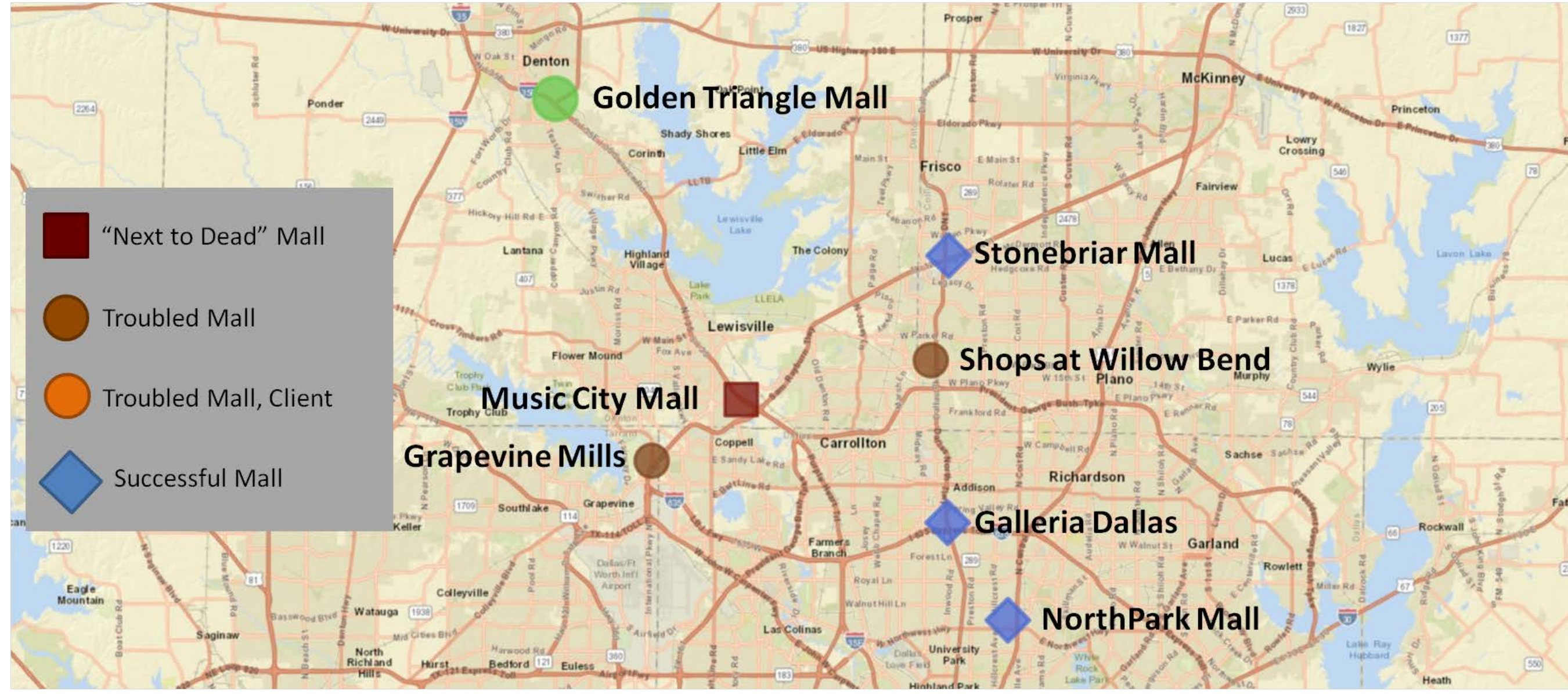


# Golden Triangle Mall: Redevelopment Plan






## I. Research Overview

The Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex (DFW) is home to several other traditional mall retailers, as well as lifestyle centers and mixed-use developments. While some sites – Galleria, Stone Briar, and NorthPark – are successful in the current retail environment, others are struggling, and several have recently closed and are undergoing redevelopment. Within this retail environment, the Golden Triangle Mall is currently categorized as “troubled”. They have experienced a severe loss of tenants over the past several years, including both their Sears, and more recently, DSW anchors. Additionally, competition is growing from two major retail centers, one on University Drive and the other just down the road from the mall. In order to succeed in an era of growing e-commerce and the fall of the traditional mall layout, **Golden Triangle sought to understand what a re-development strategy should look like.**

- What are the specific market factors that influence retail success in Denton and around the larger DFW area?
- How are successful business shopping complexes situated within these market factors and how do their respective formats fit those markets?
- What could re-development of the Golden Triangle Mall area look like?

