

PROFESSIONAL REPORT

RESTORATION OF A DECLINING INNER-RING SUBURBAN AREA:

LAMAR-COLLINS, ARLINGTON, TEXAS

by

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Introduction

Inner-ring suburban revitalization and redevelopment is a growing challenge in the United States as downtowns and outer-ring suburbs receive increased investment. Greenfields in fringe cities offer less construction obstacles and more return on investment for private sector developers leaving inner-ring suburbs behind. Additionally, with aging infrastructure and housing stock, declining population, increasing crime, and regional competition for investment, inner-ring suburbs face mounting difficulty toward recovery. One neighborhood at a time, these first-tier suburbs encourage investment from within and outside of the community through various planning techniques, some more successfully than others. Adding to the mounting obstacles is the misunderstanding of what is the most appropriate approach toward reviving inner-ring suburbs. Some suggest revitalization; others suggest redevelopment, some a combination of both, and others use the terms interchangeably. Such is the case for the inner-ring suburban city of Arlington, Texas. The City attempted to encourage redevelopment in the Lamar-Collins area of North Arlington to become a major gateway into the City and Entertainment District, but plans have not come to fruition. In a growing region like the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, how do inner-ring suburbs appropriately approach restoration? This paper will examine the challenges faced by inner-ring suburbs, differentiate between revitalization and redevelopment using regional examples, and present an analysis of how Arlington has recently approached restoration using Lamar-Collins as the study

area. Lastly, an alternative approach toward inner-ring suburban restoration, supplemented by a review of federal, state and local strategies, is presented for the Lamar-Collins Area of North Arlington.

Section 1. Defining the Problem

1.1 What is an Inner-Ring Suburb?

Suburban development proliferated post World War II due primarily to the Interstate Highway Act of 1956, the deindustrialization of central cities, and increased affordability of single-family homes through federal mortgage financing (Fishman 2000). Lee and Green Leigh (2005) point out that suburbs are now differentiated as new infrastructure continues to spread outward and jobs and people continue to decentralize. This creates diverse suburbs in a multi-ring structure consisting of inner-ring suburbs, outer-ring suburbs and exurbs (Blakely 2010, 22). Inner-ring suburbs, in particular, are defined by time of development, location and proximity to a central business district and their physical make-up. Sugie Lee and Nancey Green Leigh (2005) look at “time of development and spatial location characteristics to define the precise boundaries of the inner-ring suburbs” (14) in their study of Philadelphia. They mention these suburbs lie within twenty miles of the central city border (15). Their study took into consideration Seaver, Morris, and Rapson (1998) and Lucy and Philips (2000) post-WWII time frames. “Seaver, Morris, and Rapson defined the inner – or first-ring

suburbs as ‘post-WWII communities’ constructed between 1945 and 1965” (Lee and Leigh 2005, 14), and “Lucy and Phillips (2000) defined inner-ring suburbs as ‘middle-aged neighborhoods’ that were built from 1945 to 1970” (Lee and Leigh 2005, 14). Both definitions suggest a boundary created by physical characteristics of strong auto oriented type development consisting mainly of low-density, single-family residential areas reminiscent of the time period between 1945 and 1970.

Additionally, Bernadette Hanlon (2010) studied Lee and Green Leigh’s borrowed definition, Brookings Institution scholars Robert Puentes and David Warren’s (2006) definition, and Hanlon and Thomas Vicino’s (2007) definition of inner-ring suburbs in developing her study of inner-ring suburbs. Puentes and Warren determine inner-ring suburbs as areas linked with the top one hundred most-populated cities in 1950, areas that were not central cities in 1950, and areas comprised of ‘suburban population’ only. Hanlon and Vicino describe inner-ring suburbs as sharing a boundary with the central city and having more than 50 percent of the housing stock built before 1969 (Hanlon 2010, 33). These definitions suggest an initial boundary with a central city, but leave the extent open to interpretation.

Hanlon states that some inner-ring suburbs are actually municipalities (38). Such is the case for Arlington, Texas. It’s suburban development spurred from neighboring major cities, Dallas and Fort Worth. While it was incorporated in 1884, Arlington experienced its highest rates of growth in the 1950’s and 60’s when Mayor Vandergriff

took office. According to "The History Of The City Of Arlington: In Video Part 4", Mayor Vandergriff was a major influence on the type of development introduced to Arlington. His preferred suburban feel included single-family homes, strip retail and entertainment venues. In the 70's and 80's garden apartment complexes and regional malls emerged perpetuating the suburban pattern of auto dependent, separated uses.

The aforementioned scholarly definitions of inner-ring suburbs are fairly similar. They are characterized as post-WWII to 1970 low-density, auto-oriented, suburban type development with some association with major central cities. Such characteristics now serve as the foundation of a growing number of challenges.

1.2 Challenges to Inner-Ring Suburbs (in the South)

Increasing sprawl, rebounding central cities, land constraints, unbalanced investment, and regional competition contribute to the growing challenges of inequality faced by inner-ring suburbs. While "the share of U.S. population living in inner-ring suburbs has remained the same since 1970" (Hanlon 2010, 20), newer suburbs have greatly expanded at nearly twice the rate of older inner-ring suburbs (20). Unique to the southern region of the United States, however, are a larger percentage of outer suburbs compared to inner suburbs (37). This indicates that the South, unlike any other region in the U.S., experiences high levels of outward growth with little regard for growth management. A lax attitude toward state and regional growth management in the south has proliferated a culture built on pro-growth

policies. This mentality not only enables but also encourages sprawl development leaving mature, inner-ring suburban cities behind.

Leapfrog development takes place due to the lack of available developable land, as inner-ring suburbs are typically land locked with few large undeveloped parcels. Short, Hanlon and Vicino (2007) state that the “availability of cheap land on the exurban fringe of metropolitan areas has allowed unfettered growth and large-scale housing developments” (646) resulting in “low-density, auto-dependent, exclusionary new development on the fringe” (646). With over 1/3 of the region’s households expected to live outside today’s urban areas” (Vision North Texas 2), inner-ring suburbs will continue to experience disinvestment from the private sector, and therefore, declining population, aging infrastructure and building stock.

Unlike treasured historic buildings, the product type found in the inner-ring was not meant to last more than 40 years because it was quickly and cheaply constructed. Most inner-ring suburbs, including the study area of Lamar-Collins in Arlington (Figure 1), were built out by the 1980s with such product (i.e. strip retail buildings and garden apartments) because an accelerated depreciation deduction was available to property owners. An accelerated depreciation deduction allowed a higher upfront deduction and a lower future deduction (Rodeck). In other words, cheaper buildings not meant to last long were constructed knowing a large upfront deduction could be made rather than the traditional straight-line deduction. After a couple of years when a building

began to need significant repairs, the property was sold to another owner who could then claim the accelerated depreciation repeating the same cycle with little investment into the property. Now, inner-ring suburbs are over saturated with areas of high concentrations of aging buildings that have little life left. These aging developments often take up a lot of space and are typically located in prime sites like major intersections with high visibility, which does little for the perception of the city. It also does a poor job of attracting desired redevelopment because absentee landowners that do not wish to sell now own most. These properties, otherwise known as “cash cows”, make just enough profit that selling is not ideal to the owner.

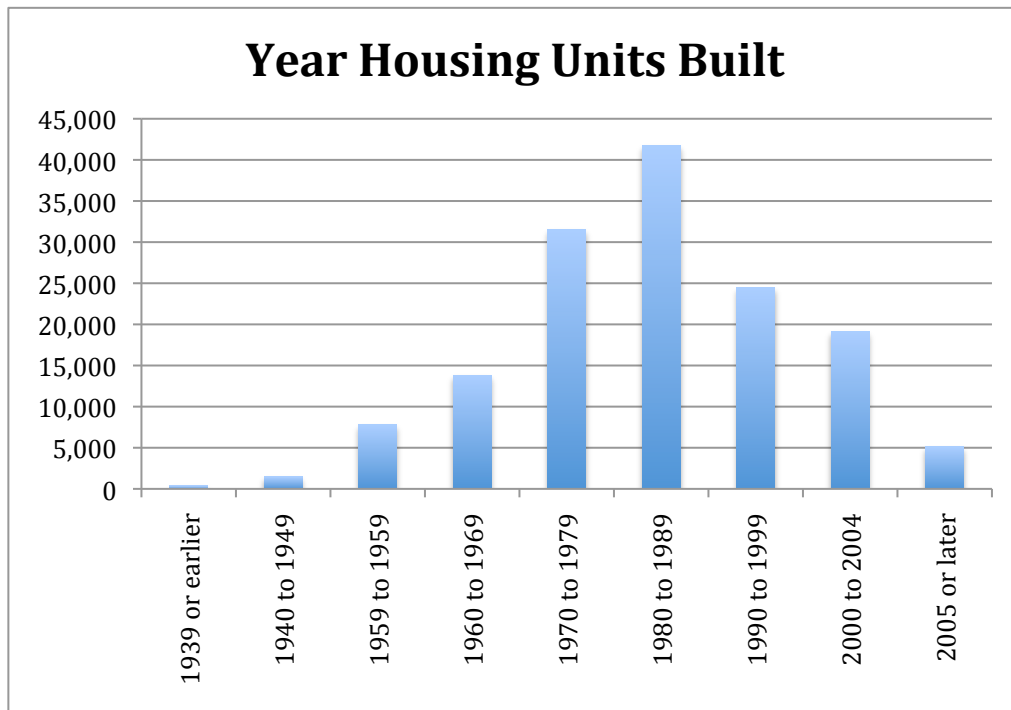


Figure 1: Year Housing Units Built in Arlington, Texas (U.S Census Bureau)

Mostly built out Inner-ring suburbs are limited by small, undeveloped parcels for infill opportunities. This limits the developer, as he or she must accommodate existing zoning, infrastructure and established communities. Also deterring much desired infill development in inner-ring suburbs is what Farris (2001) refers to as the “prisoner’s dilemma”, an idea borrowed from Hartshorn (1992). Because property rights rank high among individual rights in the south, developers are weary of investing in areas of decline. “If one owner rehabilitates or develops infill and the other does not, the rehabilitated/infill property will be negatively affected by the adjacent deteriorated property, and the owner will not receive as good a return on investment as the one who did nothing” (Farris 2001, 11). Planning tools, such as Tax Increment Finance Districts (TIFS) and Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ), meant to relieve developers of this dilemma are often misused in areas that are not in decline. So, inner-ring suburbs continue to deteriorate as they lose the battle for investment resources that are typically tied up in greenfield development in the outer suburbs (Hanlon 2010, 48). Therefore, the assumption that it is simply “more profitable for real estate companies and developers to develop new places than to redevelop already existing communities” (48) continues.

The plethora of greenfield development opportunities in outer-ring suburbs and exurbs is not only a plus for developers, it’s an asset some cities use when attracting new residents and jobs. These cities on the fringe have the available land to

accommodate new development for new residential and office space. In Grodach's (2010) study of seven central counties of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, none of the economic development officials interviewed "mentioned mitigating the environmental costs of unregulated growth as being within the scope of their work" (306). They focus, instead, on making sure they get a return on investment that increases the tax base (306). This is achieved primarily through new development because "property tax revenue is the lifeblood of local communities" (Kim 2012). In a politically conservative area of the South, tax rate increases are not typically considered, especially if there is available land for new development (Kim 2012). Therefore, an intensely competitive environment with winners and losers (Hanlon 2010, 49) persists throughout the region. For example, in 1981, Plano welcomed the relocation of Ross Perot's EDS Headquarters from Dallas on what were then fields of available undeveloped land (Kim 2012). Now, as more land becomes available through increased infrastructure subsidies, places like Frisco, Prosper and Celina are open for business as Plano slowly becomes apart of the inner-ring. A respondent quoted in Grodach's (2010) report said bluntly "the new takes from the old and it is a never ending cycle...[of cities] cannibalizing on each other" (306). What's more is many families are attracted to the reputation of good schools and low crime rates found in the outer-ring suburbs and exurbs. An attitude that insists on accommodating desired population and job growth "at any cost" (Kim 2012) creates an intensely competitive atmosphere in which inner-ring suburbs lose most of the time.

On the other end of the spectrum is competition with rebounding central business districts. Since the 1990s, downtowns and the inner city have experienced population growth and a reduction in poverty concentration with the back-to-the-city movements (Lee and Green Leigh 2005, 334). The downtown is an attractive place for young professionals and empty nesters that no longer want a lengthy commute and enjoy public transportation, cultural activities and entertainment (335). The increased investment creates fertile ground for gentrification as people start to notice the potential in downtown living, again. This reinvestment often prices out the current population leaving the inner-ring suburbs to accommodate displaced individuals who can no longer afford to live downtown.

1.3 Revitalization or Redevelopment?

As sprawl development continues on the fringe and reinvestment continues in central cities, the higher-income population polarizes in opposite directions causing inner-ring suburbs to experience declining income levels and a declining, yet more diverse population. With diversity comes conflicting views, needs and desires, and some inner-ring suburban cities choose to tackle under performing areas with plans for revitalization, redevelopment, or both. There is a common misconception among planners, developers and councilmen and women that the two are synonymous, but they differ significantly. It's important to understand where they differ in order to

propose, develop and execute appropriate plans toward neighborhood restoration within the inner-ring.

Richard Layman, an urban/commercial district revitalization and transportation/mobility advocate and consultant based in Washington D.C., defines neighborhood revitalization as a “rebuilding strategy based on assets: buildings; business; people; organizations”; while neighborhood redevelopment “looks at the only asset being present as land, land that needs to be cleared and redeveloped into something new”. These definitions suggest different types of opportunity for the City, the private owners, and the community as a whole. The former engages an existing community and rebuilds using what is available, first. They may see potential in the existing buildings, they may be in favor of saving the character of the neighborhood or they may not have the proper financing to engage in redevelopment. The latter, on the other hand, responds to conditions so poor that starting from scratch is the only option toward restoration or there is financing available for such overhaul making it easier to redevelop than revitalize.

Of particular concern in either approach is the possibility for gentrification. Intentions, motivations and goals of those attempting the restoration should be explored prior to pursuing a plan of action to avoid unwanted outcomes or backlash. Sometimes, like in the case of New York City, gentrification was the ultimate goal of neighborhood restoration in the 80s. Smith (1996) recounts the notorious riots of

1988 in the Lower East Side in which unfettered gentrification persisted without the protection of existing residents. This is an extreme case of neighborhood restoration used to radically change the state of an area in blatant hopes of gentrification. Smith attributes the proliferation of gentrification in New York City to “the Frontier Myth”, a pursuit to bravely reclaim urban areas for habitation as if these neighborhoods were wild and uncivilized (Smith 1996, 13). For example, the March 27, 1983 edition of the *New York Times* promoted the myth when it proclaimed, “West 42nd has been tamed, domesticated and polished into the most exciting, freshest, most energetic new neighborhood in all of New York...for really savvy buyers” (13). Creating an atmosphere of intentional gentrification became the social norm among well-to-do individuals and families in this example, but it later sparked significant backlash from displaced individuals and families. In an attempt to calm the seas, gentrification was later defined in the *New York Times* as “the upgrading of housing and retail businesses in a neighborhood with an influx generally of private investment” (30), the definition more or less accepted today.

At any rate, a declining neighborhood must be restored with or without the fear of gentrification, but the means for and the process in which this restoration occurs obviously matters. Is there an existing community that needs help or is displacement an acceptable option to consider? Are there existing assets to build upon or is the land the only thing of value? What can be financed right now? Making things more

complicated is the fact that the planning team must determine the level of decline in order to answer these questions, but this can be a difficult task. Like gentrification, decline means different things to different people. The term blight in the case of eminent domain, for example, is loosely defined in Texas Local Government Code as:

“an area that is not a slum area, but that, because of deteriorating buildings, structures, or other improvements; defective or inadequate streets, street layout, or accessibility; unsanitary conditions; or other hazardous conditions, adversely affects the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the municipality and its residents, substantially retards the provision of a sound and healthful housing environment, or results in an economic or social liability to the municipality.” – (“Texas Local Government Code - Section 374.003. Definitions”)

In an effort to do what is right for its existing and future citizens, the City should, to the best of its ability, assess an area independent of financial opportunity to determine the degree of decline in order to recommend and plan for the most appropriate strategy toward restoration. The next step is to determine by what means restoration is most appropriate: total revitalization, total redevelopment, or a combination of both?

