



HEATH FAQs:

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

SAVE THE DATE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE PUBLIC MEETING

6:30 p.m., Thursday, February 23
Rockwall-Heath High School,
Performing Arts Center
801 Laurence Dr., Heath

This issue of the City's newsletter is dedicated to providing facts about many topics of importance to the Heath community. You can also find these "FAQS" at www.heathtx.com under the FAQS section in the main menu. These FAQS will be updated as needed.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- There is tremendous demand for homes in Heath. Over 2,600 residential lots are currently at some stage of development.
- This will essentially double the roof tops in the community, and drives the need for ongoing Capital Improvement Projects to expand the City's infrastructure.
- Heath's current population is 8,823, and the build-out population is projected to be 25,000.
- The average new home permit value is just over \$545,000 for 2016, while the average home value in Heath is over \$456,000.
- The City is fortunate to have developers, builders and citizen volunteers who are committed to a vision for high quality development as specified by the Comprehensive Plan.
- The Comprehensive Plan is currently in the process of being updated by a group of dedicated citizen representatives, who will present their recommendations at a public meeting on February 23, at RHHS - 6:30pm.

RESIDENTIAL IMPACT ON SCHOOLS

- The other cities located within Rockwall County and served by the Rockwall ISD are also experiencing tremendous growth that impacts everything from roads to school population.
- In August 2017, a third elementary school will open in Heath to relieve the soaring attendance rates at Amy Parks Elementary. The school has been named Linda Lyon Elementary School, and will be led by Principal Megan Gist.
- While this school is located within the City of Heath, City leadership—both elected and on staff—were not involved in the RISD's attendance re-zoning process.

You can learn more about the school and attendance zones at Rockwall ISD's website: www.rockwallisd.org.

TXDOT FM 740 PROJECT

- Heath citizens are impacted daily by TxDOT's widening of FM 740 through the heart of the City. Your patience is encouraged as the contractor works to achieve the anticipated completion date in November 2017.
- The completed FM 740 will ultimately benefit the City's quality of life by adding to a growing trail system with additional sidewalks and trails.
- The widened FM 740 will also help alleviate traffic congestion and provide a safer driving environment.
- The completed FM 740 will have a positive impact on the ability to attract high quality businesses to Heath.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- In January 2014, the City Council adopted a Capital Improvement Plan that provided more than \$20 million in investments to ensure the City remains a premier North Texas community.
- These projects benefit the entire City with improvements to roads, trails, parks, public utilities and other infrastructure. Most are completed or underway.
- This success enables the City to move forward with additional and very important Capital Improvement Plan projects that are much needed, and in some cases, past due.
- Many are necessary to ensure that the City is able to deliver water and sewer services to a growing community.
- At its January 10, 2017, meeting, the City Council approved a new Plan of Finance from the City's financial advisor that funds close to \$20 million in new Capital Improvement Projects, mainly water and sewer facilities.
- The new plan includes the financing of approximately \$6.6 million to fund various projects including streets, trails, a fire truck and public works building improvements. These investments are not anticipated to impact the current tax rate.
- The plan also includes \$13 million to fund critical water and sewer infrastructure to serve a growing community, with a very minimal impact anticipated to service rates.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- City leaders past and present have recognized the need for responsible and quality economic growth to ease the tax burden on residents by increasing the City's sales tax and commercial property tax base.
- Businesses meeting this vision for quality commercial growth have selected Heath as their home.
- In December 2016, it was confirmed that Heath Hub will be built on the retail-zoned site behind CVS on FM 740.
- Heath Hub will be a unique and fun place to gather with friends and family for upscale dining and entertainment.
- Heath Hub is being developed by a group of restaurateurs, who are also Heath residents who want only the best for their hometown.
- City's leaders' vision for a hometown grocer will come to life. In the final days of 2016, official confirmation was received that Tom Thumb will build on the property across from the Shell gas station.
- Council approved the zoning change for a grocery-anchored retail center on this site in July 2015. The developers who recruited Tom Thumb are in the engineering stage and will provide a concept plan in the near future.
- The developers anticipate breaking ground in the mid to latter part of 2017, and to be open for business by the third quarter of 2018.
- Additional businesses opening in Heath include the Hidden Creek special events venue, located on Chris Cuny Boulevard on land owned by the Heath Municipal Benefits Corporation.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- In the City of Heath, we are thankful for those who serve to protect our community, including the Heath Department of Public Safety.
- Each Heath Officer is certified as a police officer, a fire fighter and an EMT. That means as first responders, they are able to give the necessary care or protection needed immediately upon arrival.
- When the tornados hit Rowlett and Garland on December 26, 2015, Rockwall County Emergency Management staff and Heath DPS officers were among the professionals and volunteers who immediately became involved in assisting with response and recovery activities.
- In addition to helping our neighboring communities, the City of Heath and Rockwall Emergency Management staff learned valuable lessons that have been incorporated into Rockwall County's Emergency overall strategies.
- This includes a mitigation plan, a debris management plan, and a community-wide coordinated effort for organizing volunteers and the receipt of donations.
- Each plan will continue to be tested, refined and can immediately be activated if needed.
- Heath citizens are encouraged to do their part by reviewing the emergency update section on the City website, and taking advantage of free emergency warning systems, such as Nixle.com.

