

Assessment of Development Potential: Grand Prairie's
Entertainment District Area

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Abstract

Grand Prairie is growing city in population and development, and one of its most identifiable locations, the Entertainment District is at its center. There are multiple amenities located with the Entertainment District such as a concert venue, a horse racing track, and minor league baseball team. However, these amenities do little to keep visitors beyond the time of the scheduled event. Located at the Belt-Line and I-30 intersection, Grand Prairie Entertainment District has the potential to be a premier regional attraction, but more must be done to enhance and unite the amenities within the area.

The goal of this project is to assess the development potential of the Grand Prairie Entertainment District and the surrounding area through the examination of accessibility, waterfront development, and entertainment within three different city case studies: Arlington, Austin and Fort Worth, Texas. In doing so, this paper will provide insight on the city of Grand Prairie's ability to utilize its resources to better compete with its neighboring cities to maximize economic and community development through the comparison of each case studies' practices and policies to Grand Prairie's own policies available in their compressive plan so that they may be applied to the Entertainment District and its surrounding area.

In doing so one could expect to draw conclusions on what the development potential of Grand Prairie's Entertainment District and its surrounding area.

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Introduction and Background

Problem Statement

The city of Grand Prairie is currently undergoing a wave of development. While new projects are underway within the Highway 161 corridor, the city has yet to take advantage of their already standing facilities and infrastructure—specifically in Grand Prairie’s Entertainment District and the land that surrounds it.

Located on northeast corner of the intersection of Belt Line Road and Interstate-30 (I-30) and east of highway 161, Grand Prairie’s Entertainment District is currently comprised of a skate park, a horse racing track, a concert arena, and a minor league stadium. These facilities are a staple in the city’s tourism plan and are ideal for capture revenue from residents within the surrounding cities such as Fort Worth, Dallas, and Arlington. In addition to these amenities, Grand Prairie’s Entertainment District is surrounded by acres of rivers, ponds, and green space. Despite the abundance of uses within the Entertainment District, these uses are not to human scale nor do they transition seamlessly into one another. Additionally, these amenities do little to keep visitors beyond the time of the scheduled event. For example, if a concert is being held, the concertgoer would have no incentive to arrive to the area earlier than the time of the of show due to the absence of the other forms of amenities such as shops, restaurants, or bars within the immediate area less likely to remain in the area after the concert ends. As it stands, the surrounding area of the Belt-Line and I-30 intersection leaves one to believe that the Grand Prairie Entertainment District has the potential to be a premier regional attraction.

Purpose Statement

The goal of this project is to assess the development potential of the Grand Prairie Entertainment District and the surrounding area through the examination of accessibility, waterfront development, and entertainment within three different city case studies: Arlington, Austin and Fort Worth, Texas. In doing so, this paper will provide insight on the city of Grand Prairie's ability to utilize its resources to better compete with its neighboring cities to maximize economic and community development through the comparison of each case studies' practices and policies to Grand Prairie's own policies available in their comprehensive plan so that they may be applied to the Entertainment District and its surrounding area. In exploring the practices within accessibility, waterfront development, and entertainment, I will gain an understanding of steps Grand Prairie can take to expand its own Entertainment District, and be able to provide recommendations on how the city can proceed based on those findings. The following paper will first discuss prevailing literature from the realms of waterfront planning, transportation innovations, and entertainment development. Then there will be a review of the methodology that will extrapolate on the data gathering methods as well as limitations of the research. Finally, the paper will conclude with recommendations on how Grand Prairie can utilize the Entertainment District area.

Literature Review

Waterfront development

The research defines waterways as anything near the water's within a city or town. This definition will include waters such as rivers, lakes, streams, or oceans (Goodwin, 1999;

Muller, 2012; Sairinen, et al, 2006). In using the aforementioned definition, this will provide context for the remaining discourse on the topic of waterfront development. To understand the waterfront planning is used today, we must first examine the history of waterfront development. Prior to the 1960's there was no clamoring for waterfront revitalization as many of the rivers and lakes near city centers were abandoned due to the mass exodus to the suburbs, or they were dumpsites for waste from adjacent factories and warehouses (Muller, 2012; Sairinen, et al, 2006). However, this would soon change with the coming of environmental planner John Ormsbee Simmons in the late 1950's and the passing of the Clean Air Act in 1963 (Muller, 2012). Simmons in particular played an active role in reinvigorating downtown center's waterways. Simmons was proactive in leading the charge to change the mindset of rivers and streams being an afterthought within city centers. Instead, he would make rivers the main attraction that would connect different districts and streets through out the city, dubbing these features blueways (Muller, 2012). Ultimately, this laid the groundwork to many of the projects that utilize rivers for as linear parks that created cohesion within an area. Today, waterfronts are used as a strategic resource to create value within a given location. If developed correctly, they become powerful symbols and aid in developing the image of a city (Goodwin, 1999; Muller, 2012; Sairinen, et al, 2006).

Thus, the research states that waterfronts create an optimum relationship between the built environment and the natural environment. This has given arise to the number of waterfront developments through the country. Coincidentally, this has led to the increase of caution when developing waterfronts due to the increased concerns of environmental impacts (Sairinen, et al, 2006). The work of waterfront development is often left to the

cities, with larger cities having in house knowledge on how to proceed with its design and implementation, while smaller cities require the hiring of private planning firms to enact the necessary procedures (Muller, 2012; Sairinen, et al, 2006).

Transportation and Accessibility

In researching relevant material, authors are quick to explain the differences between accessibility and mobility. While cities are injecting effort into either accessibility or mobility policies that can lead to an improvement of transportation means, it is important to understand the differences to enact policy that would be appropriate for a particular city.

First, the literature defines mobility as the potential for movement. More specifically, mobility refers to the use of means to move such as road development, available transportation technology, and getting from one place to another (Goldman, et al, 2006; Handy, 2002). When studying mobility policy, vehicle transportation is not reduced; instead, it is the primary beneficiary of new technology and development that subsidizes the use of automobiles. Mobility focuses on perfecting the systems that regulate transportation such as the highway systems, traffic light systems, and vehicle technology (Handy, 2002). Enhancing mobility includes developing new technologies such as innovations in fuel and energy that create alternatives to the standard gas powered vehicle. This is done under the helm of sustainable transportation: these sustainability conscious technologies seek to diminish environmental impacts of pollutants released by vehicles by introducing programs that allow users to subscribe to a bike renting service or a car-sharing service such as Uber that alleviate the number of cars on the road. While

these actions have affects on roads and means of travel, they do not affect the physical space of traveler's destinations (Goldman, et al, 2006; Handy, 2002).

Conversely, accessibility refers to the time and cost of travel and often reflects the location availability. While mobility's focus is on improving efficiencies within vehicle travel, accessibly attempts to reduce driving by bringing activities closer to the consumer. This process involves adjusting policymaker's focus from the vehicle to the built environment. Focusing on the built environment to increase accessibility requires an understanding of new urbanism, transit-oriented transportation and connectivity of roads. In enacting these criteria the research suggests that accessibility shortens commute times by clustering multi-use areas near locations with available transit systems and developing roads that interconnect these amenities together by reducing cul-de-sacs, looped roads, and closed connections that inhibit walkability and force citizens to drive their vehicles (Handy, 2002).

Entertainment

Research regarding entertainment within cities is limited to the creation of Business Improvement Districts (BID) with little regarding the specific aspects that lure people to an area such as nightlife and entertainment (Houstoun, 2002; Ratcliffe, et al, 2004). The available research seeks to examine how municipalities can instead designate areas as BID's and develop all encompassing policies that improve economic conditions within a town. These policies that constitute a BID create partnerships with local government and private companies to direct the self-sustainability and improve tourism that include:

- Maintenance

- Security and hospitality
- Consumer marketing
- Business recruitment and retention
- Public space regulation
- Parking and transportation management
- Urban design
- Social services
- Visioning
- Capital improvements (Houstoun, 2002; Ratcliffe, et al, 2004).

Together, these features seek to spur activity within an area and, in turn, aid in improving entertainment entities within a city. These vague policies include the development of nightlife that Marchetti (2013) seeks to address by influencing inclusion of new businesses as included in the list above, specifically businesses that require liquor licenses in order to function. These businesses include bars and clubs, major staples in the attraction of tourist populations (Marchetti, 2013). Ultimately, these features are deemed as successful markers of entertainment within a city.

Existing Conditions

To initially assess the development potential of Grand Prairie’s Entertainment District we will examine the existing conditions within the district and explore the challenges and assets that can provide potential economic growth and development in the future. The assessment is based on research of the following:

Demographics of the city

- Challenges—including lack of public transit, walkability, lack of nightlife entrainment and retail
- Assets—including the current major attractions, supportive future land use, and location

pulled as well as county data to gauge who would be using the area, As shown in Table 1, the city of Grand Prairie has a population of 185,631 with a median age of 32.5. Compared to Dallas County with a median age of 33.2 and Tarrant County at 34.1, Grand Prairie has a younger population than its neighboring cities. Additionally, median household income is at \$60,246, which is higher than Dallas County at \$51,411 and comparable to Tarrant County at \$60,373. With more than 60% of Grand Prairie, Dallas County, and Tarrant County age 21 years or above there is a large base of citizens in the metroplex area to suggest that Entertainment District area can be a successful development (Census.gov).