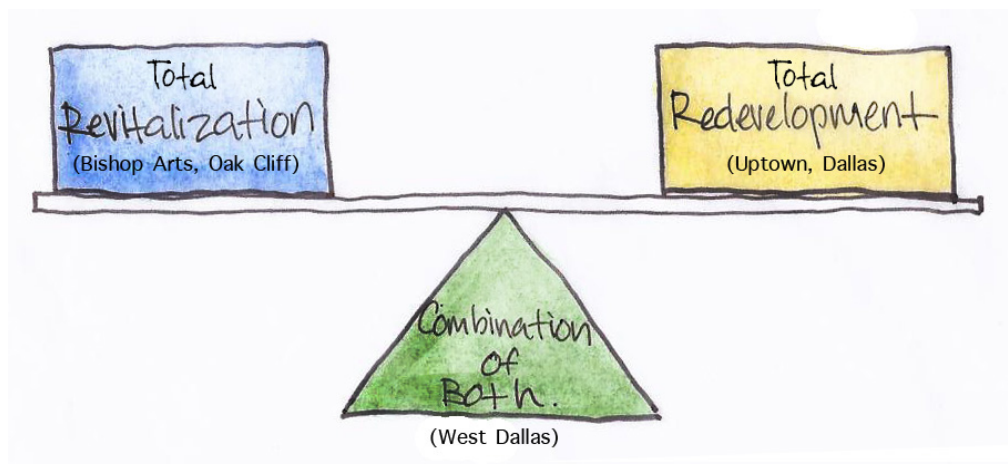


Figure 2: Revitalization/Redevelopment Diagram (Created by Ashley Shook)

Within the Metroplex are examples of total redevelopment, total revitalization and a mix of both (Figure 2). Each has a distinctly different outcome and may or may not be appropriate in certain locations. The following examples are not inner-ring suburbs, but they demonstrate how either approach was executed and why. It is important to note that works in one location may not work in another, and what works at one point in time may not work in another. Typically, redevelopment of problem sites occur when there is a willing developer, an owner ready to sell, and the potential for profit. Without this combination, however, redevelopment of existing neighborhoods is unlikely. Total redevelopment ensued in what is now known as Uptown in Dallas, Texas, as one large developer, the Southland Corporation, acquired property, mainly owned and occupied by low-income minorities. The company saw value in the land, demolished most of the existing buildings and infrastructure, and built entirely new buildings with higher rents. The area ultimately gentrified as a higher income group began to occupy the area. Hackworth (2002) notes that after the 1990 recession, corporate real estate capital was in a much better position than individual investors to overcome the obstacle of generating a profit (820). Large inner-city developers, investment trusts, and mortgage brokers merged creating a consolidated industry (819) that could redevelop whole neighborhoods creating quick gentrification.

Places like the State Thomas Historic District housed low-income families in the Roseland Homes, but once the City of Dallas created a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district and Public Improvement District (PID) in the area “in order to make available millions of dollars in incentives for a new wave of land developers” (Prior 2005, 197), the Roseland Homes were demolished and replaced with something more compatible with surrounding upscale development. This type of total redevelopment had intentions of gentrification, and it was successful in its endeavors. Here, the TIF was successful because it was used inappropriately. Theoretically, a TIF district should be established for areas “that would not otherwise attract private capital” (Youngman 2011, 322), but redevelopment had already started to take place before the TIF was introduced. Regardless, the stars aligned for this neighborhood redevelopment initiative. It’s location adjacent to Downtown Dallas, first and foremost, reduced risk for the large developer to invest time and money, and once the City was on its side by establishing the TIF, neighborhood redevelopment prevailed but with a large cost to displaced individuals.

On the other end of the spectrum is total revitalization, or building on existing assets beyond the value of the land. This is typically seen in historic districts or in areas with a very active community, sensitive to the preservation of character. This approach typically consists of small-scale, owner-occupied rehabilitation projects and has occurred since the 1950s around the U.S (Hackworth 2002, 818). In DFW, total

revitalization occurred in the Bishop Arts District of Oak Cliff before and during the recession of the 2000s. Total revitalization, opposed to redevelopment, could have ensued because financing may not have been available for a large corporate developer to be involved or because the existing property owners were conscious of the value of the existing urban form and declined any potential speculators. The latter is likely true considering Oak Cliff's former reputation as a "bad part of town". Usually, it is only after successful small attempts toward restoration and the perception of an area becomes more positive do corporations begin to invest. At any rate, the area is known for breaking all the rules when it comes to zoning ordinance regulation. Through demonstration and zoning reform, this area has been able to promote a walkable urban environment with minimal parking requirements, build-to lines, and requiring building facade permeability. This community has been successful in restoring an existing neighborhood by building on existing assets such as buildings, people, and businesses one small piece at a time. By restoring an area with several assets close to one another, a spillover effect occurred in the surrounding residential neighborhood encouraging more private investment from old but mostly new property owners.

In this scenario, a level of gentrification is occurring, as well. Both total redevelopment and total revitalization have the ability to displace individuals through gentrification, but the process is very different. Total redevelopment involves a corporate developer and a top down approach, while total revitalization may have

several small developers or property owners willing to make small renovations with a bottom up approach. The total revitalization approach may start small, but corporate developers have begun to feed off the new energy of the area by opening chain restaurants near by. Furthermore, in the case of Uptown, total redevelopment occurred due in part to its location near a downtown, while total revitalization, in the case of Bishop Arts, occurred due in part to its location as a streetcar suburb a few miles outside of the CBD. Both areas are attractive locations for private investment. Perhaps the opposite approach in either case would have been less successful in restoring these areas to their present and lively state.

Still, there is opportunity to utilize both redevelopment and revitalization in restoring a neighborhood in which gentrification may ensure but not as quickly as total redevelopment or total revitalization, as seen in Uptown and Bishop Arts. In other words, the existing community has the opportunity to grow with the investment. West Dallas, for example, is taking an incremental approach toward restoration. The area, located a few miles outside of the CBD, has an established Hispanic neighborhood called La Bajada with lower than average property values and lower-income families that wish to remain in West Dallas (*West Dallas Dream* 2009, 7). Speculators of large corporate development firms were scouting the area with the opening of the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge and Trinity River redevelopment project in mind. To ensure the protection of the existing community while encouraging some

redevelopment opportunities, the Dallas City Design Studio created a plan with existing community members and potential stakeholders, planners and architects. The plan calls for incremental development over time that starts now in order to ensure future investment (*Urban Structure Implementation Workshop 2011*). This mixed approach includes redevelopment of sites where the land is the only thing of value, infill development where the land is generally vacant, and revitalization of existing buildings with minor upgrades and/or adaptive reuse. This plan may prove an appropriate method for declining areas not located within a CBD or with a non-vocal or unorganized community. Now that the plan is being implemented post-recession and financing is again being restructured, a combined approach of redevelopment and revitalization toward restoration is all that can be financed right now.

Action is slowly taking place in West Dallas. The Fort Worth Avenue Development Group was formed to steer both revitalization and redevelopment projects along Fort Worth Avenue and surrounding streets. Projects have ranged from the Spare Parts Public Arts Initiative to the redesign of Commerce and Beckley Ave. intersection to the repurposing of an old automotive repair shop into the Four Corners Brewing Company on Singleton to the acquisition and redevelopment of a block on Sylvan Ave. and I-30 ("Fort Worth Avenue Development Group - Supporting Life and Development in Oak Cliff and Dallas"). Only time will tell if this incremental approach with the inclusion of both revitalization and redevelopment will prove successful in this neighborhood

restoration initiative. Ultimately, it is the planner's job to understand the context in which the restoration is needed and what can be financed. In the case of West Dallas, the planner reaches out to an existing community that otherwise may not feel encouraged to speak about their needs and desires, becomes an engaged member of a volunteer community development organization and helps to steer opportunities for all stakeholders to work together toward a common ground. In this approach, a balanced outcome of neighborhood restoration is the ultimate goal.

Again, the aforementioned examples are not inner-ring suburbs, but they do shed light on three distinctly different approaches toward neighborhood restoration that may be considered for the inner-ring. Revitalization and redevelopment are not one in the same. They are financed differently and involve different players. Gentrification is often an outcome of both whether employed solely or together, but the degree and speed in which it occurs is very different. It is critical for all involved parties to understand the differences in order to successfully and ethically restore a neighborhood.

Section 2. The Study Area: Lamar-Collins, Arlington, Texas

"In Dallas-Fort Worth, half of the suburbs in crisis are inner-ring" (Hanlon 2010, 96). Situated between Dallas and Fort Worth is Arlington, Texas, an inner-ring

suburban city facing the challenges mentioned above. It is now nearly 100 square miles of aging suburban development with pockets of decline. The Lamar-Collins area of North Arlington, in particular, has come on the radar for neighborhood redevelopment. Attempts to combat the decline have been pursued in recent years but have failed to spark the desired redevelopment. So what happened? How did this area come into such decline and why haven't the suggested solutions worked? Independent research and interviews with a local politician, developer, neighborhood activist, and a business manager formed the following analysis.

2.1 Background Information

The Lamar-Collins area of North Arlington, located north of I-30, between Collins and Lincoln, Brown and Lamar (Figure 3), is a 270-acre area developed between 1970 and 1983 (City of Arlington). There are great assets within this area, including ITT Technical Institute, Concorde Career Institute, Texas Health Resources, Roquemore Elementary School, a large public park, tree-lined streets, and good proximity to other parts of the City and region, like River Legacy Park to the north and the Rangers Ballpark and Dallas Cowboys Stadium to the south (Figure 4). However, Collins, a state highway that serves 18-wheeler traffic, is lined with out dated, one story strip retail and commercial development wrought with large building setbacks, a surplus of curb cuts, and inadequate pedestrian amenities. Aging multi-family garden style apartments make up 171 acres, a majority of the site area. Additionally, there are

some office/commercial buildings along Lamar that are currently disconnected from the rest of the site as a sea of parking surrounds them. Immediately surrounding the area is older but considerably well-kept single-family homes to the west and northwest, Rolling Hills Country Club and golf course to the west, Chester W. Ditto Gold Course directly north on Brown, and 30 acres of vacant land owned by TXDOT closest to I-30. On the east side of Collins is more strip retail, which will soon be the new location of a Neighborhood Wal-Mart, and a couple of car dealerships.

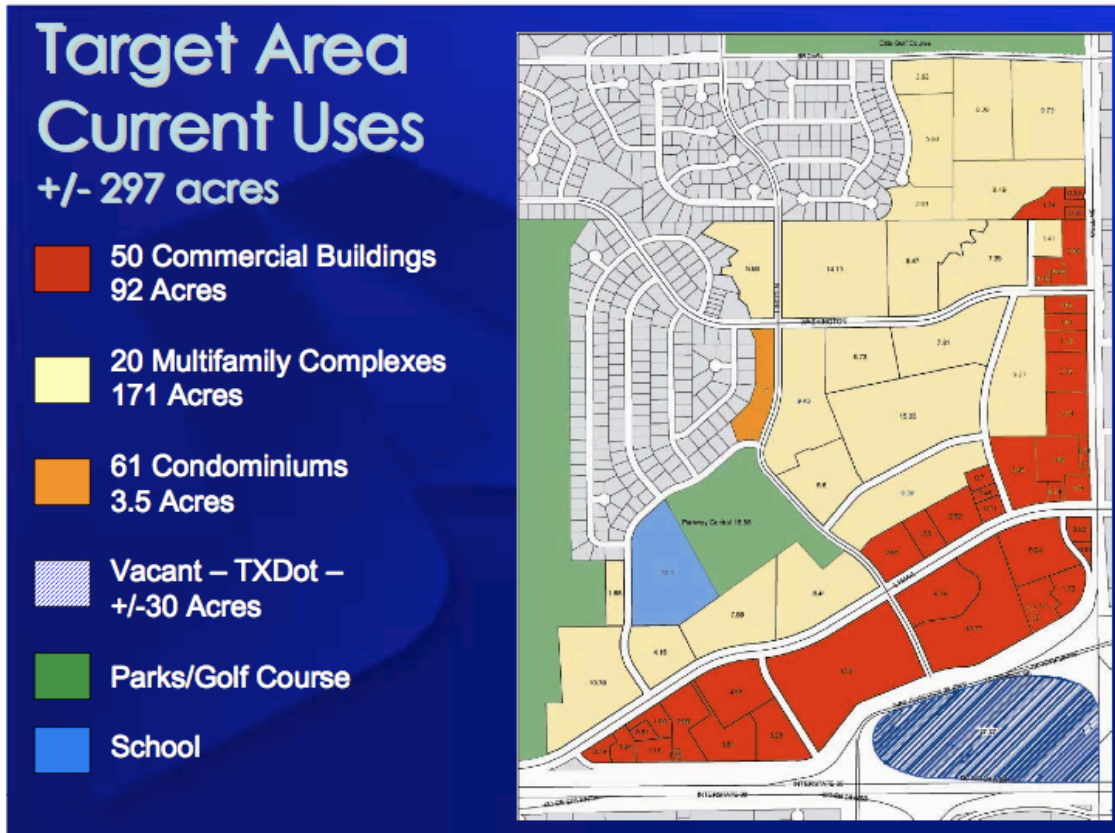


Figure 3: Lamar-Collins Target Area (Provided by the City of Arlington)

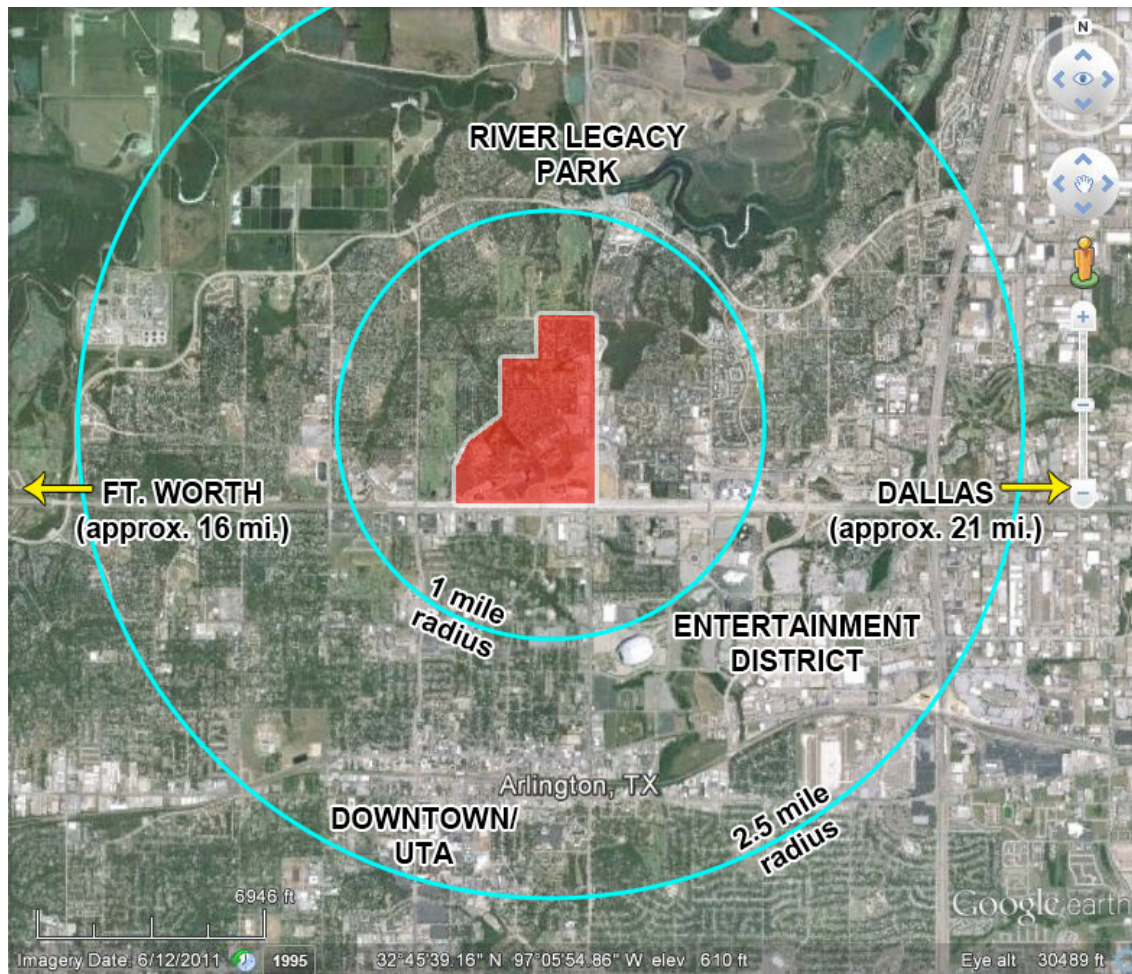


Figure 4: Proximity Map (Created by Ashley Shook using 2012 Google Earth Imagery)

