

Choices in Mansfield are key, say consultants

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Mansfield must take advantage of its vast undeveloped land by offering choices and creating destination spots for its residents.

This was the message given by the city's marketing consultants, Leland Consulting Group and RTKL, at an open house Wednesday night. The consultants said they plan to return in a few months with recommendations based on public input regarding the Golden Triangle's future.

The city hired the consultants last year to do an in-depth marketing analysis on the Golden Triangle, the area mostly bounded by Texas 360, U.S. 287 and East Broad Street.

Paris Rutherford, vice president of RTKL, said Mansfield is in a unique position compared to other cities in the Metroplex. The Golden Triangle presents a chance for Mansfield to become a destination that would be exclusive in the area.

"If we replicate exactly what Arlington has, we're not offering choices," Rutherford said.

Amidst the excitement generated around the Golden Triangle, City Manager Clayton Chandler said yet another project has announced its

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Clayton Chandler
City manager

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intentions to come to Mansfield. He said he couldn't release any details about the project at the moment, but that project officials were enticed to come to Mansfield because of Big League Dreams.

The City Council is in the process of buying land to relocate the park and aquatic center at Texas 360 and Miller Road. Chandler said the city could create an entertainment district there. The Mansfield school district is also building a football stadium and natatorium center at the intersection of Texas 360 and East Broad Street.

"You can't have a house for them to live in and a job for them to work in, but then they

have to go to Arlington for entertainment," Chandler said.

That entertainment district, coupled with the \$126 million Methodist Health System hospital and a proposed 81-acre mixed-use retail center on East Broad Street and U.S. 287 will create a destination for residents.

"All three of those separate deals will draw people, draw business, draw jobs, draw an improved economy," Chandler said.

Conventional planning, or suburban sprawl, creates a community that people can't identify with, Rutherford said. He cited examples where every intersection in a suburb has the same retail stores and the same archi-

ture.

"It yields an environment that you can find outside of Anchorage Alaska, you could find outside of St. Louis, outside of Boston, outside Arlington, Fort Worth," Rutherford said.

He said it's something Mansfield has the chance to avoid by undertaking a smart growth plan, especially one that is more pedestrian friendly and keeps short trips within neighborhoods and off major streets.

"If local trips have to go out on thoroughfares to go get a loaf of bread and you have people driving through the community or across the community, all those trips are going on the same street," Rutherford said.