



STANLEY KORSHAK

Fall '08 Predictions  
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## Culture



# Woodall Rodgers Park

Lush green space against the backdrop of the Dallas skyline. A new outdoor arts venue next door to the budding Arts District. Custom-designed sculpture and water features located mere steps away from Dallas' premiere residential experience, Museum Tower. Far from lofty pipe dreams, these are some of the myriad features of Dallas' next greatest urban attraction, Woodall Rodgers Park. Acting as both a unifying link and a springboard for the next chapter in the downtown area, the park will be a welcome addition to Big D. As the city heads determinedly toward the future with plans for bigger and better structures, the park's blueprint has opened many a city dweller's eye to the realm of possibility for a slice of tranquility in Dallas' bustling epicenter. Riding on the success of the nearby Katy Trail and the grand opening of the new Antoine Predock-designed Trinity River Audubon Center within sight, Dallas is finally seizing the moment. Now is the perfect time to welcome additional green space, to welcome change, to welcome the Woodall Rodgers Park.

Joining the chic cobblestone stretch of Uptown with the soaring skyscrapers of Downtown, the park will provide a scenic bond between the two areas while conveniently masking the eight-laned traffic of the Woodall Rodgers Freeway below. By laying an expansive "deck" foundation over the highway—effectively deleting it from sight, sound and mind—the park is able to transform an otherwise congested area into a green-inspired haven for the arts, relaxation and more.

At 5.2 acres, the park is brimming with features and opportunity, offering something for nearly everyone: a children's garden with playground, a dog park, an acoustical performance stage, plazas with water features and moveable seating, a café and outdoor terrace, botanical gardens, a great lawn with seating for up to 3,000 people, reading and game rooms, signature sculptures and Wi-Fi access. Additionally, developers are entertaining the idea of linking the park to the Katy Trail, giving trail users another reason to take advantage of the land-

scaped 3.5-mile path. Nearby residents of Museum Tower, a sleek 42-story, distinctive and contemporary high-rise of architectural significance, will enjoy the park's backyard proximity—a virtual continuation of the property's verdant landscaping and water gardens.

Bordered by Pearl and St. Paul Streets, the Woodall Rodgers Park is projected to create an estimated \$312.7 million economic benefit for the area. In tandem with the city's plans to revamp the downtown Trinity River corridor—including a Santiago Calatrava-designed bridge—the park is slated to be one of many gems in Dallas' near future. Scheduled to break ground in 2008, with a predicted 2011 completion, the city hopes the addition of the park will further encourage visitors and growth in the Arts District. Nestled amidst the Nasher Sculpture Center, Museum Tower, the Dallas Museum of Art and within shouting distance of the Meyerson Symphony Center and the forthcoming Winspear Opera House, developers are betting on downtown residents and Arts District visitors alike to congregate and relax in the park. Whether out walking Fido on a sunny Saturday or enjoying a post-concert cappuccino al fresco, the Woodall Rodgers Park will entertain a variety of scenarios, therefore appealing to a variety of people.

Perhaps most importantly, the city hopes that with the addition of the park will come additional downtown residents. Green-seeking suburbanites wary of a world filled with glass and cement can look forward to long expanses of lawn, trees and lush gardens in the park, merging the all-important great outdoors with the unparalleled convenience of living downtown. With the stately Museum Tower leading the way, developers predict additional residential projects to not only take flight, but thrive.

As Dallas looks ahead to new ideas and new territories for its expanding populace, the emphasis on transforming the city into a better, greener place for visitors and residents alike has taken priority. With the addition of the Woodall Rodgers Park, Big D is well on its way to making that dream a reality.