Lucy and Phillips (2001) point out that while some inner-ring suburbs thrive, others decline where “houses are located in inconvenient settings, where there are few public amenities, and where there are no alternatives to automobile transportation” (57). This accurately describes the current environment of Lamar-Collins. While there is a clear horizontal mix of uses, including some neighborhood retail, they are completely separated. Different uses and densities are concentrated into zones, with

the help of poor orientation, fences and walls. Housing densities range from 22 units per acre in the apartment complexes to 6 single-family homes per acre in the surrounding single-family neighborhood. There are 3,252 rental units through out the 170 acres with two large vacant parcels that formerly held multi-family. Furthermore, most everything was designed and built to be accessed by an automobile, making for inconvenient pedestrian access. Walkscore.com even gave the area a walk score of 29 “Car-Dependent”. The walls and fences worsen the inconvenience by forcing pedestrians to walk out to streets where cars travel at higher than suggested speeds because roads are very wide, on-street parking is prohibited and trees and buildings are set far back. In other words, there is a harsh pedestrian environment along streets that do little to encourage neighborhood speeds by vehicles or easy pedestrian access to neighboring establishments. If the driver’s peripheral vision were impeded to some degree, however, they would likely drive slower created a safer, more hospitable environment for multiple means of transportation.

The Lamar-Collins area outlined in Figure 5 is contained within 2 census tracts, all of 1113.11 and a small portion of the south end of tract 1113.12 (Figure 5) (“Mapping the 2010 U.S. Census”). The Lamar-Collins area is highly diversified. Figure 6 shows the demographic breakdown of both census tracts. A significant decline in population of -43.2% since 2000 occurred in tract 1131.11, while tract 1131.12 experienced a population change of -13% (“Mapping the 2010 U.S. Census”). Figure 7 shows the

demographic shift of the largest races in the area from 2000 to 2010. In this time period a significant amount of white people moved away from the area. Several black people moved away as well. Hispanics seemed to be the most consistent group in the area with only -5% change.

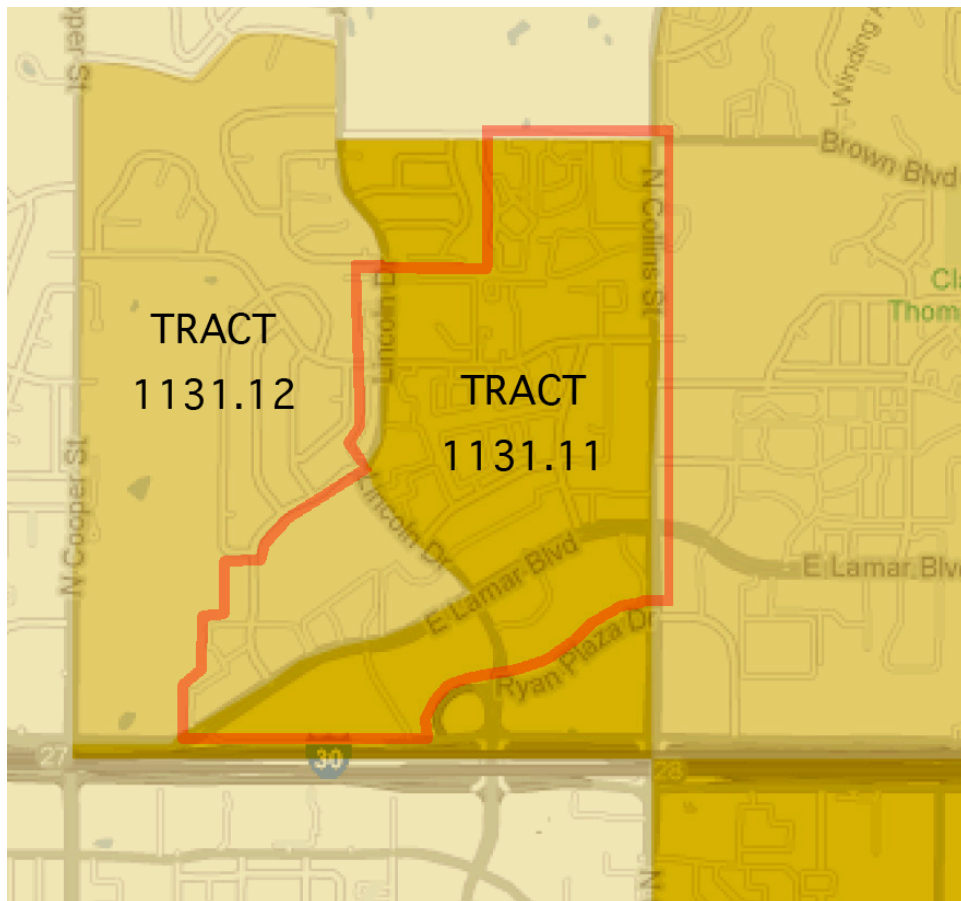
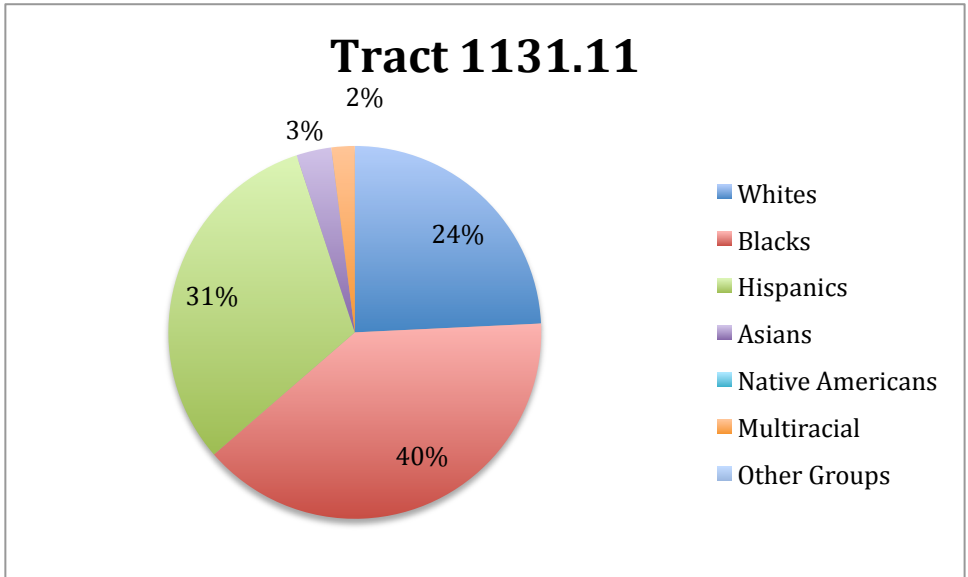
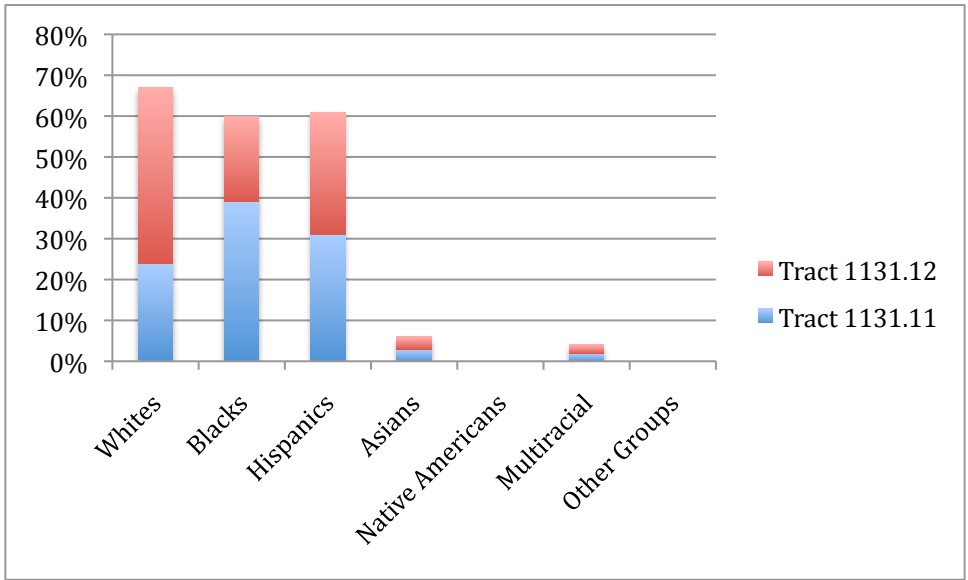


Figure 5: Census Tract Diagram (Created by Ashley Shook using base map from “Mapping the 2010 U.S. Census”)



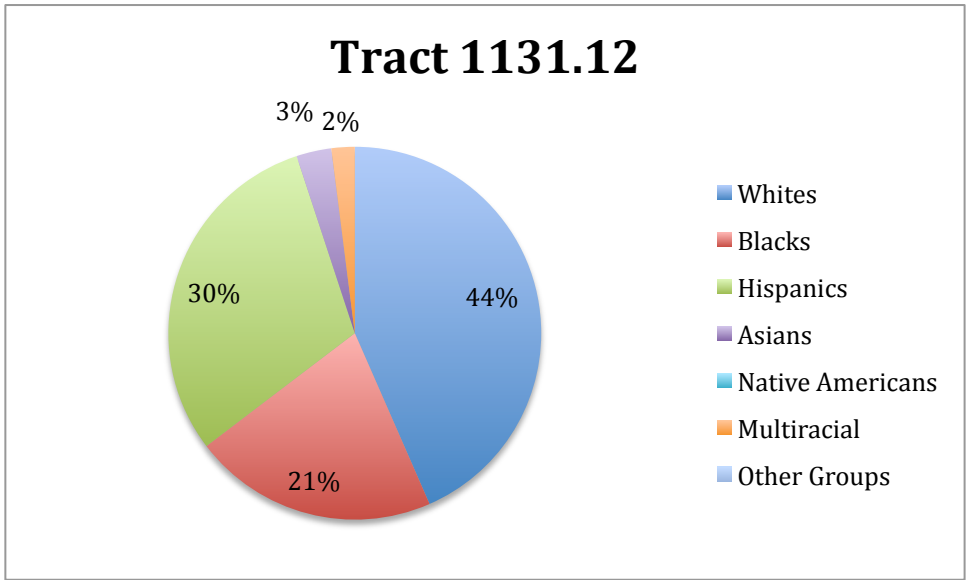


Figure 6. Population Demographics (“Mapping the 2010 U.S. Census”)

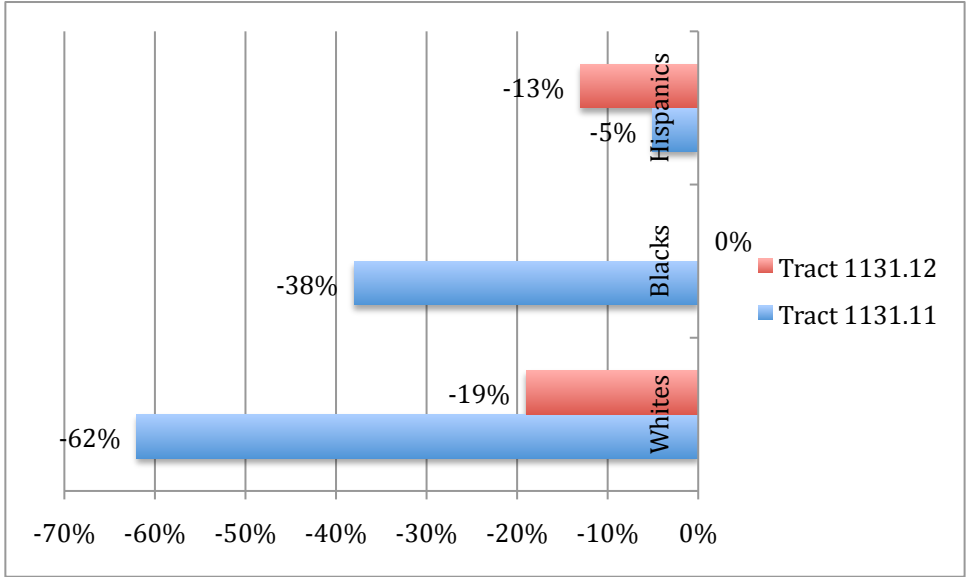


Figure 7. Population Change from 2000 to 2010 (“Mapping the 2010 U.S. Census”).

Additionally, tract 1131.11 experienced a 280% increase in housing unit vacancy from 2000 to 2010, and tract 1131.12 experienced a 244% increase in vacancy. Figure

8 shows the percent of vacant housing units compared to total housing units for the two tracts. This large increase in vacancy is partially due to the demolition of two apartment complexes along Washington. These two properties were bought and razed in 2008 after purchase by Fleet Oil and Gas out of Fort Worth (“Arlington Apartments Demolished to Make Way for Drilling.”). The rig, which was to take up 4 of 15.9 acres, was never erected and the land remains vacant to this day. The vacancy rates could also be due to the enforcement of criminal background checks for potential renters. Pressure from ACTION North Arlington and the City to perform consistent criminal background checks prevented a large number of convicted felons from moving into the area and forced several residents with active criminal history to vacate (Interview #1: Neighborhood Activist, Interview #4: Business Manager).

Income levels are shown in Figure 9. Most households are bringing in less than \$50,000 a year. Figure 10 indicates that a majority of the population in tract 1131.11 is between 20 and 34 years old with a large percentage of children under the age of 5 years old. This could mean there are a lot of young families low to moderate-income in the area. Tract 1131.12 shows a more even distribution of ages, which indicates that there are families and more retirement age people in this tract. All together, tract 1131.11 consists mainly of a largely black and Hispanic population of young families with a median household income of \$26,280 a year, and tract 1131.12 consists mainly

of an aging population with families, majority white with a median income of \$43,448 per year.

