

Star-Telegram

Looking ahead in Westlake with Laura Wheat

BY MARK WRIGHT -- SPECIAL TO STAR-TELEGRAM -

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Westlake Mayor Laura Wheat JUAN GUAJARDO /
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WESTLAKE — Laura Wheat's town is a place of large homes, large tracts, sprawling corporate campuses and no shortage of natural features. In fact, the mayor of Westlake feels her town is quite unlike any other in Tarrant County.

"We look at ourselves as an oasis, and that's how it feels," Wheat said.

That's not going to change anytime soon. In fact, Westlake in 2015 will work to enhance that oasis. The Spanish-influenced Westlake Entrada is in the works at the northeast corner of Solana and Davis boulevards. It's an upscale live-work-play center with a water feature, an amphitheater, plentiful retail, and a mix of single-family housing and duplex style-housing.

This entry way into the town is not meant to compete with any neighboring village-style development. "We're not looking to compete with Southlake Town Square," Wheat said.

No, Entrada is not another Southlake-like development. Instead, it's more of a signature feature for Westlake. And a defining feature is something, Wheat said, that this upscale community has never before had. "It will be a real defining moment for us," Wheat said. "It will give Westlake a sense of place."

Not far from Entrada, the 42-lot first phase of the Granada residential development is underway. Extensive walking trails and upscale homes on acre lots will combine to make the first phase and the future second phase of Granada "one special development."

Westlake, where \$1-million-plus homes are the norm, knows what it will look like this year and in the near future. But the Town Council and Planning and Zoning Commission also have been working on guidelines for the town's long-term development.

The Council will hold a public hearing at its meeting on Feb. 23 about its new comprehensive plan. It's the first overhaul of the plan since 1992.

"We've got a lot going on," Wheat said. "Most of my attention has been spent on finalizing the comprehensive plan."

Finishing touches are being to the west side of Davis Boulevard's \$1.2 million streetscape project.

Those features include intersection lighting, shade structures and the trails that tie into the Granada development's trail features. The oasis will be preserved.

"Everyone in this town is wanting to protect our natural beauty and preserve that look and feel," Wheat said.

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