EVALUATING THE DESIGN AND PLANNING SERVICES OF THE ARLINGTON URBAN DESIGN CENTER: CLIENTS’ PERSPECTIVES

by

YUNHUI ZHOU

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ABSTRACT

EVALUATING THE DESIGN AND PLANNING SERVICES OF THE ARLINGTON URBAN DESIGN CENTER: CLIENTS’ PERSPECTIVES

Yunhui Zhou, M.L.A.

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2011

Supervising Professor: Taner R. Ozdil

In North Texas, recognizing the potential benefits of combining community service and outreach, three design centers, the Arlington Urban Design Center (AUDC), the Dallas City Design Studio (DCDS), and the Oak Cliff Storefront (OCS) were established since 2009. A fourth design center is also in the process of being established in Waco. Similar to their counterparts across the U.S., these centers were established to provide design and planning services to cities, communities, institutions, and private owners. Although they are widely reviewed in a broad expanse of scholarly literature (Hardin, Eribes, & Poster, 2006; Forsyth & McGirr, 1999) very little is known about their impacts from the perspectives of the beneficiaries’ of these services.

This research focuses on assessing the design and planning services of the Arlington Urban Design Center, the first design center established in North Texas, by evaluating clients’ perspectives on the services the center provide. The clients in this research are defined as private land owners, communities, city departments, institutions, investors and others who used the center’s design and planning services over a three-year period. The research also reports
on the AUDC’s design and planning impacts from the view of other stakeholders (Arlington city planners, UTA deans, and student interns) in order to understand the varying viewpoints of the AUDC’s services.

This research primarily follows qualitative research methods (Taylor & Bogdan, 1997) and evaluation techniques (Rossi, & Freeman, 1993) to assess clients’ perspectives on the design and planning impacts of the AUDC. A number of interviews are also conducted with other stakeholders (Arlington city planners, UTA deans and student interns) to ascertain their varying viewpoints on this topic. Systematic review of the City of Arlington’s project archives, as well as passive observations on constructed projects, are also utilized as supporting procedures to document and illustrate the types of design and planning activities undertaken by the AUDC.

The findings of this research illustrate that the clients are benefiting regularly from urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, planning, and even interior and graphic design services which correspond with the overall mission of the AUDC. However, clients’ also seem to be interested in additional services such as civil engineering and construction related issues. Clients seem to be interested in AUDC’s services primarily due to its no service cost, visionary design ideas, and partnership opportunities they provide with the city and the local institutions.

In conclusion, understanding clients’ and other stakeholders’ perspectives toward the AUDC’s design and planning service are beneficial to the future of the AUDC, as well as other service-learning programs to understand and better respond to the needs of the beneficiaries of these centers. Additionally, knowing clients’ needs and thoughts could benefit landscape architecture by not only exposing students with real-life design and planning problems but also informing design professionals about business development and consulting services with these centers.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

“Cities have typically organized their urban design activities within their planning departments, but in recent years there seems to have been a growing desire for establishing urban design centers that have their own identity” (Rahaim, Gastil & Hundt, 2002, p. 77).

In North Texas, recognizing the importance of urban design and potential benefits of combining community service and outreach, three design centers, Arlington Urban Design Center (AUDC), Dallas City Design Studio (DCDS), and Oak Cliff Storefront (OCS) were founded since 2009. The others (such as the City of Waco’s center) are also in the process of being founded. These centers were established to provide design and planning services to cities, communities, institutions, and private owners. Although they are widely reviewed in a broad expanse of scholarly literature (Hardin, et. al, 2006; Forsyth. et. al, 1999) very little is known about their impacts from the perspectives of the clients. This research specifically focuses on assessing the design and planning services of the Arlington Urban Design Center, the first design center established in North Texas, by evaluating clients’ perspectives on the services the center provides.

1.1.1 The Arlington Urban Design Center

Arlington is a city in Tarrant County, Texas, with a population of 365,438 (NCTCOG, 2011). Arlington is the third largest city in the region, the seventh largest in Texas, and the fiftieth largest city in the U.S (The City of Arlington, 2011). The Arlington Urban Design Center (AUDC) of Texas is a service-learning program which was founded in July 2009 by University of
Texas at Arlington (UTA), School of Urban and Public Affairs (SUPA), School of Architecture (SOA), and the City of Arlington, “to create public awareness about the importance of urban design and its impacts on quality of life, environment, and economic investment” (The Arlington Urban Design Center, 2011).

Graduate students and deans from UTA’s School of Architecture and SUPA work closely with city planners on public and private projects in Arlington (The Arlington Urban Design Center, 2011). This center is mainly funded by the UTA and the City of Arlington. Students working in the design center at city hall, which is less than one mile from the UTA architecture building or the SUPA, provide free services to clients. To date, UTA students have been involved in more than 70 development projects.

Transforming from a temporary funded program (applied each year in order to acquire funding for next year) to a permanent funded center, the AUDC received mostly positive comments. Jim Parajon, Director of Community Planning and Development, said that “the center is having a positive impacts on urban development in Arlington.” Moore, one of the clients of the AUDC, expressed satisfaction with the students' work. “We told them the features we would like to have, to keep as many trees as possible and keep it environmentally friendly - really set an example,” he said. “They've done an extremely good job” (Derrick, 2011. p.1).

1.1.2 Service-Learning

As defined by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, service-learning is “a method under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community, and …is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students” (University of Massachusetts, 1996, p.3). In other research, “It is now 40 years since the launching of the first community design centers and the advocacy planning movement” (Hardin et al., 2006, p.2). The AUDC is an
academic-based service-learning program which is run by UTA and the City of Arlington. It also serves as an incubator for students to attain professional experience before graduation.

However, service-learning has its own limits in the real world. As Butin (2010) demonstrated that “specifically, I suggest that there are substantial pedagogical, political, and institutional limits to service-learning across the academy. These limits, moreover, are inherent to the service-learning movement as contemporarily theorized and enacted. As such, there may be a fundamental and unbridgeable gap between the rhetoric and reality of the aspirations of the present-day service-learning movement” (Butin, 2010, p.23).

1.2 Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the design and planning services of the Arlington Urban Design Center, the first design center established in North Texas, by assessing clients’ perspectives. The clients in this research are defined as private land owners, communities, city departments, institutions, investors and others who used the center’s design and planning services over a three-year period. The research also assesses the AUDC’s design and planning impacts from the view of other stakeholders (Arlington city planners, UTA deans, and student interns) in order to understand the varying viewpoints of the AUDC’s services.

Design centers, service-learning programs, and partnerships with academic institutions have become popular approaches to address various design and planning issues within the past decade (Rahaim, et. al., 2002). Service-learning can be applied to a wide range of educational programs. In the service-learning studio model, the teacher guides the students’ work with multiple people groups. In this way, students are introduced to real communities (Forsyth et al., 1999). However, there are limitations in the scholarly literature concerning their real benefits, and there is virtually no feedback from the communities’ side. Most sources seem to be reflecting on pedagogical issues from academic perspectives (Hardin et al, 2006).
The AUDC has gradually become more publicly recognizable, but still there is limited understanding of the role it has, and almost no input is taken from the real clients. The AUDC is a school based service-learning studio, but it is not a school curriculum. It is a co-operation organized by the University and the City. Students are generally instructed by city planners, while the UTA Deans visit the center periodically to give suggestions regarding the students’ work. So far, local news and awards ceremonies have only presented the City’s and the school’s perspectives on the AUDC.

1.3 Research Questions
The primary questions addressed by this study are:
1) What are the clients’ perspectives toward the AUDC’s design and planning services?
2) What are the clients’ design and planning professional service needs?
3) How do other stakeholders (Arlington city planners, UTA deans, and student interns) involved with the program feel about the benefits or impacts of the AUDC?

1.4 Definition of Terms
The following list contains some terms frequently used in this research.

Service-learning: As defined by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, service-learning is “a method under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community, and …is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students” (cited in University of Massachusetts 1996, p.3).

Client: Person, organization, governmental department or any unit that benefits from The Arlington Urban Design Center.

Stakeholder: “Individuals or organizations directly or indirectly affected by the implementation and results of social programs” (Rossi et al., 1993, p.2).
Urban Design: A definition of urban design has been offered in an article by Kevin Cambell and Robert Cowan in Planning (12 February 1999). Urban design can be considered to be "the art of shaping the interaction between, people and places, environment and urban form, and nature and built fabric, and influencing the processes which lead to successful villages, towns and cities."

City Planning: “City planning, at least in the United States, evolved from a mixture of public and private surveying and real estate development activities, coupled with the ad hoc application of civil engineering skills to problems of transportation, utilities, and other challenges of infrastructure development” (Rodwin, 2000, p.14).

Urban Planner: “Urban planners develop comprehensive plans and programs for the growth and overall revitalization of urban communities. They attempt to remedy urban problems, such as deteriorating business and residential areas, traffic congestion, inadequate parks and recreation facilities, shortages of suitable space for industrial development, and air pollution” (Arco, 1974, p.9).

Architecture: The art or science of building; specifically: the art or practice of designing and building structures, especially habitable ones (Merriam-Webster, 2011).

Landscape Architecture: The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) offers the following definition and application of the profession of landscape architecture: "Landscape architecture is the profession which applies artistic and scientific principles to the research, planning, design and management of both natural and built environments. Practitioners of this profession apply creative and technical skills, scientific, cultural and political knowledge in the planned arrangement of natural and constructed elements on the land with a concern for the stewardship, and conservation of natural, constructed and human resources. The resulting environments shall serve useful, aesthetic, safe and enjoyable purposes."

CLIDE: The Celebrating Leadership in Development Excellence Program.
1.5 Methodology

The methods of this research are primarily qualitative research methods (Taylor et al., 1997), program evaluation (Rossi et al., 1993), and mail and internet surveys (Dillman, 2000). The three methods of collecting information are noted as follows: secondary data collection, face to face interview, and passive observation.

Collecting secondary data is the first step of this research. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with two groups. One group was the clients, and the other was the stakeholders involved in the AUDC. Clients were randomly selected from projects list, which is generated from secondary data information biannually. Other stakeholders were selected based on their role in the AUDC. Additional information about the real influence to the area was obtained through passive observation of five constructed projects.

An interview protocol was developed to gather information about the respondents’ perceptions of the AUDC’s service. The first set of interview profile questions established the professional backgrounds of the respondents. The second set of in-depth interview questions (asked by the researcher) dealt with the individual’s perspectives of the AUDC’s design and planning service. For the purposes of this research, clients were required to answer more in-depth questions than the other stakeholders group.