## II. Methods

- 
**Site Surveys**  
 Golden Triangle | Galleria | Music City
- 
**Geospatial Market Analysis**  
 Golden Triangle | Galleria | NorthPark | Stonebriar
- 
**Semi-Structured Interviews**  
 11 Participants

## III. Interview Findings

### 1 Brick and Mortar Decline

Many of the participants do not like shopping at brick and mortar locations, and primarily make purchases online. For clothing, brick and mortar locations are still sometimes utilized by participants, but generally for size checking rather than purchases.

*“Material shopping isn’t something people go to do anymore.”*

### 2 Low Customer Appeal

The Golden Triangle Mall was described as "sad", "run down", "vacant", "sketchy", and "a ghost town". In fact, only one person had anything positive to say about this space. He is the father of a 14-year-old girl, and he appreciates that the Golden Triangle Mall represents a safe place where he can let his daughter and her friends wander relatively unsupervised. Even then, he commented that he feels sorry for her that the space doesn't have more to offer.

### 3 Same Old, Same Old

Several participants discussed that a turn off for them about shopping malls in general is that "the stores are always the same" in every mall. Participants wanted greater diversity while also recognizing that Denton doesn't need more retailers. When specific retailers were mentioned by participants, they were described as "higher end", such as Talbots, Banana Republic, Coach, and Clarkes. A successful retail space, everyone agreed, **needs a draw factor or a reason for them to go.**

### 4 Diverse Food Options

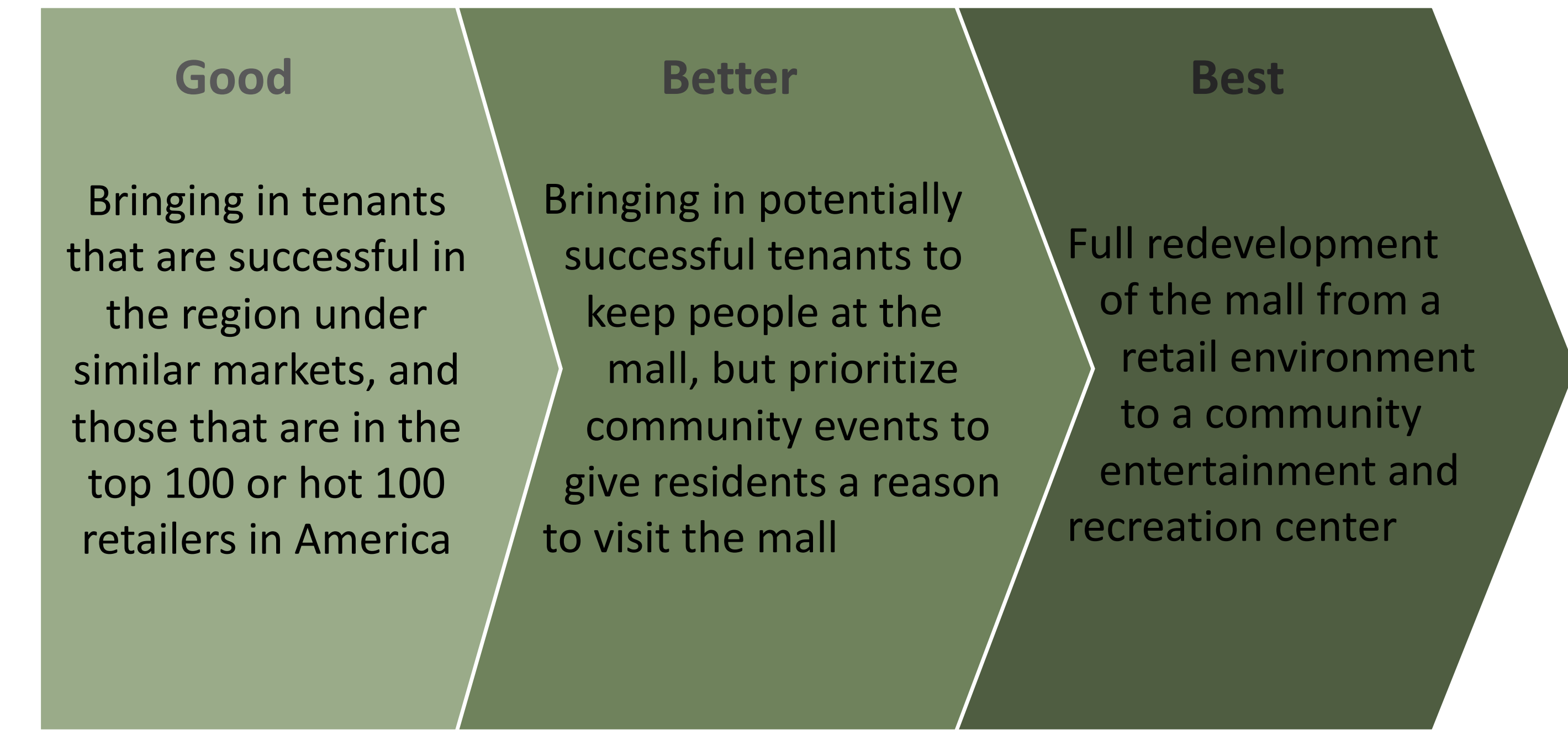
*“The food court is the heart of every American mall.”*

