

Suburbia Revisited

Rail station areas in suburbia and the inner ring are attracting higher-density residential developments in small, citylike environments.

Many of the nation's suburbs that once were composed mostly of single-family homes are maturing into small cities. This process is especially evident in metropolitan areas that are extending rail connections from the central city to suburban towns, where these extensions have proved to be a catalyst for clustered development around station areas. Light-rail transit promises to improve accessibility dramatically, allowing suburban communities to plan for intensified land uses and a buildup of residential and mixed-use environments in their centers. This is happening in a variety of places, from the affluent, new-economy suburbs to inner-ring, middle-class locales with industrial bases.

Evolution of the suburban environment is evident, for example, in Richardson, Texas, which is in the high-tech corridor north of Dallas known as Telecom Corridor. The community, long anchored on its southern end by the Texas Instruments headquarters, emerged as an office center in the 1980s and became a hub for high-tech headquarters and research and development in the 1990s. In the city's center is an area called Galatyn Park, which will be the site of a station serving an extension of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) light-rail system beginning this June. There, a large piece of open land, under single ownership of the Margaret Hunt Hill family (of Hunt Petroleum), will allow developers to bring the first high-density, mixed-use environment to Richardson.

"Residential next to rail is of rising importance for Dallas," says Don Dillard, vice president of the Hill family's Galatyn Park Corporation, who adds that he has confidence in the project's success, including the unprecedented high-density residential component. "We're creating a model project at Galatyn for the whole region: we have the makings of an urban center there."

Years of solid planning is credited with helping to set the stage in Richardson—planning jointly done by the city, the Hill family, DART, and telecommunications manufacturer Nortel Networks, which has a major facility in Richardson. The city promoted a DART extension early on, supporting the transit agency since its inception in 1987. City planners have built a broad base of community support, holding town meetings, and sponsoring a ULI advisory services panel in summer 2000 that supported the city's decision to designate areas around all five proposed Richardson stations for transit-oriented development (TOD),

permitting intensive development, with Galatyn Park identified as the city's new town center. The Hill family donated much of the land for Galatyn Park, while DART financed and constructed stations, grade separations, and five miles of light rail through the city. Nortel Networks, which built a large complex just east of the Galatyn Park station area, provided a steady presence by endorsing the TOD concept and pledging to remain in the area for the long term.



In Richardson, Texas, in the high-tech corridor north of Dallas, a planned station area called Galatyn Park will be served by an extension of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit light-rail system this June. In the background is a new 337-room Marriott Renaissance hotel; also planned are a retail/office mixed-use development and a residential portion.

The Galatyn Park Corporation now has focused its development efforts on 27 acres that form a half circle around the new station. The city has shaped the space with a broad plaza leading to the station and a new civic auditorium. Facing the plaza from the north, a 337-room Marriott Renaissance Hotel and a 30,000-square-foot conference center have been completed. Across the plaza, on a vacant, eight-acre tract, the corporation is now pursuing plans for a retail and office mixed-use development. All of this has set the stage for the residential portion, which the firm will place on a four-acre tract in one or more buildings. The city showed strong backing for the plan late last year, granting

ALAN P. MAMOSER is an associate planner with the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission in Chicago.

a maximum allowance of 90 units per acre for the tract.

It is the city's growing number of employees that ultimately triggered the demand for higher residential density in this suburb; Richardson's employee base will soon surpass its residential population of 92,000. Access to its employment areas is expected to be improved greatly by the rail connection, which will move between downtown Dallas to the southwest (less than 20 minutes away by light rail) and the affluent, service-based economy of the city of Plano farther north.

"It is a requirement, if not a necessity, to meet the housing needs of employees here, as the city has few large tracts of open land left for single-family housing," points out Michael Wanchick, an assistant city manager in Richardson. "We're looking to Galatyn Park as an intensive, high-density, mixed-use area because the elements for a 24/7 lifestyle are there: it is becoming an urban environment for the high-tech employee lifestyle."

So far, the community of quiet neighborhoods and mostly single-family homes seems to be accepting the plan. The Galatyn Park planners envision housing options for home-

owners looking to switch to a multiunit format, with increased recreational opportunities and less traffic on the road network as both employees and residents take advantage of Galatyn Park's light-rail line.

Regarding the planners' strategy to acclimate residents to higher-density residential development, Wanchick says, "We'll lead with a high-quality project, which the Galatyn Park Corporation is trying to provide. When it's done well, people will say, 'OK, that's what you're talking about,' when we talk to them about higher density." This, in turn, will lay a basis of community support for residential development at other stations, he says. Planners in Richardson do not envision strings of high rises along the rail corridor, but, instead, attractive, close-knit environments forming urban centers around the city's four additional station areas.

