

**TABLE 3-34
TOTAL SIZE OF PLANT COMMUNITIES PRESENT
WITHIN THE PROJECT CORRIDOR (exclusive of stations)**

Plant Community	Size (acres)
Urban	119.575
Grassland	171.771
Shrubland	3.916
Woodland	26.531
Riparian	13.736
Total	335.529

Source: Geo-Marine, 2006

The following paragraphs provide a brief description of each plant community. More detailed species' composition and stratification data for these community types are presented in the **Existing Conditions Technical Memorandum** (DART, 2005).

Urban

Less than half of the project area was located within the urban complex of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. This urban development has directly and indirectly affected the vegetation that grows throughout the project area. The direct impacts of urbanization have been the removal of the plant communities for the construction of buildings, parking lots, and streets. Another direct impact has been the removal of native vegetation for aesthetic landscaping. Frequent disturbances, such as mowing, have prevented native vegetation from recolonizing the project area. By definition, urban developments are not a plant community; however, there are varying patch sizes of plant communities intermingled within this urban complex.

Within the Project Corridor, there are varying densities and types of urban development that influence the plant community patch size and density. There were three basic types of urban development in the corridor identified based on the landscaped plant community. Residential areas had numerous small landscaped plant communities that provide increased heterogeneity beneficial for avian wildlife. Light urban development consists of smaller businesses that include some degree of landscaping around the buildings and parking lots. Vegetation patches are generally small and sparse in the light urban development. Heavy urban development generally consists of large buildings and parking lots, which have minimal landscaping. Generally, the plant communities associated with heavy urban development are highly maintained and are not desirable habitat for wildlife.

The residential urban development plant community consists of maintained yards with some trees and shrubs. As mentioned previously, the residential areas provide many small patches of vegetation throughout a large area (i.e., a subdivision or residential development). In addition to the small patches, the individual maintenance and vertical and horizontal diversification varied by property owner and residential development, creates a high degree of vegetation and habitat heterogeneity. Herbaceous plants generally included turf grasses such as bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), St. Augustine grass (*Stenotaphrum secundatum*), and buffalo grass (*Buchloe dactyloides*), with cool season annuals (annual blue grass [*Poa annua*], rye grass [*Lolium perenne*], cheat grass [*Bromus tectorum*], and sixweeks grass [*Vulpia octoflora*]) present in the winter months. Shrubs are limited to landscaping around the houses, which include wax-myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), possum-haw (*Ilex decidua*), yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*), American holly (*Ilex opaca*), wax-leaf ligustrum (*Ligustrum quihoui*), Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), and elbow-bush (*Forestiera pubescens*). Trees varied but included cedar elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), hackberry (*Celtis laevigata*), live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), shumard oak (*Quercus shumardii*), Bradford pear (*Pyrus calleryana*), cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), and hickory (*Carya* spp.).