



Former TI site in Stafford could be home to hotels, high-end apartments, green space

By Bryan Kirk | June 17, 2014 | Updated: June 17, 2014 5:16pm

The iconic Texas Instruments facility that once employed more than 1,000 workers may be nearly vacant, but the city of Stafford and a Dallas-area developer have big plans to transform the 192 acres into something exciting and new.

Dallas-based StreetLevel Investments, which now owns the parcel, plans to infuse about \$500 million in improvements that will include retail, multi-family housing, and office space, while at the same time maintaining many of the 50-year-old oak trees that populate the landscape.

In May, developers with Street Level Investments met with representatives from the Stafford City Council, the Stafford Economic Development Corp. and the city's planning and zoning commission to discuss plans for the site.

The overall project is expected to be fully completed by mid-2016.

For 45 years, Texas Instruments had a site in Stafford. In January 2012, company officials said they would shut down manufacturing operations and sell the property.

Although it was considered a gut punch at first, Stafford Mayor Leonard Scarcella said he plans figuratively speaking, to make lemonade from the lemons the city was dealt when Texas Instruments moved away.

"We are going to have to do a lot of squishing and stirring and other things (to make this change happen). It's a challenging situation," Scarcella said. "We are going to have to work with the developers. But that is something we are going to have to work at."

In 2012, Texas Instruments searched for a site in the Houston area for its corporate offices and research/development facility. Then, the former electronics giant announced its plans to relocate to nearby Sugar Land to a seven-acre facility that opens this summer.

Sugar Land offered a 10-year incentive package which was accepted and the company picked a site at the southeast corner of University Boulevard and U.S. 59 in Telfair for a 155,000-square-foot office building, which was to be completed by this June 30.

A small contingent of Texas Instruments employees are still working at the Stafford facility, and will remain there until the end of June.

In the meantime, Street Level Investments and the city of Stafford are working around them to devise a plan that includes Class A office space, retail and restaurant outlets and lots of green space.

Brian Murphy, principal for Street Level Investments, said finding a piece of property this size that fronts a major highway is nearly impossible.

"To have the kind of density they have and have a clean slate of 192 acres; you never get," Murphy said. "We think this is an incredible opportunity."

Murphy said the project, which is yet unnamed, will also have at least four high-end apartment complexes, two name-brand hotels and a park with jogging and biking trails and a splash pad.

With so much space to work with, the designs may change, but probably not much with the official ground breaking near.

The city and Street Level Investments plan to break ground on the retail, or front-end of the project - which faces Interstate 69 - sometime this fall.

Murphy said the project is one that the city and the developers are taking a great amount of pride in, moving forward, and they want the Stafford community to be proud as well.

"This is their community. We are the developers of the property and we want to address their community," Murphy said. "They will be the ones who use the parks, the restaurants, the residential and all the other pieces there."

<http://www.chron.com/default/article/Stafford-works-with-developer-on-former-Texas-5559271.php>