TOD plans encouraged by new transit extensions are not restricted to affluent new-economy suburbs. Englewood, Colorado, an inner-ring town on the edge of Denver that is traditionally blue collar, has voiced support for transit-oriented development since 1995 to fill the void left by a failed regional mall. The mall

was demolished in 1998, opening up 55 acres and allowing the city and developers to implement a plan that was four years in the making. The Regional Transportation District (RTD) southwest light-rail line reached the site in 2000, and a two-acre public plaza now faces the station, flanked on one side by new residential units above small stores. On the other side is an old department store—the one remaining piece of the mall—now converted into a three-story civic center with a library, an art museum, and city offices. An arterial road separates the immediate station area from a row of medium-sized single-pad stores that together hold 350,000 square feet of space. Despite their size, their front doors come to the street, conforming to the grid that the city imposed over the mall area.

The street grid even contains a new Wal-Mart, which was placed in the TOD area to meet the community's demand for a major merchandise outlet. Local planners faced a challenge in trying to accommodate the large store. "The problem was the size of their parking field," says Bob Simpson, community development director in Englewood. "We told them, 'The grid pattern does not change. It is sacrosanct.'" The store accommodated the ultimatum by reducing its size to 130,000 square feet, then splitting its parking into two sections and lowering its parking requirement to 4.9 spaces per 1,000 square feet. Although Wal-Mart would not build to the street and put parking behind the buildings, the store still gives the impression that it is less set back than a conventional big-box retail site.

Now, the station area will become the site of Englewood's highest-density residential development. Trammell Crow Residential is building the housing—a total of 438 units in a three-story, walkup format with units above small stores. Across the street, the development company Miller Weingarten has put in a 100,000-square-foot, two-story building, again offering mixed uses, with ground-level retail and second-story offices. The residential portion, all of which is for lease, has seen an influx of renters—mostly singles, older couples, and young couples without kids. Much of the appeal is the site's accessibility to downtown Denver, which is just 20 minutes away by light rail.

While the RTD extension is a catalyst for the development here, it did not occur automatically. The city has invested \$18 million in the area through its general fund and bonds to capitalize on a growing trend toward creating 24-hour places. No further residential development is foreseen now, and the site may never



Communities that go beyond the game... Partners In Design

DTJ DOWNING
THORPE
JAMES

ARCHITECTURE
PLANNING
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
ENGINEERING
ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGN

1881 Ninth Street, Suite 103
Boulder, Colorado 80302
Tel: 303.443.7533
www.dtlboulder.com



reach the potential offered by a rapidly expanding job market, such as that in Richardson. However, the basic structure, with a street grid and transit accessibility, is in place in Englewood, allowing density and building types to evolve over time.

"We're doing what we can afford here and working within our price range according to our demographics," says Simpson. Yet, he believes the community's insistence on the inherent principles of TOD will guarantee Englewood's success: "Overall, it's the quality of the development, the mix, the focus on accessibility, and connections."

Dallas and Denver are among the most exciting areas in the country for new transit, according to Dena Belzer, principal of the research group Strategic Economics, who has studied transit-oriented development projects across the country, looking for the elements that make them successful in different environments. She believes the experience of Englewood shows that though communities cannot expect to achieve quickly the full potential of land uses in their station areas, they must put in the basic structure that allows a TOD area to evolve. According to Belzer, "A community must ask itself: Has it put in a street system that sets up scale and variation, that gives permeability? Has it done a good job with the framework? With this in place, the rest of the site can be filled in over time."

Maplewood, Missouri, just west of St. Louis, is another blue-collar town planning for transit. But when the MetroLink light-rail system reaches Maplewood from St. Louis in 2005, it will not stop in the town's center, which over the years has become a mix of big-box retail and older, small business fronts. Instead, the line will come to the edge of a large industrial park recently developed by the real estate arm



Englewood, Colorado, an inner-ring town on the edge of Denver, was connected to a light-rail line in 2000. Across a bridge is the new Englewood Civic Center, located in what was once part of an old department store in a failed regional mall.

of manufacturer Sunnen Products Company. The company and the community are determined to develop an adjacent 18 acres, putting tall residential towers on a parcel of land that Sunnen has assembled over the years. Again, accessibility provided by the transit line stimulated significant planning for the station area, bringing possibilities for development to an inner-ring community that has been battered by the dominant metropolitan trends of recent decades. Marty Corcoran, Maplewood city manager, estimates that 2,500 jobs exist within a half-mile circumference of the station site. The light rail will link the town to other large job bases in downtown St. Louis and the neighboring suburb of Clayton, an affluent community whose downtown has seen significant development of commercial and residential towers in recent decades.