The audio recordings of the interviews were logged by a professional transcriber. The transcripts were analyzed by question-by-question, and themes were generated from secondary data analysis, interview analysis, and passive observation analysis.
1.6 Significance and Limitations

Recognizing the limited research on service-learning’s centers’ impacts on communities, this research focused on feedbacks or perspectives from end users which could help stakeholders of service-learning to better understand this program. This research primarily focused on clients’ perspectives of the AUDC’s design and planning service in order to give better understanding of the growth and impacts of the center. Although the results cannot be generalized to broader population, they could likely be used to inform other existing design centers in North Texas or other cities which have the desire to establish a design center in the region.

There is also a set of limitations within this research that is important to recognize at this point. This research benefits from archives and the secondary data of the AUDC. By October, 2011, seventy-two projects were listed as completed projects by the AUDC. Secondary data information might not be precisely correct because some information is hard to document, such as, projects’ start time and finish time. Also, project categorization is determined by the author, who might present bias in terms of her academic background.

One other important issue which can be considered as both strength and limitation is that the researcher is working as a part-time graduate assistant for the center. As an insider working for the center, the author may present bias towards the AUDC and the design centers in general. Yet, this can also be considered as strength since the researcher is likely to have better understanding of the inner workings of the center as well as the data collected in this research.

1.7 Study Overview

The primary research objective of this thesis is to evaluate the AUDC’s design and planning services from clients’ perspectives. The format of this thesis is organized into five
major sections: 1) Introduction, 2) Literature review, 3) Research methodology, 4) Analysis and findings, and 5) Conclusions.

Chapters one through three explore the purpose of this research; the literature review explores the current understanding of the AUDC; and the research methods utilize data to reach the primary objective. Chapter four focuses on the analysis and findings of secondary data, face to face interview, and passive observations. Chapter five discusses the conclusions of the study, how it relates to the profession of landscape architecture, and the possible inquiries for future research.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of research and literature that concentrates the importance on design centers, especially in North Texas, service-learning and program evaluation research. The first part of the literature review begins with an introduction to design studios and centers’ history and its background and development. It focuses on North Texas Design Centers and The Arlington Urban Design Center. The following review of service-learning explains the influence held by the service-learning model used in design and planning schools. The last part of this chapter presents a review of the evaluation research, and provides a basic, entry-level synopsis of program evaluation.

2.2 The Concept and History of Design Studios and Centers

It has been forty-five years since the launch of the first community design centers and advocacy planning movement (Hardin et al., 2006). In 1963, George Raymond started a Community Planning Studio at Columbia University. Architecture and planning students were initially involved in the program as paid interns, and gained the right to work towards academic credit after student protesting in 1967. This studio is the first service-learning model in design school for higher education. Not long after, Harvard University established the Urban Field Service in 1969, and Carnegie-Mellon University started in Architecture in 2001. In 1967, as a community studio, North Carolina State University started an early school-based community assistance program. Ball State University opened the Community-Based Projects Program in 1969. In the following years, the community based service-learning studio became popular with most planning, architecture and landscape architecture schools (Hardin, et al, 2006).
Rahaim (2002) shows that there are two main reasons why urban design is once again receiving public attention. The first is that the development boom of the 1980’s and 1990’s generated increasing public concern regarding growth and the quality of development in cities. Another is that there is a growing general interest in the urban quality of life, and a more sophisticated understanding of this quality is becoming more necessary.

Based on Rahaim et al.’s (2002) classification of design centers, there are three basic models for design centers: One model is the design center that is totally housed within the city government. Another is the independent nonprofit design center. The third is a hybrid, funded by some combination of city government, universities, or other sources. Dallas City Design Studio, (2011) showed in their brochure, named Municipal Design Studios and Centers, that there are 12 exemplificative design studios and centers in North America. These design studios and centers are growths of municipal planning departments. Though each studio or center has different projects and responsibilities, each one represents the same goal, which works to ensure a higher quality of development, and a subsequent increase in quality of living for cities.

2.3 North Texas Design Centers

In North Texas, three design centers, The Arlington Urban Design Center (AUDC), Dallas City Design Studio (DCDS), and Oak Cliff Storefront Center (OCSC) have been established since 2009 to provide design and planning services to city departments, communities, institutions, and private owners. In 2011, the fourth Design Center in this region is also in the process of being established in Waco, TX. The following section gives brief profiles of these centers:

2.3.1 The Arlington Urban Design Center

The Arlington Urban Design Center was established in June 2009 through a partnership between the City of Arlington and the University of Texas at Arlington (the Arlington
2.3.2 The Dallas City Design Studio

The Dallas City Design Studio was formed in October of 2009 through a grant to the City from the Trinity Trust Foundation, funded by a generous gift from Deedie and Rusty Rose, to focus on neighborhoods and development along the Trinity (Dallas City Hall, 2011).

The Dallas City Design Studio, which is a different type of design center model, is a division of the City Manager’s Office and reports directly to the City Manager. The DCDS housed within City Hall, blends the broader design community with the City of Dallas. The purpose of the studio is to elevate the design-consciousness and culture of Dallas while working to balance social, economic, environmental, and design sustainability towards enhancing livability for all Dallas residents (Dallas City Design Studio, 2011). So far, from DCDS has received two awards:

1) The 2011 Texas APA “Project Planning Award” (TAPA, 2011)
2) Celebrating Leadership in Development Excellence (CLIDE) Program in Public Planning and Policy Category (NCTCOG, 2011).

2.3.3 The Oak Cliff Storefront Center

Wilkins (2011), Director of Training and Outreach of SUPA, gave a brief description of the OCSC center. The Oak Cliff Storefront Center program started in 2010, but ended in May of 2011 due to the lack of funding. The Oak Cliff Chamber provided space serving as a suite of offices located in a Methodist Hospital for student interns. SUPA was supporting two students and the Institute of SUPA supported two additional students. During that time, three projects were completed:
1) *Design improvement for the Beckley/Zang Crossroads*: This was an in depth look at the area with improved designs to make the area a more attractive location, and to make it more pedestrian friendly.

2) *A study of a parking situation on Jefferson Blvd*: This project included a survey of the current parking situation on Jefferson Blvd, and also suggested solutions for the problem.

3) *A study that focused on the Davis Street corridor*: This project is about how to make the street more accessible to pedestrians.

### 2.4 Importance of the Arlington Urban Design Center

#### 2.4.1 Background and History of the AUDC

The AUDC is located in the downtown area of the City of Arlington, Texas. The City of Arlington is experiencing a significant amount of development activity, primarily due to the opening of the new Cowboys Stadium, the success of the Texas Rangers, the expansion of the University of Texas at Arlington. In order to capitalize on this surge of reinvestment, the City’s Community Development and Planning Department collaborated with the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) School of Urban and Public Affairs (SUPA) to create a unique design and planning studio staffed with six graduate students studying architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning (the School of Architecture, UTA, 2011).

The AUDC was established in June 2009 through collaboration between the City of Arlington and UTA’s SUPA and School of Architecture. As ICMA (2011) said “Since opening in 2009, the center has taken on more than 70 projects among them are endeavors in the downtown area and near UT Arlington”. So far, the Arlington Urban Design Center has received national recognition for outstanding achievement in innovation. It received three awards in 2010 and 2011 (The Arlington Urban Design Center, 2011):
1) Winner of the 2011 Texas APA “Current Planning Award”.

2) The AUDC is the Winner of a 2011 Alliance for Innovation ‘Outstanding Achievement in Innovation’ Award.

“The Alliance for Innovation is an international network of progressive governments and partners committed to transforming local government by accelerating the development and dissemination of innovations” (Svara, 2011).

3) Winner of the 2010 Midwest Texas APA Planning Advocate Award

To date, more people recognize the AUDC through its service or local news. Jim Parajon, Director of Community Planning and Development, said the center is having a positive impact on urban development in Arlington. Like the City of Arlington (2011) said “in the Urban Design Center, participants see the importance of great planning and design and its impacts on quality of life and the environment.”

Gincy Thoppil, a planning manager with Arlington’s Community Development and Planning Department said “Arlington businesses and neighborhoods that were hesitant to initiate physical improvements due to the cost are now taking the center’s help in realizing their dreams,” she continues, “The Arlington Urban Design Center has proved to be a time-saving and cost-effective solution to various design obstacles.”(Carter, 2011).

One of the clients of the AUDC expressed satisfaction with the students’ work. “We told them the features we would like to have, to keep as many trees as possible and keep it environmentally friendly — really set an example,” he said. “They’ve done an extremely good job.” (Derrick, 2011)

In this section, research shows that there seems to be various resources explaining and supporting the significance of the aforementioned progress, but there is not up-to-date, detailed research on the potential impacts of the center.
2.4.2 Organization and Stakeholders

2.4.2.1 Organization

The AUDC was founded and organized by UTA’s SUPA and the School of Architecture. The AUDC’s office occupies about 300 square-feet of office space on the first floor of City Hall at 101 W. Abram St. in downtown Arlington, Texas. One manager from the City of Arlington Community Development and Planning Department is in charge of management. The director of the Community Development and Planning Department and two deans of SUPA and SOA give instruction periodically. The following management chart shows the relationship of each partner.

![AUDC Management Structure Diagram]

With the funding from the City of Arlington and UTA, as well as private donations, the AUDC provides design and planning services, free of charge to its clients. “The ability of the students to use their personal and school equipment and software significantly reduces the
amount of investment needed for the program and allows the Center to function with very low overhead" (The School of Architecture, 2011)

2.4.2.2 Stakeholders

As defined by Merriam-Webster (2011), “a stakeholder is one who is involved in or affected by a course of action.” To conduct their work effectively and contribute to the resolution of the issues at hand, evaluators must understand their relationships with the stakeholders as well as the relationships between the stakeholders.

In program evaluating process, “The following are some of the stakeholder groups that either directly participate or become interested in the evaluation process and its results: ● policymakers and decision makers ● program sponsors ● evaluation sponsors ● targets ● program managers and staff ● program competitors” (Rossi et al., 1993, p. 54). In this research, the City of Arlington, UTA, student interns, clients, and private donors are the main stakeholders of the AUDC.

2.5 Service-Learning

The AUDC, a design and planning service provider to Arlington local public departments, communities and residents, could be defined as a certain type of service-learning program which instructed by the SUPA, the Architecture School, and the City. As defined by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, service-learning is “a method under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community, and ...is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students” (University of Massachusetts 1996, p. 3).
2.5.1 History of Service-Learning


Before 1860, practical and technical education was initiated in some schools and universities. The United States Military Academy at West Point provided practical training in advanced mathematics, chemistry, technical drawing, and civil engineering. Nearby Rensselaer Institute in Troy, New York, and Michigan Agricultural College also became important experiments in the direction of practical and applied learning. After 1860, the Morrill Land Grand College Movement, the Philadelphia Centennial and Manual Training, the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893, and German influence are the impulses for higher education that stressed both practical and applied learning.

