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OPINION

Has southern Dallas' moment arrived at last?

There is no stopping the push south this time around.



The exterior of the Palladium RedBird apartments on Friday, May 7, 2021, in Dallas. (Juan Figueroa/The Dallas Morning News) (Juan Figueroa / Staff Photographer)



By Dallas Morning News Editorial

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If you were paying attention to Dallas politics in 2008, you might vaguely recall a task force that then-Mayor Tom Leppert set up to focus on southern Dallas development.

It was a large group that met with good intentions but little ability to actually shift a stubborn development market that saw far more problems than opportunities south of Interstate 30.

day with developers interested in starting projects.

“They are asking where they can get 100 acres. It’s night and day,” he said.

For those of us who have been watching this for a long time, it’s clear that southern Dallas’ moment is arriving. Even in a volatile economy where interest rates are rising, deals are in the works that will change southern Dallas for generations. It’s not about when anymore. It’s about how much.

And it’s not just in one part of southern Dallas; it’s all over. Think of Mike Hoque’s proposed 270-acre University Hills development to his planned development just south of City Hall.



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Think of [the Palladium apartment project near the Reimagine RedBird development](#). Think of the [rejuvenation of Fair Park and the strong real estate interest](#) that it is sparking. Or the development of [the Southern Gateway Park and the rush for land on both sides of that project](#).

Could it fall apart? Maybe. But it’s doubtful that will happen this time around. Southern Dallas has its problems. Lack of infrastructure remains a serious one. There are fewer transportation options and fewer amenities. But that’s changing.

And consider another recent headline in this newspaper: [“Home affordability has worsened more in Collin County than in most of the U.S.”](#)

The opportunities to grow north are slowing down fast. Yes, there is still land available, but it’s ever more expensive and ever farther from DFW International Airport and a harder commute into town.

Meanwhile, a massive expanse of green, developable land sits just south of downtown waiting for the right vision.

This was what former Mayor Mike Rawlings kept hoping for and pushing for through his Grow South campaign. The effort had many prongs, but at its heart it was a marketing effort. Rawlings was trying to get the message across that southern Dallas was a smart money play. It was where growth would have to go.

More people with capital and the willingness to take a risk are figuring that out every day.

Grow South is happening. And even if the market dips, it’s hard to see it stopping this time.

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