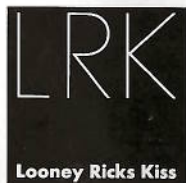
As with other TOD sites, single control of the large piece of land is critical in Maplewood. To reduce the upfront outlay, Sunnen may contribute some land or take a deferred position in a development entity that is eventually formed. The city established special zoning for the emerging industrial park and transit station district, creating shortcuts on the application procedures for multiuse and allowing flexibility on

setbacks, building heights, and other requirements. In its design criteria, which were distributed to potential partners at a recent developers forum, the community emphasized its support for an urban approach with high-rise residential space in mixed-use structures.

The revenues from large structures will be required to support new infrastructure, but Corcoran believes that the site's accessibility and Maplewood's affordability ultimately will make the place successful. He notes that Maplewood's housing market has been revived in recent years, with young professionals coming into the community, drawn by the town's proximity to job markets and housing prices that are considerably lower than those in Clayton. The transit link should leverage this trend, allowing the community to fulfill demand for condominium units in the more affordable \$150,000 range. And, says Corcoran, the site's accessibility should encourage single-car households to settle there.

With the new transit line, Maplewood has the potential to become a key node in an emerging corridor of high-density centers—a corridor that will follow the MetroLink line from St. Louis through Clayton and a series of smaller towns including Maplewood, and to its con-

Memphis
Nashville
Princeton



Inspiration from the past. Innovation for the future. Creating urban places that fully



Southlake Town Square - Phase II, Southlake, Texas, a Cooper & Stebbins development



DAVID OWEN TRYBA ARCHITECTS



RICK BAJOIRIS

A two-acre public plaza faces the light-rail station in Englewood, flanked on one side by new residential units above retail stores, and on the other by the combination civic center and library, transformed from the one remaining structure of an old mall.

nection to the region's main airport. "It's a perfect fit," maintains Corcoran, noting that the site also may offer an opportunity to build a small conference center. "Whether we can get someone to develop the area is the question now."

Strong demographic trends show that places like Maplewood may not have long to wait. Dowell Myers, a researcher at the University of Southern California who has reviewed housing preference surveys and combined them with an assessment of demographic projections, points out that people over 45 show a preference for denser, more urban, and less auto-oriented residential environments. This sector, he says, will come to dominate the housing market in ways it never has before. "The over-45 sector isn't just growing, it is being flooded by the aging baby boom generation. The growth in this sector accounts for the great majority of the growth among homeowners," continues Myers. As this sector grows, it should expand the share of the market represented by those who are changing residence and seeking a denser alternative.

Myers believes the growing number of those preferring urban environments may be confronted by a lack of response in the marketplace. But if the demand is met, whether in transit-oriented developments or elsewhere,

he foresees further expansion of demand. He believes that as desirable high-density environments are built and experienced by people, a further shift in preferences will occur—that meeting the demand will itself create more demand. "The developers are there," Myers says. "For the past decade, what was getting built was not meeting the full range of demand. But a definite shift is coming, adding up to a quantum change, and if the planners get on board, it [the marketplace] can change quickly."

In New Rochelle, New York, a Westchester County inner suburb, AvalonBay Communities found a market for luxury rental apartments and is transforming the face of the old town center by building 1,000 new apartments in two phases. The first 25-story building is complete, and the city recently rezoned the site to permit the second tower to rise to a height of 39 floors. Fred Harris, a developer with AvalonBay, says that he sees a new convergence of market demographics and public policy that supports transit-oriented development. But rather than targeting the over-45 market, his firm is responding to a younger demographic group that includes "renters by choice," as he calls them.

"The convenience of transit to New York is the key factor in the success of this rental com-

munity," says Harris. The site offers close connection by train and highway to suburban office centers, and it is just 30 minutes away from midtown Manhattan on commuter trains. While the dominant population segment that AvalonBay is serving in the new development is youthful, the 45-and-older group seeking leases is now more than 30 percent of its market and is growing. "This market is becoming increasingly oriented to downtown living. There is a shifting preference in that [youthful] demographic group in how they want to live—in an urban environment and close to transit, where getting to work and leisure doesn't always require a car. And nothing is better for bringing life back to a suburban downtown than a large group of market-rate renters," he says. Such residents bring high demand for restaurants, theaters, and shopping—a process that is apparent in New Rochelle.

While not linked to a new rail extension, transit-oriented development in New Rochelle mirrors events in Richardson. The latter, with its growing base of new-economy jobs, should attract a good proportion of well-paid young people to its new residential towers. Thus, transit-oriented development seems like it will continue to grow in affluent suburbs, bringing residential infill to the glittering office centers that rose in the past two decades. But opportunities for high-density development should also extend to a variety of suburban locations that receive transit extensions. Such is the hope of Belzer, who says: "The big challenge is to make transit-oriented development occur in neighborhoods that are still behind the market curve, with a more inclusive form of housing." As the experiences of developers and planners in both Englewood and Maplewood show, this may be a trend of the next decade. ■

integrate planning and architecture - residential, retail and commercial.



