



# Turtle Creek called 'urban oasis'

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By MARY JACOBS / Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

Janet Watts first lived in the Turtle Creek neighborhood 20 years ago when she moved to Dallas from Connecticut to join the J.C. Penney Co. When Penney's moved its headquarters from Dallas to Plano, she headed north, too, and lived in Far North Dallas and Addison for a while.

But she returned to Turtle Creek five years ago, even though it means commuting to Plano.

Every morning, she sees birds soaring by the windows of her 17th-floor condo in the Renaissance on Turtle Creek. "I just love this area," she said. "There's a lot of natural beauty here, but we're also close to all of the cultural activities."

Other residents are also passionate about the neighborhood, Ms. Watts said. Dozens volunteer when the Turtle Creek Association organizes creek cleanup days. Turtle Creek runs through the middle of the community, which is bordered by North Fitzhugh, Maple and Oak Lawn avenues and the Katy Trail to the east.

"The Turtle Creek area is an urban oasis," said Ann Swisher, association president. "I can cross the street and see egrets, ducks and turtles and just reconnect with nature."



MIKE STONE/Special Contributor  
Janet Watts returned to Turtle Creek five years ago, even though it means commuting to her job in Plano.

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Many of the homes are condos in high-rise buildings, like the Mayfair, where units cost from \$400,000 to \$2 million, or the Warrington, ranging from \$300,000 to \$1 million.

"This neighborhood has held up very well through the up and down markets," said Kyle Crews, a Realtor with Allie Beth Allman. Between January and late June this year, more than 140 condos had been sold in the immediate area.

A preference for high-rise living draws many, including Mr. Crews. "We have wonderful amenities that

are affordable given our shared condo association maintenance," he said. "And we can 'lock and leave' without any concern about security or problems with lawn or pet care, as our building staff takes care of everything."

Another factor is "walkability," with the trail and about 80 restaurants in range.

Neighborhood landmarks include Lee Park, Arlington Hall (popular for weddings) and the Kalita Humphreys Theater, the only theater designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and home to the Dallas Theater Center.

Despite high gasoline prices for her commute these days, Ms. Watts is glad she returned.

"I'm absolutely passionate about Turtle Creek," she said. "Plus, I bought a Prius a year-and-a-half ago. I'm not feeling the pain so much."

#### TURTLE CREEK AT A GLANCE

**History:** Dallas Mayor John Henry Brown promoted the use of the Turtle Creek area as a park in the late 19th century.

**2007 home sales:** \$85,000 to \$4.4 million.

**Shopping:** Highland Park Village West.

**Schools:** Dallas ISD.

**2007 crime\*\*:** No murders, 1 rape, 13 robberies, 3 aggravated assaults, 6 burglaries (residential), 66 thefts, 38 vehicle thefts.\*\*

#### **More information:**

[www.turtlecreekassociation.org](http://www.turtlecreekassociation.org)

\*Reported sales prices of homes listed through MLS

SOURCES: Dallas Police Department (\*\*reporting areas 3120, 3127, 3121, 3109); Kyle Crews, Allie Beth Allman; Turtle Creek Association