Table 1: Population numbers and median income for Grand Prairie and nearby counties.

Subject	Grand Prairie		Dallas County		Tarrant County	
	Estimate	Percentage	Estimate	Percentage	Estimate	Percentage
SEX AND AGE						
Total population	185,631	185,631	2,513,054	2,513,054	1,947,529	1,947,529
Male	90,990	49.00%	1,238,199	49.30%	953,334	49.00%
Female	94,641	51.00%	1,274,855	50.70%	994,195	51.00%
Under 5 years	14,132	7.60%	194,626	7.70%	143,000	7.30%
5 to 9 years	15,080	8.10%	196,277	7.80%	149,812	7.70%
10 to 14 years	15,176	8.20%	180,307	7.20%	149,165	7.70%
15 to 19 years	14,801	8.00%	170,878	6.80%	136,972	7.00%
20 to 24 years	13,447	7.20%	180,878	7.20%	133,030	6.80%
25 to 34 years	27,220	14.70%	404,270	16.10%	287,528	14.80%
35 to 44 years	27,199	14.70%	354,076	14.10%	270,575	13.90%
45 to 54 years	26,018	14.00%	326,719	13.00%	266,684	13.70%
55 to 59 years	10,061	5.40%	142,705	5.70%	116,285	6.00%
60 to 64 years	8,021	4.30%	119,081	4.70%	95,517	4.90%
65 to 74 years	9,541	5.10%	143,914	5.70%	119,655	6.10%
75 to 84 years	3,645	2.00%	70,147	2.80%	57,284	2.90%
85 years and over	1,290	0.70%	29,176	1.20%	22,022	1.10%
Median age (years)	32.5	(X)	33.2	(X)	34.1	(X)

18 years and over	132,159	71.20%	1,836,309	73.10%	1,419,663	72.90%
21 years and over	123,055	66.30%	1,735,932	69.10%	1,342,697	68.90%
62 years and over	19,055	10.30%	310,225	12.30%	253,016	13.00%
65 years and over	14,476	7.80%	243,237	9.70%	198,961	10.20%
18 years and over	132,159	132,159	1,836,309	1,836,309	1,419,663	1,419,663
Male	64,170	48.60%	893,233	48.60%	684,511	48.20%
Female	67,989	51.40%	943,076	51.40%	735,152	51.80%
65 years and over	14,476	14,476	243,237	243,237	198,961	198,961
Male	6,272	43.30%	103,304	42.50%	86,019	43.20%
Female	8,204	56.70%	139,933	57.50%	112,942	56.80%
INCOME						
Medium Household Income	\$60,246	(X)	\$51,411	(X)	\$60,373	(X)

Grand Prairie Demographics. US Census Bureau. 08 August 2018.
https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml?src=bkmk

Challenges

The Entertainment District corridor potential for development is greatly influenced by the number of residents within Grand Prairie and the surrounding area; however, it can also be impacted by physical factors. This section will discuss challenges that could hinder the development potential for the corridor. These challenges include retaining visitors that come to events, limited walkability due to the distance between major assets, and the lack of transit and accessibility within the area.

Lack of Permanent Residents or Extensive Visits

A major challenge that the Entertainment District is the lack of land uses that keep visitors within the area for an extended amount of time. Additionally, there are no permanent residents with the Entertainment District. The current assets, which we will discuss in more depth later, only keep visitors within an area for the set amount of time an event is being held within their facility. For example, Grand Prairie's concert hall, Verizon Theater, only keeps patrons in area for the length of a concert. While these concerts and shows take place throughout the year, AirHog Stadium and Lone Star Park's competitive seasons only take place within the month of April through September, leaving the entertainment corridor and respective parking lots underutilized for a period of time during the fall and winter seasons.

Limited Walkability and Accessibility

As a result of limited land uses within the entertainment corridor that promote prolonged visits within the area, there has been a lack of focus on walkability. Instead there is a reliance on the use of vehicles to get to large parking lots that separate major assets within the area. This creates the issue of heavy traffic congestion within Belt Line and the frontage roads adjacent to Belt Line.

No Major Transit System

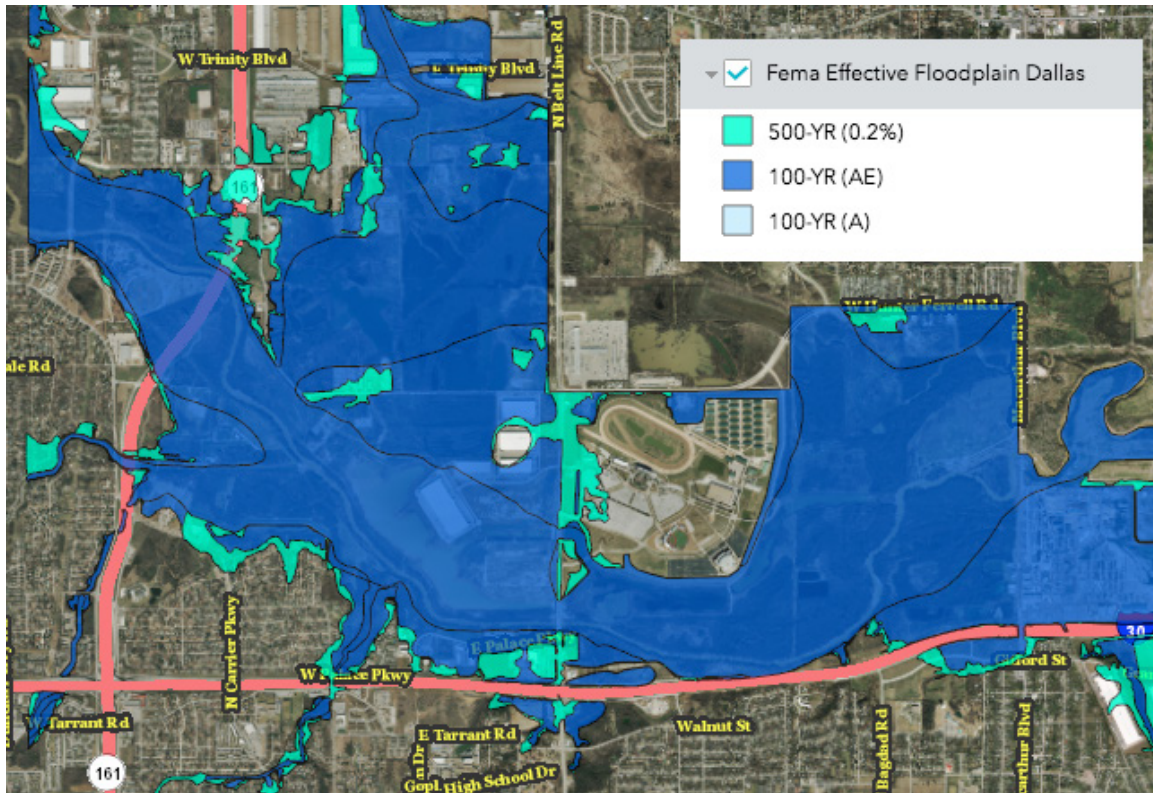
There is currently a lack of public transit in not only the Entertainment District area but in the Grand Prairie as a whole. There is a heavy reliance on vehicles that results in traffic build up on the Interstate 30 and the Belt Line intersection. According to the Texas

Department of Transportation, there is an average of 38,000 vehicles trips on Belt Line through the area in question. If there were potential for development in the area, the lack of transit system within the Entertainment District would make it difficult to cycle people through the area without having issues of traffic congestion and parking availability. Currently, the only alternative transit available in Grand Prairie is the Grand Connection program that provides citizens age 60 or higher, transportation within the city.

Extensive Floodplain

A major challenge for the area the possible environmental impact to the Trinity River area if there are plans to develop. The entertainment district area is surrounded by floodplain as shown in Figure 2. According to Grand Prairie's overview of floodplain development on their website, any development within the floodplain area along the Trinity River would have to consult the Trinity River Corridor Committee for council and approval. For located in 100 year floodplain, the developer would have follow flood management guidelines provided by Grand Prairie, such as requiring new constructions to be built two feet above the existing water line as well as requiring them to submit a flood study and require a flood insurance policy (*Floodplain*).

Figure 2: Floodplain



Mapbox. Web 08 August, 2018. <https://www.mapbox.com/studio/styles/erico21/cjad068d2ctx2rs1gu0x4y00/edit>

Lone Star Park

A major challenge to the area is the future of the Lone Star Park racehorse track. Lone Star Park is the biggest draw to the area due to it being the lone gambling use within North Texas. However, there are uncertainties in the future of the park as its limited to only being able to bet on horses, thus hampering its business as the racing season is only open for a limited window during the summer. If the entertainment district area is to be redeveloped, ensuring the survival of Lone Star Park is vital.