Another significant period for service-learning is the Progressive Era, a time in which many believed that informed and enlightened voters were the essential catalyst in remaking American democracy to suit the modern age (Copper, 1990). This marked the coming of age of the American university as an institution committed to service and distinct from the models of Great Britain or Germany. At around the beginning of 1900, colleges and universities became more prominent in community life as enrollment grew, and a greater percentage of young adult took part in higher education.

Social work provides another contribution to service-learning. Speck et al. (2004) demonstrated that “key events in American history-the Depression, the Civil Rights movement, and the War on Poverty-have helped social work maintain a clear conceptualization of service-learning and an understanding of its importance to society” (, p. 32). In contemporary era, “Service-learning as a direct linkage between the learner and the community in a service-oriented project, has been incorporated more heavily into the profession since the 1960s” (Speck et al., 2004, p. 32).
2.5.2 Service-Learning in Planning and Architecture

In planning and architecture schools, service-learning is typically utilized as a type of educational tool used in some classes to better expose students to professional life by addressing the service needs of the community involved. Harden et al. (2006) posited that “it is now 40 years since the launching of the first community design centers and the advocacy planning movement” (p. 2). During this forty year period, planning departments were typically located in school of architecture, and the early responses to the social challenges of the day involved students from both professions. While “architecture programs moved away from social engagement, planning programs moved away from architecture, an estrangement manifest in the lack of joint activity between the two departments. At some schools the planning department moved its affiliation to other academic units: at the University of California at Los Angeles for example, the Department of Urban Planning moved from the School of Architecture to the School of Public Policy and Social Research…The current lack of cooperation between the two professional programs is of concern to both” (Hardin et al, 2006, p. 11).

Service learning within planning schools and architecture schools has different influences. Some researchers suggest “service-learning has found a more congenial home in planning programs than in architecture departments. One factor is the tighter link between education and practice in the field of planning” (Hardin, et al., 2006, p. 7). However, architectural education does not have a continuous evolution toward as socially engaged of a practice as planning school does (Hardin et al, 2006).
2.6 Evaluation Research

2.6.1 Introduction

The goal of this research is to evaluate the AUDC’s planning and design services, which are a relatively new intervention in this region, from clients’ perspectives. Acquiring some knowledge about program evaluation could help researcher to understand this topic more precisely. As defined by Rossi and Freeman (2005, p. 5), “evaluation research is the systematic application of social research procedures for assessing the conceptualization, design, implementation, and utility of social intervention programs.” As Royse, Thyer, Padgett and Logan (2001) showed that “program evaluation is needed whenever new interventions are being tried and it is not known whether they will be as successful as former methods, or when there is a perception that a program could be improved- that it could become more productive or better in some way” (p. 12).

2.6.2 Evaluation Classification

As previously noted (Rossi et al., 1993), evaluation classification could be:

1) Analysis related to the conceptualization and design of interventions;

2) Monitoring of program implementation;

3) Assessment of program effectiveness and efficiency.

2.6.3 Qualitative Evaluation

Royse, et al., (2001) demonstrated that qualitative evaluation methods allowing individuals to examine those complex phenomena without relying on quantitative design are the advantages of qualitative research. They also stated “however, virtually all qualitative studies-regardless of their epistemological backdrop-share in common a few key ingredients: 1) a focus
on naturalistic inquiry in *situ*; 2) a reliance upon the researcher as the instrument of data collection; and 3) the reports emphasizing narrative over numbers” (p. 83.).

### 2.6.4 Summary

Chapter Two reviewed the literature and research regarding the specific Arlington Urban Design Center and design centers in the nation and in North Texas, as well as service-learning and program evaluation research. A brief history of the AUDC, design centers in North Texas and service learning were also included. The following section focuses on the methodology utilized in this research based on the research problems set by the Introduction and Literature Review.
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction
This chapter of the thesis focuses on the methodology of this research, which is primarily informed by qualitative research methods (Taylor et al., 1997), program evaluation (Rossi et al., 1993), and mail and internet surveys (Dillman, 2000). These three methods of data inquiry (systematic review of archival or secondary data, face-to-face interviews, and passive site observations) were adopted in this research to collect the information needed and to answer the questions set forth earlier in the research. Information was later gathered, analyzed, and synthesized in the form of qualitative summaries and descriptive statistics in order to evaluate the design and planning impacts of Arlington Urban Design Center. The following section explains in detail the research design as well as the data collection and analysis approaches followed in this research.

3.2 Research Design
Three methods of data inquiry were used in this research: Systematic review of archival and secondary data; face-to-face interviews; and passive site observations. The following sections elaborate the methodological underpinnings of this research.

3.2.1 Study Location
Arlington, where the AUDC is located, is a city in Tarrant County, Texas, (USA) within the Dallas–Fort Worth metropolitan area. It has a population of 365,438 (NCTCOG, 2011), and is the third largest city in the region, the seventh largest in Texas, and the fiftieth largest city in the U.S (The City of Arlington, 2011).
3.2.2 Study Population

Given the general definition, a stakeholder is an individual or organization directly or indirectly affected by the implementation and results of these social programs (Rossi et al., 1993). Rossi et al., (1993) demonstrated that in program evaluating processes, policymakers, decision makers, program sponsors, evaluation sponsors, targets, program managers and staff, and program competitors are some of the stakeholder groups that either directly participate or become interested in the evaluation process and its results. The City of Arlington, UTA, student interns, clients, and private donors are the main stakeholders of the AUDC. This research primarily focuses on evaluating the AUDC from the clients’ perspectives. As a result, clients are the main study population in this research. Other stakeholders, like city planners, UTA Deans, and student interns, are the supporting study population of this research.

3.2.3 Data Collection Methods

The secondary data was collected from the city’s original management files and represented information about AUDC projects. Each project shows project name, address, start time, finish time, status information, client’s name and contact information, project category, and cost estimates of service.

Two groups of people, the clients group of the AUDC and other supporting stakeholders group (Arlington city planners, UTA Deans, and student interns) were interviewed in this research. Face to face interview is the primary method used in interview procedure. A digital recorder was used to document whole dialogues for future analysis.

Passive site observations on five constructed sites are also utilized to document the design and planning outcome of some of the built projects. This is to provide an objective evaluation on the AUDC’s impact of real projects. A digital camera was used to document existing conditions of the five constructed projects.
Based on the secondary data collected from the city, this research examines data collected from four random samples from the clients’ group. If constructed projects were not in the four samples, they will be selected as additional interviews. As Rossi et al. (1993) demonstrated “random sampling consists of selecting units in an unbiased manner to form a representative sample from a population” (p 267). This research used Microsoft Excel 2010 software to randomly reorganize the secondary data by year, and select the best fit for interview samples. If one of the selected samples did not work, the researcher chose the next one on the list as a substitute. In the second group of interviews, this research focused on three Arlington city planners who are involved in the AUDC, two UTA deans who instructed periodically, and two student interns of The School of Planning and Architecture. An introductory set of profile questions was asked of each respondent to establish her/his level of experience. Following the profile questions, a set of in-depth interview questions were asked of them to spur discussion about their perspectives about the AUDC.

Passive observation of five constructed projects was also used in this thesis. Observation of these projects may give an objective view to the impacts of the AUDC’s design and planning services. Each constructed project was listed by name, address, category, site map, start time, finish time, client type, main final products provided by the AUDC, and current photos after construction.

The final portion of this thesis analyzed secondary archival data, interview transcriptions, and passive observation. Passive observations were addressed by comparing design layout images and final constructed photos.

3.2.3.1 Interview Protocol

Two groups of people were interviewed face to face in this research. The first group was the clients of the AUDC, and the second group was the Arlington city planners, UTA deans,
and student interns. Telephone inquiry was used when face to face interview were not possible. All interviews were digitally recorded by using an Aigo Digital Voice Recorder.

These digital files were then sent by email via www.yousendit.com to an audio transcript of cabbagetreesolutions.com. Transcripts were sent back to the researcher via e-mail as Microsoft Office Word documents.

Interview questions were designed to achieve the goal of the research and answer the three research questions. Dillman (2000) said “the goal of writing a survey question for self-administration is to develop a query that every potential respondent will interpret in the same way, be able to respond to accurately, and be willing to answer”.

This section analyzes the properties of the two groups used in the research, the clients of the AUDC’s projects, and Arlington City Planners, UTA deans and current student interns. This research primarily focused on the clients’ perception of the AUDC.

Face to face interviews were set up with the first group. Before each interview, project information was shown to each of the respondents. The information sheet included:

1) Project name
2) Category (planning, architecture, landscape architecture, Graphic design)
3) Start time
4) Finish time
5) Whether or not the project was constructed
6) Client type (public or private)
7) The main final products provided by the AUDC

After an introduction to the thesis, one set of profile questions was used to gauge participants’ level of design and planning experience was asked, including

1) What is your educational background?
2) What is your professional working experience?
3) How long have you been in your profession?
4) What is your relationship to the AUDC?

Regarding the second set of questions, which dealt with respondents’ perspectives, clients answered questions one through eight. Other stakeholders answered questions seven and eight:

1) How long have you been involved with design and planning projects in the City of Arlington?

2) What type of professional design and planning services do you typically acquire from external sources in regards to design and planning? Could you elaborate about the projects in the city of Arlington?

3) What are the specific services that you acquired from the AUDC? Please explain in detail.

4) Do you consider your project as architectural, landscape architectural, planning, or urban design? Please elaborate.

5) What kind of final product did the AUDC provide you with (Master plan, Perspectives, Detailed design, or Planning Document)?

6) Did the AUDC’s final products meet your project’s (or department’s) requirements? Please elaborate on the overall process and efficiency.

7) What is the AUDC, in your own words?

8) What are your thoughts on the future of design centers like the AUDC in North Texas?

3.3.3.2 Archival Data and Observations

In this research, the first step of the investigation was to prepare the projects’ archive, which was generated from the city of Arlington’s raw data. Managers of Arlington Urban Design Center update their data frequently in order to comprehensively cover and efficiently use this data. After getting these raw data inputs, a new project table was created which listed each
project’s main information: project name, start time, finish time, time frame, time range, client type, and project type.

Passive site observation was used to examine five constructed projects in the AUDC since 2009. This was done by employing walk-through observation and taking photos. This method was used to generate objective perspectives about the AUDC’s design service. Each project had basic information which was collected from archival data, and the observation dates and times were also shown in the reports.

3.3 Research Procedure

The first step of this inquiry is to create a complete data archive of all the projects the AUDC has finished since 2009 by using a quantitative method to document and categorize them. Each project lists information about design year, start time, finish time, time frame, client type, and project type.

