vision North Texas?**
- 28) Please provide your contact information to Vision North Texas at www.visionnorthtexas.org if you would like to be contacted about these comments or other aspects of Vision North Texas.**