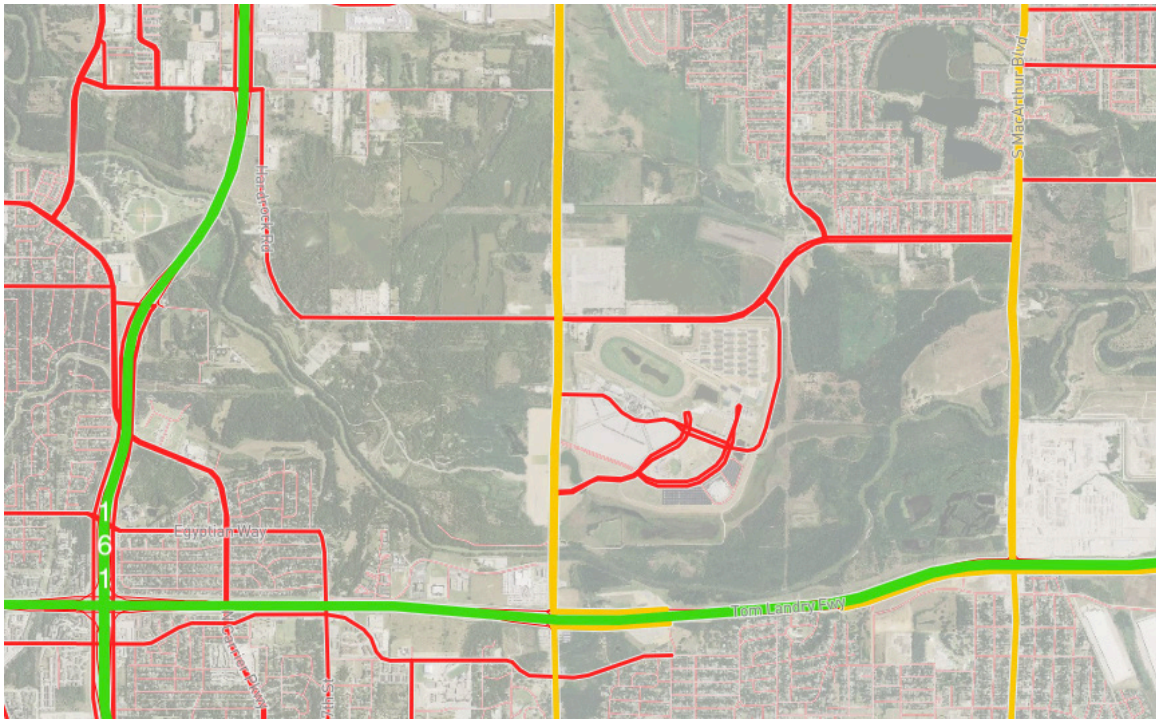
Assets

The Grand Prairie Entertainment study area has favorable features readily available on site. Specifically, commercial uses that attract large populations such as concert venues and sporting venues. Additionally, there is favorable zoning and future land use plans that make building the area flexible and rife with potential, as well as the area being in a convenient location within the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.

Location

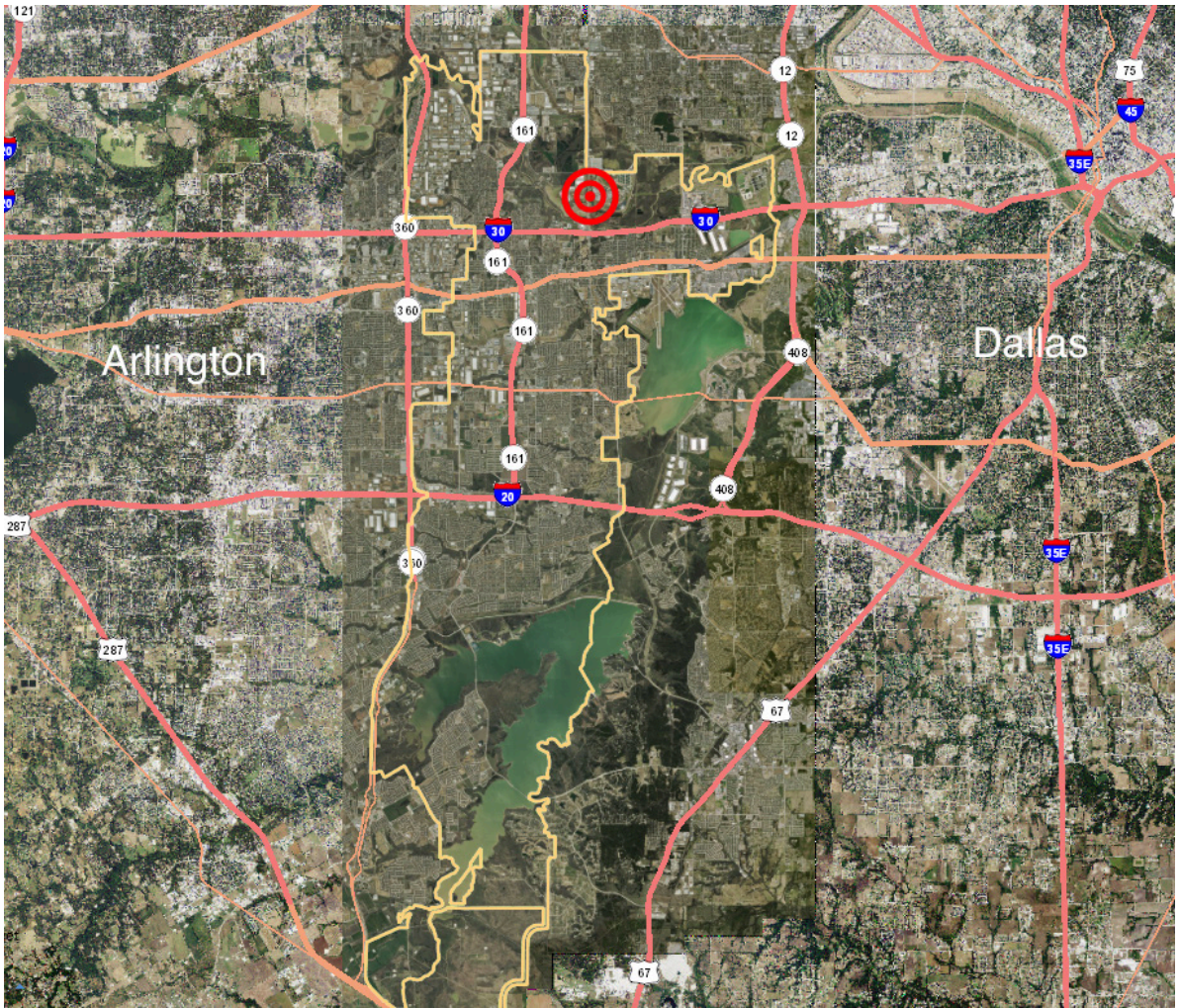
The location of the entertainment district is a major asset for Grand Prairie. As shown in Figure 3, the Study area is located near the major intersection of Belt Line and Interstate 30, the Entertainment District experiences heavy car traffic as commuters either head north towards Irving or east towards Dallas or west towards Arlington and Fort Worth (Figure 4). Additionally, the entertainment district is in close proximity to Highway 161 and the George Bush Turnpike giving the area access to major markets in the north such as Carrollton, Frisco, and Addison and Mansfield to the south of Grand Prairie. The city is also currently expanding their service road systems along the intersection help alleviate congestion and allow for more cars to drive through the area.

Figure 3: Location of major roadways along Entertainment District--Green is highway, Yellow is thoroughfare, Red is neighborhood streets



Grand Prairie. Web 08 August, 2018. <http://gis.gptx.org/maps/>

Figure 4: Location of Entrainment District area in relation to neighboring cities