The second part of this inquiry is the face to face interview, which is also accessed by the qualitative research method to emerge themes from interview data. “The phrase qualitative methodology refers, in the broadest sense, to research that produces descriptive data: People’s own written or spoken words and observable behavior” (Taylor et al., 1997, p.7). Qualitative research emphasizes the importance of looking at variables in the natural setting in which they are found. Interaction between variables is important, as well. Detailed data is gathered through open-ended questions that provide direct quotations. Jacob (1988) thought that the interviewer is an integral part of the investigation. Smith (1983) thought this differs from quantitative research, which attempts to gather data by objective methods in order to provide information about relations, comparisons, and predictions, in an attempt to remove the investigator from the investigation.
In this research, Interviews were conducted with two separate groups: Clients and other supporting stakeholders (city planners, UTA deans, and student interns). Each group answered a set of profile questions and a set of in-depth interview questions.

In addition to conducting a face to face interview, passive observations were used in this research. Passive observation occurs when the individual conducting the observation quietly observes and records the subject’s activity. Passive observation is advantageous because it minimizes the intrusion which the user experiences (Giacoppo, 2001). This research uses digital camera to document the finished projects and to show the pictures which could be compared with the final layouts provided by the AUDC. The comparison could a give more objective viewpoint to the AUDC’s design and planning service.

3.4 Analysis Procedure

The analysis of the data is done in three steps. Archival data analysis, which is the first part of analysis, operates by using quantitative research method and could give a better understanding about general project information the AUDC has amassed. Interview analysis follows the second step, the qualitative method. Profile interview questions and in-depth interview questions are asked and analyzed separately. Analysis tables or charts of profile interview data, which could briefly illustrate interviewees’ background, are used in this research. Emerging themes of people’s perspectives toward the AUDC’s design and planning service are acquired through qualitative research methods based on the research objectives. The last step, passive site observation analysis, is used to find the AUDC’s service impacts.

The three portions of analysis are analyzed separately, but in final findings they are combined and compared with each other in order to develop and generate concepts. From these concepts, key elements were found to develop final conclusions.
3.5 Significance and Limitations

This research used the qualitative research method. One criticism of this method is that the investigator is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, and the research is subject to human error and bias. There is also a set of limitations within this research that is important to recognize at this point. This research benefits from archives and secondary data from the AUDC. Secondary data might not be precisely correct because some information is hard to document, such as, projects' start time and finish time. In addition, project categorization is determined by the author, who might present bias in terms of her academic background. As an insider working for the center, the author may present bias towards AUDC and the design centers in general. Yet, this can also be considered as strength since the researcher is likely to have better understanding of the inner workings of the center as well as the data collected in this research.

3.6 Summary

Secondary archival data, face to face interview, and passive site observation are the methods which were applied to this research to evaluate the impacts of the AUDC’s design and planning services. The strategies and techniques used to analyze the collected data are identified in this chapter. The following chapter gives findings based on the procedures described in this chapter.
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on analyzing the information of the project from secondary data, face to face interviews, and passive site observations. First, the secondary data analysis summarized project profiles by using descriptive statistics and frequencies. Following this, the interviews with the clients and other stakeholders were analyzed. This research also analyzed findings ranging from profile questions to in-depth questions. Themes that emerged from in-depth analysis are also reported in this chapter. The final part of the analysis reviewed site observation data collected from constructed projects.

4.2 Analysis of the Secondary Data

Systematic review of archival and secondary data allowed the researcher to have a better understanding of the volume and scope of the work accomplished by AUDC. A project profile review also provided researchers with names and contact information of potential informants.

Viewable in the tables below (see table 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 below), the information from the secondary data was classified by public (blue color) or private (white color), and included each project list, its name, start date, finish date, time length, time range, client type, construction, and project type (categorized by the researcher).

By collecting secondary data from the City of Arlington, this research created tables for the projects which have already been completed by AUDC since 2009. According to the following record of work, AUDC has done a total of seventy-two projects under the instruction of city planners and UTA deans. Forty-two percent of them were private and fifty-eight percent
were public. They included: Twenty-two planning projects, twenty-two architecture projects, twenty-four landscape architecture projects and four graphic design projects. Each spent an average of two months per project within the past three years. Only seven percent of these projects were fully constructed. The following section will briefly look at these details.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Projects in Financial Year 2009</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Finish Date</th>
<th>Time Length</th>
<th>Time Range</th>
<th>Client Type</th>
<th>Constructed or Not</th>
<th>Project Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gas Drilling Visual Screening Research</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>7/11/2009</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Super Graphics Research</td>
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<td>7/22/2009</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Gateway Sign Design for various locations in the City</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>7/30/2009</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Parkview Addition - redevelopment scenario (conceptual visualization)</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>9/29/2009</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Downtown Farmer’s Market on Front Street - Facade Improvement</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>8/6/2009</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Entry Feature Design for St. Claire Woods neighborhood</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>9/21/2009</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LA</td>
<td></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Façade Improvement for Main Street business</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>9/21/2009</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Fish Creek Neighborhood Planning Process</td>
<td>6/30/2009</td>
<td>Sept 2010</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1~3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Streetscape Design - Collins Street (Rd to Six Flags - Abram)</td>
<td>7/16/2009</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Streetscape Design - Abram Street (Collins to Cooper)</td>
<td>7/29/2009</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1~3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Iconic Design Context</td>
<td>8/3/2009</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1~3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Mixed Use (retail + MF) building on Lampe Street</td>
<td>8/17/2009</td>
<td>04/11/1010</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>&gt;6</td>
<td>Private</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>2010 NBA All Star Tree Planting Program</td>
<td>8/21/2009</td>
<td>10/21/2009</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1~3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Bob Duncan Recreation Center (pavement extension &amp; park planning)</td>
<td>8/26/2009</td>
<td>9/6/2010</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>3~6</td>
<td>Public</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Mixed use(restaurant + retail) building on Randol Mill</td>
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<td>9/9/2009</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1~3</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Monument Sign Design for Municipal Airport</td>
<td>9/16/2009</td>
<td>10/11/2009</td>
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<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Col. Neel Keary Memorial context design</td>
<td>9/21/2009</td>
<td>11/30/2009</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1~3</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>NHP Community Center Project</td>
<td>10/12/2009</td>
<td>12/1/2009</td>
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<td>1~3</td>
<td>Private</td>
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<td>TCPR Townhome Project</td>
<td>10/13/2009</td>
<td>12/1/2009</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1~3</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>First United Methodist Church - Division Streetscape and Signs</td>
<td>10/14/2009</td>
<td>2/17/2010</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3~6</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Start Date</td>
<td>Finish Date</td>
<td>Time Length</td>
<td>Time Range</td>
<td>Client Type</td>
<td>Constructed or Not</td>
<td>Project Type</td>
</tr>
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<td>01/25/10</td>
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<td>&lt;1</td>
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<td>Ryan Dodson's 300 E Abram - façade improvement</td>
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<td>5/6/2010</td>
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<td>3-6</td>
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<td>unclear</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>2/22/2010</td>
<td>3/4/2010</td>
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<td>Animal Service Center - development of adjacent vacant parcel</td>
<td>3/30/2010</td>
<td>7/28/2010</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
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<td>Water Utilities - Fort Worth's road alignment study along Lake Arlington</td>
<td>3/30/2010</td>
<td>9/29/2010</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>Fire Station #9 (3D model)</td>
<td>4/1/2010</td>
<td>6/28/2010</td>
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<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>7/1/2010</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Convention Center - covered walkway</td>
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<td>7/28/2010</td>
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<td>1-3</td>
<td>Public</td>
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<td>LA</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Planning exercise - American Campus Communities</td>
<td>7/29/2010</td>
<td>8/16/2010</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Strategic Planning - Urban Design Section for Comprehensive Plan/Redevelopment scenarios for Comprehensive Plan</td>
<td>8/12/2010</td>
<td>9/2/2010</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Junior League</td>
<td>9/22/2010</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Courtyard Villa</td>
<td>10/1/2010</td>
<td>10/15/2010</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Holy Rosary Catholic</td>
<td>10/1/2010</td>
<td>10/12/2010</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Champions Trail at Richard Greene Linear Park</td>
<td>10/18/2010</td>
<td>10/29/2010</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Do Jang</td>
<td>10/18/2010</td>
<td>11/17/2010</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Subway</td>
<td>10/25/2010</td>
<td>11/10/2010</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>NSP Greene Home #1, #2</td>
<td>11/9/2010</td>
<td>2/27/2011</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Lincoln Square: Swamp Daddy's/Ross, Habanero's, Steinmart Entry</td>
<td>11/9/2010</td>
<td>2/7/2011</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>CVB Christmas Market</td>
<td>11/29/2010</td>
<td>12/6/2010</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Coke Pedestrian Bridge</td>
<td>12/7/2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Projects in Financial Year 2011</td>
<td>Start Date</td>
<td>Finish Date</td>
<td>Time Length</td>
<td>Time Range</td>
<td>Client Type</td>
<td>Constructed or Not</td>
<td>Project Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Convention Center North Entry and West Entry Wall</td>
<td>1/11/2011</td>
<td>3/1/2011</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>South Cooper YMCA</td>
<td>1/18/2011</td>
<td>4/9/2011</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MOT Court Line</td>
<td>1/19/2011</td>
<td>3/1/2011</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Theater Arlington Façade</td>
<td>2/14/2011</td>
<td>2/22/2011</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4th Floor MOT: Action Center, Wellness Clinic</td>
<td>2/16/2011</td>
<td>5/16/2011</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mission Arlington Green Wall</td>
<td>2/28/2011</td>
<td>3/15/2011</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>TDP Cross Sections</td>
<td>3/14/2011</td>
<td>3/22/2011</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>First Christian Church Community Garden</td>
<td>3/14/2011</td>
<td>4/5/2011</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Legends Hotel</td>
<td>3/14/2011</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Rolling Meadows Demographic Analysis</td>
<td>3/30/2011</td>
<td>4/12/2011</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>GM Demographic Data</td>
<td>5/2/2011</td>
<td>5/13/2011</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>308 Pecan Storage Facility</td>
<td>5/17/2011</td>
<td>6/15/2011</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>GM Physical and Market Inventory</td>
<td>5/24/2011</td>
<td>8/15/2011</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Front and Center Public Plaza</td>
<td>5/31/2011</td>
<td>8/4/2011</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Briarwood Neighborhood Entry Design</td>
<td>6/15/2011</td>
<td>9/15/2011</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>VNT Case Studies</td>
<td>7/5/2011</td>
<td>7/8/2011</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Compu Plan Assistance</td>
<td>7/5/2011</td>
<td>7/12/2011</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>UDC Business Façade Logo</td>
<td>8/15/2011</td>
<td>9/8/2011</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Sanford House Parking Lot</td>
<td>9/7/2011</td>
<td>9/9/2011</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.1 Client Type

This particular category of information was collected by the City, depending on the private or public nature of the work. In the Client Type category, there are thirty private projects and forty-two public projects (see the table below).

