

Community Guidelines: The Homesteads at Walker Branch

A practical breakdown of how this Wildlife Communities® development works

Summary

Three documents govern The Homesteads at Walker Branch:

- **Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions (CCRs)** - The legally binding general rules and restrictions, recorded with Fayette County
- **Association Rules & Procedures (ARPs)** - Day-to-day operations and behavioral standards, recorded with Fayette County
- **Design Guidelines (DGs)** - Detailed building and design standards, not recorded with Fayette County

During your 10-day option period, you'll receive all three documents to review in detail. This guide covers the key points you need to understand before making a commitment.

Please Note: The Homesteads at Walker Branch is designed for families who want authentic conservation as a backdrop to their lifestyle, value professional land management over DIY, and are excited by a community held to upscale design standards.

If you want maximum control with minimum rules, need flexibility for commercial agriculture or ranch operations, or view conservation as a burden rather than a benefit, The Homesteads at Walker Branch likely isn't the right fit.

Still reading? Good. Let's get into the details.

The 80/20 Conservation Model

Every lot, which we refer to as homesteads, at The Homesteads at Walker Branch operates under this framework:

80% = Wildlife Management Area

- Professionally managed by conservation specialists hired by the Association
- You own it and can use it (walking, hiking, trails, nature observation)
- You don't maintain it yourself; all clearing, pruning, weeding, planting, seeding, mowing, and haying activities are handled for you by professionals under contract to the Association
- Must remain as native habitat per the wildlife management plan
- Provides a privacy buffer and an aesthetic backdrop

20% = Homestead Area

- Your private space for buildings, landscaping, pools, driveways, and outdoor living
- You design it, build it, and maintain it
- Can be distributed across your property (does not have to be all in one spot)
- Must be designated and approved by the Architectural Control Committee before construction

Example: On a 5-acre lot, you get up to 1 acre (43,560 sq ft) for your Homestead Area. The remaining 4 acres stay as Wildlife Management Area.

Why this specific split? Wildlife management property tax treatment requires demonstrable conservation activity at scale. The 80% minimum ensures legitimate wildlife habitat while giving you substantial space for residential use. Texas counties closely scrutinize applications. This framework is designed to meet these legal hurdles and requirements.

Trail Allowance

Beyond your 20% Homestead Area, each lot receives an additional trail allowance to encourage low-impact travel and exploration across your property. These trails are allowed (and intended) to cross the Wildlife Management Area:

- You design, build, and maintain your own trail system
 - Your trail allowance is 200 linear feet of trail per acre of your total lot size
 - Your trail allowance does not count against your Homestead Area allowance; excess trails beyond this allowance do count toward the Homestead Area
 - Trails are to be designed and intended for walking, biking, and UTVs
 - Mown or dirt surface only (no gravel, pavers, or other surfacing)
 - Maximum 8 feet wide
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Wildlife Management Area: Your Role

You must: - Pay your annual assessments that fund professional services - Provide gate codes and access for authorized conservation professionals - Sign wildlife management plan documents when requested - Not interfere with authorized wildlife management activities - Report any violations or concerns to the Association

You must not: - Remove or damage native vegetation in Wildlife Management Area - Introduce non-native plant or animal species - Block access to Wildlife Management Area for authorized professionals - Take actions that jeopardize wildlife tax qualification for any lot

What you do not have to do: - Learn habitat management or become a conservation expert - Spend your weekends doing land management work - Hire your own conservation professionals - Figure out tax applications or compliance yourself

The Association coordinates all of it through the professionals under contract. Your primary obligation is financial (assessments) and cooperative (allowing access, not interfering).

Hay production: The community conducts periodic hay cutting operations for both agricultural tax compliance and habitat management (a process known as creating disturbance). This may occur in all Wildlife Management Areas and any portions of Homestead Areas not clearly marked as excluded. You'll receive advance notice of scheduled cuttings. Revenue from hay sales, if any, goes to the Association to offset community expenses.

Property Tax Benefits

How it works: Texas taxes land in wildlife management use on its agricultural and conservation value, not its market value — and that's typically a fraction of what market-value taxation would run. It's a real benefit. It's also not something we're going to hand you a percentage or a dollar figure for today: the number depends on your land and on values the county sets each year, and the county decides it, not us.

Contracted through the Association: - Wildlife management plan development and updates - Professional implementation and documentation - Annual reports to the appraisal district - All required paperwork and applications

You are responsible for: - Signing application documents when requested - Not interfering with wildlife management activities - Maintaining compliance with the wildlife management plan - Understanding each lot qualifies separately

Important limitations: - The county appraisal district makes final qualification decisions - Neither the Declarant nor the Association guarantees approval - Non-compliance with wildlife management requirements can jeopardize initial and ongoing qualification - No lot at Walker Branch has completed the wildlife management conversion yet; the community is currently in agricultural valuation, and each homestead applies and qualifies on its own

Realistic expectations: The tax treatment is a real benefit of land already being managed this way. It is not the reason for the program, and it is not guaranteed. Treat it as a benefit that follows from doing the conservation work right, not as a number to plan around.

