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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Learn the facts about Plano Tomorrow

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the City of Plano really planning on adding 40,000 more apartments?

No. Misinformation is spreading throughout our community regarding the Plano Tomorrow Plan. The claim that the City intends on adding 40,000 apartments is simply not factual nor is it included in any portion of the plan. This number is posted on the PlanoFuture group's website and in an advertisement in The Dallas Morning news. It is not part of the Plano Tomorrow plan.

Response of PlanoFuture

The City is grossly misrepresenting its position here. There could easily be 40,000 new apartments in Plano under the Plano Tomorrow Plan. PlanoFuture citizens repeatedly asked the city to state the number of apartments that could be added under the Plan and to include limits on the number of apartments that could be added to the City's housing stock. PlanoFuture's statement has consistently been that under the Plano Tomorrow Plan, 40,000 apartments could be added to the City's 29,000 apartments that existed at January 1, 2014. PlanoFuture in fact provided a specific analysis by location to support this statement and asked the City to comment and respond to the analysis. The City steadfastly refused to do this and also refused to make any statements regarding the number of apartments that could be added because they knew that if the truth was told, the Plan would be rejected by the citizens at large. 40,000 additional apartments will result in an estimated 70,000 to 80,000 residents being added to the 265,000 residents of Plano as of January 1, 2014. At the end of this document, there is a schedule showing the 10,000 apartments added or approved by zoning ordinance for future additions between January 1, 2014 and September 30, 2015, and the 1,310 additional apartments approved by zoning ordinance between October 1, 2015 and October 31, 2016. PlanoFuture's estimate by specific area of the additional 24,000 apartments that could be added under the Plan is discussed below.

So how many apartments is Plano planning to add?

According to the city's [Annual Housing Study](#), an estimated 15,329 more housing units, including all housing types, may be added in the Plano market. **Our population estimate is 300,000**, adding less than 30,000 in population from where we are today. That is inconsistent with 40,000 more housing units of any type. The 300,000 population estimate includes 6,000 new housing units on unspecified sites, which demonstrates efforts to anticipate growth such as redevelopment of Collin Creek or more transit-oriented development near the Parker Road DART station.

Response of PlanoFuture

One of our points is that from 2000 to 2013, the city consistently told its resident that its population would “max out” at 280,000 and that it did not expect to reach that level until the mid-2020’s. With recent actions, the city would have to refuse substantially all future re-zoning requests to the population to 300,000 and also to limit the additional apartments to the 15,329 discussed above. As shown in the schedule at the end of this document, the City has already added or approved 11,000 apartments since January 1, 2014 and is currently working with developers on an additional 1,000. The city has also publicly stated that it wants to add 2,000 more apartments along the DART rail line (we think it will actually be much more over time). These units will bring the city’s population to over 300,000 from the 280,000 of today (it was 270,000 when this discussion started). The City references its own 2015 housing study in support of its 300,000 population estimate. The 2015 housing study was based upon the old comprehensive plan and does not consider the changes caused by the Plano Tomorrow Plan.

PlanoFuture asked the City on several occasions to state a maximum number of apartments and population that could be added under the Plano Tomorrow Plan, but the city refused to do this. The areas designated as Complete Compact Centers (Mixed Use) Neighborhood Centers (Mixed Use) and Transportation Corridors are all areas that could result in additional apartments under the Plan, including through redevelopment to replace existing neighborhood shopping centers with apartments. Since the Plan was adopted, the city has also approved additional high density apartments in areas that the Plan designated as “Neighborhoods” and “Expressway Corridors” and which were defined as “generally not appropriate” for multi-family. The ramification is that there is essentially no area of the city that is off-limits to high density apartment development.

How many apartments does Plano have now?

Plano has 26,276 multifamily units and 6,436 urban (townhome and multifamily combined) units as of January 1, 2015. It is difficult to imagine Plano more than doubling the number of multifamily units over the next 30 years, due to the limited amount of undeveloped land, availability of land in outer-ring suburbs, reality of market cycles, and challenges related to redevelopment of property.

Response of PlanoFuture

We had to laugh at this response and the City’s attempt to mislead its citizens. Suddenly 4,000 apartments were designated as “urban units” rather than apartments. The city’s published Housing Study, dated March 2015 placed the number of [apartments](#) in the city as of December 31, 2014 at 29,000 and we know thousands have been added since. So now there are only 26,000 apartments and 6,400 “urban units?” The City appears to be saying that a

500-unit 6 story wood building that is 100% rental is an “urban unit,” not an apartment. Do they really think they draw a distinction between an apartment building and an urban unit?” How dumb do they think we are?

