

# Mixing things up: How mixed-use development is changing the look and feel of Texas' largest cities

BY BRANDI SMITH



ADDISON CIRCLE PARK | COURTESY CITY OF ADDISON

What might be considered one of the more modern approaches to development is, it turns out, rooted in some of our near-ancient history. Mixed-use development has been around for several centuries and is exemplified by the medieval villages that cropped up all over Europe.

The rules for constructing a lasting village between the 5th and 15th centuries were fairly simple. It ought to be compact, dense, offer multiple uses and provide limited transportation systems. Within the walls, the village must provide a community that is not just functional, but productive.

Just as it didn't in medieval times, mixed-use development today need not focus exclusively on residential, retail or entertainment.

"Urban mixed-use districts are walkable and combine a lot of different elements to generate activity from the day into the evening," said Paris Rutherford, principal at Dallas-based Catalyst Urban Development.

He added that, though there was talk of the idea in the 1980s, mixed-use development didn't start building in popularity until the mid-'90s. Then, in the 2000s, it began to flourish, even as the approach and designs evolved.

"Mixed-use today is not what the perception of mixed-use was ten years ago," said Nick Hernandez, managing director at Transwestern Retail. "A lot of projects built then were mixed-use in nature, but they weren't compact. The trend you see now, partially due to land prices, is to stack uses on top of each other and make it as dense as possible."

In this issue of REDNews, we will highlight some of the most significant examples of mixed-use development within the state of Texas. Some are decades old, others are just beginning construction, but they all provide a unique take on this age-old approach.

## NORTH TEXAS

### Addison Circle

It's difficult to imagine the town center of Addison, a suburb of Dallas, hasn't always been there. However, it wasn't until 1992 that a municipal committee came up with the idea for mixed-use development that now stretches over more than 40 acres at Addison's core.

"As a city, it had a very large daytime population, but a small nighttime population," explained Rutherford, who worked with city leaders on the development.

He said right in the heart of the city was roughly 80 acres of land zoned for 13.5 million square feet of office space, a use for which there was no market at the time.

"The property owner, the city, developers and planners all thought through what that could be. We arrived at a solution to create a town center, which would build the city's nighttime population," Rutherford said.

The end result is a project that has stood the test of time. More than two decades later, Addison Circle offers upwards of 2,400 residential units. It's also host to dozens of retail shops and restaurants, as well as large and small offices for companies such as Ansira. They're all wrapped around - what else? - a circle in the middle of the development, which features the commissioned public art piece called "Blueprints at Addison Circle."

"It really was the first example of mixed-use urbanism in a suburban market in the state," Rutherford said proudly, adding that the development has nabbed a slew of awards as well as national acclaim.

### Frisco Station

They're lined up along 5,280 feet of the Dallas North Tollway in Frisco: one huge mixed-use development after another. There's the \$1 billion, 90-acre Star of Frisco, the new headquarters for the Dallas Cowboys, and Wade Park, a 175-acre, \$2 billion project. The Gate, which features two 10-story luxury condo buildings, a boutique hotel and office buildings, eats up another 41 acres. But the largest development on the city's famed "\$5 Billion Mile" is Frisco Station, developed by The Rudman Partnership, Hillwood Properties and VanTrust Real Estate.

The Station, which broke ground in October 2016, will spread over 242 acres and is expected to cost \$1.8 billion. When completed, it will offer 6 million square feet of office space, 990,000 square feet of medical office, 200,000 square feet of retail and 75,000 square feet of restaurants.

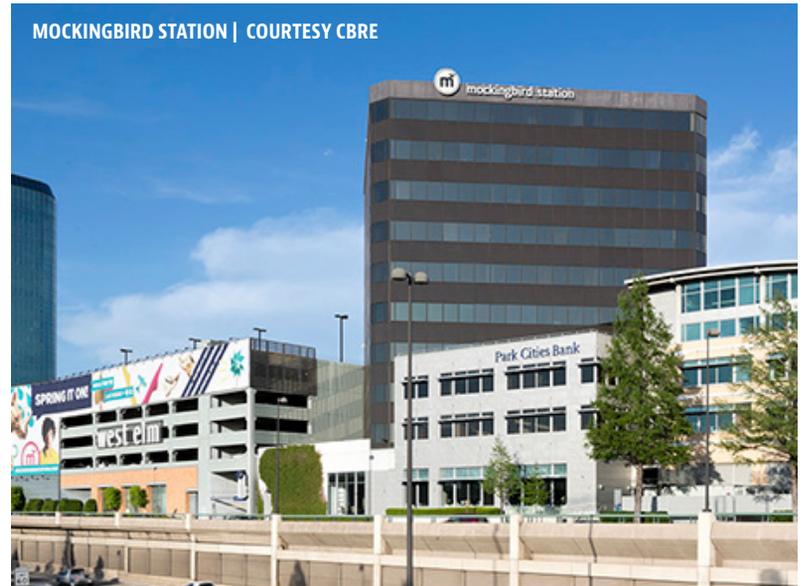
Just this spring, construction got underway on NewcrestImage's 300-room AC Hotel and Residence Inn. That project is expected to be joined by three other hotels, including a Canopy by Hilton, to complete what is being called The Hub at Frisco Station.