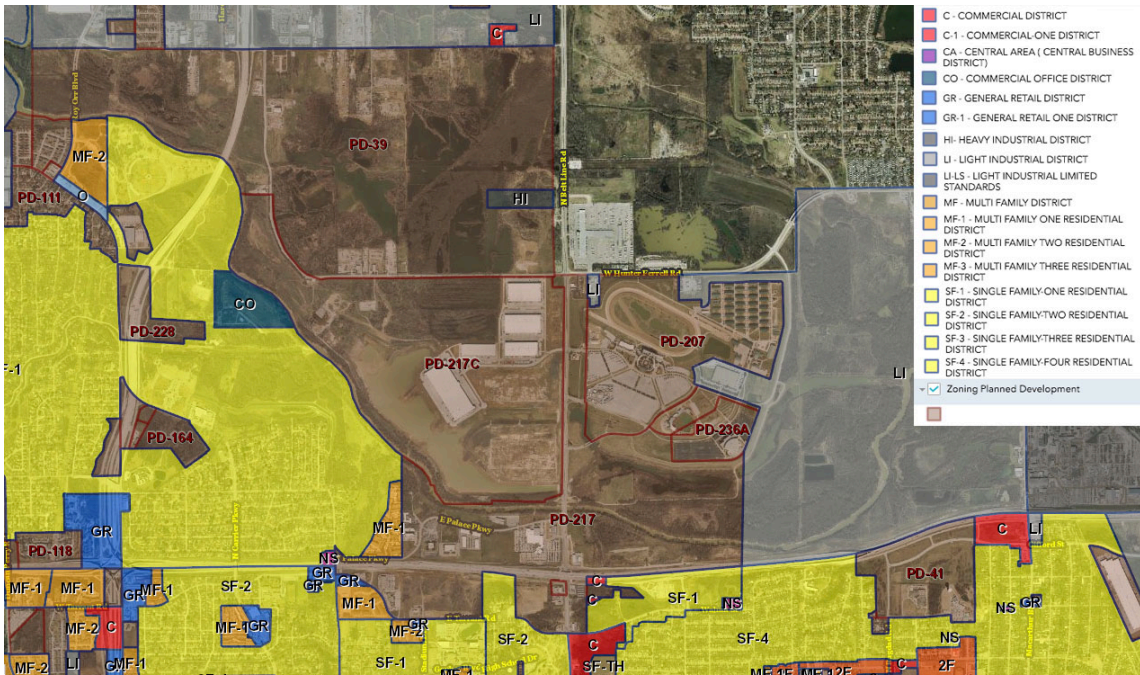


Grand Prairie. Web 08 August, 2018. <http://gis.gptx.org/maps/>

Zoning and Land Use

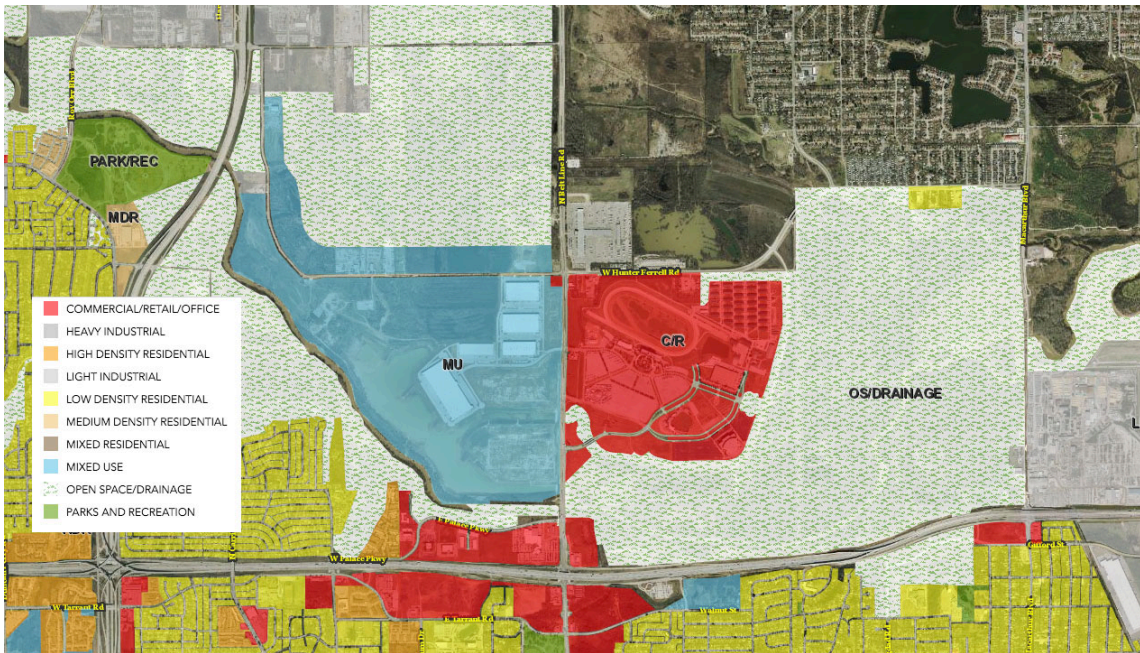
Land use is a major asset to the Grand Prairie Entertainment District area. Much of the land has been zoned Planned Development (PD) for mixed use, commercial and retail giving the area flexibility on how it can use its land in the future as shown in Figure 5. Major pieces of land in west of Belt Line are zoned PD 217C as shown in Figure 5, this zoning type allows for multi-family residential and mixed use development allowing for an array of building endeavors. PD 217 also allows mixed-use development as well as commercial and business uses such as hotel and restaurants. As a result, developers would have a streamlined route to building on available lots within the aforementioned zoning configurations. Figure 6 is a land map displaying future uses. Located on the west side of Belt Line colored in blue is mixed use configuration that permits uses in high density residential, commercial, and retail.

Figure 5: Zoning Map



Grand Prairie. Web 08 August, 2018. <http://gis.gptx.org/maps/>

Figure 6: Future Land Use map of Grand Prairie's Entertainment District area



Grand Prairie. Web 08 August, 2018. <http://gis.gptx.org/maps/>

Commercial

Grand Prairie has the benefit of having four major attractions already set within its Entertainment District: Alliance Skate Park, Lone Star Park Air Hog Stadium, and Verizon Theater.

Lone Star Park is Grand Prairie's horse racing venue where visitors are able to place bets on live races at their track from the bar and book as well as bet on other horse racing events from around the world seven days a week. Additionally, the venue also hosts outdoor music festivals and other activities.

AirHogs Stadium is home to Grand Prairie's minor league baseball team the AirHogs. The venue has a capacity of 5,440 people and its season spans May to September.

Action Park Grand Prairie is a skate park that is open year round and is an attractive destination for action sport. It contains 2 acres of dirt trails, an indoor wooden skate park complete with foam pit, and an outdoor pro course.

Verizon Theater is a concert venue with a capacity of 6,350. Verizon Theater brings in major music performers such as the Weekend and Kelly Clarkson, and hosts shows like Price is Right.

Opportunities

Grand Prairie's Entertainment District area contains two major opportunities that can propel the city forward in terms of development: green space and the Trinity River waterways.

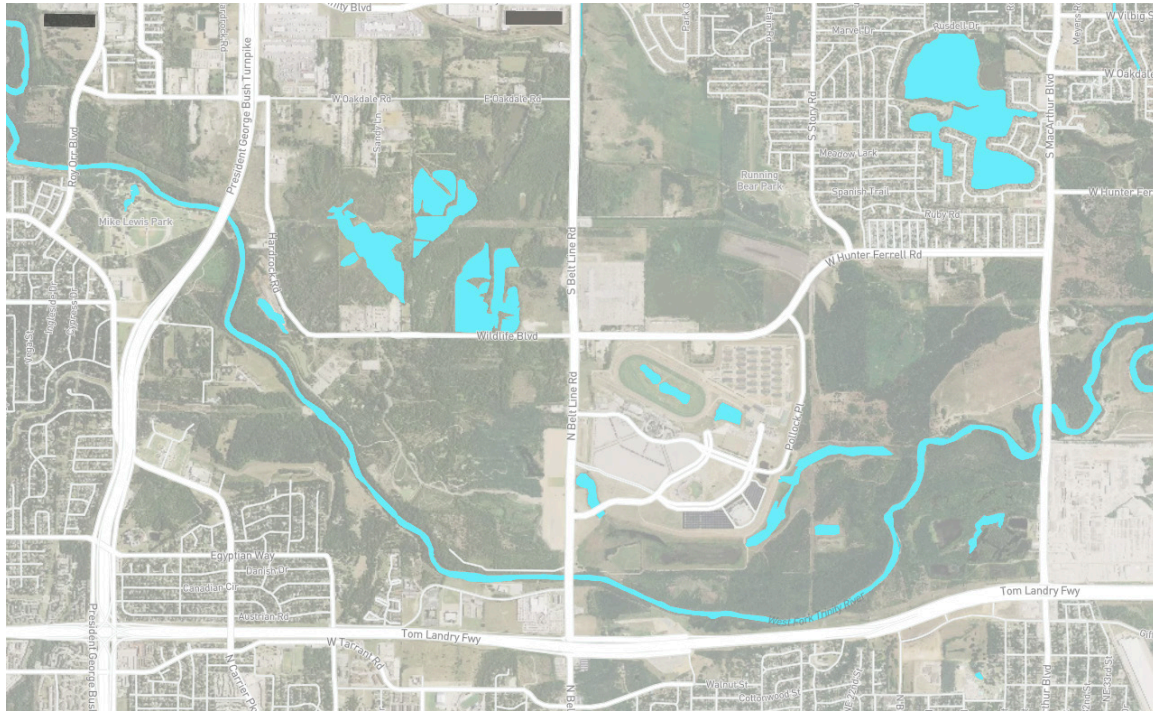
Green Space

There are approximately 2200 acres of open green space in the Grand Prairie entertainment area. A major aspect of community and urban building is the presence of green space and the abundance of open area has the potential to present new uses for the Entertainment District area if developed appropriately.

Extensive Waterways

According to Grand Prairie's interactive map system there are approximately 7 miles of Trinity River system located along the Entertainment District area with development potential for water front property or park and trails. Currently, the 3.2 miles long Lone Star Trail runs along a stretch of the Trinity River along the Entertainment District corridor.

Figure 7: Waterways



Mapbox. Web 08 August, 2018. <https://www.mapbox.com/studio/styles/eric021/cjjad068d2ctx2rs1gu0x4y00/edit>

Methodology

Research Method

The following research will examine relevant case studies to gain an understanding on how they handle and utilize similar challenges, assets, and opportunities shared by the Grand Prairie's Entertainment corridor. In doing so, there will be in depth description of how waterfronts are developed, ways to alleviate traffic congestion and promote accessibility, and improving entertainment.

