

Town of Addison, Texas

Economic Development Strategic Plan

April 2019

Strategic Plan

Provided to:

Orlando Campos

Director of Economic Development & Tourism

Town of Addison, Texas

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Introduction

PROJECT TEAM

The consultant team was led by Ady Advantage (<https://adyadvantage.com/>), a specialized economic development consultancy based out of Madison, Wisconsin. The project was supported by urban design, planning and development consulting firm, Gateway Planning (<http://www.gatewayplanning.com/>) and site selection firm, Schneider Consulting (<http://www.schneiderstrategy.com/>).

By marrying our firms' expertise in economic and community development with workforce development/attraction strategies, further leveraged by a renewed focus on the growing role of restaurants, tourism and entertainment, the Ady Advantage team created a comprehensive strategy that is singular, coordinated, and positioned for successful implementation. Our recommendations integrate traditional economic development, placemaking/town planning and infrastructure strategies in a comprehensive manner, with a focus on results and ROI from an economic development perspective.

Key project team members are listed below.



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Section 5: Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, Infrastructure and Mobility



Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, Infrastructure and Mobility

INTRODUCTION

The following section details an assessment of Addison's Zoning, Land Use, Infrastructure and Mobility, completed by Gateway Planning.

Addison, at only 4.4 square miles, has significant strengths to build upon to foster the type of physical form and environment, complemented by appropriate infrastructure and mobility options, that promotes Place-Based Economic Development. Within the Town, there are a series of individual places, districts and neighborhoods that provide a wide array of options for residential, recreational and worktime activity. Each distinct neighborhood offers a unique atmosphere, contributing to a varied array of lifestyle choices and business investment and operations opportunities. However, these offerings are often insular and isolated physically due to physical impediments (including infrastructure, busy street sections etc.). This disconnected fabric prevents the Town, its residents and the business community from unleashing the true value of these exceptional places, which when taken as a whole, are even greater than the sum of their individual parts.

The compact nature of the Town provides the opportunity to provide greater connectivity between and among these pockets of commercial activity, bedroom and residential communities and existing/future hubs of entertainment and culture. To accomplish these goals, there must be an evaluation of land use at the local level and Town wide, ideally undertaken in conjunction with examining physical infrastructure such as roadway networks, pedestrian improvements, transportation related infrastructure and mobility options, in addition to a review of associated policies that relate to place and economic viability.



Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, Infrastructure and Mobility

INTRODUCTION

Finally, it is essential to recognize the value of existing bedroom communities and neighborhoods. While the one constant in life is change, the reality is by utilizing appropriate policies, the market for growth can be harnessed in a manner that directs that change to achieve specific desired outcomes. As such, it is important to protect and preserve those aspects of neighborhood life that wish to be maintained, recognizing that remaining stagnant and not allowing any growth (including appropriately calibrated growth adjacent to, or even within, traditional bedroom communities). By considering the place-based aspects of economic development, we can look to enhance and improve existing communities, while fostering growth and the evolution of targeted areas and districts in a manner whereby current residents, employers and workers within the Town are ensured of an even greater quality of life and local environment for the years to come.