By the way, the City’s count of 32,712 apartments and urban units at January 1, 2015 increased to 34,079 as of December 31, 2015, per the City’s housing study with thousands of more units already under construction (1,513 units at Legacy West, 462 units at Legacy Town Center/ Robb & Stuckey, 465 units at Broadstone Park Place, 350 units at Rasor/ Preston Town Center, 386 units at Aura One90, and 190 units at Southern Land/ Muni-South) (total 3,366).

How many apartments has Plano approved since January 2014?

Since January 2014, the city has approved zoning for 5,832 units of multifamily or mid-rise housing. The majority of which (4,244 units) are in three urban centers (Legacy West, Heritage 190, and Beacon Square). The 10,000 figure that has been posted on the PlanoFuture group’s website is inaccurate and incorporates developments approved prior to 2014.

Response of PlanoFuture

Again, the City is parsing words here to distort the truth. PlanoFuture specifically stated that there had been 10,000 units added or approved since January 1, 2014. Included in this count were apartments that may have been approved in 2013 but were not yet built. Our point was that the average citizen does not know about new apartments and increased residents until they are actually completed. Our statement was clearly measured against the 29,000 apartments available for occupancy as of January 1, 2014, per the City’s housing study. Again, at the end of this document, we have provided a specific listing of the 10,000 units added or approved since January 1, 2014 to late 2015. That listing also shows that the total is now 11,391 (as of October 2016).

What is Plano Tomorrow?

Plano Tomorrow is a long-range guide to the city’s future over the next 20 years. It is a key long-range guide for the future growth, development and redevelopment of our city. It is not binding. It is only a plan, a set of guidelines for the future. Plano Tomorrow is indeed comprehensive. It has 41 policies, 273 action statements, 10 key components and 5 supplementary maps.

Response of PlanoFuture

Our issues with the comprehensive plan focused on the Land Use map and many areas the Plan allows high density housing. Plano’s historical comprehensive plan limited the density of apartments and required separation between apartment developments consisting of more than 500 units. The Plano Tomorrow Plan allows the addition of high density housing throughout the city in over 20 locations and allows many areas currently zoned commercial / retail to instead be used for high density residential. Example corners include Parkwood & Windhaven, Spring Creek & Preston, Parker & Independence, Parker & Custer, Parker & Alma. Many of these locations and the potential impact on the number of apartments associated population are discussed in the chart at the end of this document. PlanoFuture gave the city very specific objections to Plan provisions and specific edits to the document. These changes were supported by the hundreds of interested citizens that attended multiple public meetings on the

Plan and in over 1,000 emails and letters sent to the city. The City and our Council ignored the citizens and passed the Plan virtually unchanged.

While there are many statements and policies in the Plan unrelated to housing development, these are obvious superfluous statements. These are statements like “we should continue to improve our parks and encourage more bike paths” The statements might as well have been about motherhood and apple pie. They were unnecessary because they were obvious and are not the subject of any controversy. It appears these statements were included primarily to make it appear the Plan was much broader and more involved than land development and to deflect attention from the land development policies. The Plan buries the controversial policies deep into an extraordinarily long document to keep the public from understanding the implications.

If approved, will Plano Tomorrow be like other City ordinances?

No. Again, it’s only a framework for the future. Any future development must still be approved through the Planning and Zoning Commission and ultimately, the City Council. Nothing has changed. The Commission and Council will consider each prospective development as they have throughout Plano’s history, with objective and careful scrutiny to determine if it is appropriate for Plano. As always, the public is invited to voice their opinions at any Planning and Zoning or City Council meeting regarding any zoning case.

Response of PlanoFuture

The issue is that it will become much more difficult for the citizens to oppose unwanted development. Many of the areas that under the prior plan were reserved for offices, retail or single family homes are now designated as areas where high density multi-family is allowed. While each new project must come before the planning & zoning commission, the fact that high density apartments designated as appropriate by the plan could subject the City to litigation if tries to deny them.

How does Plano Tomorrow impact public safety?

All public safety departments have been active participants in the Plano Tomorrow process. Public Safety Department representatives presented information to the Planning & Zoning Commission and were active participants in drafting language. Public Safety and Emergency Management policies and actions can be found within the Quality of Life component of Plano Tomorrow.