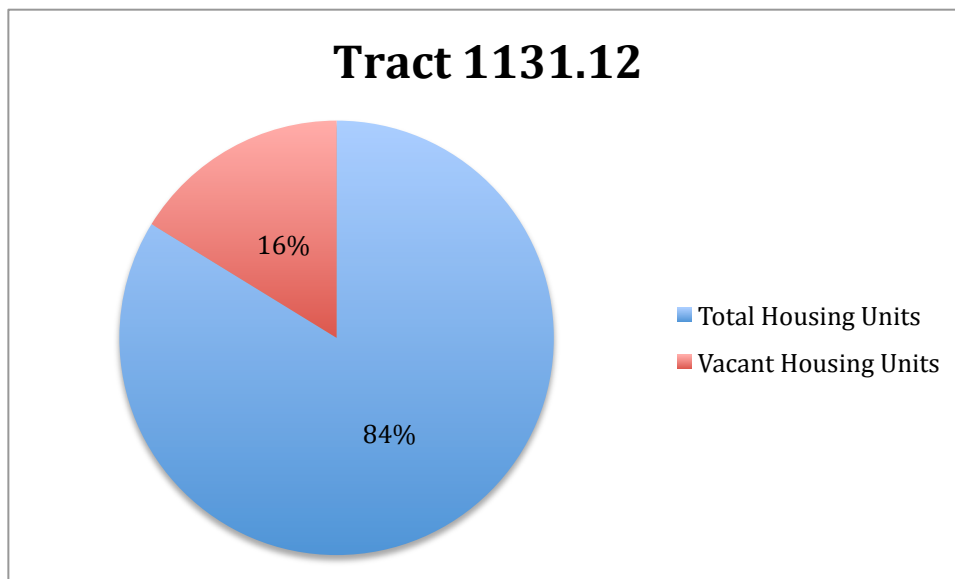
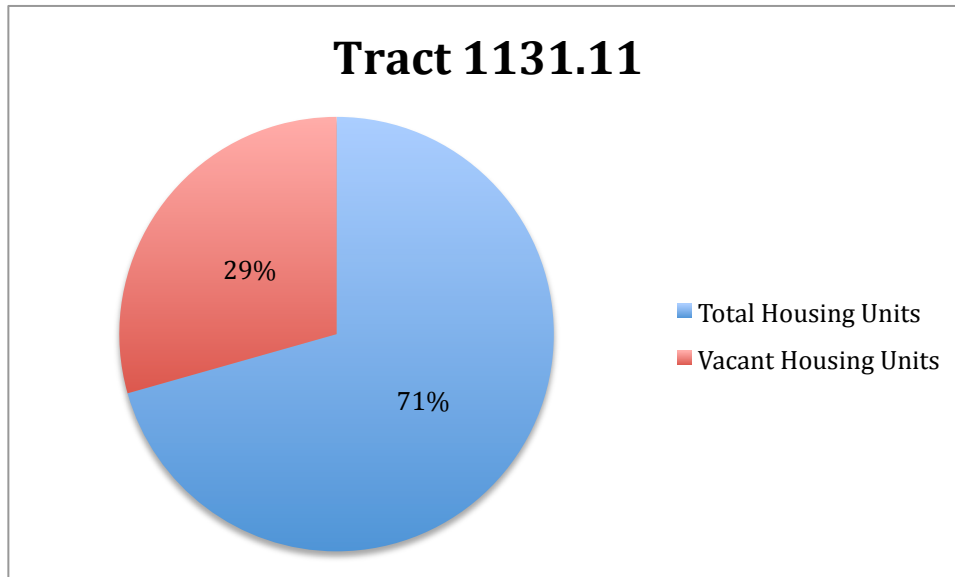


Figure 8. Vacant Housing Units in 2010 (2010 U.S. Census)

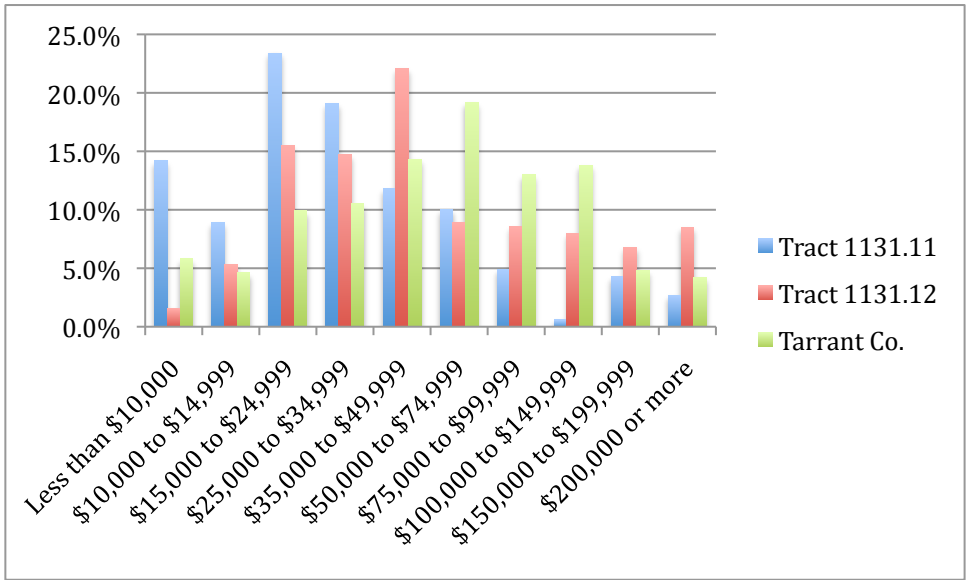


Figure 9. 2006-2010 Household Income and Benefits (2010 U.S. Census, American Community Survey)

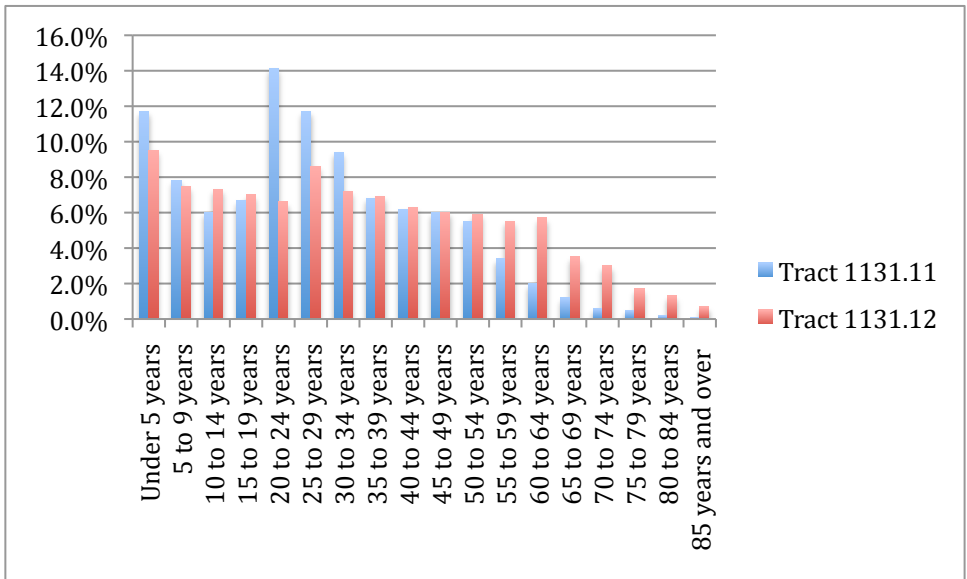


Figure 10. 2010 Age Distribution (2010 U.S. Census)

An interview with a neighborhood resident and activist in the neighborhood watch group, ACTION North Arlington, revealed that surrounding residents from the single-family neighborhood to the west and northwest have deep concern about depreciating property values and crime. They blame the apartments, and many adjacent homeowners have a misconception of what type of renter lives in the adjacent multi-family complexes. Contrary to what many think, there is no subsidized public housing in this area or in Arlington (Housing Authority of the City of Arlington 17), but “Arlington Housing Authority [does provide] rental assistance to eligible low-income persons, the elderly and persons with disabilities” (Arlington Housing Authority: Rental Assistance”). Only 4% (149 units) of those granted the Housing Choice Voucher in Arlington are located in the Lamar-Collins area (“Lamar-Collins Overlay District” 2012).

Property values have declined significantly since 2007, however (Figure 11). While a majority of the complexes have seen significant decline in value from 2007 to 2011, ten have started to see rising appraisals since 2010 (Figure 12). Some of those seeing increased appraisals are among those with the largest overall decline. This slight increase in value comes right at the end of the recession and could be due to increased code enforcement pressure from the City and subsequent upgrades to properties. In other words, properties owners seem to want to invest more in their properties rather than sell at the moment. Selling right now is unlikely considering it would probably be for less than what they originally spent. Of the ten with increasing property values,

five are concentrated along Washington Dr. next to the two undeveloped parcels, two are located closest to the single-family homes on Washington, and one is located along Lamar, adjacent to the elementary school.

Apartment Complex	2007 Value	2011 Value	Value Change
Oak Creek	\$6,104,000.00	\$7,000,000.00	14.7%
Countrywood	\$3,700,000.00	\$4,011,832.00	8.4%
Shadow Tree Condos	\$400,000.00	\$400,000.00	0.0%
The Point of N. Arlington	\$2,450,000.00	\$2,337,510.00	-4.6%
Waterchase	\$4,350,000.00	\$3,830,000.00	-12.0%
Springtree	\$3,862,471.00	\$3,227,956.00	-16.4%
Heritage Fields	\$6,910,133.00	\$4,835,260.00	-30.0%
Huntington Chase	\$3,912,069.00	\$2,593,922.00	-33.7%
Cypress Chase	\$4,700,000.00	\$2,989,000.00	-36.4%
Stone Canyon	\$4,988,000.00	\$3,100,000.00	-37.9%
Forest Hills	\$7,366,626.00	\$4,275,325.00	-42.0%
Hidden Valley	\$3,872,000.00	\$2,228,000.00	-42.5%
Manchester Park	\$2,660,500.00	\$1,511,362.00	-43.2%
The Crestmont	\$4,121,000.00	\$2,162,000.00	-47.5%
Presidents Corner	\$3,027,615.00	\$1,500,000.00	-50.5%
Summer Oaks	\$10,311,839.00	\$4,994,946.00	-51.6%
The Valencia	\$8,100,000.00	\$3,680,000.00	-54.6%
The Biltmore	\$5,614,080.00	\$2,232,000.00	-60.2%
Undeveloped	\$2,800,000.00	\$870,583.00	-68.9%
Undeveloped	\$2,825,000.00	\$805,140.00	-71.5%

Figure 11. Apartment Complexes Property Appraisal 2007-2011 (City of Arlington)

Apartment Complex	2010 Value	2011 Value	Value Change
Oak Creek	\$5,172,365.00	\$7,000,000.00	35.33%
Countrywood	\$3,041,099.00	\$4,011,832.00	31.92%
Shadow Tree Condos	\$400,000.00	\$400,000.00	0.00%
The Point of N. Arlington			
Waterchase			
Springtree	\$2,525,000.00	\$3,227,946.00	27.84%
Heritage Fields			
Huntington Chase			
Cypress Chase			
Stone Canyon	\$2,500,000.00	\$3,100,000.00	24.00%
Forest Hills	\$425,325.00	\$425,325.00	0.00%
Hidden Valley	\$2,200,000.00	\$2,228,000.00	1.27%
Manchester Park			
The Crestmont			
Presidents Corner	\$1,300,000.00	\$1,500,000.00	15.38%
Summer Oaks			
The Valencia			
The Biltmore			
Undeveloped	\$870,583.00	\$870,583.00	0.00%
Undeveloped	\$690,122.00	\$805,140.00	16.67%

Figure 12. Apartment Complexes Property Appraisal 2010-2011 (City of Arlington)

Still, concerned single-family dwellers feel the adjacent property's lower property values have and will continue to affect their property values. Figure 13 shows how surrounding property values have been affected since 2008. Of the eleven randomly appraised single-family homes in the adjacent neighborhood, the largest decline was seen on a property two streets west of Lincoln Dr., while a property sharing the same street as the multi-family complex with a -51.6% value change since 2007 is actually experiencing an increase in property value of 3.27%. This indicates that despite a declining multi-family property located adjacent to the single-family home, improvements are still being made. Tax information focuses on the improvements or lack there of on a parcel independent of the surrounding neighborhood, however. Therefore, Figure 14 shows a comparison of the 2011 appraisal values to the current comp values to demonstrate the influence of the surrounding properties. More than half of the eleven randomly selected single-family homes have comp values greater than their appraised 2011 value, which suggests that the surrounding multi-family may not have as grand an affect on the selling price of single-family homes as one might think. It can be concluded then that both the multi-family and the single-family structures are aging and both require more investment. One is not necessarily to blame for the other's decline in property value.

Single-Family Homes	2008 Value	2011 Value	Value Change
2312 Summer Oaks Ct.	\$80,950.00	\$83,600.00	3.27%

515 Franklin Dr.	\$165,700.00	\$166,600.00	0.54%
615 Washington Dr.	\$73,700.00	\$73,200.00	-0.68%
2101 Coolidge Dr.	\$190,600.00	\$188,700.00	-1.00%
708 Bunker Hill Dr.	\$171,800.00	\$168,100.00	-2.15%
2317 Eagle Park Ln.	\$241,800.00	\$236,600.00	-2.15%
614 Country Green Ln.	\$175,300.00	\$169,200.00	-3.48%
605 Van Buren Dr.	\$213,900.00	\$201,200.00	-5.94%
2115 Adams Dr.	\$202,900.00	\$190,300.00	-6.21%
2336 Summer Oaks Ct.	\$110,100.00	\$103,200.00	-6.27%
2205 Adams Dr.	\$205,200.00	\$181,300.00	-11.65%

Figure 13. Single-Family Home Appraisal Value 2008-2011 (Tarrant Appraisal District)

Single-Family Homes	2010 Value	2011 Value	Value Change
2312 Summer Oaks Ct.	\$83,800.00	\$83,600.00	-0.24%
515 Franklin Dr.	\$167,100.00	\$166,600.00	-0.30%
615 Washington Dr.	\$73,500.00	\$73,200.00	-0.41%
2101 Coolidge Dr.	\$188,800.00	\$188,700.00	-0.05%
708 Bunker Hill Dr.	\$168,500.00	\$168,100.00	-0.24%
2317 Eagle Park Ln.	\$237,200.00	\$236,600.00	-0.25%
614 Country Green Ln.	\$169,800.00	\$169,200.00	-0.35%
605 Van Buren Dr.	\$201,800.00	\$201,200.00	-0.30%
2115 Adams Dr.	\$190,900.00	\$190,300.00	-0.31%
2336 Summer Oaks Ct.	\$103,500.00	\$103,200.00	-0.29%
2205 Adams Dr.	\$181,300.00	\$181,300.00	0.00%

Single-Family Home Appraisal Value 2010-2011 (Tarrant Appraisal District)

Single-Family Homes	2011 Appraisal Value	2012 Comp. Value	Value Difference
2312 Summer Oaks Ct.	\$83,600.00	\$76,156.00	-\$7,444.00
515 Franklin Dr.	\$166,600.00	\$181,191.00	\$14,591.00
615 Washington Dr.	\$73,200.00	\$82,552.00	\$9,352.00
2101 Coolidge Dr.	\$188,700.00	\$185,838.00	-\$2,862.00
708 Bunker Hill Dr.	\$168,100.00	\$168,428.00	\$328.00
2317 Eagle Park Ln.	\$236,600.00	\$236,063.00	-\$537.00
614 Country Green Ln.	\$169,200.00	\$175,040.00	\$5,840.00
605 Van Buren Dr.	\$201,200.00	\$197,998.00	-\$3,202.00
2115 Adams Dr.	\$190,300.00	\$154,942.00	-\$35,358.00
2336 Summer Oaks Ct.	\$103,200.00	\$94,450.00	-\$8,750.00
2205 Adams Dr.	\$181,300.00	\$190,593.00	\$9,293.00

Figure 14. Single-Family Home 2011 Appraisal Value compared to 2012 Comp Values ("Real Estate ABC - Information on Buying and Selling A Home")

Crime has also been a major concern. Prior to 2005, the area started to see rising crime rates, but since 2006, overall crime in the area with the highest concentration of multi-family (Figure 15) has shown a decline of -19% (Figure 16) (Arlington Police Department). Action North Arlington, the neighborhood watch group, was created in 2005 to help identify where crime was taking place in hopes of apprehending the source through increased reporting of incidences and pressure to increase criminal background checks on potential renters (Interview #1: Neighborhood Activist). With

the help of Action North Arlington and Arlington Police Department, crime has fallen to an acceptable rate for the area, even though calls have increased. Arlington PD encourages more calls from concerned residents, within and surrounding the neighborhood, in order to understand what types of crimes were being committed and when and where they were taking place. This approach of more police presence and awareness has positively communicated to the existing community that a level of safety is being restored, according to Arlington PD. It has also shown the power of relying on an existing community to make a better place for themselves by investing time and energy into their neighborhood.