Table 4.4 Client Type Number and Percentage Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009 (6 months)</th>
<th>2010 (12 months)</th>
<th>2011 (9 months)</th>
<th>Overall (2009-2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>10 / 45%</td>
<td>11 / 46%</td>
<td>9 / 35%</td>
<td>30 / 42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>12 / 55%</td>
<td>13 / 54%</td>
<td>17 / 65%</td>
<td>42 / 58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22 / 100%</td>
<td>24 / 100%</td>
<td>26 / 100%</td>
<td>72 / 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.1 Client Type Percentage Analysis

Results of the Client Type number and percentage analysis show that the AUDC did more public projects than private projects. The private projects’ percentage decreased in 2011, which was likely influenced by some economic factors.
4.2.2 Project Type

Project Type is a category created by the researcher to understand the volume of work that was related to different professional disciplines. AUDC provides planning, architecture, landscape architecture and graphic design services. In order to have a better understanding of the work completed by the center, further research was conducted on the archive data by classifying the projects based on their primary focus. Projects were divided into four groups to respond to categories used in design firms. These groups included: Planning, architecture, landscape architecture and graphic design. Table 4.5 shows that the overall percentages of planning, architecture, and landscape architecture projects were almost equal. Another finding was that since the start of 2011, AUDC began to do graphic design, which resulted in new opportunities for the center. After providing three years of design and planning services and three awards from Texas and the nation, AUDC is gaining greater recognition. Graphic design may soon be a new design area of AUDC, causing students knowledgeable about graphic design to be of great use to the center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009 (6 months)</th>
<th>2010 (12 months)</th>
<th>2011 (9 months)</th>
<th>Overall (2009-2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>9 / 41%</td>
<td>5 / 21%</td>
<td>8 / 31%</td>
<td>22 / 30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>7 / 32%</td>
<td>10 / 42%</td>
<td>5 / 19%</td>
<td>22 / 30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape Architecture</td>
<td>6 / 27%</td>
<td>9 / 37%</td>
<td>9 / 35%</td>
<td>24 / 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic</td>
<td>0 / 0%</td>
<td>0 / 0%</td>
<td>4 / 15%</td>
<td>4 / 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22 / 100%</td>
<td>24 / 100%</td>
<td>26 / 100%</td>
<td>72 / 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.3 Time Range

The above tables show that projects that take between one and three months were the most common. Projects that took less than one month were the second most common. The projects which took longer more than six months only made up the 1.5% of the overall work completed by AUDC. Additionally, there is no forecasted project in 2011 that will be longer than three months. Analysis of these findings suggested that the efficiency of the center improved, because project sizes and scope handled by the center have shifted to smaller projects over the years (see table 4.6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009 (6 months)</th>
<th>2010 (12 months)</th>
<th>2011 (9 months)</th>
<th>Overall (2009-2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>9 / 41%</td>
<td>4 / 16.5%</td>
<td>3 / 12%</td>
<td>16 / 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1mon</td>
<td>1 / 4.5%</td>
<td>10 / 42%</td>
<td>10 / 38%</td>
<td>21 / 29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1~3mon</td>
<td>8 / 36%</td>
<td>6 / 25%</td>
<td>13 / 50%</td>
<td>27 / 37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3~6mon</td>
<td>3 / 14%</td>
<td>4 / 16.5%</td>
<td>0 / 0%</td>
<td>7 / 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;6mon</td>
<td>1 / 4.5%</td>
<td>0 / 0%</td>
<td>0 / 0%</td>
<td>1 / 1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22 / 100%</td>
<td>24 / 100%</td>
<td>26 / 100%</td>
<td>72 / 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings from the above tables show that projects that took one to three months represent the highest percentage, and projects shorter than one month held the second highest percentage. The projects which took time more than six month held the lowest percentage at 1.5%. In addition, there is no project in 2011 that is scheduled to spend more than three months. One reason for this could be that in order to improve the efficiency and reduce the cost of each project, the city manager shortened the time range of each project.

4.3 Analysis of the Interviews

The research began by sorting units of data into groups in order to construct categories or themes representative of recurrent patterns (Merriam, 1998). “These categories or themes are ‘concepts indicated by the data (and not the data itself)...In short, conceptual categories and properties have a life apart from the evidence that gave rise to them’” (Merriam, 1998, p. 179).

To achieve the goal of evaluating AUDC’s urban and planning services from the client’s perspectives, the research involved interviews with nineteen people. They were subsequently divided into two groups: The clients group and the other stakeholders group who are related to
AUDC by workforce or institutional ties. The data was examined in two separate ways: By profile information analysis across all interviewees and by individual analysis.

4.3.1 Respondent Profile

The researcher interviewed twelve clients, three city planners, two UTA deans of SUPA and SOA, and two student interns of the AUDC. G1 to G12 is the group of clients. S1 to S7 is the group of other stakeholders. The following, table 4.7, shows profile information of respondents.

Table 4.7 Respondent Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Educational Background</th>
<th>Professional Working Experience</th>
<th>How long in profession</th>
<th>Relationship to AUDC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>Bachelor of Science and Architecture</td>
<td>architect,</td>
<td>25 years</td>
<td>public project client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>Bachelor of Architecture</td>
<td>city staff architect</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G3</td>
<td>Bachelor of Accounting</td>
<td>accounting</td>
<td>33 years</td>
<td>private project client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G4</td>
<td>Bachelor of Business Administration with a minor in economics</td>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>36 years</td>
<td>private project client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G5</td>
<td>Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Technology</td>
<td>aviation companies</td>
<td>34 years</td>
<td>public project client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G6</td>
<td>Bachelor of Business Administration</td>
<td>city staff and director</td>
<td>24 years</td>
<td>public project client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>Bachelor of Architecture, Master in Urban Planning</td>
<td>planner</td>
<td>8.5 years</td>
<td>public project client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G8</td>
<td>some college</td>
<td>city staff and manager</td>
<td>23 or 24 years</td>
<td>public project client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G9</strong></td>
<td>some college in psychology</td>
<td>manager of a call center</td>
<td>private project client</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>family business owner</td>
<td>17 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G10</strong></td>
<td>Bachelor of Art in Architecture</td>
<td>private consultant firm</td>
<td>public project client</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master in Planning</td>
<td>planner</td>
<td>15 years in planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G11</strong></td>
<td>Bachelor in Business Ministration,</td>
<td>planner</td>
<td>public project client</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master of City and Regional Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G12</strong></td>
<td>Some college of Math</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>private project client</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>S1</strong></td>
<td>Master of Regional Planning</td>
<td>planner</td>
<td>founder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S2</strong></td>
<td>Bachelor of Architecture</td>
<td>architect</td>
<td>founder, previous manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master of City Planning</td>
<td>planner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S3</strong></td>
<td>Bachelor of Art History</td>
<td>planner</td>
<td>current manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master of City and Regional Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S4</strong></td>
<td>PHD in Planning</td>
<td>professor</td>
<td>founder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S5</strong></td>
<td>Bachelor of Political Science</td>
<td>architect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master of Architecture</td>
<td>academic professor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S6</strong></td>
<td>Bachelor of Geography</td>
<td>digital geographer</td>
<td>planning intern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master of Planning</td>
<td>AUDC planning intern</td>
<td>7-8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S7</strong></td>
<td>Bachelor of Architecture</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>planning intern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master of Planning</td>
<td>AUDC planning intern</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following figure shows the basic analysis of clients’ profile information. This table shows that all private project clients do not have any design or design related background.
However, both public clients who have design background and the clients do not have design background have design and planning needs from the AUDC.

![Figure 4.4 Clients' Profile](image)

4.3.2 In-depth Interview

This segment provides an overview of the respondents’ perceptions according to each interview question concerning design and planning service of AUDC. Clients’ and the other Stakeholders’ perspectives are grouped separately under each segment. Since the focus of the research was to assess the clients’ perspectives, they were required to answer all of the eight questions. Other stakeholders were only required to answer the final two questions. See the appendix for a brief summary of in-depth interview questions.

4.3.2.1 Time Involved with Design and Planning Projects

This question focused on people’s actual involvement in design and planning service in the City of Arlington. Among the twelve client respondents, four of them said the project they participated in with AUDC was the first time they were involved with AUDC. The other eight clients have been involved with City of Arlington design and planning services since before AUDC was established in 2009. The average involvement of the clients’ group is approximately 5.6 years. Among these clients, nine have been involved for less than ten years, two have been
involved for ten to nineteen years, and one has been involved in the group for more than twenty years. This analysis showed that in the past ten years, the number of Arlington local people who were involved in city’s design and planning projects has increased. This also could imply that the City has a higher requirement for design and planning.

Table 4.8 Time Involved with Design and Planning Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Time involved with design and planning projects in the City of Arlington</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>0.5 year, first time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G3</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G4</td>
<td>11 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G5</td>
<td>23.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G6</td>
<td>0.6 year, first time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>4 years, after got here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G8</td>
<td>0.5 year, first time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G9</td>
<td>1.5 years first time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G10</td>
<td>a few years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G11</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G12</td>
<td>3 or 4 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Blue: public project /White: private project

4.3.2.2 Design and Planning Service Acquired from External Sources

In the City of Arlington, public departments, private property owners, and communities have different design and planning needs from the City of Arlington. In the interviews, respondents expressed their design and planning needs from external sources as following: Architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, design concept, master plan, retrofit of old
building, all of the construction-related services, civil engineering, professional consultants for planning documents, and estimates of footage. As the following clients state:

“...And back 12 or 14 years ago, they redid the street and I asked them to let me put in the flower beds on the side and that was difficult. They didn’t want to change and it took some pushing but they finally agreed to let me put in some flower beds…” (G2).

“...we started with several engineers most of the time. Sometimes we’ll start with architects for planning purposes but usually, we’ll start with the civil engineer, go through the engineering layout phase and then bring in the architect on the design side” (G3).

“So typically, we’ll use outside services consultants that we haven’t used -- and then in addition to other consultants for other projects, we have had to use them in a few years” (G10).

“One of them was a new design concept for a monumental design with solar powered lighting at the Arlington Municipal Airport...And then we also worked with the design center for doing renderings of a design that we did in the house” (G1).

4.3.2.3 Specific Services Acquired from the Arlington Urban Design Center

Each client came to AUDC to acquire the specific service they need based on their projects’ requirements. Some requirements come from the City and some come from clients’ desire to change their existing project’s condition. Twelve clients-interviewees state that their specific service demanded architectural design, landscape design, interior design, concept design, market analysis, visual pictures, elevation, site plan, 3d rendering, streetscape, site plan, and graphic design (see Appendix A).