Food is an integral draw to a retail space, specifically a mall. Participants suggested diversifying the food options available at the mall, or using the parking lot for a food truck rally. Participants felt that this would act both as a draw factor, while also providing the community gathering space element that is currently lacking from the Golden Triangle Mall.

### 5 Recreation and Entertainment

When residents were asked what they would like to see that Denton doesn't already have, some mentioned specific retailers, such as Trader Joes, but most talked at length about the need for a community gathering space that could cater to young adults, families, and children. **What participants felt was lacking in Denton, more than specific retailers, was recreation and entertainment.**

*“I think Denton sorely needs family activity places... there is nothing here to do spontaneously. Denton has quirky, intimate, small town things, but we are sorely lacking in staples of infrastructure.”*



## IV. Recommendations

Recommendations are presented in a good-better-best format. “Good” recommendations are less time and resource intense, and so carry the least risk, but are less aligned with resident desires and interests. “Better” recommendations integrate community desires, while still maintaining the Golden Triangle Mall as a predominantly retail space. The “Best” recommendation would require significant time and resource allocation to implement, but aligns the closest to consumer desires, and as such represents the highest potential for return. The Golden Triangle Mall management was advised to review each recommendation in relation to company interests and goals before choosing a path forward.

## V. Anthropological Element

- **Market Data Doesn’t Explain Everything**
  - Information about consumer interests and desires is not present in market statistics alone
  - Lacks an insider’s perspective
- **Interviews -> Outside of the Box Findings**
  - Interviews informed what consumers felt was missing in Denton
  - As a researcher, I would not have considered food trucks, community gathering spaces, or entertainment and recreation options
- **Stronger Research**
  - Mixed methodological research like that presented here combines qualitative and quantitative data to produce emic and etic insights
  - Informed recommendations require a holistic understanding of the situation

**Anthropology gives me the tools to tackle a wide range of social problems, regardless of subject matter.** Because each project is different and presents a new challenge, work is never boring. My employers appreciate that I am able to jump in on any research project, and the training anthropology has given me in participant observation, interviewing, and qualitative data interpretation has been invaluable in every project I have worked on. **Combining quantitative approaches from geographic information systems, cognitive analysis, and social network analysis assist in gaining a holistic picture.**

This study was conducted through GEOG 5220: Retail Geography, instructed by Dr. Murray Rice., and received the Intalytics Award for Retail Geography

Erica Hawvermale  
 Applied Anthropology  
 Masters Candidate  
 e.hawvermale@live.com