Response of PlanoFuture

The police, fire and EMT functions all expressed concern about the increasing call volume due to population growth and increased response times due to increased traffic. These increases are caused by recent high density development that is only the tip of the iceberg. The city denied these were significant, but the City’s budget for 2016-2017 called for a 11% increase in spending for police and a 12% increase for fire to deal with these critical issues. Property taxes on the average home in Plano have increased by 18% over the past two years and the increase in police and fire spending have been a major driver of those increases.

How does the plan help ensure quality learning within the city?

Education is an important characteristic of the Plano Tomorrow plan and is stated within the plan's overall vision statement. Two specific policies are provided within the Quality of Life and Regionalism components of the plan that address education. The Plano Tomorrow plan contains 15 action statements related to education, with 8 already in progress. Within these action statements include direction to create facility siting guidelines for locations of future schools within the four school districts that serve the City of Plano. These statements help ensure the city remains a vested partner with the school districts and higher education institutions to continue high quality learning within the city. All notifications for zoning changes are provided to the school districts prior to the public hearings and the districts will provide enrollment and capacity information when a rezoning request is under consideration. The city meets yearly with the school district to review demographic data to help ensure schools have satisfactory capacity to serve Plano's students. This practice has been highly effective over the last several decades as dozens of schools were built to accommodate new residential development.

Response of PlanoFuture

The issue we had with the city and comments we made were that the City and School Board were not talking to each other and as Mayor Harry L. stated, "I don't tell the school board what to do and the school board shouldn't tell me what to do with land in the City." Some of the city council members and P&Z commissioners stated that "apartments do not have children." In fact, we have seen a number of major expansions in the city without any thought given to the long-term impact on our schools. The fundamental problem as we see it is that initially most new apartment complexes have only a few children and this is what the city evaluates. However, as the residents become more settled and the complex ages, the number of children grows significantly and does impact the schools. To evidence this, we looked at an area of PISD with a high concentration of apartments similar to the high-density development envisioned by the Plano Tomorrow Plan. That area of less than one-half of a square mile required 22 school buses to take all the children to school. To limit the impact, PISD ended up dividing the elementary school students and sending to them three elementary schools (Huffman, Haggard and Mitchell). In spite of that division, the portion of the children from this concentrated area going to Huffman constituted over half of the students and had such a pronounced impact on the school, that it went from exemplary to a failing school. As a result, the majority of parents in the immediate Old Shepard neighborhood sent their children elsewhere (to Centennial, Barksdale, Hightower or to a private school).

How much land is left to develop in Plano?

Plano only has about 7% of its land still available for development. Plano will reserve its remaining undeveloped land for high quality development with distinctive character, emphasizing businesses offering highly skilled employment and limiting housing and retail uses, except when integrated into compact complete centers to ensure adequate land for projected employment growth.

Response of PlanoFuture

The issue with this response is that the city ignores two facts. First, although the city talks about "Compact Complete Centers" as if they will all be like Legacy Town Center, with offices, retail, entertainment and some housing, that is not repeatable. The Legacy area has over 60,000 employees and this is projected to grow to 90,000 employees. Many of the areas designated as "Compact Complete Centers" have very few jobs currently

and, in our view, are destined to be largely a concentration of several high-density apartments with a handful of fast food, dry cleaners and other low value establishments. Second, although the city response acts as if these will only be allowed in “compact complete centers,” the Plano Tomorrow Plan intends to allow similar types of high density apartments in many areas throughout the city. These include many neighborhood shopping centers such as Park & Preston, Preston & Spring Creek, Parker & Independence, Parker & Custer and Parker and Alma. Even areas designated as “neighborhood” are not safe. In October 2016, the City approved a 500 unit, 5 story high density apartment building in an area designated as neighborhood.

What is the overall vision of the Plano Tomorrow plan?

Plano is a vibrant city with attractive and walkable neighborhoods, distinct mixed-use urban centers with active nightlife, strong commercial corridors, and a multimodal transportation system that includes a variety of transit options.

Response of PlanoFuture

The problem as we see it is that the Plan envisions Plano can have 20 areas “just like Legacy.” We all know that will not happen and many of these are destined to be concentrated with high density apartments and little else. The Plan’s idea for “walkable neighborhoods” is to build apartments on the current neighborhood retail corners and then cut paths into the neighborhoods so all those people can walk, bike and drive on neighborhood streets. This is not our vision of a suburban environment. Also, existing apartment complexes, many of which are two stories with ample green space could be demolished in favor of 5 or 6 story high density buildings with 3 times as many apartments (or more).