Public clients from the City of Arlington’s departments expressed their needs about visual or graphic design, streetscape, or elevation design:

“We really wanted to have the urban design center help in terms of give us as a kind of actor pictures of what an area could look like. So when we’re talking about redevelopment, people can visually see what type of building could look like in the future” (G10).
“The urban center provided us with various plans that the city would like to see in place concerning utilization of streetscape to make it tie in with what they want to develop and what they’ve done across the street” (G2).

One private project client stated the reason why he needed AUDC’s design services: “Specifically from the design center, we used site planning services, a little bit of architectural services” (G3). “Mainly the elevation is what we need it to provide to the planning and zoning department” (G4).

Although there is no interior design service in AUDC’s mission (the Arlington Urban Design Center, 2011), there are two city departments which do have these requirements. “Well, again, just to -- like I said in my answer earlier, to pull those resources to see exactly what could be done in that space” (G8). “They provided some recommendations about how to reduce the line or how to make it more customer-friendly and that's what they provided there for us” (G6).

“…Specific services, I wanted them to redo landscaping for me, to give me an idea of the landscaping because it’s such a hurdle, you know, such a problem here....” (G9).

In terms of the interview information generated from clients’ real needs, there seems to be a variation. When this was compared to AUDC’s list of items, they respond as a design and planning service provider. The Design Center provided urban design solutions and innovative ideas and presented before and after images. The following are the six design and planning services the AUDC can provide:

- Business Facade Improvements
- Development of Neighborhood Plans
- Design Concepts for Civic Spaces and Buildings
- Infill/Redevelopment Designs
- Green Building Demonstrations
4.3.2.4 Project Category

Projects are usually categorized by professionals in planning, urban design, architecture, landscape architecture or interior design. However, it was found that clients categorized projects differently. Within the twelve projects, only four of them are considered to be in one single category, the others are combination of different types. This variation between designers and clients might be caused by their understanding of planning, urban design, architecture and landscape architecture. In other words, category variation might bring insightful feedback to designers, which would allow them to operate in a broader way.

Table 4.9 Project Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Clients’ Category</th>
<th>Researcher’s Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>architecture</td>
<td>architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>landscape architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G3</td>
<td>urban design, architecture, landscape architecture</td>
<td>architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G4</td>
<td>urban design, architecture, landscape architecture</td>
<td>architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G5</td>
<td>architecture and landscape</td>
<td>landscape architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G6</td>
<td>interior design</td>
<td>Interior design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>transportation plan, urban design</td>
<td>planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G8</td>
<td>architecture, interior</td>
<td>architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G9</td>
<td>urban design</td>
<td>architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G10</td>
<td>planning for sure, a little bit of everything, combination</td>
<td>planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G11</td>
<td>architecture, landscape architecture, urban design</td>
<td>planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G12</td>
<td>Combination of all</td>
<td>Landscape architecture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2.5 Did Final Design of the AUDC Met Clients’ Requirements?

All of the respondents thought AUDC’s final products met their requirements. Five of them were very pleased with the design center’s work (see table 4.10).
Table 4.10 Did Final Design of the AUDC Met Clients’ Requirements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>meet project’s requirement or not?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>definitely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G3</td>
<td>yes, very helpful, would use again, recommend to other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G4</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G5</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G6</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>yes, definitely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G8</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G9</td>
<td>yes, surprised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G10</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G11</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G12</td>
<td>yes, very much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2.6 The Arlington Urban Design Center in Your Own Words

Nineteen respondents answered this question. When respondents were asked what AUDC is, they described the center mainly from the point of its organization and contributions. “collaboration,” “tool,” “user-friendly,” “free service,” and “incubator” were the key words generated from interviews. It was found that clients think about AUDC more from an aspect of direct economic benefits, while the other stakeholders have more concerns regarding the center about its partnership or collaboration.

Table 4.11 What is the Arlington Urban Design Center?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>what AUDC is in your own words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.11- Continued

| S5 | partnership, dedicated to improving the quality of life. |
| S6 | collaboration, design related products, free of charge |
| S7 | Joint program, free of charge |
| G1 | very impressive; students are interactive with each other. Age of student with maturity of level; |
| G2 | a tool |
| G3 | user-friendly |
| G4 | service (cooperation), small business can’t afford a professional, an asset for the city, |
| G5 | incubator |
| G6 | collaboration, provide planning services |
| G7 | unique entity (add to the community). City staff can do but doesn't have time to do, different skill set, save client's money, open their mind, strong benefit, move Arlington forward. |
| G8 | it's a group of energetic, dedicated people |
| G9 | a place consumers can to, have vision clients don't have, comfortable and easy place |
| G10 | partnership, free service, |
| G11 | service provider for community, |
| G12 | collaboration, |

Listed below are direct quotes from the interview subjects:

“...University-city partnership dedicated to improving the quality of life in the city for all the city residents enhancing economic value and making the expertise of the university available to the Arlington community” (S5).

“I think the urban design center is a tool that's available to property owners that want to remodel or to build new facilities particularly in the downtown Arlington area where there is a need for better planning in more cohesive design” (G2).

“Well, on a personal note, I would say that the design center is very user-friendly... I've been doing this for, you know, 10 years now and it definitely helped get our project off the ground and it was very beneficial to us” (G3).

“In my words -- other than the fact that it's a good partnership between the city and the university, I think it helps to provide a service that we wouldn't normally be able to provide to
not only businesses but neighborhoods in the city. And so the fact that it's free is very helpful “(G10).

“Oh, gosh. It would be an incubator for professional people, you know, it caters for students to become professionals and an opportunity for them to do an internship right at the -- and with the city projects” (G5).

4.3.2.7 Future of Design Centers in North Texas

Regarding the future of design centers in North Texas, all twelve of the clients’ thoughts were optimistic, as long as cities had enough funding to cover these partnerships with college students.

“It just seems like a great idea and something that should be expanded if possible and this is a unique location because Arlington is very interested in having the urban design and the rejuvenation of downtown accelerated in having that design centers. It's gonna help that” (G3).

“I think there’s -- it would be wonderful to see that in more places. I mean, to me it's a valuable resource. It benefits both the student and the department. It's very cost effective, firstly (G5).

“Obviously, without the funding it won't succeed….But I think it has a really strong future. I think it's going to be around for a long time and I think the -- it's also a great representation of the partnership between UTA and the city. And I think that partnership is only growing on many different levels. So I think that too will help it, you know, succeed” (G7).

“I don't know how many people or businesses are aware of the service that's available. If the community is not aware of it, it probably won't last” (G9).

“I hope they catch on and get used more. I think it's a valuable service that can be provided; the free part is always good… (G11).
The other stakeholders group also has positive view on the future of design centers of North Texas. But they thought that the success of this kind of service model should have some preconditions, such as school and city partnership, funding. One of them stated that:

“I think that centers like ours will continue to flourish. It takes a lot of effort and it takes a lot of commitment on the part of the city to undertake this. I’m not sure maybe cities will be able to do that. In North Texas, although I do think that it’s possible because of the success of our center that some of the larger cities could see this is a real opportunity. Maybe they will partner with the city of Arlington design centers and grow even further or to maybe have sort of another sort of [00:09:28] [Inaudible] in the center maybe in the North Texas region so I can see that happen (S1).

One respondent mentioned other types of design centers could be successful: “…Like any other city…they don't have a university in their city, like they don't have a university to have planning and architecture that's like a very good school. So it is like the model that Arlington is doing probably will not gonna work in other cities in North Texas... So these cities they may consider to use the university as a resource as far as like there are other types of design centers maybe they could hire students to work as part time but not really like a close relationship with the university but they could have their own design center. Like Dallas Studio they have students as interns working there but they don't have the formal established relationship with the university. So that could work as its own design center in-house” (S7).

Both the client-group and other stakeholders group hold positive views regarding the future of design centers. This could demonstrate that design centers could be developed well to fit different models in terms of each city’s different pre-existing conditions.
4.4 Analysis of Passive Observations

4.4.1 Introduction

Passive observation occurs when the person conducting the observation quietly observes and records the user activity. Passive observation has the advantage that it minimizes the intrusion which the user experiences (Giacoppo, 2001). In this research, passive observations of constructed projects provided another method to project views of AUDC’s design and planning service impacts. Observations were conducted by walking around the site and taking photos of the design and recording key points described in the methodology section.

4.4.2 Passive Observations

Observation 1

1) Project name: Downtown Farmer’s Market on Front Street - Facade Improvement

2) Address: 215 E Front Street, Arlington, TX 76001

3) Category: Architecture

4) Site map:

![Figure 4.5 Downtown Farmer's Market Site Map](image)

Figure 4.5 Downtown Farmer’s Market Site Map
5) Start time: Unclear
6) Finished time: 8/6/2009
7) Constructed or not: Yes
8) Client type (public or private): Private
9) The main final products provided by AUDC:

Figure 4.6 Downtown Farmer’s Market Final Layout
(The City of Arlington Project Archives, 2011)
10) Current photos after construction:

Figure 4.7 Downtown Farmer's Market Site Photo
Observation 2

1) Project name: Entry Feature Design for St. Claire Woods neighborhood

2) Address: 2106 Saint Claire Drive, Arlington, TX

3) Category: Landscape architecture

4) Site map:

![Site Map](image)

Figure 4.8 Entry Feature Design for St. Claire Woods neighborhood Site Map

5) Start time: Unclear

6) Finished time: 9/21/2009

7) Constructed or not: Yes

8) Client type (public or private): Private
9) The main final products provided by AUDC:

Figure 4.9 Entry Feature Design for St. Claire Woods neighborhood Final Layout
(The City of Arlington Project Archives, 2011)

10) Current photos after construction:

Figure 4.10 Entry Feature Design for St. Claire Woods neighborhood Site Photo
Observation 3

1) Project name: Colonel Neel E. Kearby Memorial context design

2) Address: 101 East Abram Street, Arlington, TX

3) Category: landscape architecture

4) Site map:

![Colonel Neel E. Kearby Memorial Context Design Site Map](image)

Figure 4.11 Colonel Neel E. Kearby Memorial Context Design Site Map

5) Start time: 9/21/2009

6) Finished time: 11/18/2009

7) Constructed or not: Yes

8) Client type (public or private): Private
9) The main final products provided by AUDC:

![Diagram of Colonel Neel E. Kearby Memorial Context Design Final Layout](image)

Figure 4.12 Colonel Neel E. Kearby Memorial Context Design Final Layout
(The City of Arlington Project Archives, 2011)

10) Current photos after construction:

![Current photos after construction](image)

Figure 4.13 Colonel Neel E. Kearby Memorial Context Design Site Photo
Observation 4

1) Project name: 300 E Abram - façade improvement
2) Address: 300 E Abram, Arlington, TX
3) Category: Architecture
4) Site map:

