

# Hard times long past, Westlake is now flourishing



Westlake's Deloitte University, a \$300 million training center for Deloitte LLP accounting firm employees, opened in 2011.  
Khampha BouaphanhStar-Telegram

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It was a decidedly unfriendly, even very angry time [almost 20 years ago in Westlake](#), population then about 200 on the northern Tarrant County/southern Denton County line.

Ross Perot Jr.'s [Hillwood](#) Properties empire had bought the town's crown jewel, the pristine 2,000-acre Circle T Ranch, about four years earlier and wanted to move ahead with development plans.

Some of the town's residents and officials objected to what they were being presented and decided to fight those plans. Hillwood pushed back, and the fight barely stopped short of a physical slugfest.

Mayor Scott Bradley was ousted from his post by Town Council members who wanted to work with Perot. There was even an effort to dissolve the town and absorb it into neighboring cities.

## ADVERTISING

Legal battles, appeals to the Texas Supreme Court and, finally, cooler heads sorted things out. Slowly, Hillwood and the town decided they could work together.

And, my, have they.

It would be wrong to say that Westlake is booming. That would imply a much larger population than the current group of neighbors, which hovers around 1,100.

But it is a quiet community that, mostly through Hillwood's development vision and the town's [careful master planning](#), has grown with top-tier residential construction, carefully mapped retail areas and corporate campuses that would be the envy of any big city.

The [latest to be announced](#) is a \$100 million elegant workplace for 1,200 Charles Schwab Corp. employees. It will anchor a 130-acre mixed-use development on the Circle T Ranch property at the intersection of Texas 114 and Texas 170.

Restaurants, shops, a day care, a fitness center and a 200-room hotel are to be built near the highway frontage, while residential areas and the Schwab campus will sit farther back.

There are plans to relocate part of Circle T's landmark Turner Lake to be a feature of the new development.

And all of that is happening with Westlake and Hillwood working together. The town is even providing economic incentives for the project, along with \$6 million from the [Texas Enterprise Fund](#) run by Gov. Greg Abbott's office.

And this is not the first time this has happened since those bitter days of the late 1990s. Westlake is also home to [Deloitte University](#), a \$300 million learning center for Deloitte L.L.P.'s global workforce.

[Fidelity Investments](#) and other large corporations also have major facilities in the town.

Times have changed.