Case Studies

Arlington

Arlington is a city in the middle of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex that has a population of approximately 365,438 people within a 99.92 square mile area. The city of Arlington has been selected a case study because of its similarity to Grand Prairie in population growth, development pace, and natural features. Additionally, the Arlington provides unique perspectives on the three criteria discussed within the paper. They are described below:

Waterfront Development

Arlington provides a case study in the use of waterfront for recreation use in the form of River Legacy Park, an eight-mile trail that runs along the Trinity River. This park can provide insight in to what Grand Prairie can do with its own section of trinity in terms of recreational use. The park and trail encompasses 1300 acres of land was created as part of a parntership between Grand Prairie's Park s and Recreation Department and the non-profit River Legacy Foundation in 1990.

Figure 8: River Legacy Park: Trail Highlighted in Yellow



Mapbox. Web 08 August, 2018. <https://www.mapbox.com/studio/styles/erico21/cjad068d2ctx2rs1gu0x4y00/edit>

Transportation and Accessibility

Arlington, like Grand Prairie, does not have a citywide public transportation system. However, they are in the forefront of innovative technology for transporting people within their own Entertainment District through the use of an automated shuttle bus called Milo. While currently within the pilot program that requires it to drive only on off street trails, the Milo is on a test run to study its ability as a potential long-term solution to transportation issues across Arlington. Another Transportation system that Arlington has instilled is the ride share system Via. The Via program is a ride share that charges a flat of \$3 dollars for citizens in Arlington to use within the city. Figure 11 shows a map of Via current area of operations as well its expansion locations for the summer.

Figure 9: Milo Autonomous Vehicle

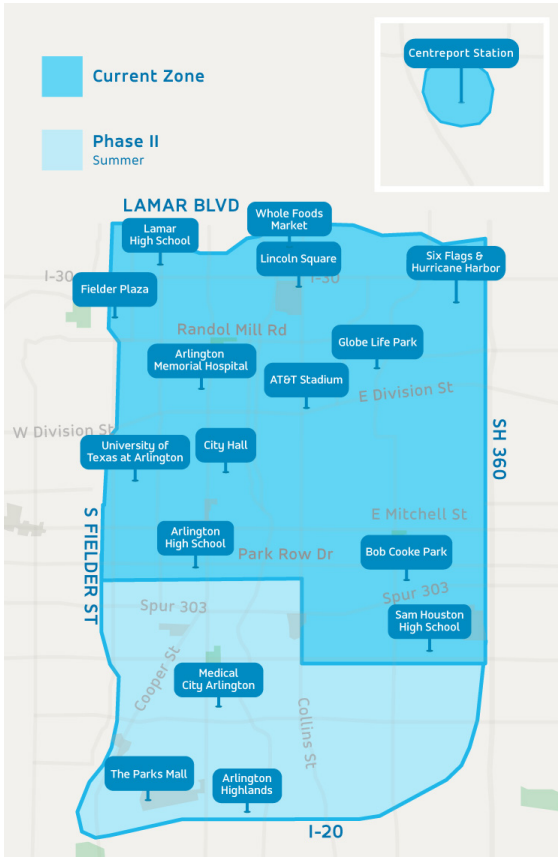


City of Arlington. Web 08 August, 2018. <http://www.arlington-tx.gov/visitors/milo>
Figure 10: Milo Operation Map



City of Arlington. Web 08 August, 2018. <http://www.arlington-tx.gov/visitors/milo>

Figure 11: Via Ride Share Operations Map



City of Arlington. Web 08 August, 2018. <http://www.arlington-tx.gov/visitors/milo>

Figure 12: Via Ride Share Vehicle



City of Arlington. Web 08 August, 2018. <http://www.arlington-tx.gov/visitors/via>

Entertainment

Arlington mirrors Grand Prairie in its housing of a singular specified Entertainment District that houses two sports venues—Globe Life Park and AT&T Stadium. While not completely finished, Arlington’s entertainment is further along with its development than Grand Prairie due its abundance of restaurants and bar scene. However, like Grand Prairie, Arlington wishes to build on its current Entertainment District through projects like Texas Live, a mixed-use development that will be built between the city’s two sports venues.

Figure 13: Texas Live! In Arlington



Texas Live! Web 08 August, 2018. <http://texas-live.com/>

Austin

Austin is a unique city within Texas that operates more like a city one would find in the Northeast of the United States because of its densely populated downtown. Austin’s

population is approximately 947,890 people within an area of 271 square miles. Austin, like Austin features interesting interpretations of the three criteria of waterfront development, transportation and accessibility, and entertainment, which are a major focus of improvement for the city as they continue to become a competitive destination for top talent in the tech industry.

Waterfront Development

A major project within Austin is the South-Central Waterfront Initiative that invokes every aspect one encounters in life—recreation, work, and entertainment—all located on the waterfront of Lady Bird Lake. The South-Central Waterfront Initiative represents the maximum optimization of a Waterfront that Grand Prairie currently does not have and could attempt to develop ("South Central Waterfront Initiative," 2017). The Initiative seeks to develop:

- Establish a lively, attractive pedestrian environment.
- Expand open space and create great public spaces.
- Enhance connections to and along the waterfront.
- Include 20% new housing units as affordable.

Figure 14: South Central Waterfront Location

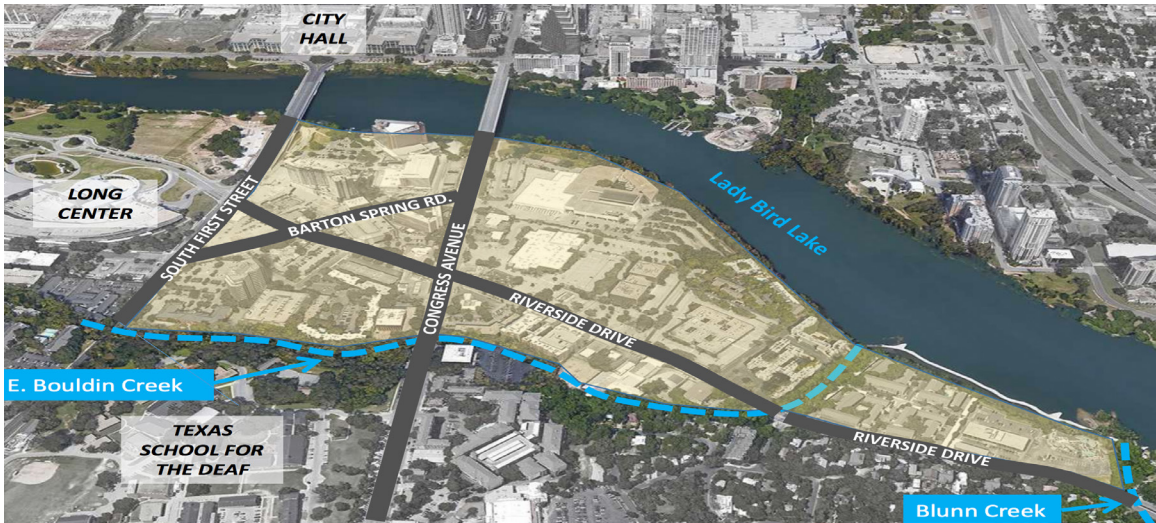
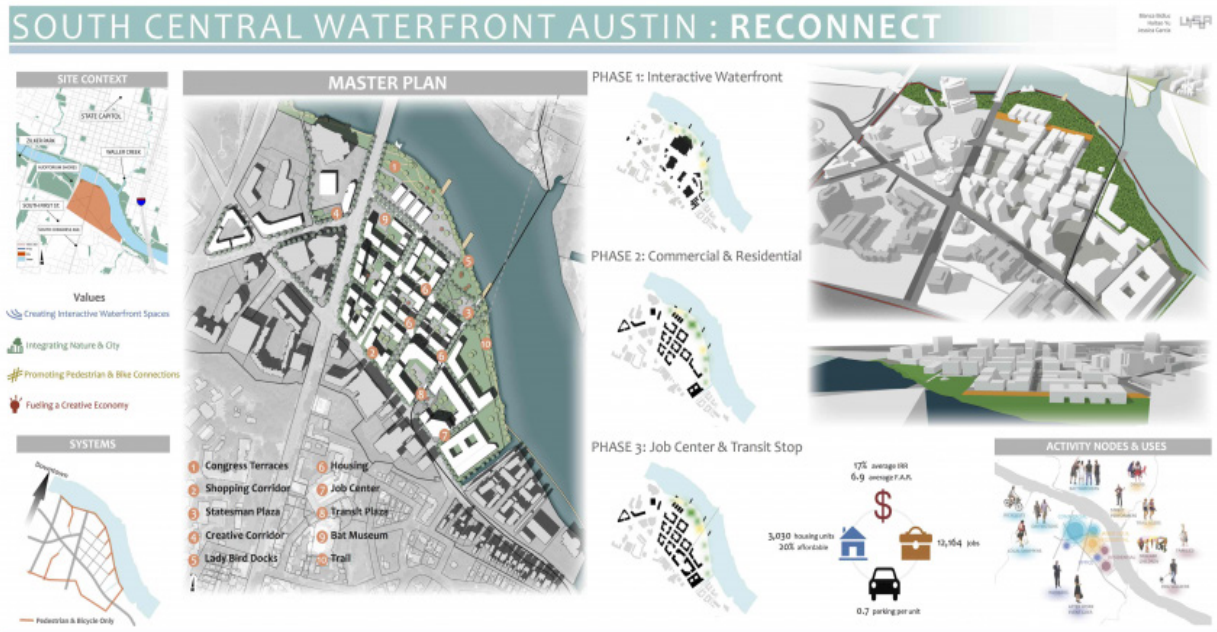