The Certified Texas Prairie Designations

Certified Texas Prairie: Every lot, and the community as a whole, qualifies for Certified Texas Prairie designation through Native Prairies Association of Texas (NPAT):

- Individual homesteads receive Certified Texas Prairie status
- The entire community receives Certified Texas Prairie Community status
- Provides official documentation of conservation contribution
- If maintained, the designation is a permanent feature of your property

What this means: This isn't marketing—it's third-party verification that The Homesteads at Walker Branch delivers legitimate grassland prairie ecosystem restoration. NPAT doesn't certify greenwashing. This designation confirms authentic conservation value.

Use Restrictions: What Is and Is Not Allowed

Restrictions within the Wildlife Management Area

- No mowing or vegetation removal except authorized by the Association
- No structures without written approval
- No parking or driving across non-pathways
- No introducing non-native plants or removing native plants
- Must allow Association access for management activities

General Use Restrictions

- No commercial agricultural operations
- No commercial businesses generating regular customer/delivery traffic
- Short-term rentals are allowed but limited to 120 days per year
- Activities can't interfere with wildlife management or create nuisances for neighbors

Prohibited Animals

- No cattle, full-sized sheep, pigs, or other large livestock (unless prescribed by conservation professionals)
- No roosters or peacocks (noise/nuisance issues)
- No exotic animals requiring special permits
- No dangerous or venomous species

Allowed Animals (with standards)

- Common house pets (must ensure against wildlife harassment)
- Horses with a minimum 1-acre pasture per horse (Lots 3, 4, and 11 only)
- Small-scale chickens, rabbits, miniature goats/sheep
- Youth agricultural projects

Fencing Restrictions

- No fencing in the Wildlife Management Area except approved wildlife features
- Security fencing is allowed around any portion of the Homestead Area
- All fencing requires ACC approval
- Must follow design standards matching your architecture
- Existing perimeter fencing maintained by the Association (can't modify)

Vehicle and Equipment Standards

- All parking must be in the Homestead Area on improved surfaces
- Commercial vehicles and RVs/boats must be screened from view or stored in enclosed structures
- Agricultural equipment must be stored when not in use
- Display vehicles (non-operational for decorative purposes) are allowed, limited to 3 per lot, and must be maintained

Design Guidelines and Building Requirements

Primary Residence Minimums

- 2,250 sq ft minimum conditioned space on ground floor
- 40 feet maximum height
- Two-car garage required (side-load or rear-load acceptable)
- Must use quality materials (stone, quality wood, metal, proper stucco)
- All utilities must be underground
- Engineered foundation required

Guest Structures

- **Guest Houses:** 600 sq ft minimum, can't exceed 2/3 of primary residence size
- **Guest Suites:** 300 sq ft minimum, 1,200 sq ft maximum
- Quantity limits based on lot size (detailed in Design Guidelines)
- Must match primary residence architectural character
- Same construction quality standards as primary residence

Architectural Styles

Encouraged: - Contemporary Texas Hill Country - Modern Farmhouse - Sophisticated Ranch - Heritage-inspired Central Texas styles (German/Czech settlement, Texas Victorian, Texas Mid-Century Modern)

Discouraged (require exceptional design quality): - Generic suburban tract home designs - Mediterranean/Tuscan/Spanish Colonial - Ultra-modern designs that may date quickly

Prohibited: - Manufactured/mobile/modular homes - Multi-family structures - Commercial/industrial aesthetic buildings - Temporary or non-permanent structures

Design Review Process

ALL construction requires Architectural Control Committee approval before you start:

- Optional preliminary review (recommended, helps avoid costly revisions)
 - Required final review with complete plans
 - 21 business days for review (may be extended with notice)
 - Construction oversight with milestone inspections
 - Final approval after completion
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Timeline and Construction Requirements

- There is no timeline to seek ACC approval to start building
- However, construction must begin within 12 months of ACC approval
- Weather-tight exterior required within 18 months of commencement
- Complete project (including landscaping) within 30 months
- Extensions available for documented delays beyond your control

Construction Standards

- Working hours: M-F 7am-7pm, Sat-Sun 8am-6pm, no federal holidays
- Tree protection required for all Protected Trees (8"+ diameter)
- Erosion control measures are mandatory
- Weekly debris removal minimum
- Site must be neat and professional at all times
- Contractor must maintain liability insurance

Failure to Meet Deadlines: The Association can require corrective action if construction stalls or drags beyond approved timelines. This protects the community from perpetual construction zones.