Places of Purpose. Spaces for Life.

Contact:

Laurin McCracken
901.521.1440
lmccracken@lrk.com

Jim Constantine
609.683.3600
jconstantine@lrk.com
www.lrk.com

UrbanLand

PUBLISHER
RACHELLE L. LEVITT

EDITOR IN CHIEF
KRISTINA KESSLER
kkessler@uli.org

MANAGING EDITOR
KAREN SCHAAR
kschaar@uli.org

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
LOUISE CHASE DETTMAN
ldettman@uli.org

SENIOR COPY EDITOR
NANCY H. STEWART

ASSOCIATE COPY EDITOR
JAMES A. MULLIGAN

ASSISTANT COPY EDITOR
DAVID JAMES ROSE

ART DIRECTOR
BETSY VANBUSKIRK
bvanbusk@uli.org

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
MEG BATDORFF
batdorff@uli.org

PRODUCTION MANAGER
DIANN STANLEY-AUSTIN

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
CECE MINER
cminer@uli.org

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
ROBIN GUYSE
rguyse@uli.org

ADVERTISING SALES DIRECTOR
LAURA TEMPLETON
(202-624-7044/ltempleton@uli.org)

SENIOR ADVERTISING MANAGER
CARMELA ACAMPORA
(202-624-7042/carmelaa@uli.org)

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT MANAGERS
YASMINE YATES
(202-624-7175/yyates@uli.org)
LAURA KIDDER
(202-624-7130/lkidder@uli.org)

ADVERTISING ASSISTANT
THOMAS MITCHELL
(202-624-7133/tmitchell@uli.org)

Volume 61, Number 1

Urban Land (ISSN 0042-0891) is published monthly (except combined November/December issue) by ULI—the Urban Land Institute, 1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W., Suite 500 West, Washington, D.C. 20007-5201; 202-624-7000; fax: 202-624-7140. ©2002 ULI—the Urban Land Institute, all rights reserved. Receipt of *Urban Land* is a benefit of membership in ULI—the Urban Land Institute. Advertisements appearing in the magazine do not constitute or imply endorsement by *Urban Land* or ULI—the Urban Land Institute. Single and multiple copies are available through ULI Publications Orders (800-321-5011 or E-mail: bookstore@uli.org); single-copy price, \$15; \$9 each for five to 24 copies; \$4.50 each for 25 or more copies.

Opinions expressed in articles or columns appearing in *Urban Land* are those of the author(s) or person(s) quoted and are not necessarily those of *Urban Land* or of ULI—the Urban Land Institute. Advertisements appearing in the magazine do not constitute or imply endorsement by *Urban Land* or ULI—the Urban Land Institute. The contents of this publication are protected by copyright and may not be reproduced in whole or in part or in any form without written authorization. Send requests for reprint permission, editorial guidelines, and editorial calendar to Robin Guyse (E-mail: rguyse@uli.org).

Postmaster: Send address changes and circulation inquiries to *Urban Land*, Member Services Division, ULI, 1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W., Suite 500 West, Washington, D.C. 20007-5201. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Printed in the U.S.A.

100 Climate Change

BETH MATTSON-TEIG

FINANCE TRENDS: The September 11 attacks may have a long-term impact on commercial lenders.

104 Supermarket Lenders

PAUL BEAKLEY

FINANCE TRENDS: Financial institutions are bulking up on multifamily.

Departments

11 Editor's Page

A First Step
Kristina Kessler

12 Point of View

The Absurdity of Modernism
Nikos Salingaros

17 Capital Markets

Will It Ever Be the Same Again?
Bowen H. McCoy

19 Smart Growth

Suburbia Revisited
Alan P. Mamoser

24 At Issue

Survival of the Fittest
James Z. Pugash and Douglas Park

28 Tech Trends

Dot.Com Space Up for Grabs
Warren Lutz

30 In Practice

Storm Modeling
Robert Nathan, Robert Sloop, and Tim Reid

32 Solution File

Affordable Arts Area
William P. Macht

34 In Print, Etc.

City Making: Building Communities without Building Walls
Store Wars: When Wal-Mart Comes to Town
Sprawl City: Race, Politics, and Planning in Atlanta

120 Back Page

Post-9/11 Impressions from Europe
Claude Gruen



28

Tech effect.

Inside ULI

108

In Uncertain Environment,
Key Urban Issues Still Matter

An Overview of ULI's Community
Outreach Program

Plus:

- Members in the News
- Who's Who at ULI and the ULI Foundation
- ULI Calendar of Events

Advertisers Index, page 119.