FRISCO STATION | COURTESY FRISCO STATION





BAYSIDE | COURTESY WILKS DEVELOPMENT



MOCKINGBIRD STATION | COURTESY CBRE

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### Mercer Crossing

When Centurion American Development Group broke ground on \$1 billion Mercer Crossing in Farmers Branch this spring, it did so after years of planning.

Stretching over 370 acres in the heart of the Metroplex, Mercer Crossing is slated to include retail, restaurants, a boutique hotel, a 48-acre office park, amphitheater and an entertainment district. It will also feature more than 800 single-family homes and roughly 3,500 multi-family units. Those will be distributed between six distinct "Texas Tudor" neighborhoods: Amesbury, Ashington, Brighton, Coventry, Verwood and Windermere.

Already, builders such as Beazer Homes, Megatel Homes, First Texas Homes, Oakdale Homes, Siena Homes and

as tenants began filling the nearly 300 residential units that came online in 2016, adding to the existing 600.

"There's real activity on the sidewalks and on the street," said Colin Fitzgibbons, vice president of CityLine developer KDC. "It's neat to see something that was just an architect's rendering become a real place."

The 186-acre development is nowhere near complete either. Nearly 1,000 more residential units are under construction now, though a total 3,925 are planned. Though retail is popping, another 30,236 square feet of space is in the works. There are also plans for roughly 1.8 million square feet of office space, which means that when CityLine is complete, it will boast 5 million square feet of office alone.

for itself as a home for the headquarters of companies such as Toyota, FedEx Office, JP Morgan Chase and Liberty Mutual.

That list will soon include Boeing, which picked Legacy West as the headquarters of its new Global Services business unit, which will serve as a hub for the approximately 20,000 BGS employees located around the globe.

Construction on the \$3.2 billion dollar, 255-acre development got underway in February 2014. As companies have moved in, the daytime population has grown to more than 20,000, making Legacy West one of the largest job centers in the state, according to The Karahan Companies.



LEGACY WEST | COURTESY THE KARAHAN COMPANIES

The property's largest tenant is State Farm, which leases 2 million square feet, the largest office transaction in North Texas history. CityLine is also home to the Raytheon campus, which is comprised of three Class A buildings. The three-story, 41,567-square-foot Wellness Building, meanwhile, hosts Children's Health Specialty Center, Family Medicine of Richardson and Texas Health Behavioral Health Center.

The first phase of build-out nearly complete, developers estimate approximately 15,000 people either live or work on site. In the years to come, as

construction continues, the goal is to grow that number to 30,000.

M/I Homes are on board and residents are expected to start moving in next year.

### CityLine

Last year was a big one for Richardson's CityLine. State Farm moved into a fourth building. Retailers, such as Whole Foods Market, and restaurants, including the Gulf seafood-focused Tricky Fish, opened up. Construction began wrapping up on the 150-room Aloft at CityLine,

### Legacy West

Billed as the largest new mixed-use development at the beginning of June in North Texas, Plano's Legacy West just celebrated the grand opening of its outdoor shopping center. However, it has already made a name

The 415,000-square-foot retail portion of the project spans three and a half blocks and will offer up options such as Sprinkles, Shake Shack, Fabletics, Coach, Tommy Bahama and Texas' first Dean & DeLuca. Legacy West will feature a 303-room Renaissance Legacy Hotel, as well as two high-rise luxury living towers with more than 1,200 luxury apartments and 127 urban villas to complete the project.

### Bayside

The only resort development on our list is also slated to bring the first man-made lagoon to Texas. Kent Donahue's Bayside includes plans for an 8-acre Crystal Lagoon, which will be the focal point of the \$1 billion, 262-acre mixed-use property in Rowlett.

The water feature is 25 times the size of an Olympic swimming pool and the equivalent of 10 football fields of water, according to the company charged with constructing it. It will also do more than offer residents a place to cool off; the lagoon will include a state-of-the-art show fountain, which can project video.