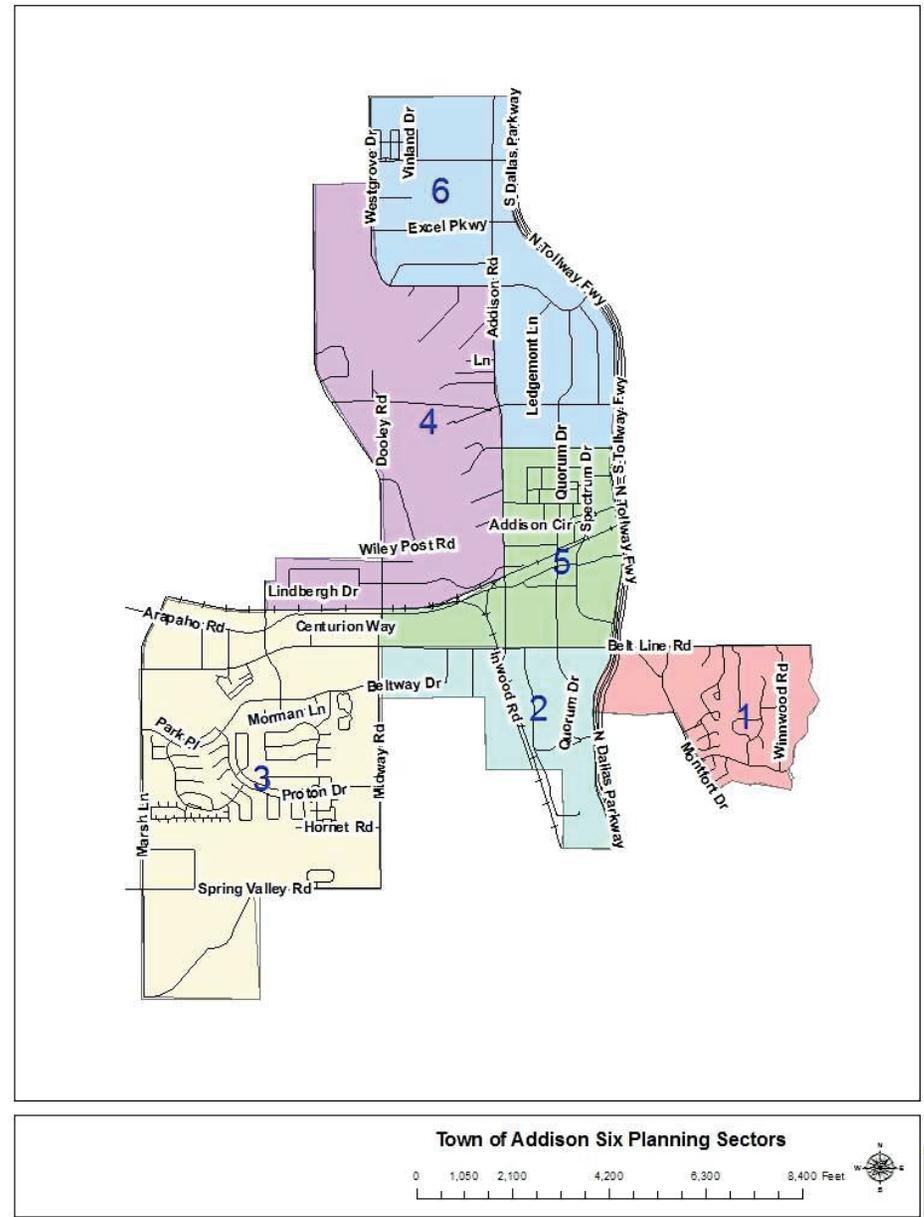
Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

AREAS OF FOCUS

Over the course of a week that consisted of multiple site tours around the Town, in addition to the compilation of information gathered at focus groups and one-on-one interviews, the team compiled information on different areas of the Town. To maintain consistency with past and ongoing planning efforts, we will provide our findings broken down into the six sectors as delineated in the Town's 2013 Comprehensive Plan.

These areas of focus include:

- **Sector 1:** Areas to the East of the Tollway.
- **Sector 2:** Boundaries are the Tollway to the east, Midway Rd to the West, and Belt Line Rd to the North.
- **Sector 3:** Boundaries are Midway Rd to the East, Marsh Rd. to the West and the train tracks to the North
- **Sector 4:** Boundaries are Addison Rd to the East (up to Westgrove, there the boundary then shifts to Westgrove) and the train tracks to the south
- **Sector 5:** Boundaries are the Tollway to the east, Belt Line Rd to the south, Airport Parkway to the north, Midway Rd. as the Western boundary from Belt Line Rd. to the Train Tracks, and Addison Road as the Western boundary north of the train tracks.
- **Sector 6:** Boundaries are the Tollway to the east, Airport Parkway to the south, the city limits to the north, and Addison Road to the west up to Westgrove, where the boundary becomes Westgrove.



Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 1: Areas to the East of the Tollway

OVERVIEW

This sector is relatively mature in terms of the built environment, with opportunities for transition and evolution into the future. Due to its location, it plays more of a supportive role to advance the overall economic development strategy rather than a direct area of focus, especially in regard to the high value bedroom communities that make up a majority of the land area. However, it should be noted that the provision of better connectivity (though infrastructure and the provision of mobility services such as a shuttle, or emerging technologies and services including ride-sharing and automated vehicles) would provide benefits in terms of retaining daytime population into the evening and capturing additional daytime business from employees that work in and around Addison – two goals that were stated throughout our interviews and research.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, MIX OF USES, ZONING CODES, HOUSING OPTIONS

This Sector consists of Belt Line Road as its Northern boundary, with a series of primarily single family residential neighborhoods to the south. The residential fabric is largely built out, located adjacent to a number of retail and restaurant offerings along Belt Line Road. Zoning along Belt Line Road consists primarily of PD and Local Retail with land use patterns consisting of lower density, auto-oriented commercial and retail. This area provides a range of destination shopping and dining, including the well-received “Village on the Parkway” redevelopment.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 1: Areas to the East of the Tollway (continued)

INFRASTRUCTURE

Road infrastructure is oriented toward the automobile, primarily designed to serve the commercial uses along Belt Line Rd, and the adjacent single family home neighborhoods to the south. There was a stated desire to provide better connectivity and walkability to service those neighborhoods, during our interviews and stakeholder sessions. The area lacks connective infrastructure to promote greater walkability and foster other mobility options (i.e. biking, micro mobility and emerging technologies), especially in regard to physical connections to the residential neighborhoods south of Belt Line along with more pedestrian related infrastructure along Belt Line.

