



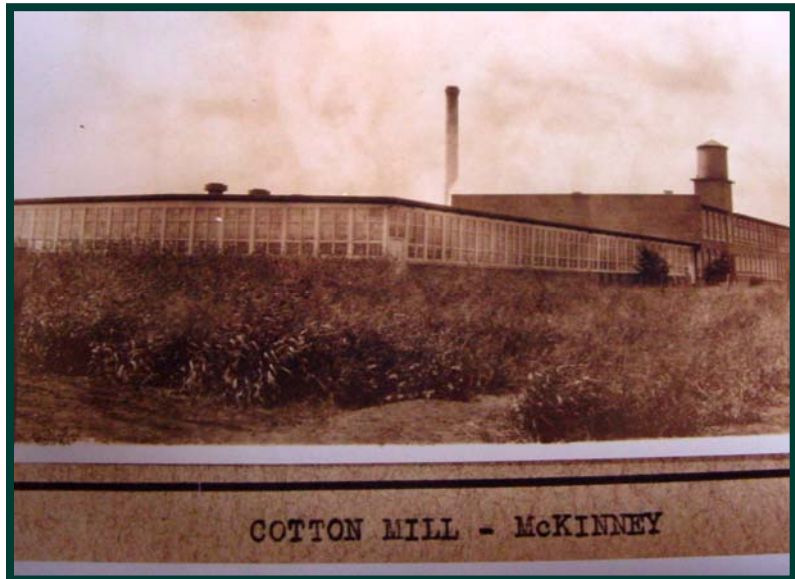
Town Center Study

Historical Overview of the Study Area

McKinney has been blessed with a rich and wonderful past. This past provides the symbols for a community that is much more than a suburb of Dallas. Today, McKinney is a city centered about a historic town square with all key roads leading to the square.

Agricultural Roots

McKinney serves as the county seat of Collin County. Collin County was established in 1846 and McKinney in 1848. Both City and County were named for Mr. Collin McKinney, a patriot, land surveyor, legislator, and one of the 56 signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence. The cultivation and processing of locally grown crops fueled much of McKinney's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century



growth and prosperity. During this period, Collin County emerged as one of the leading agricultural centers in Texas. Cotton prevailed as the county's largest and most significant farm product; however, corn, wheat, and oats were also grown in large quantities. Although crop production in the McKinney area continues today, its role in the local economy diminished after World War II. McKinney's cotton-processing structures played a significant role in the town's history and development during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Much of the area's vast agricultural potential was realized through the construction and operation of these facilities. Their establishment aided the town's commercial development because area farmers came to McKinney to sell their crops and then purchased goods at downtown stores. These property types also laid the foundation for the town's industrial development and supported the establishment of a textile mill.



Town Square

The town square is one of the symbols that people throughout North Texas recognize as being McKinney. The original town site presented a cardinal-point grid plan with a courthouse square near the city's center, a popular town plan throughout Texas. The majority of the state's county seats, especially those of the same vintage as McKinney, are arranged similarly. The square was the sole public

space set aside in the original town plan. Anticipating that property near the town's center would be in great demand for business purposes, the city's surveyors made lots facing onto the courthouse square long and narrow, measuring 25 by 100 feet. Such a layout enabled merchants to erect buildings with storefronts for displaying merchandise. George White and Ethelred Whitley, who surveyed the new town site, divided the remainder of the City's blocks into equally sized lots that were reserved for residential use.

Arrival of the Railroad

The arrival of the railroad in 1872 greatly stimulated economic growth and brought new wealth to McKinney. The railroad enticed several industrial enterprises, such as a textile mill, grain elevators and a flour mill, to locate in the community. It also influenced much of the town's physical growth, as well as settlement patterns within the City. In addition, the railroad linked the once physically and socially isolated community with the rest of the nation, thus allowing new ideas, people, and goods to arrive in McKinney.

Post World War II

The McKinney Comprehensive Plan of 1964 was the first to propose the loop road around downtown (US 75). This event, along with post WW II population growth and a desire for a decentralized growth pattern away from urban centers, changed the image of McKinney. Prior to US 75, commercial growth was focused in downtown and along SH 5 and Highway 24 (current US 380). With the arrival of US 75, growth began to shift further west.

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