

4B Thursday, August 21, 2008 N

FRISCO

# Turnpike add-on to boost economy

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tial."

City officials project that the extension — along with the 2012 planned arrival of Dallas Area Rapid Transit light rail — will combine to create 13,000 jobs and \$18.9 billion in economic impact over 20 years.

Much of that will come in Rowlett's undeveloped Northshore, a 1,000-acre planned commercial and light industrial district along the northern part of the extension.

Rowlett also hopes to develop a 300-acre retail and restaurant center along the turnpike just north of Lake Ray Hubbard.

Garland and Sachse also expect to benefit. Former Garland Mayor Bob Day said the city would not have been able to lure Firewheel Town Center to its location at the turnpike and Highway 78 had the extension not been planned.

"It'll carry a lot of traffic from every direction," said Dr. Day, now a board member for the North Texas Tollway Authority, which operates the turnpike. "That's why Firewheel Town Center is where it is."

The turnpike has not, however, proved to trigger automatic economic booms everywhere it goes.

Much of the land along turnpike extensions east of Central Expressway and west of Interstate 35E remains undeveloped.

Dr. Day predicted development would follow the new extension because no other major highway goes near eastern Dallas County. And the connection to Interstate 30 should draw traffic to and from Collin County.

"You can't get there any other way except the turnpike," Dr. Day said. "It's all landlocked. We don't have a major way of getting anything except Highway 78, which are city streets."

Dr. Harper said real estate brokers and developers have approached Rowlett about property surrounding the extension.

Construction should begin next month, NTTA spokeswoman Sherita Cofelt said.

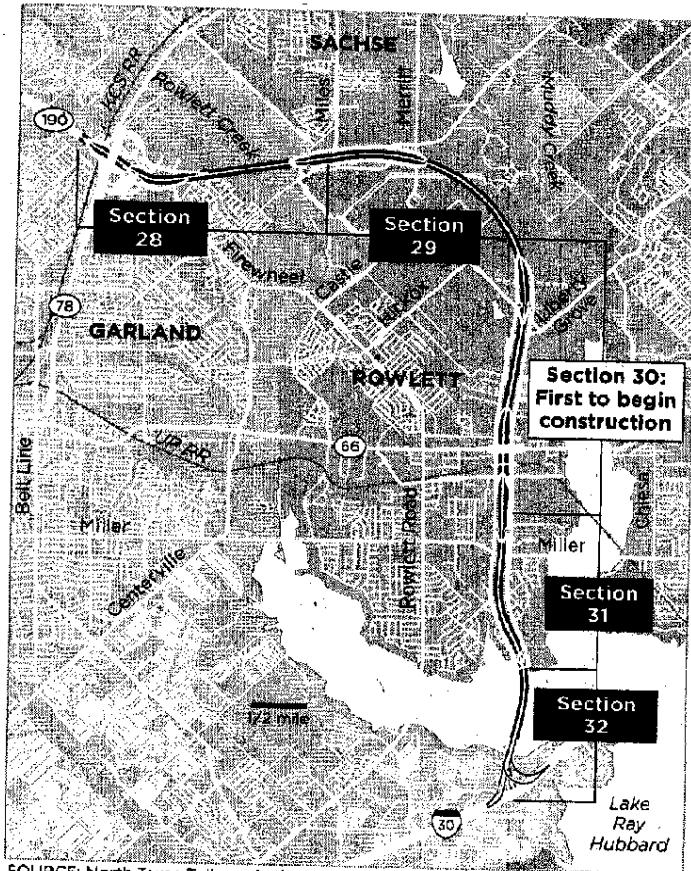
Today's groundbreaking is scheduled for 9 a.m. at the Rowlett Community Centre, 5300 Main St.

## Bush Turnpike eastern extension

The Bush Turnpike extension from State Highway 78 to Interstate 30 will be built in sections. Ground will be broken today on the first of those, Section 30, at 9 a.m. at the Rowlett Community Centre, 5300 Main St.

### Facts about the overall project:

- Length: 9.9 miles
- Expected cost: \$1 billion
- Projected opening date (all sections): late 2011
- Project partners: North Texas Tollway Authority, Texas Department of Transportation, Dallas County, Dallas, Garland, Rowlett, Sachse



SOURCE: North Texas Tollway Authority

JAMES A. BLACK/Staff Artist

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