A number of residents discussed the need to provide better connectivity from/to this sector to areas west. The primary impediment to achieving this aim is the Tollway, which creates a significant physical barrier to achieve this aim. There is a lack of enhancements and infrastructure to create a more pedestrian friendly environment, such as pedestrian treatments, bike-related infrastructure landscaping and activation. Some residents were supportive of capping the highway with a “Klyde Warren Park” type deck park to provide connectivity, although such an effort would require significant investment.

Providing additional infrastructure to enhance walkability and other mobility options would create a more woven fabric whereby the Tollway does not become such a segregating factor, but rather a hinge between points east and west could go a long way to meet these goals.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 2: Boundaries are the Tollway to the East, Midway Rd to the West, and Belt Line Road to the North

OVERVIEW

In terms of this report's focus on economic development, our team focused on the Inwood road area of this sector, along with Belt Line Rd (which is a binding agent for the Town, which crosses a number of sectors). Historically, Inwood's economic base, and subsequent land uses and built environment, evolved as a center of commerce for liquor stores, in a time when surrounding communities remained dry. Today, this monopoly no longer exists, resulting in all but a select few legacy stores having shut down. With that as background, the area provides a relative blank slate whereby creative land use, zoning and economic development initiatives could take place, within the context of limitations (i.e. Height limitations and inability to build residential in most of the district) of the airport. The area's proximity to the airport provides opportunities to leverage the evolution of this sector in the context of aviation-oriented development and economic development priorities.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, MIX OF USES, ZONING CODES, HOUSING OPTIONS

This sector is comprised almost exclusively of low density, auto-oriented retail, with the presence of a number of deteriorated buildings and vacant properties.

In regard to zoning, the Inwood area is currently zoned as Industrial, Commercial 1, 2, and Local Retail. However, it is less important to focus upon what "is" and more important to consider what tweaks and changes will be necessary to support the findings of the economic development component of this study, and other goals and objectives of the Town. With significant limitations on height, and restrictions/prohibitions on most residential uses (as a result of proximity to the airport and FAA regulations) traditional approaches for place-based economic development are limited, as the desire for integrated, walkable and mixed-use districts that include a significant residential component are simply not on the table. The Town recently completed a land use and planning study of this area led by Gensler, which should provide guidance in accordance with the economic development recommendations set forth in this overall report.

In terms of this report and the focus on economic development, the proximity of this sector to Belt Line Road and, especially, the airport to the north, provides a unique characteristic and asset that could promote uses that complement aviation related businesses. In addition, a number of residents expressed the desire to see more entertainment options and venues, which could be supported in this location due to the ability to provide larger event space and its proximity to Belt Line Road, and, from a regional perspective, the Tollway, which is a few minutes' drive to the east.

Housing in this area is limited due to its proximity to the airport and location within the flight path, and is constrained if not prohibited due to FAA regulations.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 2: Boundaries are the Tollway to the East, Midway Rd to the West, and Belt Line Road to the North

INFRASTRUCTURE

Like much of the area of Town that is within close proximity to Belt Line Road, infrastructure in this area is heavily oriented toward the automobile. There is a lack of pedestrian connections and other mobility related infrastructure. These items were not necessary to promote business and/or economic development in the past, but have become important assets to meet the needs of today's workforce. Such emphasis on pedestrian-related infrastructure is an important consideration both along Belt Line Road and along Inwood Road, the latter having been studied by the Town in partnership with Gensler, to guide future infrastructure investment decisions. That said, this section of Belt Way appears to have strong viability for a range of retail and restaurant uses, although it should be noted that a shift in the retail environment is occurring from larger footprints and big boxes to smaller locations with more of an experiential component. This is in comparison to the section of Belt Line Road, west of Midway, where the existing infrastructure may be an impediment to fostering appropriate land uses (and, as noted in our Sector 3 write up, the development of projects such as Addison Grove address many of these issues).



Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 3: Boundaries are Midway Rd to the East, Marsh Rd. to the West and the train tracks to the North

OVERVIEW

In terms of economic development analysis, the two primary areas of focus within this sector are Belt Line Road and the areas at and adjacent to the Vitruvian development. The former has an opportunity for evolution and change that could foster the economic development goals set forth by this overall report, while the latter is well on its way to providing benefits that include quality new multifamily residential options and a range of amenities for local residents, employees and visitors.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, MIX OF USES, ZONING CODES, HOUSING OPTIONS

Along Belt Line Road, a series of commercial and retail uses exists, guided by zoning oriented toward retail and commercial. It is important to note the Town's recognition of the need for a mix of uses and introduction of residential as a driver for economic development and quality of life, as is evidenced by Addison Grove mixed-used development, under the auspices of PD zoning. This could serve as a model for the evolution of other areas along Belt Line Road both within and outside of this sector.

The southern portion of this sector has witnessed an evolution from 70's and 80's garden style apartments to more intensive, mixed-use development, as is evidenced by the well-received Vitruvian development. The quality multifamily residential component, complemented by a mix of uses including retail on the ground floor is well suited to the needs of young professionals and empty nesters, serving as a key point of advantage for the Town in fostering economic development by tending to the needs of the talented workforce that desires such environments.

That said, the aging stock of garden style apartments do serve a need in regard to the provision of naturally occurring (i.e. non-subsidized) affordable and workforce housing, which is a consideration for the Town as these neighborhoods evolve and future phases of development take place.

In addition, there may be need to examine how to best support the large scale public events that are held in this area, as development has and will reduce the availability of parking for large influxes of crowds from other areas.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 3: Boundaries are Midway Rd to the East, Marsh Rd. to the West and the train tracks to the North

INFRASTRUCTURE

Much like the rest of Belt Line Road, the area is focused almost exclusively on auto-oriented infrastructure. Understanding the high volume of traffic that traverses Belt Line Road, there may be limitations on a complete transformation and/or refocus on the physical construct of Belt Line Road. Perhaps more important than the lack of walkability east-west along Belt Line Road is the segregating nature of the roadway that provides a significant impediment to connecting areas to the north with areas to the south. The lack of pedestrian amenities, including shelters from the sun/inclement weather, pocket parks and the ability to safely cross Belt Line Road with a focus on a positive pedestrian experience is an impediment to economic development. The Town has undertaken considerable investment in burying powerlines along Belt Line, which is a key first step toward improving the aesthetic component, if not the functionality, of this essential road in its role to serve automobile and, potentially, pedestrian, traffic in the future.

New development at the Vitruvian has brought with it significant investments in infrastructure, providing walkability and connectivity within that area. The relationship of the buildings to the streets and public realm provide a friendly environment for walking (and driving, for that matter), while the larger public spaces provide significant amenities for local residents, employees and visitors. There were comments provided during the interviews about concerns over parking for large events and gatherings in the area, as current locations for parking are likely to be developed in the future.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 4: Boundaries are Addison Rd to the East (up to Westgrove, there the boundary then shifts to Westgrove) and the train tracks to the south

OVERVIEW

For the purpose of economic development, this report focused on the presence of the Airport and surrounding environment. The Airport is a significant amenity and driver of economic development that provides a number of advantages from an economic development perspective. In addition to the unique nature of this airport as an alternative not found in most locales, provides opportunity to leverage “aviation oriented” development to serve the needs of economic growth and the desires of local community members.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, MIX OF USES, ZONING CODES, HOUSING OPTIONS

The areas adjacent to the Airport are, by and large, set in terms of use and built environment. However, there may be some opportunities to better leverage the airport as an economic development tool, while fostering economic growth adjacent to the airport, and to areas south, such as Inwood Rd.

To a large degree, the Airport is a “hidden gem” both physically, and mentally. The area is currently zoned as Industrial 3 or PD, serving aviation and commercial uses. Comments from our interviews and stakeholder sessions suggested that there is a lack of way signage and promotion of the airport (“out of sight, out of mind”). That said, it is apparent that the airport drives commercial investment and development, with the presence of aviation related business that then give way to more general commercial and office uses.

The area is low in density and auto-oriented, serving the needs of the airport and surrounding commercial uses. Through interviews, residents and stakeholders did discuss the desire to see a more publicly oriented range of uses, either on the airport proper or surrounding it. These included the concepts of a restaurant and/or event space that would leverage the airport as a driver, including the ability to watch aviation related-activity while enjoying food and/or entertainment options.

INFRASTRUCTURE

While there is a lack of walkability and infrastructure to support multi-modal uses, this area is heavily dependent upon the presence of the airport in regard to economic development. As such, investment in infrastructure is unlike other areas of Town where the lack of such pedestrian-oriented infrastructure may impede economic development. That said, the portion of this sector along Addison Road as you approach the proposed train station and TOD development area must be viewed differently. Ongoing studies are underway for the investment in rail related infrastructure and surrounding development which, to our knowledge, take these factors into consideration.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 5: Boundaries are the Tollway to the east, Belt Line Road to the south, Airport Parkway to the north, Midway Rd. as the Western boundary from Belt Line Road. to the Train Tracks and Addison Road as the Western boundary north of the train tracks.

