

The Real Dirt... *a publication of the Benbrook Economic Development Corporation (6th ed.) September 2019*

When you drive past a development project in progress, it's natural to wonder what's coming. And from time to time, you may hear rumors about a new business coming (or not coming) to the area.

The **Real Dirt** is here to help. This publication, produced by the Benbrook Economic Development Corporation (BEDC), shares timely and accurate information regarding development projects in Benbrook. We will tell you everything you want to know about our various projects, **as long as it does not risk jeopardizing a possible deal**. We'll also give you "the real dirt" on our vision, approaches and policies.

The City of Benbrook is committed to vibrant growth, while preserving our *Small Town, Big Backyard* appeal. The BEDC's goal is to help the city grow thoughtfully; we pursue development projects we believe can meet the needs of the community, be successful, and enhance quality of life in Benbrook. After all, this is *our* city, too.

So, here's the real dirt...

Is Braum's still coming to Benbrook (or what?)

Yes! Braum's purchased the old metal storage site at 8909 Benbrook Boulevard from the BEDC last year. They recently obtained their permit to construct a new store with drive-through service. Crews are mobilizing and construction work should begin in the coming weeks.

What's that construction behind Walmart?

Footworks Performing Arts Center is constructing a new dance studio at 9191 Vista Way. The state-of-the-art facility will be 9,000 square-feet. Just north of the studio, Aura Apartments is under construction. This is a 301-unit, high-quality, gated complex. It is a market rate complex; not Section 8 or government-subsidized. And just west of the apartments, the road expansion project is complete, connecting Vista Way to the I-20 frontage road.

The completion of these projects will increase daytime population and create easier access to commercial properties. In turn, we hope these improvements will lead to increased interest in our market from retailers and other commercial users.

What is happening at Benbrook Plaza? I heard [fill in the blank] was going in there.

The owners of Benbrook Plaza are giving the center's entire façade a facelift. The BEDC will reimburse them for a portion of those costs, as has been approved by City Council. As part of the redevelopment, Plaza owners recently demolished the old Radio Shack buildings in the parking lot, making the center both more visible and easier to access.

Dollar Tree, leasing a portion of the old Brookshire's site, is now open. The remainder of the Brookshire's space is not currently under lease. The broker is talking with multiple prospects, but for now, any stories you've heard about confirmed tenants are only rumors.

I heard the City bought Marc's Automotive and other properties at Benbrook Boulevard/Westpark Drive. What's happening there?

The BEDC now owns the Marc's Automotive tracts at 9331 and 9351 Westpark Drive, along with two adjacent tracts on this corner. The BEDC realizes this is a great commercial site, and is carefully considering proposals for redevelopment.

When are we getting *another* full-service restaurant?

This summer, the city celebrated the much-anticipated opening of our first full-service restaurant with full-service bar, Hoffbrau Steak & Grill House, located at 8501 Benbrook Boulevard. The BEDC hopes this is just the start, and is actively talking with other prospects. The focus is on attracting quality full-service or fast-casual restaurants that are family-friendly and offer alcohol service. Meantime, be sure to check out Hoffbrau, including their cozy patio!

When are we getting a grocery store? My neighbor said we're getting an HEB!

The BEDC has reached out on multiple occasions to HEB, as well as nearly all other large and small grocers in the market. Grocers rely heavily on their market analysis of a community, making it difficult to recruit them. Ultimately, the decision to open a grocery store in Benbrook (or any other community) is dependent on the company independently determining that a location is profitable and will allow them to recoup their investment. In February, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram published an excellent article on the grocery industry and their expansion mindset. Read it here: <https://www.star-telegram.com/news/business/article226293945.html>.

Despite the challenges, we continue to seek a quality grocer to serve the Benbrook community. BEDC conducted a grocery analysis on market share, community profile, etc., and we stand ready to assist a quality company in any way we can to welcome them in meeting our community's desire for a stand-alone grocer. The work continues.

How can citizens weigh in on how we want to see our city develop?

Benbrook citizens have multiple opportunities to participate in the process of governance. The Benbrook City Council meets every first and third Thursday of the month, and the Benbrook Economic Development Corporation meets every third Monday of the month. All board and commission meetings are videotaped and open to the public; citizens are encouraged to attend and every agenda allows for citizen comments.

BEDC is required to hold a public hearing before funds can be expended on any new project. Hearing notices are published in the Benbrook News (suburban newspapers), and agendas are posted 72 hours prior to council/board meetings.

Although retail and commercial development is usually dictated by market forces, BEDC *can* incentivize certain development; and we always strive to analyze the community's needs and desires as a major consideration in crafting developer agreements and incentive packages. Your input is welcome.

How can I stay informed, ask questions, or share my thoughts about what's happening in my city?

1. Call, or email, or snail mail, or Facebook message city staff. We promise to get back to you.
We're here to serve.
2. Attend City Council and/or Board and Commission meetings.
3. Watch live stream or archived videos on the City's website or City's cable channel (Charter Channel 190).
4. Read the *Benbrook Community Newsletter* and *Annual Report* that come in your mail.
5. Follow our social media pages, Facebook and Twitter.
6. Check out the City's webpage and subscribe to newsflashes: **www.benbrook-tx.gov**.

Thank you for supporting local businesses...and Thank You for Building a Better Benbrook!

City of Benbrook: 817-249-3000

Benbrook Economic Development Corporation: 817-249-6990

cmorris@benbrook-tx.gov

911 Winscott Road, Benbrook, Texas 76126