FINANCIAL STANDING

- In 2016, the Heath City Council adopted a balanced budget that reduces the tax rate for citizens while funding the addition of a new Public Safety Officer, a Streets and Parks Maintenance staff member, and a Parks Master Plan for improving and expanding the City's park system.
- The City maintains a healthy fund balance and exceptional bond ratings, both cited by the City's independent financial advisory firm, First Southwest, as some of the strongest among the Texas cities it serves.
- The strong financial standing puts the City in a favorable position to fund future projects, as well as refinance past bond debt for a savings.
- The City's current Ad Valorem tax rate is among one of the lowest in North Texas at: \$0.417311 per \$100.
- The City of Heath has earned multiple awards for its best practices in financial management including:
 - Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the U.S. and Canada (GFOA) - 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010
 - Government Finance Officers Association's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award - FY 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016
- You can find the City's current budget at www.heathtx.com under the Finance Department menu, along with other financial reports.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

- Through the past year, Heath citizens gathered for community traditions including Holiday in the Park, featuring the Christmas Tree lighting, music, food and fun; Independence Day Parade and Patriotic Celebration in the Park on July 4; and the Fun & Fit in the Park on Easter Saturday, which featured the Heart of Heath 5k and Family Fun Run.
- Additionally, the City earned important honors worth celebrating.
- In 2016, Heath was not only re-certified as a Texas Scenic City, but was upgraded from Silver to Gold status. This program recognizes Texas cities that implement high-quality scenic standards for public roadways and public spaces, with some very stringent criteria to meet.
- Heath was also rated the 14th Safest Place to Live in Texas.

COMMUNICATION

The City is committed to keeping citizens informed. Here are several ways that you can get City news:

- City website, www.heathtx.com.
- The monthly City newsletter, included in your hard copy utility bill, or as a link if you receive your bill via email.
- City of Heath Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- Attendance at all City Council and Board/Commission meetings—dates are posted at www.heathtx.com
- Sign up for the City's "Notify Me" service to receive an email notice and link to the City Council and Planning and Zoning agendas when posted. You can sign up at www.heathtx.com.
- Contact the City at 972-771-6228, or email a City Councilmember or staff member. Email addresses can be found at www.heathtx.com.

HONORING SERVICE



The City of Heath recently honored employees for their outstanding performance in 2016, including City Employee of the Year, Leisa Price, who received the award from City Manager Ed Thatcher (left).



In addition to naming Leisa Price 2016 Employee of the Year, the City recognized staff members who made a difference in their respective Departments this year. From left:
Brittnee Payne, Community Development EOY
Leisa Price, Overall City EOY
Kristi Smith, Administrative Services EOY
Scott Trammell, DPS EOY
Randy Patton, Public Works EOY
(Randy finally had time to take a day off, and was hunting when awards were presented!)

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

WELCOMING FARMERS INSURANCE, HEATH, TO TOWN!



Farmers Insurance, Heath, is a full-service insurance agency dedicated to handling both the personal and commercial needs of the citizens of Heath.

Located at 201 Laurence Dr. across from City Hall, Farmers Insurance, Heath, owners are committed to providing highly personalized service along with a convenient location in the center of town.

"Heath was our first choice because this is where we live, where we send our own children to RISD schools, and where we're active in the community," says Jason Renteria, Agency Director. "Heath is a great town and deserves a local insurance agency owned and operated by local people working for our residents."

To learn more, contact Farmers Insurance, Heath, at 972-771-1920.