

EDUCATION

DFWI raised funds and has engaged U3 Advisors to help craft the case for a Texas A&M School of Law school-anchored multidisciplinary technology and policy hub for North Texas and beyond. The academic and industry case for this campus is being built and local support is being cultivated. As we emerge from the age of coronavirus, bold civic initiatives like this will be required to capitalize on Fort Worth's inherent strengths and future potential. The U3 Advisors study will be finished soon.



TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Downtown is the hub of our county's transportation network and as progress is made on the high-speed rail connection between Houston and Dallas, much is being done to ensure that the train continues to Fort Worth's Central Station. This connection will strengthen Downtown's position as a transportation center, linking not only to DFW International Airport and other north Texas destinations, but to Houston and eventually Austin and points beyond.

DFWI has begun its Lancaster TIF-funded project to design and build a pedestrian connection between Lancaster Avenue and the T&P transit platform. This project will include a plaza linking the street and the building, improved wayfinding signage, landscaping, lighting and tunnel improvements.

Trinity Metro is well underway in their planning effort to restructure how they will serve the greater Fort Worth transit customer through route, vehicle and technology improvements. For more information on this program, visit RideTrinityMetro.org.

HERITAGE & PADDOCK PARKS PROGRESS



A signature DFWI-City of Fort Worth parks project has gained momentum. \$7.3M was approved by the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) for road and pedestrian improvements around the courthouse as part of the Heritage and Paddock Parks and Courthouse Area Improvement Project. The RTC staff also suggested potential future support for the park plan's accessibility solution down to the river – subject to other park elements' funding and RTC approval.

The Amon G. Carter Foundation, Sid Richardson Foundation, Streams and Valleys, Tarrant County and the City of Fort Worth have been invaluable in helping us achieve this progress.

Private and public fundraising will be required to complete the 50% match that DFWI has pledged to raise. The other 50% of the project's capital funding is hoped to be included on the next capital improvement plan bond program.

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by ANDY TAFT
DFWI President

COMMERCIAL GAINS AND PROMOTION

The promise of a vaccine or sustained infection rate drops seem to be the linchpins upon which some companies are making return to work decisions. Thankfully, we are seeing a return of employees to Downtown office buildings and greater traffic to Downtown's restaurants and street level retailers. Some restaurants are reporting double-digit gains every month since reopening. However, the numbers are still off significantly and the ongoing challenges cannot be ignored.

Office users are encouraged to return, safely and as soon as possible.

DFWI's marketing staff continues to promote our merchants as we work through these times. Downtown is fortunate that so many projects planned and started before the pandemic have continued apace. Visit dfwi.org/projects to learn more about current and planned projects.



HOSPITALITY GROWTH



On September 28, the 246-room Marriott AC Hotel opened at the corner of Main and 5th Streets. The 232-room Kimpton and 240-room Sandman hotel construction

projects are underway.

Fort Worth and Arlington will be co-hosting the National Finals Rodeo (NFR) December 3-12. This event, usually held in Las Vegas, will be a huge shot in the arm for our Downtown hoteliers and merchants. DFWI is working with Visit Fort Worth and the city to ensure that NFR attendees have a safe and entertaining time during their stay.



RESIDENTIAL GROWTH

The importance of a robust Downtown residential population has been elevated during the COVID period. Now with more than 10,000 residents in the immediate Downtown neighborhood, this growing base of consumers has been a critical source of support for Downtown restaurants and retailers.

Thankfully, even more Downtown residents are on the way. On Lancaster, the 330-unit Burnett Lofts have risen from the ground and the 225-unit Kent Lofts has been approved by the Downtown Design Review Board. On the north end of Downtown, ground will be broken soon on the 295-unit Huntley Apartments and the 387-unit Jameson at the Bluffs apartments is nearing completion.