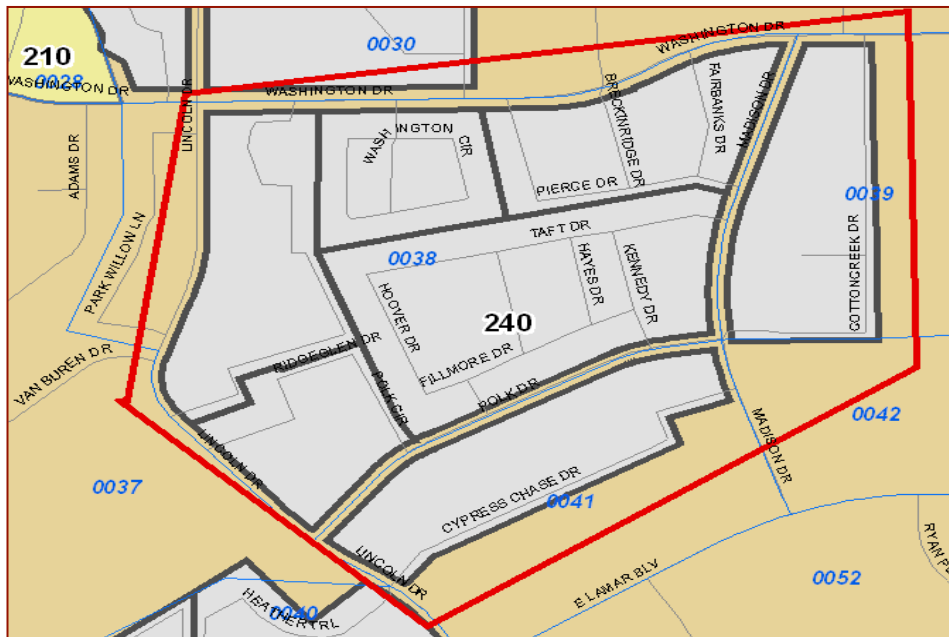


Figure 15. Area Used for Crime Statistics (Arlington Police Department)

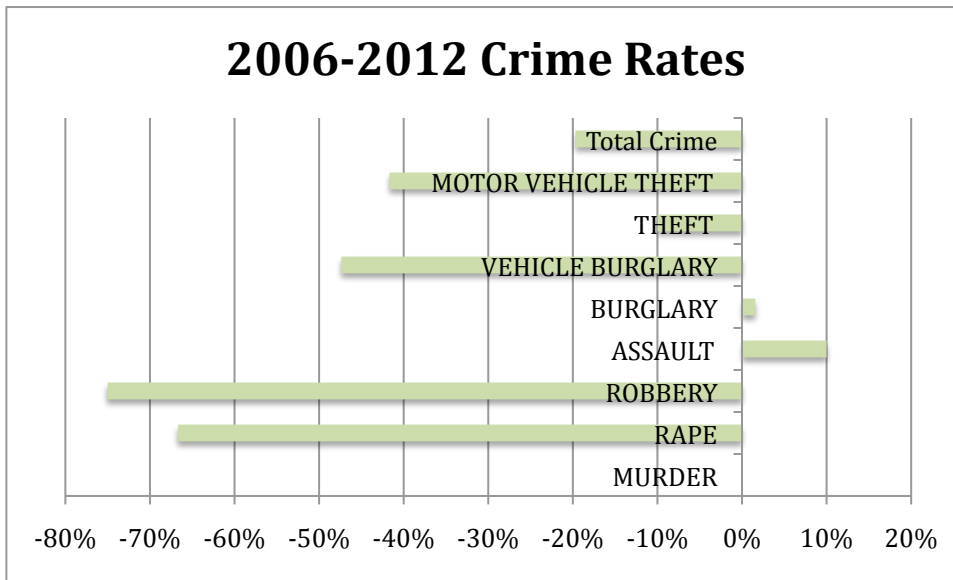


Figure 16. 2006-2012 Crime Rates (Arlington Police Department)

2.2 Lamar-Collins Overlay Ordinance

Based on the state of the area in 2005, the City saw opportunity for redevelopment of the multi-family complexes in the Lamar-Collins area. In 2006, the Arlington City Council approved a mixed-use overlay for the Lamar-Collins area (LCMU) in hopes of redeveloping the area into a more walkable, urban environment to serve as a major gateway to the City. Section 9-1400 “Purpose and Intent” of Ordinance reads as follows:

“ Purpose and Intent. The Lamar Collins Mixed Use (“LCMU”) District is established to provide areas in which a variety of housing types exist among neighborhood-serving commercial and institutional uses. The intent is to establish architectural character and to encourage pedestrian-oriented activities in this location of Arlington and to encourage redevelopment in those

areas deemed appropriate. “ (Lamar Collins Mixed Use (LCMU) Overlay District, City of Arlington)

In an overview presentation at a town meeting, highlights from the ordinance were revealed to the public. Straying from traditional zoning, the overlay was meant to encourage better form through design standards. Even though certain uses make sense in the forms prescribed for this area and others do not, use is still regulated in this overlay. There is neither a minimum nor maximum density requirement in order to encourage a desired product type resembling Addison Circle or The Shops at Legacy in Plano. In addition to permitted uses, the ordinance regulates form by building height and parking requirements. Heights along Collins are not to exceed eight stories, mixed-use buildings are not to exceed six stories and single-family may not exceed three stories (5). All multi-family parking must be located within a parking garage, no parking lots can be located between the building and the street, and side parking is limited to 25% of street frontage (6).

The ordinance never defines the term “redevelopment”, but the Champion Arlington Economic Development Strategy document (2005) uses both “redevelopment” and “revitalization” numerous times. For instance, it suggests a goal of “redeveloping existing areas” by “fostering revitalization of existing neighborhoods” (1), and later says to “focus future development and land use patterns on revitalization and infill development” (16). It then suggests to “redevelop aging and overcrowded

multi-family units and set standards for new development” (18). Clearly, there are conflicting messages as both terms are used interchangeably. Therefore, the intent and subsequent goal for the area is hard to decipher. With only about 50 acres of undeveloped land available for new infill development, there are limited options for the implementation of this ordinance: One, existing land owners could take it upon themselves to comply with the ordinance (total revitalization), or, two, existing land owners could sell property to willing developers for total redevelopment. The former is an unlikely option considering the “existing uses permitted in the Lamar Collins Mixed Use Overlay District shall remain in effect by right” (Section 9-1400,C, 5), and “existing structures in the Target Area...shall not be permitted to be included in a Mixed Use Development” (Section 9-1400,C,8). This ordinance does little to encourage existing property owners to upgrade. They can do nothing and remain there by right as long as they are up to building code standards. Even if they did wish to upgrade, they would have to remain the same size with the same configuration because adding square footage would trigger ordinance compliance. Remaining the same goes against everything the overlay seeks to accomplish.

The second option, property acquisition through a willing seller, demolition and redevelopment by developer, is likely the more desired approach with this Overlay considering the preferred building form and configuration is completely different than what already exists. The Arlington Chamber put out a brochure to market the area in

2006. It highlights the area's location on "the edge of the Metroplex's most dynamic entertainment and commercial sector" and 20 minute drive from Dallas or Fort Worth, the three new bridges over I-30 to increase access, and Arlington's growth as a whole. This brochure was created prior to the recession, however, and many of the neighbors it highlights never came to fruition, like Glorypark, the 1.5 million square feet of upscale retail, entertainment, office and hotel near the stadiums. The brochure also notes that the area is "now occupied by aging apartment complexes" but "Arlington's City Council, businesses and homeowners have joined forces to create the Lamar-Collins Mixed Use Overlay District". It seems the intention was always acquisition, demolition and total redevelopment as it promotes the area as "on the brink of unprecedented redevelopment". It was as if property owners would be willing to sell and developers would be willing to purchase upon the adoption of this overlay. On the contrary, very little redevelopment occurred. A new Whole Foods, Starbucks, Potbelly, Pei Wei, and Bank of America were developed along Collins (of which there is parking between the building and the street), but no new residential or mixed use buildings were constructed.

Surrounding homeowners have been very vocal about increased density and have expressed not wanting to see the area redeveloped as multi-family but rather more single family homes. Besides the construction lull that followed the recession, the price of land acquisition, demolition and redevelopment is very high. To acquire and

demolish just 30 acres of multi-family parcels, it would cost a little over \$21 million at market value, according to a study presented by the local politician. To justify this cost, new single-family homes on ¼ acre lots would cost \$477,151 (Figure 17). Even if single-family homes were not built, but mixed use instead, the rents would be so high only high-income individuals would be able to afford to live there, according to the politician, community activist and developer interviewed.

Lamar Blvd Redevelopment Estimates					
<i>Base Information</i>	Using assessed value		Using multiplier of 1.5 to est mkt value		
Properties involved	Huntington Chase, The Point of North Arlington, Countrywood, Waterchase				
Total Acres	30.377				
Total Land Sq Ft	1,323,222 sf				
Total assessed value (2011)	\$ 12,773,264		Rough market estimate	\$ 19,159,896	Multiplier = 1.5
# of Buildings	52				
# of Units	716				
Est. Footprint per Bldg	4,289 sf				
Demo Cost Per Sq Ft	\$ 8.50 psf		midpoint of \$7 - \$10 demo estimate range		
Redevelopment Costs					
Acquisition Price (Below Mkt)	\$ 9.65 psf		Rough mkt estimate	\$ 14.48 psf	
Total Property Acq. Price (Assessed Value)	\$ 12,773,264			\$ 19,159,896	
Est. Demo Cost	\$ 1,895,794 total		excludes parking lots	\$ 1,895,794	
Total	\$ 14,669,058			\$ 21,055,690	
Rebuilding with Single Family Homes					
# of 1/4 acre lots available	111 estimated by removing 1/11th (9%) of area for streets				
Acquisition / Redev Cost	\$ 132,154 per lot			\$ 189,691 per lot	
Infrastructure Costs	?				
Construction Cost psf	\$ 95.82 psf			\$ 95.82	
Construction Cost for New Home	\$ 287,460		estimated at 3,000 sf	\$ 287,460	
Total Cost per Home	\$ 419,614			\$ 477,151	

Figure 17. Redevelopment Estimates (Provided by Interview #2: Local Politician)

2.3 Lamar-Collins Master Plan

The Overlay ordinance is intended to make redevelopment easier while letting developers know Arlington is open for business. Then again, the highly prescribed and pricey design regulations in addition to land acquisition and demolition is a very high expectation of the private side. Not to mention existing property owners are unwilling to sell or redevelop themselves. For these reasons the overlay has failed to spark the redevelopment it was designed to encourage. Council members Mel LeBlanc and Jimmy Bennett both stated in January 2012 that “the current overlay approach must be evaluated along with other contributing factors to its failure and begin looking into new ways of making redevelopment happen in this area” (*Apartment Redevelopment in Lamar-Collins: How Do We Make It Happen?* 2012). In speaking with the local politician and developer it seems the City, at least, has begun looking in another direction.

In an interview with a developer involved with the Viridian development, a 2,300 acre mixed-use master-planned development located north of the Lamar-Collins area along the Trinity River, there was mention of a similar master plan for Lamar-Collins. Considering plans have not been introduced to City Council yet, talk was brief and vague. A master plan for the Lamar-Collins area would ensure the desired outcome of high density, mixed-use development by the overlay ordinance, but it still requires the same expectations of total redevelopment through land acquisition and demolition.

The “new ways” council suggested in January does not seem to stray far from the original approach. In fact, they’ve reduced the option of existing owners taking initiative by hoping a single developer will acquire all property and existing owners will be willing to sell. The City has also failed to reassess the state of the area today. The previous analysis of the area indicates that reinvestment has begun and crime rates have declined since 2006, yet the City still wishes to see total redevelopment based on data from 2005 or earlier.

There is an interested private developer willing to take on the task of total redevelopment, provided there is a public-private partnership with the City. Viridian, according to the developer, cost a significant amount of money considering the land was in a flood plain, but it is on a never been developed greenfield adjacent to established single family homes and River Legacy Park. The City joined with the developer, Huffines, in a public-private partnership to establish a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) for Viridian to incentivize the developer. Here the TIRZ, like a TIF, is used inappropriately to encourage investment in an area that is neither blighted nor in decline. Rather, it is used to lessen the financial burden on the developer. A similar public-private partnership would be expected for Lamar-Collins if a master plan of the same degree were initiated.

Another acceptable public-private partnership for this type of master-planned development is like the one between the City of Dallas and INCAP Master

Development LLC. To explain, redevelopment of aging multi-family and retail in parts of North Oak Cliff was the primary goal of the 2007 David Garden TIF District and INCAP, a real estate investment fund created in partnership between the City of Dallas and INCAP Master Development, LLC. The agreement was for the City of Dallas to reimburse INCAP Master Development “approximately \$4 million for the environmental remediation and demolition of the six apartment complexes and median improvements along Davis Street between Hampton Road and Montclair Avenue” (City of Dallas). INCAP prepared the sites for future development, but “their agreement with the City does not include a commitment for vertical development” (City of Dallas). Now, five years later, these lots remain vacant; the City receives no tax revenue, and the TIF is broke. In theory, this agreement takes the huge burden of demolition and remediation of land away from the invested developer, but it wasn’t enough to get new development on the ground. Perhaps this developer went too big, bought too much land and expected way more from the market than investors could justify. In an up and coming area of Dallas, a streetcar suburb just four miles from Downtown Dallas, the expected high-end mixed-use development could not get financed. Imagine the hardship for an inner-ring suburb like Lamar-Collins located 30 or more miles from a CBD will have competing for the same product.

Still, several other issues arise with the master-plan approach. First, a master plan like the Viridian does not have the social implications of displacement like the Lamar-

Collins area. The interested developer suggests that he is about creating a “sense of place”, which he feels is only achievable if one developer has control via a planned development (PD) district rather than allowing private development to ensue one small piece at a time. Sure, a more unified looking (even sterile) development can be created under one vision, but where is the community in all of this? This developer, along with the local politician, believes the community will come from outside Arlington. The local politician put it this way, “We need to invest in redevelopment of new structures so that we can move in individuals that are of a different mind set” because “when [properties] have a shelf life that’s expiring... you have a tendency to not have the most desirous or high-income individuals”. In other words, the displacement of the existing low to moderate-income community is justified as long as it can be replaced with high-income individuals. Thirty years ago these apartments housed moderate to high-income individuals. What makes them think this new corporate style of development won’t depreciate in the same way? Another tactic discussed for regulating the type of renter is keeping the units small, around 600 sq. ft. or less. The developer said that “families need to be in houses” and that some families who can’t afford a house must rent but there can’t be a “whole city of that”. By keeping the units small, families who can or want to rent will likely go somewhere else, and single high-income professionals will be expected to fill the rental units. Total redevelopment in the eyes of this politician is an opportunity to rid District 1 of a

certain class of people, a method similar to urban renewal and the redevelopment of Uptown.

Using total redevelopment by means of a master plan/public-private partnership as an opportunity to make Arlington an attraction for future residents coming from outside the City is a bold expectation in and of itself. Arlington has placed itself in competition with the entire Metroplex for the high-income individuals seeking a walkable community. This “build it and they will come” attitude could work where walkable communities are affordable. The Brookings Institution claims that more supply of walkable urban developments will drive down the cost of land. The Dallas-Fort Worth region was ranked 25th out of 30 for walkable urban places at critical mass. Until the number of walkable urban areas increase within the region, the cost of acquiring land, demolition of what exists and constructing the type of walkable urban product type envisioned for Arlington will remain very high.