Figure 4.14 300 E. Abram Site Map

5) Start time: 1/28/2010
6) Finished time: 5/6/2010
7) Constructed or not: Yes
8) Client type (public or private): Private
9) The main final products provided by AUDC:

Figure 4.15 300 E. Abram Final Layout
(The City of Arlington Project Archives, 2011)

10) Current photos after construction:

Figure 4.16 300 E. Abram Site Photo
Observation 5

1) Project name: Randol Mill Park West Pedestrian Amenities

2) Address: Oakwood Ln, Arlington, TX

3) Category: Landscape architecture

4) Site map:

![Figure 4.17 Randol Mill Park West Pedestrian Amenities Site Map](image)

5) Start time: 2/22/2010

6) Finished time: 3/4/2010

7) Constructed or not: Yes

8) Client type (public or private): Private
9) The main final products provided by AUDC:

Figure 4.18 Randol Mill Park West Pedestrian Amenities Final Layouts
(The City of Arlington Project Archives, 2011)
10) *Current photos after construction:*

Figure 4.19 Randol Mill Park West Pedestrian Amenities Site Photos
4.4.3 Lessons Learned from Observations

Table 4.12 Passive Observation Project Type and Changing Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Changing Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Farmer's Market on Front Street</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Minimal Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry Feature Design for St. Claire Woods neighborhood</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Minimal Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonel Neel E. Kearby Memorial context design</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Medium Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Dodson's 300 E Abram - façade improvement</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Maximum Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randol Mill Park West Pedestrian Amenities</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Minimal Change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is summarized in the above passive observation analysis table (Table 4.12), all of the five constructed projects were from clients in the private sector. All constructed projects were small in scale and scope, requiring smaller budgets. This may be the reason that they were constructed.

Based on the passive observations, a scale is created by the researcher called “changing level” in the above table for each project. ‘Minimal change’ means the constructed project almost accepted the AUDC’s design idea. ‘Medium change’ means the constructed project accepted the AUDC’s design idea partly, but still changed the AUDC’s design. ‘Maximum change’ means the constructed project almost changed the AUDC’s design idea. Among the five projects, only one project’s changing level is Maximum, one project is Medium, and the others three are Minimal. It was determined that most of the constructed projects followed AUDC’s final design concepts, which means the AUDC’s design service seemed to have direct effect upon the City of Arlington.

4.5 Summary of Emerging Themes

Nineteen respondents participated in the interview, which included twelve clients and seven other stakeholders of AUDC. The findings from the analysis of the interviews, secondary data analysis, and passive observation analysis, were used to identify relevant issues to the questions posed earlier in the research. The key words and phrases identified illustrated the
emerging themes from this data triangulation. The themes identified and reviewed below are important to the main research questions concerning the clients’ perspectives to AUDC’s design and planning services because clients’ service needs and the other stakeholders’ perceptions about AUDC’s is indicative of its overall effectiveness.

4.5.1 Cost of Service

Interview results illustrated that the cost is the most important reason clients come to AUDC, especially for city departments and small businesses. AUDC provides clients with free services, funded by UTA and the City of Arlington.

For small businesses, for the example passive observation four (300 E Abram - façade improvement), low cost or free design could provide clients more opportunity to use the design center and attain a more efficient business. In 300 E Abram, the client said “I would use the service again. And I would -- I have recommended to other people use the service. For us, the most important thing that the Arlington Urban Design Center provided was the ability to have preliminary design worked on at low cost so we could evaluate the feasibility of the project” (G3). Also the passive observation of this project shows that final construction did not entirely follow the center’s design concept. It retains part of the design, but moved the front seating area to the side, as the client stated: “We didn't end up with the final design drawings. We tweaked them a little bit, but what it did provide was a very useful tool to take to potential tenants to get their interest in the project” (G3).

Almost all the clients mentioned cost as a factor. Retaining the free services of the center to its clients could be a successful strategy to AUDC. The following clients mention:

“A lot of those businesses cannot afford an architect, an engineer, whatever it takes to do their planning and design. And most of them do not even know what they need because it is a complicated process to go through. They don't know where to go, who to talk to or what's
needed. So this is an asset for the city of Arlington that people can go to and in our downtown area especially from where we’re trying to grow it, we need a service like that” (G4).

“I think it’s also extremely helpful because it can save clients a little bit of that money up front that maybe they wouldn’t have put in to get a project started” (G7).

“It also provided it in a friendly manner and an approachable manner because I’m intimidated by the thought of calling a landscaper or architect or calling an engineer. I’m intimidated by the cost that it might be. I’m intimidated by the -- what would I say -- the sales pressure they might put on of you required my services now we need you to do this. And that’s what I meant by the design center is a comfortable end, easy place for me to go to and say this is what I -- I’m interested in doing and they helped me to I guess navigate a little bit easier, what can be done to my building” (G9).

4.5.2 Design Vision

The design vision of the AUDC is another key term that emerged from the analysis. Students working in the AUDC are trained professionally at UTA. Students’ creativity and city planners’ practical instruction make the center able to provide unique vision to clients. Interviewees hold favorable viewpoints toward the AUDC’s vision in design and planning. Clients report:

“I think that it’s a group of energetic, dedicated people that has a wide range of vision that doesn’t -- that thinks outside of the box and not stuck in a paradigm which I like because, again, for me personally, it stimulated my thought process as to what we could do, you know” (G8).

“I think some of the conceptual designs that have come out of the design center really help people open their minds up to the different options that are out there” (G7).

“You know, people that wouldn’t normally know how to start a project, I mean, you all had the ability to go out and meet with those clients and give them ideas of how to improve their space or their buildings or, you know, whatever project pops up” (G1).
“...have a vision of what your place can look like or what my place could look like that I can't see. I don't have the vision. I'm not an architect or a landscaper. I don't have that vision. So it provides me a place and resources that can help beautify my place” (G9).

4.5.3 As a Professional Tool

Some clients see the center as a tool to connect them with design. The AUDC is a service-learning program which hires skilled students from the UTA. Three of the students were studying planning, two studied architecture, and one studied landscape architecture. They have expertise in research, concept design, 3D rendering, graphic drawing, etc. Under the instruction of the professional city planners, their design and planning specialty could be a catalyst for the City of Arlington and local clients. From the client’s viewpoint, the center is also very user-friendly:

“I think the urban design center is a tool that's available to property owners that want to remodel or to build new facilities particularly in the downtown Arlington area where there is a need for better planning in more cohesive design” (G2).

“...We tweaked them a little bit but what it did provide was a very useful tool to take to potential tenants to get their interest in the project” (G3).

“...You know, a lot of times we were in the position of having to react to, you know, people bring us designs and then we have to react. But with the design centers, we can be proactive and, you know, the client comes to us and we can say, well, we'll help you with this design and with that we can influence how the design comes out so that in that way we can get quality design” (S3).

“I think it is a really unique entity that it has the ability to add to the community. I think some of the things that they do are things that city staff can do but doesn't have time to” (G7).
4.5.4 Partnership

From the nineteen respondents, a total of twelve respondents mentioned relationship between university and the City. In the client group, five of them talked about partnership, such as cooperation, collaboration, or partnership. Seven of them did not mention this, but in interviews with deans, planners, and students, all of them discuss the relationship. It would appear as though other stakeholders are more concerned about the partnership between the University and the City. Therefore, partnership between stakeholders is likely more important than partnership between clients.

One respondent of clients stated: “I believe it’s a group of students that works in collaboration with other partners, in this case with the City of Arlington, to provide planning services and assistance not only for the city but I believe other members of the city, not just city employees but other people within the city of Arlington” (G6).

AUDC is a program founded and organizing by UTA and the City of Arlington. They are near both the UTA campus and city hall, which is less than one mile away. The advantage of this location is that it makes the establishment and management of this center easier. For students, this short distance gives easy access to school. For the two UTA Deans, the distance is convenient for them to supervise the center and the students. One respondent mentioned the monthly instruction of UTA “…the deans will come to us every month to have meetings to check up our work so that they know what the projects we’re doing and then they act as guidance to our project directions too” (S7).

4.5.5 Design and Planning Needs of Clients

Clients of AUDC were largely both private sector individuals and public entities. They had different needs from AUDC based on the interview questions. In terms of the general needs of professional design and planning services, public clients had requirements of design concept, civil engineering consultant, master plan, interior design, planning documents, and rough estimates of footage. Private clients had needs relating to landscape design, construction-
related services, retrofitting old building, and landscaping or updating façade. The specific design and planning services public clients specifically required from AUDC are 3d rendering, design of the entrance sign, interior design, cross-section design, redevelopment of scenarios, concept design, and market analysis.

By comparing four groups of information (client’s general needs in design and planning service, clients’ specific needs from AUDC, supposed service AUDC can provide and actual service AUDC provided), it is suggested by clients that construction-related services and civil engineering consultants are parts of the design realm that AUDC does not provide. Another finding is that the mission of AUDC doesn’t include graphic design, but AUDC did some graphic design work in 2011. Professional graphic skill is one of the strengths of the center. One of the public project clients said “but other things that they do are completely different skill sets and skill sets that we don't necessarily have here within the planning department. So I think through those skill sets, they can offer a different level of whether it's architecture or landscape or planning service to not only the city on certain city projects but clients in the community” (S7).

4.5.6 Summary

The findings of the research illustrated that no-cost design and planning services, design vision, professional tool, and the partnership with the UTA emerged as areas where clients found the benefits of the AUDC’s services. Interviews also indicated issues, such as construction related services or civil engineering service, as potential areas to be addressed by AUDC in the future. It is also realized that only a small portion of the projects were built, and most of them stayed on concept level. Both clients and stakeholders indicated the AUDC as a resource to address design and planning needs and issues in this research, even though the two groups have differentiating views based on their needs.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

The objective of this research was to evaluate the AUDC’s design and planning services from different stakeholders’ perspectives. The emphasis in this research was the clients’ perspective since they were found to be the most underrepresented in scholarly literature at the time of the research. Although the AUDC holds broad community recognition, it is mostly reported almost exclusively from the university/City’s side. Therefore this thesis examined and reported on data that was acquired from three different sources: Collecting secondary data; face to face interview; and passive site observations to document an objective review of the AUDC. These three sources were used to develop a set of themes which illustrate the impacts of the center. This research is also used as a quick synopsis of the AUDC in its fourth year of practice, not only to inform future practices of the AUDC but also benefit to other design centers in the region.

5.2 Summary of Findings

Based on the objectives of this research, three methods were designed to answer the research questions. The themes that were generated from analysis answered question number one and question number three. Comprehensive analysis of the three methods helps the researcher find the final answer for question number two.

