To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

January 27, 2026

SUBJECT: PANTHER ISLAND REGULATIONS UPDATE

This report provides an update on recent and upcoming regulatory changes for development on Panther Island.

Panther Island Form-Based Code

On September 17, 2024, the City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a contract with Liveable Plans and Codes, LLC to update the Panther Island Form-Based Code District. The purpose was to incorporate the provisions of Panther Island Vision 2.0 that resulted from a collaborative effort with Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD), Tarrant County, Tarrant County College, Downtown Fort Worth Inc, the Real Estate Council of Greater Fort Worth, Streams and Valleys, Inc., the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and others.

The update will include recommended changes to all aspects of the development standards, including the regulating plan, building form standards, street standards, canal-adjacent standards, use regulations, building and lot types, and other elements as needed to implement the principles of functional and vital urbanism and practical management of growth on Panther Island. It is anticipated that the public engagement process will occur in Spring 2026 followed by the adoption process. In the meantime, interim zoning changes have been adopted by the City Council to support first phase development.

Panther Island Canal System Manual

On September 19, 2025, the TRWD Board of Directors adopted the Panther Island Canal System Manual to govern design standards and guidelines for the canal and paseo within the TRWD right-of-way. TRWD will be responsible for permitting and overseeing development of this infrastructure, as it will be owned and operated by TRWD. TRWD will also coordinate with the City regarding stormwater management. The adopted manual can be found at www.pantherisland.com.

Canal Connection Fee

On January 20, 2026, the TRWD Board of Directors adopted a resolution to implement a Canal Connection Fee to be assessed to developers. At an estimated cost of $180 million, TRWD will construct and operate the canal system to manage drainage and support flood control once it is integrated with the Central City Flood Control Project. This cost includes only the canal basin, right-of-way acquisition and paseo features that contribute to the operability and safety of the system, excluding enhanced materials and landscaping. The fee is assessed on a per land square foot basis to correlate with their drainage impact and estimated impermeable surface. The adopted fee reflects a 40% collection rate with TRWD subsidizing the remaining cost of construction through future land sales and other sources.

A consideration during the adoption of the fee was balancing the cost of the needed infrastructure with the risk of limiting the pace or quality of development due to the added expense. As a result, the TRWD Board retained the right to consider discounts for projects to facilitate significant

investment in high quality development or other TRWD objectives such as open space, activation or shared parking.

It is important to note that development on Panther Island involves costs not incurred in comparable downtown development. These costs may be partially offset by land values. The costs include a transportation impact fee, a sewer impact fee, the canal connection fee, and improvements to local street and drainage infrastructure. City and TRWD staff will continue to work together to advise the City Council and the TRWD Board on required public participation to advance development and, ultimately, the performance of the Trinity River Vision Tax Increment Financing Zone.

For any questions, please contact Dana Burghdoff, Assistant City Manager, at Dana.Burghdoff@fortworthtexas.gov.

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