From the get-go the City has referenced Addison Circle and Legacy Town Center as a means of understanding the market. The developer pointed out in his interview that a master plan like the one his team is proposing cannot be found for miles around. Therefore, there is no competition, but there is also nothing for him to compare the project to. So, he simply says if they (Addison or Plano) can do it, why not Arlington? In a case study document provided by the City, both master-planned communities’ target market is singles, young couples, and empty nesters. According to the

document, average monthly rent at Addison Circle is \$921, while average home prices are \$275,000. Rent at Legacy Town Center is \$1,000 a month, and average home prices are \$300,000. The current average rent for the City of Arlington is \$814 a month compared to Plano at \$981 per month and Addison at \$908 per month (Figure 18) (2010 U.S. Census). Arlington has mistakenly placed itself on the same level as Addison and Plano. Figure 19 illustrates high-income is mainly concentrated along the North Dallas Tollway, and it runs right through both Addison and Plano. This type of target market is rightfully justified for this type of development in these locations.

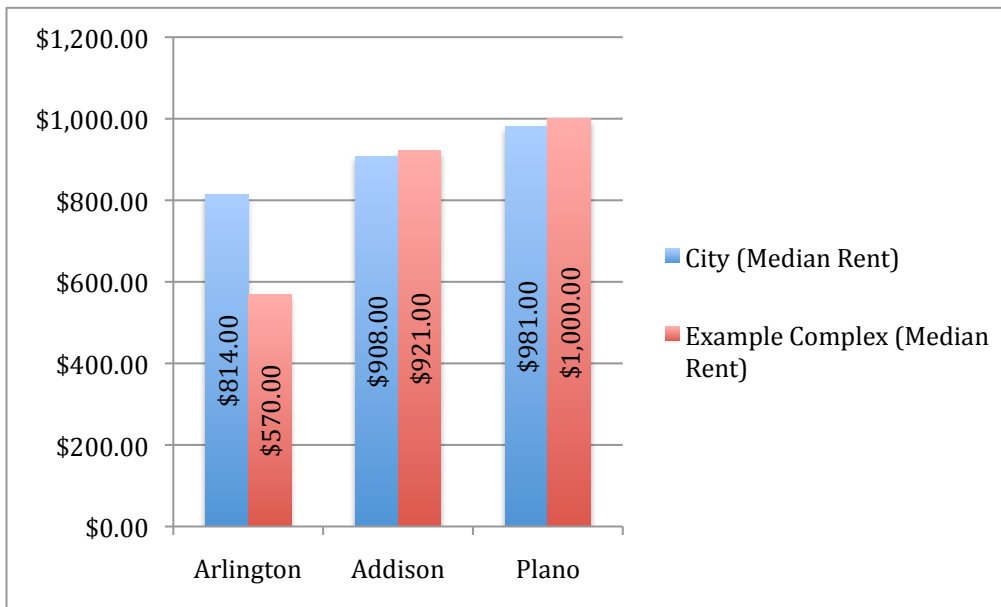


Figure 18. Median Rents (2010 US Census)

Dallas / Fort Worth

6,000,000

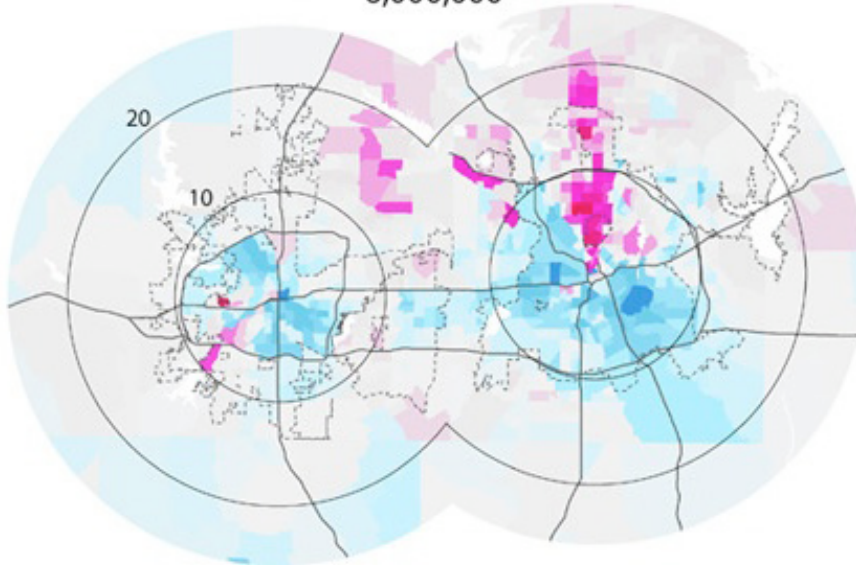


Figure 19. Income Distribution in Dallas Fort-Worth (Rankin)

Additionally, Fort Worth has recently seen a surge in single, young professional residents. According to Downtown Fort Worth, Inc., Downtown Fort Worth “is currently experiencing a residential renaissance as individuals and families embrace an urban lifestyle” (20). Most importantly, rental rates for Downtown living range from \$689 to \$5,320 and occupancy is 93.5%, well above the national average (20). The residential population Downtown has grown at 7.2% since 2007, 92.6% residents have no children and 68% of renters are unmarried (26). Also, 31.8% of the Downtown population is between the ages of 25 and 35 (27). This is the same type of renter the local politician and developer wish to attract in the proposed master-planned

community of Lamar-Collins. Furthermore, Fort Worth generates the highest number of employees and the largest payroll among all employment centers in the county (18). Not to mention only 5,146 of the 31,000 or so Downtown employees reside in Arlington (18). The local politician and developer both believe this demographic would prefer living in between two large cities, Dallas and Fort Worth, so he or she could have the option of working in or visiting either within a 30 minute drive. The problem is the mind-set. It seems that if a young, unmarried, high-income individual worked or sought weekly or even daily entertainment in Fort Worth, he or she would consider living in the closest urban environment, not one 30 minutes away by car only. The lack of commute cost would justify the higher rent. There is simply too much competition in the region for Arlington to expect this specific high-income demographic.

Section 3. Existing Strategies toward Restoration

Understanding the availability of resources is necessary before suggesting an alternative approach for the restoration of Lamar-Collins. Federal, state and local policies, or the lack thereof, can have a significant effect on the success or failure of plans for restoring inner-ring suburbs. These are briefly explored below.

3.1 Federal Policies

Federal policies can serve to enhance local strategies in order to prevent further decline of inner-ring suburbs while encouraging redevelopment and/or revitalization. Hanlon reveals, however, that Federal policy toward inner-ring suburban restoration have failed to gain political backing (Hanlon 2010, 134). In 2005, Secretary Clinton sponsored the Suburban Core Opportunity Restoration and Enhancement (SCORE) Act, for example. It included a \$250 million reinvestment fund that would have provided grants to ailing first-tier suburban communities for revitalization (134). The bill was the first of its kind to acknowledge that “first-tier suburbs were in a ‘policy blind spot’...[as] current public policies did not address the problem of suburban decline” (Vicino 2008, 574). Unfortunately, it was rejected by the 109th Congress (Hanlon 2010, 134; Vicino 2008, 575). To date, no other bill specifically targeting suburban decline has crossed Congress. Without the possibility to become law, such federal programs remain ineffective for specific inner-ring restoration.

Fortunately, however, in 2009 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency joined in an unprecedented partnership. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities seeks to “help communities improve access to affordable housing and transportation while protecting the environment” (“HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities”). This partnership, unlike Community Block

Grants and Empowerment Zones, address all types of communities, urban, suburban, and rural. While not specifically targeting inner-ring suburban communities, it does provide resources, guides and grants toward realizing visions for building more livable and sustainable communities, whether it is through revitalization and infill or redevelopment.

3.2 State Policies

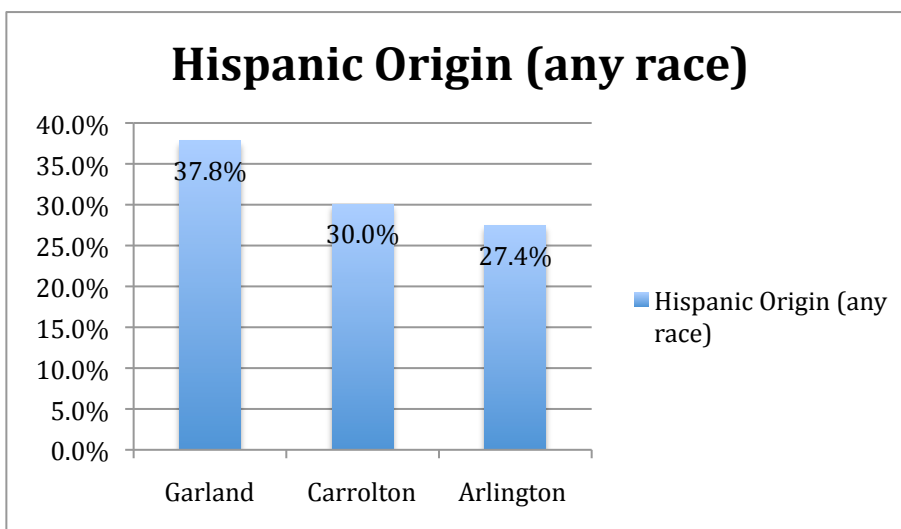
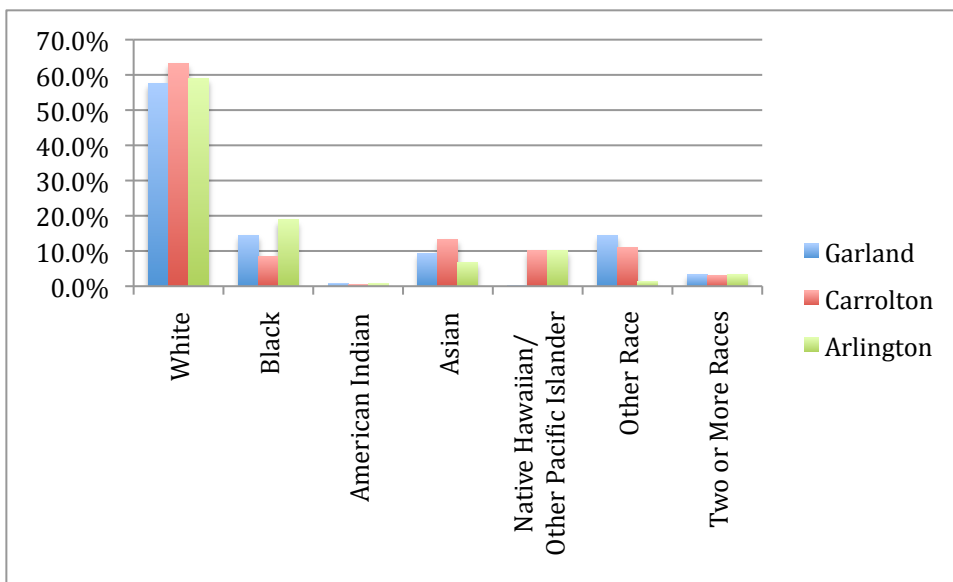
Lee and Leigh believe growth management policies mandated by the state, like those adopted in Oregon and Maryland, are good ways to encourage sustainable infill development while reducing sprawl. However, in Texas, state mandated growth management policies are not addressed at the state level. Rather, cities like Austin take on this initiative by offering incentives to encourage infill and redevelopment...to make urban containment policies effective” (Bengston 2004, 277). Austin’s Smart Growth Initiative “includes a waiver of development fees in a desired development zone to promote infill development” (Lorentz and Shaw, 2000). Using a growth management tool to address both sprawl and decline is ambitious. Development zones would have to be strategically and fairly located in areas of greatest decline, which may or may not be in the inner-ring suburbs. In DFW, such a tool would be most effective at the regional level considering all cities are in competition with one another. Unfortunately, municipal governments are far more powerful in DFW than the regional organization, North Central Texas Council of Governments. Fringe cities

would have to agree to restrict their development potential on greenfields for the sake of decreasing sprawl and reviving already developed areas in the region. With a motto of "growth at any cost", this is an unlikely option in the Metroplex.

3.3 Local Level Strategies

This leaves cities to evaluate available resources for targeted areas within their own jurisdiction. There is no silver bullet to solving the problems facing inner-ring suburbs, but a combination of assistance programs and good vision can jump start plans for restoration. Neighboring inner-ring suburban cities within the Dallas Fort-Worth region are approaching restoration at the neighborhood level. Garland particularly stands out among the region's inner-ring suburbs with similar characteristics to Arlington. Garland is an inner-ring suburban city positioned just outside the City of Dallas, to the northwest. Where as Arlington is positioned just east of the City of Fort Worth, it's closest CBD. Figure 20 demonstrates the demographic comparison between these inner-ring cities along with the City of Carrollton to provide more reference. It's clear these are fairly diverse communities with about a third of the cities' population Hispanic. Carrollton has a slightly higher median family income and median housing value most likely because it is north of Dallas and bordering Plano. An interesting thing to note is the density of each city. While the persons per square mile is comparable, the land area of each city is significantly different. Arlington is nearly twice the size of Garland with the same amount of people per square mile. Like

Arlington, Garland and Carrollton were mostly built out by the 1970s and 80s with auto-oriented development, but both Carrollton and Garland have DART rail access in addition to access to several major highways. Now, with considerably aging infrastructure and housing and an increasingly diverse population, plans for redevelopment and revitalization have surfaced.



	Garland	Carrollton	Arlington
Land Area (Sq. Miles)	57.1	37.1	99.7
Persons per Sq. Mile	3,974.4	3,281.3	3,811.3
2010 Population	226,876	119,097	365,438
Median Family Income	\$52,389.00	\$69,599.00	\$52,094.00
Median Value of Homes	\$118,700.00	\$164,300.00	\$132,500.00

Figure 20. Demographics for Inner-Ring Suburban Cities in DFW (2010 U.S. Census)

Parts of Garland suffer from high vacancy rates and underutilized space. The Centerville-LBJ area, for example, was once a thriving big box intersection with adjacent bustling multi-family in 1970s (Leszcynski 2012). Until recently the area saw “declining occupancy, a high number of police calls and a deadly apartment fire” that tarnished the area’s perception (Leszcynski 2012). Now, the area is welcoming a new Wal-Mart and the subsequent chain restaurants with the help of a HUD grant (Leszcynski 2012). It’s not high-end mixed-use development, nor is it at the speed the City preferred, but it’s something. It is also an example of corporate redevelopment.

Garland’s latest comprehensive plan indicates several catalyst areas, like the one previously mentioned, to focus on for economic development opportunities. These areas are targeted for their development potential, their need for revitalization and/or redevelopment, and strategic locations within the city. Of the seven Catalyst Areas, four are along major highways where aging strip and big box retail and multi-family complexes sit with increasing vacancies. For each Catalyst Area, the City conveniently

identifies key assets, market potential, a strategy toward restoration, and an expected turn over time period. A couple of major development opportunities include a large amount of vacant land that can be reserved for high quality greenfield development, plenty of vacant and/or underutilized commercial/retail buildings that can be sites for adaptive reuse, and transportation access and options, including the DART Blue Line (City of Garland). There is also opportunity to create live/work options and higher density, especially in areas with growing ethnic diversity (62). Rather than displacing these individuals, they wish to provide more opportunities and options for them. What's more, the City encourages taking advantage of small sites and/or underutilized spaces to create "worker and resident-friendly, small-scale 'place-making' opportunities" (65). The City also recognizes that some areas will need selective redevelopment of vacant retail buildings but encourages replacing it with higher quality residential to rent and own (66). With an over all focus on both redevelopment and revitalization, this plan helps guide new investment from within and outside the City.