This is a critical sector in regard to place-based economic development, with the presence of Addison Circle and its quality neighborhood fabric, complemented by corporate commercial abutting the Tollway and the expected presence of a rail station with surrounding Transit-Oriented Development in the western portion of this sector.

As such, we will examine this sector according to those three separate environments: (1) Addison Circle (2) Train Station / TOD area and (3) Tollway Corridor.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 5: Addison Circle

OVERVIEW

Addison Circle represents a bridge from Addison's recent past to an even more economically resilient and socially vibrant future. The walkable, neighborhood character and mix of uses found within the Circle is an environment that communities across the country strive to create, especially within the context of providing multifamily and rental opportunities for the well-educated workforce.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, MIX OF USES, ZONING CODES, HOUSING OPTIONS

A truly walkable district, Addison Circle is associated with high quality development within a mixed-use, albeit residential focused, neighborhood. Few development and potentially few redevelopment opportunities exist within this built out area of Town. Addison Circle provides high quality neighborhood living, with a vast array of multi-family residential options within a mixed-use environment. The area is currently zoned as an Urban Center District, which promotes walkable development and a mix of uses. Land uses here are generally set, with a focus on a walkable, residential neighborhood environment.

Retail is present at and around the circle proper, and located sparingly elsewhere within areas just adjacent to the circle. While ample parking exists throughout the Circle, there appears to be a consumer impression that it is not readily available. This is likely a result of visitors who are not familiar with a more urban form, expecting large swaths of parking right in front of a business they visit. This may also result from a lack of way signage.

The Circle is within walking distance to significant employment centers, including the Tollway adjacent Platinum Corridor, although our research indicated there has been little capture of these potential economic drivers. A common recommendation/suggestion from our interviews was a stated desire for potential temporary uses, events, food trucks and pop-ups that would serve to attract and retain the daytime population into the evening.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 5: Addison Circle

INFRASTRUCTURE

At and around Addison Circle, and throughout most of this sector outside of Belt Line Road, significant investment in pedestrian connectivity, walkability and the public realm exists. The larger public spaces to the west of the Circle provide a location for some of the region's most well-known and successful large scale events (including KaboomTown®), with smaller public spaces available for smaller scale and more frequent activity.

That said, there is a lack of pedestrian oriented infrastructure to support connectivity to other areas of town, including south to Belt Line Rd and, even more importantly in terms of economic development and capture, the commercial environment along the Tollway. There is also a lack of activation and activity that would provide a “reason” for people to make the effort to walk from one area of this sector to another.

In short, there is tremendous value in the immediate and long term sense at and around Addison Circle. However, a lack of connective infrastructure and activity exists between the Circle and the economic nodes to the east and south.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 5: Train Station/TOD

OVERVIEW

Representing Addison's future, in terms of internal growth and connectivity, and its role as the geographic centerpiece of North Dallas, the Train Station is a critical component of economic development into the future.

The anticipated investment in regional rail through the Cotton Belt initiative, and its planned station in Addison, provides a tremendous opportunity to evolve Addison's reputation as a balanced community that provides the best of suburban life, but with a taste of walkable, urban living. In addition, this location is a central hub that could be leveraged to provide additional mobility options and enhanced connectivity Town wide

In many ways, the station becomes the geographic "bullseye" for Addison as it looks to build on its reputation as a great place to work and conduct business and an even better place to live. It can become the focal point to connect north to the Circle and Quorum – where some additional development opportunity exists – points south to Belt Line and the southern portions of town, east to the Platinum Corridor and west to the Airport.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, MIX OF USES, ZONING CODES, HOUSING OPTIONS

With expected regional rail service, zoning and land use studies are underway by the Town. This area serves as the geographic center of Addison, enabling connective fabric and tissue to extend to Addison Circle to the north, the Tollway Corridor to the east, and Belt Line to the south.

Significant ongoing and future investments are underway that will radically change the nature of the built environment at and around the TOD area. The construction of the AMLI residential building is complemented by a range of studies that the Town is currently conducting. These efforts will be a key aspect of positioning Addison to leverage the presence of rail in the future. In addition, a range of uses at and around the station will serve to increase the viability and attractiveness of residential communities to the north and commercial users and their employees along the Tollway corridor.