How does Plano Tomorrow treat existing neighborhoods and businesses?

Plano Tomorrow’s goal is to conserve and enhance established residential neighborhoods. It encourages reinvestment in underperforming commercial sites.

Response of PlanoFuture

“Reinvesting in underperforming commercial sites” are code words for building high density apartments in their place. The City planners seem to think the solutions to all problems large and small is to add more apartments. Areas identified for redevelopment include the four corners at Park & Preston. Sure, there have at times been turnover and temporary vacancies due to the dynamic changes in retail on these corners, but the area is hardly underperforming and history has shown that vacated stores will soon be filled with new interesting businesses.

What about housing additions?

Plano Tomorrow provides a variety of quality housing types that serve diverse households. The plan recognizes that variety is very important in planning for the future.

Response of PlanoFuture

The City’s Plan may talk about a wide variety of “quality housing” options, but the reality is a) there is very limited land remaining in Plano and b) given the choice between single family lots and a high-density apartment complex,

the economics are clearly going to lead a developer to the high-density apartment development, e.g., surely a 500-unit apartment complex can bring in more money than the 10 houses that could be built on the same site. Developers include six square feet of granite countertop and then label their projects as “luxury apartments.” The city has shown it will support apartment construction almost anywhere regardless of the impact on adjoining neighborhoods.

How does Transportation play a role in Plano Tomorrow?

Plano will proactively encourage and incentivize development within walking distance of existing and future rail stations or bus transit centers to create an integrated mix of uses including residential, employment, retail, and civic spaces. Plano will also encourage reinvestment and redevelopment of identified regional transportation corridors to create cohesive developments that incorporate well-designed housing, commercial, and retail opportunities. Plano Tomorrow also recommends to review and update the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) threshold for new and redevelopment projects.

Response of PlanoFuture

The issue as we see it is the city wants to approve developments now long before any rail projects get built and there is no assurance they will be built. For all the talk of “transportation related development,” fewer than 600 daily riders board at Plano’s downtown light rails and this includes people that live elsewhere but get on and off at the station. Although a much greater number of people board at the Parker Road station, the overwhelming majority of them are people from Allen, McKinney, Frisco and other towns that are not in DART’s service area. McKinney buses their residents down to the Parker station even though they are DART members. Finally, when the City touts the development associated with light rail and the improvements in downtown Plano, they fail to state that the City has spent tens of millions of dollars of its citizens’ money to make the downtown area improvements and has given away land and several million dollars of subsidies to developers to build apartments. Why are Plano citizens paying developers to build more apartments so they can they subsidize the city services to these apartments?

How were Plano residents engaged in the process of crafting Plano Tomorrow?

The plan was comprised, in part by our citizens. The Plano Tomorrow plan is based on the visions of the community and required a thorough public outreach campaign along with several detailed work sessions with the Plano Tomorrow Advisory Committee. Over the 26-month period, nearly 4,000 individuals provided input that shaped policies and actions through surveys, open houses, and on-site meetings. With thousands of residents and business owners participating, the Plano Tomorrow Public Outreach Campaign has been the most successful initiative of any update to the city’s Comprehensive Plan.

To promote citizen involvement with the plan, the city sent public survey announcements to 82,000 residents through utility bills and delivered over 5,200 announcements to apartments; made 40,000 calls through a telephone calling service for a telephone town hall meeting; attended several neighborhood meetings including the HOA and Neighborhood Association’s Quarterly Breakfast; held “Take the Case” workshops with schools, neighborhoods associations, and the Plano Chamber of Commerce; hosted a booth at the 2013 International Festival and Plano Balloon Festival; ran an announcement in the Dallas Morning News; hosted four open house meetings at libraries

across the city; hosted two public hearings with the Planning & Zoning Commission; and had over 25 public work sessions and workshops with the Plano Tomorrow Advisory Committee. In addition to posting meeting announcements on the project website, an active electronic newsletter is distributed with nearly 1,500 subscribers to provide updates on the process of the plan.