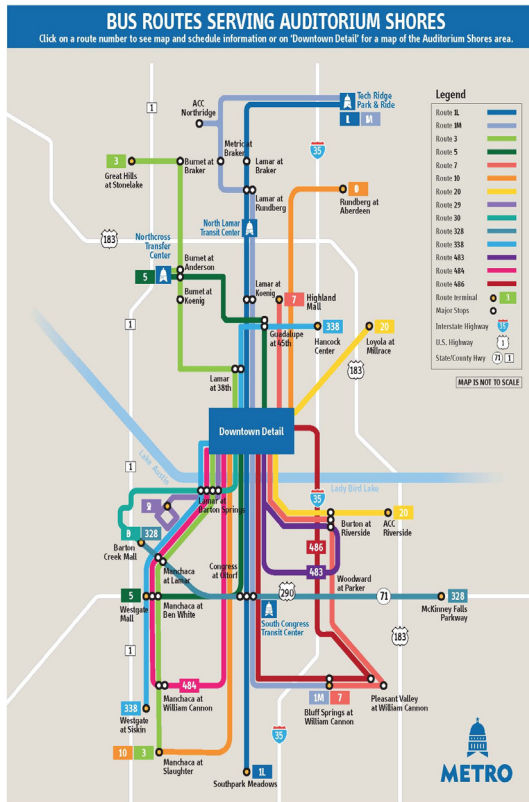
Figure 15 : South Central Waterfront Details



City of Austin.Web 08 August 2018. ftp://ftp.ci.austin.tx.us/npzd/Austingo/SCW_Vision_Plan_LatestEdition.pdf

Austin provides a typical public transportation through use of an expansive bus route system called Capital Metro. It provides an efficient mode of transportation that is free to students of the University of Texas at Austin. The bus system is a well-documented mode of transportation that Grand Prairie can study and consider for possible implementation within its own Entertainment District and its surrounding area.

Figure 16: Metro Bus Lines



CapMetro. Web 08 August, 2018. <https://capmetroblog.com/category/new-buses/>

Figure 17: Metro City Bus



CapMetro. Web 08 August, 2018. <https://capmetroblog.com/category/new-buses/>

Entertainment

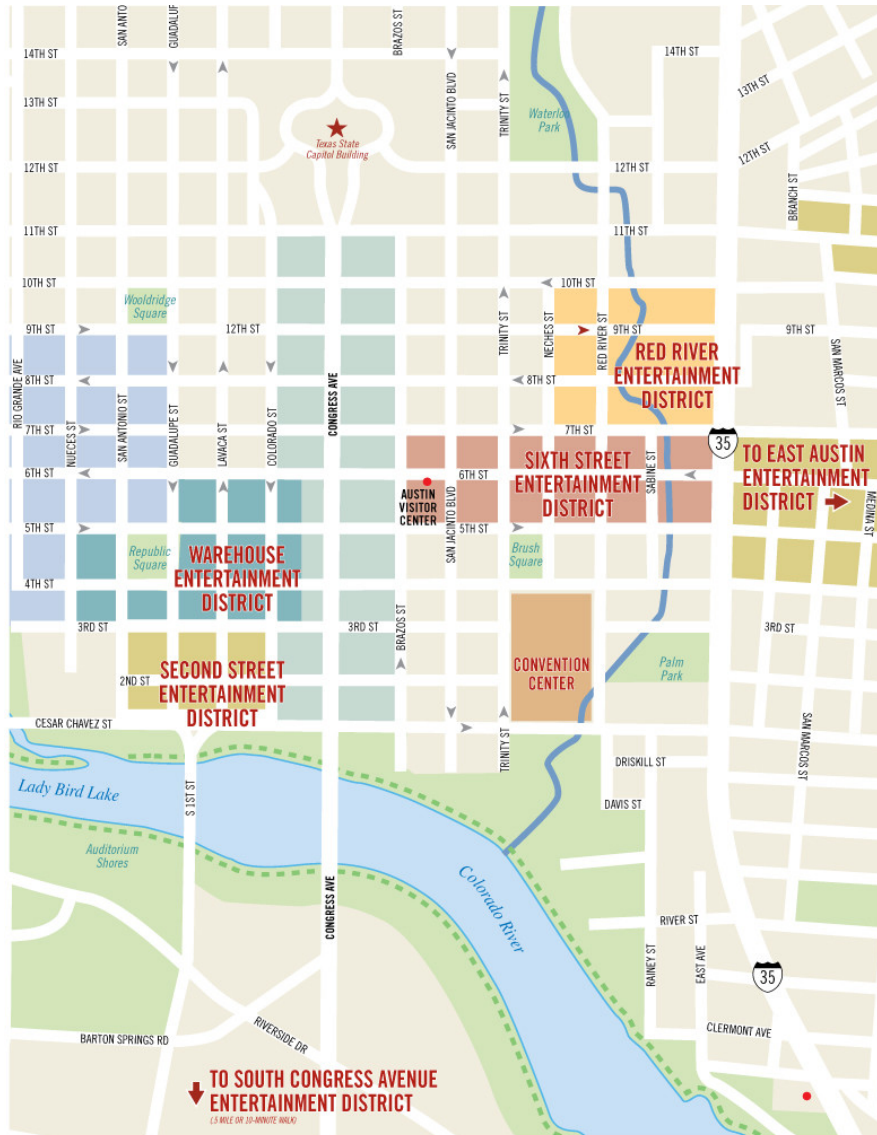
The city of Austin is known as the “Music Capital of the World,” due to the number of music festivals that are often held in the downtown adjacent Zilker Park as well as music venues down Congress avenue and 6th Street located near the city capital building. 6th Street in particular is a major hub for entertainment within Austin due to its numerous bars and dance clubs. Additionally, each weekend the 6th street is closed off to traffic to allow people to walk on the street in safe manner. The type of events mentioned above are missing within Grand Prairie and denotes a prime example of the direction the city could go if they wish to provide an entertaining nightlife to the region as well as its citizens.

Figure 18: Austin's 6th Street at night



6th Street at Night. iexplore. Web 08 August, 2018. <https://www.iexplore.com/destinations/austin/sixth-street-decoded>

Figure 19: Austin's Major Districts



City of Austin.Web 08 August 2018. ftp://ftp.ci.austin.tx.us/npzd/Austingo/SCW_Vision_Plan_LatestEdition.pdf

Figure 20: 6th Street Open to the Public



Cecchi, Lauren. "Austin 6th Street." Web 08 August 2018. <https://laurencecchi.com/everything-is-better-in-austin>

Fort Worth

Located west of Arlington, Fort Worth is the biggest city in terms of land size being examined at 342 square miles and population of approximately 854,113 people. Fort worth was selected as a case study due its unique representation of history and culture within its built environment ("Trinity River Corridor Development," 2017).

Waterfront Development

While Fort Worth has an extended trail along its segment of the Trinity River similar to Arlington, what makes the city's segment unique is its dedication the commercial development of the waterfront properties located adjacent to the river as part of its Trinity River Vision Riverfront Development Guidelines. As one drives along the river one will see multiple restaurants and breweries, as well as a drive -n theater. This case study on waterfront development provides a blueprint on a commercial development alternative, different from the other cities in this study ("Trinity River Corridor Development," 2017).

A major component of the Trinity River Vision is the redevelopment of the Panther Island as seen on Figures 21 and 22. The Panther Island project will utilize the Trinity River and allow the waterfront to be utilized in the form of canals through residential and commercial areas that will improve connect-ability within major uses.

Figure 21: Panther Island Waterways



Trinity River Vision. Web 08 August 2018. <https://trinityrivervision.org/panther-island/developer-info/>

Figure 22: Designated Panther Island revitalization area



Trinity River Vision. Web 08 August 2018. <https://trinityrivervision.org/panther-island/developer-info/>

Transportation and Accessibility

Fort Worth was one of the first cities to incorporate a bike-share program within the Dallas-Fort Worth Area. There are 35 bike-share docks located at major trails, downtown, as well as Texas Christian University.

Figure 23: Bike Share in Fort Worth



North Texas Commission. Web 08 August 2018. <http://ntc-dfw.org/bike-to-work-day-2015/fort-worth-bike-sharing-bike-to-work-2015-crop/>

Entertainment

The most interesting district within Fort Worth is the Stockyards district where one can immerse oneself in the rustic Old West where one can often see cattle being driven through the streets. The area carved a niche for itself by taken advantage of its history as cattle drive stop during the 1800's and building upon by developing commercial, retail, and restaurants that exhibit that culture. The stockyards provide an interesting case on how to use history buildings and context towards developing an entertaining attraction. Additionally, Fort Worth has developed the West 7th Urban district showcased in Figure 25. West 7th is home to 52 prominent bars and restaurants as well high density residential land uses.