The giant water feature will be surrounded by a variety of buildings, including a resort, marina, two condo towers, apartments and single-family homes. That doesn't include the 1.5 million square feet of mixed-use retail, entertainment, restaurant and office space or four miles of lake-front trails.

Crews broke ground on the property last spring, though construction is only just getting started.

## Mockingbird Station

What would become the first transit-oriented development in the state of Texas didn't start with that goal, according to Paris Rutherford, principal at Dallas-based Catalyst Urban Development.

"It was because of its location," he explained. "Of course, now it seamlessly ties into the station and it's one of the gems of transit-oriented development in the state."

Located right at the corner of Mockingbird Lane and the North Central Expressway, the property also happens to be adjacent to Southern Methodist University. It was developer Ken Hughes who first realized the site's potential.

"He was a true visionary. He was oftentimes many years ahead of his time," said Rutherford.

Just as Hughes was getting started on his new project, the city approved plans for a light-rail system, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART). The so-called "starter line" included a stop at Hughes' property, which helped transform the development into what it is today. It opened in January 1997.

Boasting more than 200 loft-style apartments, an office tower, restaurants, a theater, Mockingbird Station offers more than 550,000 square feet of mixed-use space. Ever evolving, the development, which is now 30 years old, is in the process of updating its look and signage. New greenspace and updated storefronts are also in the works.

## IN THE WORKS: NORTH TEXAS

International real estate firm Hines has announced plans for a new 135-acre mixed-use development in Allen. The property will include plans for a corporate campus.

The City of Irving is offering \$6 million in economic benefits for Verizon's \$1 billion mixed-use development in Irving. The 2 million-square-foot project would include retail, apartments, hotel rooms and DART access.

# HOUSTON

## Imperial Market

After years of work, construction on Sugar Land's Imperial Market will get underway this fall.

"Now is kind of the fun part," says Nick Hernandez, managing director of Transwestern Retail. "We're putting the tenant mix together and doing the deals. I think the only part better than this is when we open it to the public."

Imperial Market is also unique due to its location: the former Imperial Sugar refinery. Founded in what would become Sugar Land in 1843, the company's refinery ran for more than 150 years before it was shuttered in 2003.

Designed by architectural firm HOK and built by Harvey Builders, the 777,500-square-foot project will utilize most of the property's existing building, the silos and smokestacks.

"It was important for us to keep the roots of the refinery because that's how the Sugar Land community really got its start," Hernandez says.

The project will include nearly 270,000 square feet of retail and restaurants, some of which will be in the property's historic Three-Bay Warehouse. The nearby Char House is set to become a 120-room Aloft Hotel, utilizing the historic building's varying floor heights and

large windows. The aforementioned twin smokestacks will be relocated to become a kind of focal point for Imperial Market's 30,000-square-foot park, as will the recently restored water tower.

"It is remarkable to be able to breed new life into that facility," says Hernandez. "The community can use it, participate in it and draw into the history behind it. I think it really is kind of a perfect storm for a great mixed-use development with tremendous community involvement."

Adjacent to Constellation Field, the home of the Sugar Land Skeeters baseball club, and future home of the Fort Bend Children's Discovery Center (a project of the Children's Museum of Houston), Imperial Market planners hope to develop a family-friendly destination.

On that note, the project will also include 275 luxury multi-family residences and 86,400 square feet of office space.

"The City of Sugar Land enthusiastically supports the project," Sugar Land mayor James Thompson said in a statement. "It's a real game changer for the city and Fort Bend County."

## Discovery Green

When Super Bowl LI came to Houston in February, the spotlight wasn't just on NRG Stadium, where the game was played. Discovery Green, the epicenter for fan fun, logged millions of visits in the week leading up to the big game. It was an effort years in the making ever since the downtown Houston park was first conceived back in 2003.

"The establishment of the park created an option for Houstonians to recreate downtown outdoors. That was a foreign concept for a long time," says Barry Mandel, Discovery Green Conservancy's president and a fourth-generation Houstonian.

The park's creation spurred more than \$1 billion of development on surrounding property. The initial focus, Mandel says, was on the west side. Over time, developers have wrapped their projects around Discovery Green. It's certainly not by mistake, but what began simply as a park has reintroduced mixed-use development and living into downtown.

"The sheer volume of people who have visited that park has shown others around us that public green space is good for economic development," says Mandel. "It's good for safety. It's good for security. It's good for activity. It's good for spurring retail."

