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Entrance to Craig Ranch  
photo by Wendy Crooks

## Craig Ranch: A Boon to McKinney and a Blessing to Frisco School Tax Revenues

By Wendy Crooks

IMAGINE A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN LIVE, shop, work and play all within the same community. Imagine an area with hike and bike trails, a PGA Tour Tournament Players Club golf course, a full-service spa and aerobics center, a medical center for both emergencies and well-visits, parks, greenways, softball, baseball and soccer fields. Imagine a town with a trolley system that will take you into the Town Square. It may sound like you're watching *The Andy Griffith Show* on TV Land but just imagine all those amenities located within a 2000 acre development just 30 miles north of Dallas. No, it's not Mayberry you've discovered, but rather Craig Ranch in McKinney.

According to a recent U.S. Census, McKinney, Texas is the fastest growing city (of population 50,000 plus) in the United States. Craig Ranch, which is located in the northeast corners of Allen, Frisco, Plano and McKinney, offers families a self-sustaining community

with a whole lot more. Throughout the master planned property, you will see Texas inspired sculptures, waterfalls, statues and fabulous landscaping.

Developer David Craig refers to this new community as "New Urban." Unlike other master planned communities, Craig Ranch will be a place where the majority of its residents will live and work. It is estimated that of the 38,000 people that will live in the community, 30,000 will stay and work there as well. Additionally, Craig Ranch will have its own Town Center that is planned to break ground this year. The Town Center will encompass a city block of boutique and specialty shops on the ground floor with residential areas on the upper levels.

Communities like this don't generally happen over night. In fact, initially the time frame for completion was 10-15 years. "Things are happening so fast, though, so who knows?" says Mr. Craig who really got the ball rolling in 2004.

The PGA Tour Tournament Players Club golf course serves as the anchor attraction for the development. Sixteen time PGA Tour champion Tom Weiskopf designed the 72-par course, which opened for play in September. With five sets of tees and a white-limestone lined creek that winds through the course 14 times, players of all levels can enjoy this phenomenal course. Then after the game, members can rest and relax in the beautiful 43,000 square foot clubhouse. The clubhouse is fully equipped with dining facilities, lockers, a fully stocked pro shop, cart storage and administrative offices.

The TPC is the second highest rated course in the United States. In 2005, the TPC will host both the U.S. Open Qualifying Tournament and the Amateur Final Qualifying Tournament, which is unheard of for any club's premier year. Needless to say, this golf facility isn't just a private club for the "rich and famous."

Another fabulous area of Craig Ranch is the Ballfields at Craig Ranch. The Ballfields is a first class baseball and

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softball facility and home to the TCL McKinney Marshals. The Ballfields will host the 2005 Texas Collegiate All Star Games. Boston's The Gourmet Pizza Company will break ground this month and be the first restaurant to serve the 1.2 million people who come through the turnstiles. Near the Ballfields is

another source of family entertainment – a lake stocked with various fish will open for fishing this spring.

Plans for the next major attraction are now underway. Kenneth H. Cooper, MD founder and chairman of Cooper Aerobics Center announced plans to build a Cooper Aerobics Center and spa adjacent to the Tournament Players Club in Craig Ranch. The approximately 70,000 square foot wellness center will encompass a full service day spa, both indoor and outdoor jogging tracks, the latest equipment and strength training area, an indoor basketball court and outdoor swimming pool. Members will enjoy such benefits as nutrition and wellness seminars, personal fitness assessments, group exercise classes, customized youth programs and much more.

Whether your sick or well, you won't have to travel far to get top medical care either. Plans are under way for several facilities. Located right within the heart of the employment center will be at 20,000 square feet obstetrical and gynecology facility. Additionally, The Surgery Center at Craig Ranch will be conveniently located off Highway 121.

Another business owner that apparently sees the Craig Ranch potential is the owner of Starwood Montessori. A. Khandpur McKinney Investment Group will break ground on the 40,000 square feet facility named Craig Ranch Montessori School this year. Anita Khandpur, who will serve

as the facility's director said, "We will break ground between now and mid-2005 and plan to have a 2006 opening."



Ballfield Statue photo provided by Craig Ranch

The new school will welcome infants through 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

There are plans for both apartment sales and leasing in Town Square over the shops and boutiques. The dwellings will range from market rate apartments to luxury apartments. The first residential development, which was done by D.R. Horton, has homes from the \$120s to \$150s. The Hemmingway at Craig Ranch, which is on the west side of the golf course up to Custer Road, will have 354 townhouses starting at \$160,000. The Settlement, which has 384 home sites targets homeowners interested in spending \$300,000 to

\$1.5 million. The Settlement is nearly two-thirds sold out. There will also be 22 custom villas ranging from \$750,000 to \$1.5 million. On the west side of the golf course will be The Estates, which will have 156 patio homes. Located on the west side of the golf course there will be 22 one-acre lots for custom building. These exclusive home sites will front the golf course and are sure to cost a pretty penny.

Craig Ranch will certainly have a huge economic impact on the area. One entity to truly benefit from the development is the Frisco Independent School District. Although, in McKinney, Craig Ranch is located within the Frisco ISD. According to an economic study by Insight Research Company, the cumulative direct economic impact for the Frisco ISD will be \$480,652,000 from 2000–2024,

derived in part from property taxes. The indirect impact for those years will be \$66,131,000 with a combined economic impact of \$546,783,000 for the years 2000–2024.

The excitement over this Mayberry-like community is understandable. Craig Ranch brings a simple carefree lifestyle back to Texans in Collin County and offers Collin County an enormous economic boost for both the short and long run.

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*Wendy Crooks is a freelance writer who would like to be relocating to Craig Ranch with her husband and four children.*