Ongoing Costs You'll Need to Pay

Annual Assessments

The Association levies annual assessments to fund: - Professional wildlife and habitat management services
- Wildlife monitoring and tax documentation - Infrastructure maintenance (entry areas, perimeter fencing)
- Community administration and insurance - Conservation professional contracts

Annual assessment increases are capped at 15% per year unless owners vote to approve larger increases.

Shared Entrance Driveway Costs

Every lot in The Homesteads at Walker Branch shares an entrance driveway with at least one other lot: - Maintenance costs are split between the lots served by that entrance driveway - You pay for your proportional share as specified in the CCRs - Costs are triggered when repairs are needed or improvements are made - Each owner's share is based on their use of specific driveway segments

Pond Lot Costs (Lots 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 only)

Pond maintenance costs are split equally among the five pond lot owners: - Dam and spillway maintenance
- Water quality management - Required engineering assessments - Improvements approved by a majority vote of pond lot owners

Design Review Fees

The Association charges fees for design review and construction oversight: - Preliminary review (optional): \$350-\$1,500 depending on project scope - Final review (required): \$500-\$3,000 depending on project scope
- The fee schedule is published in the Association Rules & Procedures

Your Property Maintenance

You're responsible for maintaining everything inside your Homestead Area: - Structure maintenance and repairs - Lawn and landscape maintenance - Driveway and pathway upkeep - The entry gate to your lot - All utilities on your property - All property taxes and insurance

Governance: How Decisions Get Made

During the Development Period (when Declarant controls)

The Declarant (Tanglewood Landholdings TX, LLC) controls: - For a period up to 10 years from POA establishment, or until Declarant formally relinquishes control, whichever comes first - Appointment of the Association officers - Final decisions on design matters - Amending Design Guidelines and Association Rules & Procedures - Coordinating development activities

After Development Period (when Declarant no longer controls)

The owner-elected Association controls: - Electing officers to manage the Association - The Architectural Control Committee's (ACC) handling of design review - Voting on substantive amendments and major decisions - Professional conservation services under Association management

Amendment Requirements

CCRs and Association Rules & Procedures: - Minor amendments: Declarant approval during the Development Period; thereafter, owner approval by vote per percentages in CCRs - Substantive amendments affecting core conservation elements: 75% owner approval required per CCR requirements

Design Guidelines: - Minor amendments: ACC approval - Substantive amendments: ACC approval during the Development Period, then owner approval by vote per percentages in CCRs

Enforcement

The Association can: - Issue violation notices with correction timelines - Enter property to correct violations at owner's expense - Levy fines for non-compliance - File liens for unpaid assessments or fines - Seek injunctive relief through courts - Recover attorney fees and legal costs

Violations aren't taken lightly. The standards exist to protect everyone's investment.

Who This Works For (And Who It Doesn't)

Good fit: - You want authentic conservation as part of your lifestyle - You value professional land management over DIY - You appreciate the property tax benefits - You're comfortable (and excited) working within a thoughtful design framework - You see The 80/20 Conservation Model as an advantage, not a limitation - You want a property that appreciates in beauty and value over time

Poor fit: - You want maximum control with minimum rules - You desire commercial agricultural or ranching operations - You need flexibility to do whatever you want with your land - You're looking for the cheapest possible option - You view conservation as a burden rather than a benefit - You're not willing to follow design review processes

Questions to Ask Yourself

Before committing to The Homesteads at Walker Branch, consider:

- Am I comfortable with The 80/20 Conservation Model? Can I create the homestead I want within 20% of my lot area?
- Do I understand the financial commitment? Can I budget for ongoing expenses, which include annual assessments and potential shared costs?
- Will I follow the design review process? Am I willing to submit plans and potentially revise them based on ACC feedback?
- Do I embrace the conservation mission? Or do I see it as an inconvenient requirement for tax benefits?
- Can I live with the use restrictions? Will the prohibited activities impact what I want to do with my property?

If you're answering "no" or "I'm not sure" to these questions, The Homesteads at Walker Branch may not be the right fit.

Your Next Steps

1. **Review the complete documents** — During your option period, read the CCRs, Design Guidelines, and Association Rules & Procedures cover to cover. Ask questions about anything unclear.
2. **Talk to your advisors** — Have your attorney review the governance documents. Have your CPA review the tax implications. Have your architect or builder review the design requirements.
3. **Run the numbers** — Calculate your total cost of ownership, including land, construction, assessments, and shared costs. Compare property tax savings against these expenses.
4. **Make an informed decision** — The Homesteads at Walker Branch is more than a land purchase—it's a commitment to conservation-focused community living. Make sure it aligns with your goals, lifestyle, and values before proceeding.

This guide summarizes key points from the complete governance documents. The recorded Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions, Design Guidelines, and Association Rules & Procedures contain the complete requirements and govern in case of any conflict with this summary. Review all documents carefully before committing to purchase.