

Bundle 22 – Regional Education

Policies and Actions with Detailed Information

The Plano Tomorrow Policies and Actions were developed through meetings with the Planning & Zoning Commission, City Council, and extensive public outreach. Information on this process can be found here:

- [Public Outreach Process](#)
 - [Advisory Committee Workshops](#)
 - [Adoption Process](#)
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Regionalism – Regional Education

POLICY - Plano will partner with local and regional education institutions to provide quality educational opportunities to retain students in the region and for economic development opportunities to attract businesses seeking universities to provide research and development opportunities.

RE1) Assist the University of Texas at Dallas with obtaining Tier I status through the provision and funding of research opportunities.

Status:

- Complete
- [The University of Texas at Dallas announced its achievement of obtaining a Tier I status on July 25, 2018.](#)

Background:

During the Plano Tomorrow planning process, city staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission identified “[quality education](#)” as one of the top concerns for the city and the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Among the opportunities and issues related to education was the region’s lack of a Tier I university, a major public national institution with a reputation for academic excellence with strong investments for research activities. Tier I universities are instrumental in retaining and attracting a highly-skilled workforce, recruiting major companies to the area, and, in turn, promoting economic development.

While there is no strict definition of a Tier I university, since this action was adopted, the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) has earned two significant accomplishments. First, in [2016](#), the university was one of four Texas universities designated in the highest ranking for research activity by the [Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education](#), or “Carnegie Tier One,” which focuses solely on research prominence, and “is a sign that the universities are moving closer to state leaders’ goal of increasing the number of overall ‘tier one’ universities in Texas.” Additionally, [in 2018](#), UTD achieved critical benchmark criteria to be eligible for the state’s [National Research University Fund](#).

RE2) Advocate with the State of Texas to provide for adequate funding of public education.

Status:

- In progress.
- The city will continue to advocate for state funding of public education.

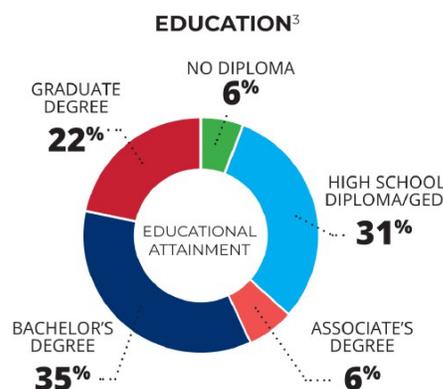
Background:

This action is a continuation of the city’s long-standing history of advocating for and investing in public education and educational opportunities for all people who live in the city. The [1986 Comprehensive Plan Educational Element](#) underscores that providing adequate and equitable public education is fundamental to the quality of life for Plano’s families and children as well as critical to sustaining robust employment opportunities and long-term fiscal sustainability. Notably, the 1986 Plan states:

A major factor in the consideration of a community for potential residential and business locations is the quality of educational opportunities provided to the residents. Education has always been an important component of the culture and expectations of the citizens of Plano. The quality educational opportunities found within the City have attracted many new residents and businesses.

Plano’s commitment to education and to the PISD has resulted in a [highly educated and diverse citizenry](#), which has been one of Plano’s greatest assets. Per the [2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates](#), Plano’s educational attainment for a bachelor’s degree or higher (56.7%) exceeds the average for both the nation (31.5%) and the state (29.3%). The below graphic illustrates a more detailed breakdown of Plano’s educational attainment:

Educational Attainment



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Plano Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan

Policies and Action Statements Relating to Density, Land Use & Growth Management

CPRC Meeting Date: September 15, 2020

Plano has a strong public education system in place with service from the Frisco, Lewisville, and Plano Independent School Districts (ISDs). Additionally, Plano is home to [Collin College](#), which has two campuses in Plano and provides an affordable option for students wishing to receive their first two years of higher education, complete some bachelors programs, undertake vocational training, and learn skills for new jobs in the ever changing economy.

Most of the city is served by Plano ISD, considered a high-quality district; however, there are disparities between schools within the district in terms of quality. As noted during the [Plano Tomorrow planning process](#), “the organization of public education in the state of Texas makes it difficult for cities to intervene as school districts are independent from cities and have their own boards and administrators.” PISD also notes that state policies, [stemming from the 1970s](#), impact the financing of Plano’s public schools, which leads to an unequal distribution of resources. Ongoing support from the city in the form of advocacy to the state for funding of infrastructure critical to education, such as afterschool programming and childcare, comprehensive and affordable broadband service, workforce training and professional development opportunities, safe and reliable transportation, and school meals, will help maintain and improve the quality of Plano’s schools.

RE3) Retain the presence of Southern Methodist University (SMU) and Dallas Baptist University (DBU) within the City of Plano by offering assistance in establishing a permanent space for facilities.

Status:

- Pending
- The Southern Methodist University (SMU) Plano Campus announced it would leave Plano in 2018 and [the campus was sold in 2019](#).

Background:

This action was established to encourage the Southern Methodist University (SMU) and Dallas Baptist University (DBU) satellite campuses in Plano where each institution could create educational experiences, provide professional and research opportunities, and cultivate more on-campus cultural and extracurricular activities. Recruiting and retaining a diverse economy that caters to service providing and good producing skillsets, is predicated on providing higher-education institutions within a city’s jurisdiction. A [report authored by the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities](#) underscores the importance of investing in higher-education, stating:

Colleges and universities enhance the competitiveness of their communities and regions – and also serve global society – through many diverse programs, services, and activities that span realms of human capital / talent development, research and innovation, and stewardship of place...As our institutions succeed in economic development, thus broadly defined, the communities and regions they serve will realize sustained advances in economic prosperity and quality of place, because they become increasingly attractive to entrepreneurs / innovators, businesses, investors, and highly-skilled job-seekers (and even students).

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The below diagram illustrating the relationship between these three components is depicted below.



Southern Methodist University (SMU) is a private school located in Dallas known for strong programs in business and the liberal arts, and had a campus in the Legacy Business Park, between Dallas North Tollway and Preston Road. The campus was more than 20 years old, spanned 16 acres, and included four buildings. In 2019, however, the SMU-in-Plano campus was sold due to [“skyrocketing commercial real estate value.”](#)

Dallas Baptist University (DBU)’s Plano campus, [DBU North](#), is located in west Plano, along Dallas North Tollway between Parker Road and Park Boulevard. DBU North provides adult education programs with courses leading to a variety of degrees.

RE4) Partner with Collin College by providing student opportunities for professional work experience and supporting the institution’s efforts for academic excellence.

Status:

- Recurring and on track

Background:

This action will support existing and new planning and programming initiatives designed to enhance the quality of education and professional opportunities for Collin College students in Plano. Collin College has two campus locations in Plano: [Spring Creek Campus](#) in east Plano, located at the southeast corner of Spring Creek Parkway and Jupiter Road, and the [Courtyard Center](#) in west Plano, located in the southeast corner of Preston Road and Park Boulevard. The Courtyard Center houses the [Continuing Education and Workforce Development Division](#). With over [400 corporate headquarters](#), the city has an ongoing opportunity to collaborate with Collin College, PISD, and civic groups such as [Leadership Plano](#) to expand upon [workforce and development initiatives](#), such as co-op, internship, and apprenticeship programs.