

Grapevine approves its first apartment projects with new design standards

[Miranda Wilcox](#) 16, 2018



Two apartment communities coming to Grapevine will be the first to be constructed under Grapevine's recently updated multifamily and mixed-use design standards manual.

The Preserve will be built near the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport on the northeast corner of SH 360 and Glade Road, and another three-part retail and apartment community—called The Shacks, The Wallis and The Baker—will be built near Grapevine Mills.

Both developments are expected to break ground by the end of the year.

Architecture firms ArchiTexas and Mesa Planning worked to update the city's design standards manual, which included the development of five character districts in Grapevine that would shape future multifamily development. Those areas include the SH 360/Airport District, the Central Transit District, the Gaylord/Great Wolf District, the Grapevine Mills South District and the Grapevine Mills North district.

“What we wanted to do was build an ordinance that could address each of those districts in their sort of natural settings,” said Craig Melde, ArchiTexas Senior Architect and a consultant for Grapevine projects.

A promotional banner for Prestonwood Christian Academy. The banner has a dark blue background on the left with white and gold text, and a photograph of graduates on the right. The text on the left reads: "PRESTONWOOD CHRISTIAN ACADEMY" in large white letters, "Where students discover their God-given potential." in smaller gold letters, and "Now Accepting Applications for 2018-19!" in white letters on a gold background. A white box on the right contains the text "Click to schedule a tour today!". On the far right is the academy's logo, which features a shield with a cross and a lion, surrounded by the text "PRESTONWOOD Christian Academy".

**PRESTONWOOD
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**
Where students discover their God-given potential.
Now Accepting Applications for 2018-19!

[Click to schedule a tour today!](#)

The purpose of the updated standards, according to city officials, is to protect the multifamily market by locking in higher rents, which increases the quality of Grapevine’s building stock, assures that development maintains the same high quality as other residential options, and promotes design and construction that is appropriate for the landscape as well as the existing environment around the subject property.

Melde said the updated standards help developers understand some of the most sought-after pieces of property in Grapevine and what the city envisions the projects on these areas to become. It also gives the city something to measure against as developers continue to knock on the door of the Dallas Road corridor with its incoming rail station.

Developers build in two districts

Mesa Planning architect Robin McCaffrey said it was important for Grapevine to get out in front of a surge in development in the entire Dallas/Fort Worth area with these standards.

“The [SH] 114 corridor is exploding, and the land [area]supply is just not there,” McCaffrey said. “Grapevine is in the advantageous position of holding a land supply in extremely high demand.”

Greystar Senior Director of Development Andrew Ord said developing The Preserve community under the new development standards was a success.

“We’re developers; we’re great at following rules, but we just need to know what they are first,” Ord said. “The city really did a fantastic job of guiding that process.”

The Preserve will be located in the SH 360/Airport district and will feature hike and bike trails with fitness stations along the path that will eventually connect to the upcoming Bear Creek dog park. The community will have a pool and fitness facility, a golf simulator, courtyards and an open-air barbecue pavilion with multimedia functions.

The location of this district calls for a developer to preserve the natural characteristics, land form and blend with adjacent land use. There are 24 character district-specific standards and four generally applied standards. These are site design standards, building design standards, building construction standards and landscaping.

Billingsley Co. Partner Lucy Billingsley said her company was excited to embrace Grapevine's history and personality with her three-part retail and apartment community of the Shacks, The Wallis and The Baker, which will be constructed in the Grapevine Mills North district.



“Grapevine’s new development standards are the best thought-through standards of any city we have worked with,” she said in an email. “They help every developer bring a project that creates a great place.”

Billingsley Co.’s project required infill development and connectivity to the major freeways, the golf course and the mall as well as the other 24 character district-specific requirements and general requirements.

Melde said he recommends any potential developer to go out and explore these districts before making a presentation to the council.

“Understand the district you’re in and understand the context, because what we really wanted to do is ensure that what’s built fits the character of that particular district,” he said.

Applying new standards to transit district

Having approved the character districts, the city is now going back to focus on design specifics aimed at more than just multifamily in the Central Transit District along Dallas Road, where city officials said the incoming TEXRail station and boutique hotel will spark increased development.

Grapevine City Manager Bruno Rumbelow said this project is a priority because as the rail station and hotel are constructed, at some point during the process the Dallas Road corridor will also be redeveloped.

“Dallas Road will be reimagined, so we’re taking it from an inexpensive strip of concrete that’s meant to serve cars and now we’re going to sort of reimagine it as the pedestrian corridor,” he said.

Rumbelow said the goal is to have the train district focus on pedestrians, which will include improving the architecture and landscape elements to make the area safer for walking.

“Dallas Road should be cool; and it should be a place where people want to gather and it should have architecture that appeals to them and it should be where they feel safe and where there are a variety of things for them to do,” Rumbelow said.

Development Director Scott Williams said the new multifamily standards tie very much into the future vision for the transit district.

“[The transit district] was the one area where it was determined that, ‘Hey if you’ve got some industrial elements there that if you work into the architecture here it would be appropriate because that historically is what you’ve seen down here,’” Williams said. “I think when you get away from multifamily and you start talking about the rest of the buildings down there, you start to see some of those same elements incorporated. We are still in that process, but we’re using the same people that designed those multifamily standards.”

He credits the Aura Four44 apartment complex as a catalyst for the redevelopment in the transit area. The building, located at 444 E. Dallas Road, was formerly a manufacturing site before it was sold and became a mixed-use development.

“The standards had not been developed at the time the Aura was built ... what the Aura did was let everyone see what you could have, potentially, and it let them see the value of those design standards,” Williams said. “So even though the standards weren’t there, we saw how good it could be if you incorporated some standards.”

Rumbelow said the reimagining of the Dallas Road corridor will take time and will be presented to the council in pieces throughout the summer.