Residential development is also seeing a boom, in part due to the City of Houston's Downtown Living Initiative, which gave builders additional funding for creating residential units downtown. Between 2014 and 2019, Mandel anticipates an increase of 5,000 downtown

"It's becoming a whole new option for Houstonians now to choose from, especially empty-nesters," says Mandel, who lives across the street from the park.

The development boom poses new challenges for the park, specifically how to balance its daytime visitors who work in the area with those who live in the area and want to recreate after work.

"How do we choose the kind of entertainment that we're bringing in? How do we control the sound, so it's not intrusive?" Mandel says, listing some of the questions park leaders are mulling. "Because of this new neighborhood around us that has bars and clubs that

stay open much later, the park is going to have to look at staying open much later."

That's why, he says, lighting is a real focus right now - "We're going to need a much more well-lit environment to keep people safe - as is the addition of more restrooms. He says the Conservancy is also looking at what changes, if any, are needed to Discovery Green's four corners. When the park was built, there wasn't much development across the street.

"We need to figure out how to open up those corners into this newly built neighborhood," says Mandel.

## CityCentre

Perhaps one of the most iconic mixed-use developments in the Houston area, Midway's CityCentre truly got its start in the early 1980s when the Town & Country Mall opened. Decades later as the mall's popularity waned due to the construction of the nearby Memorial City Mall, the developers at Midway saw an opportunity. The company purchased the property in 2004 after making an unsolicited offer.

A decision was eventually made to demolish all the existing buildings, replacing them with projects that often involved different capital partners, architects and contractors. CityCentre now includes five office buildings, three multi-family residential options, brownstones, two hotels, street-front restaurants and retail space, conference space, a cinema, a health/fitness facility and parking.

What was a failing mall is now a bustling, 47-acre urban community.

## The Post Oak at Uptown Houston

When it comes to investing in his hometown, casino owner and Landry's CEO Tilman Fertitta likes to double down, which is what he's doing on the under-construction Post Oak at Uptown Houston.

Its website bills the 10-acre project as "the first vertical mixed-use, master-planned project in Houston combining hotel, office, residential, retail and restaurant offerings all in one tower." Construction on the 38-story tower got started in 2015. When complete, it will encompass more than 680,000 square feet.

The Post Oak's hotel will feature 240 rooms and suites, which will range in size from 500 square feet up to the expansive, 4,000-square foot Chairman Suite, which will have its own elevator access, media room and terrace.

Approximately 150,000 square feet of low-density, Class A commercial office space will also be available once The Post Oak is complete. Plans include high ceilings and access to 24-hour services such as catering and/or room service.

A mix of 22 one- and two-bedroom apartments will allow tenants easy access to the Uptown area, with a bonus of full kitchens, five-fixture deluxe bathrooms and large walk-in closets.

The pièce de résistance is what could be the largest ballroom in the Uptown area when construction is complete. A whopping 30,000 square feet in all, the multi-function area includes a 16,000-square foot main ballroom, 10,000 square feet of conference space and a second-level, 3,000-square-foot junior ballroom. It's a "ballroom the likes of which Houston has never seen," according to Raffael Scasserra, design principal at Gensler, which provided master-planning and architecture for the development.

## IN THE WORKS: HOUSTON

KM Realty snagged 146 acres just off Interstate 10 and Texas 146 in Baytown with the goal of building a grocery-anchored mixed-use development that would also include residential, hotel and entertainment options.

# CENTRAL & WEST TEXAS

## The Pearl

What's old is new again at The Pearl, a modern and industrial development that uses the remnants of San Antonio's iconic Pearl Brewing Company to cultivate a unique mixed-use experience.

Started in 1883, the brewery operated on 22 acres along the city's famed river. It survived Prohibition with matriarch Emma Koehler leading the way, making ice, Near Beer and soda instead.

Koehler's strength of spirit is what inspired the property's new owners (as of 2002) to name The Pearl's 146-room boutique hotel in her honor. Hotel Emma, which opened in late 2015, is a throwback to the period when its building was born: the Victorian era. The hotel, though, is far from the only original building on site.

"I think the idea of saving the buildings, renovating the buildings, restoring the historic spaces and bringing it back to being a vibrant and dynamic San Antonio neighborhood was an inspiration," Elizabeth Fauerso, The Pearl's chief marketing officer, told REDNews.



The Pearl has made a name for itself as a foodie destination, featuring restaurants such as Cured and a weekly farmer's market.

In addition to great food, The Pearl features more than a dozen boutiques, all of which are locally owned.

However, the piece of the development getting the most attention lately is The Cellars Apartments, 122 luxury units that feature arched ceilings, marble bathrooms and spacious balconies. Rent runs up to nearly \$14,000.