5.2.1 Research Objective / Question One

Question one asked what the clients’ perspectives were toward the AUDC’s design and planning services. From the analysis of the secondary data, interviews, and passive
observations, four different perspectives of clients’ were found. It was determined that no-cost service, design vision, using as a professional tool, and local partnership are the four primary focuses of the AUDC’s design and planning services.

5.2.2 Research Objective / Question Two

Question two regarded what design and planning professional service needs of the clients are. By comparing the needs from external sources and weighing the specific needs from the AUDC, and combining secondary data information, this research found that public clients desire design concept development, the assistance of a civil engineering consultant, master plans, interior design, planning documents, and rough estimates of footage. Private clients require small landscape design, all of the construction-related services, retrofitting old buildings, and landscape design or updating façade. In conclusion, public and private clients collectively need planning, urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, interior, graphic design, civil engineering, and construction related service.

5.2.3 Research Objective / Question Three

Question three regards how other stakeholders (Arlington city planners, UTA deans, and student interns) involved with the program feel about the benefits or impacts of the AUDC. From the face to face interview analysis of this group, research found that all of the respondents are favorably disposed toward the benefits and impacts of the AUDC. Partnership between the university and the City is the predominant, underlying factor.

5.3 Importance of Findings

The four themes that emerged from the clients’ perspectives about the AUDC’s design and planning services bring important perceptions to this type of service-learning model. From the face to face interviews, all the respondents, which include clients and other stakeholders,
expressed their positive attitude toward the AUDC and future design centers. This finding demonstrated that design centers in North Texas could have active impacts to cities if they have good relationships with universities and have large enough budgets to support this program. However, there is no negative perspective toward the AUDC and future design studios. This means that this research cannot bring suggestions for adjustment of shortcomings to the AUDC, other design studios, and future service-learning program.

Another finding is that knowing the needs of clients is always the primary desire of designers. This can help the AUDC and designers better understand clients and improve their service. Also, variation between clients’ real service needs and the service the AUDC could provide informs the center about what the program lacks and what the center could do in a long run.

5.4 Relevance to the Profession of Landscape Architecture

Having some knowledge about clients’ and other stakeholders’ perspectives toward the AUDC’s design and planning service are beneficial to the future of the AUDC, as well as other design centers or service-learning programs to understand and better respond to the beneficiaries of these design centers. Understanding clients’ needs and thoughts could benefit landscape architecture schools by not only exposing students with real-life design and planning problems but also informing designers about business development and consulting services with these centers.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

The findings of this research revealed several opportunities for further research in service-learning programs in design and planning. Following are some of the possible directions for future research:

1) Evaluating the design and planning impacts of all design centers in North Texas.
2) Comparing the design and planning impacts of different type of design centers across the region and nationally.

3) Assessing the impacts of service-learning projects conducted by on landscape architecture programs and students.

4) Assessing outsiders’ (such as design and planning professionals) view of design centers.

5) Evaluating design centers’ impacts on cities.
APPENDIX A

ANSWERS OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS OF CLIENTS’ GROUP
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Time Involved with Design and Planning Projects in the City of Arlington</th>
<th>Type of Professional Design and Planning Services from External Sources</th>
<th>Specific Services Acquired from the AUDC</th>
<th>Project Category</th>
<th>Final Products the AUDC Provided</th>
<th>Met Project’s Requirement or Not?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>G1</td>
<td>2 years first time</td>
<td>design concept</td>
<td>3d rendering</td>
<td>architecture</td>
<td>digital image, 3d drawing</td>
<td>definitely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>G2</td>
<td>0.5 year, first time</td>
<td>small landscaping design</td>
<td>street scape, architectural service</td>
<td>all (clients require this, city require that...)</td>
<td>landscape and land use plan, elevation of building</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>G3</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>all of the construction-related services (civil engineer, architects, landscape architects, zoning consultant)</td>
<td>site planning service, a little bit of architectural service</td>
<td>urban design, architectural, landscape architectural</td>
<td>concept plan (show tenant)</td>
<td>yes, very helpful, would use again, recommend to other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>retrofit 85-years old building,</td>
<td>elevation</td>
<td>urban design, architectural, landscape architectural</td>
<td>elevations</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>G5</td>
<td>23.5 years</td>
<td>civil engineering, master plan,</td>
<td>design of the entrance sign, architecture and landscape</td>
<td>design, 3d rendering</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>G6</td>
<td>0.6 year, first time</td>
<td>interior design</td>
<td>interior design</td>
<td>interior design</td>
<td>4 recommendations</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>G7</td>
<td>4 years, after got here</td>
<td>professional services contract of consultants to create both of these planning documents</td>
<td>development plan cross section, graphic</td>
<td>transportation plan, urban design</td>
<td>full color renderings for the different cross sections</td>
<td>yes, definitely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>G8</td>
<td>0.5 year, first time</td>
<td>rough estimates of footage</td>
<td>office floor plan, architectural, interior</td>
<td>rendering, cost estimates</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>G9</td>
<td>1.5 years first time</td>
<td>redo landscaping, update façade,</td>
<td>redo landscaping, update façade,</td>
<td>urban design, rendering, design ideas</td>
<td>yes, surprised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>G10</td>
<td>a few years</td>
<td>plans, (graphic and pictures)</td>
<td>actor pictures</td>
<td>planning for sure, a little bit of everything, combination</td>
<td>before and after, master plan,</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>G11</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>very little out side sources, no funding,</td>
<td>conceptual design, market analysis, architectural, landscape urban design</td>
<td>architectural, landscape, urban design</td>
<td>market analysis, conceptual plans, perspectives, whole range of things</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>G12</td>
<td>3 or 4 years</td>
<td>architecture, landscape architecture</td>
<td>landscape design</td>
<td>urban design, architectural, landscape architectural, planning</td>
<td>three different design options,</td>
<td>yes, very much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

WRITTEN REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
PHONE SAMPLE REQUESTING INTERVIEW

Hello, may I please speak to Mr. / Mrs. XXX? My name is Yunhui Zhou, a graduate student of landscape architecture program at The University of Texas at Arlington. I am calling because I need to do an interview for my thesis which is titled “Evaluating the Design and Planning Services of the Arlington Urban Design Center: Clients’ Perspectives”. I am also a student working for Arlington Urban Design Center where probably you know. Your participation is voluntary. Please ask questions if there is anything you don’t understand. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes of your time. You will be asked questions and your answers will be recorded with an electronic device (digital recorder or cell phone). Your name and any items of identification will be removed and replaced with a coding system.

So would you like to participate?

If you like to participate, we can negotiate a time to meet and start the face to face interview. Or we can have a telephone interview if you like? So which way do you like?

For face to face interview, I will go through the Informed Consent with you before we start the interview. If you are a client of AUDC, I will also show you some information about your project and give you an abstract of my thesis. And then use a voice record to document the interview procedure.

For telephone interview, I will read the Informed Consent to you before we start. If you are a client, I will also read some information about your project. And then we can start the interview. Would you like to do the telephone interview right now or later?

If you have any question, you can call me, my cell phone number is 469-766-8203, or you can write an email to yunhui.zhou@mavs.uta.edu or zhouyunhui@gmail.com.

I appreciate your time. Thank you very much.
EMAIL SAMPLE REQUESTING INTERVIEW

Dear Mr. / Mrs. XXX:

My name is Yunhui Zhou. I am a graduate student in the Program of Landscape Architecture at The University of Texas at Arlington. I am conducting research for my Master of Landscape Architecture thesis titled “Evaluating the Design and Planning Services of the Arlington Urban Design Center: Clients’ Perspectives”

I would like to request your participation in my thesis research via a face-to-face interview or telephone. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the stakeholders’ perspectives on the service of Arlington Urban Design Center, primarily focus on clients’ perspectives. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

I will be available to conduct the interview at your convenience. The abstract of the thesis is attached along with the email in order to understand the subject of the research. If you would like to participate, please reply to either of the email addresses or call the phone number listed below to schedule the interview. Before agreeing to participate you will be given an Informed Consent form. In case of a phone interview, I will read the Informed Consent information over the phone. This form will explain the study in further detail. Participation in the study is voluntary.

There is no direct benefit as a result of your participation, but you will be contributing to generate knowledge of design and planning service of Arlington Urban Design Center where you had ever gotten no cost service, primarily from clients’ perspectives.

There is no compensation for participating in this study. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts for participating in this study. There are no potential health risks in this study. There are no alternative procedures and/or treatments offered when participating in this study; however, you are free to quit or decline involvement at any moment. Withdrawal from the study can happen at any time without any consequences. Thank you for your consideration. Your support and participation are greatly appreciate.
Sincerely,

Yunhui Zhou                                      Faculty Advisor,
Graduate Student                                  Dr. Taner R Ozdil
Program in Landscape Architecture                  Assistant Professor, Program in Landscape
Architecture                                        Architecture
The University of Texas at Arlington                University of Texas at Arlington
Phone: (469) 766- 8203 (cell)                      Phone: (817) 272- 5089 (Office)
Email: yunhui.zhou@mavs.uta.edu or zhuyunhui@gmail.com
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Part one (profile questions for everyone)

1.1 What is your educational background? (level and area)

What is your professional working experience? (Planner, Designer, Engineer, Finance, Human Resource, etc.)

1.2 How long have you been in your profession?

1.3 What is your relationship to AUDC?

Part two (interview questions: (clients please answer 2.1~2.8, others please answer 2.7~2.8)

2.1 How long have you been involved with design and planning projects in the City of Arlington?

2.2 What type of professional design and planning services you typically acquire from external sources in regards to design and planning? Could you elaborate especially about the project in the City of Arlington?

2.3 What are the specific services that you acquired from AUDC? (Commission, Research, Analysis, Synthesis, Construction and Operation) Please explain in detail.

2.4 Do you consider your project as architectural, landscape architectural, planning, or urban design? Please elaborate.

2.5 What kind of final product did AUDC provide you with (Master plan, Perspectives, Detailed design, or Planning Document)?

2.6 Did AUDC’s final products meet your project’s (or department’s) requirement? Please elaborate on its process and efficiency.

2.7 Would you mind telling me what AUDC is in your own words?

2.8 What do you think about the future of design centers like AUDC in North Texas?
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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Yunhui Zhou was born in Beijing, China. She grew up in a farming family, has lived in the biggest of cities as well as suburban areas, and has traveled many cities in several countries in the world. Yunhui has a deep appreciation for different cultures and landscapes of the southwestern United States, and is interested in how to combine such natural beauty with elements of the modern city. Miss Zhou has worked as architect for nine years and deeply understands the harmony between construction and nature environments. She has been with involved and led many building designs, and participated in landscape design projects. After getting her architecture degree and many years of designing practice, Yunhui enrolled in the Landscape Architecture program at the University of Texas at Arlington School of Architecture. In the same time period, Yunhui became involved in City of Arlington’s Urban Design Center as a landscape architecture student intern.