Kimley Horn, the Town's consultant recently developed a new master plan for the TOD (Addison Circle Special Area Study, 2018). The implementation aspects of the plan are still to be determined and will be a subject of final recommendations of this study.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 5: Train Station/TOD

INFRASTRUCTURE

Much like the transformation of the built environment within this area, significant investments in infrastructure are underway. This report will defer to the ongoing studies that the Town is currently conducting, with the note that the provision of transit and walkable, multi-modal infrastructure will be a significant benefit to economic development into the future.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 5: Tollway Corridor

OVERVIEW

At the heart of Addison's business community, and an ongoing focus for economic development, is the Tollway Corridor. Leveraging the unique nature of Addison Circle, and its exceptional geographic location from a regional standpoint, it is essential to evolve this area in a manner that best addresses the wants and needs of today's workforce and their employers.

New developments such as Legacy in Plano, and CityLine in Richardson represent a more competitive environment for class "A" office and associated economic development. One of the key factors in the success of these hubs is the integrated mix of uses that is highly desired by the workforce and their employers, providing mobility and walkability beyond the automobile.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, MIX OF USES, ZONING CODES, HOUSING OPTIONS

Dominated by commercial office mid and high rise towers, the Tollway is the economic heart of Addison. While significant Class "A" offices exist in this area, a number of properties have begun to age and are in need of upgrades, reinvestment and/or redevelopment. The area is zoned PD, Commercial 1,2, or Local Retail, without provisions for residential uses, which may be a hindrance in meeting the market's focus on integrated uses within a walkable setting. While most of the area is built out, select development (and, as noted above, potential future redevelopment) opportunities do exist.

INFRASTRUCTURE

It is important to consider the Tollway Corridor not in isolation, but rather in consideration of potential connections to Addison Circle to the west and Belt Line Road to the south. This is especially important considering the stated desire of a number of stakeholders to better retain the large daytime population that works along the Tollway into the evening to promote greater capture of that economic activity for local businesses.

There is good supportive infrastructure for the commercial uses in this area as it pertains to the automobile. However, there is a lack of connective, pedestrian oriented infrastructure to leverage the latent economic activity that could be derived from the tens of thousands of employees up and down the Tollway (extending beyond this sector). In addition, the lack of biking and other mobility options may deter a small, but important, sector of the workforce.

That said, the presence of a regionally significant economic hub and job center is well served by access to the Tollway and ingress/egress to the commercial activity within this sector.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 6: Boundaries are the Tollway to the east, Airport Parkway to the south, and Addison Road to the west up to Westgrove, where the boundary becomes Westgrove.

OVERVIEW

With a small and nearly built out footprint, the land constraints within the Town of Addison are considerable. As such, it is essential to maximize potential development at locations where it can be supported. One key area of focus for future development are properties along Quorum Rd, North of Addison Circle, extending to the Town border. This provides the potential to extend the quality residential neighborhoods that help define the Town of Addison and Addison circle, which is a critical component of attracting and retaining today's talented workforce.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT, MIX OF USES, ZONING CODES, HOUSING OPTIONS

There are a number of vacant and/or underutilized properties, in addition to existing uses, that are likely to evolve into a higher and better use in the relatively near term future, within this sector. Key opportunities exist for the transformation of the low density showrooms north along Quorum and, potentially, at the Mary Kay site, depending upon their desire and willingness to entertain redevelopment scenarios. The area is currently zoned as Commercial 1,2, PD, Single Family or Local Retail District.

By examining this corridor with an eye toward a mix of uses with a strong residential component (multifamily, with a mix of for sale and rental options), one could envision "extending" the walkable, mixed-use fabric of Addison Circle to the North, building upon one of the region's most desirable neighborhoods.

In the northern portion of this section exists naturally occurring workforce and affordable housing, similar to those found adjacent to the Vitruvian development in the south western portion of the Town. This northern portion of town also contains a range of office buildings which face increased competition from commercial space that is either more proximate to the Tollway and/or within proximity to the more walkable and mixed-use environments.

Assessment of Zoning, Land Use, and Infrastructure

SECTOR 6: Boundaries are the Tollway to the east, Airport Parkway to the south, and Addison Road to the west up to Westgrove, where the boundary becomes Westgrove.

INFRASTRUCTURE

As current uses do not provide the neighborhood fabric associated with areas directly adjacent to Addison Circle, the infrastructure in this sector is more geared toward the automobile, with less general connectivity. There is a lack of more complete streets and pedestrian connections, especially in the offices located in the more western parts of this sector. Such lack of a public, pedestrian realm dampens economic development potential to some degree, however the lack of proximity to true mixed-use, compact neighborhoods (i.e. Addison Circle) suggest that the need to focus on automobile ingress and egress is at a premium for the economic competitiveness of these locations from a commercial office perspective. There is, however, a lack of supportive uses such as convenience retail and restaurants for employees in the northern sector of the Town.