Figure 24: Fort Worth Stock Yards



"Fort Worth Stock Yards." Web 08 August 2018. <https://www.fortworthstockyards.org/play/fort-worth-herd-cattle-drive>

Figure 25: West 7th Urban Village



The city of Fort Worth. Web 08 August 2018. <http://fortworthtexas.gov/west-seventh-urban-village>

Limitations

The use of the of Arlington, Fort Worth, and Austin as case studies does not allow for an out of state example of the policy and practiced used to develop of a city. Despite this, using Texas cities, specifically Arlington and Fort Worth, as oppose to out of state allows for an immediate response and familiarity with residents and planners of Grand Prairie that can be a powerful in convincing a city to proceed with a project when making recommendations. Additionally, the use of in state case studies suggests that many of the policies will be similar, if not the same, to seamlessly enact a particular program.

Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the area and the relevant case studies, I will make recommendations that will attempt to spur development in the Entertainment District study area through government policy and design. These plans of action can then be review by the city of Grand Prairie for potential use in the future.

Institutional

Connect Area to Highways

Figure 26 displays the recommended connections that the city of Grand Prairie should look to add in the near future. By connecting Wildlife Parkway to 161, highlighted in red in Figure 26, you allow for cities north of Grand Prairie such Carrollton and Addison access to the entertainment district area, thus opening up new markets. Additionally, by creating a connection from the Interstate 30 service road to the entertainment district, you allow the alleviation of traffic through Belt Line.

Figure 26: Recommended Road Extensions (Red Dotted Line)



Grand Prairie. Mapbox. Web 08 August 2018.

<https://www.mapbox.com/studio/styles/erico21/cjjad068d2ctx2rs1gu0x4y00/edit>

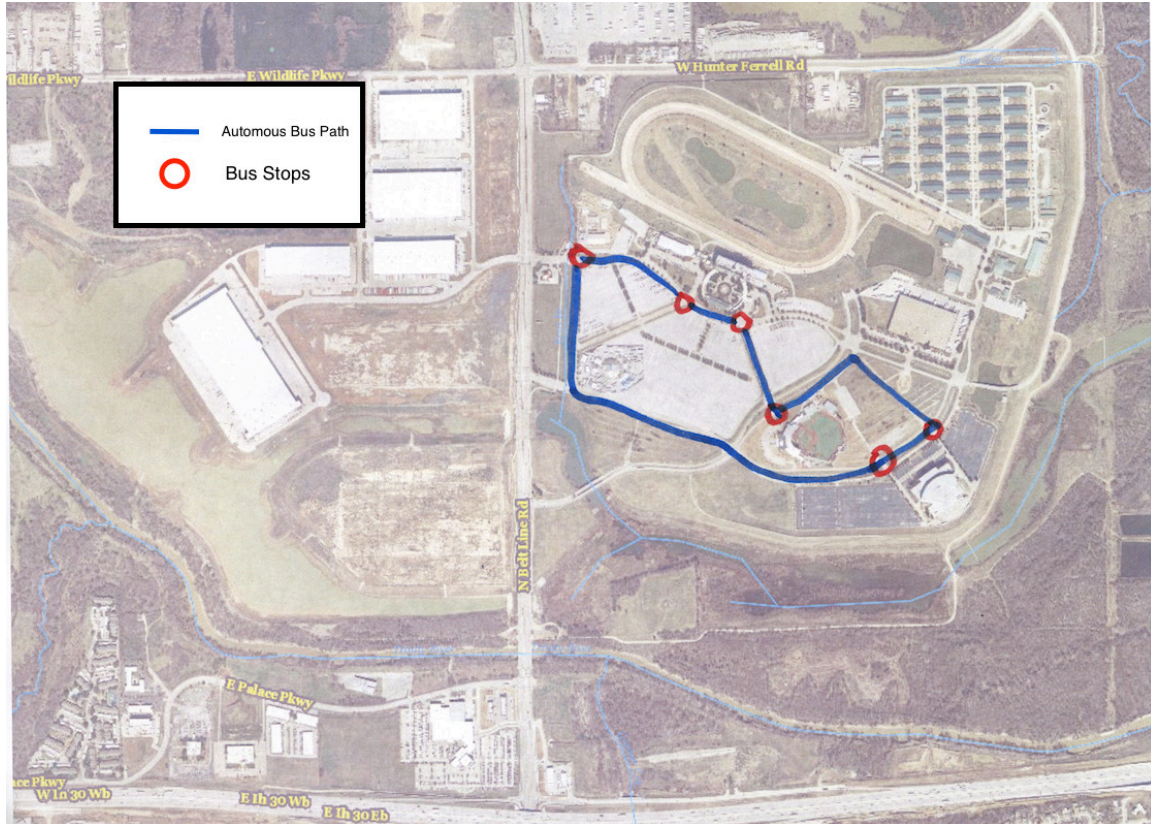
Instill a Public Transit System

Implement an autonomous shuttle similar to the milo in Arlington. The autonomous shuttle will transport patrons through major uses within the area. This will calm traffic within the area and reduce the number of parking spaces required near major uses.

Another transit recommendation would be to expand the Grand Connection program to people of ages and similar to the Via program in Arlington and charge a flat rate to transport citizens throughout Grand Prairie. This would allow citizens from outside

entertainment area to be transported to within the commercial utilized the recommended autonomous shuttle program to move about the Entertainment District.

Figure 27: Potential Autonomous Bus Route



Grand Prairie. Web 08 August 2018. <http://gis.gptx.org/maps/>

Promote Uses that Require Liquor Licenses

One of the major uses missing from Grand Prairie and its entertainment is a nightlife prominent development. This type of development includes, club, restaurants, and bars. These developments require the use of a liquor license and would be a key in creating a space that adults in the area can enjoy after attending an event at one of the Entertainment District's current venues such as Verizon Theater or Lone Star Park.

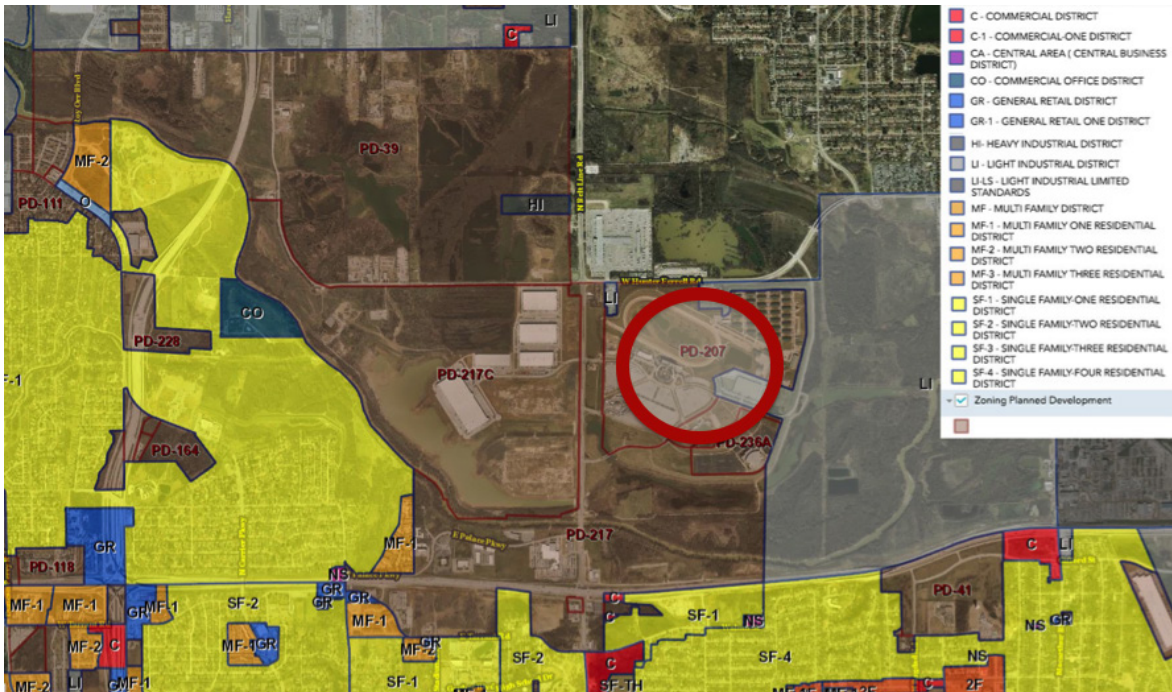
Provide Improvements to Lone Star Park

As concerns of Lone Star Park's viability as a main attraction surface, it is necessary to improve the parks facilities and pivot to a new direction that does not rely solely on horse racing. I recommend implementing sports betting and creating a casino aesthetic within the facility through the use of slot machines and cad tables. In implementing sports betting, Lone Star Park can be the first sports betting facility within Texas creating a major draw for people seeking entertainment in the form of gambling. The biggest potential roadblock to achieving this goal is state politics, as gambling within the state is not viewed as a high priority.

Rezone PD 207

I recommend the rezoning of PD 207 circled in red in Figure 28, to PD 217 to allow for flexibility in the development of the Entertainment District, specifically the parking lot area in front of Lone Star Park. In changing to PD 217, the Grand Prairie will be able to look into the creation of hotels, restaurants, and retail. By rezoning you also create a foundation to improve the viability of Lone Star Park by bringing new patrons to area.

