



Northlake area to see development boom in 2017

by Kathy Mitchell

In the 1970s, the Northlake area saw a commercial boost with the opening of Northlake Mall and an office complex on Northlake Parkway. Now, due in part to the efforts of the Tucker-Northlake Community Improvement District (CID) revitalization again is under way.

"The mall has not yet released the specifics about what will be happening there, but we know there are development plans and we're very excited," said **Ann Rosenthal**, president of the Tucker-Northlake CID.

Through CIDs, private commercial property owners within designated boundaries vote to form an alliance and agree to self-tax and use the funds raised for improvements within the district. The Tucker-Northlake CID currently includes 212 property owners representing more than \$127 million in assessed value.

Rosenthal said the first major retail center to be undertaken since the CID was established in 2013, Tucker Meridian, is in progress and stores are scheduled to begin opening in May or June 2017.

Tucker Meridian replaces the cream-colored complex of hundreds of offices on Northlake Parkway that stood just north of Lavista Road for approximately 40 years.

"Our goal is to be a destination shopping area. We want people from across the metro area to come here because of the quality shopping and dining opportunities," Rosenthal said.

The office complex had gone into decline before it was demolished, Rosenthal acknowledged. "A lot of the units were not occupied. The place was showing its age. People today want to be in offices that are bright, shiny and new. It had been primarily a medical complex and doctors wanted their patients to be able to come to a place that looks sleek and modern." CID and government officials broke ground on Tucker Meridian Oct. 5.

The 22-acre development will include such retailers as Hobby Lobby, Sprouts Farmers Market and DICK's Sporting Goods and dining options such as Einstein Bagels, Caribou Coffee, Jimmy John's and Newk's Eatery.

There also are plans for the office-retail strip

across from Meridian, Rosenthal said. "A lot of new multifamily housing has gone up in the Northlake area in recent years and more is to be built there. I believe the Old Hickory House restaurant that's been there a long time is going to remain but a lot of what is now retail and office area will be replaced with multi-family housing."

Rosenthal said that in addition to new retail and residential developments, the Northlake area is slated to have new sidewalks, street lights and streetscapes under the CID master plan. "These are the things people told us they wanted." The CID lists as its project priorities improved streetscapes, better traffic signalization, additional landscaping and street cleaning as part of a larger comprehensive master plan for future enhancements.

Rosenthal, a Tucker resident, was instrumental in the formation of the Tucker Northlake CID and its expansion to include the Northlake area.

Nicole Hall, principal and owner of Nickel Works Consulting, a company working with Tucker Northlake CID, said inclusion of the Northlake area greatly enhances

the CID's worth. "These properties represent more than \$200 million in assessed value, which would add more than \$600,000 to the CID's revenue every year."

In a released statement on Nickel Works' involvement, Hall said. "We're going to do our best to secure support from as many of the owners as possible. The more properties that join the CID, the larger the dollar value the CID can leverage to

fund improvements within the district."

Rosenthal said revitalization of the Northlake area originally had been slated for the first decade of the 21st century. "After the economy went into a slump in 2008, it just wasn't possible to do what the developers had in mind. Now that the economy has improved, we're going to see some exciting things happening in this area," she predicted.

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