Assessment of Mobility

(Note: As Mobility is, by definition, a regional factor, this report has assessed mobility from a Town wide, rather than sector by sector, approach).

The Town of Addison's compact nature and series of distinct neighborhoods and districts provides an ideal foundation to provide improved connectivity and mobility in a manner that leverages the many assets that exist today.

Known for its 190 restaurants, Class "A" office along the Tollway and unique Addison Circle environment, complemented by bedroom communities and the airport, connectivity within and to/from various parts of town are essential to spur additional economic development while improving quality of life is to examine how to provide a wider range of transportation and mobility options.



Assessment of Mobility

WALKABILITY AND THE PEDESTRIAN REALM

Perhaps the single biggest issue of concern – and opportunity for improvement – garnered from interviews and focus groups was the overwhelming desire for a more pedestrian friendly, walkable environment. While a number of neighborhoods provide walkability within the immediate area (Vitruvian, Addison Circle), there are significant physical and psychological impediments that stand in the way of utilizing pedestrian and biking options as a means of transportation. While not as important a factor, addressing bikeability is also advised, to promote cycling as both recreation/exercise as well as a mode of transportation. The recent Master Transportation Plan (MTP) did conclude that biking was not necessarily a key factor for local residents and employees, however (1) this may be as a result of the lack of any cohesive bike-related infrastructure in the first place and (2) may need to be re-examined with the onset of new technologies and services, such as scooters or automated micromobility offerings into the future.

FUTURE RAIL SERVICE AND A HUB FOR MOBILITY

In addition to walking and biking, the Town has an opportunity to leverage the upcoming DART Rail Station, which could serve as a central hub for a full suite of mobility options. Coupled with advancing technology in the realm of automated vehicles, the presence of rail that connects Addison to the rest of the region without need for driving could have significant positive impact – but only if the appropriate steps are taken to offer last mile connectivity and appropriately scaled, dense and mixed-use development at the station, and throughout the Town within its various hubs of activity. Understanding the Town once provided internal mobility through a small bus / van type of system, it may be time to re-examine how such an offering could work with the additional densities throughout town, further supported by the markets growing desire for transportation solutions that eschew driving, especially for short trips and around town.

Assessment of Mobility

OPPORTUNITY WITH AUTOMATED VEHICLES AND OTHER MOBILITY INNOVATIONS

In addition, there may be an opportunity to attract the growing field of automated vehicles and utilize Addison – with its compact footprint, presence of the airport and oncoming Rail Service, and its series of distinct destinations – as a “testing ground” for new technologies. Such an approach would highlight Addison as a forward thinking town that embraces innovative solutions to mobility and economic development, building upon its reputation as business friendly with exceptional neighborhoods and a range of entertainment options.

Additional last mile, circulator and regional mobility options, including those with permanent associated infrastructure (i.e. Hyperloop concepts, local connectors that utilize elevated Pods not unlike Gondola systems) may also be worth examining, especially if there is a viable technology, backed by sufficient capital, to invest in the Town through a mutually beneficial partnership.

BELT LINE ROAD: CONNECTOR OR DIVIDER

From a physical standpoint, there is an essential need to consider the evolution of Belt Line Road from an auto-only, low density and retail-centric corridor into a more cohesive element that provides not only for auto-traffic, but enhances local businesses and the overall environment through greater pedestrian treatments and potentially the provision of bike-related infrastructure (as noted above, the MTP suggests this is not a priority at present, but that could change with emerging technologies and/or the provision of infrastructure that would enhance the ability to utilize biking as a means of transportation).

As it stands today, the physical nature of Belt Line Rd. acts to deter connectivity from areas north to south. In addition, it negatively impacts the pedestrian experience along this essential stretch of road. In many ways, Belt Line Rd. is the “main street” for Addison, and it is the primary means by which many throughout the region experience the Town. As such, it is important to consider this key infrastructure in terms of function and form, both for the auto and, especially in today’s economic development climate and evolving retail landscape, the pedestrian.



Assessment of Mobility

INTEGRATED MOBILITY, LAND USE AND FORM

Finally, it is essential to calibrate the aesthetics of the area and the form of new development to complement any investments in changing the physical nature of the roadway itself. In fact, the current efforts to bury utility lines along this corridor is an example of how our interaction with an area is largely dependent upon its “look and feel.” It is important to engender a positive experience for people who wish to live, work or shop along Belt Line, whatever zoning and land uses are considered appropriate, to ensure investments in connectivity, mobility and the pedestrian experience are maximized. As one example, A Form-Based Code is one such tool to achieve this end, though not the exclusive means to achieve desired outcomes. Significant economic and social benefits accrue from codifying appropriate urban form, while allowing the market to better dictate the specifics uses that occur within the buildings themselves. Risk for the development community and land owners is reduced with upside improved by instilling confidence in the market through an assurance of good and appropriate building form.