The Interstate 30 Catalyst Area, in particular, stands out as an example for both redevelopment and revitalization. Serving as a gateway to the City, this area plays a large role in how the outside perceives the City. Garland recognizes that "the I-30 Corridor has shown the impacts of competitive pressures from both fringe communities and other areas of the City" (68), so expectations for the area remain

realistic. As such, the City recommends live-work multimodal connections through the Corridor, maintaining private sector contacts as public improvement decisions are made, employing regulatory mechanisms like amortized zoning on uses not in compliance with existing code and a demolition by neglect statute for dilapidated structures, and exploring land swap, land write-downs, and density bonuses to make prime land available for better uses (68). Here the City will use its authority to achieve cooperation from property owners while demonstrating to the private sector Garland is worthy of proper investment.

Section 4. Alternative Approach for the Lamar-Collins Area

The City of Garland demonstrates a sustainable strategy toward restoration with a balanced combination of revitalization and redevelopment, not an extreme case of either. By focusing on Catalyst Areas, the City is able to carefully address existing conditions and assets while building upon them in a realistic manner. This is a similar approach taken by West Dallas. Through a combined approach of market analysis and public investment, the private sector, whether it is corporate or individual owner, is once again able to see potential in declining areas. This is a win-win all around. The City generates more tax revenue, the private sector is able to make a profit, and most importantly, the existing community benefits from a new environment they can afford. The following alternative approach of incremental restoration with a mix of

revitalization and redevelopment was created using Garland and the West Dallas approach toward restoration as a source of inspiration. The plan first addresses the basics, followed by a framework plan, a development potential plan, and an implementation plan. These are described below.

4.1 Address the Basics

Notably, Arlington is not entirely the same place as Garland or West Dallas, but it can take a lot from both. Plans for West Dallas, for instance, consider time as a significant factor toward restoration. It does not happen in a short span of time, but if it did, the existing community would be far from protected. They would either be forced to relocated or priced out. This is why the City Design Studio welcomed the community and private developers to visioning sessions. Understanding what is affordable to the existing community, whether it be in the form of new buildings and public space or in the form of revitalized buildings and public space, and what may generate redevelopment in appropriate areas that doesn't spark rapid gentrification. Along similar lines is Garland's approach toward inner-ring suburban restoration, which began by updating their comprehensive plan with much attention paid to the market. First and foremost, an accurate understanding of the market is necessary before expecting a certain product or in order to propose the appropriate product for an area or neighborhood. Garland's comprehensive plan not only addresses the City from a planning standpoint but also from an economic development point of view.

This method demonstrates a realistic image of restoration for Garland. Second, Arlington should strategically identify areas in need of immediate restoration. These are areas with high vacancy rates, declining retail sales, and sometimes higher than normal crime rates. Reviving these areas first helps to mend a poor perception of the City as a whole. Third, the City should focus on what it can do in the public realm to attract private investment while tending to the needs of its current residents (both owners and renters), in the meantime. This shows the private side how the public sector is meeting them half way with out having to make a formal public-private partnership. The City recognizes what can be expected right away and what can be achieved in the long-term. In other words, Legacy Town Center is too high an expectation right now for Arlington because the market is not there to support the high rents, but it may be something the City can achieve in the future in the right area. It's clearly proven in the analysis that one reason the City is rethinking the overlay approach is because it didn't create total redevelopment fast enough. Perhaps there is a way to achieve the stability strategically located neighborhoods need while also creating the image Arlington wants for itself.

Fortunately, Arlington City Council has the unique ability to make tough decisions and is open to taking chances. It's time to take a chance on what exists currently, which includes the existing community of renters. The Lamar-Collins Area could easily be among many "Catalyst Areas" in the City. After all, it is located in

between a regionally significant park and entertainment district. Concentrated improvements could stabilize the area quicker and possibly attract or persuade private investment sooner. No area is totally alike so an in depth analysis of the area's assets and market demand should be the next step toward creating a plan.

Lamar-Collins Assets:

- Regional Access via I-30
- Growing ethnic diversity
- Infill sites available
- Ample underutilized spaces
- Existing institutional uses to build upon

The market potential right now for Lamar-Collins is modest considering the overall population growth for the City leveled off in 2011, and most of the population increases were in the south and near the Downtown and University (Arlington Growth Profile Update 2011, 7-8). This reveals the need to accommodate the existing population before trying to attract new residents to the area. Besides, area residents and property owners have shown the City they want to stay. Moreover, the Arlington Housing Authority indicates that "three quarters of Arlington's single-family housing stock is valued at a level that is affordable to households earning between 50.1% and 80% MFI" (Housing Authority of the City of Arlington 2008, 7), leaving very little affordable single-family homes available for low to moderate-income families and

individuals. The Lamar-Collins area could benefit from a greater mix of housing options, and if the current population is low to middle-income, an affordable single-family product, whether attached or detached, could be introduced. Developing single-family homes in the area would also appease the surrounding neighborhood residents giving this plan more political clout. The area is also suited for neighborhood retail and small office space considering most office, commercial and warehousing space is already available in East Arlington (Arlington Growth Profile Update 2011, 28).

4.2 The Framework Plan

With an understanding of the area's assets and market potential, a framework plan can be created. Figure 21 demonstrates what the City can do to improve the area's connectivity within the neighborhood and to the surrounding area and improve the quality of life while creating opportunities for private investment. It is important to note that a similar framework plan can be implemented in other parts of the City in need of restoration. First, the plan identifies one arterial, Lamar, and two neighborhood collectors, Washington and Lincoln, to make into complete streets. Lamar has an average daily traffic count of 25,642 at Lincoln ("2011 Traffic Counts Map"), and Lincoln and Washington serve as the main roads into the neighborhood.

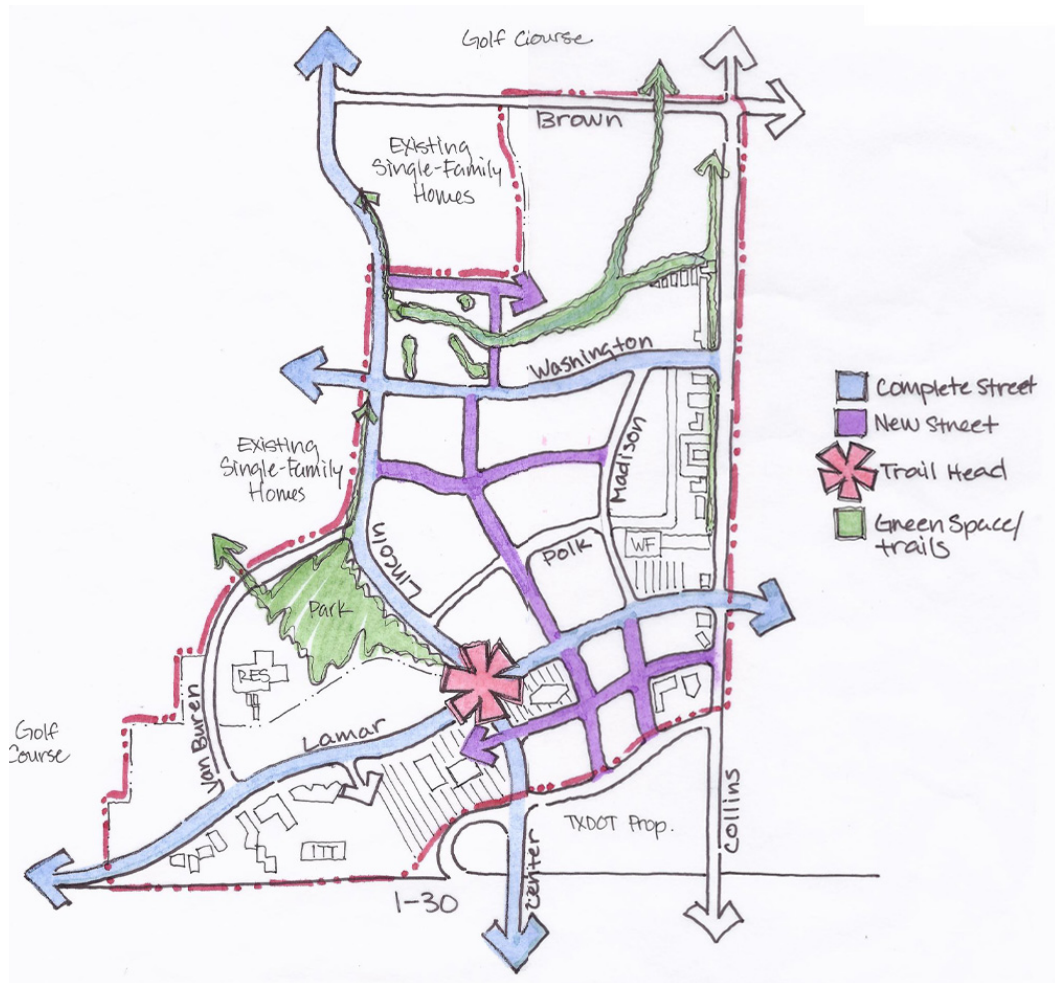


Figure 21. Framework Plan (Created by Ashley Shook)

Project for Public Spaces state that complete streets make travel safer, more comfortable and convenient for everyone, no matter the mode of travel (Project for Public Spaces). Turning these into complete streets will turn an under utilized public space into a high functioning area people want to be. Lincoln, for example, becomes Center to the south, which eventually meets up with Downtown Arlington and the University. It also connects to Green Oaks Blvd. to the north, eventually connecting to

River Legacy Park. There is great potential to add a decomposed granite walking path where sidewalks are not currently allocated and a separated bike lane, while accommodating the existing two way traffic (Figure 22). Washington could use a similar idea because it is the same size as Lincoln (Figure 22). Lamar has a 24-foot wide median that could accommodate a decomposed granite walking path (Figure 24).

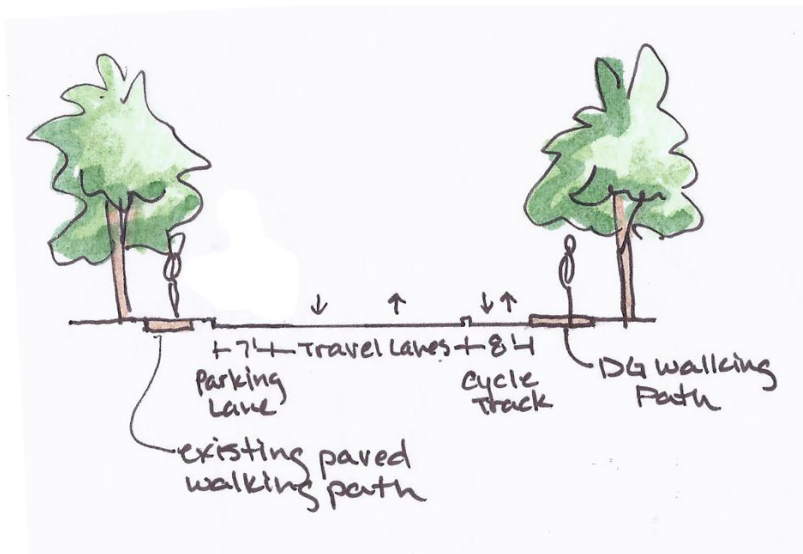


Figure 22. Lincoln and Washington Street Section (Created by Ashley Shook)

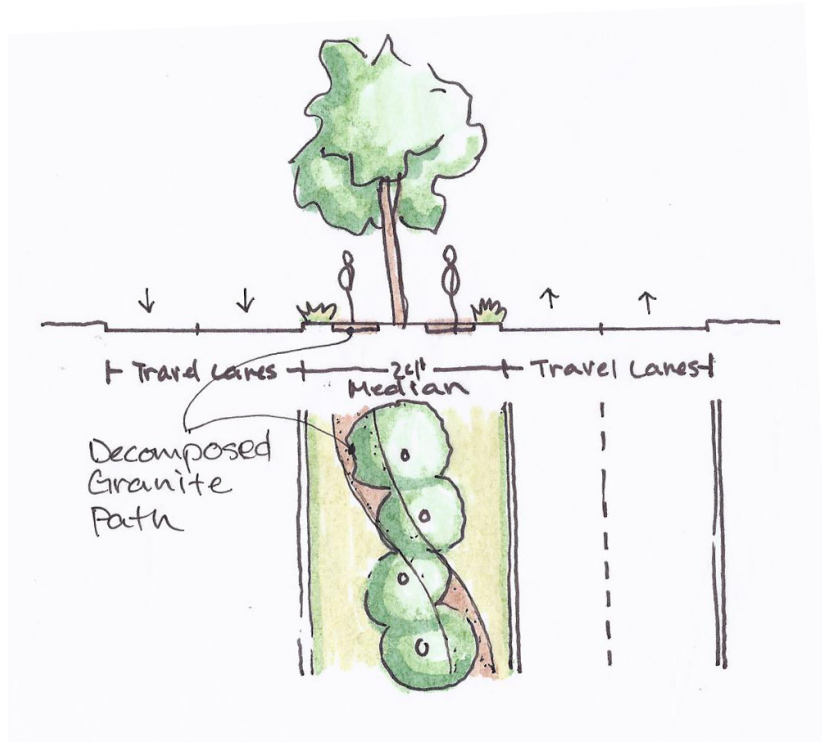


Figure 23. Lamar Street Section (Created by Ashley Shook)

Where Lincoln and Lamar intersect there is apartment buildings on the northwest corner and a bank on the northeast corner. The bank has an expansive front yard that could be created into a trailhead and neighborhood gateway. The separated bike lane can be justified in this part of Arlington considering there are several recreational cyclists traveling from this area to River Legacy Park everyday (Figure 24). Without proper infrastructure, however, their safety is compromised limiting them to driving their bikes to the park. It seems, at least in this part of Arlington, separated bike lanes would be heavily used and welcomed. Furthermore, Collins could be enhanced with simple pedestrian amenities like street trees and benches. Since Collins has large

trucks and higher speeds, the pedestrian realm belongs further away from the street with trees and plantings as a buffer from the road (Figure 25). This will increase walkability and safety for both pedestrians and drivers. The City should also work with property owners to close off unnecessary curb cuts that inhibit safety and create traffic congestion.