Figure 28: Target Rezoning Area



Grand Prairie. Image. Web 08 August 2018. <http://gis.gptx.org/maps/>

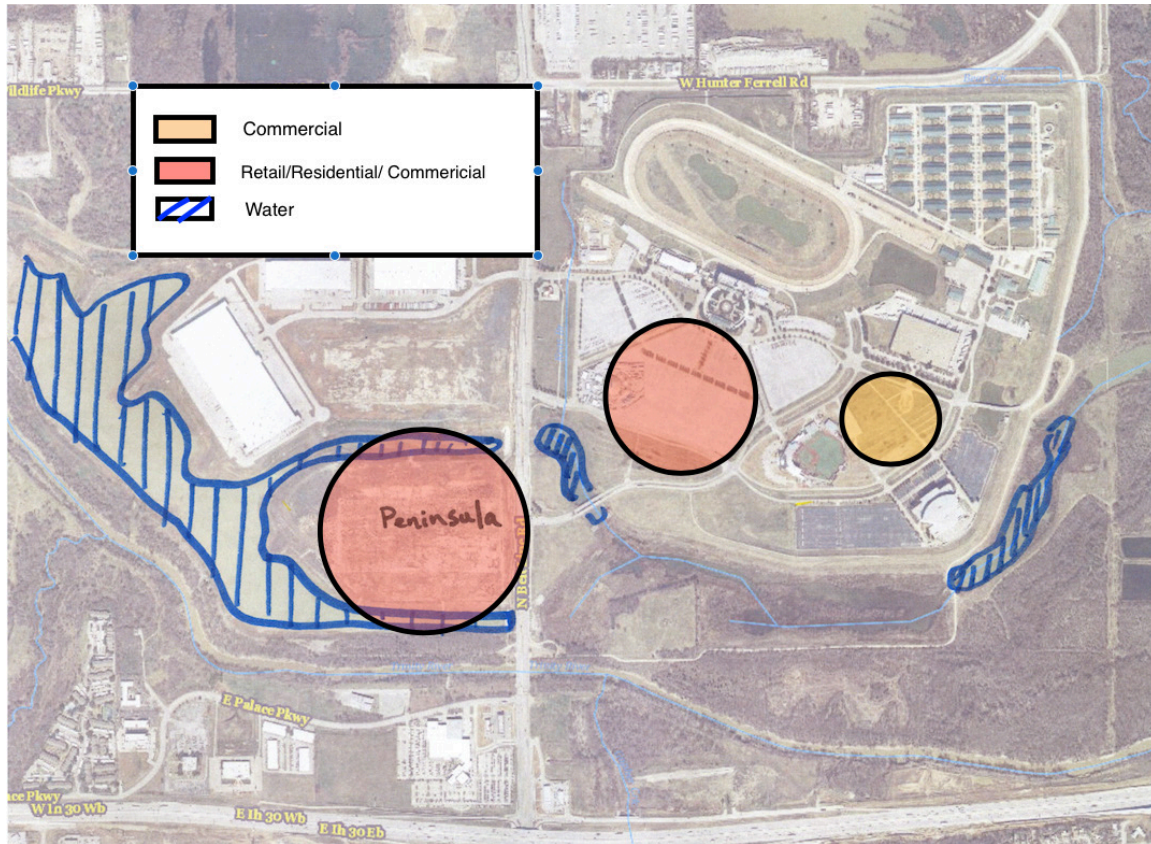
Design

Infill Vacant Land and Parking

As alluded earlier, there is a lack of land uses that keep people within the Grand Prairie Entertainment District for an extended period of time outside of the of the events detailed in the assets sections of the existing conditions. To combat this challenge, I recommend infilling the main the main parking lot with retail and commercial development. The infill of the lot would provide a centerpiece for the Entertainment District that will contain shopping, office space, and apartment developments to connect local assets. Additionally, there should be commercial development on the east side of the ballpark to allow for the development of restaurants and bars in the area. There should also be waterfront development on the peninsula on the west side of Belt Line road to create a unique

experience within the area. The recommendations explained above can viewed in Figure 29.

Figure 29: Redevelopment of location site



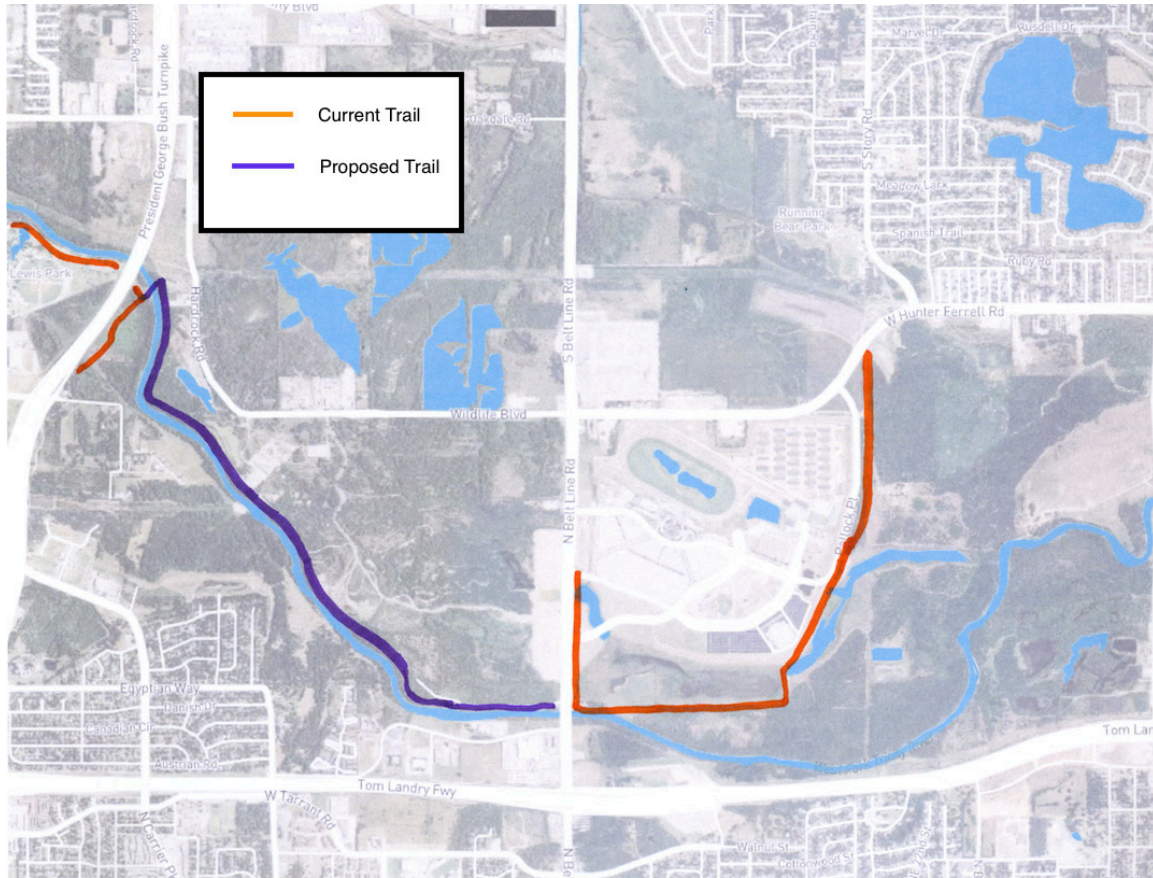
Grand Prairie. Web 08 August 2018. <http://gis.gptx.org/maps/>

Connect Trails Along Trinity River

I recommend that Grand Prairie focus on developing their trail system along the Trinity River similar to the way Arlington has developed their trinity trail system at River Legacy Park. And connect it to the trail to the Arlington segment of the Trinity trail system and the Irving segment of the trail system. There are seven miles of Trinity River located within open green space that can be turned into active green space to preserve forest area and add value to the Entertainment District. This will provide an answer to environmental concerns about building on floodplain by preserving the area as a trail

system. Details of the trail are shown below in Figure 29. Additionally, the trail will provide a buffer between the residential areas and the Entertainment District.

Figure 30: Trail Addition



Grand Prairie. Mapbox. Web 08 August 2018.
<https://www.mapbox.com/studio/styles/erico21/cjjad068d2ctx2rs1gu0x4y00/edit>

Conclusion

While Grand Prairie’s Entertainment District and its surrounding area currently has a multiple amenities that attract consumers to the city, Grand Prairie can do more to enrich the experience of those who travel within the region by assessing the development potential of the land north of the Belt Line and Interstate-30 region. As the research showed, Grand Prairie can assess the development potential of its Entertainment District

by examining three major criteria: waterfront development, transportation and accessibility, and entertainment. In examining these criteria in the cities of Arlington, Austin, and Fort Worth, Grand Prairie can develop a road map to improve its Entertainment District area. In doing so, this can create the context to allow the implementation of recommendations in design and policy.

Ultimately, I expect to find that Grand Prairie has the potential to accommodate a number of projects addressed in the research to become a major player within the region.

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