Simply put, if someone invests in developing a project on one property, it is in my interest to know that the adjacent property, when (re)developed, will be done so in a manner that complements the look and feel of the corridor as envisioned, promotes great aesthetics, allows for variation in specific architectural treatments (you may want the form of the buildings to be bound by a certain relationship to the street, fronting the road with parking in the rear, high and bulk limitations where appropriate) but also provides some flexibility in terms of specific use, that maximizes the ability for all property owners to adjust to changing market conditions, while retaining the overall character and economic value of the corridor. This is also discussed in the section for “Zoning and Land Use,” however the need to consider mobility, form and use within the same context is essential to achieve the most desirable, and sustainable, outcomes.

Assessment of Mobility

BUILDING OFF OF PREVIOUS EFFORTS – 2016 MOBILITY STRATEGY

Many of the observations, and subsequent recommendations, that our team has made as a result of our site tours and interviews were supported by, and confirm, much of the work conducted in the Town's 2016 Master Transportation Plan Update. The MTP should be both viewed and utilized within the context of serving the needs not only of the Town's population, but as a critical component to forwarding a place-based economic development strategy.

While our scope entailed a high level review of the role of mobility and transportation through the lens of economic development, the strategies and tactics presented in the 2016 plan provide a high level of detail as to how the Town might achieve its goals (economic and otherwise) through a reinvention of its transportation plan, rooted in physical infrastructure investment and changes, along with potential new modes of service. That document should serve as a basis for future planning and investment, through a coordinated effort that also encompasses land use, and the promotion of additional economic development.

In regard to some of the common themes that exist in both the 2016 MTP and those observed by this effort include:

- **Cotton Belt** – Since the plan was written, it appears that DART has committed to opening the rail station in Addison. Studies are underway by the Town to maximize benefits in regard to value capture opportunities and leveraging the opportunity to utilize the station as a center for mobility to/from and within the Town, in addition to the provision of addressing first/last mile connectivity.
- **Improvements Regarding Walkability and the Pedestrian Realm** should continue to be a point of emphasis as increased walkability would leverage the Town's existing neighborhoods and nodes of activity
- **Creating more bike and micromobility options** – There may be latent demand to utilize biking as a mode of transportation as well as recreation, but the current lack of dedicated bike lanes and other such infrastructure is a significant deterrent. That said, the recent MTP did not demonstrate that this should be a priority, but rather may be considered in light of other advancing technologies and micromobility services that could utilize mobility lanes (if not bike lanes)
- **Connect East and West** – Efforts to better connect neighborhoods to the east and west of the tollway, creating a hinge rather than a barrier



Assessment of Mobility

BUILDING OFF OF PREVIOUS EFFORTS – 2016 MOBILITY STRATEGY (CONTINUED)

In regard to some of the common themes that exist in both the 2016 MTP and those observed by this effort include:

- **Complete Streets and Context Sensitive Design** can incorporate the above, designed in a manner that is appropriate for the specific neighborhood in which it is located. In addition, such an approach can better meet and/or maximize existing and future land uses along the right of way
- **Pass Through Traffic / Congestion and Street Calming** – Per the MTP, vehicular traffic has actually been reduced since peak traffic in the 1990's, with only limited areas that expect additional congestion in the future. This presents a landscape where complete streets and ped/bike infrastructure could be accommodated as opposed to a need for additional lanes for auto-traffic (it was noted in the MTP that additional lanes would not likely be recommended in most cases).
- **Intra-Town Transit and Mobility** – Strong agreement exists in regard to the desirability of a circulator and/or other mobility options that would serve the needs of residents, employees and visitors who wish to go from one area of Addison to another neighborhood or district. In the short time since the plans release, additional opportunities may now exist with growing mobility-on-demand and/or ride share services and the early stages of automated mobility services. The latter of these is worth exploration as Addison's compact nature and series of neighborhoods and other activity hubs might present an attractive area for some of the more cutting edge companies who seek to explore pilot programs within a P3 or private-sector led effort.
- **Explore Value Capture** – While the MTP discussed the need to identify funding sources for a range of infrastructure investments and potential improvements, the Town may wish to consider undertaking a focused examination of value capture opportunities, whereby future development can provide additional resources through a number of public and private sector funding/financing mechanisms. Those resources and/or revenues streams can be monetized to pay for upfront investments that will enable significant positive overall returns on investment. The DART station is a logical opportunity for Value Capture, but there may be additional options including along a potentially reinvented Belt Line road, at/around the Tollway and other strategic locations that might support intense, mixed-use development in the future.