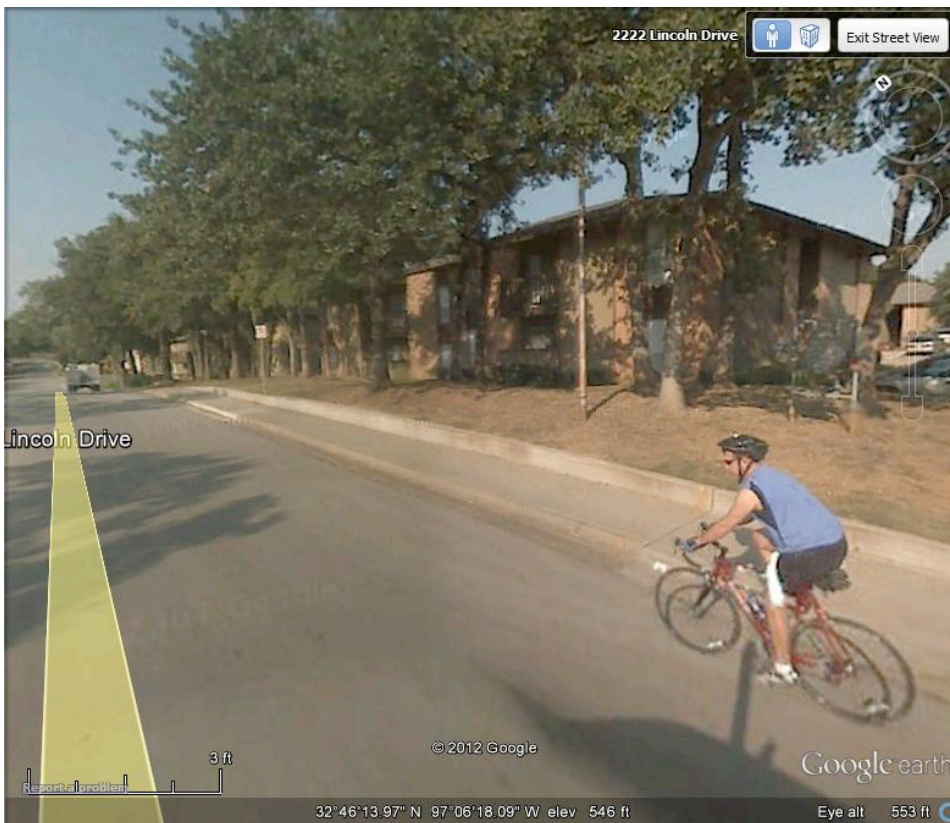


Figure 24. Lincoln Recreational Bike Rider (2012 Google Earth Street View)

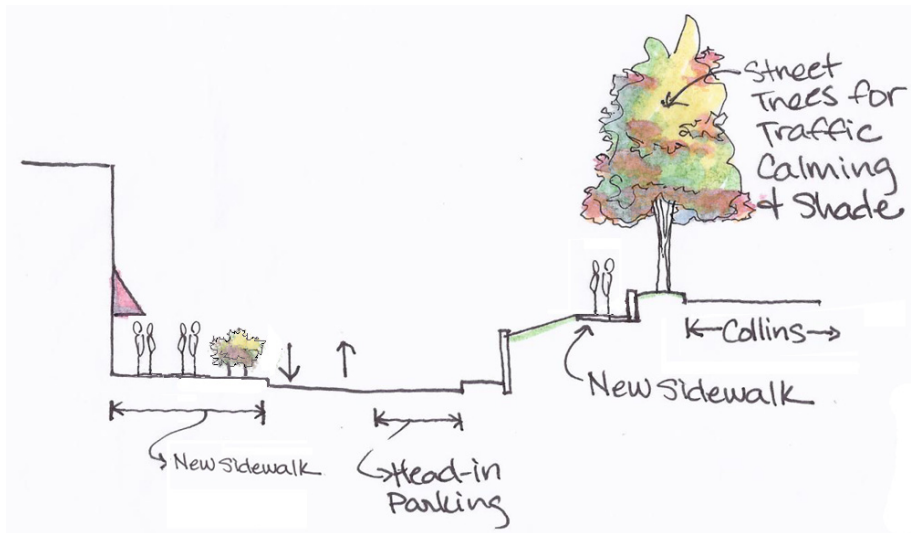


Figure 25. Collins Street Section (Created by Ashley Shook)

Introducing a grid pattern of streets will enhance connectivity while opening up secluded areas. Girling and Kellett (2005) suggest that, “integrated networks that accommodate buses, cars, bicycles, and pedestrians in attractive street environments are believed to encourage more pedestrian travel” (77). More people mean more eyes on the street and less crime, therefore a better perception. Many of the introduced streets are under-used parking areas separated by fences from adjacent apartment complexes. A mutual access easement can be used to make public roads and amenities in these under-utilized portions of the properties. Furthermore, a system of green space and trails can be introduced to the area. There is a great creek system that runs through the north portion of the area through several apartment complexes. Again, a mutual access easement would need to be employed to gain access through the properties. Openings in the fences and walls that separate the properties would be

located where trails connect. Providing connections and amenities would give the City leverage when asking for more improvements on the property. Essentially, these public improvements increase property value so if a property owner wishes to have these public amenities, they will have to meet the City half way.

4.3 The Development Potential Plan

Providing quality public streets tells the private side this area is worth investment. Several properties' appraisal values were mentioned in the earlier analysis. From this we can decide which properties are better suited for revitalization and which are better suited for redevelopment. Inner-ring suburbs have a different structure type than other parts of the city, so revitalization and redevelopment will likely take a different form. For example, revitalization in Oak Cliff's Bishop Arts meant restoring historic buildings, maintaining the established urban form with buildings close to the street, and creating streets that encourage people to slow down, walk, ride bikes, and enjoy the place. Revitalization in parts of Arlington or Garland consists of similar concepts but instead of working with historic buildings with great character, there are garden apartments and strip retail. A bit more creativity may be involved in the latter scenario considering the building stock is also aging. That is why public improvements should be focused on the spaces in between the buildings so that when future redevelopment inevitably occurs years from now, the framework is already in place.

Figure 26 highlights areas of revitalization, infill development and redevelopment. Areas more suited for revitalization are those with properties that have shown recent improvements and investment and/or potential to retrofit vacant buildings or under-utilized open spaces (i.e. parking lots) into another use. Figure 27 shows how small under-used areas can actually provide space for more diverse housing product. In under-utilized or vacant buildings, adaptive reuse could be employed to introduce neighborhood services, like a day care or tutoring center, at strategic locations for the entire neighborhood to use. For instance, if a complex is experiencing vacancy but it has begun to plateau, renters could be consolidated into fewer buildings opening up space for another needed use. These buildings should be located along the street for visibility and access. The ordinance should be amended to allow adaptive reuse and on-street parking for these services to ease the permitting process. Moreover, simple retrofits to garden apartments, like removing impermeable barriers (Figure 28) and making larger private patio areas that open to a complete street (Figure 29), could increase property value while creating a more livable product and more lively street experience with increased accessibility.

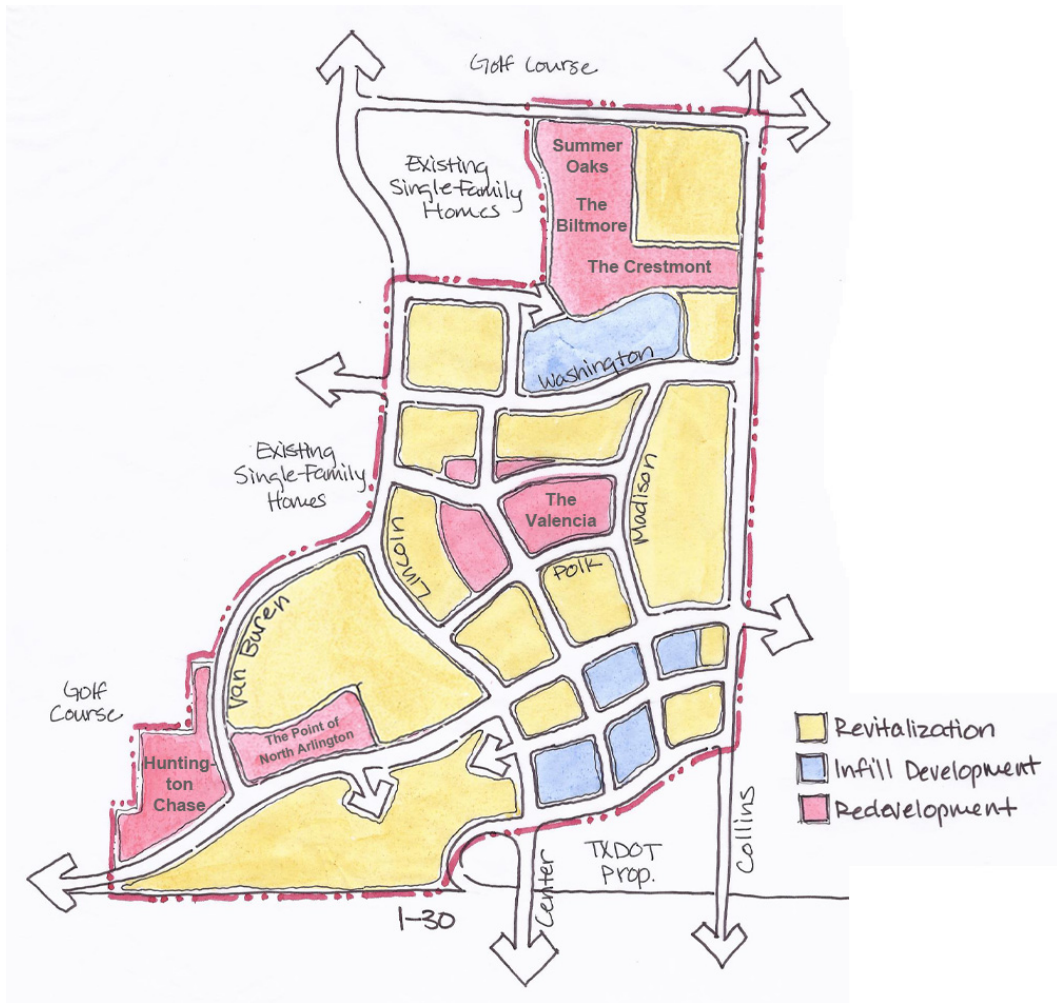


Figure 26. Development Potential Plan (Created by Ashley Shook)



Figure 27. Revitalization: Under-Utilized Parking Space (Created by Ashley Shook)



Figure 28. Realization: Increasing Access to Complete Street (Created by Ashley Shook)



Figure 29. Revitalization: Adding Value to Private Property (Created by Ashley Shook)

Moreover, the revitalization area south of Lamar and to the west of Lincoln has great potential to become a job training/business incubator area. There is already an ITT Technical Institute, Concorde Career institute, Texas Health Resources, and a Nursefinders to build upon. Not to mention, there is a large undeveloped parcel of land directly east of ITT and a ton of open parking lot space to introduce small business/job incubator spaces. The Lamar-Collins area could greatly benefit from increased access to finance and information resources, like community development banks and skill banks, in addition to the physical remediation to get the community

back on track. After all, pretty buildings and public spaces mean nothing without the human component (Blakely 2010, 287).

The strip retail along Collins has high occupancy and thriving local businesses. Currently, the buildings are set far from the road with two rows of parking between the two. Because there is parking available behind these buildings, the front row of parking could be taken up for widened sidewalks, outdoor cafes, street furniture, and plantings. The existing buildings could also benefit from a façade makeover with additional awnings and window treatments.

There are two large vacant parcels opportunely located on Washington and one along Lamar. These are the designated infill development sites. They are large enough to support a multitude of structure types and/or uses, including multi-family, attached and detached single-family affordable homes. The City should be fully aware of what the market can support and what product types can be financed at any given time. At this point in time, this area would benefit from being down zoned slightly so that high horizontal density could be developed. In other words, this area could easily have several small lots that offer an affordable ownership option with attached or detached single-family homes. There is no cost for demolition and remediation so the housing product would likely cost less than if it were to go on land designated as redevelopment. The infill area along Lamar could very well develop the high-density mixed-use found in an upscale development given there is a willing developer and

proper financial opportunities. It has high visibility and access to I-30 but it is about 400 feet away making noise from the highway a non-issue. It is also an appropriate size for this product type at the moment.

Lastly, the redevelopment sites are in areas where property was appraised the lowest, saw decreasing value every year from 2007, and, in some cases, are on the cusp of dilapidation due to being the oldest property in the area. Such is the case for the two properties along Lamar. They were built in 1970 and 1971. The City could employ regulatory mechanisms like amortized zoning on uses not in compliance with existing code and a demolition by neglect statute for dilapidated structures for the designated redevelopment areas at Madison and Polk and north of Lamar at Van Buren. The redevelopment area at Madison and Polk consists of an apartment complex that is currently cut off and has lower visibility than the rest of the surrounding complexes. If the property is condemned, the street grid could be easily reintroduced providing new opportunities for new development. The other redevelopment area along Lamar also consists of isolated apartment complexes. This area is right across the street from the revitalization area mentioned earlier that has great potential as a business incubator/job training area. Down zoning the redevelopment area to allow affordable single-family detached or attached homes with a live/work component would be appropriate here considering its proximity to the schools and job training facilities and the need for a mix of housing options.

4.4 Implementation

This combination of revitalization and redevelopment will most likely take an incremental approach over a certain period of time due to post-recession financing options. An implementation workshop like the one organized for West Dallas could prove beneficial to the City of Arlington when implementing a new framework plan and development plan because the community, potential investors and developers and current property owners would be encouraged to attend and participate. The meeting could help all parties understand their role in the future of Lamar-Collins. Initially, the City can take the initiative of improving the public realm, or the space in between the buildings, to increase the potential for private investment in the future. The pitch to absentee owners could simply include the possibility of increased profits with higher rent potential and/or a higher selling price in the near future. This will set the stage for long-range redevelopment of buildings that will soon be too old to maintain as current property owners will likely be in a position to sell and speculators will be in a position to get financing for demolition and redevelopment.

For long-range development it may be beneficial to spend money on experimentation in under-utilized spaces rather than relying on a rendering from an outside consultant. Team Better Block, for example, uses a tactical urbanism approach to demonstrate what a distressed or forgotten place can be with a bit of creativity from the community in a quick and cheap way. They temporarily retrofit streets to

calm traffic while creating a walkable environment. They also use vacant buildings for pop-up businesses to spark entrepreneurship within a community. The Better Block gives potential business owners a venue to test their product or service without spending a large amount of money on permits and the like before making a life-altering decision. For long-range projects, the City can take advantage of the federal grants mentioned earlier that are offered by the Sustainable Communities Partnership. Also, if the City were to help establish an organized community within the Lamar-Collins area, they could apply for a grant from the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation. This Foundation uses money from gas well drilling to give grants to community groups in need of neighborhood services and revitalization (“Arlington Tomorrow Foundation”). Now with more than \$80 million to grant in less than five years of gas well drilling, Lamar-Collins can take advantage of this resource, as well.

Crime will continue to decline as renewed investment ensues. This requires continued community participation and the formation of a program similar to Garland’s Apartment Managers Group. It was “formed to identify, discuss, and address issues and events affecting apartment communities” (“Community Programs”). They meet once a month with a police officer to discuss issues and how to resolve them. Through more awareness and organized community involvement from the existing properties, crime can be targeted and removed at an escalated rate.

Lastly, the City should take one more step toward changing the perception of the area, and Arlington understands the power of perception. Champion Arlington states that, “a local community selling itself as a place to live, work and visit [needs] a compelling brand and marketing message...for an effective sale” (11). It goes on to state that “an effective brand must primarily differentiate a community from its competitors; and be a true representation of what the community is and what it has to offer to prospective residents, business owners, site selection personnel, and visitors” (11).

With the aforementioned strategies toward restoration, Lamar-Collins can become an area the City recognizes as a neighborhood. A retrofitted street system, increased home ownership, rehabilitated spaces and buildings, and new development where appropriate in the Lamar-Collins Area can do a lot for its perception and the perception of the City of Arlington. Taking a chance on what exists and enhancing what was approved long ago will also tell the rest of the region that Arlington is proud of its current population and is willing to take steps toward providing a better quality of life for them, even if they are renters.

Conclusion

This study included existing planning strategies toward inner-ring suburban restoration, but could benefit from further study on how place based economic

development strategies can guide recovery, as well. The Alternative Approach for the Lamar-Collins Area could be enhanced with a more detailed marketing study that indicates actual square footage of new retail, office, and residential units the area can support. It would also be beneficial to understand exactly what can be financed now and why. Additionally, a more detailed development plan could be created in the future with a clear understanding of utility and easement locations.

None the less, this report illustrates that the City of Arlington has a bright future. The City and its planning staff needs to be realistic about what it can achieve right now to not only change the perception of the City, but to provide for its existing population. Action needs to start soon, however. The longer this is discussed, the more decline this area will see and the weaker the perception will become. What Lamar-Collins and other inner-ring suburbs offer is something no CBD, outer-ring or exurban suburb can offer, and the City has the opportunity to capitalize on its unique qualities like mature trees and landscaping, the regional accessibility, the diverse community, just to name a few. Too often do cities within the Dallas-Fort Worth region compete for the same things, but what they miss is the opportunity to be different. After all, being different is what attracts new comers and instills pride among its current citizens. Inner-ring suburbs can combat decline without a ubiquitous and costly development scheme, but it is not done without a proper and clear understanding of the existing assets and a thorough marketing study. With these

two essential analyses, an appropriate approach of redevelopment, revitalization or combination of both can be developed to guide inner-ring suburban restoration.

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