Response of PlanoFuture

The City's statements are a gross distortion of the facts and the city's response. It appears to us that the "public meetings surveys were a charade that made a mockery of the public input process. Just because the city enclosed a flyer in the "water bill survey notice" in the water bills does not mean that citizens ever looked at it and if they did, it required the recipient to go online to find and complete the survey. The overwhelming majority of the 1,280 surveys the city received said that its citizens did not want high density development and that they preferred offices and single family development of all types to other development. Yet the city tried to misrepresent the responses and say the citizens supported the Plan. Of the written comments the city received about the Plan, at least 85% of them were not in favor of the land use portion of the plan. The citizen comments at the library presentations were primarily negative on the land use plan. The Balloon Festival the city cites drew fewer than 50 comments and almost none of them related to housing, primarily because the city's presentation was very general and instead talked about things like bicycle paths and parks. Altogether, the written and publicly recorded responses the city received were around 2,500 and probably less than 100 expressed support for the land use portion of the plan. Similarly, the city is trying to take credit for going to meetings like the Plano Gardening Club and giving a very general 10-minute presentation that only briefly mentioned land use and made no statement about the large increase in high density development. The participants in these meetings typically had not advance knowledge of the Plan and most had no particular interest. In these presentations, the City typically received one or two general questions and did not get into any discussion of the significant land use changes being proposed. The City's claim that the citizens had input is patently false.

Hundreds of citizens attended five different public meetings on the plan to specifically discuss their concerns. The public comments overwhelmingly opposed the changes to the land use plan. The comments of the citizens at the public meetings and in letters and emails were ignored just as the results of the water bill survey were ignored.

How does the plan preserve Plano's suburban character?

Plano will accommodate regional population growth in identified areas while preserving the suburban character of our community. The Plano Tomorrow Future Land Use Map identifies 91% of the land in Plano as follows: "Neighborhood" or "Neighborhood Center", which state single-family uses are the preferred residential land use type (55%), or "Open Space Network", "Social Network", "Employment Center", or "Expressway Corridor", which state residential uses are generally inappropriate (36%).

Response of PlanoFuture

This language is intentionally vague and weak. We can only conclude wording this way was intended to allow the high-density apartments the city wants. Since the Plan was proposed, the city has approved a number of apartments within 500 feet of expressways including "expressway corridors." P&Z staff is on record as saying the

there are no requirements for setback from expressways, where the previous comprehensive plan required a minimum setback of 1200 feet.

Recently a 500-unit high density apartment building was approved in an area designated as “neighborhood.” The citizens pointed out that the City’s language was intentionally full of weasel words like “generally” so that they could make it appear that they citizens would be protected and the suburban character maintained when the opposite was the actual truth. The Plan changed the designation of much of the Expressway Corridors to Transit corridor for mixed use development and in both of these, the city now says high density housing is encouraged even if it directly fronts an expressway. The noise and air pollution result in a poor quality of life for resident and this was the reason the City’s prior plan did not allow apartments in these locations. The City has also shown a willingness to allow residential development within areas designation as neighborhoods and employments centers, in contravention of its own Plan. The Plan also contemplates that a number of two to four corner retail sites that are surrounded by single family homes could be “redeveloped to include “mixed use apartments.” In short, almost all of the land in Plano that does not currently have a house on it appears to be available for high density apartments.

How can I stay informed on planning issues and new residential development?

The Planning Department publishes the following:

- [Active Zoning Petitions](#) • [Annual Housing Update](#) • [Planning & Zoning Process Simplified](#)

We also encourage you to review [agendas and minutes](#) of upcoming and past meetings with the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council, subscribe to [email alerts](#) when agendas are posted, and subscribe to [Plano City News](#).

Response of PlanoFuture

The city can let you review all the notices, agendas and minutes you want but that does not mean they will listen to its citizens. Having adopted the changes in the Plano Tomorrow Plan, the city’s response to citizens’ concerns about zoning changes now is, “this requested change in zoning was contemplated by the Plano Tomorrow Plan and it already had citizen comments and was approved by the city council.” So too bad citizens, you lose and the City does not have to listen to you anymore.

With so much misinformation on the web and social media, we want you to have the facts and ask you to go to the source: www.planotomorrow.org. For other questions, please email us at planotomorrow@plano.gov.