## Éilan

At San Antonio's Éilan, Tuscan meets Texas in the form of a sprawling mixed-use development that includes homes, retail, office and a boutique hotel. Completed in 2012, Éilan is located on La Cantera Parkway.

Éilan's tagline is "Live. Work. Play." but it also offers opportunities to shop, dine and stay. The development boasts 539 residential units spread out across seven buildings, each six stories tall. Its focal point, though, is the 10-story, 165-room Éilan Hotel & Spa. During your stay, you can also sample the locally sourced menu at Sustenio Restaurant & Bar or perhaps just hop on the trolley and explore Éilan's 119 acres.

The development's pastel stucco walls and clay roofs extend beyond the residential and hotel towers to the property's two office buildings. The design isn't just romantic, it's also so environmentally friendly that Éilan is seeking Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

## The Domain

"It's a long, complicated story," Endeavor Real Estate Group principal Ben Bufkin laughs when asked about the origins of one of Austin's premiere mixed-use developments: The Domain.

Along with some capital partners, Endeavor bought the property from IBM back in 1999.

"We've been really the primary developer, involved in all the pieces," Bufkin says.

The 57-acre first phase of The Domain, which was co-developed by Simon Property Group, opened in 2007.

"It's just a phenomenal location," Bufkin says. "The great office and residential density help feed the retail, which has a regional draw as far as 150 miles out."

Bufkin says Endeavor also just wrapped up the third and final phase, called Domain Northside. Anchored by Nordstrom and featuring a new concept from Restoration Hardware, the 600,000 square foot development includes the 173-room Archer Hotel Austin, a 125,000-square-foot

office building and 563 apartment units.

"It is the latest and greatest retail piece, but it also has residential, hotel and office above," he explains, adding that it was a partnership with Northwood Investors. "We really blended best-in-class local retailers with best-in-class, first-to-market and emerging market national retailers. In a lot of these new-build, mixed-use projects, the tenant mix is usually very boutique in nature or it tends to be very national. Rarely, do you have one this size that has such a significant blend of both."

Working on both projects, Bufkin says the biggest challenge is to make the development feel authentic and natural.

"We've learned a lot of lessons over the years. You can see those implemented from Phase One to the most current phase. That's really important," he says. "You have to ask: Where should the hotel fit? Where does office go? What's underneath them? How does that all tie in to parking?"

The process of answering those questions doesn't necessarily end when a development is delivered to market. Because a mixed-use project functions like a living and breathing organism, it is constantly evolving.

"You don't just build them and put them on the shelf; you build them, then you operate them," says Bufkin. "Operating them and keeping them relevant with the local community takes a lot of elbow grease every single day. We wake up thinking, 'How do we improve it and fit it into the fabric of Austin?'"

## Lamar Union

Built in the 1960s, a nine-acre strip mall sat along Austin's South Lamar Boulevard for years. The prime real estate just south of downtown caught the eye of developer Greystar, who saw much more potential in the site. The company broke ground on the high-density retail and residential Lamar Union in 2012, putting the final construction touches on it in 2016.

When it did, Greystar didn't erase the property's history entirely; it saved the Alama Drafthouse Cinema that had anchored the strip mall, renovated it and made it a destination again. The approach was the same with the iconic Highball Lounge.

Greystar tapped BOKAPowell to assist with architecture, as well as master-planning of the development. Its three buildings are a modern take on a European town center featuring bright purple and yellow balconies set against gray walls.

In addition to plenty of entertainment options, Lamar Union hosts several of Austin's most high-profile restaurants, including VOX Table and Cantine, and 86,000 square feet of retail space. The development also offers more than 400 apartment homes in its upper floors.

## Miradores at Shadow Mountain

A Florida-based developer is aiming to bring high-rise living to El Paso. The Meyers Group has proposed Miradores at Shadow Mountain, a two-tower project mixing homes, retail and eventually a hotel.

The company currently owns four acres of property in West El Paso, which is where it wants to build its twin 20-story towers. Each would accommodate up to four spacious residences per floor. Living at the Miradores at Shadow Mountain would come with perks such as an infinity-edge swimming pool and outdoor entertaining areas. The towers would also add 12,000 square feet of retail space in the area.

## IN THE WORKS: CENTRAL & WEST TEXAS

Twenty-five minutes from downtown Austin in Lakeway, St. Croix Capital Realty Advisors is planning Gateway to Falconhead. It will include a retail campus of seven one- and two-story buildings, as well as a six-building office campus.

Did we miss a development you think should have been on the list? Email us at [digital@rednews.com](mailto:digital@rednews.com) with your ideas! ■