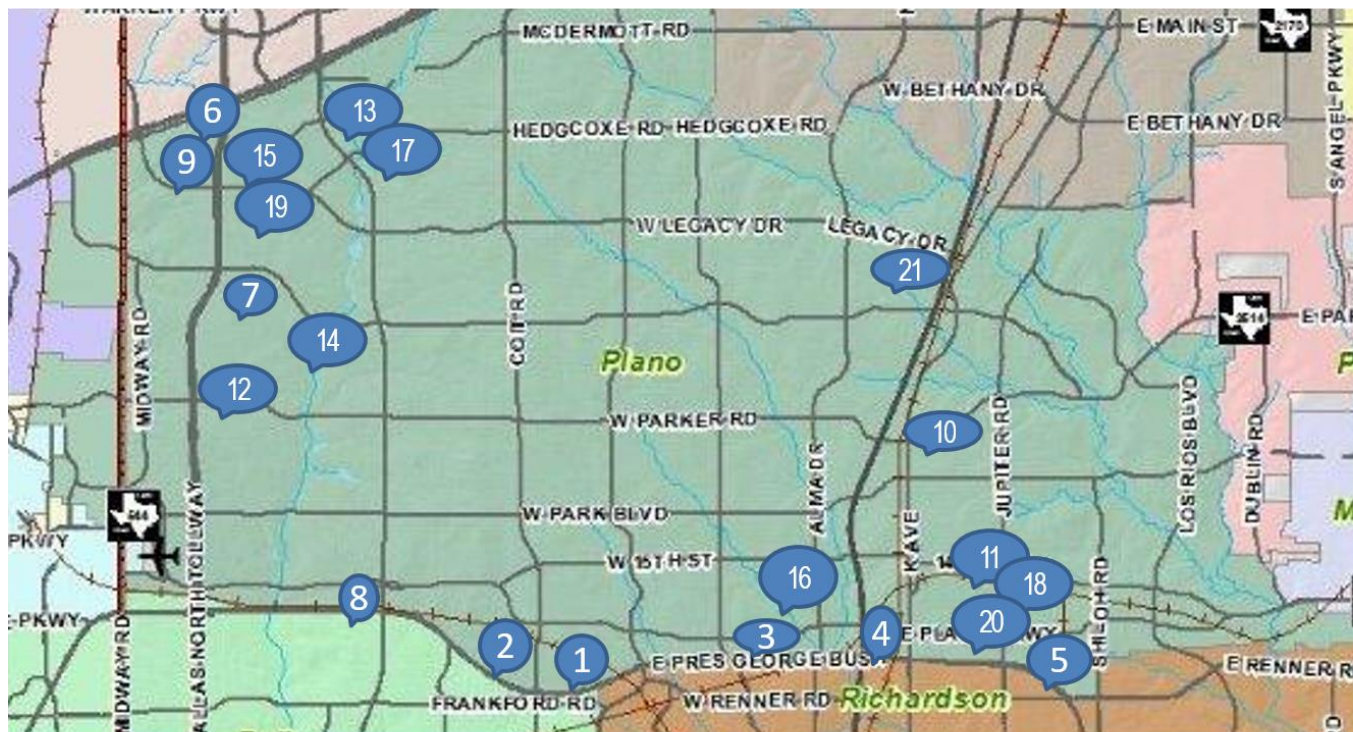
Response of PlanoFuture

The primary misinformation on the web is the City’s own information. The City’s FAQ shows the intent is to mislead its citizens and continue to misrepresent the true aspects and consequences of the Plano Tomorrow Plan.

As the City has used legal maneuvers to deny the Citizen’s petition to allow a vote on the plan, it is apparent that meaningful change will only occur when a majority of the council members that voted for the Plan are replaced.

In May 2017, there will be elections for 4 of the 8 council seats including mayor. We need to see that we get better representation on the council and look forward to the citizens help in that regard.

New Apts after Jan 1, 2014



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| 1. Elan / City Center – 1,241 units | 8. Broadstone Park Place Mid-rise – 465 units | 15. Legacy Town Center (2014) – 396 – units |
| 2. Beacon Square – 1,144 units | 9. Legacy West Multi-family Mixed use - 800 Units (Columbus Realty) | 16. Downtown Plano (2014) – 60 units |
| 3. Heritage 190 - 1,481 units | 10. 15 th & I LLC – 279 units | 17. Rasor Blvd – 500 units |
| 4. Aura One90 – 386 units | 11. Southern Land Muni South– 190 units | 18. Avenue G 224 units Artist Lofts |
| 5. Turnpike Commons - Gateway– 961 units | 12. Amli West Plano Village - 263 units | 19. Legacy Town Center – Robb & Stuckey 462 units Kincaid. |
| 6. Tollway 121 Legacy West - 713 mid-rise units (inc. Palladium 312u and 401u 5 story) | 13. Preston Town Center Mixed Use– 350 units | 20. Plano Marine 10 th & Ave K 385 units |
| 7. 7. Visions5 Mid-rise – 800 units | 14. Spring Creek & Windhaven – 341 - units | 21. TI Campus 750 units – Breezeway AR LC |
- New apartments after January 1, 2014 – 11,391